



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

April 16, 2013

TO: Bishops of synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
 Vice Presidents of synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
 Secretaries of synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
 Members of the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
 Presidents of ELCA seminaries
 Administrative Team of the churchwide organization
 Chief executive officers of separately incorporated ministries
 Regional Coordinators

FROM: David D. Swartling, secretary

SUBJECT: Report of Actions of the Church Council (April 5–7, 2013)

The Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) met at the Lutheran Center, Chicago, Illinois, April 5–7, 2013. Here is a summary of particular actions along with background and explanatory information.

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1. SOCIAL STATEMENT ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Background:

The initial request for a social statement on criminal justice came as memorials from the Rocky Mountain, South Dakota, and La Crosse Area Synods, citing concerns to address issues of mass incarceration and the impacts on the people incarcerated, their families, workers in the system, and the broader society. Work on the statement was authorized [CA07.02.09] by the 2007 Churchwide Assembly.

The Task Force on Criminal Justice presented “The Church and Criminal Justice: Hearing the Cries” as the text of a proposed social statement on criminal justice for the ELCA. If approved by the 2013 Churchwide Assembly, it will become the twelfth social statement of this church.

Church Council Action:

To recommend the following for adoption by the 2013 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:

To adopt the text of the proposed social statement “The Church and Criminal Justice: Hearing the Cries” as a social statement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in accordance with the “Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns” (2011).

The text of the recommended social statement is available on the ELCA website at:
<http://www.elca.org/What-We-Believe/Social-Issues/Social-Statements/Criminal-Justice.aspx>

Church Council Action:

To recommend the following implementing resolutions for adoption by the 2013 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

1. To call upon members of this church through steadfast prayer, discernment, ministry efforts, and public action to hear the cries, offer hospitality, accompany, and advocate on behalf of those whose lives are caught up in or committed in service to the criminal justice system;
2. To call upon members, congregations, synods, social ministry organizations, and churchwide ministries to advocate intentionally and creatively for system reform consistent with the principles and recommendations set forth in this social statement;
3. To encourage ELCA congregations to work with victims, victim advocates, and victim support organizations, to grow in sensitivity and response to the harm caused by crime, and to grow in awareness of restorative justice practices;
4. To encourage ELCA congregations to consider becoming sites of ministry and action for the incarcerated and their families, possibly in ecumenical collaboration, and with special attention to re-entry ministries and to preferential hiring for ex-offenders, as appropriate;
5. To hold in prayer the ministry of ELCA chaplains and pastors serving in all correctional facilities, or serving with law enforcement agencies around the country, and to encourage all expressions of the ELCA and its affiliated institutions to provide greater support to prison ministry;
6. To request the ELCA's Congregational and Synodical Mission unit to enlist the aid of leaders in conferences, synods, social ministry organizations or other appropriate groups in creating and maintaining a resource database, to which members, pastors or other professionals can turn for information about activities, models, and training modules that support ministry to people and action toward reform of the criminal justice system;
7. To call upon the ELCA's Worship and Liturgical Resources Team to develop additional liturgical resources for those involved in the criminal justice system, such as services and prayers for victims and their families, for those incarcerated, for those employed in the system, or rites of blessing for those engaging in visitation ministries;
8. To direct the staff of the ELCA's advocacy ministries to coordinate efforts to develop on behalf of this church a social investment screen on private prison operations, along with developing education materials to use within the ELCA for understanding these actions.
9. To direct the ELCA's Theological Discernment Team in the fall of 2015 to bring to the ELCA Church Council an assessment of the feasibility of developing a social message on U.S. national drug policy, in accordance with "Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns" (Chicago: ELCA, 1997, revised 2006, 2011);
10. To encourage the three expressions of this church to utilize the recommendations of the Addressing Social Concerns Review Task Force in the process of disseminating and implementing this social statement; and
11. To call upon appropriate staff in the ELCA's Congregational and Synodical Mission unit and the Office of the Presiding Bishop to establish and oversee a process of implementation and accountability for this social statement that provides a report on implementation to the ELCA Church Council in the fall of 2017.

2. 25TH ANNIVERSARY CAMPAIGN FOR THE ELCA

Background:

The American Lutheran Church, Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches, and Lutheran Church in America merged to form the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America on January 1, 1988. In recognition of its 25th anniversary, the churchwide organization began planning for a comprehensive capital campaign both to reflect on the people and events that shaped the life of this church and to seek new opportunities to expand its mission and ministry.

In October 2012, staff of the Mission Advancement unit presented a proposal for a campaign to the Conference of Bishops and synodical vice presidents. Further analysis of the proposal and consultation was undertaken and included ongoing dialogue with the Conference of Bishops, as well as other partners, leaders, and ELCA members.

At its November 2012 meeting, the Church Council endorsed the campaign in concept and authorized further work in anticipation of action at its April 2013 meeting to forward a recommendation to the 2013 Churchwide Assembly. ELCA bylaw 11.41.06. states that a churchwide appeal must be approved by the assembly.

Based on the November endorsement, the Mission Advancement unit, Office of the Treasurer, and Office of the Presiding Bishop developed a campaign budget for Church Council consideration.

Church Council Action:

To recommend the following for adoption by the 2013 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:

To approve the 25th Anniversary Campaign for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as a major fundraising effort of this church, its synods and congregations, its affiliated and related ministries, and individual members in order to grow the resources of this church to support congregations, leadership, relief and development, and global mission;

To thank the members of this church for their ongoing stewardship and generosity through regular offerings that supports the breadth of ministry across the ELCA and beyond;

To invite every congregation, synod, related ministry and individual member of this church to make a contribution toward the 25th Anniversary Campaign for the ELCA in order to achieve its goal of \$190 million over the next five years (2014–2018);

To request that the Church Council monitor and evaluate the implementation of the 25th Anniversary Campaign for the ELCA on an ongoing basis and that reports be submitted annually to the ELCA Church Council and to each Churchwide Assembly through the completion of the campaign;

To encourage conversations among members and in congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization regarding ways that the 25th Anniversary Campaign can be implemented to take advantage of synergies among all expressions of this church; and

To thank God for 25 years of interdependent ministry in the ELCA and to step forward boldly in order to seek to reach more communities with the good news of Jesus Christ, train more leaders who will become missionaries, pastors and lay leaders, and contribute to the alleviation of hunger and poverty.

3. PROPOSAL ON THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

Background:

The 1995 Churchwide Assembly received a report, “Faithful Leaders for a Changing World: Theological Education for Mission in the ELCA,” which embraced the vision of an interdependent network of theological education providers. That theological education network has adapted to rapid changes in the culture, the church, economics, and the profiles of leadership and educational structures by means of new institutional collaborations and mergers, new degree program designs, certificate programs, strategies for forming learning communities, and staffing arrangements. During the next few years, the ELCA will enter a period of dramatic turn-over in its rostered leadership.

In November 2012 the Church Council received the report of the Mission Funding Task Force. In response to its recommendations and in light of the multiple study processes and experiments currently underway regarding forms of leadership and leadership education in this church, the council voted [CC12.11.34];

To request the Office of the Presiding Bishop, in response to the recommendations of the Mission Funding Task Force relating to theological education and in recognition of the changing landscape in this church regarding leadership development, theological education, candidacy and call, and the rosters of this church, to consult with seminary presidents, the Conference of Bishops, the Word and Service Task Force, and other leaders and to bring a report and recommendations to the Church Council at its April 2013 meeting regarding next steps to address these issues in a holistic manner.

In response to this action, the presiding bishop brought a proposal for churchwide response to current challenges and opportunities in theological education. It outlined a path forward with the goal of bringing a report and possible recommendations to the 2016 Churchwide Assembly.

Church Council Action:

To receive with appreciation the theological education proposal from the Office of the Presiding Bishop and to encourage continued conversation and discernment throughout this church regarding theological education and the renewal of work to call forth women and men to be formed as servant leaders;

To thank the Conference of Seminary Presidents, Conference of Bishops, and churchwide staff for their input, feedback and advice in shaping the scope, process and possibilities for this proposal; and

To affirm the work of the seminaries, colleges and universities, and other theological education providers in creating a strong and increasingly flexible and efficient network that prepares a wide variety of leaders grounded in Scripture and the Lutheran confessional tradition and equipped for God's mission in a rapidly changing environment.

Church Council Action:

To authorize the creation of an advisory council which shall be known as the Theological Education Advisory Council, the members of which shall be appointed by the Executive Committee of the Church Council;

To authorize the Theological Education Advisory Council to implement the tasks outlined in the "Proposal for Churchwide Response to Current Challenges and Opportunities in Theological Education";

To authorize the Theological Education Advisory Council to consult as appropriate with other leaders both within and beyond the ELCA in order 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;

To authorize the Theological Education Advisory Council to convene presidents of ELCA universities with embedded seminaries, seminary presidents, board chairs, a bishop from each seminary's board and others to share counsel on priorities and strategic plans, current collaboration initiatives, new collaborative possibilities, and degree program design innovations, and to examine implications for our leadership identification and preparation systems;

To request that the Theological Education Advisory Council submit periodic progress reports on its deliberations along with updates on new developments in the theological education network to the Conference of Bishops and the Church Council, with a final comprehensive report and possible recommendations submitted at the fall 2015 meeting of the Church Council for consideration at the 2016 Churchwide Assembly; and

To authorize the Executive Committee of the Church Council to act as necessary to facilitate the work of the Theological Education Advisory Council, including the authority to authorize additional expenditures.

Church Council Action:

To request the Office of the Presiding Bishop, in consultation with Conference of Bishops and Church Council, to bring a budget proposal to the 2013 Churchwide Assembly, designating a regular percentage of mission support to the support of theological education;

To encourage the Conference of Bishops and Synod Councils, in partnership with the churchwide organization, to stabilize and strengthen congregational and synodical support of theological education; and

To encourage the Mission Advancement Unit and synods to articulate to congregations and members that an important way we serve God's mission is through our shared support of theological education through mission support and individual gifts.

4. ELCA PHILOSOPHY OF BENEFITS AND DEVELOPMENT OF HEALTH CARE PLAN DESIGN OPTIONS

Background:

The Church Council received periodic reports from Portico Benefit Services (Portico) about a preliminary plan design for the ELCA Health Care Plan due to the implementation of the Health Care Reform (HCR) and about revising the ELCA Philosophy of Benefits.

To bring consistency to the design and delivery of the ELCA benefit programs, Portico began in 2003 to undertake a review of the history and evolution of benefit plans and the governing documents of this church. This process resulted in the 2004 Philosophy of Benefits Report that identified five supporting principles, discussed their application in different plans, provided the views of church leaders, and proposed interpretations to achieve greater flexibility.

A variety of factors, such as the anticipation of health care reform and the impacts of economic and other changes inside and outside of this church, have prompted a revision of the ELCA Philosophy of Benefits Report. Portico convened a task force to address possible revisions and updating of the ELCA Philosophy of Benefits. Originally, the hope had been to provide a report to the Church Council at its meeting in November 2012. However, that schedule became unrealistic in light of continued uncertainties regarding the implementation of health care reform and the appropriate response of Portico.

In addition to evaluating the impacts of health care reform, Portico was approached by ELCA seminary presidents in 2012 about the possibility of developing alternative health care plans for seminaries. In response to this request, Portico developed pilot proposals, which necessitated amendments to the ELCA Medical and Dental Plan. These amendments were approved by the Church Council in a special meeting on September 18, 2012.

Portico presented the Church Council with an interim report in November 2012, and the council authorized that a report and recommendations of the philosophy of benefits task force be deferred until the Church Council meeting in April 2013 or August 2013.

Portico provided the April 2013 meeting a draft ELCA Philosophy of Benefits and the framework for potential plan designs and pricing options in the interest of providing such information in a timely manner at Synod Assemblies and in other venues. The report clarifies that further review is needed before final decisions can be made and implemented in accordance with the timetable for health care reform. This timetable necessitates endorsement in concept of the ELCA Philosophy of Benefits and the preliminary plan designs and pricing proposals.

Church Council Action:

To receive the report and recommendation of the Portico Benefit Services' philosophy of benefits task force and to express thanks and appreciation to the staff and board of trustees of Portico and to the members of its task force who have worked diligently to evaluate and update the ELCA Philosophy of Benefits in light of changes in this church and in society, especially in light of the complexities of addressing health care reform;

To affirm in concept the draft ELCA Philosophy of Benefits as presented by Portico and endorsed by its board of trustees;

To encourage Portico to continue to educate plan members, congregations, synods, the churchwide organization, other ELCA-related employers, and other interested persons regarding the ELCA Philosophy of Benefits at Synod Assemblies and in other venues and to continue to seek feedback and input from these individuals and groups as part of this process; and

To request that Portico bring a final version of the ELCA Philosophy of Benefits for review and consideration by the Conference of Bishops and for approval by the Church Council at their meetings in August 2013.

Church Council Action:

To receive the report and recommendations of Portico Benefit Services regarding development of health care plan design options and pricing alternatives that address the challenges and complexities of implementing health care reform, and to express appreciation to Portico staff and its board of trustees for considering these issues with insight, creativity, and compassion, consistent with the draft ELCA Philosophy of Benefits;

To recognize that development of plan design options and pricing alternatives is necessary if Portico is to continue to provide financially viable, self-supporting, wellness-focused health plans that can serve the needs of this church and related organizations and their plan members;

To affirm in concept the proposed plan design options and pricing alternatives presented by Portico and endorsed by its board and to encourage their further refinement, consistent with the draft ELCA Philosophy of Benefits, in anticipation of the implementation of health care reform in January 2014;

To request that Portico finalize plan design options and pricing alternatives and bring them and associated plan amendments for review and consideration by the Conference of Bishops and approval by the Church Council in August 2013;

To endorse as a benchmark the proposed health care plan option that approximates the current level of benefits provided by the ELCA health plan, and to encourage congregations, synods, the churchwide organization, other ELCA-related organizations, and other interested persons to advocate for selection of this plan option;

To further request that Portico continue to provide timely and important education and advice to plan members, congregations, synods, the churchwide organization, other ELCA-related organizations, and other interested persons regarding planning for and implementing health care reform; and

To authorize the Executive Committee of the Church Council to take additional actions as necessary to facilitate the development of health care plan design options and pricing alternatives so that a final proposal and recommendations can be considered by the Conference of Bishops and acted upon by the Church Council at their August meetings.

The draft ELCA Philosophy of Benefits (Exhibit Q, Part 2) is available on the ELCA website at:
<http://www.elca.org/Who-We-Are/Our-Three-Expressions/Churchwide-Organization/Office-of-the-Secretary/ELCA-Governance/Church-Council/Church-Council-Actions.aspx>

5. SITE FOR THE 2016 CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY

Background:

ELCA bylaw 13.41.02.h. requires the Office of the Secretary to “arrange for and manage churchwide meetings, including the Churchwide Assembly” The secretary recommends the site for a Churchwide Assembly to the Church Council for designation.

Church Council Action:

To designate New Orleans, Louisiana—subject to the satisfactory completion of negotiations in the judgment of the secretary of this church—as the site for the Fourteenth Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, August 8–14, 2016.

6. REVISED CURRENT FUND SPENDING AUTHORIZATION

Background:

The Office of the Treasurer provided revised income estimates for 2013 and revised expense authorizations by unit. The 2013 revised current fund income totaled \$70,731,675, an increase of \$1,725,370 from the November 2012 estimate.

There was no change in the \$19 million income estimate for ELCA World Hunger, and the 2013 expense proposal reflected full spending of the 2013 goal of \$19 million as well as allocations from existing fund balances.

Church Council Action:

**To approve a revised current fund spending authorization for fiscal year 2013 of \$70,731,675; and
To approve a revised total World Hunger spending authorization for fiscal year 2013 of \$20,195,415, subject to endorsement of the World Hunger Steering Committee’s revision of the “Guidelines for ELCA World Hunger Program Activities.”**

Background:

In 1988 an inter-unit task force on World Hunger comprised of churchwide organization staff adopted “Guidelines for ELCA World Hunger Program Activities” to direct implementation of the program.

The 1991 Churchwide Assembly decided that ELCA World Hunger funds would be expended 25 percent to 30 percent within the territorial jurisdiction of this church and 70 percent to 75 percent in other parts of the world. The 2013 spending authorization reflects \$13.3 million or 70.1 percent for international spending and \$5.7 million or 20.9 percent for domestic spending.

The guidelines were revised in 2006 to stipulate that “fund-raising, administration, and communication costs related to the World Hunger Program and Appeal will be covered from those funds available for use within the territorial jurisdiction of this church” (Section 5.c.).

The current World Hunger expense proposal anticipates revisions to the “Guidelines for ELCA World Hunger Program Activities” recommended by the World Hunger Steering Committee that fund-raising costs be counted as 50 percent from domestic funds and 50 percent from international funds. This scenario provides flexibility for building capacity for the entire program while also supporting the current methodology for determining unit spending authorizations.

Church Council Action:

To endorse the World Hunger Steering Committee proposal to revise the “Guidelines for ELCA World Hunger Program Activities” to reflect that, for the purpose of determining compliance with ELCA World Hunger spending restrictions, 50 percent of fund-raising costs will be counted toward the domestic percentage and 50 percent will be counted toward the international percentage.

7. RECOMMENDED 2014–2016 TRIENNIAL BUDGET

Background:

Based in part on positive trends in Mission Support, stabilization of Mission Investment Fund support, and negative trends in support from investment income and grants received from Thrivent Financial for Lutherans, the Office of the Treasurer prepared budget proposals for the 2013 Churchwide Assembly for the following three years. The proposal included spending authorizations by units of the churchwide organization. Changes in current fund allocations reflected an expanded Young Adults in Global Mission program, increased building and infrastructure costs, and planned use of the Strategic Initiative Fund.

ELCA World Hunger income was projected to remain at \$19 million for each of the three years. The World Hunger spending authorization did not anticipate allocations of fund balance. It reflected spending at an amount equal to the income proposal.

Church Council Action:

To recommend the following for adoption by the 2013 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:

2014 Budget Proposal

To approve a 2014 current fund spending authorization of \$70,541,740;

To approve a 2014 World Hunger income proposal of \$19,000,000; and

To authorize the Church Council to revise the spending authorization after periodic review of revised income estimates.

2015 Budget Proposal

To approve a 2015 current fund income proposal of \$68,552,278;

To approve a 2015 World Hunger income proposal of \$19,000,000; and

To authorize the Church Council to establish a spending authorization after periodic review of revised income estimates.

2016 Budget Proposal

To approve a 2016 current fund income proposal of \$67,920,675;

To approve a 2016 World Hunger income proposal of \$19,000,000; and

To authorize the Church Council to establish a spending authorization after periodic review of revised income estimates.

8. REVISIONS TO 2013 SYNODICAL MISSION SUPPORT PLANS

Background:

The Church Council responds to revisions in synodical Mission Support plans.

Church Council Action:

To acknowledge the decision of the following synods to maintain the percentage of sharing of 2013 mission support contributions by congregations for synodical and churchwide ministries but estimating an adjustment in the estimated amount to be shared: Oregon; Pacifica; Northeastern Minnesota; Southeastern Minnesota; Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana; Northwest Synod of Wisconsin; South Carolina; and, Florida-Bahamas synods.

To thank the bishops and synod leaders of every synod as they strive to be faithful to shared commitments within the ELCA, and to direct synod and churchwide staff, including the directors for evangelical mission, to deepen their partnership in efforts to strengthen financial support for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

9. SYNODICAL MISSION SUPPORT PLANS FOR 2014

Background:

The Church Council acknowledges synodical Mission Support plans.

Church Council Action:

To acknowledge that circumstances in the following synods have led to decisions to seek a decrease from prior levels in the percentage of sharing of 2014 mission support contributions by congregations for synodical and churchwide ministries; to encourage each synod to continue to work to grow mission support in the synod; and to request that each synod develop a plan, in consultation with the churchwide organization, to restore or surpass the previous level of mission support sharing: Sierra-Pacific; Southeast Michigan; New England; Virginia; and North Carolina synods;

To acknowledge the decision of the following synods to increase the percentage of sharing of 2014 mission support contributions by congregations for synodical and churchwide ministries: Northwest Washington; Eastern Washington-Idaho; Montana; Western North Dakota; Southeastern Minnesota; Arkansas-Oklahoma; Southwestern Texas; Western Iowa; Northern Great Lakes; Metropolitan New York; Slovak Zion; South Carolina; Florida-Bahamas; and Caribbean synods;

To acknowledge the decision of the following synods to maintain the percentage of sharing of 2014 mission support contributions by congregations for synodical and churchwide ministries: Alaska; Southwestern Washington; Oregon; Pacifica; Grand Canyon; Rocky Mountain; South Dakota; Northwestern Minnesota; Northeastern Minnesota; Southwestern Minnesota; Nebraska; Central States; Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana; Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast; Central/Southern Illinois; Northeastern Iowa; Northwest Synod of Wisconsin; East-Central Synod of Wisconsin; Greater Milwaukee; South-Central Synod of Wisconsin; La Crosse Area; North/West Lower Michigan; Northeastern Ohio; New Jersey; Upstate New York; Northeastern Pennsylvania; Northwestern Pennsylvania; Southwestern Pennsylvania; Metropolitan Washington, D.C.; and Southeastern synods;

To thank the bishops and synod leaders of every synod as they strive to be faithful to shared commitments within the ELCA, and to direct synod and churchwide staff, including the directors for evangelical mission, to deepen their partnership in efforts to strengthen financial support for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and

To request that all synods submit their 2014 mission support plans prior to their 2013 synod assemblies.

10. 500TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE EVANGELICAL (LUTHERAN) REFORMATION

Background:

The November 2012 meeting of the Church Council received and endorsed a proposal from the staff of the churchwide organization to observe the 500th anniversary of the evangelical (Lutheran) Reformation. The council authorized its Executive Committee to appoint a steering committee, in consultation with the Conference of Bishops, to continue planning and to prepare a report for the April 2013 meeting of the Church Council.

The council's Program and Services Committee discussed the challenges and opportunities associated with the upcoming observance. It recommended that the Church Council authorize hiring additional staff to implement the proposal.

Church Council Action:

To request funding for staff to guide the ELCA in observance of the 500th anniversary.

11. PROPOSED MERGER OF CALIFORNIA LUTHERAN UNIVERSITY AND PACIFIC LUTHERAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Background:

The 2011 Churchwide Assembly adopted amendments to Chapter 8 of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. These amendments made it possible for the merger of a seminary and university. Such a merger occurred in 2011 between Lenoir-Rhyne University, Hickory, N.C., and Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, Columbia, S.C.

Over the past several years the ELCA seminaries have been working with each other and with other partners to organize their educational and administrative work in ways that advance a strong, wide-reaching, and sustainable theological education network that meets the leadership needs of a church in mission. In this work, ELCA colleges and universities have emerged as particularly important partners.

California Lutheran University (CLU), Thousand Oaks, Calif., and Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary (PLTS), Berkeley, Calif., have come to an agreement that the two schools can best serve the ELCA's work of theological education by moving toward merger, with PLTS becoming part of CLU. In accordance with ELCA bylaw 8.31.02., amendments to governing documents of each separately incorporated seminary, as well as amendments to the governing documents of a college or university of this church, need approval by the Church Council.

Church Council Action:

To receive with appreciation the report and draft documents relating to the proposed merger of California Lutheran University (CLU) and Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary (PLTS);

To thank the administrations and trustees of CLU and PLTS for engaging in thoughtful, forward-looking, spirit-filled discussions about the future of these institutions within the ecology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;

To acknowledge that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is the sole corporate member of PLTS and that merger actions involving these schools must comply with the requirements in the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of this church;

To endorse in concept the proposed merger of CLU and PLTS, and to encourage the leadership of these institutions to continue their discussions and to prepare the appropriate documentation to effectuate the merger; and

To authorize the Executive Committee of the Church Council, in collaboration with the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee and the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit, to engage in further discussions and document review with CLU and with PLTS, as necessary, for the purpose of finalizing the proposed merger and to bring a recommended action regarding the merger and the final documents to implement it at a special Church Council meeting at a time to be determined.

12. ADDRESSING SOCIAL CONCERNS REVIEW TASK FORCE

Background:

The 2011 Churchwide Assembly authorized the Church Council, in consultation with the Conference of Bishops and the Communal Discernment Task Force, to establish a review process of current procedures for the development and adoption of instruments to address social concerns. The Addressing Social Concerns Review Task Force met on several occasions and prepared a report and recommendations.

Church Council Action:

To receive with thanks the report and recommendations of the Addressing Social Concerns Review Task Force, "With Hearts and Hands and Voices," and to express gratitude to task force members for their generous and capable service;

To request that the Office of the Presiding Bishop, in collaboration with the Conference of Bishops, facilitate implementation of the task force's recommendations to foster moral deliberation, to increase involvement in the deliberative processes of this church, and to expand the use of ELCA social teaching (recommendations 1-5);

To request that the Office of the Presiding Bishop, in consultation with the Office of the Secretary and the Conference of Bishops, prepare a written proposal that addresses implementing the recommendations for procedural changes in the processes for addressing social concerns in this church, including proposed revisions to Policies and Procedures for Addressing Social Concerns in the ELCA, and to report on the progress of this work to the Church Council beginning in November 2013 (recommendations 6-8); and

To request that the Office of the Presiding Bishop review the allocation of resources in the churchwide organization and explore the possibilities for partnerships with other groups and individuals to assist the church in responding to social issues, in word and deed, as part of its evangelical mission in the world, and to make recommendations, as appropriate, to the Church Council to authorize the funding and personnel necessary to implement these recommendations (recommendation 9).

The Addressing Social Concerns Review Task Force report (Exhibit J, Part 3) is available on the ELCA website at: <http://www.elca.org/Who-We-Are/Our-Three-Expressions/Churchwide-Organization/Office-of-the-Secretary/ELCA-Governance/Church-Council/Church-Council-Actions.aspx>

13. SOCIAL STATEMENT ON WOMEN AND JUSTICE

Background:

The 2009 Churchwide Assembly asked this church to “develop a social statement on the topic of justice for women in church and society to be received by the Churchwide Assembly for approval in 2015.” The 2011 Churchwide Assembly adopted a triennial schedule for Churchwide Assemblies, which would adjust the target date of the social statement to the 2016 Churchwide Assembly.

The Task Force on Women and Justice, which has the responsibility of developing the social statement, requested an extension for its work with the goal of presenting *Women and Justice: One in Christ* for adoption by the 2019 Churchwide Assembly. The request was based on four major factors:

- Seating of task force was delayed, primarily for staffing reasons;
- Importance of broad participation and engagement;
- Study resource development; and
- Recommended protocol changes to be proposed by the Addressing Social Concerns Review Task Force.

Church Council Action:

To affirm the importance of and work by the ELCA Task Force on Women and Justice, and to thank members of the task force for their commitment;

To honor the request of the task force and to grant an extension of time for the consideration of a social statement on women and justice until the 2019 Churchwide Assembly in recognition of the realities that have affected its work;

To request that the task force and all the expressions of this church utilize the recommendations of the Addressing Social Concerns Review Task Force in the process of developing this social statement; and

To ask the task force to make periodic progress reports to the Conference of Bishops and the Church Council and an interim report on its progress to the 2016 Churchwide Assembly.

14. LUTHERAN MEDICAL CENTER

Background:

Lutheran Medical Center (LMC) of Brooklyn, New York, is an ELCA-affiliated social ministry organization incorporated under the New York not-for-profit corporation law. The ELCA was the sole voting member of the corporation. As sole voting member, the ELCA was authorized to adopt and amend LMC’s governing documents, including its Certificate of Incorporation and constitution. LMC proposed changing its formal corporate relationship with the ELCA to preserve and extend its unique healthcare ministry and to provide LMC maximum flexibility in managing the challenges it faced due to a rapidly changing healthcare environment locally and nationally.

LMC charged a Mission Affirmation Task Force with several tasks to assist in the transition. The task force proposed and LMC approved a new mission statement and a covenantal commitment in support of ELCA social ministry. LMC also proposed amendments to its Constitution and Restated Certificate of Incorporation to substitute LMC Health System, Inc., a not-for-profit, tax exempt, 501(c)(3) corporation, as the sole voting member of LMC. The corporation’s board reserves a seat for the bishop of the ELCA Metropolitan New York Synod.

Church Council Action:

To adopt the following resolution on behalf of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:

WHEREAS, Lutheran Medical Center (LMC), a New York not-for-profit corporation, is an affiliated social ministry organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA); and

WHEREAS, the ELCA is the sole voting member of the LMC corporation and the ELCA has the authority to adopt and amend the LMC governing documents; and

WHEREAS, LMC, by action of its Board of Trustees, has requested that its Constitution be amended by the ELCA Church Council as specifically indicated in Exhibit H, Part 2a, attached hereto; and

WHEREAS, LMC, by action of its Board of Trustees, has requested that its Restated Certificate of Incorporation be amended by the ELCA Church Council as specifically indicated in Exhibit H, Part 1b, attached hereto; and

WHEREAS, LMC has therefore requested that the ELCA formally adopt the LMC Constitution as amended and the Restated and Amended Certificate of Incorporation attached hereto; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Church Council, on behalf of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, hereby approves and adopts the amendments to the Constitution of Lutheran Medical Center specified in Exhibit H, Part 2a; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Church Council, on behalf of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, hereby approves and adopts the amended Restated Certificate of Incorporation of Lutheran Medical Center as indicated in Exhibit H, Parts 1a and 1b.

The exhibits named in the above resolutions are available on the ELCA website at:

<http://www.elca.org/Who-We-Are/Our-Three-Expressions/Churchwide-Organization/Office-of-the-Secretary/ELCA-Governance/Church-Council/Church-Council-Actions.aspx>

15. ELECTIONS AND NOMINATIONS

Background:

ELCA bylaw 8.31.03. outlines the basic parameters for the election of members to the boards of ELCA seminaries.

The board of directors of each separately incorporated seminary shall be nominated and elected to terms as specified in the governing documents of the respective seminaries, and shall consist of 12 to 30 members, as follows:

- a. At least one-fifth nominated, in consultation with the seminaries, by the appropriate churchwide unit and elected by the Church Council . . .

Regarding the advisory council of Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary (LTSS), in accordance with ELCA bylaw 8.31.04., the bylaws of Lenoir-Rhyne University, Hickory, N.C., state:

The members of the Advisory Council will be elected by the Board of Trustees [of Lenoir-Rhyne University]. The membership of the Advisory Council shall meet the following requirements:

- a. At least one-fifth will be nominated by the Church Council of the ELCA upon consultation with the Advisory Council in coordination with the Board of Trustees.

Church Council Action:

To elect to the board of directors of The Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago to three-year terms expiring in 2016: Mr. Clarence J. Atwood, The Rev. Gordon A. Braatz Jr., Ms. Tina Glusenkamp Gould, Ms. Sarah M. Stegemoeller, and The Rev. Harvard W. Stephens Jr.;

To elect to the board of directors of Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary to a six-year term expiring in 2019: The Rev. Frank Espergren;

To elect to the board of directors of Trinity Lutheran Seminary to a four-year term expiring in 2017: Ms. Melissa Peper Firestone; and

To nominate to the advisory council of Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary as part of Lenoir-Rhyne University to three-year terms expiring in 2016: The Rev. Edward R. Benoway, The Rev. Bobbie J. Blackburn, The Rev. Susan R. Briehl, Mr. Kenneth L. Childs, The Rev. Sheila L. Elliott (United Methodist Church), Ms. Cinde Rinn and Mr. Roy T. Wise.