

Agenda Exhibits

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Revised November 12, 2010

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Part 1: Draft Report of the Communal Discernment Task Force

Report of the Presiding Bishop

I begin with familiar words from Philippians, the first chapter and third verse. “I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now” (Philippians 1:3 NRSV). Words of thanksgiving flow throughout all of scripture as our response to the grace and mercy of Christ Jesus, and words of gratitude shape our relationship with one another.

This morning I begin with words of thanksgiving to God for all those who have participated in and been affected by the recent redesign of the churchwide organization and the reductions in our work force. I want to begin by thanking all those who have served on the design team. On top of all their other responsibilities, they have spent endless hours in a really short time: Wyvetta Bullock, Christina Jackson-Skelton, Jonathan Beyer, Sherman Hicks, Kenneth Inskip and Else Thompson. (Applause) I also want to thank David Swartling and his staff in the Office of the Secretary who have accompanied us in this process, and you see the fruits of their labors. Thank you.

I wish I could name each person who has served so faithfully and well in this organization during their years of service but are now no longer serving with us because of the reduction in work force. As you have occasion to do so, please thank them. But this morning I do want to thank, in particular, two colleagues by name because you have elected them to their service, which is now coming to completion: the Rev. Dr. Rebecca Larson, whom you elected to serve as executive director for the program unit for Church in Society, and the Rev. Dr. Stan Olson, whom you elected to serve as executive director for the program unit for Vocation and Education.

You have come to know Rebecca as a passionate, prophetic leader who continually calls this church to be a church in society, responding to disasters, advocating for justice and peace and working for immigration reform. With incredible gifts as a theologian, she has accompanied the process of developing social statements. Moreover, I am convinced that, without her artistry of words and the depth of her theological understanding, we would not have had that rich social statement on human sexuality that was adopted by the 2009 Churchwide Assembly.

Stan Olson brought together critical pieces of the ELCA ecology in the formation of the Vocation and Education unit. We cannot be this church without their work and our interdependence with them. They include: campus ministries, outdoor ministries, youth and young adult ministries, our work with schools, higher education, and most particularly his work with the process of calling and forming leaders for this church as we work with candidacy committees and seminaries. He has done that so effectively that last week he was elected president of Wartburg Seminary. He has taken the work of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly on ministry policies, and given only the precision that Stan Olson has, has developed those actions into policies for the whole church.

So, I would ask you on this day to join me in giving gratitude to God for the leadership of Rebecca Larson and Stan Olson. (Applause)

I do not know how it is for you in your life, but in mine it seems that I create a lot of stress for myself and others and even conflict around expectations—the expectations others hold for me that I may not meet, the expectations I hold of others, or even of myself. I’ve often quoted the saying I saw in the office of a pastor in Florida, “Unspoken expectations are resentments in waiting.”

So as we turn to the 2011 Churchwide Assembly and the next three years, this morning I invite you to reflect with me upon three questions regarding expectations.

First, what can God expect from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in the next three years? So, what do you think? What can God expect from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America? Do we want to say, “Well, God, we highly recommend that you expect past and present trends to continue?” or “Yup, God, you can pretty well expect a continued loss of between 50,000 and 90,000 baptized members a year. Yup, God, you can pretty well expect a continued decrease in worship attendance. You can expect that giving to your work in and beyond congregations should continue to fall God.” Should we tell God to continue to lower God’s expectations of what the Holy Spirit can do in us and through us? Or: “Maybe it would be better, God, if you just hold on and not have any expectations for this church as we get through this period as individuals, congregations and leaders decide if they want to be part of and support the work of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or not. God, maybe this would be a good time to take a sabbatical year for any expectations from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.”

It may be presumptuous of me to speak for God this morning, but somehow I think God has much higher expectations of us and for us than that. Maybe that isn’t completely accurate, because we are Lutherans after all. We know we are both saints and sinners, and at any given moment we will be confessing and repenting of our sins. And yet, God must have high expectations for us, because—as much as we continue sinning and repenting and confessing—God keeps forgiving us, right? That would indicate that a God with steadfast love and mercy towards God’s people must have expectations for how those people will respond to that grace and mercy.

So, what can God expect from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in the next three years? God, you can expect that the good news of Jesus Christ will continue to have free course among us. We are going to get so jazzed—that will shake God’s expectations right there—by the good news that in Christ we are a new creation that we are going to want to share that good news passionately and persistently with our family, friends, neighbors and co-workers. Yes, God, you can expect that we will be a church of everyday evangelists numbering four million plus.

And, God, you can expect that the pastors of this church are going to continue to proclaim the good news of salvation in Jesus’ name with evangelical passion and perseverance, with the creativity of the poet, the courage of the prophet, the wisdom of the sage and the humility of a forgiven sinner. Maybe not all of those qualities every sermon, but they will be there.

God, you can expect that your living word will continue at the center of this church’s life and witness—the word of God made flesh in Jesus the Christ, the word proclaimed as law and gospel, your word recorded in the holy scriptures. Yes, God, we mean it when we say we are a Book of Faith church.

God, you can expect that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, for the next three years, will continue to define ourselves first on the basis of our relatedness to others in the body of Christ, not on the basis of what sets us apart. God, we take very seriously that you have entrusted to us the ministry and message of reconciliation. And at least for us, God, we do not believe the Body of Christ is served by further fragmentation of any of its parts. Rather, we are committed to the call you have given us to further the gift of unity with others in the one holy, catholic and apostolic church. We will do that by also making unity through witness and service our task so that we will experience both your gifts of unity and diversity.

God, you can expect that we take very seriously Jesus’ words on the plain when he said, “Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you will be fed” (Luke 6: 20-21 NRSV). So, God, we in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America are going to join with people of other faiths and those who claim no religious

convictions, and we are going to work tirelessly to feed the hungry and serve the poor. But we know we cannot do that work without simultaneously addressing the root causes of poverty and hunger in the world. Therefore, we will advocate for just policies and practices that reduce hunger and poverty.

This commitment is what I said to President Obama when I met with him last week. We began by talking about how many church bodies, congregations and members are represented in the National Council of Churches. Then I said, "Mr. President, this morning I want to call to mind for us the words of the prophet who said that finally God does not look upon the faith of God's people and listen first to the eloquence of our preaching or the melodies of our songs or the beauty of our sanctuaries. But God describes and defines and sees the faith of God's people by looking first upon the condition of those who live in poverty among us. Therefore, Mr. President, we in the religious community are ready to partner with the public sector and the private sector to end hunger and reduce poverty, believing that it is not God's intention that one in five children in the United States live in poverty, as is true today. It is not a desire of God and God's creation of God's children that almost two billion people will spend this day looking for bread and shelter from violence." So I said, "We in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Mr. President, are ready to get to work with you to extend the child nutrition bill, to work for the creation of jobs, especially for those who live in poverty, looking especially to greening jobs and extending unemployment benefits for those for whom finding work is hardest."

Yes, God, you can expect with the power of your Holy Spirit that we will be a church of over four million people who seek each day to live out the covenant you made with us in baptism. We will proclaim the Good News of God in Christ through word and deed. We will serve our neighbor, following the example of Jesus, and we will strive for justice and peace in all the world.

And, God, as shocking as it may seem, you can expect some joy from us in our serving and believing, like the joy I experienced on a bus in New Orleans this week as we were being transported to the opening worship for the National Council of Churches General Assembly. I sat next to an ELCA layperson who told me about his Sunday School class. This fall, in his rural Iowa congregation where about 40 or 50 people worship, he has five new students in fifth grade to seventh grade, not one of whom has ever been exposed to the biblical story. He said, "Can you imagine what it is like to have all five students never having heard of Abraham or the birth of Jesus, and how excited I am to see their excitement in the wonder of these stories of God's promises and God's people?"

Yes, God, you can expect joy in believing and serving. And, God, as humble as we are about our sinfulness and as ready as we are to make daily confession, you can pretty well expect, at least for the next three years, that we are no longer are going to describe ourselves on the basis of our timidity, but in our faith in Jesus Christ, our joy, our boldness and our courage, our believing and our testifying. So, God, maybe you should raise your expectations of us for carrying out your work, of restoring community in the life of the world in Jesus' name. And, oh yes, God, we know that none of these expectations will be met absent the power of your Holy Spirit among us.

A second question: what can this church expect from us who have been called and elected to positions of leadership? Years ago Walter Brueggeman reminded us of what Pastor Andrea Degroot-Nesdal told us in her sermon yesterday, that is, what fear does to us. Fear causes us to be possessive of what we have, distrustful of others, especially those in leadership. Finally, fear makes us downright anti-neighborly. In the current culture of fear in which we live, both in church and in society, we face the daily challenge as people in leadership of proving ourselves worthy of the trust of the people who have called and elected us to these positions.

We have shown that we are worthy of the trust given to us to shape the ministry and mission of this church within the resources that this church provides for us. You also have done so in

authorizing the movement towards the design proposal in August and in adopting that proposal in October. The Executive Committee, Planning and Evaluation Committee, LIFT task force, the Conference of Bishops and churchwide colleagues assisted by participating in the development of that proposal.

This church can expect from us as leaders that the two priorities for mission, which are foundational to the redesign of this churchwide organization, will continue to drive and lead this church. We are going to work collaboratively with congregations, synods, agencies, institutions and other partners to accompany congregations as growing centers for evangelical mission and we will build capacity for evangelical witness and service in the world to alleviate poverty and work for justice and peace in all the world.

I think this church can expect from us as leaders not only that we will model generosity in our own stewardship, but also will continue to hold each other accountable. We have kind of dropped the ball on the [Board of Pensions] wellness wheel. It's time to bring it out and have those one-to-one conversations with each other, asking each other, "How are you doing in stewarding all the parts of your life? How are you doing in growing towards a tithe and beyond a tithe in your own giving?"

This church can expect that we will lead as persons of faith. The center of our work will always be the gathering of the assembly around the means of grace, and we will lead by living our lives dwelling richly in the word of Christ and being constant in prayer. Leaders who are not fed regularly on Christ, the Bread of Life, will be a famished lot.

At the heart of our leading will be our deep, rich understanding of a Lutheran interpretation of the faith that has come down through 500 years of the ongoing Lutheran Reformation, and yet also the conviction that a church of the Reformation is always being reformed. We will lead believing that this is Christ's church and not ours. This church belongs to Jesus Christ, and we are here because God has called us by name. It is through baptism that we share in God's grace. Christ's church is not ours to control. And so let us lead this church by consistently making the resounding and clear call to all that there is a place for you in this church.

Two weeks ago, I decided to respond to the continued bullying of those who are gay, lesbian, bi-sexual and transgender—or even identified by others as being so—by making a video in the YouTube series, *It Gets Better*. I spoke in that brief two and a half-minute video of the power of words to harm and to heal, acknowledging that sometimes it has been the words of Christians that have bullied and harmed gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender youth and young adults, and sometimes it has been our silence. But I also spoke words of promise, seeking to offer hope in Christ. I said to each one who viewed, "You are a beloved child of God. Your life carries the dignity and beauty of God's creation. God has called you by name and claimed you forever. There is a place for you in this church and in the world."

I never imagined how those words of God's grace in a matter of hours and days would go so viral through the means of social networking. I have been moved daily by the responses—not to what I said, but what God was saying through me. In New Orleans I was sitting with a mother describing what it was like to watch that video with her lesbian daughter, both sobbing tears. Her daughter turned to her and said, "Mom, does he really mean it? Is there a place for me in this church?" A young man from Utah wrote to me saying, "I have never been a person of faith ever my life, but my friend sent this to my Facebook page and I watched it. Do you mean this, bishop? I need to learn more about this church."

Friends, do you realize how many people out there have never heard and are longing to hear God's gracious word of invitation and salvation in Jesus Christ, longing to hear God's "yes" to us in Jesus? Let us as leaders—let this whole church—not become so preoccupied with our losses and our diminishment and our internal controversies that we don't seize the opportunity that we

have to bear witness to our living, confident faith in God's grace, saying to all, especially those at the margins, there is a place for you in this church. This is an evangelical moment given to us like none other, because we live in a culture where most people see the Christian witness as an obsession with drawing lines in the sand and expending enormous energies defining who is on the right side of that line and who is on the rejected side. We know from the biblical witness, however, to beware of drawing lines in the sand, because Jesus is going to be standing on both sides of the line of the sand. For that, he got nailed to a cross.

Let's take this moment to continue to lead this church in a manner that shows, in this church at least, that dialogue isn't just possible, it is expected. There is room in this church for people of one faith, one baptism, one spirit, who have deep, deep disagreements about how that faith is lived out in a complex and changing world. The world, the Body of Christ, plagued by incivility and willful misunderstanding, needs us to be courageous leaders who are willing to say such behavior stops with us and will not be tolerated in this church. Last night we modeled a different way to have respectful, honest conversation based upon mutual trust and regard for one another.

Let's lead in these challenging economic times by resisting the temptation to become turned inward, preoccupied with our own survival—whether it is of the churchwide organization or your congregation, synod, institution or agency of this church—let us continue to tend to the whole ecology of the ELCA. Let us lead in a way that recognizes that our future is inseparable from the future of the whole Body of Christ, all of our ecumenical partners, all of our global companions.

Let us lead in a way that reflects our deep conviction that both unity and diversity are works and gifts of the Holy Spirit, that we will not let unity turn into a demand for uniformity in all things, and that we will continue to confront the scandalous realities of sexism and racism that turn our differences into systems of power and privilege for domination and exploitation.

Let us lead in a way that makes it absolutely clear that there is a central narrative woven through our work and our worship and our preaching and witnessing. After the midterm elections, I was talking to a president and CEO of a large communications consulting firm. She has worked with major candidates for office for years in this country. I said, "What do you think went wrong with President Obama and the Democratic Party that they could fall so quickly and so far in such a brief time?" She said, "They never found a compelling narrative in which the American people could find their voice and story." We have been given such a compelling narrative that defines our work, our witness and our lives of faith. Edwin Searcy describes it this way: "It is the narrative of the movement from the aching loss of Good Friday to the forsaken absence of Saturday to the astonishing newness of Easter Day that stands in stark contrast to the figural narrative provided by a culture of satiation and self-reliant success."¹

As those days of searching continued for our colleague, James Nelson, who was lost on his solo hike in the Colorado mountains, the family gathered with Amber, his fiancé. The ranger said, "Would you like to have a chaplain?" They said, "Oh, yes." He said, "Would you mind if we had a Lutheran chaplain?" They said, "No, that would be OK." So, Pastor Scott Beebe, an ELCA pastor trained to be a chaplain to such searches, began to accompany them on their journey. What would Pastor Scott Beebe have to say? To what would Amber's and James' family hold if it were not for the figural narrative of the Paschal mystery of Jesus? For in their moments of aching loss and forsaken absence, they could cling to the cross, the sign of God's presence in those moments—God's merciful loving presence—and they could live in the promise of resurrection to

¹ Edwin Searcy, "Seven Working Assumptions for Preaching in a Missional Church," *The Gospel and Our Culture*, vol. 15, nos. 1 and 2 (March and June, 2003) 3.

new life in Christ. It is this narrative that will continue to be woven throughout our living and our leading, our believing and our following.

So, one last brief question: what can we expect from God? Last week I was asked by one of the writers of *The Lutheran* magazine to share a favorite Bible verse that has had meaning throughout my life. I hate those questions. I never have one, and I can't remember my confirmation verse, so there! But I did begin to think about the 103rd Psalm. That psalm was read at every family celebration in my family of origin. When you are young and your birthday cake is on the table, but the candles aren't lit, and the gifts are sitting off on a table, and you know that you will not hear the song "Happy Birthday," taste the cake, and open the gifts until somebody reads that long 103rd Psalm—you wonder why it is my favorite. It is because the deeper memory is of one verse in that psalm: "The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love" (Psalm 103:8 NRSV). You can bet your life that God will be faithful to God's promise, because God bet the life of Jesus on God's faithfulness and in Christ we live and lead.

Thank you.

The section summaries provided in Exhibit A, Part 1a were prepared prior to the restructuring of the churchwide organization on October 8, 2010.

Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations (ER)

Submitted by Don McCoid

Full Communion Relationships

There is *increased cooperation* between the ELCA and our full communion partners (FCP). Since the last Church Council meeting, a consultation on evangelical mission planning was held in California involving EOCM leadership with our FCP. A consultation was held in Colorado to consider cooperation with outdoor ministries (facilities and program). A consultation on stewardship was held at our churchwide offices. There is increased interest and activity related to shared congregational ministries and shared clergy. This interest in cooperation also is a concern for major inter-religious partners, particularly Jewish and Muslim. FCP partners are responding to one another, as well as seeking measurable outcomes as a united voice with inter-religious agencies.

United Methodist Full Communion Agreement

In July 2010, the UMC-ELCA coordinating committee met. ELCA representatives include: Dr. Jonathan Linman (co-chair), Dr. Norma Hirsch, Dr. Jacqueline Bussie, Bishop Greg Pile, and our staff (Trice and McCoid). Guidelines for worship and recommendations on the interchangeability of clergy were developed. The three-year coordinating plan was developed, including mutual programmatic areas for consultation and planning, major areas of ministry in each church body, and how an exchange of information and mutual planning will strengthen our unified witness and service in Christ's Church. Celebrations of the full communion agreement continue in our synods and UMC conferences a full year after the final votes on full communion by the ELCA.

Reformed Church in America and Formula of Agreement (PCUSA, UCC, RCA and ELCA)

At the RCA's General Synod meeting in June at Orange City, Iowa, consideration of five overtures from different classes about the ELCA 2009 Assembly action on human sexuality and ordination changes were addressed in committee and plenary sessions. As a result, the RCA: (1) Requested "a dialogue with the ELCA in the 'spirit of affirmation and admonition' in which to discuss and explore with them the recent social statement adopted by the ELCA and to express our concern over the ELCA's action to allow the possibility of service in church office by persons in 'publicly accountable lifelong monogamous, same gender relationship, and to make a final report to the 2012 General Synod.'"

(2) Voted to direct "the Commission on Christian Unity to invite the ELCA, PCUSA, UCC, and Christian Reformed Church to join the RCA to engage in a consultation on the interpretation and use of scripture in moral discernment and ethical decision making, and report the progress to the 2011 General Synod and to make a final report to the 2012 General Synod." (*Note: A recent preliminary consultation among FOA members addressed the process and number of meetings.*)

Coordinating Committee meetings for The Episcopal Church and Moravian Church are scheduled.

Local and regional events are planned for the tenth anniversary of *Called to Common Mission*. Bishop Hanson visited The Episcopal Church's House of Bishops in September. Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori will attend an ELCA Conference of Bishops' meeting in 2011.

The Moravian Church-ELCA coordinating committee has adopted a three-year strategic plan. Implementation of this plan begins in the fall of 2010, including ER staff proactively seeking closer collaboration with Moravian and Episcopal partners based on new FCP relationships. The Moravian Church entered into full communion with The Episcopal Church in the summer 2010. (*Note: The Moravian Church, Alaska Province, did not accept our Assembly action to enter full communion with the ELCA and indicated there will be no further conversations with the ELCA.*)

Bilateral Dialogues, Discourses, and Cooperation

Roman Catholic Dialogue

The tenth meeting of the ELCA-Roman Catholic Round XI in October 2010 will consider a final draft of "The Hope of Eternal Life." The ELCA is committed to a new round of dialogue following the adoption of this round.

Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (Cooperation)

The next Committee on Lutheran Cooperation will meet on December 1-2, 2010, in Baltimore. At last summer's LCMS Convention, the Rev. Matthew Harrison was elected as the new President. The LCMS also passed resolutions to respond to the ELCA social statement and to make a report within the next year about cooperating in externals (i.e., LIRS, LSA, LWR, LDR, chaplaincy). David Swartling represented the ELCA at the LCMS Convention. Donald McCoid represented the ELCA at President Harrison's installation on September 11, 2010. We will need to assess our relationship, as we await some word from the LCMS leadership.

Lutheran-Mennonite

The significant relationship continues to build on the reconciliation and right remembering that has been adopted by the ELCA and in July 2010 by the LWF Assembly. An emerging national peace network, the Christian Peace Table is co-chaired by ER staff and ecumenical staff from the Mennonite Church, U.S.A. These staff are preparing presentations on Lutheran-Mennonite relations through 2012.

Conciliar Relationships

Lutheran World Federation

The LWF Assembly took place in Stuttgart, Germany in July 2010. The theme of the Assembly was "Give Us Today Our Daily Bread." Bishop Hanson's leadership in presiding at the plenary sessions set an excellent climate for the meeting. There was a sense of cooperation and unity in the business and sharing opportunities. Elected to the LWF Council from the ELCA are: Christina Jackson-Skelton (also elected as Treasurer and will serve this year as a Vice President for the North American region); Mikka McCracken; Dr. Robin Steinke, and Bishop Mark Hanson.

Highlights included: Archbishop Rowan Williams' powerful keynote address based on the assembly theme; Mennonite Reconciliation and the Service of Repentance; Daily Bread and climate change, HIV and AIDS, illegitimate debt, the role of women in ministry, the witness of young adults, and hunger/poverty/disease. Visit the LWF Web site for specific actions and the message. Dr. Noko's leadership as the General Secretary was celebrated. Dr. Martin Junge has succeeded Dr. Noko as General Secretary and has shared a good vision of the LWF's present and future ministry. Bishop Munib Younan was elected to be the President of the LWF, succeeding Bishop Hanson, who was recognized for his service.

Churches Uniting in Christ (CUIC)

Plans are underway for a January 2011 meeting to consider concerns of racism surrounding Haiti's history and current realities. The ELCA has recommended that racial justice should be housed in the National Council of Churches. Christian Churches Together will hold its annual meeting in Birmingham in January with an emphasis on domestic poverty.

National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA (NCCC)

A centennial celebration will take place at the annual assembly in New Orleans in November. Celebrating the 100th Anniversary of the modern ecumenical movement will involve five papers including "A Christian Understanding of . . . : 1. Creation in an Age of Environmental Crisis; 2. Unity in an Age of Radical Diversity; 3. War in an Age of Terrorism. ER staff worked collaboratively in preparation with the NCC. Michael Kinnamon continues to provide focused and creative leadership, working to increase the sense of community, understanding and witness among member communions.

At the September 2010 NCCC governing board meeting, the document "Authority of the Church in the World" provided excellent discussion, as did the paper and action on immigration, discussion of the Millennium Development Goals, and the consideration of a resolution on calling the U.S. to negotiate a policy of just peace and an end to the war in Afghanistan.

The NCCC, the World Council of Churches, and the LWF are facing great financial challenges. There is very good leadership and good representation by ELCA members who serve on our behalf on committees, boards and at assemblies.

Inter-Religious Relations

Religious Leadership Summit

A religious leadership summit was called by the Islamic Society of North America, the National Council of Churches, and the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism on September 7, 2010, in Washington D.C. Dealing with the rising anti-Muslim frenzy, the plan to burn the Quran in Florida, reaction over proposed locations of Mosques and threats on Muslims, the meeting produced a statement by interfaith leaders to promote a culture of mutual respect and to assure religious liberty for all. Donald McCoid represented Bishop Hanson in developing the statement and at the press conference. Further cooperation will be a result of this summit.

The Community of Religions in U.S. National Consciousness

Michael Trice has written a paper that encourages consideration by the United States religious community. It addresses the challenge we are facing in a society that is in turmoil especially around religious diversity. It also addresses religious cooperation through partnering with faith communities and other organizations that work across faith lines to expand respect for religious pluralism and freedom of religion or belief. The proposal would create facilitating teams to model best practices and networks that build a local and national network committed to enabling the religious community in order to construct peaceable communities in response to this current social need, and to being a healthy witness across communities.

Other Inter-Religious work is being done through ER staff in the following areas:

1. The National Muslim-Christian Initiative: ER staff co-chairs this table, which focuses on mosque and congregational needs in the United States.
2. The Jewish-Christian Encounter Table: ER staff co-chair, with a focus on congregations, synagogues and pastoral concerns. The next meeting is in October 2010 in Philadelphia.
3. The ELCA Consultative Panel on Lutheran-Muslim Relations is producing Lutheran-Muslim talking points, a free resource to congregations on best practices for engaging these neighbors in faith.

4. Decade to Overcome Violence: Michael Trice is the co-chair of the emerging Peace Table Network, which networks participants (i.e., ecumenical leaders, scholars and activists) hope will emerge into an International Ecumenical Peace Network, beginning at the International Ecumenical Peace Convocation, scheduled to take place in Jamaica in 2011.

Human Resources (HR)

Submitted by Else Thompson

Human Resources, a section of the Office of the Presiding Bishop, includes staffing, compensation and benefits, training and development, employee relations, volunteer coordination and art management.

Human Resources is committed to serving the mission of the churchwide organization by serving its people—those here, those deployed, and those who formerly served. The section accomplishes its goals by working with other units in staffing positions, by meeting needs for training and development, through fair compensation and benefit systems and by promoting positive relationships.

The HR web site can be found at <http://www.elca.org/humanresources>.

Staffing

The churchwide office once again is providing the opportunity for college and seminary students to serve in a variety of internship programs throughout the year.

Nine interns were part of the paid summer internship program in 2010. As participants in this program, students had the opportunity to develop numerous skills that they will find valuable as they prepare for the future as well as learn about the work of the ELCA churchwide office. All the summer internships were Chicago-based and provided learning opportunities for students in the following units: Church in Society, Global Mission, Information Technology, *The Lutheran*, Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Office of the Secretary.

The Vocation and Education unit recently filled another kind of internship position. This two-year term position lets the intern explore the world of ministry with youth and young adults through a variety of activities, including event planning and staffing, communications and marketing, content development and leadership development. The intern works with an experienced program professional in a variety of networks to explore and refine skills through hands-on work and reflection surrounding ministry with youth and young adults. The intern hired in 2010 recently had completed service as an ELCA missionary, serving through the Young Adults in Global Mission program in Malaysia.

Long-term paid internships have been available through the Church in Society unit in the areas of justice for women and in the New York office. Church and Society also has unpaid internships in the studies area and in the Washington D.C. Lutheran Office of Government Affairs. The D.C. interns have worked in the areas of global health and ethics, climate change, food crisis and U.S. policy and in transformative travel and domestic policy research.

Compensation and Benefits

The ELCA Board of Pensions once again offered its two percent challenge to organizations participating in its health plan. In 2010, employees of the churchwide office successfully met the challenge of having at least 65 percent of its people (employees and spouses) covered by the plan complete the health assessment by April 30, 2010. 67.6 percent of those eligible (549 employees and spouses) participated, saving the organization approximately \$131,000.

For the fourth consecutive year, employees were invited to participate in the summer flexible hours benefit. This popular benefit allows employees to work with their supervisors to compress

their normal five-day-a-week work schedule into four or four and half days. Seventy-one employees from 17 units including the Mission Investment Fund and Women of the ELCA took part in the program. By far, the most popular option was to work four 10-hour days and have either Friday or Monday off.

Training and Development

In 2010, churchwide staff is piloting a computer-based training program from Skillsoft—a leading provider of e-learning for employees in all parts of an organization. This Web-based series of over 350 courses offers learning in areas as diverse as leadership, computer skills and life balance. Fifty-one employees have accessed more than 150 courses so far this year. Fourteen employees have taken advantage of limited funding support.

Research and Evaluation (RE)

Submitted by Kenneth Inskeep

The primary responsibility of the staff of Research and Evaluation (RE) is to provide decision-makers in this church with relevant and useful information through high quality empirical research. Over the years a wide variety of research and evaluation projects have been completed. Most of these reports are available electronically under the “Special Collections” area at <http://www.elca.org/library>. Click on the “Search the Library Catalogue” link.

Work in support of the LIFT (Living Into the Future Together)/Ecology Task Force is a primary focus of the work of the unit for the present. Several new reports have been completed that are designed to provide the group with a better understanding of the ecology of this church including the LIFT Questionnaire Report, a summary of the response to the task force of lay and clergy leaders and the Report of the Working Group on Congregations in the ELCA. RE also provided many of the background materials for LIFT’s Mission Funding and Capacity Consultation.

The second major project for RE has been work in support of the churchwide organization’s Design Team.

RE continues its work with the “Stewards of Abundance” project on seminarian student debt. This project, under the direction of Vocation and Education, includes five major research projects. RE has also completed a survey of interim ministry.

The unit has completed needs assessments for Multicultural Ministries with each of the ethnic-specific communities.

RE has completed an extensive evaluation of the 2009 Youth Gathering and the impact of service learning on faith development.

RE is continuing to work with EOCM on a system of electronic monthly reports from the developers of new congregations. The unit is also working on an evaluation of the NCD (Natural Church Development) church renewal strategy. Work to evaluate the process of moving to directors for evangelical mission in each synod is also underway.

The unit has completed an evaluation of synod projects produced by the Blue Ribbon Committee on Funding.

RE is working with Global Mission (GM) to evaluate Glocal Mission Gatherings.

RE continues to devote considerable time to the Integrated Database Project, ELCA Constituent Information System (ECIS).

RE has finalized work with the Office of the Secretary on the 2009 Congregational Report Forms. This includes updating the congregational trend Web program and an updated demographic report on ZIP codes for congregational and synod mission planning.

The staff responds daily to requests from members, congregations, synods and the churchwide staff for information about the members, congregations, synods and rostered leaders.

The staff also responds daily to questions about the demographic context of the church including many custom reports in support of the directors for evangelical mission in Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission.

Synodical Relations (SR)

Submitted by Walter May, Jr.

Welcome

On behalf of Synodical Relations, I want to extend a warm welcome to you. We are glad you are here and grateful for your service. I remain appreciative for the opportunity to be a part of this church with you. Synodical Relations has experienced much transition the past two years and I'm pleased and thankful to be able to work with a wonderful staff that is dedicated and committed to serving and supporting the work of Synodical Relations. We continue to assist bishops and their staff in any way possible, especially as they deal with the realities of shrinking budgets, challenged congregations, and changing policies and procedures. Below are some updates on our work.

Bishops' Academy 2011

The next Conference of Bishops' Academy will be January 5-10, 2011 at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in Tampa Bay, Fla. The theme of the academy is "Authority and Role of Scripture in the Decision Making of the ELCA." The presenters will be Walter Taylor, Ralph Klein and Martha Stortz. The bishops' spouses also will attend this academy.

Bishops' Assistants, Associates and Administrative Gatherings

The gathering for the administrative assistants to the bishops took place at the Lutheran Center August 9-11, 2010. This was the second time for this event, where executive assistants from across the synods gathered to learn, network and share resources and best practices.

The 2011 bishops' assistants and associates gathering will be held at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in Tampa Bay, Fla. on February 17-20, 2011.

Conference of Bishops

The Conference of Bishops met September 30-October 5, at the Lutheran Center. The bishops spent time in worship, prayer and discussion about our shared leadership in mission. The bishops of Region 5 served as chaplains for this meeting.

Regional Coordinators

We gathered with ELCA regional coordinators at the churchwide office on June 14-16 and September 29-October 1, 2010. The regional coordinators have been very supportive about the transitions in Synodical Relations and remain faithful and committed servants of the regions, their bishops and synod staff. The coordinators also have taken on the challenge of new responsibilities with the same dedication and commitment to serve and support the ministry of Synodical Relations, Vocation and Education and their regions. We have completed several regional covenants and are in conversation with the other regions.

Federal Chaplaincy

The Federal Chaplaincy ministries continue to provide support for this church's nearly 200 active duty, guard and reserve military chaplains, and the nearly 130 persons in other federal chaplaincy ministries. Pr. Darrell Morton reports that the need for chaplains continues to increase, but the number of chaplains continues to decrease as pastors considering military

chaplaincy have not kept pace with those retiring. In January 2010, Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary offered a two-week course for discernment of military chaplaincy. Beginning with the 2010 fall term, a Master of Divinity with a military chaplaincy emphasis will be offered.

The military chaplains of the ELCA and the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod have a sixty-year history of cooperative ministry that includes pastoral care for all Lutheran military members and yearly shared hosting of professional development training seminars. There is concern for the future of this cooperative ministry, though Pr. Morton notes that, when polled on this issue, chaplains of both denominations have universally voiced support for continuation of this ministry together. There has been increased cooperation with the Episcopal Church for doing a joint chaplaincy ministry.

Mission Support Consultations

Synodical-Churchwide Mission Support consultations are a key element in providing for a deeper understanding of what we do together as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. These consultations provide information for synod leaders regarding the shared mission support dollars from congregations that prove for synodical and churchwide ministries.

In 2010 mission support consultations were held with 24 Synod Councils. Pr. Craig Settlage, director for mission support, was the churchwide representative for a majority of these consultations. Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson has requested consultations with leaders of the 65 synods to be held regionally this fall. These consultations, already underway, are intended to provide for candid conversation on the impact of the significant financial challenges facing the synod and churchwide organization.

Another function of Synodical Relations is to provide for a synod ministry review or synod scan. These reviews, done at the request of the synod, provide the synod bishop and Synod Council with information regarding the synod to assist the synod in planning for the future. Synod reviews were completed in 2010 for the Alaska and Caribbean Synods.

Synodical Vice Presidents' Gathering

Synodical vice presidents gathered from October 1-3, 2010 to welcome new vice presidents and to learn from each other. A more detailed reflection on this gathering will be in my next report.

Synod Assembly Participation

In collaboration with Presiding Bishop Hanson, the Synodical Relations staff have begun preparing for the 2011 synod assemblies. Together we will assign a churchwide representative to each assembly and will prepare these leaders for their time there. The assemblies begin in April and run through early July.

The Office of the Secretary and Synodical Relations have created materials to assist these synods that will be holding bishops elections. In addition to printed materials, Secretary David Swartling and I will have phone conversations with leaders from the synods that will be holding bishop elections. In these conversations we will discuss processes that are unique to each synod, answer questions from leaders and gain helpful information to benefit the person who will preside at the election.

Worship and Liturgical Resources (WP)

Submitted by Robert G. Schaefer

Partners in Evangelical Worship

After nearly a year of preparation and planning, nearly 120 Partners in Evangelical Worship (PEWs), nominated by bishops and representing 60 of the 65 synods, received two-and-one-half days of training June 22-24, 2010, at Christ the King Lutheran Church in Houston, Texas. A significant body of resources was prepared or compiled for the use of the partners in their work. This new worship network exists to assist synods and congregations in thinking about ways we will be an evangelizing church centered in the means of grace. In addition to the two volunteer partners from each synod, there were ten additional partners from culture-specific communities, nearly half the synodical directors of evangelical mission, and eight MIF church building consultants present—over 180 in all—who were trained to build or supplement existing worship resource teams. A social networking group has been set up on the Internet for ongoing communication with and among partners.

In addition to all worship (WP) staff, the executive directors of Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission (EOCM), Multicultural Ministries (MM) and several other churchwide staff participated in the event. Leadership from the wider church included Thomas Schattauer (professor of liturgics, Wartburg Seminary), and the Craig Satterlee (professor of homiletics, Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago).

Cooperative Endeavors

Over the past months, members of the worship staff have been engaged actively in working cooperatively with other churchwide units and sections on a number of projects related to the church's worship. Some of the more significant commitments of time and energy have been spent on:

- Serving on the international planning team for worship at the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) Eleventh Assembly, held in Stuttgart, Germany in July 2010.
- Creating and providing leadership for worship workshops centered in worship and culture at ELCA glocal mission events.
- Providing advice and guidance to those bishops and synods in which the “Rite of Reception with Laying on of Hands” is being used for candidates being received from Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries (ELM), whose earlier ordinations were not recognized by this church.
- In addition to writing a regular worship section in *Seeds for the Parish*, preparing additional material for an Advent edition with a particular focus on worship.
- Continuing partnership with the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission program unit on the multiunit Faith Practices Team.
- Leading a conversation regarding spiritual life and the Lutheran Center chapel in the churchwide organization with implications for the time and centrality of the weekly gathering around Word and sacrament at the Lutheran Center.

New and Renewed Baptismal Living: The Catechumenate

Significant work continues on the baptismal formation process known from ancient times as the catechumenate. WP has been leading a focused study of the catechumenate as a model—both ancient and future—for welcoming people to baptism and forming disciples. A resource development team has been named consisting of WP staff, Augsburg Fortress worship and music staff (WM) and practitioners, missional leaders and theologians from around this church. This team will meet in early December 2010 to consider the production of specific resources for congregational use, liturgical rites for possible review by the Conference of Bishops and

commendation by the Church Council, a timeline for moving this process forward and the next steps for deepening conversation and participation throughout this church.

Upcoming Responsibilities

Preparing and carrying out worship at several upcoming events will occupy a significant amount of the section's time, as daily liturgies for the ELCA and ELCIC Bishops' Academy in January 2011 and for the national gathering of Bishop's Assistants in February 2010 are in preparation. A lectionary and framing thoughts for worship at the 2011 Churchwide Assembly in Orlando, Florida, has been completed. The work of identifying presiding ministers and preachers as well as the detailed planning of each of the five daily liturgies of Holy Communion has now begun.

Joint Work with Augsburg Fortress, Publishers

The WP section continues in regular collaboration and a close working partnership with Augsburg Fortress, Publishers (AF). The resource management team, consisting of WP staff and WM staff from Augsburg Fortress, met on October 21, 2010, for review, evaluation, conversation and future planning.

Work continues on issuing *Evangelical Lutheran Worship (ELW)* as a Braille resource. This is a cooperative effort of AF and WP. A contract has been signed to convert text files (RTF format) of 650 hymns from *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* into electronic Braille files (BRF format). The first third of these hymns in BRF format is due to AF October 1, 2010. These Braille hymn files will be posted on the SundaysAndSeasons.com website for downloading as they are completed, beginning in November 2010. In addition, over the next year, large-print files (RTF format) will be added for the hymns in *ELW*. The next step in the process is the conversion of liturgical texts to BRF and large-print format. Extensive portions of *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* already are available in audio form, including all ten settings of the liturgy.

Resources produced collaboratively with Augsburg Fortress for 2010 release:

- *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* Liturgies Audio Edition, vol. 3
- *Hymnal Companion to Evangelical Lutheran Worship*
- *Worship Guidebook for Lent and the Three Days*
- *Music Sourcebook for Lent and the Three Days*
- Sundays and Seasons—2011 resource family (*Sundays and Seasons, Worship Planning Calendar, Church Year Calendar, Calendar of Word and Season, Words for Worship, Bread for the Day, New Proclamation*)
- Subscription Bulletins and Lectionary Inserts
- SundaysAndSeasons.com—addition of new worship planning content
- NewProclamation.com—lectionary helps for preachers
- *Washed and Welcome* Baptism Preparation and Formation Resources
 - *Washed and Welcome: A Baptism Sourcebook*
 - *Living the Promises of Baptism: 101 Ideas for Parents*
 - *Certificate for Sponsors*
- *Psalm Settings for the Church Year* Choral CD-ROM
- *Choral Stanzas for Hymns*—Evangelical Lutheran Worship hymns
- *Hymns for Ensembles*—Evangelical Lutheran Worship hymns
- *Hymn Accompaniments for Handbells*—Evangelical Lutheran Worship hymns

Resources produced collaboratively with Augsburg Fortress scheduled for 2011 release:

- *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* Braille and Large Print resources
- *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* Simplified Accompaniment Edition—Liturgies
- *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* Compact Accompaniment Edition—Service Music & Hymns
- *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* Holy Communion in Spanish and English (bilingual)
- *Festival Setting*—Evangelical Lutheran Worship Holy Communion Setting 9
- Sundays and Seasons—2012 resource family (*Sundays and Seasons, Worship Planning Calendar, Church Year Calendar, Calendar of Word and Season, Words for Worship, Bread for the Day, New Proclamation*)
- Subscription Bulletins and Lectionary Inserts
- SundaysAndSeasons.com—expanded music and worship planning content
- NewProclamation.com—lectionary helps for preachers
- *Washed and Welcome* Baptism Preparation and Formation Resources
 - *Welcome, Child of God* board book
 - Catechumenal resources to be determined
- (with Taosheng Publishing House, Hong Kong) *Hymns of Praise Supplement* (Chinese/English)

Ongoing Tasks

In addition to the ongoing work of the WP section, such as oversight of the Lutheran Center chapel, WP has provided consultation and liturgical review of worship services sponsored by the churchwide organization, including the installation of two new synod bishops this fall, and has produced and posted prayers and resources for specific events or occasions on the Web page. Other specific projects currently under development by WP staff include the oversight of a new online congregational devotional guide for meetings and gatherings, and a complete redesign of our webpage in 2011 with regard to Frequently Asked Questions about worship, including a new format for presenting information.

ELCA Malaria Campaign

The Church Council action on October 8, 2010, provided a pivotal moment for the malaria-related fundraising efforts of this church. By that action, the council established the ELCA Malaria Campaign, replacing the previous engagement with the Lutheran Malaria Initiative. The transition from the former logo and partnerships to the new campaign has been underway in these intervening weeks. The ELCA commitment to alleviating the suffering caused by malaria in Africa, including staff and dedicated resources, is represented in the new ELCA Malaria Campaign.

The ELCA will continue through this campaign to raise awareness and funds for malaria prevention and treatment through its companions in Africa, focusing on an anticipated goal of \$15 million. The campaign will continue to encourage prayer, advocacy, education and fundraising toward containing deaths related to malaria by 2015.

Throughout 2010 and 2011, ten pilot synods will engage the campaign for 12 months each and will test materials and strategies before a proposal for the ELCA Malaria Campaign is brought to the 2011 Churchwide Assembly. They also will continue with their current fundraising and awareness-raising goals and make use of campaign structures and networking plans developed by ELCA churchwide staff. The 2010 pilot synods are: East Central Synod of Wisconsin; Minneapolis Area Synod; Northwest Synod of Wisconsin; Southern Ohio Synod; and Southwest California Synod. The 2011 pilot synods are: Indiana-Kentucky Synod; Northeastern Ohio Synod; Pacifica Synod; Rocky Mountain Synod; and Southwestern Texas Synod.

Current plans for the ELCA Malaria Campaign provide for ELCA engagement with companion churches in Angola, the Central African Republic, Ethiopia, Liberia, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe over the life of the campaign. The first focus of intensive malaria engagement has been with churches within the Lutheran Communion in Southern Africa. Following action by the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly, planning for malaria partnerships has been, and continues to be, expanded to other companion churches in West and East Africa.

At its April 2011 meeting, the ELCA Church Council will consider an action to recommend authorization of the ELCA Malaria Campaign by the 2011 Churchwide Assembly. The action will address the fundraising goal, time frame and other details essential to the successful completion of the campaign.

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HIV and AIDS Report

Implementation of the ELCA HIV and AIDS strategy continues to unfold in 2010. The following reflects some of that work. The HIV and AIDS website, www.elca.org/aids, was redesigned. A one-minute HIV testing PSA featuring St. Paul Lutheran Church in Wheaton, Ill., an HIV and AIDS strategy video and an HIV and AIDS action kit for congregations were completed. In addition, a series of meetings with selected bishops across the U.S. to explore possible methods of support and engagement with the strategy going forward were held. Staff held conversations with the following synods: Southeastern Synod; Metropolitan Washington D.C. Synod; Northwest Washington Synod; Metro Chicago Synod; Greater Milwaukee Synod; and Southeast Michigan Synod. Four youth and three staff attended the International AIDS Conference in Vienna, Austria. A contract staff person has been hired in the Washington, D.C., office to focus on HIV-related legislation for FY 2010 (approximately six months, beginning August 2010). Fundraising efforts through direct mail, major donor visits and online giving opportunities have taken place.

As for marketing and communication, the following are available: strategy banners for loan to events and sites; a one-page overview of the strategy for download or order; and Spanish versions of the strategy and other resources.

Staff also have been engaged as presenters and in leadership roles at a variety of events throughout the year. They also have engaged ecumenical partners by creating the Ecumenical HIV and AIDS Table, which brings HIV and AIDS-related staff from full communion churches and several other groups around a common table for networking and resourcing opportunities.

Challenges going forward include ongoing education and awareness-raising efforts across the church; fundraising in the current economic climate; grounding the domestic side of the strategy in significant ways in the U.S.; sustaining and growing the international side of the strategy through working with companion churches; and building a platform of information and resources to support these efforts.

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Report of the Vice President

The word (Christ) was full of grace and truth. From Him we all received more and more blessings. John 1: 16

From the fullness of His grace, we have all received one blessing after another. I once had an older friend whose favorite saying was, “Well, honey, count your blessings.” No matter what happened—full blown catastrophe or a minor glitch—her response was the same: “Well, honey, count your blessings.” It was so nice having her around. She made everyone stop and put life in perspective, taking the bluster out of any problem. When she passed away, I found that, of all her gifts I missed, her ministry of “count your blessings” is the one I miss most.

Why is it that we, who are so blessed with the gifts of God’s earth and sea and all that is in it, have a hard time remembering our blessings?

I begin my report by counting some of my blessings. Two years after the destruction of Hurricane Ike, my hometown is shaping up, in some ways better than it was. My business is thriving and we have had our best year ever. Progress is made every day in Galveston.

On July 27, God blessed Diane and me with one of our greatest gifts—Bryson Edward Peña. Our son and daughter-in-law made us first-time grandparents to the most wonderful baby that ever lived. Everyone is doing great. Thank you, Lord!

My family is a constant source of blessings for me. Of course there are the trials and tribulations of raising a family. All is not calm, peaceful and smooth sailing in any family. No one lives the ideal family life of a 1950’s sitcom, but as the verse from Proverbs tells us, “Children’s children are a crown to the aged, and parents are the pride of their children.” They really do make life worthwhile. We looked forward with great anticipation to October 19, when young Bryson was baptized into God’s family at his home church, Rejoice Lutheran, in Coppell, Texas. Praise be to God!

Our daughter, Stephanie, just received her senior ring from Texas A&M University and is set to graduate in May 2011. God has blessed her with a desire to help children with learning, physical and/or emotional disorders.

Diane and I continue to work together in our business. Believe it or not, I think we both count that as a blessing. Well, at least I do. And our 32 years of marriage is certainly one of God’s blessings for us both.

Sometimes blessings are so huge they spill out over the people around us. I count the opportunity to serve God as the vice president of the ELCA as one of those. This experience is a blessing to my family and me so many ways: the knowledge it has brought, the deepening of my faith, the chance to meet so many remarkable people and the list goes on.

These past five months have been fairly busy. I was fortunate to attend six synod assemblies this past year: Southeastern Minnesota, the joint assembly for Southeast Michigan and North/West Lower Michigan, La Crosse Area, Upstate New York and the Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast.

In June, I also visited and participated as lector at the closing worship service at the Partners in Evangelical Worship training at Christ the King Lutheran Church in Houston, Tex. This event drew about 200 leaders from across the church who gathered to share their experiences and hopes for worship.

In July I attended the Lutheran Church –Missouri Synod Convention, also held in Houston. Among other business, the LCMS approved a restructuring plan and also elected a new slate of officers.

The August 4 Church Council meeting was via teleconference, a first for me chairing a telephone conference call with over 50 participants. The meeting was held to discuss finances, personnel and an organizational design process. Though it was challenging at times, I believe the meeting went well and necessary business was completed without the difficult logistics a face-to-face meeting would have entailed.

I also attended the Mission Capacity and Funding Consultation held August 5-6 in Chicago. This event gathered leaders from across our church, together with representatives from our ecumenical partners to hear their important perspectives as interdependent partners in our ELCA ecology. This event also helped to reinforce my own perspective and appreciation for all the relationships we share with our many colleagues in ministry for the sake of the mission to which God calls us.

In its August meeting, the Church Council appointed an Ad Hoc Committee to respond to synodical resolutions related to the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund and the Special Needs Retirement Fund. I was asked to serve as the convener. This committee is comprised of Church Council members David Anderson, Mark Helmke and Ann Niedringhaus, liaison bishops Callon Holloway and Martin Wells, and as advisory members, Board of Pensions chair Lois O'Rourke, ELCA treasurer Christina Jackson-Skelton, ELCA Secretary David Swartling, Board of Pensions staff liaison Robert Berg and Executive Assistant to the Secretary Ruth Hamilton. This committee is operating under a tight timeline as it expects to present a full report and possible recommendations to the November 2010 meeting of the ELCA Church Council. We have met numerous times by teleconference calls and are working diligently on this very complex matter to meet our deadline.

I returned to Chicago the first week in October for the Conference of Bishops. Fortunately, this conference coincided with the gathering of the ELCA's synodical vice presidents and seminary presidents. I appreciated the opportunity to hear about the successes and challenges in their everyday vocations. While listening, I couldn't help but think how blessed we are to have such a diverse and devoted group of folks working for the good of our church.

We are in uncertain times. Though the church is hard at work in every expression, adversarial conditions can be found everywhere. The country is experiencing economic challenges not seen since World War II. Add that to the unrest of changes in society and church, and we have a sharp decline in mission support, which brings about reduced funds for the ministry of the church. We are looking at restructuring proposals in the churchwide expression that have resulted in difficult cuts in staff and grants. If we concentrate only on the hardships and difficulties that tend to demand our attention, we can feel that the world is a bleak place indeed.

However, the demands that are put on us need not cloud the picture of what God *has* granted us. Health, family, the beauties of the earth.... As I view the ELCA Web site, I also read about our church throughout the world. I read about ELCA missionaries training African surgeons to provide healthcare to millions of people in a country who have no access to simple life saving treatments. I also read about Lutheran Disaster Response, which is not only providing assistance in my own hometown of Galveston after Hurricane Ike two years ago, but also is providing aid to Wisconsin residents who were recently flooded out of their homes. One of the ELCA's 26 colleges and universities, Wagner College, recently received an award for Civic Engagement. Our institutions of higher learning are training our leaders for tomorrow. There are so many more examples—just go to the ELCA Web site and look. We *are* blessed in so many wonderful ways.

My dear friend had plenty of adversity in her life. She was the one to take care of an aging father in New Orleans and a sick and aging housekeeper that had been in her family for many

years. These two heavily depended on her, as they had no one else. She also had a husband, children and grandchildren depending on her in many other ways. She was an active volunteer in many organizations, an active member of her church and worked full time. She fed the hungry and clothed the poor.

And yet she never *ever* complained. She counted her blessings instead and was a cheerful soldier in the Kingdom.

So, when Alice Stone said, "Well, honey! Count your blessings!" you knew you could.

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Report of the Secretary

The year 2010 has been challenging from many perspectives. Like the ELCA as a whole, the Office of the Secretary has worked hard to continue to meet its primary responsibilities of providing assistance to synods, bishops, congregations and the churchwide organization amid the many difficulties created by the economy, the aftermath of the Churchwide Assembly, re-structuring and related issues. At the same time, the Office of the Secretary continues to focus on working collaboratively to position this church to focus on mission and ministry prospectively and to develop systems and protocols to assist synods and congregations in their important work.

This meeting will address a number of profound issues relating to configuring this church for future mission and ministry and looking ahead to the challenges of 2011. In order to provide the context for those discussions, let me initially review the results of the 2009 congregational reports and data regarding congregations leaving the ELCA. Thereafter, I will address other activities and plans for the Office of the Secretary, particularly those that will require amendment to governing documents or action by the Church Council.

A. Congregational Reports

In 2009, there was a significant change in the congregational (parochial) report forms. An internal task force at the churchwide office, informed by synodical and congregational consultation, began working on amendments in 2008, but a revised form was not ready to go until last year. (The revised Form A was introduced at the fall Conference of Bishops meeting in 2009.) With substantial assistance from the Research and Evaluation section and others, a new form was distributed for reporting in 2009. It had a number of important differences from its predecessors. First, it sought to simplify the financial reporting to make completing the form easier and less time-consuming. Second, it focused not on counting voting members but asked about people participating in a congregation's ministry, a change that had been requested by both synods and congregations.

Not surprisingly, difficulties in completing the forms were encountered, and the difference in the form resulted in a slight drop in response rates. (Of course, other reasons also contributed to that decline.) With the continued support of synodical and congregational leaders, we hope that the response rate will rebound and that our ability to mine and disseminate more useful information will validate the decision to change the form.

A summary of the 2009 congregational statistics is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

Before turning to the data itself, let me emphasize the opportunity for synods and congregations to obtain useful information for study and evaluation from the congregational reports. The Research and Evaluation section has the capacity to provide many types of analysis of the data obtained in parochial reports. Although some synods routinely request such data, most synods do not. Appendix 2 is a sample of a report tracking congregational information over time. Such a report would be invaluable to a congregation working on a profile in anticipation of a call process or engaged in strategic planning. (Conversely, a congregation that does not routinely provide parochial reports can appear embarrassingly unprepared for calling a new pastor or engaging in strategic planning if its most recent data is five years old!) The Research and Evaluation section invites synodical requests to prepare analyses based upon the particular needs of the synod.

1. *Reporting*

The response rate for the 2009 parochial reports was 75.0 percent. Here are the response rates for the previous nine years:

- 2008 – 79.5 percent
- 2007 – 81.9 percent
- 2006 – 81.1 percent
- 2005 – 81.1 percent
- 2004 – 81.4 percent
- 2003 – 81.6 percent
- 2002 – 87.5 percent
- 2001 – 85.3 percent
- 2000 – 86.0 percent

The drop in 2009 represents 553 fewer congregations reporting than in 2008.

Synod response rates vary substantially. Kudos to the following synods for achieving 100 percent responses: Alaska; Northern Great Lakes; Greater Milwaukee. Honorable mentions go to the following synods with more than 90 percent of congregations responding: Oregon; Southeastern Minnesota; La Crosse Area; New Jersey; Lower Susquehanna; South Carolina. Our goal is to again achieve an 85 percent response rate from congregations.

2. *Results*

The 2009 data reflect a continued decrease in the number of congregations and membership. Giving also dropped for the first time in many years, although congregational wealth remains high.

a. Membership

In 2009, the number of congregations dropped to 10,348, a loss of 48. (This includes only a few congregations that terminated their relationship with the ELCA as the result of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly action; a separate discussion of those congregational losses is in paragraph B below.) Baptized membership was reported as 4,542,868, down 91,019 or 1.96 percent. Since 2002, the ELCA has lost 9.8 percent of its baptized membership. (Baptized membership in 1988 was 5,251,534.) Average worship attendance dropped to 1,289,953, a loss of 40,756 or 3.1 percent from the previous year. The average worship attendance has dipped to 28 percent of baptized ELCA Lutherans.

For the past seven years, baptized membership has shown a steady decline. Since 2002 baptized membership has declined by more than 50,000 each year. Here are the losses per year since that time.

- 2002: -57,191
- 2003: -53,082
- 2004: -54,495
- 2005: -79,653
- 2006: -76,573
- 2007: -64,247
- 2008: -76,069
- 2009: -91,019

The decline in average worship attendance was even faster. Here are yearly decreases since 2002.

2002:	-36,120
2003:	-33,617
2004:	-28,659
2005:	-35,020
2006:	-31,065
2007:	-46,562
2008:	-31,411
2009:	-40,756

The average worship attendance per congregation in 2009 dropped to 125; in 2005, it was 137.

Racial/ethnic participation changed modestly from previous years in 2009, although it is difficult to draw definitive conclusions because of the change in questions from baptized membership to participation. However, the number of congregations reporting some participation by ethnic groups continues to grow slightly. The reported participation rates are as follows: 35.38 percent African American/Black; 32.40 percent Latino/Hispanic; 32.04 percent Asian/Pacific Islander; 26.79 percent multiethnic; 11.22 percent American Indian/Alaska Native People; 6.19 percent Arab/Middle Eastern.

b. Financial

The effects of the recession were reflected in congregational financial data, although perhaps not as much as might be expected. Total receipts by ELCA congregations were reported as \$2.66 billion in 2009, down 2.94 percent from 2008. (This was approximately the same level of total receipts as in 2006.) Regular unrestricted giving by members dropped only 0.45 percent from 2008, to \$1.93 billion. Average giving per confirmed member dropped slightly, -0.27 percent to \$648.45, almost the same level as in 1997 and higher than in 2006, if the amount is not adjusted for inflation.

Current operating expenses were reported as \$1.92 billion, a 0.38 percent decrease from 2008. However, current operating expenses as a percentage of the total congregational disbursements continues to climb; it now amounts to 70.64 percent of total disbursements. Total congregational indebtedness also climbed in 2009; it now approaches \$2 billion.

Reported mission support declined by 7.27 percent to \$121.9 million. (The highest year for mission support was in 2007, when \$132.9 million was reported; in 2008, mission support declined by 1.05 percent.)

Surprisingly, reported congregational assets showed increases over 2008. Funds held by congregations in endowments and memorial funds totaled \$1.16 billion in 2009, an increase of 6.13 percent from 2008. (This compares with a high of \$1.25 billion in 2007.) Cash and savings increased by 3.09 percent to \$897 million, almost the same amount as in 2007. The reported value of real property continued to increase to \$18.43 billion, a 0.36 percent over 2008. Taken together, these data reflect that the ELCA remains a church with substantial capacity for mission and ministry.

Attached as Appendix 3 is a summary of responses to Form C, which is essentially a questionnaire to congregations that is prepared each year with input from units of the churchwide organization and others. It is intended to provide data for planning and evaluation of programs and emphases within this church. The reported data from 7,407 congregations are

interesting for many reasons. One result is surprising and disappointing: only 40 percent of responding congregations reported that they participated in the Book of Faith Initiative.

B. Congregations Voting to Leave the ELCA

ELCA constitutional provisions 9.62. and 9.71. govern the process for congregations to terminate their relationship with the ELCA and for disposition of the property. As you know, this process has been the subject of considerable discussion among bishops, other leaders in synods, the churchwide organization and congregations. After providing information regarding the congregations taking votes, I will provide a summary of possible changes to the governing documents based upon your input.

1. Summary of Congregational Votes to Terminate Relationship with the ELCA

As of October 1, 2010, 576 first votes by congregations had been taken to terminate their relationship with the ELCA. (544 congregations took first votes, and some congregations have taken more than one first vote.) Of these 576 first votes, 395 first votes passed, and 181 failed to receive the requisite two-thirds of voting members present. Subsequently, 274 congregations have taken a second vote (one has taken a second vote twice); 258 of these second votes passed and 16 failed. (I hope to provide you updated information during my oral report at the meeting.)

Of congregations taking first votes, the percentage that has failed has been remarkably steady, somewhat more than 30 percent.

The distribution of congregations taking votes to leave varies dramatically from synod to synod. As of September, the highest number of congregational votes in a synod has been in the Northwestern Minnesota Synod with 32 congregations taking votes. The Montana, South Dakota, and Southwestern Texas synods have had more than twenty congregational first votes. Seven synods (Greater Milwaukee, New Jersey, Slovak-Zion, Northeastern Pennsylvania, Northwestern Pennsylvania, Metropolitan Washington, D.C., and Caribbean) have not reported any congregations voting to terminate their relationship with the ELCA. The largest number of congregations departing in a synod is Montana, with 17 second termination votes as of September 2.

We can ascertain the destination of most but not all of the congregations that depart the ELCA. Based on information provided to us by departing congregations and a review of the Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ (LCMC) Web site, we estimate that approximately 72 percent of congregations that have taken two votes and terminated their relationship with the ELCA have joined LCMC.

The Office of the Secretary will continue to provide you updates of congregational votes on a monthly basis.

2. The Process for Terminating a Congregation's Relationship with the ELCA

As indicated above, ELCA constitutional provisions 9.62. and 9.71. address the process for termination of a congregation's relationship with the ELCA and the disposition of its property. (The former provision describes the process itself, and the latter addresses property issues.) Synodical bishops have done a superb job in explaining the process to congregations and in following the required steps to maximize the opportunity for congregations to go through a meaningful discernment process.

In conferring with bishops and addressing questions that have been directed to the Office of the Secretary, a number of possible improvements to the process have been identified. These include:

- Notice in advance of a congregation's intent to take a first vote and the content of the proposed action.
- Opportunity for synodical consultation before the first vote.
- Opportunity for a representative of the synod (bishop or designee) to attend and have voice at the first special meeting.

- Requirement for attestation that the initial meeting was properly called and held and for a report of the vote count.
- Clarification regarding the nature and scope of the synod consultation.
- Clarification regarding the timing of the period of consultation (i.e., when the clock begins to run).
- Requirement that notice of the second meeting be mailed to the bishop as well as congregational members.
- Provision for the bishop or designee to have voice at the second special meeting.
- Clarification regarding the timing of the vote on the church body that the congregation will affiliate with if it terminates its relationship with the ELCA.
- Provision of a time limit for notifying the synod and the secretary of the result of the second vote.
- Clarification that the effective date of termination depends on what provisions in 9.62. and 9.71. apply.
- Requirement that contractual obligations, particularly outstanding loans to ELCA entities, be met as a prerequisite to termination.

We anticipate that the proposed amendments to the governing documents that you will consider will include amendments of 9.62 to address some of these issues.

C. Governing Document Amendments

In the summer and fall of the year preceding a Churchwide Assembly, the Office of the Secretary undertakes the process of reviewing the governing documents of this church to recommend possible amendments, based partly on suggestions received from various sources over the previous two years. (The possible revisions to 9.62. discussed above result from that process.) The review process this year has been and will be impacted by the work of the LIFT task force and proposed restructuring by the churchwide organization Design Team. The net result is that many more than the usual number of amendments will be proposed this year. (Continuing resolution amendments likely will be proposed to and acted upon by the Church Council at its November or April meetings; bylaw and constitutional amendments, as well as proposed amendments to the *Constitution for Synods* and the *Model Constitution for Congregations* will be reviewed by the Church Council and submitted for approval to the 2011 Churchwide Assembly.)

The proposed amendments to governing documents fall broadly into three categories.

1. LIFT Planning Team proposals relating to governance

Since its creation by the Church Council in the spring of 2009, the Living into the Future Together: Renewing the Ecology of the ELCA Task Force (LIFT) has sought to discern what God is calling the ELCA to be and do in the future. As the LIFT charter states: “The intended result of the Ecology Study Task Force’s work is a report on recommendations that will position this church for the future and explore new possibilities for participating in God’s mission.” In organizing itself to address these issues, the Task Force created work groups to examine specific issues and to make recommendations. One of the work groups examined the governing documents of this church and is preparing recommendations regarding governance and structure issues.

Although work on governance and structure remains to be accomplished, the work group agreed on a number of recommendations. Ideally, these recommendations would have been incorporated into the final LIFT report, but two realities militated for a different approach with respect to them. First, the timetable for bringing amendments to governing documents requires that proposed constitutional amendments must be vetted and reviewed so that the Church Council can approve them at its November meeting prior to the assembly. (This is necessary so that the requirement of six months’ advance notice can be provided to Churchwide Assembly voting

members in accordance with constitutional provision 22.11.a.) Second, the exigencies created by declining mission support necessitate an accelerated consideration of at least one of the recommendations (i.e., the one proposing a triennial Churchwide Assembly) and argue for discussing other governance issues in the context of re-structuring of the churchwide organization.

In these circumstances, the work group on governance and structure presented its recommendations to the LIFT Planning Team. Given the realities of the timetable for their consideration and the potential for the restructuring of the churchwide organization, the LIFT planning team reviewed the recommendations, made editorial suggestions and approved four memoranda for submission to the Executive Committee of the Church Council for vetting and review in anticipation of the November Church Council meeting. While LIFT will continue to look at issues of structure and governance, and perhaps to provide additional input, the following recommendations are “on the table” for review and comments:

- a. Churchwide Assembly
 - triennial cycle
 - reduction of number of advisory members
 - increased use of technology
- b. Church Council
 - adjustment of size from fixed number (37) to a range (36-45)
 - nomination and election of one-third of members through “at large” process
 - reduction of advisory members
- c. Conference of Bishops
 - provision for chair to be a voting member of the Church Council
 - development of a mutual referral process to and from the Church Council
- d. Program unit committees
 - elimination of program unit committees
 - allocation of responsibilities to Church Council committee(s)

Each of these proposals has been disseminated widely and discussed with the Conference of Bishops. As part of the report on the amendments to the governing documents, feedback on the proposals will be provided to you. Other ideas may be submitted to the LIFT task force, and it is anticipated that there will be additional recommendations on governance and structure.

2. Design Team proposals for restructuring the churchwide organization

As you know, the Design Team has made proposals for restructuring the churchwide organization based upon missional priorities and funding realities. The superstructure of the new design was presented to and acted upon by the Church Council in its special meeting on October 8. Substantial work remains in translating the Design Team’s concept amendments of the governing documents of this church. Much of the structural work for the Church Council at this meeting will involve proposed constitutional amendments and bylaws related to the work of the Design Team.

3. Other Proposals for Governing Document Amendments

In addition to possible amendments relating to the LIFT Planning Team proposals on governance and recommendations on re-structuring, the Office of the Secretary anticipates that

numerous other amendments will be proposed to the Churchwide Assembly. Here is a partial list of anticipated amendments:

- Clarification of the term “this church” in all governing documents.
- Deletion of “special interest conferences” in 8.41.
- Provision for ecumenical availability of rostered laypersons.
- Authorization for a full communion partner to have voice and vote on a board or council of a synod, the churchwide organization or a separately incorporated unit.
- Authorization for remote (electronic) meetings by Synod Councils and the Church Council.
- Clarification of the process upon death or resignation of a synodical bishop.
- Addition of bylaws and policies under 8.74. regarding criteria and practices for local altar and pulpit fellowship.
- Authorization for a single nominee to be made by a board or the Nominating Committee.
- Provision for a range of members on the Board of Pensions instead of a fixed number.
- Revision of the process for member discipline.

Appendix 4 is a preliminary index of proposed amendments that will be under consideration at this meeting. (Pray for the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee because they have a lot of work on their plate!)

If you have suggestions or proposals for other governing document amendments, please let me know.

D. Roster Manual Revisions

In addition to amendments to the governing documents, the Manual of Policies and Procedures for Management of the Rosters of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has been revised and reviewed by the Conference of Bishops. Pr. Ruth Hamilton has done a superb job in developing possible amendments and working with the Conference of Bishops’ Roster Committee to bring them to the Church Council for action. Here is a list of important issues addressed by proposed amendments:

- Process for terminating the call of a rostered lay person.
- Clarification of the significance of resignation.
- Clarification of disability processes.
- Revisions to form letters.
- Policy on ecumenical availability of lay rostered leaders.
- Policy on local practice of altar and pulpit fellowship.
- Guidelines related to on-leave-from-call status.

E. Churchwide Assembly Preparation

As the calendar turns, the pace of preparation for the Churchwide Assembly accelerates. The planning team, coordinated by Myrna Sheie in the Office of the Presiding Bishop, already has begun to meet. A number of issues warrant brief mention.

The fully electronic process for obtaining information regarding voting members worked almost seamlessly. We currently have the desired information from more than 99 percent of the 1005 voting members of the 2011 Churchwide Assembly. Please thank those in your synod who facilitated the process of transmitting the voting member list to us. Analysis of the preliminary list of voting members yields some important results. The following percentages represent the most ever in the history of a Churchwide Assembly:

- 36 percent of ordained minister voting members are women!
- 13 percent of voting members are persons of color or persons whose primary language is other than English!

- 13 percent of voting members are under the age of 30!

We anticipate that we will begin to communicate electronically with voting members some time this fall.

In conjunction with IT and the Office of the Presiding Bishop, the Office of the Secretary is continuing to work on the pilot project to have some synods “go paperless” in 2011. Although much work remains to be accomplished, work on the Net Community Web Site and review of possible hardware are taking place. We also are cognizant of the need to build in adequate time for orientation and training for those who will be using only computers, not the printed *Pre-Assembly Report*. Stay tuned!

As in past years, the Office of the Secretary is working on revisions to the Rules of Organization and Procedure for the Churchwide Assembly. They will be submitted in draft form to the Church Council in November. Based upon input from the 2009 Churchwide Assembly, as well suggestions from the Communal Discernment Task Force and others, there are a number of proposed revisions under consideration. These include the following:

- Speeches must be limited to two minutes (not three).
- Points of personal privilege must be submitted in writing to the Secretary and may not be made from the floor.
- Moving all previous questions will be prohibited.
- Personal computers and electronic devices will be allowed from the plenary hall, but they must be in silent mode and not used in a manner to disturb others. Speaking on telephones or other devices will be prohibited.

If you have other suggestions for rule amendments, please let me know.

I remain concerned about eliciting nominations of highly qualified and motivated people for churchwide positions. We are working on a revision to the nomination form, and the nominations database is being combined into the integrated database for the churchwide organization. In addition, restructuring will impact positions for nominations. As a result of these factors, the nominations workbook will not be available by the time of the Church Council meeting, but I anticipate that it will be distributed to you and other leaders in the near future. Please continue to be alert for talented and committed people for nomination to churchwide positions. Send their names to the Office of the Secretary, and we will contact them for more information. My priority remains to “raise up and support faithful, wise, and courageous leaders” in all expressions of the ELCA.

Finally, I want to reiterate a recurring theme regarding assemblies. Given the amount of work required at both the synodical and churchwide levels in processing memorials and resolutions, it is important to have strong Reference and Counsel committees and encourage them to work proactively to refine and edit proposed actions for the churchwide organization. I appreciated the expanded cooperation between the Office of the Secretary and synods in crafting memorials and resolutions in 2009. Our goal remains to have Synod Assemblies consider important issues in legal and carefully crafted proposed actions! Also, please be aware that the Office of the Secretary is working on revisions to the Guidelines for Synodical Secretaries and the memorandum on memorials and resolutions. Anticipated changes include not accepting resolutions or memorials with footnotes, discouraging and/or limiting “whereas” clauses, and requiring some sense of the prioritization of the memorials/resolutions. Your participation in Synod Assemblies is appreciated!

F. Calls Issued by the Church Council

At the meeting, I will provide you a list of calls issued by the Church Council in 2010 in Exhibit A, Part 3, Appendix 5.

G. Other Work in Progress

As you know, the Office of the Secretary has wide-ranging responsibilities, including roster maintenance, minutes and record keeping, constitutional, policy, and legal oversight, meeting planning, Yearbook preparation and archives management. I continue to learn more about these areas and the ways that the Office of the Secretary provides important services to you, your synods, congregations and individuals.

In addition to ongoing responsibilities, there are a number of important projects that are underway that I want to describe for you.

1. Education for Synod Secretaries

Technology affords the opportunity for improved communications, and we are working proactively to facilitate better communications with synods in a variety of ways. In 2010, the Office of the Secretary and the Synodical Relations section held several telephone conferences with bishops to exchange ideas and information, and each year the Synodical Relations section and the Office of the Secretary work collaboratively with synods in which bishop elections will be held. We also actively use the listserv for bishops and the listserv for vice presidents to communicate information.

In October, a new listserv for synodical secretaries was launched. Given their responsibilities and the opportunities to exchange “best practices,” this listserv should streamline their work and provide useful assistance. In addition, we hope to hold the first Webinar for synod secretaries soon. This will provide a wonderful opportunity for the Office of the Secretary to disseminate important information and updates, as well as to elicit questions and exchange important ideas.

Finally, we continue to ask that you regularly check and widely promote “Administration Matters,” the electronic newsletter prepared by the Office of the Treasurer and the Office of the Secretary. Recent articles have covered such topics as HIPPA, internet courses for congregation administrators, employment applications, background checks, compensation and benefit issues and more. The link to “Administration Matters” is as follows: www.elca.org/administrationmatters.

2. The Minutes Project

One of the important responsibilities of the Office of the Secretary is providing for minutes of governance meetings. This includes taking and preparing minutes for the Churchwide Assembly, Church Council, Executive Committee and the Cabinet of Executives; it also includes ensuring that minutes of other units are kept and that all minutes and related records, including those of Synod Councils and Synod Assemblies, are preserved in the archives.

The minutes for the 2009 Churchwide Assembly are in the process of being finalized. I estimate that I spent more than 100 hours in reviewing and editing these minutes. This amount was expended several times in total, considering the work of the minutes’ takers, the preparation of the preliminary minutes, compiling and editing the final minutes and preparing the bound edition, which will approximate 800 pages, including exhibits.

Other minutes also are extensive. As you know, the Church Council usually meets twice a year, and its minutes routinely exceed 100 pages, exclusive of exhibits. Minutes from the Conference of Bishops routinely exceed 25 pages, and often exceed 50 pages. Cabinet of Executives minutes also are lengthy.

A number of factors militate for revisiting the content, format and protocols for minutes. First, *Robert’s Rules of Order* do not require such extensive minutes. (According to *Robert’s*, minutes should provide what is done, not what is said!) Second, technology now means that electronic recording of meetings is available. Thus, all plenary sessions of the Churchwide Assembly are recorded in both video and audio media, and all plenary sessions of the Church Council are

recorded on CD. Third, economic realities raise profound questions regarding the advisability of investing such substantial time in minutes. Fourth, the practice of recording the substance of what people say in plenary discussions occasionally results in inadvertent mischaracterization of their remarks. Is it productive and meaningful to record what everyone says on almost every subject? Fifth, the extent of minutes from the Churchwide Assembly and the Church Council set an example for synods and congregations. To the extent that the churchwide organization can provide an example and demonstrate “best practices,” the current handling of minutes is counterproductive, in my opinion. Finally, the reality is that preparation of voluminous minutes means that fewer people review them and suggest corrections. The current process for review and approving minutes does not conform to *Robert’s Rules* and does not provide the requisite assistance to the Office of the Secretary in ensuring that they are as accurate as possible.

Another aspect of “The Minutes Project” warrants mention. The Office of the Secretary is mindful of the challenges that remain in the area of production and dissemination of Synod Assembly minutes and reports, as well as Synod Council minutes, given the increasing financial constraints synods face. As part of “The Minutes Project,” the churchwide archives, working with ELCA Information Technology, has developed a Synodical Minutes Electronic Repository whereby synods will be able to upload electronic copies of Synod Assembly minutes and reports and Synod Council minutes to a repository maintained and administered by the churchwide archives. The rollout of this repository began in September with one pilot synod and over the coming weeks will be introduced to all 65 synods.

3. *Voices of Vision: An Update on the Oral History Project*

In 2008, the Office of the Secretary received a Thrivent grant for an oral history project to obtain audio and video interviews from key ELCA leaders. The project is titled “Voices of Vision: The ELCA at 25.” The interviews are intended to serve dual purposes. They will provide future source documents for researchers and others examining the history of this church. Oral history offers a unique perspective not documented elsewhere. In addition, the expectation is that the interviews will be compiled and edited into a video presentation to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the ELCA. It is our hope that this will be shown at the 2013 Churchwide Assembly.

To date, we have completed 28 audio interviews and eight video interviews, with more to be scheduled in the coming months. The video interviews include conversations with all three presiding bishops, among others. We are grateful to those who have already given their time to contribute to this project, and we look forward to collecting more interviews.

4. *Risk Management*

In April 2008, based upon a recommendation from a task force, the ELCA selected Church Mutual Insurance Company of Merrill, Wisconsin, for the endorsed insurance program. One of the reasons that Church Mutual was endorsed was its emphasis on loss control and risk management.

Although it has sometimes been low on the radar screen, the resources of Church Mutual with respect to risk management are important for congregations. From time to time, “Administration Matters” picks up these recommendations for articles, and the Office of the Secretary Web site contains a link to Church Mutual. In early September, we invited the officers, including the new CEO of Church Mutual, Michael Ravn, to Chicago to discuss the endorsed program. In the course of a productive and informative meeting, we asked Church Mutual to increase its focus on providing loss control and risk management assistance to congregations. Inasmuch as 44 synods now have their insurance through the endorsed program, we have the opportunity to provide improved assistance (through Church Mutual agents and resources) to congregations.

5. *Synod bishop elections*

For several years, one issue on the secretary's "to do" list involved synod bishop elections. Working with Synodical Relations and synods with pending elections revealed both widely different nomination and election practices and common concerns. As a result, each year Synodical Relations and the Office of the Secretary prepare "Guidelines for Synod Bishop Elections." (If you would like a copy, please let me know!)

In addition, the Office of the Secretary has consulted with a number of synods regarding possible pre-assembly processes for surfacing names of potential nominees for bishops. Several synods are undertaking studies, and we have prepared a memo for the Rocky Mountain Synod summarizing the various practices utilized for the nomination and election of bishops. (Because S9.04 is not a required provision, practices vary widely.) If you would like a copy of the memo provided to the Rocky Mountain Synod identifying the practices, please let me know.

G. Concluding Remarks

This has been a tumultuous time, both in the churchwide organization and in the Office of the Secretary. In addition to redesign issues, we continue to grieve for our colleague James Nelson and his family and friends. Thanks to all for their prayers of support.

Despite all our challenges, I give thanks to God daily for the opportunity to serve you, synods, congregations and the churchwide organization as secretary of this amazing church, with its diverse, grace-filled ministries. I remain grateful for the opportunity to work with Bishop Hanson and to support his vision and leadership for this church. I also appreciate working with Carlos Peña and Christina Jackson-Skelton in the leadership of the churchwide organization. In everything, I remain committed to providing counsel and assistance to the churchwide organization, synods and congregations in a spirit of collaboration. In doing so, I remain convinced that the polity of the ELCA and our interdependence provide us the opportunity to accomplish ministry more effectively and profoundly together than our constituent expressions can do on their own. Our challenge is to work collaboratively to maximize our resources to accomplish mission and ministry in Christ's name. God's work. Our hands.

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PROGRAM: CD170BN

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
 FORM A - SUMMARY OF CONGREGATIONAL STATISTICS AS OF 12/31/09

PAGE 1 OF 3
 RUN DATE 08/04/10

ELCA CONGREGATION TOTALS
 (7,709 CONGS FILED)

	2008	2009	CHANGE	PER CENT	STATISTICAL ANALYSIS		
SUMMARY OF MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS					AVERAGES PER CONGREGATIONS REPORTING		
TOTALS -- END OF YEAR							
TOTAL NUMBER OF CONGREGATIONS	10,396	10,348	48-	0.46-			
BAPTIZED MEMBERS	4,633,887	4,542,868	91,019-	1.96-	BAPTIZED MEMBERS	(/10,272)	442.25
CONFIRMED MEMBERS	3,483,336	3,444,041	39,295-	1.12-	CONFIRMED MEMBERS	(/10,260)	335.67
ANALYSIS OF MEMBERSHIP GAINS AND LOSSES							
BAPTIZED MEMBERS -- RECEIVED							
BY BAPTISM - CHILDREN UNDER 16	61,617	58,328	3,289-	5.33-			
BY BAPTISM - ADULTS 16 AND OLDER	5,839	5,812	27-	0.46-			
BY AFFIRMATION OF FAITH	47,586	50,842	3,256+	6.84+			
BY TRANSFER	77,072	62,602	14,470-	18.77-			
FROM OTHER SOURCES AND STAT ADJS	23,511	24,494	983+	4.18+			
TOTAL RECEIVED -- BAPT MBRS	215,625	202,078	13,547-	6.28-			
BAPTIZED MEMBERS -- REMOVED							
BY DEATH	45,225	43,905	1,320-	2.91-			
BY TRANSFER	54,704	52,069	2,635-	4.81-			
FOR OTHER REASONS AND STAT ADJS	193,133	193,789	656+	0.33+			
TOTAL REMOVED -- BAPT MBRS	293,062	289,763	3,299-	1.12-			
BAPTIZED MEMBERS CONFIRMED	43,195	45,124	1,929+	4.46+			
ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS	NEW IN 2009	2,527,941					
AVERAGE WEEKLY WORSHIP ATTENDANCE							
WORSHIP SERVICES							
TOTAL WEEKLY WORSHIP ATTENDANCE	1,330,709	1,289,953	40,756-	3.06-			
AVG SUNDAY ATTENDANCE PER CONG	128	125	3-	2.34-			
PCT BAPT MBRS ATTENDING WORSHIP	28.71	28.39	0.32-	1.11-			

PROGRAM: CD170BN

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
 FORM A - SUMMARY OF CONGREGATIONAL STATISTICS AS OF 12/31/09

PAGE 2 OF 3
 RUN DATE 08/04/10

ELCA CONGREGATION TOTALS
 (7,709 CONGS FILED)

	2008	2009	CHANGE	PER CENT	STATISTICAL ANALYSIS	
SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL STATISTICS					AVERAGES PER CONGREGATIONS REPORTING	
TOTALS -- END OF YEAR						
TOTAL RECEIPTS	2,741,313,099	2,660,510,821	80,802,278-	2.94-	TOTAL RECEIPTS (/10,275)	258,930.49
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS	2,764,009,721	2,716,085,854	47,923,867-	1.73-	TOTAL DISBURSE (/10,275)	264,339.25
ASSETS, VALUE ON DEC 31	20,616,480,228	20,855,546,628	239,066,400+	1.15+	ASSETS VAL 12-31 (/10,275)	2,029,736.89
TOTAL INDEBTEDNESS ON DEC 31	1,770,824,328	1,930,034,710	159,210,382+	8.99+	TOTAL INDEBT (/10,275)	187,837.92
AVERAGE GIVING PER BAPT MEMBER	488.79	491.60	2.81+	0.57+	PERCENT--INDEBTEDNESS/ASSETS	9.25
AVERAGE GIVING PER CONF MEMBER	650.24	648.45	1.79-	0.27-	PERCENT--CONGS WITH NO DEBT	63.79

DETAIL OF FINANCIAL STATISTICS

RECEIPTS					PERCENT OF TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS	
REGULAR GIVING BY MEMBERS	1,943,406,300	1,934,552,385	8,853,915-	0.45-	CURRENT OPERATING EXPENSES	70.64
DESIGNATED GIVING BY MEMBERS	321,610,482	298,763,662	22,846,820-	7.10-	CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS	8.91
EARNED INCOME (ANY SOURCE)	145,913,132	144,180,212	1,732,920-	1.18-	PAYMENT ON DEBTS	7.95
GRANTS (ANY SOURCE)	27,970,949	26,996,807	974,142-	3.48-	MISSION SUPPORT	4.48
ALL OTHER RECEIPTS	302,412,236	256,017,755	46,394,481-	15.34-	NON-MISSION SUPPORT BENEVOLENCE	4.39
DISBURSEMENTS (SEE NOTE BELOW)						
CURRENT OPERATING EXPENSES	1,926,284,447	1,918,904,303	7,380,144-	0.38-	OTHER EXPENSES AND REALIZED LOSSES	3.60
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS	261,089,360	242,143,682	18,945,678-	7.25-		
PAYMENT ON DEBTS	215,247,530	215,938,907	691,377+	0.32+		
MISSION SUPPORT	131,498,498	121,929,893	9,568,605-	7.27-		
NON-MISSION SUPPORT BENEVOLENCE	125,393,534	119,304,773	6,088,761-	4.85-		
OTHER EXPENSES, REALIZED LOSSES	104,496,352	97,864,296	6,632,056-	6.34-		
ASSETS, VALUE ON DEC 31						
CHURCH REAL ESTATE	18,372,850,385	18,439,175,647	66,325,262	0.36+		
ENDOWMENT AND MEMORIAL FUNDS	1,093,785,974	1,160,930,075	67,144,101+	6.13+		
CASH, SAVINGS, BONDS, ETC.	869,634,754	896,580,828	26,946,074+	3.09+		
ALL OTHER ASSETS	280,209,115	358,860,078	78,650,963+	28.06+		
NUMBER OF BEQUESTS RECEIVED	4,948	2,979	1,969-	39.79-	NUMBER OF BEQUESTS PER 100 DEATHS	6.78
TOTAL VALUE OF BEQUESTS RECEIVED	66,615,167	72,629,786	6,014,619+	9.02+	AVERAGE VALUE PER BEQUEST	24,380.59
PROJECTED MISSION SUPPORT	127,633,093	123,250,177	4,382,916-	3.43-		

NOTE: NON-MISSION SUPPORT BENEVOLENCE INCLUDES VERY DIFFERENT CATEGORIES FOR DATA YEARS 2008 AND 2009.

PROGRAM: CD170BN

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
 FORM A - SUMMARY OF CONGREGATIONAL STATISTICS AS OF 12/31/09

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 RUN DATE 08/04/10

ELCA CONGREGATION TOTALS
 (7,709 CONGS FILED)

CONGREGATIONS REPORTING ETHNIC GROUP INDIVIDUALS (SEE NOTE BELOW)	BAPTIZED MEMBERS (2008)	ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS (2009)	PERCENT OF CONGREGATIONS REPORTING ETHNIC GROUP PARTICIPANTS
AFRICAN AMERICAN/BLACK	3,615	3,662	35.38
AMERICAN INDIAN & ALASKA NATIVE PEOPLE	1,163	1,162	11.22
ARAB/MIDDLE EASTERN	623	641	6.19
ASIAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER	3,407	3,316	32.04
LATINO/HISPANIC	3,287	3,353	32.40
MULTIETHNIC	2,706	2,773	26.79
WHITE	10,178	10,105	97.65
OTHER	542	555	5.36

TOTAL ETHNIC ACTIVE INDIVIDUALS	BAPTIZED MEMBERS	ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS	PERCENT ETHNIC ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS
AFRICAN AMERICAN/BLACK	52,661	48,148	1.42
AMERICAN INDIAN/ALASKA NATIVE	6,818	5,849	0.17
ARAB/MIDDLE EASTERN	2,154	2,192	0.06
ASIAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER	22,067	20,769	0.61
LATINO/HISPANIC	42,621	43,986	1.30
MULTIETHNIC	18,098	25,720	0.76
WHITE	4,470,272	3,218,252	95.16
OTHER	17,510	16,919	0.50

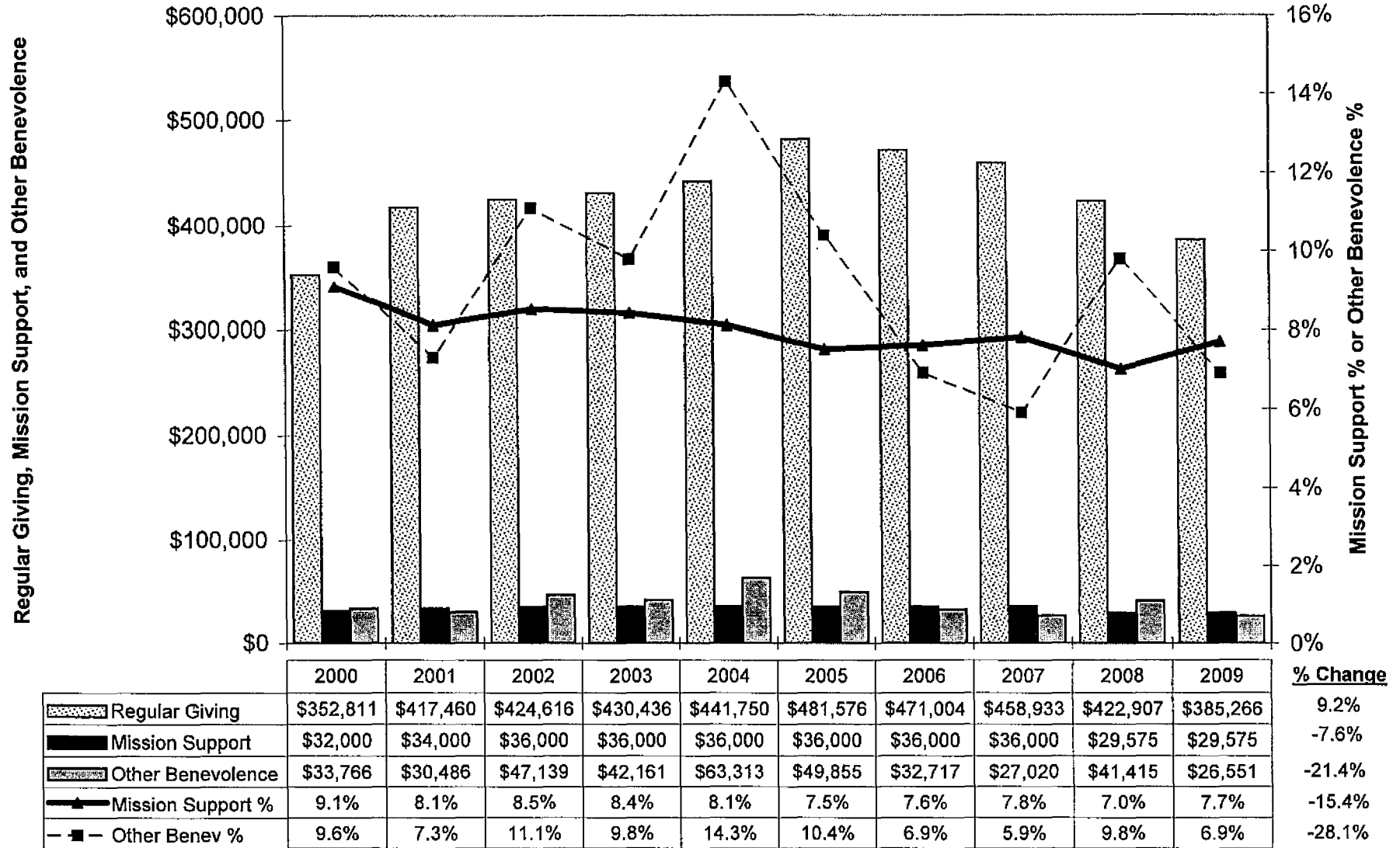
NOTE: IN 2009 ETHNIC GROUP COUNTS WERE OF ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS. FOR 2008 AND EARLIER YEARS COUNTS WERE OF BAPTIZED MEMBERS.

DISTRIBUTION OF CONGREGATIONS BY SIZE

SIZE OF CONGS	CONGREGATIONS		BAPTIZED MEMBERS		CONGREGATIONS		CONFIRMED MEMBERS	
	TOTAL CONGS	PERCENT	TOTAL BAPT MBR	PERCENT	TOTAL CONGS	PERCENT	TOTAL CONF MBR	PERCENT
FORMING	0	0.73	0	0.00	88	0.85	0	0.00
VERY SMALL	1-175	31.92	330,696	7.27	4,280	41.36	410,641	11.92
SMALL	176-350	26.79	706,388	15.54	2,815	27.20	710,907	20.64
MODERATELY SMALL	351-500	13.17	572,867	12.61	1,248	12.06	520,182	15.10
MEDIUM SIZED	501-700	10.59	646,063	14.22	849	8.20	498,995	14.48
MODERATELY LARGE	701-950	7.11	597,123	13.14	502	4.85	404,084	11.73
LARGE	951-1,500	5.63	677,183	14.90	372	3.59	440,113	12.77
VERY LARGE	> 1,500	4.02	1,012,621	22.29	194	1.87	459,119	13.33

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Regular Giving, Mission Support, Other Benevolence*, Mission Support % and Other Benevolence % of Regular Giving for Bethany - Bainbridge Island, WA



*Other Benevolence includes all ELCA and non-ELCA benevolence, excluding mission support.

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PROGRAM: CD180BN

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
 FORM C - 2009 CONGREGATION INFORMATION SUMMARY

PAGE 1 OF 1
 RUN DATE 08/07/10

ELCA CONGREGATION TOTALS
 (7,407 CONGS FILED IN 2009)

C30 EDUCATIONAL MINISTRY PROVIDED

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
 YES 7,079 NO 290 NO RESP 38
 STUDENTS.....435,141
 TEACHERS..... 84,776

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

YES 5,213 NO 2,020 NO RESP 174
 STUDENTS.....283,786
 TEACHERS..... 79,118

C31 CURRICULUM USED

AUGSBURG FORTRESS RESOURCES.... 4,628
 CONCORDIA PUBLISHING
 RESOURCES..... 1,097
 INDEPENDENT PUBLISHERS..... 2,593
 CREATE OWN MATERIALS..... 3,223
 OTHER DENOMINATIONAL
 PUBLISHER..... 1,413
 NO RESPONSE TO ANY..... 417

C34 LANGUAGE(S) IN WHICH LITURGIES ARE CONDUCTED

AMHARIC..... 5
 ARABIC..... 2
 ARMENIAN..... 2
 BATAK..... 2
 CAMBODIAN..... 3
 CANTONESE..... 6
 CREE..... 0
 CREOLE (FR)..... 1
 DANISH..... 3
 DINKA (SUDAN)..... 4
 ENGLISH..... 7,336
 ESTONIAN..... 1
 FINNISH..... 13
 FRENCH..... 3
 GERMAN..... 37
 HAITIAN..... 0

C32 NUMBER OF ADULTS IN BIBLE STUDY GROUPS

1-10..... 1,712 31-40..... 576
 11-15..... 1,092 41-50..... 456
 16-20..... 845 51-80..... 539
 21-30..... 1,010 81+..... 502
 NO RESPONSE TO ANY..... 675

C33 EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION CENTER,
 KINDERGARTEN AND/OR DAY SCHOOL

YES 1,420 NO 5,610 NO RESP 377

C35 DISABILITY ASSISTANCE PROVIDED

YES 6,881 NO 489 NO RESP 37
 IF YES, SPECIFIED ASSISTANCE:
 BUILDING WHEELCHAIR ACCESS.... 6,136
 BRAILLE/LARGE PRINT
 WORSHIP MATERIALS..... 3,212
 ASSISTIVE HEARING DEVICES..... 3,056
 SPECIAL NEEDS OUTREACH/SUPPORT 2,719
 NO RESPONSE TO ANY..... 44

C36 PARTICIPATED IN BOOK OF FAITH INITIATIVE

YES 2,962 NO 4,051 NO RESP 394

C37 YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY PAID STAFF

YES 1,391 NO 5,746 NO RESP 270

C38 DIRECT GLOBAL MINISTRY INVOLVEMENT

YES 2,352 NO 4,757 NO RESP 298

C39 PROVIDE SOCIAL MINISTRY SERVICES TO
 PEOPLE ON LIMITED OR FIXED INCOMES

YES 5,661 NO 1,584 NO RESP 162

IF YES, RELATED SERVICES:

EDUCATION..... 740
 FOOD..... 5,308
 HEALTH CARE..... 867
 HOUSING..... 1,317
 OTHER..... 1,971
 NO RESPONSE TO ANY..... 29

C40 FAMILIAR WITH ELCA'S DOMESTIC HUNGER
 GRANT PROGRAM

YES 3,440 NO 3,425 NO RESP 542

C41 USED STORIES OF FAITH IN ACTION

YES 1,667 NO 5,005 NO RESP 735

SIGN..... 58
 SLOVAK..... 5
 SPANISH..... 110
 SWAHILI..... 8
 SWEDISH..... 8
 TAGALOG..... 0
 TAIWANESE..... 3
 TAMIL..... 1
 TELUGU..... 0
 THAI..... 4
 TIGRINYA (ETHIOPIAN DIALECT)..... 3
 UKRAINIAN..... 1
 URDU (PAKISTAN)..... 1
 VIETNAMESE..... 1
 WENDISH..... 0
 YORUBA..... 0

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CHURCH-TO-CHURCH RELATIONSHIPS IN THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

The *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* and the policies adopted in accordance with them describe three kinds of official church-to-church relationships: full communion with non-Lutheran partners, established by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting in a Churchwide Assembly (8.71.); relationships established through membership of both churches in the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) (8.73.); and relationships of unity in faith and doctrine, created by the acceptance by both churches of the teachings of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession (2.05., 8.74.).

Full Communion

Relationships of full communion in accordance with constitution provision 8.71. are developed under the policy "Ecumenism: The Vision of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America," which was adopted by the 1991 Churchwide Assembly. Implementation of the relationships is authorized by provision 8.72. and accompanying policies and procedures.

For the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the characteristics of full communion are theological and missiological implications of the Gospel that allow variety and flexibility. These characteristics stress that the church act ecumenically for the sake of the world, not for itself alone. They will include at least the following, some of which exist at earlier stages of a relationship:

- a common confessing of the Christian faith;
- a mutual recognition of Baptism and a sharing of the Lord's Supper, allowing for joint worship and an exchangeability of members;
- a mutual recognition and availability of ordained ministers to the service of all members of churches in full communion, subject to the disciplinary regulations of other churches;
- a common commitment to evangelism, witness, and service;
- a means of common decision making on critical common issues of faith and life;
- a mutual lifting of any condemnations that exist between churches.

Development of full-communication relationships involve a process that normally takes years and includes steps of ecumenical cooperation, dialogue, and preliminary recognition before full communion is achieved.

Full-communication relationships allow for the service of ordained ministers in the church body of a partner. These relationships are governed by the constitution (bylaws 8.72.10.–8.72.16.), roster policies, and agreements with each of the partners establishing the principles for the orderly exchange of ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament.

Relationships created through LWF Membership

The Lutheran World Federation is a global communion of Christian churches in the Lutheran tradition. The LWF has 145 member churches in 82 countries, representing 70 million Christians.

The Bible, the three ecumenical creeds, and the Confessions of the Lutheran Church form the LWF's doctrinal basis. LWF member churches confess the triune God, agree in the proclamation of the Word of God, and are united in pulpit and altar fellowship. The LWF confesses one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church, and is resolved to serve Christian unity throughout the world.

Churches that wish to join the LWF must formally accept the Federation's doctrinal basis as detailed in Article II of the LWF Constitution. Further requirements for membership and application are outlined in the LWF Constitution and Bylaws.

The relationship between the ELCA and members of the LWF is governed by constitutional provision 8.73. The bylaws and policies on ecumenical availability of ordained ministers under relationship of full communion (8.72.10.-16.) apply to service in the ELCA by ordained ministers from other member churches of the Lutheran World Federation.

Relationships of unity in faith and doctrine

Relationships of unity in faith and doctrine in accordance with constitutional provisions 2.05. and 8.74. are based upon each church body's acceptance of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession as a true witness to the Gospel and recognition that the other church body's faith and doctrine reflect its acceptance of the teachings of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession.

No Lutheran church body has sought a relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America based upon this principle.

Local relationships

Full-communion and other official relationships are lived out not only by the churchwide organization but in the synods and congregations of this church. Implementation can occur when congregations work together in local ministries, when they form parishes or federated or united congregations, when the ordained minister of one full-communion partner serves a congregation of the other partner, and in countless other ways.

In the ELCA's predecessors, altar and pulpit relationships were established first at the official church-to church level and then locally. The constitution of the ELCA allows for local practice of altar and pulpit fellowship:

8.74. This church, in accord with constitutional provision 2.05., acknowledges as one with it in faith and doctrine all churches that accept the teaching of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession and understands that altar and pulpit fellowship with congregations and other entities of such churches may be locally practiced. Local practice of altar and pulpit fellowship, in accord with churchwide constitutional provision 2.05., is subject to the approval of the Synod Council, upon endorsement by the synodical bishop. Notice of such approval is to be given to the presiding bishop as the chief ecumenical officer of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

In accordance with this provision, the Office of the Secretary currently is developing further constitutional language and a policy to guide local practice, particularly in the matters of service of ordained ministers and parish arrangements.

Procedures:

The congregation(s) and ordained minister(s) seeking to practice locally altar and pulpit fellowship must apply to the synodical bishop, or, if located in the territories of contiguous synods, the synodical bishops. In accordance with constitutional provisions 2.05. and 8.74.:

1. The congregations and the ordained ministers seeking to be involved in the local practice of altar and pulpit fellowship must acknowledge in writing that all participants—local, regional, and national or churchwide expressions—accept the Unaltered Augsburg Confession as a true witness to the Gospel and recognize that the others' faith and doctrine reflect their acceptance of the teachings of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession.
2. The local practice of altar and pulpit fellowship must be endorsed by the synod bishop and approved by the Synod Council. The primary factor to be considered in endorsement and approval is the mission and ministry needs of the ELCA. Approval by the Synod Council is given on the basis of the synodical bishop's assessment of the gifts, experience, skills, and training of the ordained ministers for such service and the congregations as sites for local practice of altar and pulpit fellowship.
3. Each approval of the local practice of altar and pulpit fellowship must be reported to the presiding bishop as the chief ecumenical officer of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Types of Local Practice of Altar and Pulpit Fellowship:

The following categories of service parallel those identified for full-communion partners.

- **Occasional Service.** An ELCA ordained minister may be asked to preach or administer the sacraments in a non-ELCA congregation. An ordained minister of a church body with which a relationship of full communion does not exist may be asked to preach or administer the sacraments in an ELCA congregation on an occasional basis.
- **Extended Service.**
 1. An ordained minister of the ELCA, under certain circumstances, may serve one or more congregations of a church body with which this church is not in full communion as part of a parish arrangement with one or more ELCA congregations. The ELCA congregations are served under congregational call. The non-ELCA congregations are served under contract.
 2. In extraordinary circumstances, an ordained minister of a church body with which the ELCA is not in full communion may serve one or more ELCA congregations as part of a parish arrangement with one or more congregations of a church body with which the ELCA is not in full communion. The ELCA congregations are served under contract, not call. To be eligible to serve, an ordained minister will demonstrate to the appropriate regional body knowledge of and an appreciation for the history, polity, theological, and liturgical identity, practices of ministry, and discipline of the ELCA. The ordained minister will be expected to preach, teach, and administer the sacraments in an ELCA congregation in a manner that is consistent with the Confession of Faith of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and to live in a manner consistent with the expectations of this church as stated in "Vision and Expectations: Ordained Ministers in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America."
- **Transfer of Roster Status.** An ordained minister of a church body with which a relationship of full communion does not exist who seeks to serve indefinitely within the ordained ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may apply for admission to the roster of ordained ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America under the policy of "Admission to the Roster of Ordained Ministers of Persons Ordained in Another Lutheran Church or Another Christian Tradition" for consideration of approval by a synodical Candidacy Committee of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Such an ordained minister would then become an ELCA pastor upon receipt and acceptance of a regular call and installation in an ELCA congregation or other approved setting. Roster status in more than one church body at a time is precluded in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Exchange of Information:

Service in a local practice of altar and pulpit fellowship in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America requires the complete and continuing disclosure to the synod of all information concerning the past and present ministry of the participating ordained ministers. Such disclosure must include any disciplinary proceedings concerning such ordained ministers, including discipline related to conduct during service in the ELCA by an ordained minister of another church body. In addition, background investigations must be conducted by the congregations.

**LOCAL PRACTICE OF ALTAR AND PULPIT FELLOWSHIP:
POLICY ON AND PRACTICE OF CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISION 8.74.**

(Revised September 27, 2010)

A. CURRENT PROVISION AND PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES

8.74. This church, in accord with constitutional provision 2.05., acknowledges as one with it in faith and doctrine all churches that accept the teaching of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession and understands that altar and pulpit fellowship with congregations and other entities of such churches may be locally practiced. Local practice of altar and pulpit fellowship, in accord with churchwide constitutional provision 2.05., is subject to the approval of the Synod Council, upon endorsement by the synodical bishop. Notice of such approval is to be given to the presiding bishop as the chief ecumenical officer of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

8.74.01. The approval is granted initially for one year only and must be reviewed and approved annually by the Synod Council. Any time that the local practice of altar and pulpit fellowship no longer serves the mission and ministry needs of this church, the synodical bishop may withdraw endorsement and the Synod Council may withdraw approval.

8.74.02. An ordained minister of a church body with which the ELCA is not in full communion who is serving in a ministry involving the local practice of altar and pulpit fellowship with an ELCA congregation is understood to be subject to the standards, policies, and discipline of the church body in which the ordained minister is rostered or holds ministerial status. Such an ordained minister, while serving an ELCA congregation or other ministry, is expected to abide by the standards and policies of this church related to ordained ministers. An ordained minister of this church, while serving in a ministry involving the local practice of altar and pulpit fellowship with a non-ELCA congregation, remains subject to the standards, policies, and discipline of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

B. LOCAL PRACTICE OF ALTAR AND PULPIT FELLOWSHIP: POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Background:

The purpose of this policy is to enable the local practice of altar and pulpit fellowship, in accordance with constitutional provision 8.74. and its accompanying bylaws. It is important to note that the Conference of Bishops, in approving "A Statement of Understanding Concerning Synodically Authorized Ministry of Word and Sacrament" in March 2005 [CB05.03.01] committed itself to consider first full-communion partners when a need for Word and Sacrament arises, as follows: "To affirm that when addressing the need for Word and Sacrament ministry in a congregation or other ministry where an ordained minister of this church is not available, that synods will seek the utilization of an ordained minister of a full-communion partner church, under the guidelines related to the orderly exchange of ordained ministers."

8.74. This church, in accord with constitutional provision 2.05., acknowledges as one with it in faith and doctrine all churches that accept the teaching of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession and understands that altar and pulpit fellowship with congregations and other entities of such churches may be locally practiced. Local practice of altar and pulpit fellowship, in accord with churchwide constitutional provision 2.05., is subject to the approval of the Synod Council, upon endorsement by the synodical bishop. Notice of such approval is to be given to the presiding bishop as the chief ecumenical officer of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

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8.74.02. An ordained minister of a church body with which the ELCA is not in full communion who is serving in a ministry involving the local practice of altar and pulpit fellowship with an ELCA congregation is understood to be subject to the standards, policies, and discipline of the church body in which the ordained minister is rostered or holds ministerial status. Such an ordained minister, while serving an ELCA congregation or other ministry, is expected to abide by the standards and policies of this church related to ordained ministers. An ordained minister of this church, while serving in a ministry involving the local practice of altar and pulpit fellowship with a non-ELCA congregation, remains subject to the standards, policies, and discipline of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Accountability and Pastoral Care:

An ordained minister of another church body is accountable to the jurisdiction or judicatory in which the ordained minister is “rostered” or in other ways a member. The synodical bishop is responsible for appropriate pastoral care and leadership for a congregation served by an ordained minister of another church body in the same manner as when the congregation is served by an ordained minister of this church (ELCA constitutional provision 10.31.a.3).

Pension and Medical Insurance:

A determination of the ordained minister’s medical and disability insurance will be made. The basic principle is that an ordained minister remains in his or her church body’s pension and benefits plan. It is anticipated that a congregation of this church will be able to contribute to the plan of another church body in order to provide appropriate medical coverage and a pension plan.

Titles:

The usual title “pastor of (insert name of congregation)” would be used for ordained ministers serving in an ELCA congregation. The professional title of “The Rev.” for an ordained minister also would be understood as applicable, in view of that ordained minister’s officially recognized status in a church body with which the ELCA has a relationship of full communion.

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Report of the Treasurer

The Office of the Treasurer manages the financial, business, information technologies, and building management affairs of the churchwide organization. The governing description of this office appears in constitutional provision 13.50. and continuing resolution 13.52.A05. Two function areas of the churchwide organization report to the Office of the Treasurer: Information Technology and Management Services. Reports on activities and major directions for these areas are included in this report.

The Office of the Treasurer serves to support the mission of ELCA congregations, synods and the churchwide organization. The Office of the Treasurer has concentrated its efforts on budget management, improving efficiency and effectiveness, continued strengthening of internal controls and looking for ways to decrease costs for infrastructure and thereby maximize dollars available for mission. Major areas of concentration include:

Expansion of Internal Audit Plan

The 2010 internal audit plan has been expanded over the last year-and-a-half to include reviews of the Global Mission unit, Contracts and Fixed Assets. The contracts and fixed assets reviews have been especially helpful in streamlining the process controls over these areas and may lead to cost-savings down the road. The 2010 plan also included a general review of process efficiencies throughout the churchwide organization, which helped to highlight areas where duplication of effort exists and efficiencies could be obtained.

The IT portion of the 2010 audit plan also was expanded to reflect the implementation of several new systems and IT follow-up work. General controls reviews of the following new systems have been, or will be, conducted to verify that they are designed and implemented with the proper controls and testing:

- The ECIS (integrated data base system)—successfully rolled out to several units with more to come;
- The new Foundation Endowment management system—implemented in November 2010;
- A new Foundation deferred gifts system—work to be executed in the November-December 2010 time frame, with implementation early in the first quarter 2011; and
- The past few SAS 70 reports (reviews completed by an independent audit firm of the vendor's internal controls) for our current payroll vendor (ADP) indicate a significant lack of controls over Personal Identity Information. As a result, a process was undertaken to consider other payroll providers. IT, Human Resources, Global Mission and the Office of the Treasurer have worked together to select UltiPro from Ultimate Software as the churchwide organization's new human resources/payroll vendor and system. This system purchase has been approved by the ELCA Capital Budget Committee and we anticipate going live with this project in the first quarter of 2011.

Data Security

Internal Audit partnered with Information Technology (IT) and Human Resources to implement a comprehensive, multi-pronged identity theft prevention program that will further enhance the churchwide organization's control over the use of confidential data as well as ensure compliance with many governmental identity theft regulations. This program, which fulfills the requirements of the Red Flag Act governing the use and protection of customer-related Personal Identity Information (PII) data, was put in place late in the second quarter 2010. It includes a mandatory "Identity Theft" workshop, which already has been given to over 150 employees. Every employee must attend this workshop at least once every two years. In addition, the Data Security Committee has moved from assessing the current data security environment to designing and implementing new policies and procedures that will strengthen the data security process. New procedures include:

- The Red Flag Policy and procedure (implemented);

- The Electronic Data Communications policy and procedure (pending approval); and
- The Data Security policy and related procedures (pending approval).

The Data Security Committee also has formed sub-committees to address many of the issues raised in the external security assessment conducted by FishNet Security and released in the first quarter 2010.

IT has implemented an "IT risk assessment" to be used by IT management in developing plans to ensure key risks are addressed throughout the year.

Restructuring

Under the new churchwide design, all development and Foundation accounting and finance staff will be centralized and relocated to the Office of the Treasurer. Internal audit has planned additional management assistance in the fourth quarter of 2010 and the first quarter of 2011 to verify that separation of duties controls, which could be lost in the restructuring process, are picked up and continue within the new structure.

Accounting

The Office of the Treasurer assumed unit and financial accounting responsibilities for Women of the ELCA in May. A service level agreement was signed which details the expected service deliverables. The automated creation in workflow of unit monthly report increased the timely receipt of the reports and saved significant staff time.

Receipts Processing

Gifts processing just completed a successful NetCommunity upgrade. This is the software used to receive and process online gifts. As part of the new design, additional gift processing functions will be shifted from the Foundation. We will continue to work on documenting and implementing new procedures. Staff is preparing for the new gifts processing system to be rolled out in 2011.

Accounts Payable

We have cross-referenced the tax numbers on the W-9 forms we have on file to each payee record within the general ledger (IFAS) to ensure ELCA's preparedness for the taxable status change for corporations in the upcoming year. By performing this task we were able to destroy W-9 forms no longer current.

There was a good response to a mailing sent to ELCA monthly payees encouraging their participation in a new payment method, which replaces check payments with ACH deposits. This allows for faster processing and savings of time and money. This option was also very well received by staff for expense reimbursements.

Banking

The Foundation and Endowment Fund Pooled Trust operating accounts were moved from Northern Trust to Harris Bank to consolidate all treasury management activity at Harris. As a result of the consolidation, Harris offered a 1 percent earnings credit on all balances held by Harris, including the already existing ELCA general accounts. This level of earnings credit is more than double the rates available for short-term overnight investments, which had been the practice for available ELCA funds.

Information Technology (IT)

Submitted by Mr. Jonathan Beyer

The treasurer shall provide for information technology in support of the work of this church and the operation of Chicago-based churchwide units. In so doing, the treasurer shall have an executive for information technology, appointed by the treasurer, who shall be responsible for the development and review of guidelines and policies for computer standards, security of electronic data, application development, data storage and data retrieval, and shall enable use of electronic technologies for churchwide staff to assist in support of congregations, synods, and related institutions and agencies of this church (13.52.B05.).

ELCA Constituent Information System (ECIS)

Phase I of the project to unify all constituent data sources of the ELCA churchwide organization has successfully converted nine major systems to date, which include the official roster and congregation database systems. ECIS currently holds over 305,000 constituent records. The conversion of these nine systems into ECIS also includes pertinent constituent information—including but not limited to—160,000 rostered leader job records and 175,000 relationship records. Many of the project objectives have been realized.

The challenges of this project have extended beyond systems and data integration to data clean-up, data de-duplication, streamlining business processes and organizational change. It also has created cross-unit communication that was not previously as prevalent and work efficiencies in managing this information. Communication with synods regarding information management has started. ECIS was demonstrated to individuals in over 25 synods, and a pilot with synodical offices currently is being planned.

Support of this initiative has been demonstrated by creating the ECIS Constituent Care team within Communication Services to facilitate good information management and to support the use of ECIS. This team is responsible for queries, exports and reports as well as ensuring up-to-date, secure, accurate and reliable data under the provision of system policies and procedures.

The next phase of this project involves integrating over 345,000 donors, 1.6 million gifts and the online giving application into ECIS. It also includes integrating ECIS with the ELCA financial system and an upgraded Synod Remittance Advise System (SRAS) for use by synods.

Mission Investment Fund (MIF) Technology Updates

The MIF server virtualization initiative is substantially done and a move to centralized data storage has been completed. These elements together present a stable, flexible and high-performance platform for the MIF IT environment.

With a focus on disaster recovery and business continuity, MIF has begun preparations to join the ELCA in using the data center at the Board of Pensions in Minneapolis as a secondary site. Replication of some business-critical data already has begun. The site is expected to be fully ready to host MIF disaster recovery efforts before the expiration of the current SunGard contract in mid-2011.

The MIF IT team has an active role in discussions around a replacement for the core banking system scheduled for 2011 or 2012. The new system is expected to deliver substantial improvements in business intelligence and reporting to assist the MIF senior management team when charting future strategic plans.

Foundation System Conversions

IT program and project management, along with ELCA Foundation accounting staff have been working collectively on two system conversions. The HWA Trust processor system has been implemented and replaces the current custom endowment management system.

The project for the implementation of PG Calc's GiftWrap Web-based software has begun and will replace the current custom deferred gifts system. Realizing the continued benefits of integrating systems, the Foundation will begin using the PG Calc's Planned Giving Manager proposal software in February that will integrate with GiftWrap. GiftWrap also will integrate with ECIS.

Data Security

FishNet Security performed a detailed assessment of the technology architecture in support of security policies, procedures and regulations to ensure system and data security for the churchwide organization and Mission Investment Fund in late 2009. The results of this assessment were finalized in spring 2010 and the following summary was provided by FishNet Security, "ELCA is proactively improving their security program. Although FishNet Security identified areas of opportunity for improvement, ELCA demonstrated many positive security practices...Many of the recommendations outlined in this report are challenges commonly faced by organizations. ELCA should continue to improve its security program and use this report as a guide in identifying and prioritizing security initiatives, in order to properly secure their information assets."

Additional details regarding the data security program and projects are contained in the internal audit section of this report.

Church Council Conference Calls

Information Technology provided setup and support for two Church Council conference calls in August and October 2010. The setup was intricate to ensure the integrity and security of each of the meetings. Leveraging this technology saved significant travel costs for the organization.

Conference Center Sound System

The sound system in the Full Council conference room at the Lutheran Center was in need of replacement. New microphones, mixing equipment and a remote-operated camera were added. This new technology includes on-off functionality and a visible "live" indicator for each microphone. The remotely-operated camera allows for a broader view of those speaking than those just at the podium or head table. Integration to record and stream content also has been enhanced.

IT Service Management

The IT section has implemented several new processes designed to improve service delivery to the end users. Under the umbrella term, "IT Service Management," there are many components, such as change management, service level agreements, a catalog of services and processes to address incidents and problems that inevitably arise. These processes, procedures and documents are meant to enable IT to provide controlled, consistent and high-quality service.

Cherwell software was purchased to assist the IT section in developing the above processes, as well as monitor and report on actual performance. IT service metrics are available by request.

Novell to Microsoft Transition

The IT section has an initiative to transition away from Novell technology to Microsoft technology. The most visible component of this effort is the move from GroupWise to Exchange Server and the Outlook client. Other, less visible components include back end services that are used to provide the technology infrastructure at the Lutheran Center.

In a related project, the operating system of the churchwide office computers will be upgraded to Windows 7 and the Office 2010 Professional suite. Other possible enhancements of this project include better support for remote connectivity, more robust security features, integration between voicemail and e-mail and the use of SharePoint as a collaboration tool.

By replacing aged Novell services with up-to-date Microsoft services plus introducing the new services outlined above, the IT section is positioning the organization to move into the future with a much more robust and productive suite of IT products and services.

Disaster Recovery and Business Continuity

In an ongoing effort to prepare for disasters or other events that could disrupt normal business operations, the IT section has introduced and enhanced the reliability of several systems in 2010. A second successful disaster recovery test was performed in April, validating that the virtualized network design provides for a flexible infrastructure and maintaining key services without undue downtime.

In addition, a generator for the server room was brought online in April, which allows for continued operation of the server and network equipment in the event of a power delivery interruption. New air conditioner units were added to the server room in the autumn of 2010 and can be powered by the generator. One of these units operates without the need of a cooling water supply year round, making it more environmentally friendly and allowing for the continued supply of chilled air during a power outage.

Hardware Refresh

IT has successfully refreshed 110 laptops since February 2010 and continues to keep hardware images up-to-date.

IT continues to increase its efforts to be "green" through recycling and reusing of assets. IT made donations of still-useful technology assets to ELCA-related entities. Prior to donation, hard drives were wiped with software meeting Department of Defense standards to prevent accidental data loss.

Information Technology disposes of non-working ELCA computer equipment responsibly so it does not end up in landfills or being exported to other countries for irresponsible disposal.

Management Services

Submitted by Ms. Karen Rathbun

The treasurer shall make provisions for facilities management in support of the operation of the Lutheran Center and the function of Chicago-based churchwide units and, in so doing, the treasurer shall maintain management services with an executive for management services appointed by the treasurer who shall be responsible for building management for the churchwide organization and the coordination of central services for Chicago-based churchwide units (13.52.C05.).

Section Responsibilities

Management Services has responsibility for the operation of the Lutheran Center premises in Chicago, Ill., the archives building in Elk Grove Village, Ill., and leased properties in Washington, D.C. and New York City. Management Services also provides infrastructure services including: a copy center; maintenance of floor copiers and printers; office supplies; mail management and the ELCA Advantage Program, a national cooperative buying program. A building management contractor, Jones Lang LaSalle (JLL), manages the facilities, garage maintenance, cleaning and security functions. The Lutheran Center is 91.0 percent occupied.

Management Services

Disaster response thank-you letters and appeal mailings have increased mail volumes. Using the Smartmailer system allows us to get the best rate for non-profits: 19.2 cents a piece on any 200+ piece mailing. Once the ELCA Constituent Information System (ECIS) is fully implemented, the units will be able to send more mailings for complete processing in the mail room, creating greater cost efficiency.

A recent storm left hail damage to the two air conditioning units at our archive facility in Elk Grove Village and we are working with risk management on the claim to replace them. We will be adding hail covers for the new units.

We have renegotiated the Office Depot contract portion of the ELCA Advantage program: they now will give us a two percent rebate, plus an additional one percent back on all orders over \$150 at the time the order is placed.

Capital Projects

The air conditioning units in the computer room are being replaced by two new Energy Star-rated units. There will be one wet and one dry system to allow the use of free cool air during the cold months to keep the computer center at its needed temperature.

We will be installing new frequency drive fans for the facility at the cost of \$60,000. This project will pay for itself in 2.25 years and then is estimated to save us \$20,000 a year on electricity. Twenty percent of the cost will be picked up by our tenants as common area maintenance.

A proposal to replace the roof was approved by the Capital Budget Committee. The vendor has agreed to hold the price so we can begin the project in April 2011. The current roof is original to the facility. The new roof will meet the City of Chicago's specifications for environmental content.

To add to the security of the facility we installed glass windows on the doors in each floor and have instituted complete keycard access on ELCA floors 5-11. This means that visitors will have to call their party from the house phone, either on the first floor or on the 11th floor to be provided access.

The space vacated by the Augsburg Fortress store will be utilized for meetings and meals. Management Services outfitted the room with round tables and chairs and is in the process of setting up sound and audio visual systems.

After walking through the archives facilities in Elk Grove Village with our insurance carrier, we will be replacing the sidewalk and dock apron at their suggestion. During the winter months the sidewalk shifted and broke, becoming a hazard.

There have been numerous break-in incidents in the garage. Over a period of three months, twelve cars were broken into and stereo equipment and navigation systems were stolen. In addition to having a security person monitoring the garage east entrance from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. aluminum gates have been installed to deter theft going forward.

Environmental Stewardship

MS and CS conducted floor demonstrations on recycling at the Lutheran Center and also joined efforts on designing an intranet Web page called, "How Do I Recycle..." which contains explanations and links on recycling different types of materials.

We recycle paper, batteries, toner cartridges, DVDs, CDs, VHS tapes, glass, plastic, cans and light bulbs at the Lutheran Center. We arranged for a recycling drive for computers, cell phones, typewriters and other electronics that were out-of-date or no longer working. Techno recycling will be held at least once a year, based on need, to ensure that no hazardous materials go to the landfills.

A report from Jones Lang LaSalle shows the following materials recycled in one month: 252 lbs. of bottles and cans, 8,483 pounds of old corrugated paper and 14,233 pounds of unsorted papers.

And these environmental benefits: 195 trees preserved, 80,388 gallons of water conserved, 37.90 cubic yards of waste that did not go to the landfill, 45,936 kWh of electricity saved, 907.24 oil gallons not wasted, and 689.04 lbs of air pollution reduced.

Also, all the cleaning products used at the Lutheran Center are environmentally friendly.

We are doing our first project at the Lutheran Center with propress pipe. Propress pipe can be steel or copper, but instead of soldering, the pipe is crimped; therefore, no fumes are emitted into the air. This work can be done while the staff is in the facility and also prevents the chance of a fire starting from the

propane torch used in soldering. Going forward we will specify all our plumbing work to be done with this process.

Due to our push to purchase recycled office supplies we contacted our vendor Office Depot, member of the ELCA Advantage program. We are proud to announce that the Lutheran Center uses 49 percent recycled office supplies, while the average corporation uses 20 percent.

The ELCA replaced 80 printers and 12 copiers this year with multifunction units that print, fax and scan. The scanning feature has become very popular instead of making copies, with considerable savings on paper consumption. These units are leased and will be cleaned three times for data removal before going back to the vendor. We save \$45,000 a year on this new program as we do not purchase laser jet cartridges anymore. Service and toner are included in our cost-per-copy or print.

We will again purchase our electric from Constellation at a locked-in, reduced rate. Currently the ELCA electricity usage and associated costs are down by approximately 2.56 percent. In order to keep costs down the HVAC is being shut-off on weekends and long holidays when no meetings are scheduled in the Lutheran Center. Light sensors are being installed in the copy room on each floor for additional savings.

Now that the organizational redesign is completed, we will propose a new configuration of units that will free space for leasing and, in the meantime, result in energy and maintenance savings.

Building Management Company

An RFP was completed for a building manager. The decision was made to stay with JLL but an appendix was added to the contract, establishing measurable service levels. We also renegotiated this contract down \$27,200.

The building management company replaced our assigned property manager, receptionist and security director, so we are currently meeting on a weekly basis with the new team to keep on top of our projects and expectations.

Tenant Update

We are working on an early renewal and space expansion with the National Board of Osteopathic Examiners in which they would take an additional 5,000 square feet on the second floor.

ChildServ, another tenant, has also asked for an early renewal with a five-year extension at this time.

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Report of the Conference of Bishops

The 59th meeting of the ELCA Conference of Bishops took place September 30 - October 5, 2010 at the Lutheran Center in Chicago. Newly elected and installed bishops William Gafkjen, Indiana Kentucky Synod, and Wolfgang Herz-Lane, Delaware Maryland Synod, were warmly welcomed to the Conference.

Presidents and interim presidents of the eight ELCA seminaries joined the bishops for lively conversation about theological education. The dialogue explored emerging needs for leaders in various contexts. The conversation will continue over the next two years, as together we seek to discern the best use of synod and seminary resources in service to the mission of this church.

ELCA synod vice-presidents also were present for the weekend, and joined the bishops on Friday evening for the uplifting Fund for Leaders' awards banquet at the Marriott Hotel. Scholarship recipients were recognized. A highlight of the gathering was the recognition of significant donors to the Fund. The vice-presidents also joined the conference on Saturday for reports from our presiding bishop, Vice-President Carlos Peña, Secretary David Swartling, and Treasurer Christina Jackson-Skelton.

The majority of our time together was consumed by conversation about the emerging future of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Reports from the LIFT Task Force and the Churchwide Design Team invited conversation with the bishops on a broad range of issues. As the Church Council is well aware, synods are in a period of continuing and rapid adaptive change, brought on by economic, cultural and denominational shifts.

The past year has been challenging for synod bishops. Each congregation leaving, or considering leaving, the ELCA has consumed many hours of the bishops' time and energy. This pastoral challenge will continue, of course. Nevertheless, my colleagues in the Conference of Bishops continue to champion the good and gracious work of this church and relentlessly advocate for its unity and its future. Bishops also have been tending to global relationships with companion synods.

Every meeting of the Conference is an occasion to deal with roster issues, to receive updates on Board of Pension matters, military chaplaincy, ecumenical relations, intra-Lutheran relationships and the Lutheran World Federation. At this gathering we received updates on the ELCA Malaria Campaign and again reviewed the draft social statement on genetics.

I assure you, the ELCA Church Council, of the prayers of the bishops of this church. Our time together is always centered in our gathering around Word and sacrament. The first disciples of Jesus devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers (Acts 2:42). We continue to find our life and hope in these things. I know it will be so for you as well.

Bishop Allan Bjornberg
Chair, Conference of Bishops

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Synodical Resolutions for Referral

1a. Resolution Concerning Augsburg Fortress Pension Plan Termination Minneapolis Area Synod (3G)

WHEREAS, “Social statements establish policy for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America’s (ELCA) work in the areas of advocacy and corporate social responsibility, enabling, limiting, and directing these activities” (Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns, p.12); and

WHEREAS, in 1999 the ELCA adopted a social statement entitled, “Economic Life: Sufficient Sustainable Livelihood for All,” which states, “God is at work in economic life. Economic life is intended to be a means through which God’s purposes for humankind and creation are to be served. When this does not occur, as a church we cannot remain silent because of who and whose we are”; and

WHEREAS, that statement further says, “We commit ourselves as a church to: . . . provide adequate pension and health benefits, safe and healthy work conditions, sufficient periods of rest, vacation, and sabbatical, and family-friendly work schedules”; and

WHEREAS, Augsburg Fortress, Publishers, a unit of this church, has terminated its defined-benefit pension plan thereby eliminating the lifetime annuity payments promised through the plan; and

WHEREAS, the action of Augsburg Fortress places 175 retired persons in diminished financial positions and an additional 325 past and present employees, many of whom have worked for 20, 25, or 30 years for the ELCA publishing ministry, with the prospect of spending their end-of-life years with incomes below the established poverty lines; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that in keeping with stated policy to provide “adequate pension and health benefits,” the ELCA Church Council seek means of funding the pension accounts of the faithful servants—retirees and past and present employees who were promised annuity benefits through the recently terminated Augsburg Fortress defined-benefit pension plan.

1b. Augsburg Fortress Pension Plan Termination Southeastern Minnesota Synod (3I)

WHEREAS, the ELCA social statement "Economic Life: Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All" promotes economic justice; and

WHEREAS, Augsburg Fortress, Publishers (AFP), is a separately incorporated program unit of this church; and

WHEREAS, AFP has terminated its defined benefit pension plan, reducing the pension benefits some current and retired employees expected through this plan; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Minnesota Synod in assembly direct its synod council to memorialize the ELCA Church Council to:

1. Investigate means to restore any lost pension benefits for current and retired employees of AFP; and
2. Initiate an independent investigation to determine how the AFP pension program came to be underfunded.

1c. Termination of Defined Benefit Pension Plan by Augsburg Fortress, Publishers Southwestern Texas Synod (4E)

WHEREAS, Augsburg Fortress, Publishers, a separately incorporated program unit of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, terminated its defined benefit pension plan by action of its Board of Trustees in December 2009; and

WHEREAS, the termination of the Augsburg Fortress defined benefit pension plan has adversely affected approximately 500 present and former employees; and

WHEREAS, individuals have asked about the background and reasons for the actions of the Augsburg Fortress Board of Trustees, and it is important to provide accurate and complete information regarding the termination; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Texas Synod Assembly expresses its concern and prayers for these 500 present, former, and retired employees of Augsburg Fortress whose annuity payments have been eliminated and whose financial situations have been diminished through the termination of Augsburg Fortress' defined benefit pension plan; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Texas Synod Assembly direct the Synod Council to forward this resolution to the ELCA Church Council and the Board of Trustees of Augsburg Fortress, the ministry of publishing of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

**1d. Augsburg Fortress Employees and Retirees
Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod (7E)**

WHEREAS, the ELCA's 1999 social statement *Economic Life: Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All* contains this provision on page 10:

“We commit ourselves as a church to: . . . compensate all people we call or employ at an amount sufficient for them to live in dignity; provide adequate pension and health benefits, safe and healthy work conditions, sufficient periods of rest, vacation and sabbatical, and family-friendly work schedules”; and

WHEREAS, Augsburg Fortress Publishers is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and

WHEREAS, Augsburg Fortress Publishers has terminated its defined benefits pension plan which was promised to approximately 500 present and former employees; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA claims to have no responsibility for this unjust act; and

WHEREAS, this action will render many Augsburg Fortress retirees destitute; and

WHEREAS, this church seeks to be an advocate for the hungry and for justice; and

WHEREAS, the Holy Scriptures call upon us, as we have opportunity, to do good to all and especially to the household of faith (Galatians 6:10), and Jesus sent out disciples saying that “the worker is worth his keep” (Matthew 10:7–10); and

WHEREAS, the ELCA has not taken action to restore the incomes of these plan members in spite of its commitment in the social statement; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod in assembly urges the Church Council to take all necessary actions to fulfill the commitments in the social statement on economic life for Augsburg Fortress employees and retirees who are suffering significantly reduced income.

**1e. Resolution Concerning the Termination of the Augsburg Fortress Pension Plan
South Dakota Synod (3C)**

WHEREAS, Augsburg Fortress Publishers, a separately incorporated program unit of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, terminated its defined benefit pension plan by action of its Board of Trustees in December 2009; and

WHEREAS, the termination of the Augsburg Fortress defined benefit pension plan has adversely affected approximately 500 present and former employees; and

WHEREAS, individuals have asked about the background and reasons for the actions of the Augsburg Fortress Board of Trustees, and it is important to provide accurate and complete information regarding the termination; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the South Dakota Synod in assembly ask its Synod Council and Synod Bishop to express deep concern to the Church Council and Presiding Bishop about the burdens that have been placed upon the past and present faithful servants of our church's publishing house; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the South Dakota Synod in assembly direct the Synod Council to ask the Church Council to seek means of restoring pension funds for the past and present faithful servants who were promised annuity benefits through the Augsburg Fortress Pension Plan; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the South Dakota Synod in assembly direct the Synod Council to ask the Church Council to conduct a review of the actions of the management and trustees of Augsburg Fortress Publishers regarding the background, reasons for, and implications of the termination of its defined benefits plan, and to report on the results of the review at the November 2010 meeting of the Church Council; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the South Dakota Synod in assembly direct the Synod Council to forward this resolution to the Church Council for consideration and possible action.

**1f. Termination of Defined Benefit Pension Plan by Augsburg Fortress, Publishers
Metropolitan Chicago Synod (5A)**

WHEREAS, Augsburg Fortress, Publishers, a separately incorporated program unit of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, terminated its defined benefit pension plan by action of its Board of Trustees in January 2010; and

WHEREAS, the termination of the Augsburg Fortress defined benefit pension plan has adversely affected approximately 500 present and former employees; and

WHEREAS, individuals have asked about the background and reasons for the actions of the Augsburg Fortress Board of Trustees, and it is important to provide accurate and complete information regarding the termination; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Chicago Synod Council expresses its concern and prayers for these 500 present and former employees of Augsburg Fortress who have been adversely affected by the termination of the defined benefit pension plan; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Chicago Synod Council forward this resolution to the Church Council and to the Augsburg Fortress Board of Trustees to convey this synod's concern.

**1g. Board of Pensions and Augsburg Fortress Pension Issues
Upstate New York Synod (7D)**

WHEREAS, the people of the Upstate New York Synod are a resurrection people who pray first, walk together, and change lives, we hold special concern for all those who are suffering in these difficult financial times; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Upstate New York Synod hold in prayer those who are negatively affected by the changes in the pension plans of the ELCA and Augsburg Fortress, Publishers; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Upstate New York Synod also pray for the hungry, the homeless, the jobless, and all who are experiencing fear, frustration, depression and devastation due to the current economic climate; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Upstate New York Synod memorialize the ELCA, its Synods and congregations, its various organizations, small groups, and individuals to pray for the recovery of this nation's economy and the alleviation of those conditions that are so devastating to so many of God's children locally, nationally, and globally; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Upstate New York Synod Assembly affirm the actions taken by the Synod Council at its April 2010 meeting (SC10.04.32).

**1h. Augsburg Fortress, Publishing
Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod (8B)**

WHEREAS, Augsburg Fortress, Publishers, is the result of the merger of publishing houses of the predecessor bodies of the ELCA; and

WHEREAS, many of the retirees of Augsburg Fortress were of important service to the predecessor bodies of the ELCA, and, many of the retirees of Augsburg Fortress remained employed after the institution of the ELCA; and

WHEREAS, the predecessor bodies and the ELCA have continually maintained a relationship with Augsburg Fortress (or its predecessor companies) which both Augsburg Fortress and the ELCA has recognized as adjunct to, supportive of, and driven by the ministry of the ELCA; and

WHEREAS, since its inception, and still today, the ELCA commits itself to causes of social justice and fairness; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod Assembly request the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to recognize that, even though the ELCA has no legal or fiduciary obligations to Augsburg Fortress retirees whose retirement benefits were terminated, it does have responsibility to seek justice and fairness and to investigate ways that the ELCA can act justly (not simply legally) toward these retirees; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod Assembly direct the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod Council to forward this resolution to the Church Council for consideration and possible action.

Background from the Office of the Secretary

On December 31, 2009, Augsburg Fortress Publishers (AFP), the publishing house of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), announced that it would terminate its defined benefit retirement plan effective March 5, 2010. The action, approved by the board of trustees of AFP, affected 500 plan participants. In announcing the termination, AFP explained that the action was necessitated primarily by financial losses attributable to decreasing sales and the dramatic downturn in the financial markets.

During 2005, AFP had taken action to freeze the defined benefit plan and began offering a separate defined contribution plan to its employees. According to AFP, if it had done nothing more, the plan would have run out of money in approximately five years and left about 60 percent of those in the plan with no retirement benefits. The trustees of the AFP plan amended the plan to provide a more equitable allocation of plan assets among plan participants. As a result, most participants in the defined benefit plan received a lump sum payment after the plan was terminated. The publishing company has maintained and continues to maintain retirement benefits for its staff.

AFP is separately incorporated entity apart from the ELCA churchwide organization. The churchwide organization has never had authority or control over AFP's pension plans. The ELCA had no role in the creation, management, funding or termination of the Augsburg Fortress defined benefit retirement plan that was closed. The individual members of that plan were not employed by the churchwide organization.

On April 21, 2010, a group of those AFP employees who had been covered by the terminated pension plan filed a lawsuit in the U.S. District Court of Minnesota, naming as defendants the publishing house and the ELCA, as well as a number of individuals. That lawsuit seeks to recover losses suffered by the plaintiffs and all other members of the plan. The ELCA denied the allegations made against it and has filed a motion seeking a complete dismissal from the case.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To receive with gratitude the resolutions of the Metropolitan Chicago, Upstate New York, Minneapolis Area, Southeastern Minnesota, Southwestern Texas, Northeastern Pennsylvania, South Dakota, and Southwestern Pennsylvania synods related to the termination of the defined benefit plan of Augsburg Fortress, Publishers (AFP);

To join with those synods in expressing deep concern and offering prayers for all persons adversely affected by the termination of the AFP defined benefit retirement plan, and to encourage this church to remember in prayer those current and former employees of

AFP, as well as those serving in other church-related institutions impacted by the current economic crisis;

To acknowledge with regret that this entire matter is now the subject of litigation in federal court in Minnesota and to recognize that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America must now defend itself against the claims for substantial monetary damages that are being alleged in that lawsuit, therefore to decline at this time to undertake any further investigation or review of this matter during the pendency of the lawsuit;

To refer these resolutions to the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Office of the Treasurer to explore possible ways that those seeking to assist the affected AFP retirees financially might be provided an opportunity to do so through means of a voluntary appeal or special fund for that purpose, and report their findings and possible recommendations to this Council upon conclusion of the pending lawsuit; and

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

2. Resolution Commending the ELCA's Church Council for its Leadership and Urging it to "Stay the Course" in Regard to 2009 Churchwide Assembly Actions Florida-Bahamas Synod (9E)

WHEREAS, the Synod Council of the Florida-Bahamas Synod shares with the Church Council of the ELCA the responsibility for legislative and policy direction and implementation between our respective Assemblies; and

WHEREAS, this Synod Council has strong appreciation and support for the wise, faithful, and courageous leadership consistent with this church's foundational and governing documents that has been the hallmark of the Church Council's history; and

WHEREAS, it falls to all of us with Council responsibilities at the Churchwide, Synod, and Congregation levels in this church to demonstrate the finest in such leadership traits in our sometimes arduous and demanding positions; and

WHEREAS, the Church Council has the responsibility to implement the ministry policy recommendations adopted by the 2009 Churchwide Assembly in the midst of disagreement; and

WHEREAS, in the midst of these internal and external challenges faced by the Church, the Florida-Bahamas Synod Council wishes to convey its appreciation, thanks, and support to the Church Council for its faithful leadership; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Florida-Bahamas Synod Council gives thanks to Almighty God for the gifts and discipleship of all engaged in the ministry of our Church Council and for the Council's exemplary guidance and leadership in these trying times; and be it further

RESOLVED, that we urge you, with our full support and appreciation, as well as our commitment to a constructive and positive partnership with you, to "stay the course" in moving in the positive directions toward which we have been called by the 2009 Churchwide Assembly actions, however difficult and demanding that may be; and be it further

RESOLVED, that we commit to continue to lift up Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson and the entire Church Council in prayer at every meeting of our Synod Council, asking that each of you be given the necessary vision, courage, strength, and wisdom to continue your ministry as you are called to do.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To receive with gratitude the resolution of the Florida-Bahamas Synod Council commending the ELCA Church Council for its leadership in preparation for the actions of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly;

To acknowledge the commitment to "constructive and positive partnership" expressed by the Florida-Bahamas Synod Council and to join with them and with leaders throughout

the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in prayer, partnership, and continuing work together;

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

**3. Accessibility in the ELCA and South-Central Synod of Wisconsin
South-Central Synod of Wisconsin (5K)**

WHEREAS, Jesus commissions his followers to gather disciples everywhere, and the ELCA seeks to follow this call by welcoming diversity in its communities of faith and also by continuing a healthy tradition of self-examination and change when it discovers bias in its words or actions; and

WHEREAS, liturgical and scriptural literacy is highly valued among the people of the ELCA and the ELCA has chosen the NRSV translation of the Scriptures as its accepted translation and embarked on a churchwide biblical literacy program—the Book of Faith Initiative; and

WHEREAS, Augsburg Fortress is the designated publishing house of the ELCA that provides pastors, educators, worship planners, and other members of the ELCA with products and services that communicate the Gospel, enhance faith, and enrich the life of the Christian community from a Lutheran perspective; and

WHEREAS, printed resources produced by the ELCA and Augsburg Fortress are rarely published in accessible formats, i.e., formats other than small-size print; and further, it is understood that the ELCA and Augsburg Fortress have no plans to expand the selection; and

WHEREAS, people with most kinds of vision impairment, people with certain learning disabilities, and people with other disabilities affecting the activity of reading are not able to use most of the ELCA or Augsburg Fortress materials in the available format; and

WHEREAS, individuals and congregations must spend large amounts of money and time to create or re-create materials so that people with disabilities affecting the activity of reading are able to participate fully in worship, spiritual development, and educational activities at home, school, or church; and

WHEREAS, people who are blind or otherwise visually impaired are currently involved in a struggle for basic civil rights like access to education, employment, and voting, and the ELCA ignores this struggle by promoting worship and educational materials that are available only in small-size print and by allowing inaccessible features on their Web sites thus further marginalizing many children and adults with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, in spite of these barriers, people with vision impairments and other disabilities, through their commitment to the Gospel, are already active as worshipers and leaders in ELCA congregations, schools, colleges, and seminaries; and

WHEREAS, modern technology makes production and distribution of accessible format materials easier than ever, and centralizing these functions would allow congregations across the ELCA to have more convenient and less expensive access to such materials; and

WHEREAS, the resurrection of a comprehensive ministry to provide accessible format materials to ELCA congregations would benefit and uplift the entire body of Christ; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin memorialize the Church Council to direct Augsburg Fortress to report to the 2011 Churchwide Assembly a plan to implement in its own publishing, partnership publishing, or other contracted manufacturing a way to make available at reasonable cost its printed materials (books and other forms) upon request in an appropriate accessible format that maintains the structural integrity of the original material; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin requests the Church Council at its November 2010 meeting to direct all churchwide units and encourage auxiliary organizations to design their Web sites in ways that respect the accessibility needs of people with vision impairment by using high-contrast, following W3C standards, and incorporating feedback from users with disabilities; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin requests the Church Council to direct all churchwide units of the ELCA to include information on plans to implement the accessibility to the April 2011 Church Council meeting; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the 2010 Synod Assembly of the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin requests the Synod Council to examine synodically created materials and policies on accessibility for those with disabilities and order changes to said materials and policies in the spirit of this resolution and as the Synod Council directs; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the 2010 Synod Assembly of the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin encourages all congregations within this synod to review their internal policies and materials and to make changes as needed in the spirit of this resolution; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Bishop of this Synod shall report to the 2011 Synod Assembly any actions taken on this subject by the Church Council and the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin Synod Council; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the 2010 Synod Assembly of the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin directs the Synod Secretary to forward this resolution to the Church Council and the ELCA Secretary, for consideration and possible action, and to each congregation within this synod.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To receive the resolution of the South Central Synod of Wisconsin related to accessibility in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the South Central Synod of Wisconsin;

To refer the resolution to the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit in consultation with the Office of the Presiding Bishop and Augsburg Fortress, Publishers, especially as a Message on Disabilities is drafted as requested by the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly;

To request that a report and possible recommendations be brought to the April 2011 meeting of the Church Council; and

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

4. Social Statement *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*

South Carolina Synod (9C)

WHEREAS, the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, in accordance with ELCA bylaw 12.12.01, adopted a social statement, *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*, by exactly a two-thirds vote; and

WHEREAS, the social statement has generated substantial disagreement and debate among faithful members of the ELCA; and

WHEREAS, the South Carolina Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has in assembly expressed disagreement with the social statement *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* (275 opposed, 125 in favor, 89 abstain 2009 SC Synod Bulletin of Reports); and

WHEREAS, *Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns* expressly provides for reconsideration of a social statement by the Churchwide Assembly following its adoption, and its removal or revision; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the South Carolina Synod Assembly direct the South Carolina Synod Council to request the Church Council to request the Churchwide Assembly to reconsider the social statement *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* in accordance with *Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns*.

Background information

The document guiding the reconsideration of social statements is *Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concern*. The section called "Social Statement Reconsideration" (page 17) describes the process for reconsideration:

Revised November 3, 2010

Churchwide Assemblies may reconsider previously adopted social statements. Such reconsideration may involve either a revision or removal of the statement. This may be done in two ways:

1. A Churchwide Assembly, by a two-thirds vote, may call for the reconsideration of a social statement at the next assembly. Subsequent to such a vote, the social statement shall be referred to the Church in Society unit for re-study. The proposed change and the reasons for it shall be made available to this church with an official notice of such proposed action to be sent to the synods by the secretary of this church at least three months prior to the Churchwide Assembly at which it will be considered. A two-thirds vote of the assembly shall be required to revise or remove the social statement.
2. The Church Council by a two-thirds vote of its voting members may ask the Churchwide Assembly to reconsider a social statement. Such Church Council action must be taken no later than at the Church Council meeting in the autumn prior to the assembly. The proposed change and the reasons for it shall then be made available to this church with an official notice of such proposed action to be sent to the synods by the secretary of this church at least three months prior to the Churchwide Assembly. A two-thirds vote of the assembly shall be required to reconsider the statement and also to revise or remove it. Both actions may occur at the same assembly.

In addition to the resolution of the South Carolina Synod, four synods passed memorials addressing the social statement *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*. The memorial of the South Dakota Synod requests that the 2011 Churchwide Assembly to “reconsider and remove the social statement *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* in accordance with *Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns*.” The memorials of the Metropolitan Chicago, Metropolitan New York, and the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. synods, all similarly worded, request the 2011 Churchwide Assembly “to encourage the full implementation of the social statement *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* and its implementing resolutions....” Additional memorials on this topic may be approved by the 2011 synod assemblies.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To receive the resolution of the South Carolina Synod requesting the reconsideration of the social statement, *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*;

To acknowledge that four synod assemblies in 2010 passed memorials addressing the 2011 Churchwide Assembly on this topic, one requesting reconsideration of the social statement and three requesting “full implementation” of the social statement and its implementing resolutions and to anticipate that synod assemblies in 2011 may pass additional memorials on this topic;

~~To further acknowledge that the 2011 Churchwide Assembly is the authorizing body for any action to reconsider *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* and that any action by the Church Council in November 2010 would pre-empt additional actions by synod assemblies;~~

To decline to request reconsideration of ~~consider a motion to reconsider~~ *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* by the Churchwide Assembly at this meeting of the ELCA Church Council, but to request that the resolution of the South Carolina Synod and this response be reported as information to the Memorials Committee; and

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

5. The Decade of Women—Gender Equality: Theological Reflections and Congregational Action Strategies

Southwest California Synod (2B)

WHEREAS, we celebrate this church's ordination of women as a clear public witness of the equality of women and men intended by Jesus and the early Christian community; and

WHEREAS, we globally profess to love our wives, mothers, sisters and daughters, yet leave millions of women and children displaced in the wilderness, or homeless on highways and streets, ignoring their cries for help, and remaining blind to their bruises and wounds from the violence they suffer; and

WHEREAS, a global study on the discrimination and disempowerment women face throughout their lives and how that impacts children's lives entitled the *UNICEF 2007 Report on the State of the World's Children* concluded the following:

- Gender equality is not only morally right, it is pivotal to human progress and sustainable development;
- Gender equality furthers the cause of child survival and development;
- Gender equality will not only empower women to overcome poverty and live full and productive lives, but will better the lives of children, families and countries as well;
- Women's equal rights and influence in the key decisions that shape their lives and those of children must be enhanced in three distinct arenas: the household, the workplace and the political sphere; and

WHEREAS, the 2009 Churchwide Assembly approved the creation of a Social Statement on Justice for Women (which was memorialized by this Synod); and

WHEREAS, the ELCA's implementation of "The Decade for a Culture of Peace and Nonviolence" and the "Stand With Africa" formats successfully highlighted ministry opportunities and can be readily adapted to focus directly on the obstacles and challenges faced by women around the world; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southwest California Synod Assembly direct the Synod Council to forward this resolution to the Church Council for timely consideration and possible action to adopt 2011–2020 as "The Decade of Women" within our denomination by incorporating those successful strategies as exhibited in "The Decade for a Culture of Peace and Nonviolence," and "Stand With Africa" and other gender-equality action strategies for congregations, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwest California Synod lend its voice and efforts in promoting gender equality which contributes to achieving the goals of reducing poverty and hunger, saving children's lives, improving maternal health, ensuring universal education, combating HIV and AIDS, malaria, and other diseases, and ensuring environmental sustainability, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwest California Synod Assembly commend and enhance the efforts of this church's Global Mission unit, the ELCA World Hunger Program, Lutheran World Relief, Women of the ELCA, and other ecumenical and interfaith advocacy efforts by raising awareness and funds for their important work in honoring women by faithfully addressing issues critical to their survival, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwest California Synod, through its staff, conferences, congregations and members, exercise intentional efforts to labor for real change on women's issues, especially in the areas of sexual violence, domestic violence, healthcare, human rights, displaced refugees, reproductive rights, poverty, economic and property rights, among others.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To receive the resolution of the Southwest California Synod requesting consideration of a "The Decade of Women" (2011—2020) within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;

To refer the resolution to the Office of the Presiding Bishop in consultation with the Administrative Team with a request that a report and possible recommendations be brought to the April 2011 meeting of the Church Council; and
To request that the secretary of this church inform the synod of this action.

**6. Hearing the Various Voices of this Church on the Matter of Sexuality
Allegheny Synod Assembly (8C)**

WHEREAS, the decision by the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to allow for the rostering of pastors who are in same-gender, publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous relationships has had a major effect on our church and has left many wondering how to respond faithfully to this decision; and

WHEREAS, this church can run the risk of losing the voices of that large majority of people who out of their conviction and faith in Christ find themselves somewhere in the middle of this issue and as space needs to be created for continued, respectful dialogue so that these voices are not silenced; and

WHEREAS, we believe that no one comes to their beliefs and positions lightly, that people with opposing views hold them out of their conviction of what it means to be faithful to the Gospel of Christ, and that committed Christians can come to opposing beliefs on how they are to be faithful; and

WHEREAS, we understand that the debate over this issue runs the risk of becoming so polarized that we could lose the ability to talk to and hear each other; and

WHEREAS, the Church has always faced times of tension and testing, and it has gotten through these challenges and controversies through dialogue, attention to each other, and listening to the guidance of the Holy Spirit who speaks through the Body of Christ as well as Scripture. A few examples of these challenges can be found in the controversy between Peter and Paul over circumcision (Acts 15:5–21, Galatians 2:11–21); the early Church's learning how to be God's people in this world (1 Corinthians); the Church's struggle to define its beliefs (Council of Nicaea and Arian Controversy); the Reformation to call the entire church back to the Gospel of Christ; and the struggles in the last century regarding the ordination of women; and

WHEREAS, we are called to work out our differences within the Body of Christ as part of the witness to the evidence of Jesus living in our midst, and the work of the Holy Spirit among us. By doing so we humbly offer to our communities and the world a new way, rather than retreating to the ways of the world around us. We do this remembering that, "if [we] have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if [we] have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, [we are] nothing" (1 Corinthians 13:2); and

WHEREAS, the social statement on human sexuality adopted by the 2009 Churchwide Assembly reflects the complexity of the issue. The statement includes different understandings and practices within the life of this church as it seeks to live out its mission and ministry in the world. This church recognizes with conviction and integrity all four positions as put forth in Section IV of *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*; and

WHEREAS, trusting God's Spirit to lead, we are faced with the challenging work of discerning how we are to live in this time, finding the way together, as this church. We acknowledge that there is room for discussion and group discernment and that there is time for the process of God's work leading us to find the way through the present reality; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Allegheny Synod continue in these discussions with intentional prayer for guidance of the Holy Spirit as it maps out a faithful path. Let us intentionally pray for Christ's unity amidst our differing understandings of faithful response to this issue on the first and fifteenth of each month. ~ Let us pray with each other; and be it further

RESOLVED, we commit ourselves in Christ to strive together with a spirit of compassion for the other, humility before God; love for our brothers and sisters in Christ, and respect for where other faithful Christians may be on this issue. We acknowledge that the Holy Spirit continues to be actively at work in this process, inviting us to hear each other and discern where God is leading us. ~ Let us walk with each other; and be it further

RESOLVED, that Allegheny Synod commit itself to the challenge of working out how we live under this reality, unified as the Allegheny Synod of the ELCA in this prayerful process,

working together, and listening to each other. We do this believing it is a witness to the Body of Christ which serves and furthers the mission and ministry of the one holy catholic and apostolic church for which our Lord prayed on the night of his arrest in the Gospel of John (John 17:20–23). ~ Let us work with each other; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Conference of Bishops be commended for its faithful work in recent deliberation on policies related to this topic. This is a witness to the living Christ within the Church, embracing the unity Christ offers while recognizing with conviction and integrity the various positions held on this topic. These efforts enable us to continue to work through the present situation. ~ Let us encourage one another; and be it further

RESOLVED, that, for the sake of the Gospel and the unity of the Church, the Allegheny Synod Assembly strongly urge the Church Council, Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson, and the Conference of Bishops as they continue to form and shape policies for the church regarding this issue to be about the deliberate, committed, and challenging work of: hearing the various voices of the church on this subject; praying deliberately for the Spirit's guidance on this issue; and seeking to be shaped and led by the Living Word! ~ Let us move together into the future for the sake of Christ's mission and ministry to which we are called.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To receive with gratitude the resolution of the Allegheny Synod related to “hearing the various voices of this church on the matter of sexuality” and to acknowledge the commitment of the ELCA Church Council to be attentive to this church as we

- **Pray with each other**
- **Walk with each other**
- **Work with each other**
- **Encourage each other**
- **Move together into the future for the sake of Christ's mission and ministry to which we are called;**

To invite the congregations and members of this church to respond to the call of the Allegheny Synod by hearing the various voices of the church, praying deliberately for the Spirit's guidance and seeking to be shaped and led by the Living Word on those issues that challenge us, including sexuality; and

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

7. The Timeline of the Draft Social Statement on Genetics

West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod (8H)

WHEREAS, the Conference of Bishops expressed concern about the timeline of the draft social statement on genetics during their meetings March 5-9, 2010; and

WHEREAS, some bishops expressed concern that the social statement and its potentially controversial topics are being presented to the church at a time when some parts of the ELCA are still immersed in controversy over decisions from the 2009 Churchwide Assembly; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA has continued with the timeline of its Task Force on Genetics by issuing the draft social statement for study and response despite the expressed concerns of the Conference of Bishops; and

WHEREAS, responses to the draft social statement need to be submitted prior to October 15, 2010; and

WHEREAS, this short timeline provided only seven months for the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod to coordinate efforts and to respond to a social statement with potentially controversial implications; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod ask the Church Council not to submit the social statement on genetics to the 2011 Churchwide Assembly for approval; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod ask the Church Council to instead submit the social statement on genetics to the 2013 ELCA Churchwide Assembly for approval.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To receive the resolution of the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod related to the timeline for the social statement on genetics;

To acknowledge the action of the ELCA Church Council at its November 2010 to establish a timeline for the development of social statements as the response of this council to the resolution of the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod; and

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

8a. Board of Pensions and ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund

Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod (8B)

WHEREAS, the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund (“the Fund”) experienced significant losses as a result of the recession that began in 2008; and

WHEREAS, the board of trustees of the ELCA Board of Pensions, in consultation with Board of Pensions senior staff and advisors, acted in a number of ways to address losses in the Fund, including: closing the Fund to new contributions; reducing payments to annuitants in the Fund by 9% for 2010; advising annuitants of potential decreases in annuity payments in 2011 and 2012; reducing in 2010 by 3.5% the value of not yet annuitized accounts of participants in the bridge component of the Fund; and advising these participants of potential decreases in account values in 2011 and 2012; and

WHEREAS, the 2010 reductions and possible future reductions have the potential of working severe hardships on many with fixed financial responsibilities, and puts the burden on those individuals only; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA Special Needs Retirement Fund was created to provide assistance for eligible plan participants, spouses, and surviving spouses, who have financial need; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod Assembly requests the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to consult with the Board of Pensions regarding the background of, reasons for, and implications of the decisions made with respect to the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund, to explore possible alternative ways to restore Fund losses (including congregational, synodical, or church- wide contributions, or temporary increases in payment contributions by individuals to the Fund until the Fund is brought to a “fully funded” position), and increase payment levels for annuitants and account values for those with bridge component accounts not yet annuitized, and to report on the results of the consultation at the November 2010 meeting of the Church Council; and be it further

RESOLVED, that steps be explored to mitigate the adverse effects of the Fund reductions and possible future reductions, including the expansion and promotion of the ELCA Special Needs Retirement Fund; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod Assembly direct the Synod Council to forward this resolution to the Church Council for consideration and possible action.

8b. The Board of Pensions and the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund

Metropolitan New York Synod (7C)

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Assembly request that the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America retain an external agency to consult with the Board of Pensions regarding the background of, reasons for, and implications of the decisions made with respect to the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund, to explore possible alternative ways to restore Fund losses and increase payment levels for annuitants and account values for those with bridge component accounts not yet annuitized, and to report on the results

of the external agency-consultation at the November 2010 meeting of the Church Council; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Assembly request the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to direct that steps be explored to mitigate the adverse effects of the Fund reductions and possible future reductions, including the expansion and promotion of the ELCA Special Needs Retirement Fund, and that the results of that exploration be reported to all congregation, agencies and institutions of the ELCA and to all participants in the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund and/or the ELCA Special Needs Retirement Fund; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America be requested by the Metropolitan New York Synod in Assembly to insure that reconsideration of the drastic actions taken by the Board of Pensions be undertaken, with a view to alleviating the hardships imposed upon retirees, their spouses, surviving spouses, and their families, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Assembly direct the Synod Council to forward this resolution to the Church Council for consideration and possible action.

**8c. Board of Pensions and ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund
Northeastern Iowa Synod (5F)**

WHEREAS, the ELCA Board of Pensions has informed pensioners in the Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund that their monthly annuity payments may be decreased by 9% in each of the years 2010, 2011, and 2012 (an accumulated decrease of 25% from the 2009 level) based on “future investment returns in the Fund of 7.6% per annum”; and

WHEREAS, this reduction has the potential of working a severe hardship on those with fixed responsibilities, especially those “who have served so faithfully and generously—with passion for the Gospel and compassion for God’s people” (the Rev. Mark S. Hanson, presiding bishop) in congregations with reduced means; and

WHEREAS, the theology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America proclaims that we are one church in the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12: 14–26); and

WHEREAS, the ELCA social statement *Economic Life: Sufficient and Sustainable Livelihood for All* states, “We commit ourselves as a church to . . . provide adequate pension and health benefits”; and

WHEREAS, the plan of the Board of Pensions to correct the current under-funding puts the burden of that correction on the pensioners only; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Iowa Synod Council request the ELCA Church Council to consult with the Board of Pensions in order to explore a variety of ways, including congregational or churchwide contributions, so that the Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund can be brought to a “fully funded” position or carry a reasonable “unfunded liability,” in order that the reductions in payment to pensioners can be reversed or ameliorated as quickly as possible; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that a thorough review of policy regarding investments be conducted so that the effects of sharp market volatility might be mitigated in view of hardship imposed upon retirees, their spouses, surviving spouses, and their families.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To receive the resolutions of the Southwestern Pennsylvania, Metropolitan New York, and Northeastern Iowa synods related to the ELCA Board of Pensions annuity funding;

To acknowledge the action of the Church Council in August 2010 to establish an Ad Hoc Committee with the following members: Church Council: David Anderson, Mark Helmke, Ann Niedringhaus, Carlos Peña (convener); liaison bishops: Callon Holloway, Jr.,

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Exhibit B, Part 1a

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Martin Wells; advisory member: Lois O'Rourke, chair, Board of Pensions Board of Trustees; ex-officio: Christina Jackson-Skelton, ELCA treasurer and David Swartling, ELCA secretary; Board of Pensions staff liaison: Robert Berg; churchwide staff liaison: Ruth Hamilton, Office of the Secretary;

To anticipate a report and recommendations from the Ad Hoc Committee at the November 2010 meeting of the Church Council related to the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund, including but not limited to:

- 1. Consultation with the Board of Pensions regarding the background of, reasons for, and implications of the decisions made with respect to the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund; and**
- 2. Exploration of possible:**
 - a. alternative ways to restore Fund losses and increase payment levels for annuitants and account values for those with bridge component accounts not yet annuitized;**
 - b. steps to mitigate adverse effects of the Fund reductions and possible future reductions, including the expansion and promotion of the ELCA Special Needs Retirement Fund;**

To acknowledge the action of the ELCA Church Council related to possible recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee as the response of the Church Council to all synodical resolutions on this issue; and

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

Proposed Responses to Synod Resolutions

1a. Resolution Concerning ELCA Board of Pensions Decisions Pertaining to a Shortfall in Board of Pension Annuity Commitments Minneapolis Area Synod (3G)

WHEREAS, the theology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) includes the understanding that we are all one in the Body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:14–26); and

WHEREAS, the ELCA “Economic Life: Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All”, adopted by the sixth Churchwide Assembly on August 20, 1999, in Denver, Colorado, states in part, “We commit ourselves as a church to ... provide adequate pension and health benefits ...”; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Pensions of the ELCA (the Board) has a fiduciary responsibility to manage the pension funds so that they will adequately fund the annuity obligations owed to pensioners; and

WHEREAS, the Board’s plan to correct an underfunding of pension obligations to former employees puts much of the burden on the pensioners (with some experiencing greater hardship because of the cuts) and does not share the burden with the entire Body of Christ; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Minneapolis Area Synod meeting in assembly urge the ELCA Church Council to request that the Board reevaluate both the bases of loss in the Board’s formula that measures the gap to an average high over the past 10 years and thereby re-determine the gap that the Board needs to cut annuities; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Minneapolis Area Synod meeting in assembly urge the ELCA Church Council to request that the Board reconsider those who have experienced this cut as a major hardship; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Minneapolis Area Synod meeting in assembly urge the ELCA Church Council to request that the executive staff of the Board look for additional ways to re-fund the under-funding in the Annuity Fund; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Church Council urge the Board of Pensions to separate the Annuity and Bridge Fund into two separate funds and manage the Annuity Fund in a more conservative and less risky way, so that in the future it will not experience the loss experienced in this last recession.

1b. Board of Pensions and ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod (4F)

WHEREAS, the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund (“the Fund”) experienced significant losses as a result of the recession that began in 2008; and

WHEREAS, the board of trustees of the ELCA Board of Pensions, in consultation with Board of Pensions senior staff and advisors, acted in a number of ways to address losses in the Fund, including: closing the Fund to new contributions; reducing payments to annuitants in the Fund by 9% for 2010; advising annuitants of potential decreases in annuity payments in 2011 and 2012; reducing in 2010 by 3.5% the value of not yet annuitized accounts of participants in the bridge component of the Fund; and advising these participants of potential decreases in account values in 2011 and 2012; and

WHEREAS, the 2010 reductions and possible future reductions have the potential of working severe hardships on many with fixed financial responsibilities; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA Special Needs Retirement Fund was created to provide assistance for eligible plan participants, spouses, and surviving spouses, who have financial need; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod Assembly requests the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to consult with the Board of Pensions regarding the background of, reasons for, and implications of the decisions made with respect to the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund, to explore possible alternative ways to restore Fund losses and increase payment levels for annuitants and account values for those with bridge

component accounts not yet annuitized, and to report on the results of the consultation at the November 2010 meeting of the Church Council; and be it further

RESOLVED, that steps be explored to mitigate the adverse effects of the Fund reductions and possible future reductions, including the expansion and promotion of the ELCA Special Needs Retirement Fund; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod Assembly direct the Synod Council to forward this resolution to the Church Council for consideration and possible action.

**1c. Board of Pensions Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund
Southwestern Minnesota Synod (3F)**

RESOLVED, that Southwestern Minnesota Synod at its 2010 Assembly request the Church Council to explore and implement, in partnership with the ELCA Board of Pensions, strategies to restore the reduction and cancel any future reductions to the recipients of the ELCA Board of Pensions Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Minnesota Synod Assembly requests the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to consult with the Board of Pensions regarding the background of, reasons for, and implications of the decisions made with respect to the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund, to explore possible alternative ways to restore Fund losses and increase payment levels for annuitants and account values for those with bridge component accounts not yet annuitized, and to report on the results of the consultation at the November 2010 meeting of the Church Council; and be it further

RESOLVED, that steps be explored to mitigate the adverse effects of the Fund reductions and possible future reductions, including the expansion and promotion of the ELCA Special Needs Retirement Fund; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Minnesota Synod Assembly direct the Synod Council to forward this resolution to the Church Council for consideration and possible action.

**1d. Underfunding of ELCA Board of Pensions
South Dakota Synod (3C)**

WHEREAS, the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund ("the Fund") experienced significant losses as a result of the recession that began in 2008; and

WHEREAS, the board of trustees of the ELCA Board of Pensions, in consultation with Board of Pensions senior staff and advisors, acted in a number of ways to address losses in the Fund, including: closing the Fund to new contributions; reducing payments to annuitants in the Fund by 9% for 2010; advising annuitants of potential decreases in annuity payments in 2011 and 2012; reducing in 2010 by 3.5% the value of not yet annuitized accounts of participants in the bridge component of the Fund; and advising these participants of potential decreases in account values in 2011 and 2012; and

WHEREAS, the 2010 reductions and possible future reductions have the potential of working severe hardships on many with fixed financial responsibilities; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA Special Needs Retirement Fund was created to provide assistance for eligible plan participants, spouses, and surviving spouses, who have financial need; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the South Dakota Synod Assembly request that the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America consult with the Board of Pensions regarding the background of, reasons for, and implications of the decisions made with respect to the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund, to explore possible alternative ways to restore Fund losses and increase payment levels for annuitants and account values for those with bridge component accounts not yet annuitized, and to report on the results of the consultation at the November 2010 meeting of the Church Council; and be it further

RESOLVED, that steps be explored to mitigate the adverse effects of the Fund reductions and possible future reductions, including the expansion and promotion of the ELCA Special Needs Retirement Fund; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the South Dakota Synod Assembly direct the Synod Council to forward this resolution to the Church Council for consideration and possible action.

**1e. Board of Pensions and ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund
Upstate New York Synod Council (7D)**

WHEREAS, the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund (“the Fund”) experienced significant losses as a result of the recession that began in 2008; and

WHEREAS, the board of trustees of the ELCA Board of Pensions, in consultation with Board of Pensions senior staff and advisors, acted in a number of ways to address losses in the Fund, including: closing the Fund to new contributions; reducing payments to annuitants in the Fund by 9% for 2010; advising annuitants of potential decreases in annuity payments in 2011 and 2012; reducing in 2010 by 3.5% the value of not yet annuitized accounts of participants in the bridge component of the Fund; and advising these participants of potential decreases in account values in 2011 and 2012; and

WHEREAS, the 2010 reductions and possible future reductions have the potential of working severe hardships on many with fixed financial responsibilities; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA Special Needs Retirement Fund was created to provide assistance for eligible plan participants, spouses, and surviving spouses, who have financial need; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Upstate New York Synod Council requests the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to consult with the Board of Pensions regarding the background of, reasons for, and implications of the decisions made with respect to the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund, to explore possible alternative ways to restore Fund losses and increase payment levels for annuitants and account values for those with bridge component accounts not yet annuitized, and to report on the results of the consultation at the November 2010 meeting of the Church Council; and be it further

RESOLVED, that steps be explored to mitigate the adverse effects of the Fund reductions and possible future reductions, including the expansion and promotion of the ELCA Special Needs Retirement Fund.

**1f. Board of Pensions and ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund
La Crosse Area Synod (5L)**

WHEREAS, the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund (“the Fund”) experienced significant losses as a result of the recession Mat began in 2008; and

WHEREAS, the board of trustees of the ELCA Board of Pensions, in consultation with Board of Pensions senior staff end advisors, acted in a number of ways to address losses in the Fund, including: closing the Fund to new contributions; reducing payments to annuitants in the Fund by 9% for 2010; advising annuitants of potential decreases in annuity payments in 2011 and 2012; reducing in 2010 by 3.5% the value of not yet annuitized accounts of participants in the bridge component of the Fund; and advising these participants of potential decreases in account values in 2011 and 2012; and

WHEREAS, the 2010 reductions and possible future reductions have the potential of working severe hardships on many with fixed financial responsibilities; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA Special Needs Retirement Fund was created to provide assistance for eligible plan participants, spouses, and surviving spouses, who have financial need; therefore, be it

RESOLVED that the La Crosse Area Synod Assembly requests the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to consult with the Board of Pensions regarding the background of, reasons for, and implications of the decisions made with respect to the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund, to explore possible alternative ways to restore Fund losses and increase payment levels for annuitants and account values for those with bridge

component accounts not yet annuitized, and to report on the results of the consultation at the November 2010 meeting of the Church Council; and be it further

RESOLVED, that steps be explored to mitigate the adverse effects of the Fund reductions and possible future reductions, including the expansion and promotion of the ELCA Special Needs Retirement Fund; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the La Crosse Area Synod Assembly direct the Synod Council to forward this resolution to the Church Council for consideration and possible action.

**1g. ELCA Board of Pensions Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund
Greater Milwaukee Synod (5J)**

WHEREAS, the theology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) is that it is one church in the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:14–26); and

WHEREAS, the Lutheran church bodies which are the predecessor church bodies of the ELCA have a 250-year history of being concerned that its retired clergy and rostered lay workers have adequate pensions; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA social statement on economic life, *Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All*, adopted by the sixth Churchwide Assembly on August 20, 1999, in Denver, Colorado, states in part, “We commit ourselves as a church to . . . provide adequate pension and health benefits;” and

WHEREAS, the ELCA Board of Pensions has a fiduciary responsibility to manage the pension funds; and

WHEREAS, the plan of the ELCA Board of Pensions to correct the underfunding puts the burden of that correction on the faithful pensioners that participated in the Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Greater Milwaukee Synod at its 2010 Assembly request the Church Council to explore and implement, in partnership with the Board of Pensions, strategies to restore the reduction and cancel any future reductions to the recipients of the ELCA Board of Pensions Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Greater Milwaukee Synod Assembly requests the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to consult with the Board of Pensions regarding the background of, reasons for, and implications of the decisions made with respect to the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund, to explore possible alternative ways to restore Fund losses and increase payment levels for annuitants and account values for those with bridge component accounts not yet annuitized, and to report on the results of the consultation at the November 2010 meeting of the Church Council; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Greater Milwaukee Synod Assembly requests the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to explore steps with the Board of Pensions to mitigate the adverse effects of the Fund reductions and possible future reductions, including the expansions and promotion of the ELCA Special Needs Retirement Fund; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Greater Milwaukee Synod Assembly direct the Synod Council to forward this resolution to the Church Council for consideration and possible action.

**1h. Board of Pensions and ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund
New Jersey Synod (7A)**

WHEREAS, the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund (“the Fund”) experienced significant losses as a result of the recession that began in 2008; and

WHEREAS, the board of trustees of the ELCA Board of Pensions, in consultation with Board of Pensions senior staff and advisors, acted in a number of ways to address losses in the Fund, including: closing the Fund to new contributions; reducing payments to annuitants in the Fund by 9% for 2010; advising annuitants of potential decreases in annuity payments in 2011 and 2012; reducing in 2010 by 3.5%

the value of not yet annuitized accounts of participants in the bridge component of the Fund; and advising these participants of potential decreases in account values in 2011 and 2012; and

WHEREAS, the 2010 reductions and possible future reductions have the potential of working severe hardships on many with fixed financial responsibilities; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA Special Needs Retirement Fund was created to provide assistance for eligible plan participants, spouses, and surviving spouses, who have financial need; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the New Jersey Synod Assembly ask the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to consult with the Board of Pensions regarding the background of, reasons for, and implications of the decisions made with respect to the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund, to explore possible alternative ways to restore Fund losses and increase payment levels for annuitants and account values for those with bridge component accounts not yet annuitized, and to report on the results of the consultation at the November 2010 meeting of the Church Council; and be it further

RESOLVED, that steps be explored to mitigate the adverse effects of the Fund reductions and possible future reductions, including the expansion and promotion of the ELCA Special Needs Retirement Fund; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the New Jersey Synod Assembly direct the Synod Council to forward this resolution to the Church Council for consideration and possible action; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the New Jersey Synod take leadership in supporting the Special Needs Retirement Fund of the Board of Pensions to assist those who are in or on the edge of poverty.

**1i. Board of Pensions and ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund
Northern Illinois Synod (5B)**

WHEREAS, the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund (“the Fund”) experienced significant losses as a result of the recession that began in 2008; and

WHEREAS, the board of trustees of the ELCA Board of Pensions, in consultation with Board of Pensions senior staff and advisors, acted in a number of ways to address losses in the Fund, including: closing the Fund to new contributions; reducing payments to annuitants in the Fund by 9% for 2010; advising annuitants of potential decreases in annuity payments in 2011 and 2012; reducing in 2010 by 3.5% the value of not yet annuitized accounts of participants in the bridge component of the Fund; and advising these participants of potential decreases in account values in 2011 and 2012; and

WHEREAS, the 2010 reductions and possible future reductions have the potential of working severe hardships on many with fixed financial responsibilities; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA Special Needs Retirement Fund was created to provide assistance for eligible plan participants, spouses, and surviving spouses, who have financial need; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Northern Illinois Synod Assembly request the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to consult with the Board of Pensions regarding the background of, reasons for, and implications of the decisions made with respect to the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund, to explore possible alternative ways to restore Fund losses and increase payment levels for annuitants and account values for those with bridge component accounts not yet annuitized, and to report on the results of the consultation at the November 2010 meeting of the Church Council, and to those members who experienced a reduction in their pensions; and be it further

RESOLVED, that steps be explored to mitigate the adverse effects of the Fund reductions and possible future reductions, including the expansion and promotion of the ELCA Special Needs Retirement Fund; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northern Illinois Synod Assembly direct the Synod Council to forward this resolution to the Church Council for consideration and possible action.

[Please note: The resolutions from the Northeastern Iowa, Metropolitan New York and Southwestern Pennsylvania synods related to the ELCA Board of Pensions annuity funding are provided in Exhibit B, Part 1a.]

Church Council Action [CC10.08.33a]

To receive the resolutions of the Minneapolis Area, Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast, Southwestern Minnesota, South Dakota, Upstate New York, La Crosse Area, Greater Milwaukee, New Jersey, and Northern Illinois synods related to the ELCA Board of Pensions annuity funding;

To establish an Ad Hoc Committee, including the following members:

1. Church Council: David Anderson, Mark Helmke, Ann Niedringhaus, Carlos Peña (convener)
2. Board of Pensions: Lois O'Rourke, chair, Board of Trustees
3. Liaison Bishops: Callon Holloway, Jr., Martin Wells
4. Ex-Officio: Christina Jackson-Skelton, ELCA treasurer and David Swartling, ELCA secretary
5. Board of Pensions staff liaison: Robert Berg
6. Churchwide staff liaison: Ruth Hamilton, Office of the Secretary;

To request that the Ad Hoc Committee respond to synodical resolutions related to the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund, including but not limited to:

1. Consultation with the Board of Pensions regarding the background of, reasons for, and implications of the decisions made with respect to the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund; and
2. Exploration of possible:
 - a. alternative ways to restore Fund losses and increase payment levels for annuitants and account values for those with bridge component accounts not yet annuitized;
 - b. steps to mitigate adverse effects of the Fund reductions and possible future reductions, including the expansion and promotion of the ELCA Special Needs Retirement Fund;

To request that a report and possible recommendations be brought to the November 2010 meeting of the ELCA Church Council; and

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

Response from Ad Hoc Committee

Please see the report of the Ad Hoc Committee as provided in the agenda.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To receive report of the Ad Hoc Committee created to respond to the resolutions of the following synods related to the ELCA Board of Pensions annuity funding: the South Dakota, Southwestern Minnesota, Minneapolis Area, Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast, Northern Illinois, Northeastern Iowa, Greater Milwaukee, La Crosse Area, New Jersey, Metropolitan New York, Upstate New York, and Southwestern Pennsylvania synods;

To acknowledge the report of the Ad Hoc Committee as the response of the Church Council to the synods' resolutions as well as any future resolutions received on this topic; and

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

**2. Support and Encouragement for Waldorf College
Western Iowa Synod (5E)**

WHEREAS, Waldorf College was founded in 1903 by Lutherans as an expression of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and has been a valued leader in Lutheran higher education since that time; and

WHEREAS, Waldorf College has been an active partner in ministry to and with the Western Iowa Synod since the founding of this synod; and

WHEREAS, Waldorf College is now owned by Mayes Education, Inc., a subsidiary of Columbia Southern University; and

WHEREAS, Mayes Education is open to and welcoming of a continued Lutheran presence on the Waldorf campus; and

WHEREAS, the Waldorf Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit entity, has been established as a separate entity from Waldorf College to provide scholarships to Lutheran and non-Lutheran students who attend Waldorf College, and to support Campus Ministry on the Waldorf campus; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA continues to explore the possibility of an on-going relationship between the ELCA and Waldorf College and/or the Waldorf Foundation, and

WHEREAS, Immanuel Lutheran Church of Forest City, Iowa, is open and willing to partner with the Waldorf Foundation to build and support Campus Ministry on the Waldorf campus; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the congregations of the Western Iowa Synod give prayerful, spiritual support to Waldorf College, the Waldorf Foundation, Immanuel Lutheran Church, and Mayes Education, Inc., during this time of exploration, discovery, and transition; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Western Iowa Synod Assembly direct the Synod Council to encourage the Office of Bishop to seek ways to assist and encourage congregations of the synod to financially support Campus Ministry on the Waldorf College campus through the Waldorf Foundation; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Western Iowa Synod Assembly supports and encourages the Vocation and Education program unit of the ELCA to continue to recognize Waldorf College as a historically Lutheran college and to work to maintain a spiritual and ecclesiastical relationship with the college into the future.

Executive Committee Action [EC10.08.13a]:

To receive the resolution of the Western Iowa Synod related to support and encouragement for Waldorf College;

To refer the resolution to the Vocation and Education program unit, in consultation with Development Services and the Western Iowa Synod, and to request that a report and possible recommendations be brought to the November 2010 meeting of the ELCA Church Council; and

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

Response from the Vocation and Education unit

For several years through 2009, Waldorf College faced severe challenges to its financial viability. This situation, common to many small colleges, had many causes, including lower than optimal enrollment and a very small endowment. Waldorf's board and administration worked very hard to find a way to continue its existence as a non-profit, ELCA-related college. In addition to the active involvement of Bishop Michael Last as a member of the board, Stan Olson from Vocation and Education (VE) had been active as the churchwide organization's liaison to the board for two years. The board was comprised primarily of ELCA members, both from Iowa and across the church.

At the point when the possibility of sustaining the college as a private college with its existing revenue sources seemed unlikely, the Waldorf administration and board began to

explore other options, including sale to a for-profit entity. During these years the college also established the Waldorf Lutheran College Foundation, a separately incorporated 501(c)(3) nonprofit entity. Both these actions have born fruit.

After extensive negotiations, including work with bond holders and accrediting agencies, Waldorf College was sold in January 2010 to Mayes Education, Inc., a family corporation with many years of experience in online education, which was seeking a way to expand its offerings with a residential campus and a liberal arts curriculum. The college accepted this sale as the best way to preserve the college and its mission of educating young people for service in the world. Vocation and Education staff members believe the principles of this church's social statement, "Our Calling in Education," undergird the conviction that those engaged in a for-profit educational endeavor legitimately can approach that work through a Lutheran understanding of vocation. Given that their vocation includes preparing young people for their own vocations, this church can share a vision for appropriate mission with such a school. How this church might relate directly to a for-profit school is largely unexplored territory. VE staff members have indicated their willingness to engage in such exploration.

At no time in the conversations and negotiations between Waldorf College and Mayes Education or after the sale did Mayes Education indicate to churchwide staff that they had any desire to find a way to maintain the former relationship with the ELCA. Nor did they suggest any desire to develop new ways to relate formally. There were direct and cordial conversations among Vocation and Education staff members and the principles of Mayes Education, but because the college did not care to pursue this, there was never any exploration by the ELCA as to whether it would be legally and ecclesially possible and wise to seek a new formal relationship. During a final consultation this spring, college officials indicated that any future connections should be through the Waldorf College Foundation. The ELCA's relationship with college officials continues to be amicable. We anticipate the possibility of future conversations, but we have pursued instead a connection to the foundation.

The Waldorf Lutheran College Foundation is now operating with a small endowment and with staffing provided by Waldorf College. In 2009, the final grant through the churchwide organization was directed to the foundation rather than to the college itself to facilitate transition in the work this church has supported there. Publicity from the foundation indicates their intent to focus on scholarships, alumni relations and campus ministry. Vocation and Education staff members have been in ongoing conversation with the foundation's board and staff. The foundation's leaders are open to exploring a formal relationship with the ELCA. Our suggestion to them has been that they explore applying to be acknowledged by the Church Council as an Independent Lutheran Organization. The foundation board was to discuss this at its September 2010 meeting. Preparing for that application would require some clarifying of their governing documents and/or purpose statement.

The Waldorf Lutheran College Foundation is now working with Immanuel Lutheran Church of Forest City to provide part-time campus ministry to Waldorf students. A program has been established that includes many of the elements of ministry that were available under the college's ELCA-related status. Vocation and Education staff are in conversation with Immanuel's pastor, offering counsel on the ministry and offering to explore with them a formal connection with ELCA campus ministry. The intern who is staffing the campus ministry has been invited to the ELCA Campus Ministry new staff orientation this fall.

Because of the present financial realities, we anticipate the rapid phase-out of the program of grants to ELCA-related colleges. However, even if the program were to continue,

neither could a grant be given to a for-profit school, nor is there any provision for regular grants to foundations, even Lutheran ones. It is possible that the Waldorf Lutheran College Foundation and/or Immanuel Lutheran Church could seek churchwide and synod support for the new campus ministry. No such requests have been received, nor is it clear that funds would be available, but a request would be in order and would be considered carefully.

The staff of the Western Iowa Synod does not anticipate that the synod will be able to offer any significant financial support. However, the synod does stand ready to use its communication resources to tell the story of the foundation as an opportunity to perpetuate the important Lutheran presence that has and could continue to be a part of the fabric of the Waldorf community.

The ELCA Foundation worked in conjunction with the Advancement Department of Waldorf Lutheran College Foundation with regard to donors who had named Waldorf College as the charitable beneficiary of a deferred gift. Donors whose gifts were generated by the ELCA Foundation were contacted by our staff regarding beneficiary changes. The vast majority of gifts were generated by Waldorf College, and these donors were contacted directly by the Advancement Department of Waldorf Lutheran College Foundation. The ELCA Foundation currently administers 34 deferred gift contracts that now benefit the Waldorf Foundation.

The ELCA Foundation manages only one endowment that named Waldorf College as a beneficiary. The endowment agreement allows for the ELCA, through the ELCA Church Council, to name a “similar or complimentary ministry” to receive the annual distributions from this endowment. In consultation with the Vocation and Education unit and the Office of the Treasurer, the ELCA Foundation will develop a recommendation for redirecting the distributions from this endowment for consideration and action by the Church Council.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To receive with gratitude the response of the Vocation and Education unit to the resolution of the Western Iowa Synod related to Waldorf College;

To encourage the appropriate churchwide units and the Western Iowa Synod to continue exploring opportunities for shared mission with the Waldorf Lutheran College Foundation, particularly in the area of campus ministry;

To anticipate a recommendation from the ELCA Foundation to name a “similar or complimentary ministry” to receive the annual distributions from the endowment managed by the Foundation on behalf of Waldorf College; and

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

3. Lay Rostered Leaders

South Carolina Synod (9C)

WHEREAS, in February 2007, this church’s Vocation and Education unit convened a consultation of representatives of the three lay rosters (Associates in Ministry, Deaconesses, and Diaconal Ministers), synodical bishops, churchwide staff, seminary and college faculty, and agency leaders to articulate ways in which the theology and experience of vocation and service should define the role of lay rostered persons as publicly called leaders in the ELCA in the twenty-first century; and

WHEREAS, as a follow-up to this churchwide consultation, regional consultations are convening throughout the ELCA to continue discussions of these issues; and

WHEREAS, in March 2009, ordained and lay rostered persons came together with the bishops of each synod in Region 9 for a follow-up consultation to consider the ministry of Word and Service in the ELCA; and

WHEREAS, members of the regional consultation affirmed that a sense of call is central to the vocation of all people of God through baptism and assumes particular expressions for rostered persons; and

WHEREAS, members of the regional consultation agreed that the existing lay rosters share much in common with ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament, while acknowledging that a need exists among all four rosters of this church for better relationships that recognize partnership in ministry and enhance mutual understanding; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA currently lacks sufficient language to convey with theological clarity an accurate description of the functions that honor the vocation of all the baptized while recognizing the significant and distinctive roles of the four rosters of this church; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the South Carolina Synod encourage continued conversation among the four rosters around the issues of partnership in ministry and mutual understanding raised at the churchwide and regional consultations; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the South Carolina Synod ask the Vocation and Education unit of the ELCA to work toward developing theologically coherent language for use among the rosters of this church which honors the commonality of the rosters while respecting their differences; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the South Carolina Synod Assembly direct the Synod Council to forward this resolution to the Church Council for consideration and possible action.

Executive Committee Action [EC10.08.13b]

To receive the resolution of the South Carolina Synod related to lay rostered leaders;

To refer the resolution to the Vocation and Education program unit with a request that a report and possible recommendations be brought to the April 2011 meeting of the ELCA Church Council; and

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

Response from Vocation and Education unit

In response to the March 2010 report and recommendations from the two-year *ad hoc* Public Ministry Consultations Planning Team, the Vocation and Education unit has prepared a report and recommendation on these matters. The South Carolina Synod Assembly's resolution is understood as implicitly supportive of the *ad hoc* team's work and also of the recommendation below. The background and recommendation is in the *En Bloc* section of the agenda under the title, "Recommendations of the Public Ministry Consultations Planning Team."

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To receive the response of the Vocation and Education unit in response to the resolution of the South Carolina Synod related to lay rostered leaders;

To acknowledge the action of the Church Council in response to the "Recommendations of the Public Ministry Consultations Planning Team" as the Church Council's response to the resolution from the South Carolina Synod assembly; and

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

4. Rostered Leader Profiles

Upper Susquehanna Synod (8E)

WHEREAS, the pastoral call is an intimate relationship between the pastor and the congregation; and

WHEREAS, a knowledgeable evaluation from many perspectives of a pastor's current situation and style is most appropriate for the call process; and

WHEREAS, the current Rostered Leader Profile (RLP) of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) requires a current member of the pastor's congregation to provide a personal reference for a pastor seeking a call in another congregation; and

WHEREAS, this requirement is sometimes not practical and may threaten the pastor/congregation relationship; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Upper Susquehanna Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America request that the ELCA program unit for Vocation and Education modify the current clergy RLP to remove the requirement for a recommendation by a current congregational member; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Upper Susquehanna Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America request that the ELCA program unit for Vocation and Education modify the current RLP to replace the requirement for a recommendation by a current congregational member with a requirement for a recommendation by "a non-rostered person who knows the pastor's current situation and pastoral style" or words to that effect.

Executive Committee Action [EC10.08.13c]

To receive the resolution of the Upper Susquehanna Synod related to lay rostered leaders;

To refer the resolution to the Vocation and Education program unit with a request that a report and possible recommendations be brought to the April 2011 meeting of the ELCA Church Council; and

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

Response from Vocation and Education unit

The online "Rostered Leader Profile" system was tested first for members of the three Word and service rosters. With the learnings from that experience, a team convened by the Vocation and Education unit made extensive revisions to the forms and in the processes so that the system could be used for all four rosters. Both process and forms were developed and modified in consultation with the Conference of Bishops over a period of two years. The system was put in operation in June 2009 and has been well received.

The resolution from the Upper Susquehanna Synod asks for a change to page 6 of the Rostered Leader Profile (RLP). That page asks for names and contact information for five people: the synodical bishop, an ELCA pastor, *a lay person in the current or most recent ministry setting* [emphasis added], a lay person who is not a member of the current ministry setting and a supervisor or colleague who knows the rostered leader well. In addition, the page requests "the name of a lay person who is able to observe you in your current ministry and is willing to offer a brief recommendation. Your reference will be asked to complete a questionnaire and offer comments on your ministry."

The resolution refers to the request italicized above, a lay person in the current or most recent ministry setting. The expressed concern is that this may not be practical and may "threaten the pastor/congregation relationship." Although it is not stated explicitly, the point seems to be that a rostered leader's current ministry might be undermined if members knew that he or she is open to another call.

While recognizing the validity of the underlying concern, it is suggested that there is a strong reason not to change the form, since there are several other ways for an individual to deal with the concern. First, a reference from a member of the current ministry provides a different kind of information than is provided by one who is outside that ministry. A non-member reference also is requested. The two are complementary; an important perspective could be lost if no member reference were included. Second, it is the rostered leader who completes this form. The rostered leader has several options to address the stated concern. For example, he or she normally would

be able to find one member who could be trusted with a confidential conversation about the reasons the rostered leader wants to be available for call. In addition, the rostered leader could indicate to each synod receiving the form that the current member named should be contacted only after the rostered person has given advance notice. Finally, the rostered person could decline to enter a name in the blank, indicating that the name would be supplied at the appropriate time and explaining the reasons to his or her bishop and the bishop of each synod receiving the form.

CC ACTION [*EN BLOC*]

To receive the response of the Vocation and Education unit to the Upper Susquehanna Synod requesting a revision to the Rostered Leader Profile;

**To express gratitude to the synod for the request, but to decline to make the requested change in the Rostered Leader Profile as detailed in the background information provided;
and**

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

Proposed Responses to Churchwide Assembly Actions

**1. Worship and Educational Materials in Braille, Large Print, and Audio
[Memorial Category B7] [CA09.03.12]**

a. Upstate New York Synod (7D)

WHEREAS, the Good News is a life-giving gift of God, meant to be shared freely with everyone, like sunlight or oxygen; and

WHEREAS, Jesus commissions his followers to gather disciples everywhere, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) seeks to follow this call by welcoming diversity in its communities of faith and also by continuing a healthy tradition of self-examination and change when bias is discovered in words or actions; and

WHEREAS, in John 9:3, Jesus specifically affirms God's calling for people who are blind, saying, "[this man] was born blind so that God's works might be revealed to him," and the man in the story goes on to demonstrate this by courageously witnessing to Christ, just as many people with low vision or blindness continue to do today; and

WHEREAS, people who have low vision or blindness are involved in an ongoing struggle for basic civil rights like access to voting and education, and the ELCA should support this struggle as part of its commitment to promoting justice for all God's children; and

WHEREAS, people with low vision and blindness are already active as worshipers and leaders in ELCA congregations and seminaries; and

WHEREAS, promoting the availability of Braille, large-print, and audio resources would encourage growth in our church membership; and

WHEREAS, modern technology makes production and distribution of large-print, audio, and Braille materials easier than ever before, and centralizing these functions would allow congregations across the ELCA to have more convenient and less expensive access to such materials, and

WHEREAS, the formation of the ELCA included an organization called the ELCA Braille & Tape Service, later renamed ELCA Braille & Tape Ministry, which became inactive in 2004; and

WHEREAS, since 2004 the ELCA has promoted worship and education resources (*Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, Book of Faith resources, social statements, Christian education materials, etc.) that are available only in small-size print, thus marginalizing children and adults who read Braille or large print and use audio resources; and

WHEREAS, the resurrection of a comprehensive program to provide Braille and large-print and audio resources to ELCA congregations would benefit and uplift the entire body of Christ; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Upstate New York Synod in assembly memorialize the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to provide financial and other support for the creation of a new full-time program to make resources readily available in Braille, large print, and audio form.

**b. Publication of *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* in Braille
Minneapolis Area Synod (3G)**

WHEREAS, hymns are a wonderful tool for members of a congregation to use for inspiration as well as bringing joy, faith-building, and healing for their lives as a community as well as individually; and

WHEREAS, blind people are members of congregations and have the same spiritual needs as the sighted; and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) produced a Braille version of the *Lutheran Book of Worship*, and many blind people are accustomed to its use; and

WHEREAS, Braille printers are expensive for most people to purchase; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Minneapolis Area Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to commit sufficient funding for the publication of a Braille version of the *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*.

**c. Additional Formats for Worship and Educational Materials
Southern Ohio Synod (6F)**

WHEREAS, the Good News is a life-giving gift of God, meant to be shared freely with everyone, like sunlight or oxygen; and

WHEREAS, Jesus commissions his followers to gather disciples everywhere, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) seeks to follow this call by welcoming diversity in its communities of faith and also by continuing a healthy tradition of self-examination and change when bias is discovered in words or actions; and

WHEREAS, in John 9:3, Jesus specifically affirms God's calling for people who are blind, saying, "[this man] was born blind so that God's works might be revealed to him," and the man in the story goes on to demonstrate this by courageously witnessing to Christ, just as many people with low vision or blindness continue to do today; and

WHEREAS, people who have low vision or blindness are involved in an ongoing struggle for basic civil rights like access to voting and education, and the ELCA ignores this struggle by continuing to promote worship and educational resources (such as *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, the NRSV Bible, social statements, and Christian education materials) that are available only in small-size print, thus marginalizing children and adults who read Braille or large print; and

WHEREAS, people with low vision and blindness are already active as worshipers and leaders in ELCA congregations and seminaries; and

WHEREAS, promoting the availability of Braille and large-print resources would encourage growth in membership of this church; and

WHEREAS, modern technology makes production and distribution of large-print and Braille materials easier than ever before, and centralizing these functions would allow congregations across the ELCA to have more convenient and less expensive access to such materials, and

WHEREAS, the formation of the ELCA in 1988 included an organization called the ELCA Braille and Tape Service, later renamed ELCA Braille and Tape Ministry, which became inactive in 2004; and

WHEREAS, the resurrection of a comprehensive program to provide Braille and large-print resources to ELCA congregations would benefit and uplift the entire body of Christ; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southern Ohio Synod call on the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to provide financial and other support for the creation of a new full-time program to make resources readily available in Braille and large print.

**d. Availability of Resources in Braille and Large Print
New England Synod (7B)**

RESOLVED, that the New England Synod memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to provide financial and other support for the creation of a new full-time program to make resources readily available in Braille and large print.

**e. Additional Formats for Worship and Educational Materials
Virginia Synod (9A)**

WHEREAS, the Good News is a life-giving gift of God, meant to be shared freely with everyone, like sunlight or oxygen; and

WHEREAS, Jesus commissions his followers to gather disciples everywhere, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) seeks to follow this call by welcoming diversity in its

communities of faith and also by continuing a healthy tradition of self-examination and change when bias is discovered in words or actions; and

WHEREAS, in John 9:3, Jesus specifically affirms God's calling for people who are blind, saying, "[this man] was born blind so that God's works might be revealed to him," and the man in the story goes on to demonstrate this by courageously witnessing to Christ, just as many people with low vision or blindness continue to do today; and

WHEREAS, people who have low vision or blindness are involved in an ongoing struggle for basic civil rights like access to voting and education, and the ELCA should support this struggle as part of its commitment to promoting justice for all of God's children; and

WHEREAS, people with low vision and blindness are already active as worshipers and leaders in ELCA congregations and seminaries; and

WHEREAS, promoting the availability of Braille and large-print resources would encourage growth in the membership of this church; and

WHEREAS, modern technology makes production and distribution of large-print and Braille materials easier than ever before, and centralizing these functions would allow congregations across the ELCA to have more convenient and less expensive access to such materials, and

WHEREAS, the formation of the ELCA in 1988 included an organization called the ELCA Braille and Tape Service, later renamed ELCA Braille and Tape Ministry, which became inactive in 2004; and

WHEREAS, since 2004 the ELCA has promoted worship and educational resources (such as *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, Book of Faith resources, social statements, and Christian education materials) that are available only in small-size print, thus marginalizing children and adults who read Braille or large print; and

WHEREAS, the resurrection of a comprehensive program to provide Braille and large-print resources to ELCA congregations would benefit and uplift the entire body of Christ; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the bishop of the Virginia Synod be directed to present to the ELCA Churchwide Assembly this resolution calling the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to provide financial and other support for the creation of a new full-time program to make resources readily available in Braille and large print.

Churchwide Assembly Action [CA09.03.12]

To receive the memorials of the Minneapolis Area, Southern Ohio, New England, Upstate New York, and Virginia synods calling for additional worship and educational materials in Braille, large print, and audio formats, and other forms of technology as may be available;

To affirm and celebrate the many ways individuals, networks, congregations, synods, the churchwide worship staff, Augsburg Fortress, and the Vocation and Education unit already are engaged in ministry with and providing resources for people with impaired vision;

To encourage appropriate churchwide staff to give continued attention to the needs articulated in these memorials and to continue collaboration with the network of people advocating for and facilitating these ministries;

To acknowledge with regret the funding challenges and the resulting limitations on this work;

To encourage the network and others to give particular attention to inviting contributions to appropriate endowments held by the ELCA Foundation; and

To direct the Vocation and Education unit to bring a progress report on these ministries and their funding to the November 2010 meeting of the ELCA Church Council.

Church Council referral [CC09.11.87]

Referred to: Vocation and Education unit with Worship and Liturgical Resources,
Augsburg Fortress and the ELCA Foundation

Response due: November 2010

Response from the Vocation and Education unit

In response to synod memorials, the 2009 Churchwide Assembly adopted a resolution titled "Worship and Educational Materials in Braille, Large Print, and Audio" [CA09.03.12]. The resolution calls for a progress report to this Church Council meeting from the Vocation and Education unit in consultation with Augsburg Fortress, churchwide worship staff and the ELCA Foundation. We are happy to provide this update.

Work continues on issuing *Evangelical Lutheran Worship (ELW)* as a Braille resource. This is a cooperative effort of Augsburg Fortress (AF) and the Worship and Liturgical Resources (WP) section of the churchwide organization. A contract has been signed to convert text files (RTF format) of 650 hymns from *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* into electronic Braille files (BRF format). The first third of these hymns in BRF format are due at AF on October 1, 2010. Beginning in November 2010, these Braille hymn files will be posted on the Sundaysandseasons.com Web site for downloading as they are completed. In addition, over the next year large print files (RTF format) will be added to that Web site for the hymns in *ELW*. The next step in the process is the conversion of liturgical texts to BRF and large print format. Extensive portions of *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* already are available in audio form, including all ten settings of the liturgy.

AF also has published the *Lutheran Study Bible* and *ELW* in "enlarged print" editions (not large print). Approximately 1200 book titles are now available from AF for digital download via Kindle and other e-readers. Print size can then be adjusted according to the reader's preference. AF has several Web-based resources that allow users to enlarge print as needed for both worship and faith formation resources (i.e., Sundaysandseasons.com, Herewestandconfirmation.org, Sparksundayschool.com in particular). AF also tries, upon request, to provide permission and electronic files when possible for adapting AF intellectual property into alternate formats through third party organizations such as Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic and Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

In the restructuring of 2005, the VE unit was given responsibility for oversight of the churchwide organization's work with disability ministries. Because of reductions in the general budget these past years, all programming work and much of the limited staff support now are funded through restricted endowments and a small accumulated reserve rather than the general budget. The endowments, which aggregate various gifts and bequests received over many years, generate about \$24,000 annually for disability ministries in general and an additional \$6,000 for Braille and tape ministries. No large additions have been made to principle of the endowments in recent years, but there are occasional smaller donations. Within these funding limits, VE focuses its ongoing efforts on being part of the various networks that engage the ministries. VE's payroll includes part-time staff consultants in Braille, audio and large print ministries and in deaf ministries. The director for ministry leadership's portfolio includes oversight of these responsibilities. The various networks are grateful for this partnership, but continue to push for more staff time dedicated to disability ministries. At present, such expansion of staff work is financially impossible.

We anticipate that endowment income can continue to give limited assistance with the production and distribution of Braille, large print and audio *ELW* hymns and worship settings. In related work, VE has supported the network's expressed desire to be engaged in

the production of the forthcoming Message on Disabilities, to be considered by the Church Council in November 2010, and is ready to provide funds so that drafts, process resources and the message itself can be available in Braille, large print and/or audio (MP3) formats to enhance participation in the completion of the message and its use.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To receive with gratitude the response of the Vocation and Education unit with Worship and Liturgical Resources, Augsburg Fortress and the ELCA Foundation in response to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly action related to worship and educational Materials in Braille, large print and audio; and

To acknowledge the report provided above and the ongoing commitment to this work through the newly formed Congregational and Synodical Mission unit as well as the approval of a social message, “People Living with Disabilities,” as the response of the Church Council to the Churchwide Assembly action.

2. Advocacy for Legal Protection and Fairness
[Memorial Category E1] [CA.09.03.09i]

a. Minneapolis Area Synod (3G)

WHEREAS, the Lutheran church has a tradition of opposing discrimination codified in law, even during times of social dislocation; and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) has written social statements to guide efforts to advocate for the protection of legal rights and has developed an advocacy arm to carry out the pragmatic efforts at legislative change; and

WHEREAS, the social statement on human sexuality notes that “laws have a direct impact on patterns of social trust within households and networks of kinship” and that “victims of sexual violation must be able to rely on public institutions for intervention”; and

WHEREAS, the social statement on human sexuality notes that “certain laws and economic realities . . . may create extreme economic hardship for some, including older adults, who desire to be legally married” and asks that the ELCA advocate for “altering laws and the factors that create a significant impediment for such people to be married”; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Minneapolis Area Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to call on bishops, ministries, and members of this church to advocate for laws that prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity and for laws that define violence on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity as a hate crime; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Minneapolis Area Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to direct appropriate churchwide units and to encourage synods, congregations, and members of this church to advocate for laws and regulations that permit widows and widowers to marry without losing retirement benefits.

Churchwide Assembly Action [CA.09.03.09i]

To thank the Minneapolis Area Synod for connecting faith to issues in public life;

To acknowledge the importance of the issues raised and to note background information provided related to the current and recent work done on hate-crime sentencing and employment non-discrimination;

To affirm the historical concern of ELCA social policy for advocacy related to human and civil rights and equal protection under the law and to encourage the members of this church to advocate in keeping with this tradition;

To request that, as financial and staff resources permit, the Church in Society unit study the issue of the potential loss of retirement and related benefits for older adults who desire to marry; and

To acknowledge that the Church in Society unit advocates on these issues based on this church's social policy statements related to human and civil rights.

Church Council referral [CC.09.11.87]

Referred to: Church in Society unit

Response due: April 2010

April 2010 Response from the Church in Society unit

The Church in Society unit has not been able to date to "study the issue of the potential loss of retirement and related benefits for older adults who desire to marry" as requested in the 2009 Churchwide Assembly recommendation to the Minneapolis Area Synod memorial (Advocacy for Legal Protection and Fairness [CA.09.03.09i]) due to limited staff resources.

Church Council Action [CC.10.04.22b]

To authorize a delay in the response of the Church in Society unit to the memorial of the Minneapolis Area Synod related to legal protection and fairness regarding the potential loss of retirement and related benefits for older adults who desire to marry;

To request that a report and possible recommendations be brought to the November 2010 meeting of the ELCA Church Council; and

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

Response from the Church in Society unit

The advocacy department of the Church in Society program unit affirms the importance of the issues raised by the Minneapolis Area Synod. The background information included in the report of the Memorials Committee provides helpful context:

The ELCA works in the tradition of predecessor church bodies to oppose discrimination in all forms and does so through various offices. This includes advocating for the equal protection of civil rights under the law. The ELCA also advocates for changes in laws in order to end discriminatory practices that have been codified into law. These efforts are based upon the social statements and social policy actions of this church and rely both on a broad movement of members of this church and organized advocacy efforts in New York at the United Nations, in Washington, D.C., and in state capitals.

This church's social statements and messages express deep concern for legal protection and human rights grounded in the dignity of all people.¹ Over many years, the ELCA has gone on record in opposition to civil and human rights violations due to sexuality and sexual orientation. The 1989 Churchwide

¹ For example, see the social statements *The Church in Society: A Lutheran Perspective* (1991); *Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity and Culture* (1993); *Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All* (1999); and the message *Commercial Sexual Exploitation* (2001).

Assembly said that the ELCA would not tolerate any forms of sexual abuse or harassment (CA89.04.18). The 1991 Churchwide Assembly reaffirmed the 1989 Churchwide Assembly action (CA91.07.52). In 1993, the ELCA Church Council reaffirmed (CC93.03.37) the historical position of the ELCA:

1. Strong opposition to all forms of verbal or physical harassment or assault of persons because of their sexual orientation; and
2. Support for legislation, referendums, and policies to protect the civil rights of all persons, regardless of their sexual orientation, and to prohibit discrimination in housing, employment, and public service and accommodations....

The 1993 Churchwide Assembly commended this action by the Church Council (CA93.03.4). On the basis of these precedents, the 1997 Churchwide Assembly acted to support the Employment Non-Discrimination Act and affirm advocacy by synods and the Church in Society unit "in support of laws barring discrimination against individuals on the basis of their sexual orientation" (CA97.6.29).

This church is also on record in support of equal protection under the law for all people including areas related to property and inheritance rights, home ownership, and health and retirement benefits. Through its advocacy ministry, this church has supported adding sexual orientation as a class actionable under "hate crimes" sentencing. More recently, the ELCA supported adding sexual orientation as a protected class in the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA). Both actions seek to uphold the thematic concern of this church's language addressing civil rights and legal protections, including opposition to discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity.

Human dignity is common to all by virtue of creation by God in the image of God. Christians are called to support and defend basic human rights for others. While equal protection under the law in the United States extends to several specific classes of protection, the current social policy language of this church does not address specifically the situation of older adults and the legal effect of a decision to marry on their existing retirement and related benefits.

The resolution from the Minneapolis Area Synod makes reference to language in the draft of the social statement on human sexuality coming before the 2009 Churchwide Assembly. We note that, as such, this language is pending and cannot be construed as a basis for action by the ELCA or its various offices. However, regardless of pending social statement language, the focus in this area of work remains compelling, as described above and as derived from existing social policy language.

The fourth "whereas" clause and the second "resolved" clause seem to address the situation of older heterosexual couples, typically widows and widowers, who desire to be married but are inhibited in this decision by laws that might, in effect, negate one or the other's retirement benefits.

The connection being drawn between the two issues stated in the two "resolved" clauses is the importance of altering laws when the force and effect of those laws perpetuate discrimination related to certain benefits and rights, especially those in danger of being forfeited by virtue of becoming a couple or entering into marriage.

The advocacy ministries of the ELCA will continue both to support civil and legal rights and to oppose laws that deny these rights and protections.

The advocacy department confirms the Church Council requested action (above) and will continue to find opportunities to advocate on this issue in its broader context of human and civil rights and equal protection.

With regard to studying the issue of marriage and potential loss of benefits for older adults, the advocacy department finds the following:

Tax Treatment

A so-called “marriage penalty” refers to certain features of the tax code that require higher taxes from some married couples when filing one tax return (“married filing jointly”) than for the same two people filing two separate tax returns if they were unmarried (i.e. filing as “single,” not “married filing separately”). Couples with a wider gap between their incomes more often escape the marriage penalty, but couples with similar incomes usually pay a penalty. Legislation in 2001 remedied the marriage penalty for many couples. The 2001 law had three marriage penalty provisions, two of which could relate to older adults.

- **Standard Deduction:** The legislation in 2001 reduced the application of the marriage penalty by equalizing the standard deduction rate for singles and married couples. For example, in 1999 the standard deduction for single filers was \$4,300, while the deduction for married couples was only \$7,200. The 2001 legislation increased the standard deduction for couples to be two times the standard deduction for individuals.
- **Payment Bracket:** The legislation eliminated some of the marriage penalty tax by increasing the 15 percent tax bracket for married couples filing jointly. In 1999, single taxpayers paid a 15 percent tax on income of \$25,750 or less. Married couples, however, only qualified for the 15 percent tax bracket if the income on a joint return was \$43,050 or less. The elimination of the marriage penalty has equalized the 15 percent tax bracket for single filers and married couples filing jointly. Thus, married couples filing jointly now will qualify for the 15 percent bracket on income of up to \$51,500 (exactly double the single-filer amount). The marriage penalty tax, however, may still apply when a married couple's income exceeds the 15 percent tax bracket, which today means married joint filers whose taxable income (i.e. income after deductions and personal exemptions, exceeds \$67,900).

The improvements made in 2001 expire in 2010. Currently, they are part of the much larger middle class tax package that is stalled in Congress. The marriage provisions are not controversial, but because they are included in a much larger tax bill that contains contentious provisions, the fate of the marriage penalty remains to be seen. Congress is expected to convene for a “lame duck” session in November 2010 after the midterm elections, during which time it is expected to take up expiring tax issues.

For more information on tax issues facing older taxpayers, see IRS Publication 554, Older Americans Tax Guide, available at <http://www.irs.gov/>.

Social Security Benefits

Another area of common concern related to benefits for older adults is Social Security. According to the Social Security Administration, in most situations, there is no marriage penalty in Social Security. A married couple's lifetime earnings are calculated independently to determine their benefit amounts. Therefore, each spouse receives a monthly benefit amount based on his or her own earnings. However, if one member of the couple earned low wages

or did not earn enough Social Security credits to be insured for retirement benefits, s/he may be eligible to receive benefits as a spouse.

Widows and widowers who remarry after age 60 can keep their own (higher) benefit, rather than switching to a lower spousal benefit. This has been the case since 1977. When one reaches age 62 or older, s/he may get retirement benefits on the record of his/her new spouse if it is higher. Also, remarriage would have no effect on the benefits being paid to children.

For more information on social security and related federal benefits, see www.ssa.gov or www.socialsecurity.gov.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To receive response of the Church in Society program unit to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly memorial on “Legal Protection and Fairness” related to older adults;

To approve the background information provided as the response of the Church Council to the assembly’s action; and

To request that the ELCA advocacy staff continue to find opportunities to advocate on these issues within the broader context of human and civil rights and equal protection for all people.

3. Environmental Stewardship

[Memorial Category B5] [CA09.03.09f]

a. Sierra Pacific Synod (2A) [2009 Memorial]

WHEREAS, we in the industrialized world are consuming energy and the earth’s resources in a way that is both unsustainable in the future and unfair to those in the developing world; and

WHEREAS, we hear disturbing scientific reports of environmental pollution, global climate change, a record rate of species extinction, and a depletion of nonrenewable resources that should give us pause; and

WHEREAS, human activity, especially over-consumption of energy and resources in the pursuit of material wealth, appears to be a critical driver in this change in climate and environmental distress; and

WHEREAS, Genesis 2:15 directs us to be stewards of creation, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), recognizing the gravity of these threats, has committed to addressing them in a constructive way, as evidenced by the 1993 social statement “Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope and Justice”; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Sierra Pacific Synod Assembly call on the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America at its 2009 Churchwide Assembly to adopt the Genesis Covenant (*see below for more information*) to reduce by a minimum of 50 percent the emission of greenhouse gases from all facilities, houses of worship, camps, offices, and conference centers of this church within 10 years; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the bishop and Synod Council appoint a Creation Care Task Force to develop a roadmap to sustainability, which gives congregations and other institutions an actionable plan on user-friendly terms for reducing their greenhouse gas emissions by maximizing energy efficiency, reducing unnecessary consumption of energy and resources, and witnessing to creation as God’s gift for which we are responsible as disciples of Christ; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this assembly calls on its congregations and the ELCA to work together with all religious institutions regionally, nationally, and globally and with leaders of science, government, and business to adopt the same goals of the Genesis Covenant.

The Genesis Covenant

The Challenge

The Genesis Covenant is an invitation to every community of faith to take action to reverse global warming.

The Genesis Covenant is a pledge to be made publicly by the national religious bodies that endorse it as their witness to the holiness of creation and their commitment to protect the Earth as a sacred trust.

The Genesis Covenant is an expression of the unity of the world's religious communities in the face of a shared crisis.

The Genesis Covenant is a challenge to all other sectors of society to join people of faith in a global effort to change history by changing behavior.

The Covenant

We will reduce the greenhouse gas emissions from every facility that we maintain by 50 percent in 10 years.

The Commitment

The Genesis Covenant must be endorsed by the appropriate representative governing body of the community. Once that body has adopted the covenant, every facility that it maintains will reduce the greenhouse gas emissions from their levels at the time of ratification by 50 percent within ten years. This includes places of worship, offices, schools, camps, retreat centers, and other facilities.

The Community

The Genesis Covenant will maintain an interactive online presence to support and network local communities who are part of the Covenant. This resource will empower every faith community to meet its goals in fulfilling the reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. It will welcome people of all faiths into a working partnership with their neighbors to achieve an historic change for the sake of our children.

Churchwide Assembly Action [CA09.03.09f]:

To thank the Sierra Pacific Synod for connecting Christian faith to public issues;

To acknowledge that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America through its social statement, "Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope, and Justice," its resources, and its action has sought to bring the importance of climate change to the attention of congregations, synods, the churchwide organization, and related agencies and institutions, as well as to public and private sectors of society;

To thank the congregations, synods, and related agencies and institutions of the ELCA that are practicing environmental stewardship and seeking to reduce greenhouse gas emissions; and

To request that, as financial and staff resources permit, the Church in Society program unit bring a proposal that includes a timeline, detailed budget, proposed funding sources, and identified partners to the ELCA Church Council for the development of a strategy for this church to address climate change.

Church Council referral [CC.09.11.87]
Referred to: Church in Society unit
Response due: November 2010

Response from the Church in Society unit

The Church in Society unit has not been able to date to “bring a proposal that includes a timeline, detailed budget, proposed funding sources, and identified partners to the ELCA Church Council for the development of a strategy for this church to address climate change” as requested in the 2009 Churchwide Assembly recommendation (CA.09.03.09f) due to limited staff resources. Steps, however, have been taken with other units to create and begin to implement a plan in which the churchwide organization, together with synods, can address climate change.

A review of memorials approved by synod assemblies in 2010, however, indicates that ten synods approved memorials addressing comparable issues under the theme of “energy stewardship.” In light of the restructuring of the churchwide organization and the significance of the pending response of the 2011 Memorials Committee, it is recommended that the action of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly be reported as information to the 2011 Memorials Committee as it prepares recommendations for consideration by the next Churchwide Assembly.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To receive the response of the Church in Society program unit and recognize that current financial, staffing and restructuring challenges limit the capacity of the churchwide organization to respond to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly action related to environmental stewardship;

To acknowledge that steps have been taken with other units to create and begin to implement a plan in which the churchwide organization, together with synods, can address climate change;

To anticipate that the issue of energy stewardship will be brought to the 2011 Churchwide Assembly through memorials from at least ten synods; and

To decline to respond to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly action regarding environmental stewardship at this time, but to request that the 2011 Memorials Committee receive the 2009 action and this response as information to inform their work.

4. Message on Human Disability
[Memorial Category B1] [CA.09.06.37]

a. Alaska Synod (1A)

WHEREAS, an estimated 54 million children and adults within the United States live with a disability; and

WHEREAS, people who live with a disability historically have faced challenges in gaining equal access to education, employment, health care, and accessibility and are more likely to live in poverty than people without disabilities; and

WHEREAS, because of ignorance, fear, and the perpetuation of myths, people with disabilities and their families have been stigmatized and discriminated against in church and society; and

WHEREAS, persons who live with a disability are active members and leaders in congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, yet many congregations struggle with issues of accessibility, accommodation, and welcome; and

WHEREAS, in carrying out its mission to the world, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America commits itself to “study social issues and trends, work to discover the causes of oppression and

injustice, and develop programs of ministry and advocacy to further human dignity, freedom, justice, and peace in the world” (ELCA 4.03.1.); and

WHEREAS, neither the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America nor its predecessor bodies has a social statement addressing the theological and social implications of human disability; and

WHEREAS, the “Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns” states that topics for social statements shall be approved by the Churchwide Assembly and development of a social statement shall be overseen by the Church in Society unit; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Alaska Synod memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to direct the Church in Society program unit to develop a social statement concerning persons with disabilities to be presented for consideration by the 2013 Churchwide Assembly; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the task force charged with the formation of this social statement pay special attention to the unique issues that face different types of disabilities, whether they be physical, sensory, psychiatric, or intellectual.

b. Nebraska Synod (4A)

WHEREAS, an estimated 54 million children and adults within the United States live with a disability; and

WHEREAS, people who live with a disability historically have faced challenges in gaining equal access to education, employment, health care, and accessibility and are more likely to live in poverty than people without disabilities; and

WHEREAS, because of ignorance, fear, and the perpetuation of myths, people with disabilities and their families have been stigmatized and discriminated against in church and society; and

WHEREAS, persons who live with a disability are active members and leaders in congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, yet many congregations struggle with issues of accessibility, accommodation, and welcome; and

WHEREAS, in carrying out its mission to the world, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America commits itself to “study social issues and trends, work to discover the causes of oppression and injustice, and develop programs of ministry and advocacy to further human dignity, freedom, justice, and peace in the world” (ELCA 4.03.1.); and

WHEREAS, neither the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America nor its predecessor bodies has a social statement addressing the theological and social implications of human disability; and

WHEREAS, the “Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns” states that topics for social statements shall be approved by the Churchwide Assembly and development of a social statement shall be overseen by the Church in Society unit; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Nebraska Synod in assembly memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to direct the Church and Society program unit to develop a social statement concerning persons with disabilities to be presented for consideration by the 2013 Churchwide Assembly; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Nebraska Synod in assembly memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to direct the task force charged with the formation of this social statement to pay special attention to the unique issues that face different types of disabilities, whether they be physical, sensory, psychiatric, or intellectual.

c. Metropolitan Chicago Synod (5A)

WHEREAS, an estimated 54 million children and adults within the United States live with a disability; and

WHEREAS, people who live with a disability historically have faced challenges in gaining equal access to education, employment, health care, and accessibility and are more likely to live in poverty than people without disabilities; and

WHEREAS, because of ignorance, fear, and the perpetuation of myths, people with disabilities and their families have been stigmatized and discriminated against in church and society; and

WHEREAS, there are persons who live with a disability who are active members and leaders in congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, yet many congregations struggle with issues of accessibility, accommodation, and welcome; and

WHEREAS, in carrying out its mission to the world, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America commits itself to “study social issues and trends, work to discover the causes of oppression and injustice, and develop programs of ministry and advocacy to further human dignity, freedom, justice, and peace in the world” (ELCA 4.03.1); and

WHEREAS, neither the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America nor its predecessor bodies has a social statement addressing the theological and social implications of human disability; and

WHEREAS, the “Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns” states that topics for social statements shall be approved by the Churchwide Assembly and that development of a social statement shall be overseen by the Church in Society unit; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Chicago Synod memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to direct the Church and Society program unit to develop a social statement concerning persons with disabilities to be presented for consideration by the 2015 Churchwide Assembly; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the task force charged with the formation of this social statement pay special attention to the unique issues that face different types of disabilities, whether they be physical, sensory, psychiatric, or intellectual.

d. New Jersey Synod (7A)

WHEREAS, an estimated 54 million children and adults within the United States live with a disability; and

WHEREAS, people who live with a disability historically have faced challenges in gaining equal access to education, employment, health care, and accessibility and are more likely to live in poverty than people without disabilities; and

WHEREAS, because of ignorance, fear, and the perpetuation of myths, people with disabilities and their families have been stigmatized and discriminated against in church and society; and

WHEREAS, persons who live with a disability are active members and leaders in congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, yet many congregations struggle with issues of accessibility, accommodation, and welcome; and

WHEREAS, in carrying out its mission to the world, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America commits itself to “study social issues and trends, work to discover the causes of oppression and injustice, and develop programs of ministry and advocacy to further human dignity, freedom, justice, and peace in the world” (ELCA 4.03.1); and

WHEREAS, neither the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America nor its predecessor bodies has a social statement addressing the theological and social implications of human disability; and

WHEREAS, the “Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns” states that topics for social statements shall be approved by the Churchwide Assembly and development of a social statement shall be overseen by the Church in Society unit; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the New Jersey Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

to direct the Church in Society program unit to develop a social statement concerning persons with disabilities to be presented for consideration by the 2013 Churchwide Assembly; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the task force charged with the formation of this social statement pay special attention to the unique issues that face persons with different types of disabilities, whether they be physical, sensory, psychiatric, or intellectual.

e. Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod (7F)

WHEREAS, an estimated 54 million children and adults within the United States live with a disability; and

WHEREAS, people who live with a disability historically have faced challenges in gaining equal access to education, employment, health care, and accessibility and are more likely to live in poverty than people without disabilities; and

WHEREAS, because of ignorance, fear, and the perpetuation of myths, people with disabilities and their families have been stigmatized and discriminated against in church and society; and

WHEREAS, persons who live with a disability are active members and leaders in congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, yet many congregations struggle with issues of accessibility, accommodation, and welcome; and

WHEREAS, in carrying out its mission to the world, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America commits itself to “study social issues and trends, work to discover the causes of oppression and injustice, and develop programs of ministry and advocacy to further human dignity, freedom, justice, and peace in the world” (ELCA 4.03.1); and

WHEREAS, neither the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America nor its predecessor bodies has a social statement addressing the theological and social implications of human disability; and

WHEREAS, the “Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns” states that topics for social statements shall be approved by the Churchwide Assembly and development of a social statement shall be overseen by the Church in Society unit; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to direct the Church in Society program unit to develop a social statement concerning persons with disabilities to be presented for consideration by the 2013 Churchwide Assembly; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the task force charged with the formation of this social statement pay special attention to the unique issues that face persons with different types of disabilities, whether they be physical, sensory, psychiatric, or intellectual.

f. Greater Milwaukee Synod (5J)

WHEREAS, an estimated 54 million children and adults within the United States live with a disability; and

WHEREAS, people who live with a disability historically have faced challenges in gaining equal access to education, employment, health care, and accessibility and are more likely to live in poverty than people without disabilities; and

WHEREAS, because of ignorance, fear, and the perpetuation of myths, people with disabilities and their families have been stigmatized and discriminated against in church and society; and

WHEREAS, persons who live with a disability are active members and leaders in congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), yet many congregations struggle with issues of accessibility, accommodation, and welcome; and

WHEREAS, in carrying out its mission to the world, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America commits itself to “study social issues and trends, work to discover the causes of oppression and

injustice, and develop programs of ministry and advocacy to further human dignity, freedom, justice, and peace in the world” (ELCA 4.03.1.); and

WHEREAS, neither the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America nor its predecessor bodies has a social statement addressing the theological and social implications of human disability; and

WHEREAS, the “Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns” states that topics for social statements shall be approved by the Churchwide Assembly and development of a social statement shall be overseen by the Church in Society unit; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Greater Milwaukee Synod memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to direct the Church in Society program unit to develop a social statement concerning persons with disabilities to be presented for consideration by the 2013 Churchwide Assembly; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the task force charged with the formation of this social statement pay special attention to the unique issues that face different types of disabilities, whether they be physical, sensory, psychiatric, or intellectual.

g. New England Synod (7B)

RESOLVED, that the New England Synod memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to direct the Church in Society program unit to develop a social statement concerning persons with disabilities to be presented for consideration by the 2013 Churchwide Assembly; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the task force charged with the formation of this social statement pay special attention to the unique issues that face people with different types of disabilities, whether they be physical, sensory, psychiatric, or intellectual.

h. Pacifica Synod (2C)

WHEREAS, an estimated 54 million children and adults within the United States live with a disability; and

WHEREAS, people who live with a disability historically have faced challenges in gaining equal access to education, employment, health care, and accessibility and are more likely to live in poverty than people without disabilities; and

WHEREAS, because of ignorance, fear, and the perpetuation of myths, people with disabilities and their families have been stigmatized and discriminated against in church and society; and

WHEREAS, persons who live with a disability are active members and leaders in congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), yet many congregations struggle with issues of accessibility, accommodation, and welcome; and

WHEREAS, in carrying out its mission to the world, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America commits itself to “study social issues and trends, work to discover the causes of oppression and injustice, and develop programs of ministry and advocacy to further human dignity, freedom, justice, and peace in the world” (ELCA 4.03.1.); and

WHEREAS, neither the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America nor its predecessor bodies has a social statement addressing the theological and social implications of human disability; and

WHEREAS, the “Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns” states that topics for social statements shall be approved by the Churchwide Assembly and development of a social statement shall be overseen by the Church in Society unit; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Pacifica Synod memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to direct the Church and Society program unit to develop a social statement concerning persons with disabilities to be presented for consideration by the 2015 Churchwide Assembly; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the task force charged with the formation of this social statement pay special attention to the unique issues that face different types of disabilities, whether they be physical, sensory, psychiatric, or intellectual.

Churchwide Assembly Action [CA09.06.37]

To thank the Alaska, Pacifica, Nebraska, Metropolitan Chicago, Greater Milwaukee, New Jersey, New England, and Southeastern Pennsylvania synods for their call for strengthened awareness within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to the particular challenges faced by people living with disability as well as this church's responsibility to address issues of accessibility, accommodation, and welcome;

To acknowledge with gratitude the many resources available through the churchwide organization, synods, social ministry organizations, and congregations and urge their use throughout this church in its ongoing commitment to address both the challenges of stigmatization and discrimination within church and society and the issues of accessibility, accommodation, and welcome; and

To decline to authorize the development of a social statement on human disability, but to request the Church in Society unit to consider development of a message on human disability, as financial and staff resources permit, that would aid awareness, deliberation, and action within this church, giving special attention to the unique issues (e.g., physical, sensory, psychiatric, or intellectual) of the different types of disability.

Church Council referral [CC.09.11.87]

Referred to: Church in Society unit

Response from the Church in Society unit

The proposed social message titled "People Living with Disabilities" was provided to members of the Church Council for input on October 15, 2010 with response requested by November 5, 2010. Following the final review of the Program and Services Committee on November 12, 2010, the proposed draft of the social message will be uploaded to Net Community as Exhibit K, Part 2a.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended: [See agenda section III.H.1.]



Office of the Secretary
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

July 8, 2010

The Rev. David K. Moore
Members of St. John's Lutheran Church
5289 320th St.
Cylinder, IA 50528

Dear Pastor Moore and members of St. John's Lutheran Church:

I write to acknowledge receipt of the "Petition to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America" from your congregation that was forwarded to the Office of the Secretary by the Synod Council of the Western Iowa Synod. Your petition will be posted on the ELCA Church Council's Web site. I anticipate that it will be considered with synodical resolutions related to actions on ministry policies at the Church Council meeting in November.

May God bless you and the ministry of your congregation.

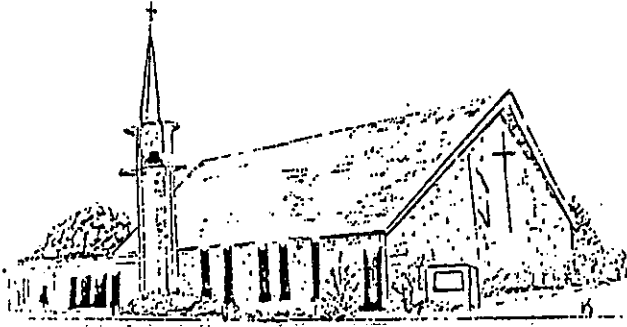
Sincerely,



David D. Swartling
Secretary

DDS/jnb

xc: ELCA Western Iowa Synod



St. John's Lutheran Church
5289 320th St.
Cylinder, IA 50528
(712) 424-3815
Pastor David K. Moore

Re: Petition to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Dear Mr. Clausen:

Preface

In the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, we the people and congregations of the Church are given a great right and a great privilege.

In Section 9.53.07, the aforementioned Constitution states:

"Congregations shall have the right to petition this church."

The following is a petition we respectfully make in accordance with the governing documents of our Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

We are informed in the same section, "Petitions shall be addressed to the synod to which the congregation relates for response by the synod, or, at the discretion of the synod, for forwarding to the Churchwide Assembly."

We therefore submit the following petition, with its reasons, to you; and through you, to the proper division of the churchwide dimension of the Church.

Background: A Review of the Churchwide Resolutions

At the E.L.C.A. Churchwide Assembly, meeting this August past in Minneapolis, Minnesota, the Assembly voted to adopt the social statement "Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust," along with a series of

implementing resolutions with amendments.

In addition, as Presiding Bishop of our Church, The Rev. Mark S. Hanson wrote following this action, "Our assembly also adopted resolutions proposed by the Church Council based on those contained in a 'Report and Recommendation on Ministry Policies.' The actions direct that changes be made to churchwide policy documents to make it possible for those in committed same-gender relationships to serve as rostered leaders in the ELCA." ¹

The resolutions involved, among other matters, congregational recognition [for those who wish to do so] of same-sex relationships, described as "life-long" and "monogamous;" the rostering of such as ordained Pastors in the Gospel ministry of the Church; the drafting of "amendments to ministry policy documents;" and respect for the bound consciences of members of the Church and constituent congregations. ²

Reasons for this Petition:

Therefore, out of love for the orthodox, apostolic, Biblical Christian Faith; therefore, out of love for the Truth; for the holiness and unity of Christ's Church; and out of love for people, their human good and their eternal salvation; we submit the following petition, and our reason for this petition, to our Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, directing it for action, first to our Western Iowa Synod to which we are related, and beyond our Synod to the proper body of the churchwide dimension which has responsibility for handling and responding to such.

Our Concerns

There is great concern throughout the Church regarding the wisdom, the truthfulness, the faithfulness to Scripture [and there-

fore also to the Church's own governing documents³], and the Christian theological and ethical orthodoxy of that decision.

We share that concern and that conviction.

We believe the Church has made a bad and erroneous decision.

It has committed itself to a theological and ethical and hermeneutical [Scriptural interpretative] position that is at variance with "the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints" [Jude 3b NRSV], one that is at variance with the Christian orthodoxy of two thousand years.

A Brief Review:

The Position We Contend Against

The contemporary debate in support of same-sex acceptance has supported the contention that the Biblical passages on homosexuality do not have relevance for contemporary life-long, monogamous, same-gender relationships for reasons such as the following:

- homosexual practice in Scripture is related to pagan religious worship and practice, which is not an issue among us today;
- that the sin at Sodom that brought God's judgment was the aspect of gang-rape, the breach of hospitality, and the attempt to have sexual relationships with angels, and not same-sex relations;
- that the issue in Scripture involving homosexuality is in regard to adults taking advantage of the young, children, minors; and forcing sexual relations on them; violent, rapistic behavior, instead of the of-age, loving, consensual same-sex relationships that we have at present;
- that most of the Scriptural passages involve morally unre-

- strained behavior, promiscuity, orgiastic behavior, immoral behavior, lustful and not loving; but not specifically identifying same-sex behavior as such, but immoral activity carried out by heterosexual or homosexual both;
- that in Scripture the current same-sex practice [i.e. loving, consensual, life-long, publicly-accountable, monogamous] was not anticipated by the Biblical writers, is not dealt with, and does not speak to it or about it. ⁴

The Position We Hold

The written Word of God, the Scripture, speaks about homosexual acts.

In its various verses relating to the matter, it covers the broad spectrum of all kinds of same-sex acts.

Male with male, and female with female, is universally and uniformly proscribed.

The main, central, core reason, as set forth in Romans 1:18-32, is that such acts are unnatural. They contravene the male-female plan for human sexual relationships that God set forth from the beginning, and which is the only legitimate form of sexual expression, and which is to be reserved for marriage.

This is the apostolic, Scriptural, orthodox Christian Faith held by the Church from the beginning and through the centuries since.⁵

The Biblical documents and the orthodox Christian Faith do not support such a doctrinal, theological, ethical position as that adopted by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America at its August last Churchwide Assembly.

To adopt that position is to say..."with virtuoso hermeunetic derring-do, that we have all been wrong for the entire thirty-five

hundred years since Sinai, and that what the Bible really teaches is that homosexuals, for example, may enjoy fully expressed and active sexual lives."⁶

No Church within the stream of Christian orthodoxy can ever say that, has no right to say that.

May our God preserve us from that!

Word and Spirit Together

We have heard that we must be open to the leading of the Holy Spirit as we work through these issues; and that is always true.

But the context of the statements often suggests the Holy Spirit operates apart from, aside from, even in contradiction to the written Word of Scripture that He has inspired.

Lutheran Christians have never so separated the Spirit of God from the Word of God.

To set the Holy Spirit of God apart from the Word of Scripture in this manner is to subscribe to what Dr. Martin Luther and the Church call "enthusiasm," which has always been rejected by the Church: when personal, individual, subjective feelings, leadings, experiences become the basis for doctrine and theology rather than the objective Faith of the Church given by our Lord Jesus Christ and set forth in written Scripture.

The Danger for the Church

and

for Christian Theology

Our Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, therefore, has already committed heresy, or is in very great and near danger of doing so.

The acceptance of the validity of homosexuality, of homosexual

ordination, and of homosexual unions, has broad implications and poses grave dangers for the truth of the Christian Faith and for the broad spectrum of Christian theology.

This one issue has implications, for example, for:

- the doctrine of God [God is not therefore as Scriptural revelation and as the Church in its teaching has always understood, said, and taught];⁷
- the doctrine of sin;
- the nature of holiness;
- the meaning and purpose of human sexuality;
- the nature and purpose of the family;
- the purpose of male and female;
- ecclesiology, the doctrine of the Church, for God has never described His relationship with His people in same-sex terms;
- the authority of God's Scriptural Word;
- for Truth as absolute and not relative;⁸
- the possession of a sound hermeunetic, or interpretation, of the written Word of God.

The Effect of the Churchwide Decisions on the Church

We who are Lutherans have a specific understanding of the nature of the Church: where the Gospel is proclaimed in its purity, and the sacraments are administered in accordance with it.

The Church of Jesus Christ is also constituted by four other words:

A. **One.** But this action of our Church is divisive among its own people and in its own congregations and among its own synods. Moreover, these actions are divisive in terms of the true ecumenism

that all Christians are to eagerly seek in accordance with our Lord's desire "that all of them may be one," just as God the Father is in the Son and God the Son is in the Father [John 17:21]. These decisions drive a further wedge between our part of the Church and the majority of Christ's Church on earth, our brothers and sisters in Christ who subscribe to the Bishop of Rome, and to those in the community of the Eastern Orthodox, as well as large portions of the Protestant community who do not, cannot, will not go against Scriptural authority for the sake of fellowship.

B. Holy. But to laud, accept, and approve what the Holy God calls sin is to contravene and go against holiness. "Likewise, Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities, which, in the same manner as they, indulged in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural lust, serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire." [Jude 7 NRSV] ⁹

C. Catholic. Universal. But the position accepted by our Church at its most recent Churchwide Assembly is not one which the Church of Jesus Christ always, everywhere, and at all times has held to, believed, and confessed. We have departed from the catholicity of the Church.

D. Apostolic. What our Church has accepted in its Churchwide Assembly resolutions is not, and never was, the teaching of the Apostles, the teaching received by those our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of the Church, chose, called, and designated to be His spokesmen and the teachers of His Church.

Love Compels Us...

Out of love for people, and out of love for our brothers and sisters who struggle with same-sex attraction, and who beyond that

have entered into same-sex relationships and unions, we must also ultimately ask our Church to rescind and reverse its recent Church-wide Assembly decisions. God has created us human beings male and female; and He has created us only for each other; and to attempt to contravene that divinely created pattern is to go against our very nature, never find true fulfillment, and end up disillusioned and with a sense of hopelessness. Father Roger J. Landry writes, "While two men may genuinely love each other, the mutual utilitarianism involved in homosexual activity, rather than 'making love,' actually corrodes the love that may exist between them. Statistics in fact show that the more sexual a same-sex relationship, the more quickly it leads to a break-up. In same-sex activity, men, rather than taking responsibility for the other's good, spiritually, psychologically, and medically, actually become consensual consumers of the other."¹⁰

Love Further Compels Us...

We also do grave injustice to approve actions and encourage relationships that the Holy God says are sin. The Church should never be in the position of encouraging people in what will only take people away from the God Who desires to save them. The Church is not to encourage people to damnation, but to salvation. Our Lord has said stern and horrible words about those who "put a stumbling block before one of these little ones who believe in Me" [Matthew 18:6 NRSV].¹¹ The Prophet Isaiah states, "Ah [NIV: Woe], you who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!" [Isaiah 5:20 NRSV] Oh, Lord, preserve us all from causing any one of Your believing children to stumble! And preserve Your Church from calling evil good, gracious Lord!

God's Call to Repentance

The responsible and sane path to follow when one has embarked on a wrong road or in a wrong direction is to turn around and again travel in the correct direction. The Scripture calls this repentance, and Churches as well as individual people can be called by God to this course of action.

The Petition We Therefore Present

Having stated our reasons, we therefore petition the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, to and through our Western Iowa Synod, to which we as believers in Christ and as a Christian congregation are related, to put a hold on any policy development and implementation in regard to the aforementioned resolutions adopted by our Church in Churchwide Assembly in Minneapolis, Minnesota, of August last.

We petition the Church that no "changes be made to churchwide policy documents to make it possible for those in committed same-gender relationships to serve as rostered leaders in the ELCA."¹²

We petition the Church to not act upon the resolutions recently enacted to enter people in same-sex relationships into the rostered leadership of the Church. [Resolution Two] We ask that a hold be put on this action.

We petition the Church not to draft and approve amendments to ministry policy documents. [Resolution Four]

We petition the Church to not develop ways, or to put a hold on any development in process, "to allow congregations that choose to do so to recognize, support and hold publicly accountable life-long, monogamous, same-gender relationships."¹³ [Resolution One]

We petition the Church to place a hold on any and all forms

and types of implementation, or any action towards such implementation, of the aforementioned resolutions. Our desire would be for permanency, but our petition is that this hold and non-implementation be carried out at least until after the Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to be convened in 2011.

Concluding Statement

It is our conviction that the Church needs to revisit and reverse the theological and ethical positions adopted by the Churchwide Assembly in August. At the very least, the Church needs to be given the opportunity to do this.

There is and will be, it is our conviction, a great voicing of concern that our Church do this very thing at its next Churchwide Assembly in the Year of Our Lord two-thousand-eleven. This has become very clear in the response by many individual believers and by many congregations of this Church.

For the good of the Church, for the good of people, and so that there may be practical recognition of our Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's orthodox Christian statement of faith, we respectfully and in Christian love, place this petition before the Church, in the Name of the One by Whose grace we live, Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Savior.

[Statement of Action Taken on Next Page]

Adopted by: The St. John Lutheran Church, by action of its
Annual Congregational Meeting. Voting method:
secret ballot. Balloting results: YES - 31
NO - 3

Date: Sunday, January 17, A.D. 2010

Attesting Signitures:

Todd Mathis

Chairman of Church Council

Marta Simpson
Vice-Chairman of Church Council

Suzanne Witt
Secretary of Church Council

Pastor David K. Moore

Pastor

N O T E S

1. 2009 Churchwide Assembly Letter from Presiding Bishop Hanson.
Date: Saturday, August 22, 2009, at 12:02 p.m., P. 2.
2. Ibid.
3. Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, "Confession of Faith," 2.03:
"This church accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life."
4. Some of the arguments are succinctly stated in the article entitled "Jesus, Samaritans and Homosexuals," by Don Williams, ETERNITY, May 1978, reprinted in The Christian Reader, September/October 1978, pp. 22-29. The article is a review of the book Is The Homosexual My Neighbor? by Letha Scanzoni and Virginia Mollenkott.
5. Consider the Fathers of the Church. St. Athanasius [A.D. 297-373], quoting Romans 1:26f, calls same-sex acts "crimes contrary to nature." On the Incarnation, The Treatise De Incarnatione Verbi Dei, by St. Athanasius, translated and edited by Sister Penelope Lawson, C.S.M.V. [New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1946], Chapter One, "Creation and Fall," p. 10.
6. Lead, Kindly Light, My Journey to Rome, by Thomas Howard [San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2004], pp. 38-39.
7. A related aspect: "...the union of our sexual polarities... alone expresses the reality of God's image seen in male and female together." Op. Cit., Williams, p. 29.
8. For example: "Long ago I learned from Your decrees that You have established them forever." [Psalm 119:152 NRSV]; "The sum of Your word is truth; and every one of Your righteous ordinances endures forever." [Psalm 119:160 NRSV]

9. Cf. NIV: "In a similar way, Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding towns gave themselves up to sexual immorality and perversion. They serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire."
10. Becoming a Real Man of God, by Father Roger J. Landry [New Haven, Connecticut: Catholic Information Service, Knights of Columbus Supreme Council, 2007; The Veritas Series], p. 24. The frustration and lack of fulfillment found in same-sex relationships is set forth very well, clearly, and concisely in another booklet in the aforementioned Veritas Series: Same Sex Attraction: Catholic Teaching and Pastoral Practice, by Father John F. Harvey, O.S.F.S. Cf. pp. 18-19. This A.D. 2007 publication is a well-written, brief, informative primer for anyone wanting to read further on same-sex issues.
11. Ibid., Father John F. Harvey. A sensitive and compassionate program of pastoral care for those struggling with same-sex attraction.
12. Op. Cit., Presiding Bishop Hanson, p. 2.
13. Ibid., p. 2.

Region 1 Report

Submitted by Shelley Wickstrom

Region 1 is a partnership of the churchwide organization and the six synods of Alaska, Northwest Washington, Southwestern Washington, Eastern Washington/Idaho, Oregon and Montana. Our congregations are made of people of the plains, the mountains, the rivers, the tundra and sea. We are rich in ethnic, cultural and linguistic diversity. The congregations of Region 1 include one in California and four in Wyoming. Pacific Lutheran University, the pan-Lutheran Trinity Lutheran College, Holden Village, the Grunewald Guild, two life-long learning ministries, eight outdoor ministry sites and eight campus ministries are part of our shared mission and ministry.

Ecumenical and inter-Lutheran cooperation are embodied in shared ministries in Region 1. Five synods partner with the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod in funding Consultation to Clergy and LENS—the Lutheran Life-long Learning Network. The Northern Rockies Institute of Theology serves an ecumenical audience in Montana. Conversations with local judicatories of the United Church of Christ, the Episcopal Church USA, the United Methodist Church and the Presbyterian Church—USA continue for the sake of shared congregational ministry and mission development.

Thirty-four congregations in Region 1 have left the ELCA, seventeen of which are from Montana. In the last twelve months, mission support from congregations has dropped between 7 percent and 22 percent in our synods. When the level of mission support to synods in August 2010 is compared to August 2008, the percentage of decline is between 24 percent and 13 percent for an average of 19percent. Our synods were experiencing an economic downturn before CWA 2009. To enhance our regional partnership, the synods of Region 1 always have been lightly staffed. That pattern now leaves little room to navigate our decreased funding. Region 1 maintains a financial services office that provides the accounting and bookkeeping services for the six synods and related ministries.

The Region 1 Governing Council has adapted their structure to reflect the previous year's downsizing of regional staff and the subsequent change in the nature of our regional partnership. An Executive Committee of two bishops and four synod vice presidents now provide oversight for our regional work.

The work of the region this year has included a campus minister retreat and a campus ministry consultation convened to discuss our shared ministry and funding issues. Synod leaders of hunger, companion synod and global mission committees are meeting annually with churchwide staff. Two "glocal" events, two conferences on hunger and two conferences on discipleship have been held with regional and churchwide participation. The Lutheran Staff Association continues to draw participants for an annual conference from across the region. Women of the ELCA of Region 1 hosted a convention in Kalispell this summer. We're excited to host the Women of the ELCA Triennial in Spokane in 2011.

As we live into what it means to assist *members, congregations, synods, institutions and agencies of this church to grow in evangelical outreach*, our economic reality meets the Spirit's gift of hope and imagination in exciting ways. There are congregations in each synod that have experienced growth precisely because of clarity over who is welcome there. Area strategies are being developed in urban areas that address natural coalitions for a renewed vision even in the midst of closing some congregations. Twenty-four emerging worshipping communities are reaching out to a variety of ethnic communities as well as the unchurched and "dechurched." Leadership for those diverse communities is being identified by our Directors for Evangelical Mission and developed through TEEM and the gift of foreign-born pastors. Candidacy

Committees have embraced the joy and challenges such diversity in language and culture brings. A third prison ministry is being developed. The Book of Faith Initiative has fed a conversation percolating about the need for strong lay education.

Region 2

Submitted by Margy Schmitt Ajer

The five synods of Region 2 (Sierra Pacific, Southwest California, Pacifica, Grand Canyon, and Rocky Mountain.) continue to work together in some amazing ways to increase capacity of mission and ministry. One of the primary focuses of our life together is outreach and mission. Some of the ways we live out that focus include:

- Global mission and world hunger gatherings;
- Participation in EOCM review tables;
- Coordination of behavioral interviews;
- Ongoing work in building stronger connections between the process of candidacy and the identifying and preparation of missional leaders;
- Facilitation of ongoing conversation and resource sharing among Directors for Evangelical Mission and other partners; and
- Support and encouragement for a wide variety of creative ministries and mission.

A second focus of our work together is discipleship and leadership development, which includes:

- First Call Theological Education;
- CREDO—a joint project with Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary and California Lutheran University to equip lay leaders to reflect theologically;
- CROSS TRAINING—a cross generational servant leadership school in the planning stages;
- Development of new ways to work together in campus ministry; and
- Joint work in candidacy, first call assignment and mobility.

In order for any of any of our work together to be effective, we must tend to relationships. Some of the ways we do that are:

- Ongoing support and connections for bishops and synod staff and synod leadership (i.e. vice presidents);
- Bi-annual bishops and staff retreat;
- Convening of conversations and resource sharing around a wide variety of share ministry concerns; and
- A yearly consultation to plan our work together.

It continues to be a privilege and joy to serve with the leadership and people of Region 2 as we are the church together in our part of the world.

Region 3

Submitted by Paul Baglyos

Region 3, as I like to say, is the “ota” region—comprised of all the States that end in “ota.” The region includes nine of the sixty-five synods and nearly a quarter of the baptized membership of the ELCA. Measured by baptized membership, the two largest synods of the ELCA—the Minneapolis Area and the Saint Paul Area synods—are part of Region 3. The region includes one of the eight ELCA seminaries and five of the twenty-six ELCA colleges and universities. Demographically diverse, Region 3 includes the sixteenth-largest metropolitan area in the United States (Minneapolis-Saint Paul) as well as two of the five least populated states in the nation (North Dakota and South Dakota). Urban concentrations of population tend to be located in the eastern areas of the three States of the region; outlying rural areas support various industries, such as agriculture, ranching, timber, oil and tourism. Within the region are numerous multi-cultural communities that are comprised, for example, of Native American, African, Asian and Latino identities and populations.

As I write this report, I am nearing my first anniversary (October 1) as regional coordinator. For me, the past year has been one of enormous learning: learning to know nine bishops, their staffs and the character of the synods they serve; learning to know scores of candidates for rostered ministry and nine candidacy committees; learning to know administrators and faculty members of Luther Seminary and Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary (both of the Western Mission Cluster); learning to know campus ministry staff, local sites and local boards/councils; learning to know leaders of various regional networks; learning to know the geography, history and culture of the region; learning to know policies, procedures and best practices within the churchwide organization and among my coordinator colleagues in the other eight regions of the ELCA. For the region I serve, as for all others, the past year has been one of enormous difficulty: the time, energy and attention of the bishops and their staffs has been dominated by care for congregations, ministry leaders and parishioners in turmoil surrounding the decisions of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly; every synod of the region has had to contend—in various ways—with diminished or redirected mission support, and the consequent challenges of reductions in synod budgets, spending and staffing; shared ministry partners, including campus ministries, have struggled to find new ways to secure funding for their work; previous assumptions about ministry and mission have been discarded under pressures to think and act in new ways. Much of the work done regionally this past year has involved mutual encouragement, counsel and consolation among various ministry peers and colleagues—including the bishops, counterparts among synod staff members, network leaders and the officers of shared ministry partners. In all three states of the region, for example, campus ministry has undergone and continues to undergo substantial restructuring, occasioning new intentions for collaboration and partnership. In a recent teleconference, one synod staff member repeated a recurrent affirmation, frequently heard this past year: “We’re all in this together, and we need each other in order to thrive in ministry.” I have discovered that the role of regional coordinator is deeply valued among ministry leaders seeking wisdom, support and guidance from others in the region and in the churchwide organization engaged in common or compatible work. Regional coordinators, I have learned, coordinate ministry leadership by coordinating ministry leaders in conferences, conversations and collaboration.

The strategic direction of the ELCA churchwide organization that pertains most fully to the work of regional coordinators is, I think, number 5: to “assist this church to bring forth and support faithful, wise, and courageous leaders whose vocations serve God’s mission in a pluralistic world.” In Region 3—as in all other regions—we bring this strategy to life in various

ways, but particularly in our work with candidacy. My attention is drawn especially to the second half of the strategic direction, describing “leaders whose vocations serve God’s mission in a pluralistic world.” That wording underscores our church’s need for leaders capable of discerning the “new thing” (Isaiah 43:19) that God is doing in the world and in this church, which in turn means that everyone charged with responsibility for candidacy in this church must become capable discerners of the “new thing” that may be presented in candidates whose vocations exceed the customary and the familiar. Work with candidates in the TEEM program, for example, requires constant discernment of the “new thing.” In Region 3 we have this past year begun new ways of learning together how to discern the “new thing” to which our work in candidacy calls us. We have started to hold monthly conference calls among synod staff members charged with candidacy duties, we have explored new ideas for candidacy committee training and candidacy discernment, and we have begun to consider ways to cultivate greater collaboration among potential candidacy partners, such as camp directors, campus ministry staff (at state schools as well as ELCA schools), youth and young adult ministry leaders and Christian educators.

In the coming year we will seek to carry to further realization some of the new ideas and initiatives arising from this past year. Besides the work related to candidacy, we will continue to explore and develop new models for vibrant campus ministry, and toward that end will seek to host a regional gathering of the key officers of local campus ministry boards or councils. The regional office itself will undergo restructuring as we bid farewell to Sandy Pilgrim, our administrative assistant, upon her retirement at the end of this calendar year and implement both a new budget and a new staffing arrangement. The goal of that restructure will be to make the region more cost effective while also more flexible and responsive to the values of collaboration and networking among the constituent synods of the region and the various ministries they undertake.

Region 4

Submitted by Herb Palmer

As the Region 4 Coordinator for Ministry Leadership, serving in a part-time call, my responsibilities are much more specific in the areas of candidacy, campus ministry, and communication between the churchwide expression of the church and the Region 4 synods. I am grateful that I get to be part of these ministries.

In this time, following the decisions of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly the candidacy committees have been very sensitive to affirm the convictions and/or struggles of each person on the committee. Across the region, we have engaged in respectful and healthy conversations. We also continue to learn and implement the ministry policy changes with attention and care.

Candidates for ministry continue to come forward in the hope to serve the church. In Region 4 we have a number of candidates whose first language is other than English. Many of these ministry candidates have been appointed to serve and study through (TEEM). The Lutheran Seminary of the Southwest in Austin, Texas, located in Region 4, has served well to engage our TEEM candidates in theological education and pastoral formation.

Campus ministry has a presence in each of our synods. Each synod has developed its own way of relating to the campus ministry sites and providing funding. The Churchwide grants in support of campus ministry are deeply appreciated. Our grants, however, have been stagnant over the last few years and this year we had to make reductions. Funding is needed but the ministries continue to press on in the faith formation and leadership development of students.

Synod assemblies displayed a resolve to mission. Generally, the spirit was to move forward. Synod bishops, their staff and Synod Councils have given the leadership for this direction.

Region 5

Submitted by Carl Richard Evenson

The twelve synods of Iowa, Illinois, Wisconsin and Upper Michigan are gathered into Region 5, bringing traditional and contemporary thinking, a variety of farm, small town, and urban cultures, and significant racial diversity, primarily in the Milwaukee and Chicago synods. The result is a limited amount of dialogue and diversity in bishops, yet a common commitment to our life together.

In the past year regional coordination of campus ministries has become quite active, with a retreat for campus ministers, quadrennial reviews on campus, and a good deal of financial struggle as region, boards and committees find their way forward in a time of lean resources. It has not been possible for the regional office to carve out more than the minimum amount of time and energy to service campus ministry. Yet our campus ministries remain vibrant centers for ongoing spiritual and religious conversation with students finding their way in a difficult world.

Much of the coordinator's time continues to be spent in the area of candidacy and regional synod bishops continue to caution against any reduction in attention. Candidacy decisions affect the church for years into the future and a mutual discernment is best when it includes candidate, churchwide and seminary representation, and synod committees. This past year has included much committee training and conversation as new policies have affected candidacy work. The result has been satisfactory, but there have been some (not many) losses of committee members who feel unable to be supportive of our new policies. We seek to maintain candidacy committees that reflect the diversity of thinking in their synods.

The assignment of seminarians has gone well, but the system is complex for candidates, bishops, and synods. We are in a time when requests for timely assignment bump up against a system designed to hold a pool of candidates for two assignment "moments" in the year.

The key strategic direction for Region 5 continues to be to *assist this church to bring forth ...leaders...* To this end, the region continues to encourage the vital contributions and deepening relationships that grow in candidacy and campus ministry within the synods. The task of the region and the deployed regional presence is to keep all parties working toward that goal for the sake of raising faithful and prepared leaders to serve the church. Region 5 serves a vital role in maintaining communication and grace between disparate parts of the church in the endeavors of raising and nurturing leadership.

As we look into 2011, the work of Region 5 will be directed toward assisting in the ongoing training of candidacy committees and adjusting the assignment process for churchwide as well as synods. Coordinator attention to campus ministry and its ministers will be valuable. Regional synod global mission and world hunger leaders will be meeting and Region 5 will gather its diaconal, associates in ministry, and deaconess rosters. These kinds of gatherings serve to build trust, increase awareness, share the burdens of life and enable good interaction between expressions, individuals and groups of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

I continue to hear my calling to serve as Coordinator for Ministry Leadership. I hear it both within myself and from the many corners of the church I serve. I am called to be a bridge, a communicator, an ambassador and connective tissue among the church's expressions. My expertise, assistance and reflection from this unique outpost is valuable to leaders in synod and churchwide office alike. May the Lord of the Church strengthen us for the difficult year we have before us. My prayers go with the Church Council and all who serve this church so well.

Region 6

Submitted by Marilyn McCann Smith

Region 6 of the ELCA is comprised of six synods: two in the lower peninsula of Michigan, three in Ohio, and one formed by the states of Indiana and Kentucky. We are rural, suburban, and urban communities. Our strong ties to manufacturing have resulted in unemployment and foreclosures that rank among the highest in the U.S. Higher education, technological research, medicine and transportation; however, are areas of economic strength. Our middle class is shrinking at least as fast here as in other areas of the U.S. but in some places at much higher than the national rate. Although the number of ELCA congregations has remained relatively consistent, the membership in those congregations is in a general decline. And, among the fewer number of members, a smaller percent attend worship each week. The result of economic hardship and fewer worshippers is evident in almost every congregation in our region. Thus, each synod has experienced severe reductions in mission support. Most synods have dealt with shortfalls through reduction in the synod staff or reduced hours and wages. In more recent months, synods' ability to fund programs, institutions and partnerships has diminished. In Region 6 it is clear that the old has passed away and God is making a new thing in our midst. We pray for the vision to see it.

The work of Region 6 has focused always on relationships. A significant cooperative effort undertaken by our synods is the Region 6 Archives. Trinity Lutheran Seminary provides space for the archives and synods contribute financially. An advisory board is chaired by the regional coordinator, who also supervises the half-time professional archivist. This year the archives partnered with Trinity to expand space to accommodate the increasing amount of records and artifacts. The archivist continues to increase work with congregations to improve record keeping and assist them to prepare for significant anniversaries. The archives is strong and promises to serve the synods well into the future. Among the networks of relationships nurtured by Region 6 was a new undertaking: a consultation for candidates and rostered leaders serving as associates in ministry, deaconesses and diaconal ministers. The participants were enthusiastic about the opportunity to gather, united in their desire to effectively serve as public ministers in the church and society and hopeful that future gatherings will afford them support for one another, growth in their skills and knowledge of the changing scope of and methods for ministry. Another new regional gathering this year brought together campus ministers serving in the region. This was a chance for the regional coordinator and campus ministry staff to become better acquainted and begin to vision for new ways to support and resource campus ministry. The annual Region 6 Global Gathering brought together synod staff and leaders in World Hunger, Global Mission, companion churches, and the HIV and AIDS and Lutheran Malaria Initiatives (LMI). Commitment to World Hunger and companion churches is strong in Region 6 and the leadership has long appreciated the opportunities to come together with churchwide staff for resources and tools, support, ideas and fellowship. The challenge to move into new endeavors, particularly with LMI, was met with enthusiasm and a willingness to pilot this program.

This region takes very seriously the strategic initiative to assist this church to "bring forth and support faithful, wise, and courageous leaders whose vocations serve God's mission in a pluralistic world." The consultations and gatherings noted above seek to enable leaders, both staff and volunteer, to feel equipped and encouraged to carry out the work they've been gifted and called to do. In addition to these networks and gatherings, a significant amount of the coordinator's work is rooted in the development of rostered leadership. She attended nearly all candidacy committee meetings held in the region, representing the churchwide expression and

assisting synod staff and committee members in our commitment to prepare leaders to serve throughout the ELCA. An increasing number of candidates moving through candidacy by other than traditional routes resulted in increased numbers of meetings, panels, correspondence and travel for the coordinator, but the outcome has been more congregations served by rostered leaders than might otherwise have been the case. This work also included First Call Assignment and transition into ministry. The coordinator worked with bishops and staff to facilitate the identification of candidates appropriate to serve in congregations in the region.

In the year ahead, the focus areas for the region's work will be: strengthening funding for the archives; continuing the Global Gathering consultation; beginning work with the ecumenical/LERN officers in the synods; continuing to build relationships with Directors for Evangelical Mission serving in the region; and continuing to introduce networks of leaders to one another in order to explore how knowledge of the ministry in which each group is engaged and awareness of the resources and gifts that they bring to the mission of the church will enhance the overall effectiveness of the efforts brought forth in the name of Jesus in Region 6. As God is doing a new thing, we seek to be newly re-shaped vessels to receive and utilize the new gifts coming our way.

Region 7

Submitted by Peggy M. Wuertele

The principal work of the regional coordinator continues to revolve around candidacy. In the words of Bishop Roy Riley, "Candidacy, first call assignment and first call theological education done seamlessly and well, is what best serves the synods of the region." In addition to being present as resource person at more than 25 synod candidacy committee meetings this year (in seven synods), I regularly consult with synod staff, seminary faculty and staff, and students/candidates to provide support for the ELCA churchwide process. I consider it my ministry as a called and ordained pastor of this church to be a non-anxious, involved and creative presence in many instances, including holding seminars with seminary staff to assist student/candidates in navigating the intricacies of the process. In addition, as we seek to become a more multicultural church, I have convened approximately fifteen competency assessment panels for incoming TEEM candidates and theological review panels for those who seek to enter the ELCA roster from other Christian traditions.

Campus ministry also has been an active part of my work this year. I have conducted two quadrennial reviews and been part of a third one. I have visited several of our campus ministries in the region and participated in both a regional mid-winter retreat and the national conference in August. In addition, three vacancies developed in regional campus ministries and I worked with the synods and boards to have them all filled in time for the start of the academic year. I have been learning how exciting this ministry with young adults can be and also how unique each setting is. My admiration and respect for the passion and creativity of campus ministers continues to grow as I see how they endeavor to integrate a relevant faith component in a sometimes resistant academic setting.

Critical components of my work in the region include directing the First Call Theological Education core event, in which all seven of our synods as well as the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia participate. We seek to provide a very high quality continuing education experience for our first call leaders. We are currently re-imagining our core event and developing it into a "leadership guild" with the intention of having first call leaders in affinity groups with trained coaches throughout their first three years of rostered ministry. We also have had increased focus in the region this year on youth and young adult ministry. We just completed

the second of what is becoming an annual Youth Ministry Leaders' Summit, with plans to engage more colleagues next year. The triennial Region 7 Youth Gathering also took place this past summer, and we are now trying to re-imagine what will happen in the future.

Executive assistant Yvonne Curtis works with me in the regional office where we provide support in the form of information and consultations for synod staff, churchwide staff and the seminary, making the region a meeting place for the ELCA expressions in the Northeast.

Region 8

Submitted by Nancy E Gable

Region 8 is comprised of eight synods in the mid-Atlantic region of the United States of America: Northwestern Pennsylvania, Southwestern Pennsylvania, Allegheny, Lower Susquehanna, Upper Susquehanna, Delaware-Maryland, Metropolitan Washington D.C., and West Virginia-Western Maryland. In this territory, we find the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, (the first and oldest Lutheran Seminary in North America) founded in 1826; three colleges of this church: Gettysburg, Susquehanna and Thiel, eight outdoor ministry sites and numerous expressions of social services, schools and advocacy ministries. The region is comprised of nearly 1,150 congregations and 453,000 baptized members. It contains three major urban centers: Washington, D.C., Baltimore and Pittsburgh, as well as many mid-sized cities and suburbs, and numerous town and country parishes (some dating to pre-Revolutionary War days). From open farm land to the industries of coal and steel to the centers of government, culture, and education, the region encompasses a great variety of people, places and issues. The industrial, mining and farming communities have seen declines in population, as has the Lutheran Church in this region. Yet the cities have seen significant growth, including African American, Latino and African immigrant population increases.

During this past year several events are highly symbolic of the important "grassroots" ministry work going on in and throughout Region 8 and have involved people from throughout the region. First, the Region 8 bishops worked with regionally based staff from the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Ministry unit to kick off a multiple year "Missional Leadership Training" opportunity. Participants in this learning opportunity concluded their work in colleague groups and with the larger learning group for three years. The purpose and outcomes of this program are being evaluated so that future plans can build on this training foundation. Second, the Lower Susquehanna Synod is developing a November 2010 "glocal" gathering and inviting other synods to assist with resources and inviting participation from congregations throughout the region.

Region 8 synods work collaboratively in many aspects of the First Call Theological Education (FCTE) program. Each year approximately 100 first call pastors, diaconal ministers, deaconesses and associates in ministry gather for an annual conference that fulfills one of the core principles of the ELCA's FCTE emphasis: context, skills and identity. In November 2009 the focus of the event was on stewardship and financial wellness. The keynote presenter and workshop opportunities centered in this important aspect of professional service in ministry. The intent was to assist participants' ability to walk the line of being both a steward of God's blessings and the steward leader of a congregation. The Region 8 bishops lead a Bible study on the upcoming lectionary gospel text.

In previous reports, I noted that all partners in Region 8 are committed to the continuing development of the emerging relationship with the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg's (LTSG) Certificate in Theological Studies program. Born as a result of the

partnership between the region's bishops, the coordinator for ministry leadership and the faculty of LTSG, this certificate program provides all participants an opportunity to deepen their faith, nurture and satisfy their hunger for greater theological understanding, grow in their passion for the gospel and for God's people and enhance their understanding of the practice of ministry. Region 8's candidacy committees are utilizing this certificate program to meet the academic requirements of those preparing for rostered ministry through the Theological Education for Emerging Ministries (TEEM) program. These candidates report both an excellent academic experience and a strong sense of group cohesion that assists with their ongoing formation as future pastors of the ELCA. It is exciting to witness the active participation of several students from our full communion partners in this opportunity to prepare for service in ministry.

The Directors for Evangelical Mission (DEMs) continue to develop a creative partnership and strong relationship with LTSG as well as working in the candidacy, assignment and first call process. The DEMs work with the LTSG dean, registrar, director of field education and the regional coordinator to discover the many ways in which our mission work connect in classroom, field education placements and assignment and first call opportunities. During this academic year the DEMs will be on the LTSG campus on a regular basis to meet students and encourage the early testing process for development and redevelopment; also, they will participate in teaching a January Term 2011 course, Portraits in Mission, and in the senior seminar, Integrative Seminar III.

The coming year promises to be one where we in Region 8 seek and appropriate balance between carrying forward helpful and beneficial ministry activities while exploring and engaging in new opportunities for cooperative ministry. There is a good spirit among the leaders of the region who are committed to the mission of the ELCA and who desire to find ways embody that mission, particularly in the area of first call theological education, campus ministry and candidacy.

Region 9

Submitted by Harvey Huntley Jr.

Region 9 is one of the largest geographical territories encompassed within the ELCA. It is also in a rapidly growing part of the United States; however, the concentration of Lutherans within this region is not very high compared to many other areas of the country. The region consists of six synods: Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Southeastern (Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, and Tennessee), Florida-Bahamas, and the Caribbean (Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands). This region is blessed with a cooperative spirit among church leaders and a supportive attitude toward the churchwide organization.

In the past year the work of the regional coordinator has been significantly embellished with the addition of major responsibilities in campus ministry related to the Vocation and Education unit. This includes quadrennial reviews at campus sites, vacancy work related to campus ministry organizations, and contact with campus ministry staff, including regional retreats. A major focus this past year has been on discernment of vocation among college students as a growing opportunity for campus ministry input and support.

In addition, candidacy continues to be a major focus in this region. Region 9 generates large numbers of candidates—more than the region absorbs in active ministry. There have been training opportunities for new candidacy committee members as well as interpretation of new policies related to recent Churchwide Assembly resolutions. The regional coordinator attends all candidacy committee meetings in the six synods of the region and facilitates and provides staff support for the bishops in the churchwide assignment process.

During the past year the region added a satellite office in the North Carolina synod office building thanks to a generous invitation from the synod. This offer came because on June 12, 2010, the regional coordinator married an ELCA pastor who is now serving in Salisbury, NC. The region now has two office locations—the main office at Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary in Columbia, SC, and the satellite office in Salisbury, NC.

A key to the development of an effective region is the cultivation of vital networks. Over the past two years a new network has emerged at the initiative of regional deployed staff with financial and stewardship responsibilities. This group includes staff from the following areas: Mission Investment Fund, the ELCA Foundation, EOCM (Directors of Evangelical Mission), synod stewardship specialists, and the Board of Pensions. The group first met for a retreat in August 2009 followed by a second retreat in January 2010. At these two events the staff learned in depth about the work each of them does in the region and the resources they have for mission across the region. The group has agreed to meet annually and to work collaboratively on behalf of mission in order to explore new ways in which mission can be enhanced through cooperative efforts.

During the coming year, several areas will require significant attention by the regional leadership and the coordinator:

- Continued development of relationships with campus ministry sites.
- Refinement of financial support from synods for the mission of the region.
- Support for candidacy committees in a time of transition due to resignations by committee members who disagree with the 2009 Churchwide Assembly resolutions on human sexuality.
- Search for a new treasurer for the region (a volunteer position).
- Sponsoring an event for administrative assistants in the region's synod offices.
- Establishing Bishop's School on a solid financial footing with staffing so this ministry can be sustained in spite of recent regional staff reductions.
- Planning for a 2012 First Call Theological Education regional event focused on stewardship.

**What does it mean to be the church?
The ELCA and ELCIC in the 21st Century**
By Cheryl Peterson

When I was a pastor in Milwaukee, one of the congregation members gave me a book. It had belonged to her father who had served this congregation as pastor from 1942-1984. The book chronicled the history of Lutheranism in Milwaukee and was entitled *A Plan for Survival*.¹ The first chapter was about our congregation which was founded by the Buffalo Synod as the first Lutheran congregation in Milwaukee. I showed the book to a friend who was also a pastor, and who knew I was writing my dissertation on ecclesiology. She quipped, “How about that for an ecclesiology?!” We laughed about it, but I have come back to that title in my mind several times since then, because it could be the title of an ecclesiology written today for the historic mainline Protestant churches.

We are living in a time when survival is on the mind of most mainline congregations and denominations. It is an undeniable fact that the “mainline churches” in the U.S. and Canada – including Lutheran churches – are in a significant numerical decline.² There is some dispute about why this is³ and about how to best respond to this crisis, but for most, the goal seems clear: What can we do to turn this trend around? A glance at some of the more recently published titles reveals a myriad of solutions (what I like to call the adjective church books). We’ve all heard of the Purpose-Driven Church and the Emerging Church, but now we also have: Comeback Churches, Liquid Church, Third-Culture Church, Deep Church, Total Church, Engaged Church, Essential Church, Simple Church, Transformational Church, and my favorite, Sticky Church. The strategies they propose generally fall into one of four categories: relevancy, authenticity, marketing, and purpose. In other words, “How can we do church better?” What can we do to bring people back into the churches again [even if that is only a strategy to get them in to hear the gospel, as Kenneth [Inskoop] suggested in his talk]? What can we do to get the church to grow and thrive again in this changing context? How can we do church better?

Baptist church consultant Reggie McNeal says that we are asking the wrong question. His alternative, which he calls the “tough,” rather than the “right” question, is this: How do we deconvert from Churchianity to Christianity? That is one of the questions we need to ask, but there is even a more basic and prior question, and it’s the one we’ve used to frame this conference: What does it mean to be the church? Or as I prefer, who is the church, or alternatively, who are we as church? The real ecclesial crisis we are facing is one of identity. The real problem is not that we have lost our purpose. It’s easy enough to find one of those—just ask Rick Warren. The real problem is that we have forgotten or maybe never really knew *who we are*. As I will argue, who we are is related to who God is calling us to be and what God is calling us to do—that is, our mission or vocation.

In two weeks, a group of Lutherans will be gathering in my home town of Columbus, Ohio, and in all likelihood, will form a new Lutheran church body, because they are not happy with the identity of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA).⁴ To many of them, the ELCA has become a church

¹ Roy A. Suelflow, *A Plan For Survival* (New York: Greenwich Books, 1965).

² “The latest American Religious Identification Survey (2008) shows that “The historic Mainline Christian churches have consistently lost market share since the 1950s, but since 2001 there has been a significant fall in numbers. The Methodists and Episcopalians have been particularly affected by losses.” ARIS, p. ____ . Website. It is worth noting that although the mainline denomination show the largest drop in membership, some conservative Christian groups have also started losing members (whereas before they were always growing), e.g. Baptists, Assemblies of God, etc. The Pentecostal tradition made particular headway during the 1990s but its growth appears to have leveled off recently (though everywhere else in the world, these groups are growing by leaps and bounds, cite a work on Pentecostalism).

³ Sociologists have been offering theories for decades; give some examples.

⁴ CORE Web site.

that has lost its biblical and confessional moorings. In fact, James Nestingen has gone as far as saying that because the ELCA has “redefined the Word of God,” it can no longer be considered a church, since the church is created by the Word.⁵

As DeAne [Lagerquist] noted in her presentation, the question of ecclesial identity has been asked since the first Lutherans arrived in North America in the seventeenth century and which erupted perhaps most infamously in the mid-nineteenth century in eastern Pennsylvania with the publication of the Definite Platform (unfortunately pitting “American” against “Lutheran,” a pair of identities that we are still trying to figure out how to hold together). There are those Lutherans who think we need to be more Lutheran by stressing our distinctive Lutheran heritage, and there are those who seemingly want to play that heritage down in an effort to become more (capital E) “Evangelical,” which is one of the few Christian traditions that seem to be growing as the mainlines decline.⁶

While I find this debate important and fascinating—and I even teach a class about it – it is not a debate that too many people outside of Lutheranism care about.⁷ Don’t get me wrong – this is a conversation that Lutherans must continue to have with each other, especially as we learn to live in communion amidst the tensions that have resulted from decisions made last August. But it’s still not the “tough question.” The tough question is: What is our identity as the people of God, that is, who are we as the church? It is a question we must ask first as Christians, members of the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church, even if we will answer it with a Lutheran accent.

And it is a question we must ask in light of our changing context. I agree with Nicolas Healy who says that the ecclesiological task is to seek after the concrete identity of the church in its ecclesiological context, and not another “blueprint” ecclesiology suitable for any time and place. One of the components in our context that must be taken into account is the dis-establishment of a cultural Christendom that has been operative in various guises in the U.S. since its founding. Historically, the identity, place, and influence of the mainline churches were supported by a society which was “Christian” in rhetoric if not always in numbers. Even more significant was the optimistic narrative of a Christian America that gave the Protestant churches a clear role and purpose in society until the 1960s. There were no worries about survival; indeed, there was unprecedented church growth in the post-World War II period, from which Lutherans, while historically outsiders to the mainstream of evangelical Protestantism, also benefited. While this shift has been discussed by Douglas John Hall and others, it has been my experience that most congregations are still not coming to grips with it. We are still, as Hall says, “Dreaming Christendom dreams.”

We have also not come to terms with the significant role that the voluntary principle played in this process. The voluntary principle was significant in enabling the legitimacy of various Christian traditions immigrating into the same geographic area and providing a means for them to work together toward common goals (especially in the nineteenth century) toward a vision of a more “Christian America.” While there were many positive results of this development (e.g.?), according to historian C.C. Goen, the price we paid was high: we lost the *doctrine* of the church, settling instead for a more sociological concept of the church as a voluntary association of self-selecting individuals, a “private body of individuals who voluntarily choose to belong for reasons of their own.”⁸

Thus, it is not simply that the aforementioned strategies – become more relevant, find out what people want/need, and so forth – do not explicitly address the question of the church’s identity. The larger problem is that *there already is* an operative concept of the church presumed in these strategies, that of

⁵ Nestingen on CORE website.

⁶ The other, of course, is Pentecostalism – which while it is affecting Lutheranism in the global south, so far has not had the same kind of impact in North America.

⁷ Mark Noll is a notable exception; see his . . .

⁸ Goen, 23.

the church as “voluntary association.” Regardless of what their traditions teach about the doctrine of the church, most mainline Protestants in this country (including Lutherans) operate *in practice* with a view of the church as a voluntary association of self-selecting individuals.

At the center of this concept is the individual who chooses to affiliate (or not) with a particular congregation, denomination, or even a “non-denominational” entity, rather than on the Triune God who calls, gathers, enlightens, and sends the church. When we ask, “What can we do to ‘turn this around’?” or even “What is our purpose?” we make the focus on the individual to whom we’re reaching out, rather than on the God who calls the church into being with a particular identity and vocation.⁹ The majority of responses to the perceived ecclesial crisis of declining members are given with this concept of the church in mind, focusing on what individuals want or needs and how to attract individuals to the church [and also playing into the marketing pressures Kenneth speaks of in his essay].

I am a systematic theologian, so it should come as no surprise that I propose that we need to replace this church concept with a theological one in order to address the real, underlying ecclesial crisis, which I have argued is one of identity. I agree with DeAne that Lutheran ecclesiology is defined by theology rather than polity or structure. Picking on her last point, I propose that the starting point for this investigation needs to be who God is and what God is doing, rather than the church and what its members do. The rest of my presentation will consider three theological starting points – and corollary paradigms – for ecclesiology, before outlining my own proposal for an ecclesiology that “starts with the Spirit.”

As Lutherans, the most obvious theological starting point is the Word of God, or more specifically, the promise of the gospel, addressed to sinners. Many Lutherans prefer to define the church by what “happens” in the assembly of those whom God gathers: which is that God speaks the Word of promise (justification by grace through faith which brings forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation) to those gathered. Jenson and Gritsch, in their classic book on Lutheranism, refer to church as an event or a “happening.” [an idea we heard Kenneth propose again last night.]

Another ecclesiological paradigm has emerged since the mid-twentieth century, one that takes as its starting point the Triune God’s being as a communion of persons. In communion of *koinonia* ecclesiology, ecclesial communion is modeled on the idea of the communion of persons within the Trinity and is experienced horizontally as well as vertically, pointing to “organic relationships, mutual participation, and the imparting of life benefits” in the body of Christ.¹⁰ This paradigm of communion is being embraced by many ecumenically-minded theologians, including some Lutherans (as well as some feminist and liberation theologians), and has been adopted by the Lutheran World Federation as a self-description.

For the first paradigm, what is important is not the being but the function of (or better yet, the activity in) the church. Ecclesiology should be done in service of proclaiming the gospel – or not at all. As a hierarchical institution, the church “got in the way” of the proclamation of the pure gospel during Martin Luther’s day. To focus on ecclesiology beyond the event of proclamation warrants caution, lest we find ourselves in a similar situation today. Those who hold this view prefer to understand the being of the church in terms of event: the performative utterance, the Word that declares the forgiveness of sins and justifies the sinner in the midst of the assembly. The event of proclamation of the gospel of justification by grace through faith on account of Christ, then, creates the “event” of the church, whose being is continually being re-created and actualized through proclamation of the gospel. Thus, the main interest is not in *what* the church is, but *what it does* (or more properly, what God does in it), which can seem to reduce the definition of the church to functional terms.

⁹ The irony, of course, is that in a context in which the church’s role has been disestablished, where one can no longer take the church’s existence for granted, individuals have sought to have their needs for community, meaning, healing, etc. met in places other than the local Christian congregations (e.g. AA, cf. Tickle’s book).

¹⁰ Karen L. Bloomquist, “Engaging Economic Globalization as Churches,” in *Ecumenical Review* 53/4 (2001), p. 496.

The communion paradigm locates the being of the church in the divine life of the Triune God: the church is the body of Christ, a mystical communion, an organism through which members participate in the divine life, most centrally in the celebration of the Eucharist.¹¹ The “*what*” question is more central here, even though it is articulated in terms of a relational, rather than a substance, ontology (which its proponents argue allows it to avoid the dangers of hierarchicalism and institutionalism that ontological views of the church often lead to). Communion is understood in terms of participation in the triune God, whereby believers are brought into communion with the Triune God (and one another) through their incorporation into the body of Christ through the sharing of the Lord’s Supper. Thus this paradigm retrieves both the sacramental and relational understandings of communion: i.e., communion means participation in the triune God through the Eucharist, and by extension, participation in the body of Christ, the church.¹²

To summarize: each paradigm offers a distinct entry point from which to examine the identity and purpose of the church: the Word that is God’s address to the church on the one hand, and the communion of the three persons of the Trinity on the other. The first paradigm posits the church as word-event: the church exists in the event of proclamation itself, the church “happens.” The purpose of the church is proclamation of the good news to those who are gathered. The second paradigm posits the church as a kind of sacrament, a sign of the Triune God’s desired communion with all of creation. The purpose of the church is to provide communion with God, which is most profoundly experienced in the Eucharist, and to be a sign to the world of the unity God wishes to have with all people. While each paradigm has much to commend it, there are difficulties with each as the foundation for an ecclesiology for a post-Christendom context.

Proponents of communion ecclesiology often criticize the Word-Event paradigm for its tendency to be interpreted in overly individualistic (and even existential) terms, in the “I-Thou” encounter of individuals with the Word of promise. Even for those who expand the Word-event paradigm to include an understanding of the church as event *outside* of the traditional setting of pulpit and altar, the emphasis on “what is happening” over and against “who is there” still can lead to a functional concept of the church that does not address the very real quest for authentic community in today’s context. Communion ecclesiology, on the other hand, has been criticized for its tendency to idealize ecclesial communion as a reflection of the communion within God’s triune being and to refuse to acknowledge the sin *of* the church. This is especially true in Catholic and Orthodox versions of communion ecclesiology, but one can also find this concern expressed by some Evangelical Catholic Lutherans.¹³ The need to reconcile differences and diversities within the body of Christ is typically addressed in communion ecclesiology, but not always the need to reconcile relationships *within the church* broken by sin, such as the LWF did the other week in the historic request for forgiveness from the Mennonites.¹⁴

¹¹ Thus, the “nature” of the church cannot be understood in either paradigm apart from the corresponding understanding of salvation. If salvation is understood in terms of forensic justification (of the individual) that is “declared” (proclaimed), the church will be seen in light of that understanding: the church is the “event” in which that justification is declared. In most contemporary communion ecclesiology, the church is an icon of the Triune God in which we participate—experience salvation as union with God. Much of the disagreements surrounding the doctrine of the church (at least in the ELCA, e.g. between Evangelical Catholics and the WordAlone Network) can be traced back to these divergent understandings of salvation.

¹² It is important to note that there is a wide array of communion ecclesiologies that vary in how they understand the structure of this communion, from the hierarchical communion ecclesiology of Joseph Ratzinger on the one hand, to the more liberationist communion ecclesiology of Leonardo Boff and Elizabeth Johnson, on the other. See Dennis Doyle. . .

¹³ My response to Bouteneff; does Jenson speak to this?

¹⁴ LWF site

More pertinent to our purposes today, both paradigms can be criticized because they presume context of Christendom and the questions underlying each paradigm presume the gathered church of Christendom. The question that historically has driven the Word-event paradigm is, “How do I recognize the true church?” [Where the gospel is being rightly proclaimed and the sacraments administered in accordance with the scripture].¹⁵ The underlying concern of the communion paradigm is one of Christian unity. In the ecumenical age, there are many ecclesial communions claiming to be “the church.” How do they relate to one another? Can we speak of a real communion among the churches in spite of theological and structural differences? Communion ecclesiology, which emerged as a major theme of the Second Vatican Council, came to be adopted by many ecumenically-minded Protestants among other reasons as a way to address the question of the unity of the church in a denominational age.

These questions—while not unimportant for the church to consider—are no longer the primary questions being asked in a post-Christendom, post-modern age. Today the church must wrestle with its identity not only in relation to the truth of the gospel it proclaims and the divisions within it; the church also must wrestle with its theological identity and purpose in a society that can no longer assume the centrality and influence of the church. No longer are people asking, “Which church?” or “How are these churches ‘one’?” Now the questions guiding the church’s inquiry are more basic: Why do these people gather at all? What purpose does the church have in an increasingly post-Christian world? What does it mean to “be” the church in a world that does not take its existence for granted?

A second—and related concern—is what while each paradigm has as its starting point God’s agency, each makes the primary focus the action of God to *gather the church* (so that its members can hear the promise, or be united with Christ in the sacrament), rather than the action of God to *send the church*. However, as Lutheran theologian and ecumenist Edmund Schlink has pointed out, the church exists in a double—not a single—movement. Following the New Testament narrative, the church is both the people of God called *out* of the world and the prophetic, priestly, and kingly people *sent into* the world.¹⁶ Because these two paradigms presume either an actual or de facto cultural Christendom, there is a danger of focusing only the first movement, the Spirit’s gathering of the Church, to the neglect of the second. In other words, in both paradigms, it is too easy to neglect the missional aspect of the church’s identity.

A third paradigm has emerged out of the work of the mostly Reformed “Gospel and Our Culture Network,” but which has quickly caught on in other traditions, including Lutheran.¹⁷ These authors propose that the church’s identity is rooted in its participation in the mission of God, defined in terms of God’s own Trinitarian being, i.e., a sending God. A commonly heard catch-phrase goes, “The church does not have a mission; God’s mission has a church.” Because God is a missional God, the church is by nature a missional community, sent as well as gathered by God’s activity.

This third paradigm takes the post-Christendom context clearly into account and sees the church in this “double movement” of the Spirit, wherein the church is not only gathered by God’s missional activity, but also sent out, reflecting God’s purpose to heal and restore creation. As missiologist David Bosch famously articulates, “The classical doctrine of the *missio Dei* as God the Father sending the Son, and God the Father and the Son sending the Spirit [is] expanded to include yet another ‘movement’: Father, Son and Holy Spirit sending the church into the world. . . in the emerging ecclesiology, the church is seen as essentially missionary . . . Here the church is not the sender but the one sent.”¹⁸ Mission, then, is not something the church does; it is central to *who the church is*. Of course, this is not how most congregations understand and use the term “mission;” many congregations believe they are

¹⁵ Augsburg Confession

¹⁶ “In this double movement of those being called and those being sent by God, the church exists.” See Schlink, *Ökumenische Dogmatik*, 566. The translation is mine. The original German reads, “In dieser doppelten Bewegung des von Gott Berufen- und Gesandtseins existiert die Kirche.”

¹⁷ Cite some of the literature here, including *The Evangelizing Church*.

¹⁸ Bosch, ____.

already “missional” because they are focused outward as a way to respond to their anxiety over the loss of members and influence, as a way to “bring the numbers up.” Whether or not this or that “missional strategy” works is for others to decide. My concern is that this is an unhelpful way to frame the crisis in which we find ourselves in, one that does not get at the central issue for the mainline churches in an increasingly pluralistic era that is being decried as the “end of Christian America,”¹⁹ which as I have stated is one of *ecclesial identity*.

As I already noted, the missional paradigm takes the post-Christendom context clearly into account in a way that the other two paradigms generally do not. Understood correctly, it also offers a helpful theological starting point from which address the church’s identity in this context.²⁰ However, while I will preference the *missio dei* paradigm by using it as a starting point, I am not choosing it over and against the other two paradigms. My goal is not to argue for a new “blueprint ecclesiology” but to offer an approach to the question facing the church in its context today.

Each of these three paradigms has something to contribute to the task at hand. My own proposal draws on the strengths of all three. The Word-event retains the Protestant focus on the proclamation of the forgiveness of sins as a gift that comes to us from outside of ourselves (*extra nos*), as a word that is addressed to us. The communion paradigm emphasizes that this gift is not only declared but is the gift of Christ himself “present in faith” to believers that enables them to share communion with Triune God through incorporation into the body of Christ, centrally through participation in the Eucharist. Through this incorporation, we are also enabled to share in a *koinonia* of love with other members of the body of Christ. The primary limitation of the Word-event and communion paradigms, in my view, is that they do not take into account the post-Christendom context in the way that the missional paradigm does.

In taking up the *missio dei* [God’s mission] as the starting point for my ecclesiological proposal, I do so with two additional methodological moves. I propose that a narrative method is the most proper to the exploration of the church’s identity, and that this narrative ought to be read pneumatologically, that is, we ought to “start with the Spirit.”²¹ To discover “who” the church is, it seems appropriate to begin with the story of the God creating the church in the narrative of the Scriptures without reducing the church’s “being” to its “story” as the Yale School has sometimes been accused of doing. A narrative method allows a rich engagement with the Scripture and I will argue, by extension the ecumenical creeds of the Church, in the task of addressing the church’s identity and purpose.

In the first instance, the turn to narrative addresses the problem of using “identity” as a category. To speak of the church’s “identity” rather than its nature or being might suggest to some the sociological method used in “identity studies” wherein a group’s identity is determined over and against the identity of other groups.²² This can contribute to an “us and them” mentality which does not serve the church’s mission. At the same time, the church does have a peculiar and distinctive identity but this is found not in its identity over and against “others” but rather in relationship to the One who is “Other,” God, whom we know through the revelation given to us in Scripture. Most broadly, a narrative method is one that draws on literary theories or genres for theological reflection. Even though a narrative method has been associated primarily with the Yale School and theologians such as George Lindbeck, according to L. Gregory Jones, “There is not so much a distinct position known as ‘narrative theology’ as there are a

¹⁹ Newsweek cover.

²⁰In making this move, I am following Neil Ormerod who also prefers mission to communion as a theological starting point for a systematic ecclesiology today. See also Stephan Bevans article

²¹ Lyle Dabney for this phrase.

²² Jon Pahl here – why he prefers speaking of the church in terms of “where” God is (rather than “who” or for that matter “what is happening,” per the Word-event paradigm which is help by his colleague Timothy Wengert).

variety of ways in which theologians have argued for the significance of narrative for theological reflection.”²³

There are three reasons that I suggest that narrative can be a helpful method for exploring the identity and purpose of the church. Narrative is an appropriate method first of all because resonates with the sensibilities of the postmodern, post-Christendom context, which are drawn to understand reality relationally, through story and narrative, rather than through propositionally stated, universal truth claims. Second, while narrative theology is one of the most promising theological developments in the west in recent decades, few theologians have explored the natural connection between narrative, ecclesiology, and mission, especially for the U.S. context.²⁴ This leads to my third and perhaps more important reason: a narrative approach to ecclesiology is especially appropriate for the church in the U.S. today because the history of the Protestant mainline churches in the U.S have been shaped by a particular narrative, which subsumed the scriptural story of the church toward a new *telos*—that of a “Christian America.”²⁵ Amidst the breakdown of this narrative, the church is offered a new opportunity to rediscover its missional identity in the story of the Scriptures. Thus, a narrative method looks to the Holy Scriptures and by extension, to the Third Article of the Apostles’ Creed, where the Holy Spirit and the church both appear in the creedal story of salvation, to answer the question of the identity of the church.²⁶

A narrative approach to ecclesiology explores the identity of the church by considering its place in the scriptural and creedal narratives, in terms of its relationship to God, its “character,” its purpose, and finally its goal or destiny. What is the church’s relationship to the God who has called it into a new life through the death and resurrection of Christ? What is the character of this people called “the church?” What purpose does the church have in God’s intended destiny for all of creation?

By “starting with the Spirit,” I also follow Edmund Schlink, who stated that “Ecclesiology must be taken as a whole and expounded and developed in a Trinitarian way; and in this we should not forget that in the primitive Confessions [the creeds] the articles concerning the Church are directly connected with the articles on the Holy Ghost. This suggests that, within a Trinitarian context, one should expound the doctrine of the church as the *opus proprium* [proper work] of the Holy Ghost.”²⁷ If we begin our reflections on ecclesiology by considering the “proper work of the Holy Spirit,” we begin with God’s ad extra movement in the world.

²³ Jones, “Narrative Theology,” in *The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Modern Thought*, ed. Alister E. McGrath (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993), 395-398.

²⁴ Christopher Wright’s book, *Mission of God*, cite other recent works. And older piece is the set of essays in *Footprints of God: A Narrative Theology of Mission*, ed. Charles Van Engen, Nancy Thomas and Robert Gallagher (Monrovia, California: MARC, 1999). See also Chapter Two, “The Importance of Narrative Theology,” in *Mission on the Way: Issues in Mission Theology*, by Charles Van Engen (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1996), 44-68.

²⁵ In his essay, “Who are we? Being Christian in an Age of Americanism,” Allen Hilton concurs. He appeals to narrative as the appropriate method for exploring the church’s identity in the U.S. context today, arguing that communities (even nations) take on a story-formed character.²⁵ He goes on to contrast the “nation’s story” with the “church’s story.” Allen R. Hilton, “Who are we? Being Christian in an Age of Americanism,” in *Anxious About Empire*, ed. Wes Avram (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2004), 150.

²⁶ According to Luther, writes Lindbeck, the creed is a summary of the gospel, “and the gospel, in turn, is narrative: it proclaims the history of God’s gracious dealings with humankind in creation, the coming of Jesus Christ (the climatic part of the story), and the gathering of a people, the Church, through the Holy Spirit.” See Lindbeck, “Martin Luther and the Rabbinic Mind,” in *The Church in a Postliberal Age*, ed. James J. Buckley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 25. Lindbeck’s application of this insight is considered below.

²⁷ Schlink, “Twelve Theses,” in *The Coming Christ and the Coming Church* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1968), 96. For Schlink, the context of any talk of the church’s being also must be eschatological, since the church is on a pilgrimage between the first and second advent of Christ. Schlink, “The Pilgrim People of God,” in *The Third World Conference on Faith and Order* (Lund 1952), ed. Oliver S. Tomkins (London: Camelot, 1953), 151-161.

As with using narrative as a method, “starting with the Spirit” also resonates with our current social context, where an increasing number of people define themselves as “spiritual but not religious.”²⁸ However, to my knowledge, no one has written a narrative missional ecclesiology that “starts with the Spirit.”²⁹ This is especially surprising considering not only the contemporary context but also the natural connection between the Holy Spirit with the church in the New Testament narrative, especially the Acts of the Apostles. The church has its own story that is related to and rooted in the story of Israel and Jesus, but that the *church’s particular identity and mission*, becomes clear after the resurrection and with the coming of the Holy Spirit. “Starting with the Spirit” in the “story of the church” offers a way to think about the identity of the church that incorporates the missional focus of the third paradigm but also the theological contributions of the other two paradigms: the emphasis on forgiveness of sins in the church’s proclamation and the communion that members share with God and one another. This story arc begins with the new life of the resurrection and Pentecost events and ending with the promise of Christ’s second coming; in-between, the church finds its identity as a “communion of saints” who live by the gift of “the forgiveness of sins,” and in the Spirit-enabled living out of this gift, becomes and is a witness to the world.

Elsewhere I have called my approach an “ecclesiology of the Third Article.”³⁰ Here I propose the designation “Spirit-breathed people,” or alternatively, “Spirit-breathed community.”³¹ The phrase “Spirit-breathed” heretofore has been used to describe a view of the Holy Scriptures (based on 2 Tim 3:16), but a narrative reading of the scriptures would suggest it more appropriate to use this descriptor for the church.³² The image comes from John 20, the Johannine Pentecost, which unlike the Pentecost event described in Acts 2, specifically includes Jesus giving the disciples a missionary charge: “As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” The Spirit that Jesus breathes onto his disciples is the same Spirit that raised him from the dead (Romans 8:11), creating a people to walk in the new life of the resurrection, being led by the same Spirit who indwells them.

The New Testament (and Acts in particular) tells the story of a people who are called into communion and mission by the power of the resurrection. If we start with the Spirit as a primary character in the biblical narrative, we see the Spirit as the one who raised Jesus from the dead (Rom 8:11) and blew on the nascent church at Pentecost, releasing them from their fear and confusion to be a community in mission to the world that they had been hiding from (Acts 2 and John 20). As a down payment of our final destiny, the Spirit is the first fruits and power of new life, forgiveness, and faith for the church in its pilgrim existence. The Spirit brings the church into being as a community whose destiny is the kingdom of God, whose character is new life and whose purpose it is to bear witness to the power of life over death. In the Acts of the Apostles, the community that is brought into being is not an idealized divine community but

²⁸ Linda Mercadante’s work on this; also the growing phenomenon of Pentecostalism globally make pneumatology an important resource for ecclesiology today.

²⁹ Gabriel Fackre comes the closest to what I am attempting to do in *The Church: Signs of the Spirit and Signs of the Times, The Christian Story: A Pastoral Systematics, Vol. 5* (Eerdmans, 2007). In my review of this book, I welcomed Fackre’s methodological use of narrative and grounding ecclesiology in pneumatology, although I thought it could have been developed more fully in light of on-going mainline suspicion of the Holy Spirit (which I will do). The major weakness in this work, however, is the minimal attention given to the recent “missional” focus in North American ecclesiology, especially as related to the mark of “apostolicity.”

³⁰ Here I also follow by doctoral advisor, Lyle Dabney.

³¹ I realize I am introducing a new adjective, but it is a biblical one unlike most of the adjective-church books noted in my introduction. I like Craig Van Gelder’s designation of the church as a “community led by the Spirit” but it does not capture the fullness of the Spirit’s role in the life of the church. While I found “Spirit-animated” appealing, it can be problematic in that it can be used to indicate the Holy Spirit as the principle that animates the church as a given and divinely instituted structure, as it sometimes suggested in Roman Catholic ecclesiologies.

³² Karoline Lewis’ point on the Greek words used by John and Paul, and the connection made to creation.

one that is being raised daily to a new creation through recognizing their sinfulness and hearing the promise of forgiveness (the focus of a Word-event ecclesiology) as well as one of true *koinonia* and sharing with God and one another (the focus of communion ecclesiology). This narrative sketches out an identity and purpose not only for the church of the first century, but for the church today. In contrast to the fearfulness driving much conversation about the church today, we see in Acts glimpses of a community that is oriented toward the possibility of new life in the resurrection and does not fear its own future survival. This people is constantly moving outside of its comfort zone, crossing ethnic boundaries and lines of social class and wealth to create a new community, bringing good news and healing to the marginalized (the focus of a missional ecclesiology).

The Acts of the Apostles has begun to appear in resources for the “missional church,”³³ but Lutherans historically have been suspicious of the Acts of the Apostles because of its association with church growth movements and Pentecostalism, especially neo-Pentecostal movements and their focus on prosperity, fearing it will lead to a theology of glory. Douglas John Hall, for example, especially cautions Americans against what he terms “resurrectionism,” a celebration of the resurrection and new life apart from the cross of Christ. This need not be the case if one understands the work of the Holy Spirit in a Trinitarian framework that links it to creation and redemption as well as sanctification. One way to do this is to show that my constructive proposal for a narrative, pneumatological, and missional ecclesiology is grounded not only in a new reading of scripture but also in the tradition of the church. This continuity with the historic church and its ecumenical creeds, which of course already is presumed by the larger Trinitarian framework of the missional church and communion paradigms, explicitly distinguishes my proposal from a more traditional Pentecostal approach.³⁴

Following the Trinitarian framework of Martin Luther’s treatment of the Apostles’ Creed in his Small and Large Catechisms, one can posit a “narrative” that runs through the Creed and the Third Article in particular that shows these linkages and at the same time can serve as a framework for understanding the *church’s Spirit-breathed identity and purpose*. This narrative begins with the Holy Spirit calling the church into being through the Word, by “bringing it to Christ.” The Third Article continues narrating this new creation (which Luther dubs a “holy community” and “a holy Christian people”) as a people who have been brought into communion with God through the power of the Holy Spirit. The church lives out that communion through a community of relationships marked by communication of the forgiveness of sins, a gift first and continually received through the Holy Spirit, and a sharing of the Spirit’s fruits in anticipation of its final destiny in the kingdom of God. The church also receives its purpose from the work of the Spirit. As Luther writes, “The Holy Spirit continues his work without ceasing until the last day, and *for this purpose he has appointed a community on earth, through which he speaks and does all of his work*. For he has not yet gathered together all of this Christian community, nor has he completed the granting of forgiveness.”³⁵ Thus, the church finds its identity and purpose as *a Spirit-breathed church*,

³³ *Called to be Church*, by Anthony Robison and Robert Wall. Although Gabriel Fackre does not work explicitly out of a missional paradigm, he chooses as his organizing principle what he calls the four “birthmarks” or “signs of the Spirit” that emerge from the church’s birth and nurture in the Acts of the Apostles: *kerygma*, *leitourgia*, *diakonia*, and *koinonia*. In Part One, Fackre discerns these signs (and resistance to them) from the Acts narrative as interpreted in tradition and lived out in the narrative of ecclesial life in both local and at-large contexts. In Part Two, he relates the four foundational signs to the marks of the church in the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed. Fackre, *Ibid*.

³⁴ This is beginning to change; e.g. Amos Yong and Veli-Matti Karkkainen are examples of contemporary Pentecostal theologians who conscientiously work within the larger ecumenical tradition. Yong even has a treatment of the Nicene marks of the church from a Pentecostal perspective.

³⁵ *BC*, 438. This raises the interesting question posed to me by Richard Bliese during our discussion group following my presentation: “Does the church’s narrative end after the eschaton, or does it change? If the latter, what changes?”

as the Holy Spirit empowers and leads the church to live out the new life given in the resurrection as “the communion of saints” in the “forgiveness of sins.”

In summary, I propose that the question of the church’s identity and purpose can best be answered in today’s context by returning to the “story of the church” which properly “starts with the Spirit” and by reclaiming a concept of the church as *Spirit-breathed people* who are called and sent, a community created and led by the Spirit for communion, reconciliation, and mission.

The One Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church in the North American Context

Cheryl M. Peterson

The North American context

If one were to ask, What is the state of the church in North America? one would hear concern about declining worship attendance and participation in congregational life. It is an undeniable fact that since the 1960s the “mainline churches”¹ in the USA have been in continuous numerical decline. Since its foundation in 1988, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) has declined in membership by 9.1 percent (from

5.25 million members to 4.77 million in 2006).² Some have predicted that if current trends and demographics continue, the ELCA will “turn out the lights” in 2046.³

Whatever the cause (or causes),⁴ this decline is causing great anxiety in these churches—not only because they are growing smaller in numerical terms but because they have lost a certain cultural and social position within American society and are becoming “sideline” churches. This is part of a larger shift in American society that Canadian theologian Douglas John Hall describes as “dis-establishment” from a *de facto* form of Christendom operative in the USA since its founding. Although Christianity was never legally established by the government as the national religion, as in many European nations, it has become commonplace for contextual theologians to apply this term also to the USA and Canada. Hall argues that the constitutional separation of church and state has blinded us regarding the depth of influence culture has had on North American Christianity. While in modern-day Europe cultural Christianity is largely a matter of form, in the USA it is on the level of content.⁵ Hall explains that

[i]n North America, the establishment of Christianity consists of the identification of the Christian faith with the values, goals, and ways of the dominant culture [...]. It exists rather as a *de facto* cultural alliance. It functions at the level of what is meant by the term “way of life,” that is, ideologically.⁶

² These figures can be found on the Web site of the ELCA, at www.elca.org, accessed 7 August 2008.

³ Cited in Mark Hanson, “The Future of Lutheran Institutions,” address given in January 2005, at https://archive.elca.org/bishop/messages/m_ELCAInstitutionsJan2005.pdf, accessed 7 August 2008.

⁴ The cause for the decline is debated. Recently, a team of sociologists at the University of California, Berkeley have shown that the primary reason for this decline is not, as is sometimes argued, their liberal theology, but a matter of demographics, including lower fertility rates among their predominately white, native-born members (and unlike evangelicals, Mormons and Catholics, the low birth rate among mainliners has not been offset by streams of immigrants). See Mark I. Pinsky, “Lifeline for Mainliners,” in *USA Today Opinion Forum* (19 May 2008), at <http://blogs.usatoday.com/oped/2008/05/lifeline-for-ma.html>, accessed 7 August 2008.

⁵ This was first noted by Alexis de Tocqueville. See the discussion in Jerald Brauer, *Images of Religion in America*, Facet Books, Historical Series, no. 8, edited by Richard C. Wolf (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1967).

⁶ Douglas John Hall, *The Reality of the Gospel and the Unreality of the Churches* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1975), pp. 103-104. See also Douglas John Hall, *Confessing the Faith: Christian Theology in a North American Context* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996), pp. 228-256.

¹ According to the *Encyclopedia of Religion and Society* (the Hartford Institute for Religious Research, Hartford Seminary), “the so-called mainline churches are the large and established denominations that constitute the majority of organized American Christianity. The term, while somewhat inexact, is used informally to refer to the major players in the American religious sector, implying a shared concern for ‘public ordering.’ Generally, mainline churches exhibit many or most of the following characteristics: They have their own (or predecessor) origins in the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries; have a million or more members spread widely among the 50 states; are predominantly Caucasian (except for black Baptist or Methodist denominations) but include proportions of African Americans, Hispanics, Asiatics, Native Americans, and others; are governed by elected, parliamentary assemblies, with agency offices and staffs at a central location; sponsor colleges, seminaries/theological schools, and part-time local church schools (sometimes also elementary and high schools); staff their congregations with full-time, professional, seminary-educated, ordained clergy who now increasingly include women; run publishing houses and publish theological journals, denominational magazines, and newspapers; operate program units in domestic and global missions, social action and social welfare, evangelism, and Christian education; issue ‘social statements’ on political, economic, and social issues and sponsor representation (lobbying) to governmental agencies; contribute to and/or cooperate with councils of churches at local, state, national, and world levels.” See the web version of William H. Swatos, Jr., *The Encyclopedia of Religion and Society* (Walnut Creek: AltaMira Press, 1998), at <http://harr.hartsem.edu/ency/Mainline.htm>, accessed 7 August 2008. Today the major mainline denominations include the American Baptist Convention, the Disciples of Christ, the Episcopal Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Presbyterian Church of the United States of America, the United Church of Christ, and the United Methodist Church. Historically, mainlines (collectively) have been the most prominent and powerful religious groups in the USA, although the Association of Religion Data Archives (ARDA) in a 2000 study counts 26,344,933 members of mainline churches versus 39,930,869 members of evangelical Protestant churches. See ARDA, at www.thearda.com/, accessed 7 August 2008.

The identity and place of the mainline churches was guaranteed by the wider "Christian" society.

Accompanying this shift is the *de facto* operative ecclesiology for North American Protestants: the church as a voluntary association of self-selecting individuals who choose to belong to a church for reasons of their own.⁷ This "peculiar" North American concept of the church developed in the American colonies in an effort to legitimize the variety of Christian traditions immigrating into the same geographic area. Later, it was codified in the US constitution in the first amendment and became firmly established in the nineteenth century. While this concept has led to many arguably good developments, it gave shape to a particular way of thinking about the church and tended to "push tangible, practical considerations to the fore by placing primary emphasis on the free, uncoerced consent of the individual."⁸ At the center of this concept is the individual who chooses to affiliate (or not) with a particular congregation, denomination, or even a "non-denominational" entity, rather than on the Triune God who calls, gathers, enlightens and sends. Clarence Goen charges that theological reflection on the doctrine of the church was lost in the process. He states,

Three centuries ago the question, "What is the church?" was of crucial, even revolutionary importance. Today it is diffidently asked, rarely answered, and indeed scarcely visible—having been displaced by more urgent questions about growth, efficiency, dollars.⁹

It should be pointed out that Lutherans were among those in the nineteenth century who rejected or severely criticized the voluntary principle as a basis for ecclesiological understanding. As a whole, Lutherans were also suspicious of revivalism, upon which many of the churches relied. However, E. Clifford Nelson points out that in the wake of the 1950s' religious revival, all mainline churches became closely allied with "the American way of life." Theologically, the Lutheran position

⁷ See James Luther Adams, "The Voluntary Principle in the Forming of American Religion," in Elwyn A. Smith (ed.), *The Religion of the Republic* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971), pp. 217-246. For the development and critique of this peculiarly "American ecclesiology," see Clarence C. Goen, "Ecclesiocracy without Ecclesiology," in *Religion in Life* (1979), pp. 17-31.

⁸ Sidney Mead, *The Lively Experiment: The Shaping of Christianity in America* (New York: Harper & Row, 1963, 1975), p. 113.

⁹ Goen, *op. cit.* (note 7), p. 29.

was to stand against all forms of culture-religion, by emphasizing the transcendent, eschatological nature of the kingdom of God. However, as Nelson notes,

[i]n doing so [Lutherans] mis-interpreted, or at least gave one-sided emphasis to, a facet of Lutheran theology, and they did not escape captivity to culture-religion by minimizing the public and prophetic role of the church. As a matter of fact, Lutheran congregations across the land in the prosperous fifties gave evidence that they were enamored of the desire for popular approval and success. Accepting uncritically the approbation of middle-class America, Lutheranism was in danger of becoming what its theology did not allow, a culture-religion.¹⁰

Since the 1960s, American culture religion began to be disestablished and the mainline Protestant churches found themselves being dislodged from their particular role as a chaplain to the culture, and the privilege, influence and public voice that went along with that position.¹¹ Not only has the church lost its public voice, it no longer has any hegemony with regard to the "private" side of religion. The USA and Canada are becoming more and more religiously pluralistic,¹² with an increasing number of non- and pre-Christian options available to the religious seeker. Interest in spirituality is on the rise (you can visit any major bookstore chain the USA for evidence of this). However, many of these spiritual seekers are looking elsewhere because, as Baptist church consultant Reggie McNeal charges, most mainline churches are now more secular than the surrounding culture. He writes, "The problem is that when people come to church, expecting to find God, they often encounter a religious club holding a meeting where God is conspicuously absent."¹³

¹⁰ E. E. Clifford Nelson, "The New Shape of Lutheranism," in E. Clifford Nelson (ed.), *Lutherans in North America*, revised edition (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980), pp. 525-526.

¹¹ According to Wade Clark Roof, this is the fruit of the voluntary principle. See Wade Clark Roof, "America's Voluntary Establishment: Mainline Religion in Transition," in Mary Douglas and Steven Tipton (eds), *Religion and America: Spiritual Life in a Secular Age* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1982, 1983), pp. 130-149.

¹² The proportion of the [American] population that can be classified as Christian has declined from 86 percent in 1990 to 77 percent in 2001. If this trend continues, then by about the year 2042, non-Christians will outnumber the Christians in the USA. See *The American Religious Identification Survey*, Graduate Center of the City University of New York, 2001, p. 10, at www.gc.cuny.edu/faculty/research_briefs/aris.pdf, accessed 7 August 2008.

¹³ Reggie McNeal, *The Present Future: Six Tough Questions for the Church* (San Francisco:

The voluntary association model worked in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries when Americans were interested in joining organizations and societies. More and more, Americans are not looking to “become members” of institutional organizations and societies so they can go to meetings; they are looking for authentic community and deep spiritual experiences.¹⁴

The most common response to the disestablishment of the churches is the attempt to recapture their former position and role in society, either by adapting the voluntary principle to entrepreneurial ends (e.g., some church growth movements that market congregations as vendors of religious goods and services, or that market set principles and programs that congregations can purchase and use in order to grow and flourish, such as Natural Church Development),¹⁵ or through forming new cultural alliances (e.g., the “Religious Right”). The solutions assume a voluntary concept of the church and are pragmatic, focusing on strategy to reverse the decline in membership and return to the “golden days” of church activity and/or a “Christian America.”¹⁶

Another—and I would suggest more faithful—response is to see the process of disestablishment as an opportunity for the American churches to rediscover their biblical identity and purpose in this changed context (which has become a new “mission field” for the gospel) in the USA and Canada.

The marks of the church in the Lutheran tradition

What purpose do the “marks of the church” have in the changing context of North America—a context of “post-Christendom”—in which the church is wrestling with questions of identity and mission? The four

Jossey-Bass, 2003), p. 59.

¹⁴ This is one reason why the “Emerging Church” movement is gaining ground in the US A and UK: because it proposes a model of church that is relational, rather than institutional.

¹⁵ Michael Jinkins, *The Church Faces Death: Ecclesiology in a Post-Modern Context* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1999), p. 13; Darrell L. Guder (ed.), *Missional Church: A Vision for the Sending of the Church in North America* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), pp. 83-85.

¹⁶ For mainline Protestants, this is the post-World War II era, when the sanctuaries and Sunday school classrooms were filled every week and when the church played the role of “chaplain” to the nation, blessing America and its values of freedom, democracy and progress—all while ignoring racist Jim Crow laws and other human rights violations, such as the internment of Japanese Americans during the War.

attributes of the church (one holy, catholic and apostolic) appeared in the Creed of Constantinople in 381 AD,¹⁷ although it was not until the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries that the notes themselves were debated when the unity of church and empire were once again at stake. Until this point, the marks of the church were explained as attributes or characteristics of the true church, but as Hans Küng points out, the new ecclesiological concepts, introduced by John Wycliffe and Jan Hus, raised the question of the truth of a church independent of the Holy See. Catholic apologists no longer argued that these marks were merely characteristics; now they were treated as distinguishing characteristics, recognizable marks, by which the true church can be perceived.¹⁸ Of course, the apologists understood these marks to be firmly and visibly rooted and guaranteed by the church’s ecclesial structures, the office of bishop, the papacy, canon law, etc. The Reformers had no objection to the classic attributes of the church, but rejected the idea that they could be empirically identified by these ecclesial structures. The only outward signs by which they claimed one can discern the true church were the pure proclamation of the Word and the administration of the sacraments in accordance with the institution of Christ.

As American Lutheran Timothy Wengert points out, the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed actually seems to argue against the *notae* serving as visible marks.

The phrase, “We believe in one holy, catholic and apostolic church,” far from defining the church’s visible marks, calls for faith (we believe!), not sight. However, the next phrase “we acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins” points instead to something physical and

¹⁷ While the origin of the creedal affirmation that the church is “one holy, catholic and apostolic” may be obscure, it seems right that these “notes” would be affirmed during the formation of the church’s orthodox teaching, designating not only the correct doctrine of Christ and the Trinity but also affirming the qualities of the church that held to these teachings. The third article of the Creed established at Nicaea (325) consisted of a simple phrase: “And in the Holy Spirit.” It was “in fact supplemented and for practical purposes replaced by the so-called Creed of Constantinople, which is what we know as the ‘Nicene Creed.’ The origins of this formula and its connection with the Council of Constantinople in 381 are obscure. But it was accepted by the Council of Chalcedon in 451 as a fuller statement of the ‘faith of Nicaea’—which it does in effect maintain, while at the same time expanding the third article with the double purpose of safe-guarding the doctrine of the Holy Spirit and of assimilating the older statement to the typical baptismal creed.” John Burnaby, *The Belief of Christendom: A Commentary on the Nicene Creed* (London: SPCK, 1959), p. 6.

¹⁸ Hans Küng, *The Church*, transl. Ray and Rosaleen Ockenden (London: Burns & Oates, 1967), p. 266.

tangible: water and the Word. In fact, the verbs in the creed demarcate an important shift (from believing to acknowledging) precisely at the point where the church's true *notae* first appear in the creed. One holy, catholic and apostolic are not the church's visible marks: baptism for the forgiveness of sins is!¹⁹

The guarantor is not the right structure or office but the right proclamation of the Word and right administration of the sacraments.

In the late medieval and Reformation contexts, in which the church played a central role in the spiritual lives of all citizens and where the unity of the church was assumed, the question, How does one identify the true church? became central once the identification of the "true church" with the Roman Catholic Church was challenged.²⁰ In any event, the debate in the Reformation period over the marks of the church centered on contrasting claims about how to identify the "true" church from any false church. In a post-Christendom context, where there is no established church (legally or culturally) and where Christianity is losing its cultural dominance and influence, this is no longer the central question being asked by those in the church. The question for the North American context is a more basic one, What good is the church? What is the church good for?

In light of this question, do the traditional Nicene-Constantinopolitan "marks" of the church have any relevance for the churches in North America, in particular with regard to how the churches might rediscover their identity and purpose in a post-Christendom context? I will argue that if we understand the Nicene-Constantinopolitan marks as the Reformers did—as attributes (or as Küng proposes, "dimensions") of the church, these marks can assist the American churches in rediscovering their biblical identity and mission.²¹

¹⁹ Timothy J. Wengert and Gordon W. Lathrop, *Christian Assembly: The Marks of the Church in a Pluralistic Age* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2004), p. 34.

²⁰ The English translation of the *Catholic Catechism* (part one, section two, chapter three, article 9, paragraph 3.812, reads: "Only faith can recognize that the Church possesses these properties from her divine source. But their historical manifestations are signs that also speak clearly to human reason." At www.vatican.va/archive/catechism/p123a9p3.htm, accessed 7 August 2008.

²¹ Even if they cannot be objectively verifiable tests of a church's authenticity, they should nevertheless be considered "serious points of corporate reflection, part of that process of critical self-examination that belongs to the household of faith." Hall, *Confessing...*, *op. cit.* (note 6), p. 72.

For Lutherans, the four adjectives in the creed cannot serve as marks in the determinative sense. For Lutherans, the church's being or identity is marked and constituted by the event of the Word being proclaimed and the sacraments being administered. We cannot point to anything except these means of grace to know "where" the church is. The church is created by the Word and sacrament but it is the Spirit who works through these means to shape a people for ministry and mission. However, Lutherans can affirm the Nicene-Constantinopolitan "notes" as attributes that result from the Holy Spirit's activity working through these means to create the church in a dynamic way or, in Lutheran terms, to "gather and sanctify" the church to be God's people on earth and to do God's will. If we view these notes of the church as dimensions of the Spirit's activity in and amidst this "spiritual community," then these marks become very relevant indeed for ecclesiological reflection in the North American context. At the same time, it should be stressed that as dimensions of the Spirit's activity, these "notes" are reflective of the God who calls the church into being:

- One: "The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me" (Jn 17:22-23)
- Holy: "You shall be holy, for I am holy" (1 Pet 16)
- Catholic: "For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, and you have come to fullness in him, who is the head of every ruler and authority" (Col 2:9-10)²²
- Apostolic: "As the Father has sent me, so I sent you. . . Receive the Holy Spirit" (Jn 20:21-22).

These attributes belong to the church only pneumatologically and eschatologically, that is, as dimensions of God's "preferred and promised

²² Avery Dulles suggests that the term *pleroma* (fullness) is perhaps the nearest biblical equivalent for what we call catholicity. Avery Dulles, *The Catholicity of the Church* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1985), p. 31.

future²³ that manifest themselves in the present-day church through the Spirit's activity but that will not be fully realized until the eschaton. If we start with the eschatological Spirit of God, what can we learn from the *notae ecclesiae* about what it means to be the church in the North American context today?

The marks of the church for a North American context

Wolfgang Pannenberg states that although these four attributes of the church mutually imply one another, "it is no accident that unity comes first, for it is directly given with the being of the church as the fellowship that is grounded in the participation of believers in the one Lord Jesus Christ."²⁴ Even though unity may seem to have a logical priority as Pannenberg states and may seem to be the most logical starting point for an American ecclesiology considering the sheer number of denominations in the USA, I am going to suggest that we begin in reverse order for three reasons, two theological and one contextual.

If we begin our consideration of the marks of the church with the attribute of unity as a reflection of the perichoretic unity of the Trinity, we risk an idealized concept of the church which "can and has led the church to focus on its internal life and develop hierarchical structures to ensure unity, indeed, using an appeal to unity as an ideological weapon to suppress disagreements and movements calling for change."²⁵ Neil Ormerod points out that while the attempt to link ecclesiology to the Trinity by means of *communio* and *perichoresis* is admirable, it is problematic because

the divine unity is where God is most different from God's creatures, even the creation that we call church. What is first in our knowledge of the

²³ This phrase is Patrick Keifert's. See Patrick Keifert, *We are Here Now: A New Missional Era, A New Missional Journey* (Eagle, ID: Allelon Publishing, 2006).

²⁴ Wolfgang Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, vol. III, transl. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), pp. 405-406. Historically, the mark of unity likely appeared first in the creedal formulation because it was in the Emperor's political interest to restore the organizational unity of the church.

²⁵ Cheryl M. Peterson, "The Church as a Confessing *Koinonia* of the Spirit," in Karen L. Bloomquist (ed.), *Being the Church in the Midst of Empire*, *Theology in the Life of the Church*, vol. 1 (Minneapolis: Lutheran University Press, 2007), p. 81.

triune nature are the divine missions of Word and Spirit, which in turn ground our knowledge of the processions and persons of the Trinity.²⁶

To begin with, the divine missions of Word and Spirit suggest beginning with the mark of apostolicity, with the "sent-ness" of God's own self in the incarnation and Pentecost, and God's sending of the church into the world as God's own ambassadors.

Moreover, from a specifically Lutheran perspective, it makes sense to begin with apostolicity, since it is the mark that refers to the teaching of the apostles, the message of the gospel, the *kerigma*. According to Luther, it is the dynamic event of the proclamation of this gospel message that creates the church.²⁷ Hans Küng concurs that

[t]he church can only be truly one, holy, and catholic if it is in all things an apostolic church. What is in question is not any kind of unity, holiness, or catholicity, but that which is founded on the apostles and in that sense is apostolic.²⁸

A final reason for starting with apostolicity is contextual. If we understand that the American churches are in need of a "missional ecclesiology"—a church that is not only gathering to "bless" the culture and serve as a social club for its members, but that is being sent out into neighborhoods and communities to witness to the in-breaking reign of God—then we must begin with apostolic. Here I am following Darrell Guder and the Gospel and Our Culture Network who propose that we read and understand the Nicene marks in reverse order

in order to restore missional purpose to our theology of the church. ... It is a simple and yet revolutionary proposal: What if we were to say

²⁶ Neil Ormerod, "The Structure of a Systematic Ecclesiology," in *Theological Studies* 63 (2002), p. 29. See also Stephen Bevans, "God Inside Out: Notes toward a Missionary Theology of the Spirit," at www.sedos.org/english/Bevans.html, accessed 7 August 2008.

²⁷ According to Edmund P. Clowney, "The marks of the church, as developed during the Protestant Reformation, centered on the church as apostolic. The sure sign of Christ's true church is the preaching of the apostolic gospel." Edmund P. Clowney, *The Church* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1995), p. 73. And as Robert J. Scudieri also points out, "The Word of God is Luther's expression for the apostolic quality of the church." Robert J. Scudieri, *The Apostolic Church: One, Holy, Catholic, and Missionary*, Lutheran Society for Missiology Book Series (Fullerton, CA: Lutheran Society for Missiology, 1995), p. 10.

²⁸ Küng, *op. cit.* (note 18), p. 344.

that the church we confess is apostolic, catholic, holy, and therefore one? . . . If we start our Nicene ecclesiology with apostolicity, then we end up defining catholicity and holiness and oneness in rather different ways—in ways closer to the sequence of formation that we find in the Biblical documents.²⁹

Apostolic

It is customary to define apostolicity as continuity with and faithfulness to the apostolic tradition. According to the recent international Lutheran-Catholic study document, *The Apostolicity of the Church*, the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed confesses the church to be apostolic, “which is an attribute effected by the Holy Spirit who unites, sanctifies, and maintains believers over time in continuity with the apostles’ faith, teaching, and institutional order.”³⁰ As essential as it is to stress the apostolic origins of the content of the gospel message, Carl Braaten argues that

continuity with the apostles does not mean constructing an irreducible minimum of apostolic doctrines, nor does it mean linking into an unbroken chain of apostolic offices of leadership; it does mean laying hold of the original eschatological drive of the early Christian apostolate and tracing its trajectory through the discontinuities of time and history.³¹

As a pneumatological dimension of the church, apostolicity must be understood in the original New Testament sense of being sent out to bear witness to the eschatological future that breaks forth in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. To be an apostolic church means to be a church that continues to be sent into the world to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ.³² Robert J. Scudieri has suggested that when

²⁹ Darrell L. Guder, “The Nicene Marks in a Post-Christendom Church,” unpublished paper, 27 December 2005, pp. 9-10, at www.pcusa.org/oga/perspectives/oct06/nicene-marks.pdf, accessed 7 August 2008.

³⁰ The Lutheran World Federation and Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, *The Apostolicity of the Church: Study Document of the Lutheran-Roman Catholic Commission on Unity* (Minneapolis: Lutheran University Press, 2006), p. 47.

³¹ Carl E. Braaten, *Principles of Lutheran Theology*, 2nd edition (Minneapolis: Fortress Press 2007), p. 62.

³² “What is originally apostolic is sending to bear witness to the universal and definitive truth of the revelation in Jesus Christ. Primarily, then, the church’s apostolicity means the sending

we hear “apostolic,” we should first think “missionary.” According to Braaten, if the apostolic mission aims at the renewal of all humanity in the kingdom of God, then the criterion of what is apostolic in the church’s life (doctrine, worship, structure, etc) is that which points to and motivates the “comprehensive and liberating truth of the kingdom of God in Jesus and his resurrection from the dead.”³³

The North American churches need to reclaim this dimension of their ecclesial identity. Because of the legacy of *de facto* Christendom, most congregations do not see themselves first and foremost as communities commissioned and authorized sent out with a purpose—to speak the liberating gospel to their neighbors.³⁴ If they do have a vision for outreach, the stated goal is more often than not the attainment of new members (since the old Lutheran methods—immigration and procreation—are no longer working), and not witnessing to the in-breaking kingdom of God.

Catholic

Moving on to the second Nicene mark, a church can only be apostolic if it is also catholic, as Braaten points out, because the scope of the apostolic mission is total and universal. Lutherans have not always been comfortable with this term because of its association with obedience to Rome. Following Augustine, the “catholic church” was defined as the universal church spread throughout the world whose unity is manifested under the authority of Rome. This led some to substitute the word “Christian”

out of the apostles to all humanity is continued by the church.” Pannenberg, *op. cit.* (note 24), p. 406.

³³ Braaten, *op. cit.* (note 31), p. 63.

³⁴ Following Gustav Warneck, it has become fashionable to say that Luther did not stress this meaning of apostolic. I agree with James A. Scherer who argues that Luther was mission-minded; it was just that his “field” for missionary work was limited to Christendom. As Scherer says, “Since the Gospel had fallen into oblivion in Christendom—Luther’s Gentiles being those who had never heard the pure Word of God preached in Germany—missionary obedience could only mean preaching the gospel anew. And since the distortion of the Gospel message had led to the degeneration of mission into ecclesiastical propaganda, forced conversions, crusades, and non-evangelical methods, Luther’s obedience to the mission command meant re-establishing the church on its one true foundation of Jesus Christ and the Gospel.” James A. Scherer, “Luther and Mission: A Rich but Untested Potential,” in Alan D. Scott (ed.), *The Lutherans in Mission: Essays in Honor of Won Yong Ji*, Lutheran Society for Missiology Book Series, series edited by Eugene W. Bunkowske (Fort Wayne: Lutheran Society for Missiology, 2000), pp. 1-8. See also in the same volume, Eugene W. Bunkowske, “Was Luther a Missionary,” pp. 9-24 and Werner Eiert, “Luther and ‘Mission,’” pp. 25-42.

for catholic in the creed.³⁵ This makes no sense, as Conrad Bergendoff points out, because “there can be no question of any other church in the Third Article of the Creed than the Christian church.”³⁶ More common today is the substitution of the word “universal,” which is closer but still does not capture the full meaning of the term catholic.

The word in the original Greek is *kata holon*, according to or appropriate to the whole. The Fourth Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Uppsala (1968) defined catholicity as “the quality by which the church expresses the fullness, the integrity, and the totality of life in Christ.”³⁷ Thus, rather than simply identifying catholicity with the universal scope of the apostolic mission (although it includes that), we might agree with Darrell Guder that “the catholicity of the church is demonstrated in all the ways that the church at every level witnesses to the one gospel that draws all people to Christ.”³⁸ In other words, this dimension of ecclesial identity is qualitative as well as quantitative.

To be a “catholic” church means to go beyond the limits of particularity, both in terms of its openness to God’s eschatological future and to the whole world in its diversity.³⁹ The implied universality of the church’s mission is constitutive for its catholicity; the fullness of the church’s eschatological consummation (Eph 1:23), as Pannenberg states, “finds manifestation at any given historical moment in the openness of the church’s actual fellowship, of transcending any and all particularity, to the fullness of Christ that will fully come only in the eschaton.”⁴⁰

Each Christian congregation is at the same time “fully” the church (per *CA VII*) but not by itself the “whole” church. To be catholic means consciously to point beyond one’s own particular community to the global church as a fuller expression of the Spirit’s work in creating and

shaping a people.⁴¹ This is more than recognizing that each local congregation is a part of a larger ecclesial whole. To say that the church is catholic is not just to say that it is in *koinonia* or communion with other congregations throughout the world, but that this communion extends to all classes and kinds of people. As a catholic community, the church is called to be all-embracing in its mission and ministry, reflecting the fullness of Christ and the universal redemption available through his life, death and resurrection.

Such a catholic identity suggests the need to call into question the self-interests of groups and members within the church.⁴² The dis-establishment of mainline Protestant churches in the USA from positions of influence and hegemony offers a real opportunity to reclaim true catholicity as a dimension of ecclesial identity. For the churches in North America, this includes rejecting all attempts to define their own cultural tradition or theology as normative for the global church.⁴³ For Lutheran congregations in North America, this means to break out of our historical ethnic enclaves and tendency toward social and classist parochialism. The ELCA remains a largely white (98 percent) and middle-class church. In order to claim the ecclesial dimension of catholicity, white North American Lutherans and other Christians need to recognize their parochialism and privilege and be willing honestly to acknowledge the racist heritage of their country and the continuing impact that the history of slavery and racist Jim Crow laws have socially, culturally and economically (if not legally). In spite of gains made by many African Americans, the fact that North Americans have not come to terms with this history should be clear from recent press coverage of the presidential primaries this spring.⁴⁴

Holy

The apostolic mission is the announcement of the kingdom of God, an eschatological future in which all belong to the “whole” in the fullness

⁴¹ Guder, *op. cit.* (note 15), p. 257.

⁴² Dulles, *op. cit.* (note 22), p. 180.

⁴³ Guder, *op. cit.* (note 15), p. 257.

⁴⁴ I am referring to the controversy regarding Senator Barack Obama’s (D-Illinois) relationship with his former pastor, the Rev. Jeremiah Wright and the historic speech he gave on race in response. For several stories related to these events, see www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=88652293, accessed 7 August 2008.

³⁵ This line of thinking follows Augustine in his debate with the Donatists. Lutherans would affirm the catholicity of the church apart from Roman obedience, arguing that there could only be one universal church spreading throughout the world because there could be only one true faith and therefore only one church in which that faith was confessed and believed. The church was catholic insofar as it was faithful to this one gospel attested by Scripture and early Christian fathers. See Dulles, *op. cit.* (note 22), p. 148.

³⁶ Conrad Bergendoff, *The One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church*, The Hoover Lectures 1953 (Rock Island, IL: Augustana Book Concern, 1954), p. 51.

³⁷ Norman Goodall (ed.), *The Uppsala Report* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1968), p. 13.

³⁸ Guder, *op. cit.* (note 15), p. 257.

³⁹ Braaten, *op. cit.* (note 31), p. 65.

⁴⁰ Pannenberg, *op. cit.* (note 24), p. 407.

of life given through Jesus Christ. In order to witness to this kingdom, the church is called to be "holy." This may be the most misunderstood of the notes or dimensions of the church's identity. In the first place, holiness must be understood as being "set apart" for this mission in order to engage the world, not to withdraw from it. Like the other marks, this is not an empirical designation that can be observed by, in this case, looking at the piety of its members; it is the result of the Holy Spirit working in and through the church to reconcile and heal with the forgiveness of sins given through Jesus Christ. The churches in North America need to reclaim this dimension of ecclesial identity as a mark of the whole church and not just of individual members. In the North American experience, holiness, from the two Great Awakenings to more recent revival movements, has too often been defined in individualistic (focusing on personal salvation and sanctification) and moralistic (with a particular concern for sexual purity) terms.

In his explanation of the third article of the Apostles' Creed in the *Large Catechism*, Martin Luther speaks of the Spirit's work of "making holy" in terms of the forgiveness of sins. The Christian experiences new life as "full forgiveness of sins, both in that God forgives us and that we forgive, bear with, and aid one another."⁴⁶ Luther speaks of the growth of the holy community in eschatological and missional terms. Holiness has begun and is growing daily, but "now we remain only halfway pure and holy."⁴⁶ The Holy Spirit will continue to work in us, increasing holiness on earth through the church and forgiveness, until the last day, when there are only perfectly pure and holy people. In its earthly pilgrimage as God's "holy flock," the Christian community is to bear the blessings it has received, for the sake of the world. As Luther states,

The Holy Spirit continues his work without ceasing until the last day, and for this purpose he has appointed a community on earth, through which he speaks and does all of his work. For he has not yet gathered together all of this Christian community, nor has he completed the granting of forgiveness.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ Martin Luther, "Large Catechism," in Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert (eds), *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000), p. 438.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 438.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 439.

The church's apostolic mission is not only to proclaim the forgiveness and reconciliation given in Jesus Christ as a witness to the in-breaking kingdom of God, but to embody it in its own life, even if imperfectly. Lutheran theologian, Christof Gestrich, suggests that it is only when the forgiveness of sins becomes a communal reality that the church truly can bear the gospel to the world. The proclamation of a promise is not enough, he argues, because the church's "promises are no longer enticing for many people, at least in the form which they are usually 'proclaimed.'"⁴⁸

As I pointed out earlier, North Americans outside the church are seeking what the church purports to have: authentic relationships, healing and reconciliation. However, when they walk into the typical mainline congregation, too often they find instead a social club where members are bickering about unimportant things, people who not only refuse to live by forgiveness, but who instead hold grudges and judge others. Christian witness begins with how we treat one another within the church, but the Spirit's work of reconciliation and healing is also carried into our communities and neighborhoods and shared directly with our neighbors, especially those who suffer injustice and discrimination. It is true that the church is simultaneously a fellowship of sinners and a fellowship of saints (declared righteous in spite of our sin); yet, it is through the Spirit's work to heal and forgive that the church itself is being made "holy" so that it can demonstrate the in-breaking and gracious rule of God and be an instrument of God's sanctifying and gracious rule for others.⁴⁹

Unity

Finally, we come to the unity of the church. As stated in Jesus' high priestly prayer in John 17, unity ought to serve the mission (apostolicity) of the church ("so that the world may believe").⁵⁰ The lack of visible unity among the churches is an obstacle to the church's apostolic mission to witness to the kingdom of God. While Christians already share a spiritual unity through their baptism into Christ and faith, the healing of historic

⁴⁸ Christof Gestrich, *The Return of Splendor in the World: The Christian Doctrine of Sin and Forgiveness* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), p. 278.

⁴⁹ Braaten, *op. cit.* (note 31), p. 68.

⁵⁰ Bergendoff, *op. cit.* (note 36), p. 89.

divisions in the church helps to enable the church's apostolic witness to the world. As Conrad Bergendoff states, wherever baptism incorporates people into the fellowship of faith, which is the body of Christ,

there has existed a unity whether recognized or not . . . the achievement of the ecumenical endeavor is not in the creation of this underlying, unbroken, eschatological unity, but in its insistence that this unity requires expression in the churches who confess it.⁶¹

In the American context, the unity of the churches is not and has never been a political affair because the first amendment forbids the establishment of a national church. More importantly, it has never been sought. Unity therefore must be addressed by Christians themselves. The history of Protestant Christianity in the USA has been one of division and merger. In addition to the divisions that immigrant Christians brought with them when they came to America, Christians in the USA have split over various doctrinal and ethical issues, including slavery. According to the Center for the Study of Global Christianity, there are 635 denominations in the USA alone and an increasing number of congregations are started without any denominational affiliation.⁶²

The ELCA is one example of a denominational merger in the USA. As stated in its constitution, the ELCA seeks in its faith and life "to manifest the unity given to the people of God by living together in the love of Christ and by joining with other Christians in prayer and action to express and preserve the unity which the Spirit gives."⁶³ The ELCA participates at various stages of ecumenical relations with other church bodies that confess the Triune God and Jesus as Lord and Savior. The desired goal is

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 93. "Whether we acknowledge it or not, incorporation into His body places us in relationship to all others in the body, and no denial of fellowship on our part can rend the unity of the body—it can only separate us from the fullness of grace dwelling in the integration of the members in unity. If we are planted in the vine, the branches are not detached from other branches except those that bear no fruit—and each leaf and twig and limb derives strength through each other from the vine itself" (*ibid.*, p. 91).

⁶² This figure is from the World Christian Database of the Center for the Study of Global Christianity, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, 2004, at <http://worldchristiandatabase.org/wcd/about/denominationlist.asp>, accessed 7 August 2008.

⁶³ Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 4.02.f, at www.elca.org/Who-We-Are/Our-Three-Expressions/Churchwide-Organization/Office-of-the-Secretary/ELCA-Governance/-/media/Files/Who%20We%20Are/Office%20of%20the%20Secretary/Constitutions/PDF/ConstitutionsBylawsandContinuingResolutionsApril2008.ashx, accessed 18 August 2008.

"full communion," a relationship that is rooted in agreement on essentials and allows diversity in nonessentials. The ELCA Vision for Ecumenism states that full communion includes all that Lutherans have meant by "pulpit and altar fellowship" but goes beyond that historical formulation "because of the obligatory mission given by the Gospel."⁶⁴ It is a goal that needs continually to be defined; it does not demand organic union but neither does it rule that out. It allows for situation oriented decisions about order and decision-making structures; this flexibility has enabled the ELCA to be in full communion with church bodies that could not (at this point) be in full communion with one another. Since its formation, the ELCA has adopted full communion agreements with five mainline Protestant denominations and will vote on a full communion agreement with a sixth (the United Methodist Church) when it meets in assembly in summer 2009. Even with these agreements, much work remains to be done at the level of local reception: what difference do these agreements make in the day-to-day life of congregations and denominations, especially with regard to the apostolic mission?

Finally, I would argue that in order to express more visibly the given unity we have as members of Christ's body, the ELCA and other mainline churches in North America need to address not only the theological differences that have historically divided our denominations, but also the issues that threaten further to divide Christianity today (e.g., sexuality, biblical interpretation), as well as the fact that American Christians continue to segregate themselves by race. The adage that "Sunday morning at 11:00 a.m. is the most segregated hour during the week" remains as true in the USA today as ever.

⁶⁴ *The Vision of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, at <http://archive.elca.org/ecumenical/vision.html>, accessed 15 September 2008.

Report of the Executive for Administration

“No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone. God is faithful, and [God] will not let you be tested beyond your strength, but with the testing [God] will also provide the way out so that you may be able to endure it.”

1 Corinthians 10:13 NRSV

This verse in 1 Corinthians has been a source of encouragement these past several months as the churchwide organization has gone through reorganization. The urgency for a redesigned organizational structure became clear from the continued decline in mission support for churchwide ministries. Since 2008 mission support has declined from \$65.3 million to a projected \$48 million for 2011. As you know, mission support has historically provided 80 percent of the unrestricted income for the churchwide organization. For 2011, the projected percentage drops to 76.7 percent. Given the significant decline in available resources, our first challenge in 2010 was to adjust the 2010 budget. In August, we presented a revised budget to the ELCA Church Council that represented at \$4.2 million dollar decrease or 5.5 percent. However, the greater task was to redesign the churchwide organization for 2011 and beyond so that it is positioned to carry out missional priorities and is sustainable by projected income levels. This required a current fund budget reduction of \$2.5 million or 3.8 percent with an additional contingency plan of \$2.9 million. We have reduced the World Hunger budget by \$1.7 million for 2011. Since 2008, the churchwide organization current fund budget has been reduced by \$19.4 million or 23.7 percent.

We understand that the whole ELCA ecology is experiencing financial challenges. Our congregations, synods and institutions and agencies also are facing difficult decisions related to resourcing mission. Given this broader reality and our interdependent relationship, the reorganization process needed to engage our partners and provide for consultation with the ELCA Church Council, Conference of Bishops, Living Into the Future Together: Renewing the Ecology of the ELCA (LIFT) task force.

In June 2010 the Office of the Presiding Bishop appointed a Design Team and outlined the process noted below. The design team consulted with the Cabinet of Executives, the ELCA Church Council Executive Committee, the Conference of Bishops' Executive Committee and liaison bishops and the Living Into the Future Together task force planning team as it began its work. The process was reviewed and updated with the full ELCA Church Council at its August 4, 2010 meeting. The Church Council Planning and Evaluation Committee was consulted also in this process.

Stated Objectives

1. Align priorities and general operations with available resources.
2. Position the organization for the future, especially the next three to five years.
3. Create a lean, nimble, focused churchwide organization.
4. Identify areas for strategic reduction and disengagement.

Desired Outcomes

1. A reorganized structure based on core functions and priorities that would serve the churchwide organization for three to five years.
2. Cost/expense impact analysis.
3. Revised job descriptions.
4. Presentation materials that present a clear case for decisions.
5. Convincing case for partners that includes a strategy for their engagement.

6. Articulated understandings of implications for partners.
7. A clear sense of the efficiencies of how the churchwide organization does its work.

Leadership for this process was provided by an organization Design Team: the ELCA treasurer, the executive for Research and Evaluation, the executive for Human Resources, the executive director for Multicultural Ministries, the executive for Information Technology, the executive for administration, and the presiding bishop. As needed, the team included the budget director, ELCA secretary, and the executive for Communication Services. Consultants for the process were Michael Hansen, M. G. Hansen and Associates and John Andrews, D. Hilton and Associates.

Consultation with Governance and Other Partners

- ELCA Church Council through the Executive Committee and Planning and Evaluation Committee;
- Conference of Bishops through the Executive Committee and liaison bishops;
- LIFT task force through the planning team and work group #7 (Governance and Structure); and
- Churchwide office through the Cabinet of Executives, Program Advisory Team, and general staff input through the Intranet.

Guidelines and Criteria

The following guidelines and criteria were used in the reorganization of the churchwide office. Changes should:

1. Maximize positive impact on the two strategic priorities of the churchwide organization.
2. Better position the churchwide organization for the future.
3. Take into account the impact on significant churchwide partners.
4. Not turn the churchwide organization in on itself to be only self-serving.
5. Be most appropriate in areas where there is a clear alternative in providing a service or ministry.
6. Seek the right proportionality among strategic functions of the churchwide organization's infrastructure (including technology, communication and development services) and its program and other services.
7. Maintain a commitment to being an inclusive churchwide organization.

The impact of the changes on our core values as described in the ELCA Constitution and the Plan for Mission were considered, including:

1. Commitment to the Confession of Faith and this church's Statement of Purpose;
2. Interdependence;
3. Servant leadership;
4. Effective stewardship of resources;
5. Inclusive representation in assemblies, councils, boards and committees;
6. Ongoing review of functions; and
7. Nurturing of unity.

Questions asked

What will create a sustainable (renewing), nimble, focused organization? Positively impact the sustainability of the whole ecology? Positively impact giving and resource development? Reflect

our core values as presented in the ELCA Constitution and the “Commitments for Implementation” of the Plan for Mission?

Time Line

June 2010

- Announced the process: Cabinet of Executives, Church Council, Conference of Bishops, LIFT Task Force, ELCA press release
- Constituted the Design Team and began meeting
- Engaged consultants
- Solicited input from Conference of Bishops
- Invited input from churchwide staff

July 2010

- Received input from partners
- Began drafting new design

August 2010

- Received input from Mission Capacity and Funding consultation
- Consulted with LIFT task force
- Processed data from Conference of Bishops
- Further developed design

September/Early October 2010

- Finalized design
- Consulted with Cabinet of Executives, Church Council and liaison bishops of the Conference of Bishops
- Presented proposal to the ELCA Church Council
- Announced decisions

Information Available to the Design Team

The Design Team took full advantage of the work of the LIFT/Ecology (Living in to the Future Together) task force. In 2009, the LIFT task force was authorized by the Church Council in collaboration with the Conference of Bishops to study the “ecology” of the ELCA and make recommendations that “will position this church for the future and explore new possibilities for participating in God’s mission.” These recommendations will be presented to the 2011 Churchwide Assembly. In support of the work of the task force, extensive studies were conducted with congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization. These studies, including surveys of lay and clergy leaders in addition to the participants at a majority of 2010 synod assemblies, were foundational to the deliberations of the design team. The design team also consulted with the LIFT planning team by conference call and one face-to-face meeting.

The design team also encouraged synod bishops to meet regionally and to share their thoughts and ideas. The bishops were asked to respond to the following questions. Seven of the nine regions responded.

1. What are the core functions for synods and the churchwide organization?
2. How can a sustainable structure for mission priorities be created?
3. What can be strategically disengaged?

4. How do we stay committed to one another?
5. What are the norms for proportionate sharing in our collective budgeting?
6. What are the implications of target appeals (e.g., LMI [ELCA Malaria Campaign], World Hunger, Disaster Response or synod campaigns) on the whole financial picture?

The design team consulted three times by conference call with the Executive Committee of the Church Council and twice with a working group of the Planning and Evaluation Committee.

The design team provided opportunities for the executive directors, churchwide staff and units to share their thoughts and ideas. Responses were received from each of the executive directors of program units and from 75 individual staff members.

The design team conducted a detailed analysis of the churchwide organization's job positions and its grants to partners in ministry.

Two organizational consultants also advised the design team: Michael Hansen of Hansen and Associates, Potomac, Maryland; and John Andrews, Executive Vice President, D. Hilton Associates, The Woodlands, Texas. Consultants in communications and development also provided input.

Based on this work, the design team concluded that the two existing priorities of the churchwide organization are widely shared by the members, congregations, and synods of this church. The churchwide organization, working collaboratively with congregations, synods, agencies and institutions and other partners, will give priority to:

1. accompanying congregations as growing centers for evangelical mission; and
2. building capacity for evangelical witness and service in the world to alleviate poverty and to work for justice and peace.

To this end, the churchwide organization can continue to play a significant and pivotal role in the life of this church by working with its local and global mission partners to build, support, and extend the mission of this church.

The Goals of the Design Team

The design team embraced the following goals:

1. To design a churchwide organization that effectively and efficiently works with its ministry partners to respond nimbly with and on behalf of this church to the needs of the world in both its local and global context.
2. To design a churchwide organization that effectively and efficiently works with its ministry partners to build the capacity of this church for local and global mission.
3. To maximize the stewardship of this church's resources by creating for the churchwide organization the most efficient operational infrastructure possible.
4. To create new financial resources by better communicating and interpreting the effectiveness and efficiency of this church's response to the needs of the world.
5. To strengthen the response of this church to the needs of the world by increasing the collaboration and accountability within the churchwide organization and between the churchwide organization and its mission partners.
6. To reflect our core values as presented in the ELCA Constitution and the "Commitments for Implementation" of the ELCA Plan for Mission.

The New Design and Its Rationale

Achieving the priorities of this church is dependent upon strong interdependent relationships between congregations, synods, the churchwide organization and the agencies and institutions of this church. These interdependent relationships will extend the mission capacity of this church,

promote accountability and provide for the best stewardship of the resources of this church. It will be a priority of the churchwide organization to help build these interdependent relationships.

Congregational and Synodical Mission

The design of the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit is based upon the premise that synods are best positioned to work directly with congregations in planning and carrying out mission while the primary role of the churchwide organization is to provide support and build capacity among synods.

The Congregational and Synodical Mission unit will be responsible for working with congregations through synods to create and support local mission partnerships. To this end, the design team maintained the churchwide positions of directors of evangelical mission, who are deployed churchwide staff in synods. These positions are responsible both for local mission planning and the success of those mission plans. This includes providing support and building the capacity of this church to start new congregations, renew congregations, provide leadership for mission and address issues of poverty and justice.

A priority of the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit will be the success of these local mission plans in synods. Each team in the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit will be asked to think anew about how its work in congregational ministry, in ethnic specific and multicultural ministry, in leadership development and support, in poverty and justice ministry and in advocacy, align with, and contribute to, the success of these local mission plans.

Global Mission

The churchwide organization will continue to support and build the capacity of this church for global mission. The churchwide organization will provide integrated support of this church's work in other countries and the means through which churches in other countries engage in mission to this church and society. Stronger relationships with congregations working through synods are critical to increasing the global mission capacity of this church. The global partners of the ELCA depend upon the Global Mission unit to coordinate the work of the whole church. To this end, the design team was very supportive of work within the Global Mission unit to strengthen its emphasis on accompaniment, both in global mission education and in synodical mission partnerships.

The unit will also continue its long term commitment to international development and disaster relief.

Mission Advancement

The full participation of this church in the mission of God depends upon how clearly members understand that mission and their level of commitment to it. To this end, the churchwide organization will create a Mission Advancement unit. The Mission Advancement unit will strengthen the identity and mission of this church through focused, strategic and integrated communication with the members of this church and the wider society.

The creation of the unit builds on the goal established by the Blue Ribbon Committee on Mission Funding: "As a result of clear and relevant communication from the churchwide organization, ELCA members will know the distinctive missional identity of this church, will be empowered to know and tell the story of God's redeeming love in the world and, living in God's abundance, will support personally the work of this church in and beyond their congregations" (August 2007).

The unit will focus communication with constituents and donors. It will conduct marketing and public relations and direct current, deferred and major gift appeals. It will seek to build a

strong identity among members and increase the mission capacity of this church as members are motivated to respond with financial gifts.

The unit brings together marketing and public relations, creative services, constituent services and all gifting and appeals including mission support. While the ELCA Foundation will continue with its own identity, it will be positioned within the Mission Advancement unit.

The unit will include *The Lutheran* magazine.

The Office of the Presiding Bishop

The Office of the Presiding Bishop will take on some additional responsibilities in order to improve the coordination of administration and the effectiveness of the churchwide organization. The presiding bishop will convene and oversee a smaller and more strategic management and planning team that will include the full-time officers of the ELCA, the executive for administration in the Office of the Presiding Bishop, and the executives of the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit, the Global Mission unit, and the Mission Advancement unit.

The Office of the Presiding Bishop also will provide leadership and care for synodical bishops and the relationship with the Conference of Bishops. It will continue to be responsible for the agendas for the Churchwide Assembly, Church Council and Conference of Bishops.

The Office of the Presiding Bishop will provide a new and needed locus for this church's theological discernment (including justice for women and studies). It also will provide oversight of the ecumenical and inter-religious relations of this church and of military chaplaincies.

The Office of the Presiding Bishop will continue to be responsible for relationships with separately incorporated ministries including: Women of the ELCA, Lutheran Men in Mission, Augsburg Fortress, National Lutheran Campus Ministry, and the Lutheran Deaconess Association.

The Office of the Presiding Bishop will include Human Resources and Research and Evaluation.

The Office of the Secretary

The Office of the Secretary will continue to fulfill the functions of the secretary of a corporation but will also take on the consolidation of event planning in the ELCA. This will provide for additional coordination and efficiencies in this area. The Office of the Secretary will provide for the minutes and records of official church meetings, including the Churchwide Assembly, Church Council and Conference of Bishops; the rosters of this church, annual congregational reports, archives and records management; the publication of official documents; changes to the constitution of the ELCA and interpretation of the constitution; legal services; risk management; meeting planning and management and arrangements for Churchwide Assembly, Church Council, Conference of Bishops and all other churchwide meetings.

The Office of the Treasurer

The Office of the Treasurer will continue to work toward achieving efficiencies for both financial administration and information technology. The Office of the Treasurer will provide for financial, accounting, insurance, property management, investment and money management systems and related services for churchwide units; relationships with the Board of Pensions; the Endowment Fund of the ELCA and the Mission Investment Fund; and the information technology infrastructure.

Operational and Administrative Efficiencies

Many steps were taken to increase the operational and administrative efficiencies of the churchwide organization, including the following:

1. Administrative functions were streamlined in many areas, including event planning and coordination, the mailroom, the copy center, the Resource Information Service, constituent support and reception. The number of administrative support staff throughout the churchwide organization was reduced significantly.
2. The following functions were centralized:
 - a. Office supply purchasing;
 - b. Gift and receipt processing;
 - c. Marketing and communications;
 - d. Web development;
 - e. Missionary and staff payrolls and personnel policy administration; and
 - f. Accounting and finance.
3. The library was closed.
4. Vacant floor space within the building will be made available for leasing.

Positions Eliminated

The following positions in the churchwide organization were eliminated.

- Service Units (10)
 - Communication Services
Associate Director Marketing–Broadcast Media Production
Executive Director, Communication Services
 - Development Services and Foundation
Administrative Assistant (2)
Assistant Director for Global Mission Support
Associate Director for Gift Planning Services
Controller
Coordinator for Donor Stewardship
Director for Marketing
Gift Processor
- Program Units (39)
 - Church in Society
Administrative Assistant (3) (1 deployed)
Associate Director for Studies
Associate Executive Director
Director Corporate Social Responsibility (deployed)
Director ELCA World Hunger Program
Director for Governmental Relations (deployed)
Executive Director, Church in Society
Writer/Editor
 - Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission
Administrative Assistant (3)
Senior Administrative Assistant (2)
Assistant Director for Evangelism

Coordinator for Development of New Congregations

Director for Stewardship

Director for Support Networks

Global Mission

Administrative Assistant

Assistant to Director-Europe & Middle East Desk

Manager for International Compensation

Manager, Resource & Logistics

Multicultural Ministries

Administrative Assistant

Associate Director Multicultural Ministries

Senior Administrative Assistant

Vocation and Education

Administrative Assistant (4)

Director for Youth Ministries

Director for Lifelong Learning

Associate Director for Campus Ministry (2) (1 Deployed)

Executive Director, Vocation and Education

Assistant Director for Educational Partnerships

Director for Ministry Leadership

Assistant Director for Outdoor Ministries

Assistant Director for Campus Ministry

- Offices (11)

Office of the Presiding Bishop

Asst to the Exec for Worship & Liturgical Resources

Associate Director for Worship

Assistant Director for Human Resources

Receptionist/Senior Staff Assistant (Synodical Relations)

Research Analyst

Office of the Secretary

Director for Library and Record Management

Managing Editor, Yearbook

Office of the Treasurer

Assistant to the Executive for Management Services

Assistant to the Manager of Office Services

Gift and Income Specialist

Programmer/Financial System Analyst

What is the Capacity of the Newly Designed Churchwide Organization?

The human and financial resources available to the churchwide organization have been reduced significantly. We have gone from 16 units/sections to three program units and three offices. There still are nine separately incorporated ministries (See Exhibit E, Part 1, Appendix A). We have reduced staff from 398 to 337 (See Exhibit E, Part 1, Appendix C). In particular, many administrative support positions were eliminated and several key financial functions were consolidated. Programmatic positions were reduced as well.

It is not the intention of the design team to suggest that fewer staff can do more. The design team has offered an initial response in this new structure for the churchwide organization, but

executive directors and staff will need to work with partners to more fully implement the potential within the design.

As you can see from the list of positions eliminated above, we have reduced staffing in important programmatic areas. We will live into these changes and work differently. In some cases, a staff contact remains to serve in maintaining the relationship with partners. In other cases, like youth ministry, worship and advocacy, more than one staff person will serve but the work will be reconfigured to reflect a reduced capacity. See Exhibit E, Part 1, Appendix B for a staff contact list of current ministries.

Implications for synods:

1. We are in conversation with the Conference of Bishops about what this will mean for our partnership and shared leadership. The Synodical Churchwide Relations Committee will work with staff to explore how we move forward together, especially in areas like:
 - Campus Ministry
 - Regional Coordinators/Regions
 - Candidacy
2. The focus of our work is intended to enhance the capacity of both synods and the churchwide organization to support congregations and carry on ministry with and on behalf of this church. We will need to live into this new design and maintain flexibility.

Time of Transition

The days and weeks since October 11 have been challenging. We made some very difficult decisions that resulted in the loss of positions and ministries held by valued colleagues. I do not have words to express my sadness adequately. Like you, I continue to pray for God's comfort and guidance for all of us touched by these changes.

I am deeply grateful to all who have worked on the new design for the churchwide organization. As we begin to live into the new structure, we are in what change management expert William Bridges calls *transition*. According to Bridges, transition is made up of three stages: 1) ending, losing, letting go; 2) an in-between time when the old is gone but the new isn't fully operational (called the neutral zone), and 3) the new beginnings. Bridges says that everyone who experiences change has a transition period—it is not optional.

To assist the organization during this time, the Office of the Presiding Bishop has convened two transition teams. One is the new Administrative Team. Members of that team are Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson, Secretary David Swartling, Treasurer Christina Jackson-Skelton, Mission Advancement interim executive Howie Wennes, Congregational and Synodical Mission executive Stephen Bouman, Global Mission executive Rafael Malpica Padilla and me, the Executive for administration. While the Administrative Team is a team established constitutionally and will have an ongoing role, it also will function as a "transition management team" for the next several months. The primary role will be to provide the overall management of the transition.

Else Thompson, executive for Human Resources, will lead a second team, which will focus on culture and people issues. Members of this team include the four alliance leaders – Josselyn Bennett (Poverty and Wealth), Sherman Hicks (Multicultural), Kristen Glass Perez (Young Adults), and Mary Streufert (Justice for Women). Additional staff on the team are Ben McDonald-Coltvet, Melissa Ramirez Cooper, Sylvia Perez, Gordon Straw, Dann Taylor and Victor Thasiah.

It is my expectation that staff will work together, as a whole organization, during this transition period. The Office of the Presiding Bishop plans to share as much information

as possible through a series of regular e-mail updates that will describe progress on changes. By way of these updates, colleagues will be invited to introduce new units and to tell stories about new ways of working. Since a lot in our world is changing, we also are looking at revisions to major processes like writing job descriptions, performance evaluations and our compensation framework.

To help our working together, staff are invited to share ideas and thoughts about how we can move into the new design and have the best possible transition. A link on the Intranet is provided for this input.

Living Into the Future Together: Renewing the Ecology of the ELCA Task Force

The LIFT task force has provided a comprehensive report of its work in Exhibit E, Parts 2a-d. The task force has been engaged extensively in listening to this church since January 2010. It is exciting to witness the task force's progress. I am especially grateful for the partnership provided by the LIFT planning team during the redesign of the churchwide organization. Below is an excerpt from the LIFT Web site that describes their involvement.

LIFT and the ELCA churchwide organization restructuring process

During spring and summer 2010, the LIFT task force initiated a conversation across the ELCA to focus on internal and external factors impacting congregations, Lutheran identity, relationships across the church, and expectations of the various partners in our ELCA ecology. This grassroots conversation included studies conducted with individuals, congregations, synods, the churchwide organization and partners.

- Over half the 2010 synod assemblies devoted time in their agendas to LIFT conversations and forums; responses from those conversations were received and analyzed.
- This summer a questionnaire was fielded to a random sample of pastors and congregational lay leaders. Research data were analyzed and then summarized by ELCA Research and Evaluation and by LIFT. Full summaries were posted on the LIFT Web site.
- Numerous groups and partners participated in surveys, focus groups and interviews.
- In August, LIFT brought together bishops, leaders from institutions of higher education, pastors, ecumenical partners and leaders from various partner agencies to consider mission capacity and funding.

These extensive research components from people across this church provided the churchwide organization design team with current insights about priorities for ministries. In addition, the LIFT planning team consulted with the design team on a conference call in August and during a face to face meeting in September. The perspectives and ideas generated through LIFT were foundational to the deliberations and shaping of the proposal developed by the design team.

Mission Capacity and Funding Consultation

On behalf of the LIFT task force, the presiding bishop convened a Mission Capacity and Funding Consultation at the Lutheran Center on August 5-6, 2010. The objectives of the consultation were to:

- Examine the current funding patterns and consider implications for the future.
- Identify ways that this church can most effectively and efficiently steward and deploy the funds available for its mission.
- Name the opportunities for growing support for the capacity for mission of the whole ecology.
- Provide LIFT with suggestions and advice for its work.

The following observations were offered by participants following small group assessment of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (“S.W.O.T.”):

- The whole system is dependent upon healthy congregations and faith in individuals. So how do we nurture both?
- How do these various ecologies do their development work individually and how might the many manifestations be knit together more consciously?
- We are describing ourselves as an ecology of ecologies, but we’re operating a more linear, mechanical model.
- For most people who would draw such a graphic, churchwide and synods would be on the periphery of it, not at the center as here.
- The most fundamental thing is engaging more and more people in God’s mission for God’s world; other conversations might be irrelevant without that. What’s the whole thing *for*? Mission should and will calibrate our prioritizing.
- Is the system shown in the graphic efficient or inefficient or both? Can we make it stronger?
- There is a need for more voices of young and diverse people to be sure we plan for the church they will welcome.

Outcomes for the future

- Pastors will internalize the relationships and mission of the whole ELCA.
- The partner closest to the ministry will hold the responsibility and be given the resources.
- A more connected church, meaning knowing one another well, being aware of one another and one another’s ministry and having a larger notion of “neighbor.”
- Recognize synods as the key connective tissue for this church.
- All rostered leaders are tithers.
- Increase touch between ministries and people; build contacts; don’t waste time trying to force funding into other patterns.
- Equip people to live out continually their vocations as humble and effective communicators of the gospel/faith. (Relationships are key, individuals are key; community organizing principles may be useful.)
- Relationships are foundational and all must be rooted in mission. Problem is that we’re not translating between the churchwide organization and grassroots; funding will follow relationships and conviction.
- The group decided the question is not really about mission funding flow; it’s about what it means to be faithful—dollars are not excluded, but they’re not the point.
- Big idea: become a synod-centric church. Identity is the glue that holds things together—flows to purpose and flows to resources.
- This church would be well served by deepening its capacity to communicate with every member; a communication network open to all who are interested; demonstrate broad relationships of this church; communicate stories of individuals, local and global ministry including disaster response; use of internet, podcasts; brief, succinct and focused communications.

Christian Education

“Toward Renewed Christian Education in the ELCA,” a report responding to the Church Council’s request for information about Christian education ministries in the churchwide office may be found in Exhibit L, Part 1. The report provides a brief history of the work of Christian education in the churchwide organization and addresses how the organization will engage Christian education networks, resources and events in the future.

Blue Ribbon Committee

The churchwide organization continues to implement the recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Committee on Mission Funding. A report on the “Pilot Synods—2008-2010 Final Review” is included in Exhibit E, Part 4.

Finally

In the midst of all the changes and work of redesign for the churchwide organization, staff still attended to ongoing ministry. I commend for your reading the unit and section reports in Exhibits A, Part 1a and J, Parts 1 and 1a. Staff have done an amazing job these past several months. Please join me in thanking them for their continued commitment and faithfulness to this church’s mission.

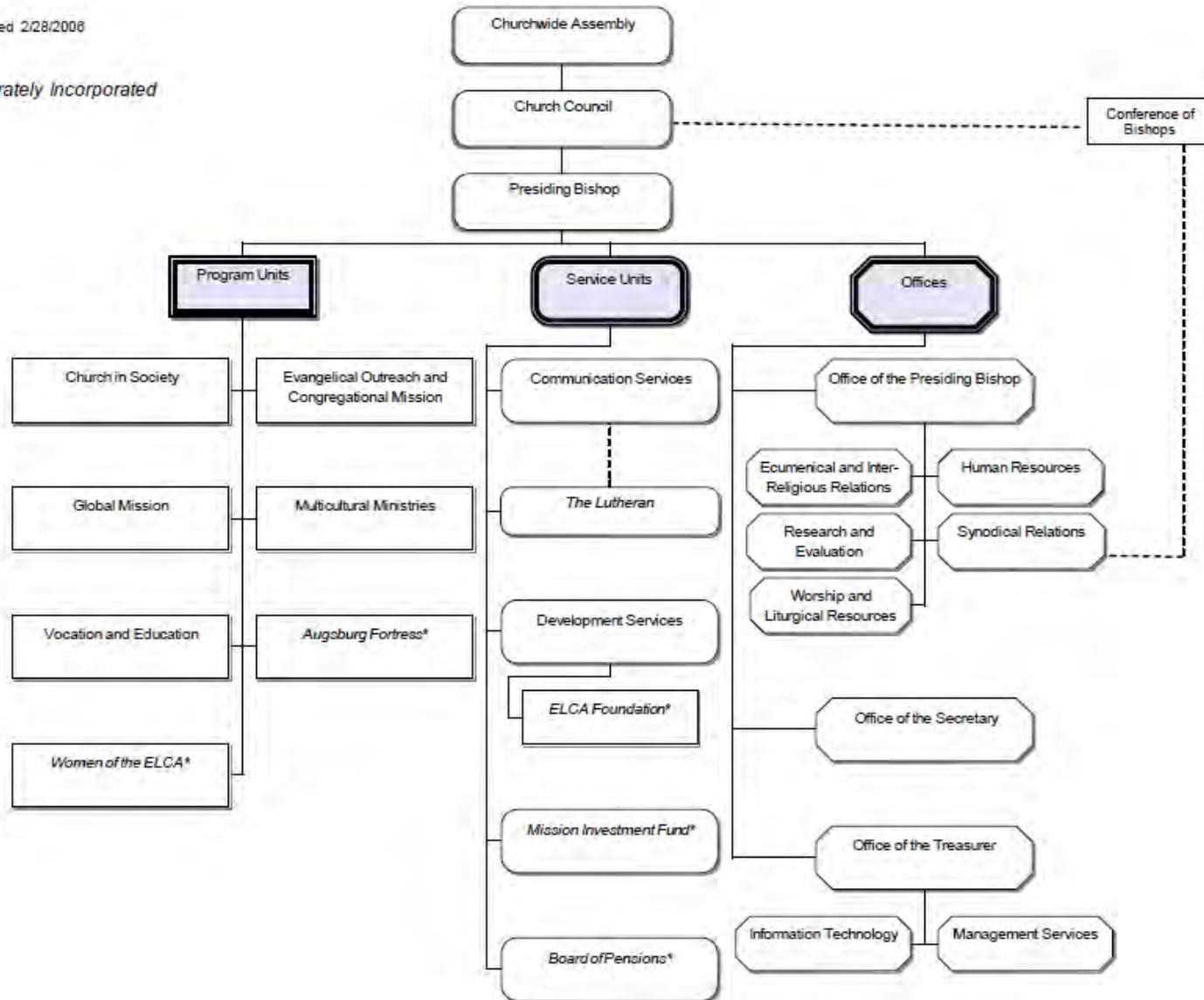
Thank you for your partnership and support as we have moved through a difficult period in the life of the churchwide organization. There is still much work to be done with and on behalf of this church. I am confident that together, with God’s grace, we can continue to serve and make a difference in the world that God so loves.

Former ELCA Churchwide Organization

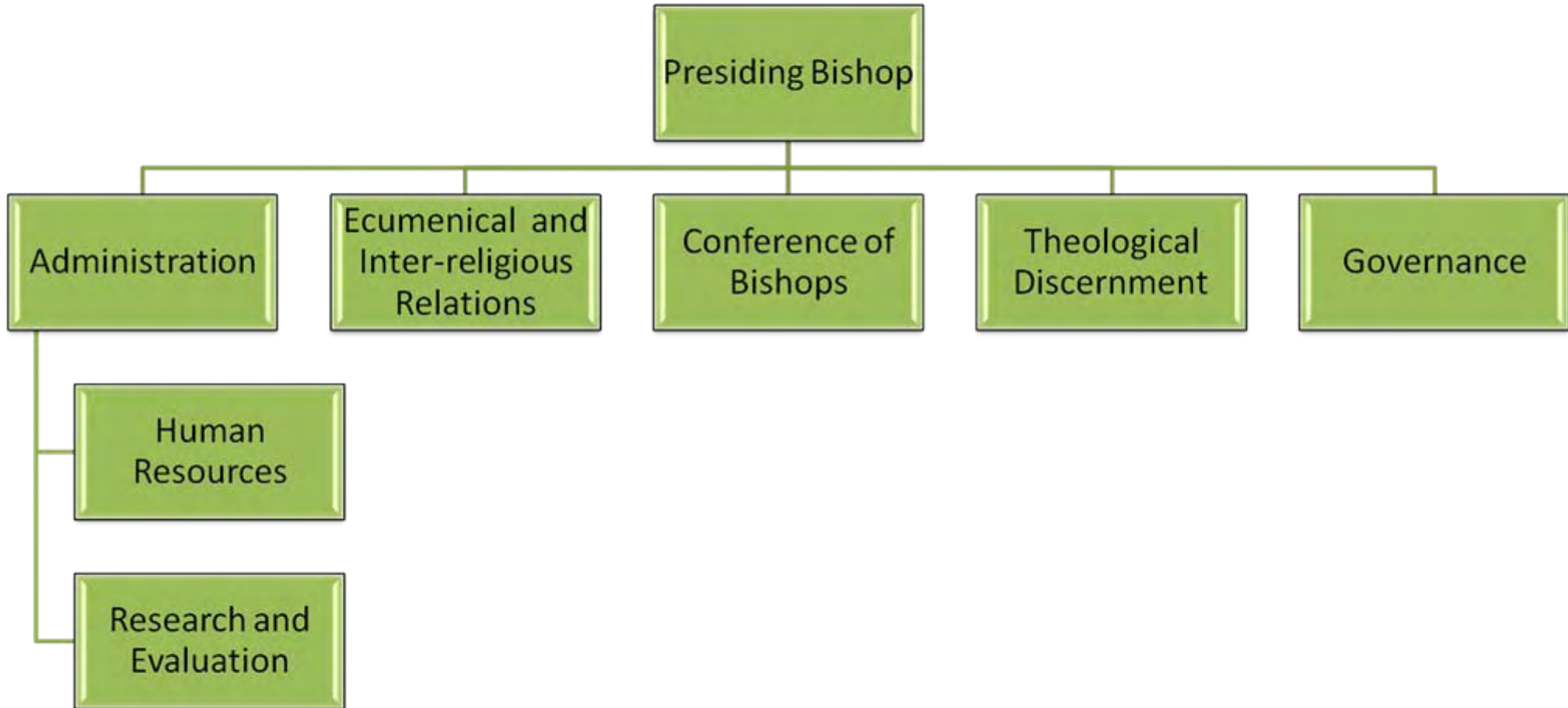
Churchwide Units

Last Modified 2/28/2008

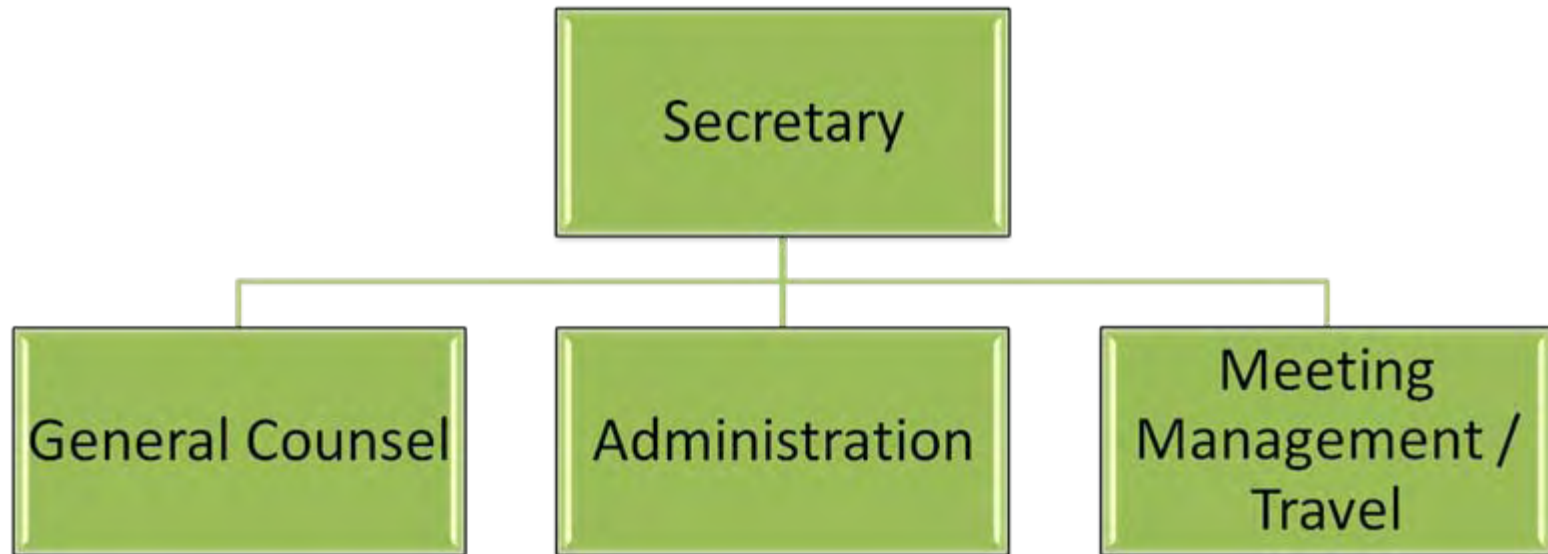
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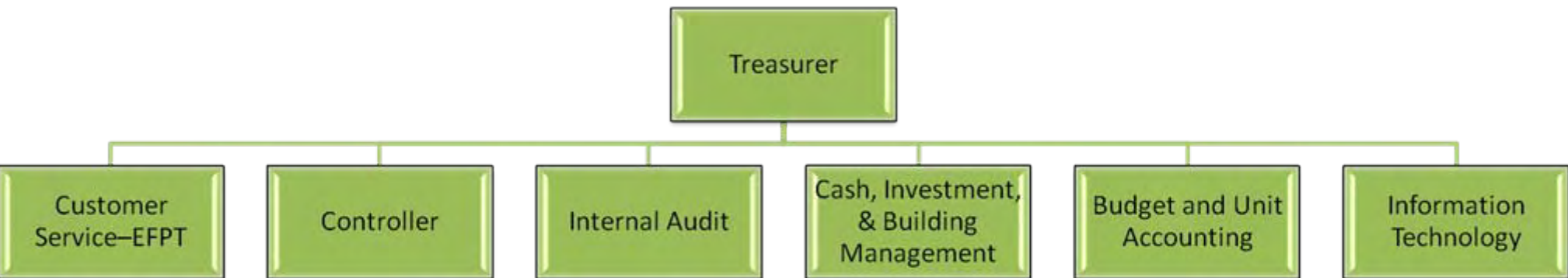
Office of the Presiding Bishop



Office of the Secretary



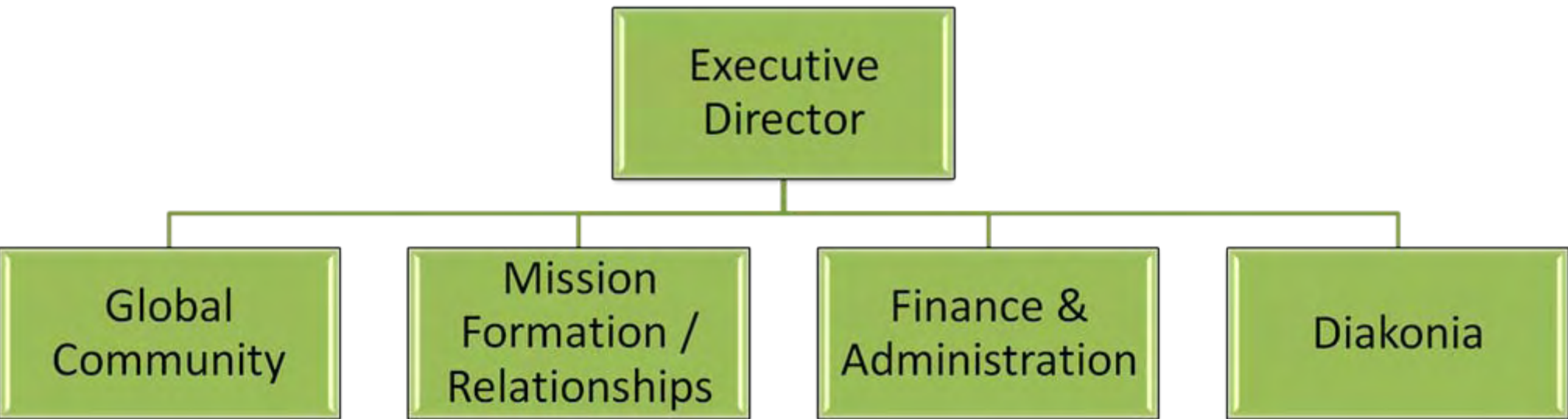
Office of the Treasurer



Mission Advancement



Global Mission



Congregational and Synodical Mission



Separately Incorporated Ministries of ELCA

- Augsburg Fortress
- Board of Pensions
- Endowment fund of the ELCA
- Lutheran Men in Mission
- Mission Investment Fund
- National Lutheran Campus Ministry
- Risk Management
- The Deaconess Community of the ELCA
- Women of the ELCA

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American Indian & Alaska Native Ministry	Straw, Gordy
Arab and Middle Eastern Ministries	Khoury, Kholoud
Asian Ministries	Limthongviratn, Pongsak
Asia-Pacific Global Mission	Ishida, Yoshitaka (Franklin)
Book of Faith	Jacobson, Diane Levy
Campus Ministry	Rothmeyer, Sue
Candidacy	Villalon, Gregory
Church Council	Sheie, Myrna
Churchwide Assembly	Swartling, David
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Companion Synods	Berry-Bailey, Barbara; Campbell, Mary; Rowe, Julie

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Domestic Hunger Education	Creech, David
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Fund for Leaders	Hanson, Paul
Global Formation-Education	Mortha, Sunitha
Global Formation-Relationships	Westphal, Lanny
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Global Mission Support	Schock, Twila Kay

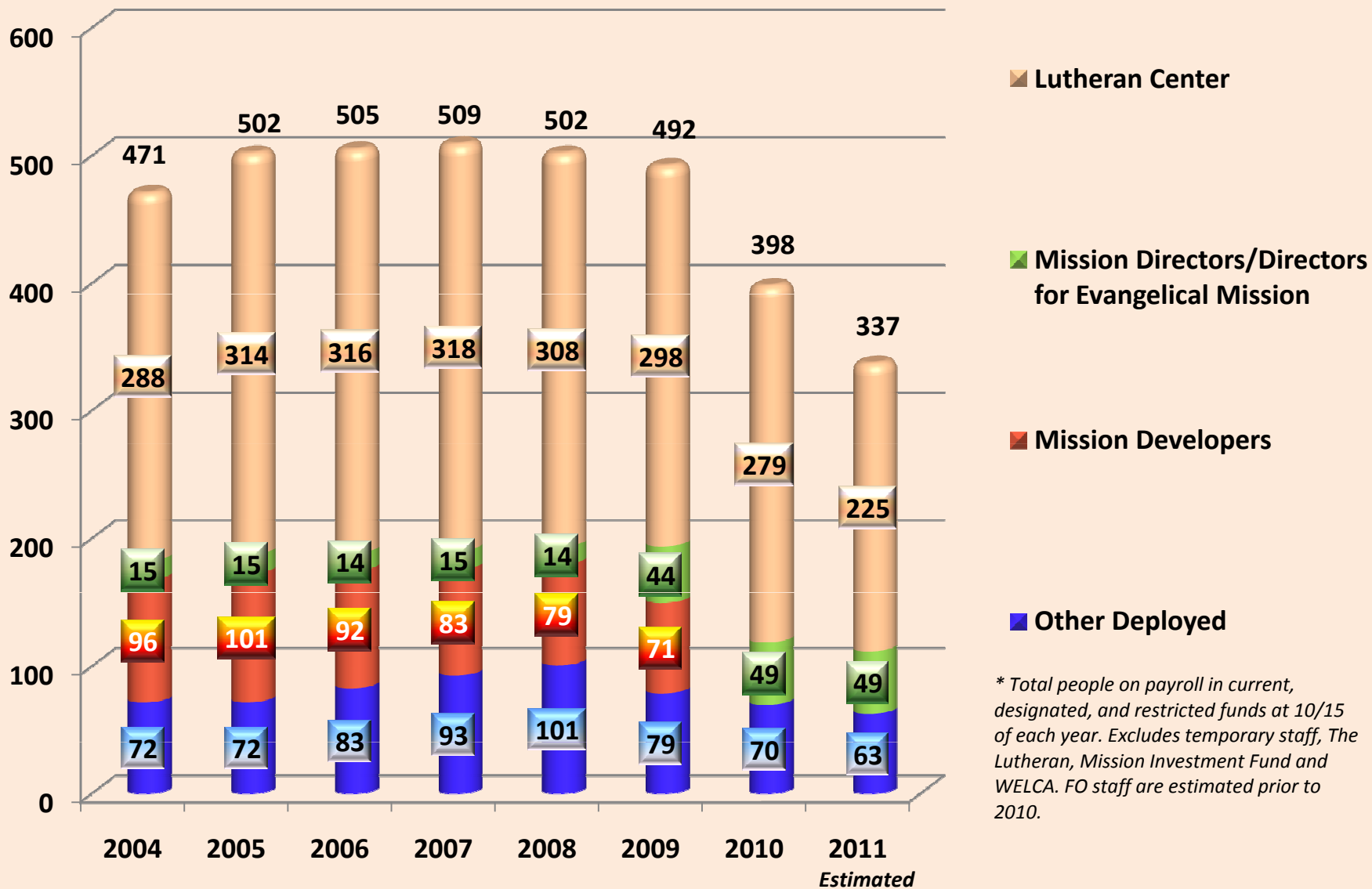
Global Leadership Development	Jackson, Tammy
Human Resources	Else, Thompson
Information Technology	Beyer, Jonathan
International Development and Disaster Response	Johnson, Lita
Justice for Women	Streufert, Mary Jane
Latin America and Caribbean	Rodriguez, Raquel
Latino Ministries	Carrasquillo, Hector
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Lifelong Learning	Bruesehoff, Richard
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The <i>Lutheran</i>	Lehmann, Dan
Lutheran Men in Mission	Haugen, Doug
Lutheran Office of World Community	Frado, Dennis 212-808-5360
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Mission Investment Fund	Roby, Eva
Mission Support	Settlage, Craig

Missionaries/ Global Support	Nelson, Steve
Multicultural Ministry	Hicks, Sherman
New Congregations	Duran, Ruben
New Ministry Support	Duran, Ruben
News and Media Relations	Brooks, John
Outdoor Ministries	Burkhardt, Mark
Outreach Leadership	Flanigan, Everett
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Racial Justice Ministries	Hicks, Sherman
Regional Coordination	Soto, Evelyn
Renewal of Congregations	Harrison, Neil
Research and Evaluation	Inskeep, Kenneth
Risk Management	Thoma, Rob
Roster Issues	Hamilton, Ruth
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Worship	Schaefer, Robert
Young Adults in Global Mission	Torgerson-Martinez, Heidi Lynn
Youth and Young Adults	Rothmeyer, Sue
Youth Gathering	Hagstrom, Heidi

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Selected Staffing Types * 2004 - 2011



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**Living into the Future Together: Renewing the Ecology of the ELCA
Progress Report Summary
November 2010**

The task force for “Living into the Future Together: Renewing the Ecology of the ELCA” (LIFT) met together for the first time in January 2010. Since that time, the task force has been engaged in prayerful study and conversation about both the relationships and interdependence that characterize the ELCA and its partners, and the context, or environment, in which we live today. The LIFT study has responded to questions prompted by increasingly evident changes in the cultural, religious, financial and global environment in which ELCA congregations and its partners seek to carry out God’s mission. The task force was charged with asking how this church, in its various expressions, can participate most effectively in carrying out God’s mission in the world. The two overarching questions that guide this work are:

*What is God calling this church to be and to do in the future?
What changes are in order to help us respond most faithfully?*

The following reflect significant steps in the work plan the task force has undertaken during the first ten months of 2010:

1. January–March: Development of research resources to capture the ideas, feedback and conversation in which the task force invited people to engage.
2. Spring: People joined the conversation in a variety of ways, including randomly distributed surveys, questionnaires, interviews, forums and Synod Assembly conversations.
3. Summer: Analysis of research data-to-date posted on LIFT Web site for response.
4. August: LIFT hosted the Mission Capacity and Funding Consultation, bringing together bishops, leaders from institutions of higher education, pastors, ecumenical partners and leaders from various partner agencies. The purpose of the consultation was to identify the places and relationships where resources flow with the greatest energy and to consider sustainability for the future.
5. August–September: The LIFT planning team was available for conversations as the churchwide restructuring design team deliberated its work. The research data developed through the work of the LIFT study provided timely information upon which the design team was able to draw as it considered future priorities.
6. September: The LIFT Web site provided some broad ways to think about the future of this church and invited people to respond with scenarios for the future.
7. October: The Conference of Bishops reviewed preliminary recommendations from LIFT and held focused conversations about a number of topics, including:
 - roles and responsibilities of synods and bishops;
 - strengthening congregations and synods in evangelical mission;
 - role of regions;
 - mission funding approaches and accountability; and
 - mission effectiveness capabilities of the synods.

Insights from this gathering will provide important feedback as the task force continues to deepen and refine its work. The bishops also formed a group to continue to think more deeply about these questions.

The task force is extremely grateful for the participation of thousands of people across this church in the conversation about God’s call to this church and possible changes for the future.

The wealth of feedback and research data received has been foundational for the tasks of the work groups, who have now prepared the preliminary recommendations included in this report.

Preliminary Recommendations

IDENTITY

LIFT focused its work on the identity of this church by asking, “*What distinctive gifts does our theological, confessional, and liturgical identity bring to this environment and to this time of change?*”

The task force studied the ELCA governing documents, engaged theologians, evaluated lay and clergy member survey responses and considered current vision and mission statements that have guided the ELCA’s work. From this exploration and our deliberations, LIFT has identified five gifts that represent distinctive strengths of this church for these times. These five gifts represent the power of God’s presence in the world and distinct assets of the ELCA for evangelical mission in these times:

- The power of God’s **WORD and SACRAMENT** spoken and enacted to create faith and foster new life.
- The power of God’s gift of **GRACE** to be the foundation of restored relationships with God, each other, and the world.
- The power of being **CALLED, CLAIMED and SENT** by God to serve others.
- The power of **RELATIONSHIPS and PARTNERSHIPS** to strengthen one another and expand the reach of God’s message and mission in the world.
- The power of **SPIRITUAL HUNGER and LEARNING** to foster a maturing faith with the conviction to follow Jesus Christ into the challenges and opportunities of life.

These gifts are embodied in the current mission and vision statements through which the work of this church is carried out in the world.

INTERRELATIONSHIPS

These recommendations focus on strengthening the vitality of congregations in ways that also strengthen connections within and across the expressions and partners of this church.

1. Make a primary focus within the ELCA that of ensuring vital congregational ministry. This includes an emphasis on faith formation and discipleship lived out in various ways including witnessing and addressing social concerns.
2. Engage this church in a discussion about what it means to be Lutheran. Be able to clearly articulate core Lutheran identity as this will shape faith formation and discipleship approaches within this church.
3. Strengthen synods as the primary support for vital congregations so that approaches to vitality may be *contextual*.
 - Create an environment that promotes creativity in the way synods work with congregations. This may include modifications to the constitutions of synods and churchwide organization.
 - Encourage the development of networks, partnerships and collaborations that include a variety of ministry partners as a means of supporting congregational vitality.
 - Lift up and share examples of effectiveness as well as resources within and across synods. The churchwide organization should find ways of connecting and communicating learning and resources across synods.

- Identify and develop the resources synods need to do this ministry in addition to their other responsibilities, which include (but are not limited to) working with congregations to call pastors, starting new congregations and supporting struggling congregations. Resources may include (but are not limited to) staff, dollars, skills, knowledge and relationships.
 - Explore and experiment with different models for synod structure and functions. This process should inform the question about the number of synods necessary for mission.
4. Find ways to support effective leadership across the church (i.e., rostered, lay staff and lay leaders) because these leaders are key to vital congregations.
 - Identify means of supporting effective leaders and increasing effectiveness among all leaders.
 - Explore how seminaries can better prepare current and future rostered leaders for the challenges of mission in the modern world.
 - Use partnerships among seminaries, synods, churchwide organization, congregations and other ministry partners for the ongoing development of leaders.
 - Find ways to more fully engage lay leaders throughout this church to ensure congregational vitality.
 - Explore implications of missional focus on the roles of leaders and leadership bodies.
 5. Engage ministry partners in conversation about respective roles with congregations, synods and churchwide organization.
 6. Evaluate the role and function of regions within the ELCA in light of mission.
 7. Explore the potential of new covenant agreements to strengthen the relationships and clarify the expectations of rostered leaders, congregations, synods, and churchwide as well as ministry partners.
 8. Explore different ways to do moral deliberation as a church. Explore different ways to speak publically and advocate as a church.

PARTNERSHIPS

Extensive interviews, evaluations and conversation with the following partners led to preliminary recommendations in these areas thus far:

1. *Global Mission*: Continue to support and encourage the work of GM as a priority for the ELCA, and particularly as they review and analyze their internal operations with a view to establishing priorities and allocating resources in light of current opportunities and issues.
2. *Companion Churches*: Continue to build and strengthen relationships with companion churches in the global community focusing on accompaniment, mutual growth, capacity building and sustainability of relationships.
3. *Companion Synod Programs*: Engage in further research to identify and frame the issues and questions arising from the Companion Synod Programs. Continue to support, encourage and expand this ministry and create opportunities for creative thinking and planning among congregations, synods, churchwide staff, ecumenical partners, and related entities.
4. *Related Entities*:¹ Proceed with sensitivity to the effect that the human sexuality decision at CWA 2009 has had on relationships with related entities, and partner to understand where areas of overlap and duplication of effort might be minimized or eliminated.

¹ There were 85 responses from 18 partnerships (e.g., organizations and other entities) that responded, including Lutheran Services in America (LSA); the LSA board of directors; Lutheran Hospital/ Health Care; teaching theologians; Lutheran Women in Theological and Religious Studies; alliances for faith, science and technology; Lutheran Ethicists; the Journal of Lutheran Ethics editorial board; Lutherans

5. *Ecumenical Partnerships*: Ecumenical relations at the Churchwide level are well respected and highly effective, and while no changes are recommended to the current mission, function or structure, this church can build upon opportunities to encourage and promote successful ecumenical partnerships at the synod and local levels. Prior to the launching of new major studies a review needs to examine similar work done by other churches.
6. *Church in Society Partnerships*: Better define the mandates, roles, and ways of cooperating among the ELCA and related entities.

SUSTAINABILITY, STRUCTURE and GOVERNANCE

Sustainability

As noted above, the Mission Capacity and Funding Consultation met in early August to deliberate on matters of sustainability. One of the relevant reports for that study came from a summary of the Blue Ribbon Committee on Mission Funding.² The observations and conclusion within the report that seem most timely and still applicable in the life of the ELCA are the following:

Under “Affirmations for Mission”

The necessity of consulting together between congregations and synods and between synods and the churchwide organization before making decisions about changes in mission support sharing and proposed changes in patterns of grants and staffing.

Within the “philosophy of mission funding”

This funding is grounded in the 55/45 percent sharing of mission support between the churchwide organization and synods as a mark of who we are together and our commitment to our shared mission. The formula for sharing is based on all unrestricted giving from congregations to synods.” This funding “relies on the unique position of the churchwide organization to help this church stay connected to the wider Lutheran and ecumenical communities and redistribute funds across the regions of this church.

Under “mission support assumptions” these points:

1. Mission interpretation and a coordinated communications strategy for the ELCA are essential.
2. Transparency and accountability positively impact relationships and financial support.
3. Clarity as to the location of work and differentiated roles between synods and the churchwide organization is fundamental to the effective distribution of mission funding.

What has changed? As members of this church continue to experience the sustained, negative impact of the global recession, what will the impact be on giving in the local congregation and the sharing of those gifts for synodical and churchwide ministries? Is the 55/45 percent sharing affirmed by the Blue Ribbon report no longer viable in some synods? The experience of the past two years would seem to suggest that is the case. Yet what would be the

Concerned; Lutheran AIDS networks; Church in Society program committee; Corporate Social Responsibility; Bread for the World; Lutheran Disaster Response; bishops “ready bench”; Lutheran Peace Fellowship; Lutheran Human Resources; and Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service.

² The report was approved by the 2007 ELCA Churchwide Assembly. The document is available on the Church Council’s Net Community Web site under the resource tab.

impact on the churchwide organization if the synods that have maintained or exceeded the 55/45 sharing reduced that sharing to a new norm?

One conclusion is that this data supports the continuation of the present 55/45 sharing. If the percentage were changed—to 50/50 for example—it would be critically important that synods below that percentage of sharing move to reach that agreed-upon figure. If the only change were to be synods reducing to 50/50, then the obvious result would be a further diminishment of mission support for churchwide ministries. One further question: at what point does the viability of a synod emerge when the percentage of mission support declines significantly below the stated recommendation of 55/45?

A report on the “Blue Ribbon Pilot Synods” has been prepared for the November 2010 meeting of the Church Council (see Exhibit E, Part 4). This report will provide information on the results of the efforts to increase mission funding within the six pilot synods and may provide “best practices” that could be used widely across synods.

Ongoing LIFT Emphasis

In addition to the four areas below, the LIFT task force recommends that the ELCA provide a means to continue the work of LIFT on an ongoing basis. The purpose is to sensitize the ELCA to the changing secular and religious environments with a view to enabling this church to respond to changes as rapidly as possible.

LIFT Recommendations: Churchwide Assembly

The work group on structure and governance concluded that the legislative and oversight functions of the Churchwide Assembly described in the governing documents should not be altered at this time. In addition, it concluded that the size of the Churchwide Assembly and the method of allocation of voting members, which provides for elected voting members from synods, are appropriate. The work group on structure and governance believes, however, that current economic realities in the churchwide organization and throughout the ELCA militate for changing the cycle of the Churchwide Assembly, with non-legislative functions of the assembly addressed in other ways. In addition, the category of advisory members should be eliminated or amended; whether categorized as advisory members or guests, such persons should attend at the expense of their organizations or alternative funding sources obtained. Guests should be encouraged to attend at their own expense. Technological options also should be explored and expanded to broadcast the assembly to a wider audience and to disseminate more broadly its activities.

LIFT Recommendations: ELCA Church Council

The work group on structure and governance and the LIFT task force planning team believe that the current size of the Church Council is in a reasonable range from a governance perspective. Given the current number of synods, it would not be desirable, either from a cost standpoint or a governance perspective, to increase the size of the Church Council to 69 members. Further, increasing the size to 69 by election of a voting member from each synod would not address the issue of ensuring the requisite skills and expertise of the Council and necessarily would increase the role of the Executive Committee.

Foundational principles of the ELCA call for equitable representation of the people of God in this church. Lutheran tradition also emphasizes that life in the church be maintained decently and in order. The work group on structure and governance and the LIFT task force planning team believe that the size of the Church Council is reasonable, although a range in size would be desirable. However, changes in the method that some members are elected for the sake of suitable representation from the membership of the ELCA and for the sake of good order in ELCA governance are recommended. Specifically, it is desirable to elect some members to the Church Council who have the skills and

expertise crucial to the governance of the churchwide organization. These people with specialized skills can be elected with specific and current issues in mind rather than assigning a “slot” or “category” for a theologian, lawyer, accountant or the like. Efforts should be undertaken to draw people with the necessary experience and expertise from as wide a pool of this church as possible.

In an era of reduced mission support, the current number of advisory members, whose expenses are borne by the churchwide organization, is not financially justifiable. Input from constituencies can be provided in other ways.

LIFT Recommendations: Conference of Bishops

The work group on governance and structure and the LIFT task force planning team believe that the Conference of Bishops is underutilized as a resource in this church. However, options to expand the role legislatively would be inconsistent with the history and polity of this church, and amending the governing documents to specify a role in particular circumstances is both complex and raises the possibility of unintended consequences. Therefore, the work group recommends as follows:

Expand the role of the Conference of Bishops in its consultative capacity by developing practices/procedures for the Church Council to refer issues to it and for the Conference of Bishops to make recommendations to the Church Council. However, no change in the governing documents regarding the legislative role of the Conference of Bishops is recommended.

Within the existing framework, the Church Council should work proactively to elicit input and recommendations from the Conference of Bishops as part of the legislative decision-making process, and the Conference of Bishops should work proactively to provide specific input and recommendations on important policy issues. This process for cross-referral could include requests for theological papers or input on important issues, as well as convening other tables across synodical lines to address issues of importance to this church.

Provide for the chair of the Conference of Bishops to be an ex officio member of the Church Council and the Executive Committee (i.e., a voting member by virtue of the bishop’s position)

Liaison bishops provide an important input to the Church Council, but having the chair of the Conference of Bishops serving as a full voting member of the Church Council and the Executive Committee strengthens the governance connection between the groups and will facilitate the opportunity for cross-referral of matters from one group to the other.

LIFT Recommendations: Program Committees

The work group on governance and structure and the LIFT task force planning team recommend amending the governing documents to eliminate program committees and to reallocate their responsibilities to a committee of the Church Council.

A single Church Council committee—the Planning and Evaluation Committee or a newly configured committee—would receive reports on policies and strategies from all program units on a regular basis, probably at least yearly. Such a committee would have the advantage of receiving reports from all units and would be able to synthesize them and make coordinated recommendations to the Church Council. While this approach would expand the work of members of the Church Council, it would facilitate the coordination of oversight responsibilities and substantially reduce costs associated with the meetings of individual program committees.

If additional reporting and/or oversight are needed or desirable, meetings by teleconference or webinars can be arranged. If special expertise is needed, guests can be invited to participate in the meetings.

Methods need to be explored and developed to obtain input from congregations, synods and individual members and to disseminate information regarding the work of program units more effectively.

Conclusion

The LIFT task force work group on structure and governance and the planning team will bring the above recommendations to the Church Council for vetting and review at its November 2010 meeting.

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**Living into the Future Together: Renewing the Ecology of the ELCA
Process Report
November 2010**

The task force for “Living into the Future Together: Renewing the Ecology of the ELCA” (LIFT) met together for the first time in January 2010. During the past ten months, the task force has been engaged in prayerful study and conversation about the relationships and interdependence that characterize the ELCA and its partners, and the context, or environment, in which we live today. The LIFT study has responded to questions prompted by increasingly evident changes in the cultural, religious, financial and global environment in which ELCA congregations and its partners seek to carry out God’s mission. The earliest church took seriously the context into which the Holy Spirit was sending it, and this study has taken very seriously the rapidly changing context and complex environment today.

Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson, quoting Craig Dykstra of Lilly Endowment, has described the ELCA as “an ecology of interdependent ecosystems” that includes congregations, synods and the churchwide organization; schools, colleges, universities, seminaries, outdoor and campus ministries; agencies and institutions; as well as full communion, global and ecumenical partners.

The term *ecology* comes from the Greek root *eco-* or *oikos* in New Testament Greek, a term that can express a number of meanings. As a noun, it can refer to a house or meeting place, to the human body as a perishable tent or a house of clay, and it can refer to the Christian community itself as the household of faith. The meaning of this word can reference stewards or managers, those who have been entrusted with the treasures of the Gospel, and specifically the charge of a bishop. In its largest sense, *oikonomia* refers to God’s plan of salvation, and the term *oikoumenae* embraces the whole inhabited world to the ends of the earth. When the root of the term functions as a verb, it describes the actions of planting and building up. Hence, the New Testament use of this term helps us consider how the things that take place in the ecology of the church today and into the future might contribute to strengthening and stewarding the community of faith that extends to the ends of the world.

Some of the work of the task force has been done “at the 35,000-foot level,” keeping all of this church’s interrelationships in view. Yet some of the most important work in which the task force engaged involved inviting people across this church to join in a conversation about the future of the ELCA at a time when relationships for some have been turbulent and interdependence has been strained. The task force was charged with asking how this church, in its various expressions, can participate most effectively in carrying out God’s mission in the world. The two overarching questions that guide this work are:

What is God calling this church to be and to do in the future?

What changes are in order to help us respond most faithfully?

When the task force began this effort, it identified a number of commitments that would permeate its methodology. It would ground its work in the word and in prayer. The study would reflect a Lutheran understanding of Scripture and be faithful to the Lutheran Confessions. It would tend to the principle of interdependence that is so central to the ELCA and to the partners with whom we collaborate, both nationally and internationally. The project would be done with transparency, which the task force would model throughout its deliberations. And finally, the task force would live out the model of *accompaniment*—walking together in Christ with one another in the task force and with all of those with whom we would be in conversation. The task force has sought to function consistently with these commitments when meeting for monthly Web-ex meetings, as work groups schedule meetings to fulfill their own work plans, and as the study has been engaged, reported and broadly shared.

The task force met in person in January, June and September 2010, and will meet together in person again at the end of January 2011.

As the work began, the task force identified people who might provide background and teaching to better equip us for the study. Timothy Wengert talked about the gifts that the ELCA brings to this time—confessional heritage, understanding of Scripture and the liturgy. Ozan Sevimli, an officer for the World Bank, taught the task force about the changing world economy. Biologist William Teska provided insights into some key concepts of ecology, which is characterized by biological diversity, and includes dynamics of competition, succession and sustainability. He noted how the term “ecology” comes from the Greek root meaning “house” (i.e., the state of the house of nature) and “economics” (i.e., the state of the house of finances). The task force received updates on the work of Multicultural Ministries and Justice for Women. Research by David Roozen and James Nieman, read as a resource by the task force, has shown that the denominations that most effectively negotiate the challenges of this postmodern time will be those “with strong identities; with strong personal, relationally dense, crosscutting, connectional networks; and with strong noncognitive sources of religious authority.”¹ At the end of September, Leonard Sweet helped the group grasp how much our world has changed by suggesting that those who were born prior to 1973 are now “immigrants” in “a TGIF world—a world of Twitter, Google, iPhone and Facebook,” and those born after 1973 are the “natives” today. This summer the task force learned of the work of the task force on communal discernment and of the ongoing work of ELCA Communications Services in messaging and communications.

The first phase of the task force’s work involved developing resources that would provide a way to capture the ideas, feedback and conversation in which the task force intended thousands of people to engage. This required identifying possible respondent groups and noting when these groups were or were not scheduled to meet in person, determining the best method for reaching respondents, developing a timeline for distribution of the research tools, projecting the timeframe for analysis of research data and determining how research data analysis finally would be reported out and shared. The development of this work plan took place between January and April 2010.

The second phase of LIFT work began to unfold in the spring of 2010 when people across this church began to join in the conversation in a variety of ways:

- Individual questionnaires were available online and on paper and sent to a random group of respondents, both clergy and lay.
- The LIFT Web site provided a vehicle for posting documents, responding to the questionnaire and receiving comments.
- Facebook and Twitter provided another portal for conversation.
- Over half of the Synod Assemblies provided time for conversation about questions developed by LIFT, and conversation took place in plenary table discussions, forums, Synod Council meetings and/or congregational gatherings.
- One-on-one and focus group interviews were conducted with numerous partners.

By the end of June, task force members and staff in ELCA Research and Evaluation began to analyze the vast amount of data that had been received. Responses still are being gathered.

¹ David A. Roozen and James R. Nieman, eds., *Church, Identity, and Change: Theology and Denominational Structures in Unsettled Times*. (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2005).

In an effort to seek participation across this church, numerous groups were contacted directly so that they might participate in the research. These include: campus ministries; churchwide unit program committees; LWF companion churches; ELCA Conference of Bishops; college and university presidents; ELCA Church Council; ELCA churchwide units; ELCA resource centers; Ethnic ministries (African Descent; American Indian and Alaska Native; Arab and Middle Eastern; Asian and Pacific Islanders; and Latinos); full communion partners; Lutheran Services in America; Lutheran Student Movement; Lutheran Youth Organization; pastors of larger congregations; regional coordinators; related entities²; seminary presidents; seminary students; social ministry organizations; synod assemblies (37); synod councils; synod office personnel; synod vice presidents and Young Adults in Global Mission.

Analysis of research data to date was posted on the LIFT Web site this summer and available for wide review and conversation.

In early August, LIFT hosted a gathering called the Mission Capacity and Funding Consultation, bringing together bishops, leaders from institutions of higher education, pastors, ecumenical partners, and leaders from various partner agencies. Its purpose was to identify the places and relationships where resources flow with the greatest energy, and consider sustainability for the future. The conversation at this consultation indicated the need for a more connected church, and recognized that connections, or relationships, are strongest when synods are in conversation with pastors and congregations. It recognized the strength of connection between ELCA churchwide ministries and global partners. There was an expressed recognition that the ELCA needs to build on the synod-centric energy that exists in many places. Consultants David Roozen and James Nieman were present at the meeting, and they noted certain themes that emerged from conversations: a new and amplified role of synods in the formation of leaders, communication, and mutual accountability; an increasing need for the importance of energy for congregations; and discovering a way to increase the capacity of local expressions to make decisions about mission funding that are informed by identity, mission, and connectedness.

This summer, LIFT also was available for conversations as the Churchwide Design Team deliberated its work. When the Design Team announced its plan on October 11, 2010, Bishop Hanson commented on the cooperation between the design team and the LIFT project, particularly with regard to the results of research carried on by LIFT as an important factor in decisions made by the design team.

At the beginning of September, the task force provided some broad ways to think about the future of this church and invited people to respond with scenarios for the future. Approximately 60 people responded. These scenarios will be posted on the Web site soon for review by any and all.

In early October, the Conference of Bishops reviewed the preliminary recommendations from the LIFT Task Force and held structured conversations on a number of questions and topics. These included:

- roles and responsibilities of synods and bishops;
- strengthening congregations and synods in evangelical mission;
- the role of regions;
- mission funding approaches and accountability; and
- mission effectiveness and capabilities of synods.

Some of the conversation among the bishops reflected a concern over questions of authority and responsibility in this church. There seems to be either no connection, or a limited connection,

² See list on page 12.

between those charged with making decisions in this church and those who are responsible for implementing the decisions. Lack of clarity about the nature of authority and of power in this church sometimes can make it appear as though no one is in charge.

The bishops also expressed concern about the financial health of some of the synods. They spoke of a desire to support each other and to help this church to maintain a fully national presence even in places where money to support a synodical structure is nearly lacking. The bishops spoke of the desire to hold each other accountable for mission support from their synods for the larger work of the ELCA.

The LIFT task force believes that its service to this church includes creating a climate for open discussion that can have the broadest consequences, and is grateful for the significant time and energy the bishops committed to questions presented by LIFT. The bishops also formed a group to continue to think more deeply about these questions. Insights from these conversations will provide important information as the task force continues to deepen and refine its work.

The task force is extremely grateful for the participation of thousands of people across this church in the conversation about God's call to this church and possible changes for the future. The wealth of feedback and research data received has been foundational for the tasks of the work groups, who now have prepared the preliminary recommendations included in this report.

After the meeting of the Church Council in November 2010, the task force will continue to refine this work. The preparation of a final report will begin in February 2011 with a penultimate report sent to the Conference of Bishops for review in early March, and then a final report submitted to the ELCA Church Council in April 2011.

Preliminary Recommendations and Supporting Data

IDENTITY: Identity, Mission and Vision of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in a Time of Change

The “Living into the Future Together” (LIFT) task force focused its work by asking, “*What distinctive gifts does our theological, confessional and liturgical identity bring to this environment and to this time of change?*”

The task force studied the ELCA’s governing documents, engaged theologians, evaluated lay and clergy member survey responses, and considered the current vision and mission statements that have guided the ELCA’s work.

From this exploration and our deliberations, LIFT has identified five gifts that represent distinctive strengths of this church for these times. These gifts are believed to be reflective of the ELCA’s Lutheran heritage and particularly germane to this time of change. We further believe the identity statement affirms and extends the existing mission and vision statements that have guided the ELCA’s work. We look forward to sustained, ongoing conversations and deliberation regarding this church’s identity and vibrancy for witness and service.

Gifts for this Time

These five gifts represent the power of God’s presence in the world and distinct assets of the ELCA for evangelical mission in these times:

- The power of God’s **WORD and SACRAMENT** spoken and enacted to create faith and foster new life.
Rationale: We are confident that individual Christians and faith communities can discover new forms of presenting, studying and enacting the story of Jesus Christ and his servant lifestyle in the common speech and experiences of particular “peoples” in a global society. We are confident that faithful and vital congregations equipped to become effective, compassionate communities and strengthened to provide fresh, unique expressions of the promise of God in Word and sacrament will become centers of mature faith formation and evangelical mission in the world.
- The power of God’s gift of **GRACE** to be the foundation of restored relationships with God, each other, and the world.
Rationale: God’s hope and graciousness spoken, embodied and enacted for the sake of others constitutes a contrasting and transformative message in a cynical, harsh and abusive world.
- The power of being **CALLED, CLAIMED and SENT** by God to serve others.
Rationale: The cruciform shape of the Christian calls individual Christians and faith communities to be a vital presence, to work for the sake of others in all that we do. Witness to life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, service of others and seeking justice will be the hallmarks of our sacrificial life in the world.
- The power of **RELATIONSHIPS and PARTNERSHIPS** to strengthen one another and expand the reach of God’s message and mission in the world.
Rationale: Interdependent relationships, communities and partnerships are woven into the fabric of human existence and are foundational to Christian faith and leadership. We will be an inclusive, local and global church that joins others in the breadth of God’s work in the world. We will seek and equip lay and rostered leaders of evangelical missional imagination who collaborate boldly with other faith communities and partner institutions.
- The power of **SPIRITUAL HUNGER and LEARNING** to foster a maturing faith with the conviction to follow Jesus Christ into the challenges and opportunities of life.

Rationale: Curiosity, wonder and a hunger for knowledge and learning are gifts given by God to all humans and most especially to Lutheran Christians, who for generations have supported colleges and universities, seminaries, outdoor ministries, schools, social services and campus ministries. The church's network of individuals and faith communities must be mobilized to engage seekers, young and old, churched and un-churched, in an actively reflected and embodied faith as disciples of Jesus Christ.

These gifts are embodied in the mission and the vision through which the work of this church is carried out in the world.

Mission statement: "Marked with the cross of Christ forever, we are claimed, gathered and sent for the sake of the world."

Vision statement:

CLAIMED: by God's grace for the sake of the world, we are a new creation through God's living work by the power of the Holy Spirit;
GATHERED: by God's grace for the sake of the world, we will live among God's faithful people, hear God's Word and share Christ's supper;
SENT: by God's grace for the sake of the world, we will proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed, serve all people following the example of our Lord Jesus and strive for justice and peace in all the world.

INTERRELATIONSHIPS

These recommendations focus on strengthening the vitality of congregations in ways that also strengthen connections within and across the expressions and partners of this church.

1. Make a primary focus within the ELCA that of ensuring vital congregational ministry. This includes an emphasis on faith formation and discipleship lived out in various ways including witnessing and addressing social concerns.
2. Engage this church in a discussion about what it means to be Lutheran. Be able to clearly articulate core Lutheran identity as this will shape faith formation and discipleship approaches within this church.
3. Strengthen synods as the primary support for vital congregations so that approaches to vitality may be *contextual*.
 - Create an environment that promotes creativity in the way synods work with congregations. This may include modifications to the constitutions of synods and churchwide organization.
 - Encourage the development of networks, partnerships and collaborations that include a variety of ministry partners as a means of supporting congregational vitality.
 - Lift up and share examples of effectiveness as well as resources within and across synods. The churchwide organization should find ways of connecting and communicating learning and resources across synods.
 - Identify and develop the resources synods need to do this ministry in addition to their other responsibilities, which include (but are not limited to) working with congregations to call pastors, starting new congregations and supporting struggling congregations. Resources may include (but are not limited to) staff, dollars, skills, knowledge and relationships.
 - Explore and experiment with different models for synod structure and functions. This process should inform the question about the number of synods necessary for mission.

4. Find ways to support effective leadership across the church (i.e., rostered, lay staff and lay leaders) because these leaders are key to vital congregations.
 - Identify means of supporting effective leaders and increasing effectiveness among all leaders.
 - Explore how seminaries can better prepare current and future rostered leaders for the challenges of mission in the modern world.
 - Use partnerships among seminaries, synods, churchwide organization, congregations and other ministry partners for the ongoing development of leaders.
 - Find ways to more fully engage lay leaders throughout this church to ensure congregational vitality.
 - Explore implications of missional focus on the roles of leaders and leadership bodies.
5. Engage ministry partners in conversation about respective roles with congregations, synods and churchwide organization.
6. Evaluate the role and function of regions within the ELCA in light of mission.
7. Explore the potential of new covenant agreements to strengthen the relationships and clarify the expectations of rostered leaders, congregations, synods, and churchwide as well as ministry partners.
8. Explore different ways to do moral deliberation as a church. Explore different ways to speak publically and advocate as a church.

PARTNERSHIPS

Global Mission

Affirmations

1. GM's ministry embodies the missional identity of the ELCA, which is fundamental to its purpose as articulated in its constitution: "The Church is a people created by God in Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, called and sent to bear witness to God's creative redeeming, and sanctifying activity in the world."
2. In the words of the executive director, "Historically mission has been a key program/function for our church. It is also our greatest fundraising category."
3. Again, in the words of the executive director, "[GM offers the ELCA] an opportunity to be globally formed and globally informed."
4. Respondents to the LIFT questionnaire indicated that:
 - a. GM's ministry is part of a group of ministry activities that plays an important part in helping people feel connected to the wider church;
 - b. Strong national coordination and involvement in global mission is an expectation consistent with being a part of the ELCA; and
 - c. Planning and conducting the global mission of the church should be a responsibility of the churchwide organization.
5. GM enjoys significant benefits from working with its partner organizations. Companion churches, related entities, synods and congregations expand the work of GM by dedicating resources and energy to specific issues.
6. There is a shift away from the "mission board approach" to GM's structure and activities and toward a more grassroots, decentralized, de-institutionalized approach.
7. The review being conducted internally by GM executive, GM staff and the program committee to understand and adjust to the current context of its ministry could identify opportunities for a renewed structure and more efficient use of resources.

Issues

1. GM is structured on a “mission board” model, which is not aligned with the current trend toward independent organizations doing specific, focused work and individuals wanting to be personally involved in mission activities.
2. Some synods are larger and have more financial resources than the churchwide organization, making the creation and continuation of common intentions a matter of relationship, collaboration and influence rather than command and control by a central authoritative body.
3. Changing societal attitudes toward the culture of church indicate that finding alternative ways of engaging people in mission is crucial.
4. Differences on human sexuality can undermine the strong relationships between GM and its partner organizations.
5. Diminishing financial resources and staff cuts at the churchwide organization are resulting in GM being spread too thin, which can minimize the positive impact of its activities.

Recommendations

1. Continue to support and encourage the work of GM as a priority for the ELCA.
2. Provide support and encouragement to GM executives and the GM Program Committee as they review and analyze their internal operations with a view to establishing priorities and allocating resources in light of current opportunities and issues. This could be in the form of providing independent consulting support from an individual or group that has proven experience in organizational design and has the capability of being objective in their analysis.

Companion Churches

Affirmations

Responses indicated that the companion churches affirm the role of GM as the unit that:

1. Creates a mutual understanding of mission and builds relationships to support the development of the companion churches;
2. Is committed to the unity of the Lutheran communion and to church-to-church relations and to promoting Lutheran identity;
3. Promotes and models the concept and ministry of accompaniment;
4. Provides assistance where there is concern for justice or illness, such as HIV and AIDS;
5. Provides timely response to emergencies and hunger appeals;
6. Is committed to having multicultural and international staff to engage with its global companions;
7. Provides financial resources, personnel and training; and
8. Encourages multicultural awareness and visits through the Companion Synod Program.

Issues

1. Differences on some theological, ethical and social issues, such as human sexuality, will continue to be a challenge.
2. Having an association with the ELCA companion churches can be viewed by others in the global community as believing and acting exactly as the ELCA believes and acts, which is not necessarily true or helpful.
3. Lack of integration among congregation, synod and churchwide efforts, particularly as related to the Companion Synod Program.

4. Diminishing financial resources and the worldwide economic recession.

Recommendations

1. Continue to build and strengthen relationships with companion churches in the global community, focusing on accompaniment, mutual growth, capacity building and sustainability of relationships.
2. Continue dialogue on issues that impede progress and interfere with good relations.
3. Work with companion churches to understand where areas of overlap and duplication with the work of related entities could be reduced.

Companion Synod Programs

Affirmations

Responses indicated that the synods affirm the role of GM as the unit that:

1. Provides a public face for the church on a national and global scale;
2. Provides an accompaniment model as the theological and functional approach to GM activities;
3. Coordinates events and initiatives in which the synods and congregations participate, such as global mission events (GME), relief efforts and companion synod start-ups;
4. Equips global mission leaders and sends missionaries;
5. Provides the support that is essential if some things go wrong, especially related to training or travel; and
6. Provides resources, information and expertise that is more efficiently collected and developed within a larger context and then disseminated to the synods and congregations.

The synods affirm their role as the expression of the church that:

1. Engages and equips congregations in extended ministries, including global mission;
2. Is in closer touch with people who want to become active in global mission efforts;
3. Brings committed staff at the synodical level and good leadership at the congregational level to global mission efforts; and
4. Grows and strengthens the Companion Synod Program relationships.

The synods would like to see a continuation of the Companion Synod Program and increased collaboration between synods and GM, especially in the sharing of resources, expertise, support and encouragement.

Issues

1. The Companion Synod programs respond to an increasing desire on the part of people to be involved personally in mission activities; however, there is a risk that emphasis on the Companion Synod program relationships diminishes the focus on broader GM activities.
2. It is believed by some that if synods do not become actively involved in equipping and supporting global mission efforts in their synods, separate independent mission groups will fill the gap.
3. Independent mission activities taking place at the synodical or congregational level do not consistently contribute to a commonly agreed vision or model for global partnership relationships. In some cases, independent activities still foster a dependency model of involvement with global companions.
4. Companion Synod programs, as with other programs sponsored by partners and related entities, can be seen as competing with GM. GM's efforts to engage with those programs and partnerships can be seen as attempts to control.

5. Diminishing financial resources and staff cuts at the churchwide organization are cited as problematic.

Recommendations

1. Engage in further research to identify and frame the issues and questions arising from the Companion Synod programs. Continue to support, encourage and expand this ministry.
2. Create opportunities for creative thinking and planning about how synod and churchwide staff can work more closely to support and assist each other in the work of global mission.
3. Explore the possibility of joining with ecumenical partners and related entities to found an independent organization through which individuals and groups could engage directly in global ministry activities with a commonly agreed approach, operational philosophy and theology. This could provide synods, congregations, unaffiliated groups and individuals who seek direct involvement in activities such as mission trips, exchanges, and hosting international students with access to an ELCA-endorsed organization offering such things as programs, education, training, dialogue and travel assistance on a fee-for-service basis.

Recommendations: Related Entities

1. Proceed with sensitivity to the effect that the human sexuality decision at the 2009 Churchwide Assembly has had on relationships with related entities.
2. Partner with related entities to understand where areas of overlap and duplication of effort might be minimized or eliminated. Consider the possibility of engaging external consulting support to do additional research and make recommendations toward this objective.

Ecumenical Partnerships

Issues and questions

The following questions were considered in preparation for evaluating the present and future of ELCA ecumenical relationship opportunities:

1. What issues do we have in common with our full communion partners?
2. Does the ELCA have constitutional or policy barriers to increasing cooperative ecumenical work at the synod or congregational level?
3. Are there models of success or failure of cooperative work from which we can learn?
4. Are full communion partners interested in sharing resources at the local or synod level?
5. What are the cultural, legal or other barriers to congregations and synods working ecumenically?
6. What are the theological concerns about expanded partnerships?
7. What is the impact on Lutheran identity in ecumenical partnerships?
8. What are the opportunities for expanded mission in ecumenical work at the congregational and synod level?
9. What are the opportunities for sharing resources?

The following questions were asked of ecumenical partners:

1. In participating in God's mission, what do Lutherans do best?
2. What do you believe are the strengths of the ELCA as a denomination? What are its weaknesses?
3. What challenges and opportunities for working together with the ELCA do you see?

4. What common issues does your denomination share with the ELCA in the future?

Affirmations

Responses from ecumenical partner interviews and the Mission Capacity and Funding Consultation participants (August 2010) were remarkably consistent:

1. Lutherans strike a good balance between responding quickly in the moment and endless deliberation.
2. Lutheran liturgy is a gift to the wider church. It is relevant and contemporary, but also takes account of the tradition through the ages.
3. ELCA consistently and thoughtfully seeks input and counsel from partners. Strongest from national office; varies considerably at regional, synod and local levels. "...not as strong at state and local levels of ecumenical work. It's not in the DNA of the church."
4. Others look to ELCA for theological depth. ELCA values diversity in a clear sense of gospel and are insistent on a depth that others don't always have. ELCA commits to serious theological dialogue in ecumenical relations.
5. ELCA is strong in bilateral relationships, particularly at national level,
6. ELCA is more at home in sacramental ministries; less at home in justice ministries.
7. ELCA is strong in a systematic disciplined approach to ecumenical relations.
8. Strengths: how ELCA manages conflict; willingness to address neurological issues such as sexuality; theological rigor; real commitment to peace and justice at national offices; broad agenda; LIFT study is a real strength.
9. ELCA has a "bridge" character with evangelical Catholics, also is very much a part of the Protestant world and is open to orthodoxy. Has tendency to think catholic when it transcends local context. There is now appreciation for Lutherans in the Asian church.
10. ELCA full communion partners all share similar issues: declining church giving, attendance and membership; aging membership; size and complexity of church administrative structure is not sustainable at current level; how to use new social media technologies; how to engage youth and increase diversity; how to resource our congregations for mission.
11. Ecumenical challenges vary throughout country: in upper Midwest, where the ELCA presence is strong, ecumenical partnering is weaker. Relations stronger in areas like the south, where mainline churches are in the minority and band together. Challenges in many parts of country with Roman Catholics bishops; others are very supportive of ELCA relationship.
12. Should be easier for ELCA to think out of the box because younger as a denomination and structure than others.

Recommendations

1. Ecumenical relations at the churchwide level are well-respected and highly effective. No changes are recommended to the current mission, function or structure.
2. Significant opportunities are available at the synod and local level. In cooperation with existing resources such as LERN, the ELCA needs to identify ways to encourage and promote successful ecumenical partnerships at the synod and local levels. We recommend that a group be convened to:
 - a. Identify successful ecumenical partnerships at the synod and congregational level;
 - b. Prepare a report on best practices and lessons learned from unsuccessful attempts; and

- c. Work with the Office of Communication to widely distribute this information. This work should be completed prior to the 2011 Churchwide Assembly in 2011 and be available for distribution by that date.
3. The Conference of Bishops and synod vice presidents are encouraged to reach out to local mid-level judicatories such as dioceses, presbyteries and sessions to explore sharing of resources, office space and administrative personnel.
4. Prior to the launching of new major studies, a review needs to examine similar work done by other churches. Recommendations coming to the Executive Committee or Church Council should include a discussion of previous or current studies and reports by others. Requests should explain why this study is not a duplication of others' work.

Church in Society Partnerships

There were 85 responses from 18 partnerships (e.g., organizations and other entities) that responded, including Lutheran Services in America (LSA); the LSA board of directors; Lutheran Hospital/ Health Care; teaching theologians; Lutheran Women in Theological and Religious Studies; alliances for faith, science and technology; Lutheran Ethicists; the Journal of Lutheran Ethics editorial board; Lutherans Concerned; Lutheran AIDS networks; Church in Society program committee; Corporate Social Responsibility; Bread for the World; Lutheran Disaster Response; bishops "ready bench"; Lutheran Peace Fellowship; Lutheran Human Resources; and Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service.

Issues, opportunities for growth, and identified barriers

1. Can do far more together (ELCA and related entities) than separately.
2. The Lutheran communion can learn from ELCA and its processes related to human sexuality issues and issues of women and gender justice.
3. Continued opportunities for united advocacy and programs.
4. Growth in opportunities for ELCA congregants and other Lutherans (active in the church or not) to be encouraged to participate in the range of opportunities available to encourage faith-in action around the world.
5. Representation of ELCA in programs and programmatic issues in countries where it has an interest.
6. Reduce the risk of negative impact of the human sexuality debate.

Affirmations

The highest number of responses was related to the following topics:

1. Service, social justice, serving the community (17)
2. Theology (especially as it relates to addressing social issues), grace (17)
3. Connecting people and connecting organizations, building relationships (9)
4. Dialogue, moral deliberation, social statements (7)
5. Congregations, diversity of styles, worship, music (6)
6. Education (5)
7. Hunger, disaster relief, humanitarian efforts
8. Public witness, such as the National Youth Gathering
9. Global perspective
10. Focus on vocation
11. Mediating culture; balancing Scripture, reason and tradition

Benefits of working in partnership with the ELCA

Responses focused on the sharing of resources, information and experiences. Also, there are some benefits to having a shared identity with the ELCA among the related entities. The shared identity, however, also can be a liability when negativity about the ELCA affects the contributions and relationships to related entities. Resources can be combined with those of related entities to achieve a better and more sustainable outcome.

1. Sharing information and experiences.
2. ELCA commitment to global diakonia.
3. Financial and technical support.
4. Being a part of an ELCA network of cooperating ministries, organizations and institutions.
5. ELCA combines advocacy work with financial support and support of personnel.
6. Deep commitment to values of justice.
7. Engagement of ELCA staff in helping related entities vision their work and future direction

Liabilities of working in partnership with the ELCA

1. Challenges mentioned were related to sorting out—or better defining—the roles of the ELCA and related entities instead of fields of overlap and duplication.
2. Negative attitudes towards the ELCA that can affect willingness to support related entities too closely identified with the ELCA.
3. Not fully understanding the differences in being a constituency or partner of a related entity.
4. An historic alliance can be a liability when the alliance is then bound by the past when working to envision the future of the partnership.

Recommendations

1. Convene a group to:
 - a. Better define the mandates, complementary roles and ways of cooperation among the ELCA and related entities;
 - b. Sort out the respective roles of ELCA and related entities³ instead of increasing fields of overlap and duplication; and
 - c. Learn how to be jointly competitive in the fundraising market.
 - d. The group should work with the office of Communication to widely distribute this information.

³ See list at the top of page 12.

SUSTAINABILITY, STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE

As mentioned above, the Mission Capacity and Funding Consultation met in early August to deliberate on matters of sustainability. One of the relevant reports for the consultation was a summary of the Blue Ribbon Committee on Mission Funding.⁴ The summary states:

A report on the implementation of the 2007 Blue Ribbon report on mission funding was prepared for the April 2010 meeting of the Church Council. This report summarized the implementation of key elements of the Blue Ribbon report since the 2007

Churchwide Assembly. The concluding summary of that report is worth citing here:

The continuing challenge of the economic recession has hindered the capacity of synods and the churchwide organization to implement fully the recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Report on Mission Funding. Energy that might have been directed to more creative mission funding efforts has been diverted to efforts to respond to reduced giving in congregations and the resultant decline in mission support.

At the same time, the same context has made it even more evident that the conclusions of the Blue Ribbon Report on Mission Funding about the centrality of mission support in funding the mission of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America remain correct and timely. The simple reality is that the financial gifts of the members of the ELCA, shared with synods and the churchwide organization in mission support and designated giving through the ELCA Hunger Appeal and Disaster Relief, make possible all that we do together in Gods mission.

The observations and conclusion within the report that seem most timely and still applicable in the life of the ELCA are the following:

Under “Affirmations for Mission”

The necessity of consulting together between congregations and synods and between synods and the churchwide organization before making decisions about changes in mission support sharing and proposed changes in patterns of grants and staffing.

Within the “philosophy of mission funding”

This funding is grounded in the 55/45 percent sharing of mission support between the churchwide organization and synods as a mark of who we are together and our commitment to our shared mission. The formula for sharing is based on all unrestricted giving from congregations to synods.” This funding “relies on the unique position of the churchwide organization to help this church stay connected to the wider Lutheran and ecumenical communities and redistribute funds across the regions of this church.

Under “mission support assumptions” these points:

1. Mission interpretation and a coordinated communications strategy for the ELCA are essential.
2. Transparency and accountability positively impact relationships and financial support.
3. Clarity as to the location of work and differentiated roles between synods and the churchwide organization is fundamental to the effective distribution of mission funding.

What has changed? As members of this church continue to experience the sustained, negative impact of the global recession, what will the impact be on giving in the local

⁴ The report was approved by the 2007 ELCA Churchwide Assembly. The document is available on the Church Council’s Net Community Web site under the resource tab.

congregation and the sharing of those gifts for synodical and churchwide ministries? Is the 55/45 percent sharing affirmed by the Blue Ribbon report no longer viable in some synods? The experience of the past two years would seem to suggest that is the case. Yet what would be the impact on the churchwide organization if the synods that have maintained or exceeded the 55/45 sharing reduced that sharing to a new norm?

Since the recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Report, several synods below the 55/45 sharing have acted to increase that percentage, while twelve synods at the 55 percent or higher have retained that percentage, some at significant cost to other ministries of staffing.

The number of synods that have increased the percentage of sharing:

2008-2009 21
2009-2010 19
2010-2011 14

The number of synods that have decreased the percentage of sharing:

2008-2009 10
2009-2010 19
2010-2011 4

This data supports the continuation of the present 55/45 sharing. If the percentage were changed—to 50/50 for example—it would be critically important that synods below that percentage of sharing move to reach that agreed-upon figure. If the only change were to be synods reducing to 50/50, then the obvious result would be a further diminishment of mission support for churchwide ministries. One further question: at what point does the viability of a synod emerge when the percentage of mission support declines significantly below the stated recommendation of 55/45?

A report on the “Blue Ribbon Pilot Synods” has been prepared for the November 2010 meeting of the Church Council (see Exhibit E, Part 4). This report provides information on the results of the efforts to increase mission funding within the six pilot synods and may provide “best practices” that could be used widely across synods.

Ongoing LIFT Emphasis

In addition to the four areas below, the LIFT task force recommends that the ELCA provide a means to continue the work of LIFT on an ongoing basis. The purpose is to sensitize the ELCA to the changing secular and religious environments with a view to enabling this church to respond to changes as rapidly as possible.

LIFT Recommendations: Churchwide Assembly

One of the work groups of the Living into the Future Together (LIFT) Task Force focused on issues of governance and structure, and it engaged in an extensive review of the governing documents of this church in light of the charter for the LIFT Task Force. In so doing, the LIFT work group on structure and governance, and subsequently the LIFT Task Force Planning Team, affirmed the theology, purposes, and foundational principles of organization found in Chapters 2, 3, 4, 5, and 8 of the *Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. The work group and the LIFT Task Force Planning Team also concluded that a number of governance-related recommendations should be made. One such recommendation is to amend the governing documents of this church to provide for a triennial cycle for the Churchwide Assembly, linked with a cycle for regional, synodical, and local missional (i.e., non-legislative) gatherings. A related recommendation is to reduce the number of advisory members to the Churchwide Assembly.

This memorandum will provide background information, identify issues and questions that relate to this proposal, provide affirmations of underlying assumptions, and describe recommendations for amendments in the governing documents and/or current practices. The purpose of this memorandum also is to solicit input and suggestions so that specific amendments to the governing documents may be prepared for submission to the Church Council and to the 2011 Churchwide Assembly.

Background

The Churchwide Assembly is the highest legislative authority in the ELCA. Its duties, limitations, organization, composition, and membership are described in Chapter 12 of the *ELCA Constitution*. Constitutional provision 12.11 provides:

The Churchwide Assembly shall be the highest legislative authority of the churchwide organization and shall deal with all matters which are necessary in pursuit of the purposes and functions of this church. The powers of the Churchwide Assembly are limited only by the provisions of the Articles of Incorporation, this constitution and bylaws, and the assembly's own resolutions.

Constitutional provision 12.21 enumerates the duties of the Churchwide Assembly as follows:

The Churchwide Assembly shall:

- a. Review the work of the churchwide officers, and for this purpose require and receive reports from them and act on business proposed by them.
- b. Review the work of the churchwide units, and for this purpose require and receive reports from them and act on business proposed by them.
- c. Receive and consider proposals from synod assemblies.
- d. Establish churchwide policy.
- e. Adopt a budget for the churchwide organization.
- f. Elect officers, board members, and other persons as provided in the constitution and bylaws.
- g. Establish churchwide units to carry out the functions of the churchwide organization.
- h. Have the sole authority to amend the constitution and bylaws.
- i. Fulfill other functions as required in the constitution and bylaws.
- j. Conduct such other business as necessary to further the purposes and functions of the churchwide organization.

In addition to the constitutionally enumerated legislative functions, members of the ELCA and voting members of the assembly have recognized that the Churchwide Assembly has a number of functions besides the legislative and oversight ones described in the governing documents. For example, the Churchwide Assembly provides a forum, centered in worship, to bring this church together, to build relationships, to exchange ideas, to inspire and motivate, and to learn about the interdependent mission and ministries of the wider church. The Churchwide Assembly also provides a means for congregational members and synodical leadership to grow in appreciation of interdependence and to learn about cooperative ministries being carried out in the ELCA. When proposals were made previously to change the frequency of the meetings of the Churchwide Assembly or its membership, these considerations, rather than the legislative and oversight functions of the assembly, have been reasons people cited for retaining the current biennial cycle.

Constitutional provision 12.31 prescribes that the Churchwide Assembly will meet biennially in regular session and provides a mechanism to call special meetings. Other provisions address the composition, including voting members, advisory members, visitors, observers, and the like. The governing documents provide for approximately 1000 voting members based upon a formula using baptized membership and number of congregations in a synod; the Church Council also allocates a small number of additional voting members to small synods to allow inclusion of additional voting members who are persons of color. The composition of the Churchwide Assembly must comply with the representational principles enumerated in constitutional provision 5.01. Thus, at least 60 percent of the members must be laypersons; of the lay members, 50 per cent must be male and 50 percent female. Of the ordained ministers, there must be both male and female members. Ten percent of the assembly must be persons of color and/or whose primary language is other than English. In addition, the 2009 Churchwide Assembly adopted continuing resolution 6.02.A09, which calls for development of processes to ensure that the composition of the Churchwide Assembly shall be at least 10 percent youth and young adults.

In addition to voting members, there are 50-100 advisory and other categories of participants for which the churchwide organization pays the expenses. Congregational observers and other visitors come at their own expense.

Organizing and holding a Churchwide Assembly involves a number of significant costs, both financial and human. Typically, assemblies are held in convention centers and last 6-7 days, exclusive of pre- and post-assembly meetings. The average cost of a Churchwide Assembly in the last decade has been approximately \$2.5 million, with the most expensive assembly costing approximately \$3 million (Chicago in 2007). In light of economic uncertainties and likely increases in the cost of transportation, it is probable that the costs of holding the Churchwide Assembly will increase in the future, if the composition and timing remain unchanged.

The 1995 Churchwide Assembly considered a proposal to amend the governing documents to provide for a triennial assembly cycle. It was defeated. The 1995 proposal did not contain recommendations for accomplishing non-legislative functions of the Churchwide Assembly in other ways or to hold other periodic gatherings of rostered and other leaders and theological conferences in non-assembly years.

Other denominations have different cycles for their legislative bodies. For example, the General Convention of the Episcopal Church meets every three years, and the General Conference of the United Methodist Church meets every four years. Interestingly, the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod currently has a three-year cycle, and its task force on governance and structure recommended a four-year cycle, coordinated with periodic theological and regional events. (This proposal was narrowly defeated at the 2010 LCMS Convention.)

Issues/Questions

The LIFT Task Force work group on structure and governance addressed a number of important issues embedded in considering possible changes in the frequency, meetings, and composition of the Churchwide Assembly. Because an evaluation of proposals relating to the Churchwide Assembly necessarily includes consideration of these issues, they are set forth below:

- Is the Churchwide Assembly an appropriate forum for conducting the legislative responsibilities of the churchwide organization?⁵
- Can some legislative functions of the Churchwide Assembly be addressed by the Church Council?
- Should the number of voting members to the Churchwide Assembly be changed?
- Should the formula for determining voting membership of the Churchwide Assembly be changed?
- Should the representational principles relating to inclusivity of lay members, women, persons of color, and youth/young persons at the Churchwide Assembly be amended?
- What is gained/lost by going from a two-year Churchwide Assembly cycle to a three-year cycle?
- How would a three-year Churchwide Assembly cycle affect elections held at the Churchwide Assembly?
- How would a three-year Churchwide Assembly cycle affect budget issues?
- Is the current Churchwide Assembly duration of 6-7 days appropriate if it is held on a three-year cycle?
- If the Churchwide Assembly goes to a three-year cycle, what meetings or assemblies should be held in other years and how should these be coordinated?
- What is gained/lost by reducing the number of advisory members or changing the way that their expenses are paid?
- Should there be some method of ratifying actions of the Churchwide Assembly?
- Are there methods of cost-sharing that could be used instead of providing for advisory members?
- How can technology be used to bring the Churchwide Assembly to a larger audience?

Affirmations

In considering the issues identified above and in developing recommendations relating to the Churchwide Assembly, the work group on structure and governance reached consensus on a number of foundational matters. The recommendations that follow regarding the Churchwide Assembly are premised on these affirmations:

- The Churchwide Assembly is an appropriate body to fulfill the legislative and oversight functions described in the governing documents of this church (although a deeper conversation is recommended regarding the subjects of “legislation,” the manner that legislation reaches the assembly, communal discernment before legislative action is taken, and the manner that actions are implemented.) (See footnote 1 above.)

⁵ This memorandum recognizes and assumes that the Churchwide Assembly is the “highest legislative authority of the churchwide organization” as specified in ELCA constitutional provision 12.11. A church body like the ELCA requires a highest legislative authority. The LIFT Task Force Planning Team believes, however, that this church should engage in further study and conversation about what are the appropriate subjects of legislation for the Churchwide Assembly, how legislation comes to the Churchwide Assembly for action, the process of communal discernment before legislative action, and the manner that actions of the Churchwide Assembly are appropriately implemented.

- The principle of interdependence and the relationships among congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization are foundational to the polity of the ELCA and provide unique and important opportunities to engage in collaborative and effective mission and ministry.
- The size of the Churchwide Assembly and the method of allocation and election of voting members are appropriate.
- The representational principles and the commitment to inclusivity underlying them are important foundational principles and should be preserved in the composition of the Churchwide Assembly.

Recommendations

In light of these affirmations, the work group on structure and governance concluded that the legislative and oversight functions of the Churchwide Assembly described in the governing documents should not be altered at this time. In addition, the size of the Churchwide Assembly and the method of allocation of voting members, which provides for elected voting members from synods, are appropriate. The work group on structure and governance believes, however, that current economic realities in the churchwide organization and throughout the ELCA militate for changing the cycle of the Churchwide Assembly, with non-legislative functions of the assembly addressed in other ways. In addition, the category of advisory members should be eliminated or amended; whether categorized as advisory members or guests, such persons should attend at the expense of their organizations or alternative funding sources obtained. Guests should be encouraged to attend at their own expense. Technological options also should be explored and expanded to broadcast the assembly to a wider audience and to disseminate more broadly its activities. Therefore, the recommendations are as follows:

1. *Amend the governing documents to provide for a triennial cycle for the Churchwide Assembly. Couple this proposal with strategies for missional, theological, regional, synodical, and/or other events in the intervening years.*
 - a. The legislative functions of the Churchwide Assembly can be addressed effectively on a three-year cycle, although careful consideration will need to be given to election issues.
 - b. Oversight of units can be addressed between assemblies by the Church Council in its capacity as the board of directors of this church.
 - c. There is merit in allowing more time for communal discernment on important issues before addressing them legislatively at an assembly.
 - d. A triennial cycle also would allow more time for implementing legislative actions following a Churchwide Assembly before attention turns to preparing for the next one.
 - e. Non-legislative functions of the assembly can be accomplished effectively in other forums and in other ways. This approach would allow greater focus on missional activities in non-Churchwide Assembly years. For example, these events could include the Youth Gathering, the convention of the Women of the ELCA, global mission events, and the like. In addition, such events could be held on a local or regional basis. For example, synods could convene regional conferences addressing missional issues of mutual interest or concern.
 - f. Periodic gatherings of rostered leaders and theological conferences could be facilitated and would have a salutary impact on this church, if they were separate from a legislative function. In looking at these options, the work group on structure and governance and the LIFT Task Force Planning Team believe that it will be important to coordinate planning and scheduling of these events.
 - g. Broader and deeper study and conversations among members, congregations, synods, the churchwide organization, and others should take place regarding the appropriate subjects of legislation that come before the Churchwide Assembly, the ways that legislation is generated, reviewed, and placed on the agenda of the Churchwide Assembly, the process of communal

discernment before legislative action occurs, and the manner that actions of the Churchwide Assembly are implemented.

2. *Amend the governing documents to reduce the number of advisory and non-voting members to the Churchwide Assembly whose expenses are paid by the churchwide organization.*
 - a. In light of economic realities, it is no longer feasible for the churchwide organization to pay to gather numerous advisory members to observe the proceedings in order to be available to respond to questions, if they arise.
 - b. If specific agenda matters will be addressed, arrangements can be made in advance for the participation of persons who are important to make presentations, provide information, or answer questions.
 - c. Guests should be encouraged to attend, if they so desire, at their own expense.
3. *Evaluate how technology can be expanded to involve more individuals and congregations in the Churchwide Assembly.*
 - a. Expanded use of technology could include, for example, forums or hearings that would be set up to allow remote participation or town hall meetings could be scheduled in conjunction with the assembly.

Conclusion

The LIFT Task Force work group on structure and governance and the Planning Team bring these proposals to the Church Council for response to the specific amendments to the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* will be proposed.

LIFT Recommendations: Church Council

One of the work groups of the Living into the Future Together (LIFT) Task Force focused on issues of governance and structure, and it engaged in an extensive review of the governing documents of this church in light of the charter for the LIFT Task Force. In so doing, the LIFT work group on structure and governance, and subsequently the LIFT Task Force Planning Team, affirmed the theology, purposes, and foundational principles of organization found in Chapters 2, 3, 4, 5, and 8 of the *Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. The work group and the LIFT Task Force Planning Team also concluded that a number of governance-related recommendations should be made. One such recommendation is to amend the governing documents of this church to provide a mechanism for nomination and election of some Church Council members on an “at large” basis, as well as to reduce the number of advisory members.

This memorandum will provide background information, identify issues and questions that relate to this proposal, provide affirmations of underlying assumptions, and describe recommendations for amendments in the governing documents and/or current practices. The purpose of this memorandum also is to solicit input and suggestions so that specific amendments to the governing documents may be prepared for submission to the Church Council and to the 2011 Churchwide Assembly.

Background

Constitutionally, the Church Council serves as the interim legislative authority between meetings of the Churchwide Assembly. Its specific duties and responsibilities are enumerated in Chapter 14 of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. These responsibilities include review of the procedures and programs of individual churchwide units and implementation of actions taken at the Churchwide Assembly. Legally and functionally, the Church Council of the ELCA is the board of directors of a multi-million dollar, multi-national corporation.

Pursuant to constitutional provision 14.31, the Church Council consists of the four churchwide officers and 33 other members elected by the Churchwide Assembly. The composition of the Church Council must comply with the representational principles enumerated in constitutional provision 5.01. This means that at least 60 percent of the members must be laypersons; of the lay members, 50 percent must be male and 50 percent female. Of the ordained ministers, there must be both male and female members. Ten percent of the assembly must be persons of color and/or whose primary language is other than English. In addition, continuing resolution 6.02.A09 calls for development of processes to ensure that the composition of the Church Council shall be at least 10 percent youth and young adults.

In addition to these criteria, continuing resolutions 19.21.B05 and 19.21.C05 superimpose geographical considerations on the nomination and election processes for Church Council members. In essence, synods are paired for purposes of nominating Church Council members. Based on this pairing, the Office of the Secretary developed a matrix establishing “slots” for paired synods for each year for many years into the future. Thus, synods are assigned the category of persons to be nominated when that synod’s “turn” comes up on the matrix. Continuing resolution 19.21.B05 requires Synod Assemblies to nominate two people, whose names are submitted to the Churchwide Assembly for election.

The Committee for the New Lutheran Church (CNLC) considered the composition of the Church Council. It rejected proposals to have each synod elect a member of the Church Council. Over the years, some synods have submitted memorials to the Churchwide Assembly addressing the composition of the Church Council. These have asked that the Church Council be expanded to 69

members to allow a representative from each synod, in addition to the officers. These proposals have not been adopted by the Churchwide Assembly.

Other than identifying “slots” for nominees based on synodical residence and representational principles, the Church Council does not conduct an inventory of skills and expertise for purposes of filling positions on the Church Council. Thus, for example, there is no structural way to ensure that the Budget and Finance Committee has people with financial, accounting, or audit experience, or a way to ensure that there are individuals with legal experience to serve on the Legal and Constitutional and Review Committee. By contrast, such considerations are evaluated in identifying nominees for boards of the separately incorporated units. In the public sector and in most non-profit organizations, such skills and experience inventories are carried out routinely as part of the process of identifying and electing board members.

In addition to voting members, bylaw provisions in Chapter 14 of the ELCA constitution provide for advisory members. The churchwide organization reimburses the expenses for advisory members to participate in Church Council meetings; they have voice but not vote. Currently, there are approximately twenty advisory members.

Issues/Questions

In evaluating the composition of the Church Council, the following issues and questions were considered:

- What is the optimal size of the Church Council?
- Should the Church Council be composed of one voting member from each synod?
- Should members of the Church Council continue to be nominated and elected in accordance with representational principles?
- Should some or all of the members of the Church Council continue to be nominated by synods according to the current practice?
- Should some members of the Church Council be nominated by the Nominating Committee taking into account skills and expertise?
- Should synods and the Nominating Committee nominate two persons for each position, as is currently the practice, or only one?
- Should nominations from the floor at the Churchwide Assembly be allowed?

Affirmations

In evaluating possible recommendations relating to the Church Council, the work group on structure and governance reached consensus on several underlying principles. The recommendations that follow are premised on these affirmations:

- The size of the Church Council with 37 members is reasonable from a governance perspective; expansion to 69 members to allow one member from each synod is not desirable.
- The current process for nomination by synods and election by the Churchwide Assembly of some members of the Church Council is appropriate.
- From a governance perspective, there is a need to ensure that the composition of the Church Council includes individuals with specific expertise required by a board of directors.
- The representational principles and the commitment to inclusivity underlying them are important foundational principles and should be preserved in the composition of the Church Council.

Recommendations

The work group on structure and governance and the LIFT Task Force Planning Team believe that the current size of the Church Council is in a reasonable range from a governance perspective.

Given the current number of synods, it would not be desirable, either from a cost standpoint or a governance perspective, to increase the size of the Church Council to 69. Further, increasing the size to 69 by election of a voting member from each synod would not address the issue of ensuring the requisite skills and expertise of the council and necessarily would increase the role of the Executive Committee.

Foundational principles of the ELCA call for equitable representation of the people of God in this church. Our Lutheran tradition also emphasizes that life in the church be maintained decently and in order. The work group on structure and governance and the LIFT Task Force Planning Team believe that the size of the Church Council is reasonable, although a range in size would be desirable. However, changes in the method that some members are elected for the sake of suitable representation from the membership of the ELCA and for the sake of good order in ELCA governance are recommended. Specifically, it is desirable to elect some members to the Church Council who have the skills and expertise crucial to the governance of the churchwide organization. These people with specialized skills can be elected with specific and current issues in mind rather than assigning a “slot” or “category” for a theologian, lawyer, accountant, or the like. Efforts should be undertaken to draw people with the necessary experience and expertise from as wide a pool of this church as possible.

In an era of reduced mission support, the current number of advisory members, whose expenses are borne by the churchwide organization, is not financially justifiable. Input from constituencies can be provided in other ways.

Taking into account these considerations, the work group on structure and governance has the following specific recommendations:

1. *Adjust the size of the voting membership of the Church Council to a range, as opposed to a specific number, and provide an alternative nomination process to elect a portion of the council.*
 - a. The proposed range is 36-45. This would allow the flexibility to elect additional members to address the need for particular areas of skill and expertise; it also would provide the flexibility not to fill a position if someone resigned mid-term.
 - b. Continue to provide for nominations in paired synods, as provided in existing continuing resolutions, for election of approximately 2/3 of the membership of the Church Council.
 - c. Develop a process by which 1/3 of the membership would be nominated by the Nominating Committee using an assessment of the needs of the Church Council, the skills and expertise of the individuals, and representational principles. The Nominating Committee would solicit potential nominees from synods and other sources for these positions.
 - d. The Nominating Committee, subject to approval by the Church Council, would have authority to designate positions, exclusive of geography; the Nominating Committee also would have the ability to ensure that the representational principles were implemented. (For example, it could be responsible for the nomination of youth and young adults and persons of color, if those groups were not otherwise adequately represented.)
 - e. Before each Churchwide Assembly, the Nominating Committee would submit its recommendations for the open positions to the Church Council for approval.
 - f. The Nominating Committee would submit two names for each designated position for election by the Churchwide Assembly. Nominations would be solicited from synods and other sources.

2. *Reduce the number of advisory members to the Church Council.*
 - a. Reduction of the number of advisory members could be done by eliminating the positions for board and committee chairs; if this were done, unit executives would provide information and responses to questions that might arise.
 - b. If youth and young adults become voting members, they do not need to be advisory members.
 - c. Persons currently serving as advisory members could attend as guests.

Conclusions

The LIFT Task Force work group on structure and governance and the Planning Team bring these proposals to the Church Council for response to specific amendments to the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* will be proposed.

LIFT Recommendations: Conference of Bishops

One of the work groups of the Living into the Future Together (LIFT) Task Force focused on issues of governance and structure, and it engaged in an extensive review of the governing documents of this church in light of the charter for the LIFT Task Force. In so doing, the LIFT work group on governance and structure, and subsequently the LIFT Task Force Planning Team, affirmed the theology, purposes, and foundational principles of organization found in Chapters 2, 3, 4, 5, and 8 of the *Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. The work group and the LIFT Task Force Planning Team also concluded that a number of governance-related recommendations should be made. One group of recommendations addresses the role of the Conference of Bishops in this church.

This memorandum will provide background information, identify issues and questions that relate to this proposal, provide affirmations of underlying assumptions, and describe recommendations for amendments in the governing documents and/or current practices. The purpose of this memorandum also is to solicit input and suggestions so that specific amendments to the governing documents may be prepared for submission the Church Council and to the 2011 Churchwide Assembly.

Background

From a governance perspective, the Conference of Bishops occupies a unique position in the ELCA. The *Constitution for Synods* defines the responsibilities of synodical bishops (see +S8.12) and describes the process by which a Synod Assembly elects the bishop (see S9.04). Within the churchwide organization, synodical bishops, along with the presiding bishop and the secretary of the church, comprise the Conference of Bishops (see 15.31). In terms of governance, the Conference of Bishops is not a legislative body. Pursuant to bylaw 15.31.01, it is responsible for reporting to the Church Council and “may make recommendations to the presiding bishop of this church and to the Church Council.”

ELCA bylaw 14.32.01 provides for nine liaison bishops to the Church Council, one from each region, to be elected by the Conference of Bishops. In addition, the chair of the Conference of Bishops is required to attend Church Council meetings.

Continuing resolution 15.31.A07 elaborates on the responsibilities of the Conference of Bishops as follows:

The Conference of Bishops of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall provide opportunities for worship, spiritual renewal, and theological enrichment for those elected to the office of bishop of a synod, the presiding bishop of this church, and the secretary of this church. To fulfill these responsibilities, the Conference of Bishops shall:

- a. be a forum in which goals, objectives, and strategies may be developed and shared concerning pastoral leadership, care, and counsel for the synods;
- b. review recommendations from the appropriate churchwide unit pertaining to standards for the admission to the rosters of ordained ministers, associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers, and for their retention on those rosters;
- c. review recommendations and foster programs, in consultation with the appropriate churchwide unit, pertaining to policies related to ordained ministers, associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers, and their families for pastoral care in such areas as call review, guidance, mobility, intervention, discipline, rehabilitation and spiritual growth;
- d. work with the appropriate churchwide unit in the processes for first call for candidates for the ordained ministry of this church, first call for persons certified

- as associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers, mobility of rostered persons, and pastoral care;
- e. carry out programs, under the leadership of the appropriate churchwide unit, related to ordained ministers, associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers, and their families for pastoral care, including call review, guidance, mobility, intervention, discipline, rehabilitation, and spiritual growth;
 - f. offer programs for orientation and continuing education for bishops, officers, and their spouses;
 - g. assist the bishops in their role as teachers by being a forum for serious reflections on the theological and ethical implications of issues that affect the life of this church;
 - h. participate in the development and study of ecumenical documents and assist the bishops to promote the unity of this church through leadership and ecumenical worship, fellowship, and interaction; and
 - i. assist the bishops in their role as leaders in fostering support for the work of this church by being a forum for discussion of annual mission-support plans and serving as a means of providing advice and counsel to the Church Council in the council's responsibility for approval of those plans.

Issues/Questions

The following issues and questions arose in connection with evaluating the role of the Conference of Bishops in the structure and governance of this church:

- Should the Conference of Bishops have a legislative role in governance?
- Should the chair of the Conference of Bishops be a voting member of the Church Council?
- Should additional bishops be voting members of the Church Council?
- From a governance perspective, what can be done to better utilize the Conference of Bishops?

Affirmations

In evaluating possible recommendations regarding the role of the Conference of Bishops, the work group on structure and governance affirmed the following:

- Synodical bishops provide invaluable leadership within each expression of this church and collectively as a conference. The wisdom of bishops and the breadth of their experience are vitally important to the mission and ministry of this church as well as the vitality of the principle of interdependence.
- Although input from bishops is not always obtained on legislative matters, it is not desirable to amend the governing documents to provide for a magisterium that would vote on legislative proposals.
- Procedures or processes should be developed to strengthen the relationship and provide regular input from the Conference of Bishops to the Church Council and to refer questions from the Church Council to the Conference of Bishops.
- The connection between the Conference of Bishops and the Church Council can be strengthened by providing that the chair of the Conference of Bishops serve *ex officio* as a voting member of the Church Council and Executive Committee.

Recommendations

The work group on governance and structure and the LIFT Task Force Planning Team believe that the Conference of Bishops is underutilized as a resource in this church. However, options to expand the role legislatively would be inconsistent with the history and polity of this church, and

amending the governing documents to specify a role in particular circumstances is both complex and raises the possibility of unintended consequences. Therefore, the work group recommends as follows:

Expand the role of the Conference of Bishops in its consultative capacity by developing practices/procedures for the Church Council to refer issues to it and for the Conference of Bishops to make recommendations to the Church Council. However, no change in the governing documents regarding the legislative role of the Conference of Bishops is recommended.

- Within the existing framework, the Church Council should work proactively to elicit input and recommendations from the Conference of Bishops as part of the legislative decision-making process, and the Conference of Bishops should work proactively to provide specific input and recommendations on important policy issues. This process for cross-referral could include requests for theological papers or input on important issues, as well as convening other tables across synodical lines to address issues of importance to this church.

Provide for the chair of the Conference of Bishops to be an ex officio member of the Church Council and the Executive Committee (i.e., a voting member by virtue of the bishop's position)

- Liaison bishops provide an important input to the Church Council, but having the chair of the Conference of Bishops serving as a full voting member of the Church Council and the Executive Committee strengthens the governance connection between the groups and will facilitate the opportunity for cross-referral of matters from one group to the other.

Conclusions

The LIFT Task Force work group on governance and structure and the Planning Team bring these proposals to the Church Council for response to the specific amendments to the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* will be proposed.

LIFT Recommendations: Program Committees

One of the work groups of the Living into the Future Together (LIFT) Task Force focused on issues of governance and structure, and it engaged in an extensive review of the governing documents of this church in light of the charter for the LIFT Task Force. In so doing, the LIFT work group on structure and governance, and subsequently the LIFT Task Force Planning Team, affirmed the theology, purposes, and foundational principles of organization found in Chapters 2, 3, 4, 5, and 8 of the *Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. The work group and the LIFT Task Force Planning Team also concluded that a number of governance-related recommendations should be made. One such recommendation is to amend the governing documents of this church to eliminate program committees.

This memorandum will provide background information, identify issues and questions that relate to this proposal, provide affirmations of underlying assumptions, and describe recommendations for amendments in the governing documents and/or current practices. The purpose of this memorandum also is to solicit input and suggestions so that specific amendments to the governing documents may be prepared for submission to the Church Council and to the 2011 Churchwide Assembly.

Background

Chapter 16 of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* addresses program units of the churchwide organization. They are defined in constitutional provision 16.11. as being “assigned responsibility for a major, identified portion of the program of this church.” Continuing resolution 16.11.A05. lists the program units as follows: the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission unit; the Global Mission unit; the Vocation and Education unit; the Church in Society unit; the Multicultural Ministries unit; the Publishing House of the ELCA unit; and the Women of the ELCA unit.⁶ The responsibilities of individual program units are described in detail in continuing resolutions in Chapter 16.

Program units report to the Churchwide Assembly and Church Council. Constitutional provision 16.12 provides as follows:

Each unit shall be responsible to the Churchwide Assembly and will report to the Church Council in the interim. The policies, procedures, and operation of each unit shall be reviewed by the Church Council in order to assure conformity with the governing documents of this church and with Churchwide Assembly actions.

In addition, program units and their staffs are subject to the oversight of the presiding bishop in the role of president and chief executive officer of the churchwide organization, pursuant to ELCA constitutional provision 13.21.

All unincorporated program units have program committees, pursuant to ELCA constitutional provision 11.35. Their responsibilities are described in bylaw 16.12.13 as follows:

Each program committee shall review proposed policies and strategies for its areas of responsibility in the preparation of such policies and strategies for submission by the executive director of the unit to the appropriate committee of the Church Council, for presentation to the Church Council.

⁶ The Publishing House of the ELCA (aka Augsburg Fortress, Publishers) and the Women of the ELCA are separately incorporated. Constitutional and bylaw provisions create them and prescribe their organization; continuing resolutions describe their responsibilities. As separately incorporated entities, they have their own boards of trustees. This memorandum only addresses program units that are not separately incorporated .

Program committees consist of 15 persons elected to non-renewable six-year terms by the Churchwide Assembly; in addition, there are provisions for advisory members and a liaison member from the Church Council (bylaw 16.12.12). Program committees customarily meet twice per year (bylaw 16.12.11).

Under the original governing documents of the ELCA, program units had different names and their committees functioned differently. Units responsible for programs were designated as “divisions.” Each division had a board comprised of 21 members, plus advisory members. In addition to reporting responsibilities to the Churchwide Assembly and Church Council, each board elected the division’s executive director, in consultation with and subject to the approval of the presiding bishop, authorized staff positions in consultation with the executive director, and requested budget support and expenditure authorization from the Church Council.

The governing documents were amended with respect to some provisions relating to divisions between 1987 and 2005, but division boards remained as part of the structure.⁷ As part of the reorganization of the churchwide organization approved by the Churchwide Assembly in 2005, the constitutional role of the Church Council as the board of directors of the ELCA was emphasized. As part of this clarification of duties and responsibilities, divisions became program units and were reconfigured. Division boards became program committees. As the change in name implied, they functioned less like a board and more like an advisory committee to review and make recommendations on policies and strategies. The line of accountability was reconfigured so that recommendations to the Church Council were to be made through the unit’s executive director.

Since the restructuring, program committees have struggled to find their identity and purpose. Questions have been raised whether it is a good use of resources—time, financial, and human—to continue to gather advisory committees together for what often seems like little reason and less output. The estimated cost of an in-person meeting of a single program committee in Chicago is approximately \$9000 per meeting. In addition, there is significant staff time spent in preparations for the meetings.

Issues/Questions

In evaluating the viability and utility of program committees, the following issues and questions were considered:

- What are the important functions of program committees?
- Can the functions of program committees be addressed in other ways in the structure and governance of the churchwide organization?
- Are there alternative ways to solicit input from and provide information to members of the ELCA regarding program units besides program committees?
- Does the Church Council function effectively in making suggestions to program units and in reviewing the policies and strategies of program units?
- Can technology be utilized more effectively to enhance the connections among the expressions of the ELCA, to disseminate information, and to elicit input from members of this church regarding work of the program units?
- To what extent would elimination of program committees undermine interdependence and increase the perception that the ELCA is a “top down” organization in its decision-making?

⁷ Responsibilities of the division boards were amended several times between 1988 and 2005. For example, the authority to set executive director salaries in consultation with the presiding bishop was eliminated in 2003.

Affirmations

In considering the issues identified above and in developing recommendations relating to program committees, the work group on structure and governance reached consensus on a number of foundational matters. The recommendations that follow are premised on these affirmations:

- The elimination of board language and functions from program committees was desirable from structure and governance perspectives.
- The utility and benefits of program committees do not warrant the expenses required for them to meet as currently required in the governing documents.
- Church Council monitoring and oversight would be facilitated by creating a more direct line of accountability with program units. From a governance perspective, it would be desirable for Church Council members to fulfill many of the roles and responsibilities currently performed by program committee members.
- A single committee of the Church Council could accomplish the roles and responsibilities of separate program committees and could better coordinate, prioritize, and oversee the program units.
- As necessary, guests with particular expertise or perspectives could be invited to attend Church Council committee meetings when program unit issues would be addressed.
- Alternative approaches must be developed to obtain input from, to communicate with, and to engage synods, congregations, and members regarding the work of program units. Technology provides some opportunities to do so, but it cannot be the exclusive vehicle for such communication.
- Although the work of the Church Council would be increased, it is not anticipated that the new responsibilities associated with the elimination of program committees would increase either the time or expense associated with its meetings.

Recommendations

In light of these affirmations, the following recommendations are made:

Amend the governing documents to eliminate program committees and to reallocate their responsibilities to a committee of the Church Council.

- A single Church Council committee, the Planning and Evaluation Committee or a newly configured committee, would receive reports on policies and strategies from all program units on a regular basis, probably at least yearly. Such a committee would have the advantage of receiving reports from all program committees and be able to synthesize them and make coordinated recommendations to the Church Council. While this approach would expand the work of members of the Church Council, it would facilitate the coordination of oversight responsibilities and substantially reduce costs associated with the meetings of individual program committees.
- If additional reporting and/or oversight are needed or desirable, meetings by teleconference or webinars can be arranged. If special expertise is needed, guests can be invited to participate in the meetings.
- Methods need to be explored and developed to obtain input from congregations, synods, and individual members and to disseminate information regarding the work of program units more effectively.

Conclusion

The LIFT Task Force work group on structure and governance and the Planning Team bring these proposals to the Church Council for response to the specific amendments to the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* will be proposed.

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 - [A Questionnaire on Decision-Making \(2004\)](#) A report on a questionnaire fielded to a variety of ELCA constituencies on how the ELCA goes about making decisions.
 - [A Questionnaire on the Design Elements \(2004\)](#) Nineteen "design elements" were identified to guide the realignment of the churchwide organization for mission. This is a report of a questionnaire developed to assess the support for each of the elements. The questionnaire was fielded to a variety of constituencies.
 - [Report on the Representative Panel Meeting \(2004\)](#) This is the report on the deliberations of a group asked to develop the "design elements" or "conceptual

parameters to guide how the churchwide organization would be "realigned for the sake of mission."

- [Role of the Churchwide Organization \(2004\)](#) Summary of a discussion with a variety of constituencies on the role of the churchwide organization in the ELCA. Includes a discussion of mission support, different understandings of the churchwide organization, and a suggested design.
- [Report on the Churchwide Planning Worksheet \(2003\)](#) The Worksheet listed short descriptions of 91 churchwide programs along with 2004 budget allocations. The worksheet, distributed to synod bishops, asked if a program was working well, whether it should be given more or less attention and/or funding.
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- [Report on Congregations in the ELCA \(2007\)](#) A survey of congregation and pastors designed to assess the mission and ministry of ELCA congregations. A sample of ELCA congregations who are part of the Willow Creek Association was also included for comparison purposes.
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Blue Ribbon Pilot Synods – 2008 to 2010
Final Review

Kenneth Inskip and Victoria Flood
ELCA Research and Evaluation
September 2010

The 2007 ELCA Churchwide Assembly adopted the “Report of the Blue Ribbon Committee on Mission Funding” for supporting God’s mission through the ELCA. Included in the Mission Support Outcomes and Goals is the formation of a mission support consultation process that will be piloted by four or more synods. The goal of this process is to increase mission support in the congregations of the participating synods and to increase the percentage of sharing between synod and the churchwide ministries of the ELCA.

This process was affirmed by the ELCA Mission Funding and Interpretation Team (MFIT) in March 2008. Twelve synods were invited to submit proposals by June 2, 2008. Based on the proposals received, six synods were chosen as pilots: North Carolina, North/West Lower Michigan, Minneapolis, South Dakota, Nebraska, and Southwestern Washington.

The time frame for this project was November 2008—September 2010. This is a short time frame for measuring change in items that generally are reported on an annual basis. In addition, the context of a large and sustained U.S. economic downturn, coupled with strong disagreement in parts of the church over the 2009 Churchwide Assembly decisions regarding those who are in monogamous, same-sex, long-term, committed relationships, altered the ability of many pilot synods to implement the stewardship project as they had proposed initially.

Below are the various criteria that were set forth for evaluating the efforts of the BRC pilot synods on mission funding. After each set of criteria is a summary of how well each synod met the criteria during the given time frame for the project.

Criteria:

1. A final review will evaluate the effectiveness of the projects based primarily on a sustained increase in mission support.
2. Pilot synods will develop and implement a plan to increase the percentage of sharing with churchwide ministries toward or beyond the goal of 55 percent.

Table 1 shows the percent of Mission Support provided to the Churchwide organization from each of the six pilot project synods, beginning with 2006.

Table 1: Mission Support Percentages from 2006 through 2011

Synod	Mission Support % 2006	Mission Support % 2007	Mission Support % 2008	Mission Support % 2009	Mission Support % 2010 (estimate)	Mission Support % 2011 (estimate)
Southwestern Washington	37.00%	37.00%	37.50%	38.00%	38.50%	39.00%
South Dakota	42.00%	42.00%	42.00%	42.00%	43.00%	44.00%
Minneapolis Area	57.10%	55.00%	55.00%	55.00%	55.00%	55.00%
Nebraska	57.00%	57.00%	57.00%	57.00%	57.00%	57.00%
North/West Lower Michigan	50.00%	50.00%	50.00%	51.00%	50.00%	50.00%
North Carolina	42.32%	42.12%	41.87%	40.50%	39.26%	39.07%

One synod achieved a sustained increase in mission support during the time frame of the project: Southwestern Washington.

One synod maintained its mission support in 2009 and then increased its mission support in 2010: South Dakota.

One synod increased its mission support in 2009 and then decreased it in 2010, returning to the level that it was at in 2008: North/West Lower Michigan.

Two synods maintained their mission support during the time frame of the project. These are the same two synods that are at or above the goal of 55 percent: Minneapolis Area and Nebraska.

One synod decreased its mission support during the time frame of the project: North Carolina.

Summary: Two synods accepted into the pilot project already were at or above the 55 percent level, which may have meant that they had less incentive than other pilot project synods to increase their mission support to the churchwide organization. These two synods maintained their levels, but did not increase them. The pilot project achieved a 17 percent success rate with this criteria since one of the six pilot synods did increase its mission support in both years of the pilot project time frame.

Criteria: Pilot Synods will develop and implement a plan to increase mission support within the congregations of the synod.

Table 2 shows the reported intended mission support given to the synod by all the congregations within the synod as a percentage of the regular and designated giving received by all the congregations within the synod. This data is compiled from the annual reports filed by congregations.

Table 2: Aggregate Intended Mission Support From Congregations to the Synod

Synod	2007 Congregation Intended Mission Support as a % of Reg+Designated Giving	2008 Congregation Intended Mission Support as a % of Reg+Designated Giving	2009 Congregation Intended Mission Support as a % of Reg+Designated Giving
Southwestern Washington	4.62%	4.98%	4.42%
South Dakota	5.07%	6.15%	5.18%
Minneapolis Area	3.79%	4.00%	3.62%
Nebraska	7.70%	7.90%	8.30%
North/West Lower Michigan	6.89%	7.80%	6.71%
North Carolina	7.37%	7.39%	6.78%

All synods showed an increase in congregational intended mission support to the synod in 2008, the largest increases in: South Dakota (increase of 1.08) and North/West Lower Michigan (increase of .91).

One synod showed an increase in congregational intended mission support to the synod in both 2008 and 2009: Nebraska.

In 2009, four synods had a lower rate of congregational intended mission support to the synod than in 2007: Southwestern Washington, Minneapolis Area, North/West Lower Michigan and North Carolina.

Summary: Overall, the project had a 17 percent success rate with this criteria since one of the six pilot synods showed an increase in congregational intended mission support to the synod during the project time frame.

Criteria: Pilot synods will:

1. Increase communication and mission interpretation within the synod.
2. Strengthen and develop leaders who communicate, interpret and financially support synod and churchwide ministries as we carry out God's mission together.
3. Utilize and develop collaborative teams that involve synod and churchwide leaders.

Criteria: The synod will determine the specific measurement criteria for the pilot and will report progress at review points as agreed upon with the point person on the churchwide staff.

Southwestern Washington Synod

As a participating synod in the BRC Pilot Synod on Mission Funding project, the Southwestern Washington Synod proposed the following:

1. To begin four to six new mission congregations by 2013; and
2. To increase mission support by one-half percent per year of the actual synod general fund receipts, moving the synod from 37 percent in 2007 to 40 percent by 2013.

There was nothing specific in the Southwestern Washington Synod proposal addressing methods for increasing communication or mission interpretation within the synod. However, EOCM staff report that this synod's participation in the pilot synod project has contributed to a strengthening of the relationship between the synod and the churchwide organization.

The outcomes for mission starts and mission support are in the process of being achieved. There are three new starts firmly underway as of the date of this report; in addition, the synod has increased its mission support by one-half percent annually beginning in 2008.

South Dakota Synod

As a participating synod in the pilot synod project, the South Dakota Synod proposed focusing first on leadership development, and second, on preparing and conducting a conference-wide annual response campaign based on a new premise of mission support.

The synod identified the following outcomes for these activities:

1. An annual increase in overall giving to congregations that exceeds inflation.
2. An accompanying increase in annual giving for mission support that exceeds inflation so that within six years overall support will have increased by 33 percent.
3. A growing awareness and appreciation of our role in God's mission through the three expressions that can be identified through the following measures:
 - a. Can members articulate at least one ministry that is supported through their mission support of the synodical and churchwide expressions?
 - b. Do rostered leaders embrace their constitutional mandate to interpret the mission of the ELCA?
 - c. Are congregations increasing their undesignated mission funding?
 - d. Do members report rising feelings of trust in synod and churchwide officials and the expression for which they work?

As shown in Table 3, average giving per member in the South Dakota Synod increased in both 2008 and 2009. Total regular giving and total designated giving each increased in 2008, but decreased in 2009. As already noted, the synod’s annual mission support increased in 2010 and is estimated to increase further in 2011.

Table 3: Trends in Congregational Giving

	2007	2008	2009
Average Giving per Member	\$467.09	\$482.94	\$485.31
Total Regular Giving	\$35,484,039	\$38,289,691	\$35,832,473
Total Designated Giving	\$8,425,043	\$8,662,037	\$8,343,982

The South Dakota Synod reports the following achievements because of the pilot synod project:

1. Developed an understanding that clarifies the deep connection between stewardship and mission through the telling of stories—THE Story (God with God’s people as told in scripture), OUR Story (What God is doing through us in congregations, synods and the churchwide organization), MY Story (What God is doing in the life of the individual disciple).
2. Developed a nine-day course that trains steward leaders to coach congregational teams through a process that fosters a narrative, holistic and intentional approach to improving the congregation’s stewardship ministry. Out of that course development, new tools were created:
 - A pro-forma planning document to guide the congregation, with coaching from the steward leader, through the planning process;
 - An assessment tool used to evaluate the congregation’s stewardship ministry and how it is doing in telling the story of what God is doing through us in congregations, synods and the churchwide organization; and
 - A plan for the 25 steward leaders who successfully completed the nine-day training program to work with 50 congregations (two each) to develop a customized year-long intentional emphasis on improving capacity in over 25 percent of the congregations of the South Dakota Synod.

The South Dakota Synod did not report about the specific measures in #3 a, b, and d, as outlined in its project outcomes.

Minneapolis Area Synod:

The Minneapolis Areas Synod had a detailed project to implement. However, staffing changes within the synod delayed project implementation, and nothing was achieved during the time frame for this project.

The Minneapolis Area Synod has been in consultation with churchwide organization staff about this project, and has been granted a one-year extension to complete its project. Some revisions to its original project proposal are expected. In addition, the Minneapolis Area Synod has applied to become part of a churchwide organization grant initiative, the Macedonia Project, with similar goals as the pilot synod project. It is possible that the synod’s efforts with respect to the pilot synod project will be combined with its efforts as part of the Macedonia Project.

Nebraska Synod

As a participating synod in the pilot synod project, the Nebraska Synod did not propose a specific project, but rather, discussed the synod's approach to increasing mission support:

Our philosophy...is that mission support is directly connected to rostered leaders and lay members in congregations understanding the work of the church as God's work that we are called to do together. Our approach to increasing mission support has been to focus on basic stewardship education through the combined effort of a lot of different programs...the best way to increase mission support is to "raise the stewardship bar" with rostered leaders and in congregations.

Of the six pilot project synods, the Nebraska Synod has the highest rate for mission support and maintained that rate through the time frame of the project.

The Nebraska Synod has been intentional in increasing its mission interpretation by enlisting over 100 mission interpreters in the synod's congregations.

North/West Lower Michigan Synod

As a participating synod in the pilot synod project, the North/West Lower Michigan Synod proposed a project with a repeating cycle in nine parts, with the goal "for each congregation to grow in awareness of itself as a vital partner in mission in its context and in the world." The nine parts included:

- Part One: Mission Support Appreciation
- Part Two: Mission Support and Growing Stewards Workshops
- Part Three: Money Leadership for Thriving Congregations (overnight retreats)
- Part Four: Three-Week Mission Support Emphasis
- Part Five: Mission Support Appreciation
- Part Six: Money Leadership for Thriving Congregations
- Part Seven: Stewardship Workshops Offered to Clusters of Congregations
- Part Eight: Pre and Post Evaluation and Ongoing Publicity
- Part Nine: Celebrate The Response and The Good Things that God Will Do Through Our Response

The measurable results outlined in the project included:

1. Participating congregations increasing their mission support by one percent of the congregation's regular giving over the period September 30, 2008 - September 30, 2010.
2. Each participating congregation that is not a mission partner as of August 31, 2008, will become a mission partner by August 31, 2010, either by means of a budget line item, a designated special offering, a covenant of mutual support through prayer or a combination of these means.
3. Identify 12 congregations who have consistently been above the synod average in mission support percentage and invite them to share their story.

The North/West Lower Michigan Synod reported that each congregation received a DVD for a three-week emphasis in every congregation in the synod in Spring 2009. The DVD included:

- A message from former DEM Clay Bates encouraging growth in discipleship and mission support;
- A sermon by Stephen Bouman and a discussion guide for group conversation;
- A sermon by Bishop Jon Schleicher;
- Stories from new and renewed ministries in the synod; and,
- A discussion of mission support consultation for congregations.

The synod reports that not all congregations used the DVD in spring 2009.

The North/West Lower Michigan Synod did not report about the specific outcomes listed in its project.

North Carolina Synod

As a participating synod in the pilot synod project, the North Carolina Synod proposed a project with the following goal:

Congregations, congregational leaders and rostered leaders will develop a better/stronger sense of ministry partnership and stewardship theologies/principles which will ultimately result in stronger financial response from individuals and congregations.

The proposed project identified a number of ways to evaluate the effectiveness of the project:

1. The number of participants in the conference events—goal of at least 80 percent of congregations and active rostered leaders participating.
2. The number of returns of annual parochial reports and support agreements—goal of reaching 90-95 percent of parochial reports and 75 percent of support agreements at the end of three years.
3. Increase in dollar amounts of mission support—goal of one-quarter of synod congregations reflecting an increase in mission support by a “significant amount” during the three-year period. Suggestions for how to define “significant amount” include:
 - a. Giving increase of at least 10 percent over last year’s mission support
 - b. Giving increase of one or more percent of regular giving in the congregation
 - c. Giving five percent of more beyond the partnership agreement in a given year
4. Increase in requests for trainers and stewardship assistance.
5. Number of individuals, rostered and lay, participating in Stewardship training—goal at the end of three years to have over 1,000 leaders participate in this project on one or more levels.

This implementation of this project was postponed, in part because the synod did not receive a grant that it intended to use to support the project. Nothing was achieved during the time frame of this project.

Summary: Overall, one synod, Southwestern Washington, met all the outcomes it identified for its project, but provided no information about outcomes related to mission interpretation. A second synod, South Dakota, met many of the outcomes for its project. Two other synods, Nebraska and North/West Lower Michigan implemented the project but did not report about specific outcomes. The final two synods, Minneapolis Area and North Carolina did not implement projects during the pilot project time frame. There were no synods that met all the criteria for these projects.

Criteria: Pilot Synods will share outcomes of the pilot with Synodical Relations for use by the ELCA Conference of Bishops and Church Council by September 30, 2010.

Southwestern Washington Synod

- No reports summarizing the outcomes have been submitted.
- Although the time frame for the pilot project has ended, the synod still considers the project active and continues to work toward its goals of new mission starts and an increased mission support percentage from the synod to the churchwide organization.

South Dakota Synod

- A report was submitted outlining the results of the pilot project.
- Although the time frame for the pilot project has ended, the synod still considers the project active and continues to work on its annual response campaign as well as continuing to work on leadership development within congregations.

Minneapolis Area Synod

- Because nothing has been implemented with respect to this project, there have been no reports about the progress or the results.
- The time frame for the pilot project has ended, but the synod has been granted a one year extension for completing its project. Its project may be combined with efforts related to the Macedonia Project.

Nebraska Synod

- No reports summarizing the outcomes have been submitted.
- The project is considered closed by the Nebraska Synod.

North/West Lower Michigan Synod

- A report was submitted outlining the contents of the DVD that was given to each congregation. The report did not include a summary of the outcomes.
- The project is considered closed by the North/West Lower Michigan Synod.

North Carolina Synod

- Because nothing has been implemented with respect to this project, there have been no reports about the progress or the results.
- The time frame for the pilot project has ended, and it is not clear whether any aspect of the pilot project will continue within the synod.

Summary: One synod, South Dakota, provided a report summarizing its outcomes as a result of the project. One synod, North/West Lower Michigan, provided a report summarizing its actions related to the project, but did not include information about the outcome of these actions. The other synods provided neither summary reports nor final status updates in the cases where the projects were delayed.

**ELCA CHURCHWIDE ORGANIZATION
2010 OPERATING RESULTS SUMMARY
FOR THE EIGHT MONTHS ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2010**

The churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America had expenses in excess of revenue of \$1.1 million in current operating funds for the eight-month period ended September 30, 2010, a favorable variance of \$1.7 million from September 2009 and favorable to the period budget by \$3.0 million.

Receipts totaled \$42.0 million for the eight-month period compared with \$49.0 million the previous year, a decrease of \$7.0 million or 14.3 percent. Expenses related to the current operating fund amounted to \$43.1 million, a decrease of \$8.8 million or 16.9 percent from September 2009.

These financial statements reflect the action of the Church Council in August 2010 to reduce the 2010 spending authorization by \$4.2 million or 6.1%. The revised 2010 Mission Support budget projects a reduction from 2009 of \$8.7 million or 14.6%. Revenue in the period was favorable to the revised budget by \$0.3 million or 0.7 percent. Expenses were below the authorized unit spending plans by \$2.7 million or 5.9 percent.

Income from congregations through synods in the form of Mission Support income after the eight-month period was in line with the revised projection at \$32.6 million, a decrease of \$5.7 million or 14.9 percent from the same period in 2009.

Other temporarily restricted and unrestricted funds available for the budgeted operations of the church amounted to \$9.4 million compared with \$10.7 million in the first eight months of 2009. Income from Vision for Mission, \$0.8 million, resulted in favorable variances to both the year-to-date budget and to September 2009. Income from investments of \$0.9 million was favorable to budget by \$0.6 million but was behind September 2009 by \$0.4 million. Bequests and trust income, \$1.2 million, and Missionary Sponsorship support, \$1.8 million, were behind budget and the same period in 2009. Other sources of income included fraternal grant support, \$1.0 million, Mission Investment Fund, \$1.0 million; endowment income, \$1.6 million; and other income of \$1.1 million.

Total contributions to ELCA World Hunger for the eight months were \$7.6 million. This is unfavorable to the same eight-month period in fiscal 2009 by \$1.7 million or 17.9 percent. Over the same period, ELCA members contributed \$9.7 million for the ELCA Disaster Response, primarily in support of the Haiti earthquake appeal which received gifts of \$8.0 million. This compares positively to \$0.8 million in revenue for the same period in 2009.

Contingency plans for both current fund operations and World Hunger programs are in place. Income will be monitored closely between now and year-end to determine when and whether any funding on hold as part of the contingency plan can be released to partners.

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EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
CURRENT OPERATING FUNDS
SUMMARY OF REVENUE AND EXPENSES
(In Thousands)
For the Period Ended September 30, 2010

	2010	2010	2009	Year-to-Date Variance	
	ACTUAL	BUDGET	ACTUAL	ACTUAL	CURRENT YEAR
				vs BUDGET	vs PRIOR YEAR
				Favorable/(Unfav)	Favorable/(Unfav)
REVENUE					
UNRESTRICTED					
Mission Support	\$ 32,587	\$ 32,491	\$ 38,293	\$ 96	\$ (5,706)
Other	4,050	3,079	4,726	971	(676)
Total Unrestricted	<u>36,637</u>	<u>35,570</u>	<u>43,019</u>	<u>1,067</u>	<u>(6,382)</u>
TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED					
Designated Gifts	3,008	3,170	3,190	(162)	(182)
Other	2,319	2,930	2,768	(612)	(449)
Total Restricted	<u>5,327</u>	<u>6,101</u>	<u>5,959</u>	<u>(773)</u>	<u>(631)</u>
TOTAL REVENUE	\$ 41,964	\$ 41,670	\$ 48,977	\$ 294	\$ (7,013)
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 43,060	\$ 45,765	\$ 51,811	\$ 2,705	\$ 8,751
NET	<u>\$ (1,096)</u>	<u>\$ (4,095)</u>	<u>\$ (2,834)</u>	<u>\$ 2,999</u>	<u>\$ 1,738</u>

**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
 CURRENT OPERATING FUNDS
 REVENUE SUMMARY
 For the Period Ended September 30, 2010**

			Year-To-Date Variance		
	2010 ACTUAL	2010 BUDGET	2009 ACTUAL	ACTUAL vs. BUDGET Favorable/(Unfavor)	CURRENT YEAR vs. PRIOR YEAR Favorable/(Unfavor)
UNRESTRICTED					
Mission Support	\$ 32,586,534	\$ 32,490,942	\$ 38,292,777	\$ 95,592	\$ (5,706,243)
Vision for Mission	795,688	560,000	401,129	235,688	394,559
Investment Income	918,657	339,995	1,339,625	578,662	(420,968)
Bequests and Trusts	881,385	733,336	1,599,644	148,049	(718,259)
Endowment	558,522	556,011	595,205	2,511	(36,684)
Rent	620,645	659,738	661,836	(39,093)	(41,191)
Other	275,369	229,620	128,569	45,749	146,800
Total Unrestricted	<u>36,636,799</u>	<u>35,569,642</u>	<u>43,018,785</u>	<u>1,067,157</u>	<u>(6,381,986)</u>
TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED					
Missionary Sponsorship	1,781,663	1,936,880	1,891,151	(155,217)	(109,488)
Bequests and Trusts	323,020	933,333	767,585	(610,313)	(444,565)
Endowment	995,803	997,007	1,060,698	(1,204)	(64,895)
Unit-Designated Gifts	226,809	233,333	174,108	(6,524)	52,701
Mission Investment Fund	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,125,000	-	(125,000)
Grants	1,000,000	1,000,000	940,000	-	60,000
Total Restricted	<u>5,327,294</u>	<u>6,100,553</u>	<u>5,958,542</u>	<u>(773,259)</u>	<u>(631,248)</u>
TOTAL REVENUE	<u>\$ 41,964,094</u>	<u>\$ 41,670,195</u>	<u>\$ 48,977,327</u>	<u>\$ 293,899</u>	<u>\$ (7,013,233)</u>

PRELIMINARY AND UNAUDITED

**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
 CURRENT OPERATING FUNDS
 ACTUAL EXPENSES VS. SPENDING AUTHORIZATION
 For the Period Ended September 30, 2010**

	2010 ACTUAL EXPENSES	2010 SPENDING AUTHORIZATION	Variance Favorable (Unfavorable)	Percent of Actual to Budget
PROGRAM UNITS				
Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission	11,304,312	12,600,371	1,296,059	89.71%
Global Mission	8,600,263	8,785,248	184,985	97.89%
Multicultural Ministries	593,175	745,160	151,985	79.60%
Church in Society	1,633,362	1,723,836	90,474	94.75%
Vocation and Education	6,051,587	6,339,935	288,348	95.45%
OFFICES				
Presiding Bishop	3,440,026	3,751,455	311,429	91.70%
Treasurer	3,979,238	4,142,966	163,728	96.05%
Secretary	2,093,852	2,045,636	(48,216)	102.36%
SERVICE UNITS				
Communication Services	1,441,818	1,627,478	185,660	88.59%
Development Services	903,055	831,939	(71,116)	108.55%
OTHER				
General Treasury	79,589	106,103	26,514	75.01%
Retiree Minimum Health Obligation	1,666,667	1,666,667	-	100.00%
Depreciation	1,253,780	1,358,668	104,888	92.28%
Strategic Initiatives	19,043	40,000	20,957	47.61%
TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>\$ 43,059,767</u>	<u>\$ 45,765,462</u>	<u>\$ 2,705,695</u>	<u>94.09%</u>

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
SYNOCDICAL REMITTANCES
 for the period ending
 September 30, 2010

MISSION SUPPORT										OTHER REMITTANCES THROUGH SYNODS				
		2009	2010 MS PLAN		CURRENT MONTH		YEAR-TO-DATE			\$ VARIANCE		World	Missionary	Other
		MS%	AMOUNT	MS%	2010	2009	2010	2009	% Vary	Monthly	Y-T-D	Hunger	Sponsorship	
Alaska	1A	38.00%	\$ 159,120	39.00%	\$ 12,399	\$ 13,419	87,929	\$ 109,227	(19.5%)	(\$1,021)	(\$21,298)	\$6,792	\$365	\$13,065
N.W. Wash	1B	45.50%	627,900	45.50%	45,512	46,450	377,298	403,372	(6.5%)	(938)	(26,074)	98,987	12,930	93,742
S.W. Wash	1C	38.00%	423,500	38.50%	31,521	35,629	219,466	286,124	(23.3%)	(4,108)	(66,658)	58,541	5,530	45,511
E. Wash / Id	1D	39.00%	229,500	30.00%	-	19,934	127,563	204,944	(37.8%)	(19,934)	(77,382)	17,712	8,435	24,834
Oregon	1E	42.00%	420,000	42.00%	28,215	28,952	239,275	298,637	(19.9%)	(737)	(59,361)	67,009	7,748	75,344
Montana	1F	39.40%	414,750	39.50%	26,034	33,289	227,855	272,707	(16.4%)	(7,255)	(44,853)	51,810	17,588	57,626
Total Region 1		40.81%	2,274,770	39.89%	143,680	177,674	1,279,386	1,575,011	(18.8%)	(33,994)	(295,626)	300,851	52,596	310,122
Sierra Pacific	2A	51.00%	1,081,500	51.50%	65,886	88,331	554,003	672,039	(17.6%)	(22,446)	(118,036)	48,609	15,665	13,100
SW California	2B	51.00%	686,000	49.00%	53,852	39,296	336,451	391,273	(14.0%)	14,556	(54,822)	93,585	19,262	189,731
Pacifica	2C	55.00%	832,000	52.00%	70,635	84,074	500,734	652,746	(23.3%)	(13,439)	(152,011)	61,778	15,238	132,429
Grand Canyon	2D	51.00%	950,000	50.00%	63,014	74,850	583,546	760,157	(23.2%)	(11,836)	(176,610)	80,106	20,364	79,613
Rocky Mtn.	2E	50.00%	1,258,750	50.00%	106,009	116,238	837,044	900,070	(7.0%)	(10,229)	(63,026)	161,745	27,557	248,601
Total Region 2		51.41%	4,808,250	50.52%	359,395	402,790	2,811,779	3,376,284	(16.7%)	(43,394)	(564,505)	445,822	98,087	663,474
W. No. Dak	3A	41.49%	379,950	42.50%	29,356	26,856	213,543	224,448	(4.9%)	2,500	(10,905)	18,639	25,877	16,597
E. No. Dak	3B	41.00%	440,000	40.00%	27,076	35,459	208,243	266,640	(21.9%)	(8,383)	(58,398)	23,436	24,549	59,042
South Dak	3C	42.00%	727,413	43.00%	58,004	65,968	449,775	566,636	(20.6%)	(7,964)	(116,861)	87,838	33,804	78,428
N.W. Minn	3D	51.00%	765,000	51.00%	41,546	70,066	365,675	466,216	(21.6%)	(28,520)	(100,541)	12,805	28,482	83,761
N.E. Minn	3E	49.00%	632,100	49.00%	45,486	53,890	349,378	383,301	(8.9%)	(8,403)	(33,923)	84,609	22,163	59,714
S.W. Minn	3F	52.50%	1,162,350	52.50%	75,018	85,487	618,523	738,077	(16.2%)	(10,469)	(119,554)	83,637	99,997	95,086
Mpls Area	3G	55.00%	1,870,000	55.00%	104,691	95,086	945,256	1,012,981	(6.7%)	9,605	(67,724)	129,949	50,120	117,429
St. Paul Area	3H	50.00%	1,070,000	50.00%	83,267	89,587	607,481	656,688	(7.5%)	(6,320)	(49,207)	30,529	37,124	67,271
S.E. Minn	3I	52.50%	1,001,175	52.50%	68,774	71,242	576,924	636,134	(9.3%)	(2,468)	(59,210)	68,266	41,170	88,596
Total Region 3		49.63%	8,047,988	49.87%	533,219	593,641	4,334,798	4,951,121	(12.4%)	(60,422)	(616,323)	539,708	363,286	665,924

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
 SYNODICAL REMITTANCES
 for the period ending
 September 30, 2010

MISSION SUPPORT										OTHER REMITTANCES THROUGH SYNODS				
		2009 MS%	2010 MS PLAN		CURRENT MONTH		YEAR-TO-DATE			\$ VARIANCE		World Hunger	Missionary Sponsorship	Other
			AMOUNT	MS%	2010	2009	2010	2009	% Vary	Monthly	Y-T-D			
Nebraska	4A	57.00%	2,000,000	57.00%	132,794	183,322	1,273,248	1,536,350	(17.1%)	(50,528)	(263,102)	96,984	5,009	114,599
Central States	4B	53.00%	930,818	51.00%	72,860	91,845	623,305	732,190	(14.9%)	(18,985)	(108,885)	64,692	14,297	51,478
Ark/Ok	4C	42.70%	238,463	40.20%	21,652	18,956	142,910	159,562	(10.4%)	2,696	(16,652)	15,086	2,777	53,266
N Tx / N La	4D	46.00%	662,700	47.00%	39,426	52,554	351,441	409,146	(14.1%)	(13,128)	(57,705)	34,887	8,981	31,309
S.W. Tex	4E	55.00%	737,000	50.00%	44,785	63,217	498,912	697,792	(28.5%)	(18,431)	(198,880)	77,032	2,648	58,573
Tx.-La. Gulf Coas	4F	50.00%	750,000	50.00%	48,827	63,790	439,153	490,679	(10.5%)	(14,963)	(51,526)	53,850	13,511	15,562
Total Region 4		52.87%	5,318,981	51.59%	360,344	473,683	3,328,969	4,025,720	(17.3%)	(113,339)	(696,751)	342,531	47,223	324,787
Metro Chicago	5A	55.10%	1,831,195	55.00%	130,990	172,399	1,117,799	1,217,208	(8.2%)	(41,409)	(99,409)	134,077	33,346	91,494
No. Illinois	5B	55.00%	1,306,250	55.00%	102,136	96,471	824,073	911,158	(9.6%)	5,665	(87,085)	94,677	37,527	70,533
Gen. So. Ill	5C	56.00%	924,000	56.00%	78,036	82,854	580,098	668,202	(13.2%)	(4,818)	(88,104)	81,723	23,907	65,800
S.E. Iowa	5D	53.50%	1,566,480	53.50%	93,097	123,895	863,677	1,033,010	(16.4%)	(30,798)	(169,333)	146,540	12,531	44,142
West Iowa	5E	49.50%	351,048	35.10%	17,500	17,500	140,000	315,000	(55.6%)	-	(175,000)	48,846	21,279	48,911
N.E. Iowa	5F	42.00%	680,000	42.50%	24,602	32,700	189,126	360,548	(47.5%)	(8,098)	(171,422)	94,569	36,585	87,235
N. Great Lakes	5G	53.50%	450,000	50.00%	33,317	31,667	261,301	318,265	(17.9%)	1,650	(56,964)	56,942	7,006	80,986
NW of Wisc	5H	58.00%	805,750	55.00%	52,937	59,577	448,304	474,859	(5.6%)	(6,640)	(26,555)	34,174	41,326	40,920
E.C. Wisc	5I	55.00%	885,398	55.00%	71,790	69,312	525,321	576,835	(8.9%)	2,479	(51,514)	95,345	45,132	159,123
Grtr Milwaukee	5J	61.00%	1,341,733	60.10%	96,821	111,296	866,775	896,630	(3.3%)	(14,475)	(29,855)	80,111	17,246	80,232
SC of Wisc	5K	57.90%	911,200	55.00%	58,429	64,561	483,568	564,448	(14.3%)	(6,131)	(80,880)	82,998	16,345	156,609
LaCrosse (W)	5L	55.00%	462,000	55.00%	-	37,151	198,306	289,372	(31.5%)	(37,151)	(91,066)	36,044	2,207	46,489
Total Region 5		54.63%	11,515,054	53.34%	759,656	899,383	6,498,349	7,625,535	(14.8%)	(139,727)	(1,127,186)	986,046	294,437	972,473
SE Mich	6A	44.00%	690,000	45.00%	37,819	53,060	352,642	436,619	(19.2%)	(15,240)	(83,978)	19,104	8,921	78,398
NW Lower Mich	6B	51.00%	771,000	50.00%	56,317	67,225	468,822	564,873	(17.0%)	(10,907)	(96,051)	76,801	10,423	23,196
Ind / Ky	6C	51.00%	1,133,000	51.50%	87,277	115,861	630,492	799,076	(21.1%)	(28,584)	(168,585)	111,939	8,354	117,312
N.W. Ohio	6D	51.00%	1,093,440	51.00%	82,968	99,594	610,599	704,114	(13.3%)	(16,626)	(93,515)	71,162	36,257	95,829
N.E. Ohio	6E	50.00%	869,750	49.00%	68,606	84,734	571,746	670,190	(14.7%)	(16,128)	(98,445)	38,933	5,524	15,900
S. Ohio	6F	50.00%	800,000	40.00%	40,000	74,117	465,653	681,496	(31.7%)	(34,117)	(215,843)	64,036	11,380	158,323
Total Region 6		50.92%	5,357,190	47.86%	372,987	494,591	3,099,953	3,856,369	(19.6%)	(121,603)	(756,417)	381,976	80,858	488,959

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
 SYNODICAL REMITTANCES
 for the period ending
 September 30, 2010

MISSION SUPPORT											OTHER REMITTANCES THROUGH SYNODS			
		2009 MS%	2010 MS PLAN		CURRENT MONTH		YEAR-TO-DATE			\$ VARIANCE		World Hunger	Missionary Sponsorship	Other
			AMOUNT	MS%	2010	2009	2010	2009	% Vary	Monthly	Y-T-D			
New Jersey	7A	50.00%	1,150,000	50.00%	64,818	83,794	640,988	699,226	(8.3%)	(18,976)	(58,239)	74,679	6,333	136,593
New England	7B	55.00%	1,115,053	54.00%	74,743	91,907	668,404	737,311	(9.3%)	(17,164)	(68,907)	39,977	5,241	52,012
Metro NY	7C	47.50%	648,000	48.00%	41,066	41,088	310,156	342,678	(9.5%)	(22)	(32,521)	21,757	3,100	34,853
Upstate NY	7D	48.00%	668,820	47.10%	55,072	54,375	380,511	426,444	(10.8%)	697	(45,933)	76,792	9,567	50,647
N.E. Penn	7E	53.00%	1,404,000	52.00%	109,127	118,016	872,823	888,467	(1.8%)	(8,889)	(15,644)	171,862	18,400	142,473
S.E. Penn	7F	53.50%	1,297,375	53.50%	112,754	107,597	798,831	824,341	(3.1%)	5,158	(25,510)	75,503	11,980	102,854
Slovak Zion	7G	30.00%	36,000	30.00%	984	-	12,683	18,000	(29.5%)	984	(5,317)	2,016	889	7,662
Total Region 7		51.51%	6,319,248	51.04%	458,565	496,777	3,684,396	3,936,468	(6.4%)	(38,212)	(252,071)	462,586	55,510	527,094
N.W. Penn	8A	49.50%	468,225	50.00%	36,947	36,904	280,794	281,507	(0.3%)	43	(713)	70,417	5,625	26,430
S.W. Penn	8B	55.00%	1,100,000	55.00%	89,157	96,405	612,552	792,169	(22.7%)	(7,249)	(179,617)	69,126	25,841	88,470
Allegheny	8C	50.00%	450,000	50.00%	32,630	38,584	241,810	311,794	(22.4%)	(5,954)	(69,984)	47,915	29,011	59,523
Lower Susq	8D	50.00%	1,610,000	46.00%	125,608	146,661	975,451	1,129,642	(13.6%)	(21,053)	(154,191)	193,833	54,058	103,367
Upper Susq	8E	50.00%	601,000	50.00%	41,012	53,341	339,793	362,161	(6.2%)	(12,329)	(22,368)	49,776	10,198	48,607
Del / Md	8F	53.00%	1,245,500	53.00%	82,021	86,735	713,880	767,024	(6.9%)	(4,714)	(53,144)	53,486	8,028	50,700
Metro DC	8G	55.00%	1,045,000	55.00%	64,618	108,380	597,376	617,823	(3.3%)	(43,763)	(20,447)	41,253	12,940	72,189
W Virg-W Mlyd	8H	51.50%	255,683	45.00%	21,300	23,515	170,400	220,416	(22.7%)	(2,215)	(50,016)	19,302	1,080	37,024
Total Region 8		52.03%	6,775,408	50.73%	493,293	590,526	3,932,057	4,482,537	(12.3%)	(97,232)	(550,480)	545,109	146,782	486,310
Virginia	9A	50.60%	628,949	35.10%	58,237	93,289	442,193	703,117	(37.1%)	(35,052)	(260,924)	91,815	3,733	64,919
N. Carolina	9B	39.89%	1,865,000	39.26%	76,613	83,333	813,356	1,136,400	(28.4%)	(6,720)	(323,044)	103,583	9,875	69,553
S. Carolina	9C	45.00%	1,416,435	45.00%	101,341	105,054	878,340	840,432	4.5%	(3,713)	37,908	95,934	39,572	229,521
Southeastern	9D	50.00%	1,050,000	50.00%	87,741	88,192	722,148	873,724	(17.3%)	(451)	(151,576)	69,372	24,773	95,096
Florida-Bahamas	9E	51.00%	1,144,618	51.13%	83,413	99,400	737,012	895,255	(17.7%)	(15,987)	(158,243)	85,675	14,911	45,317
Caribbean	9F	15.00%	30,000	12.50%	2,500	-	23,799	14,804	60.8%	2,500	8,995	838		
Total Region 9		45.77%	6,135,002	43.00%	409,845	469,268	3,616,847	4,463,732	(19.0%)	(59,424)	(846,884)	447,217	92,864	504,407
Total		50.52%	\$ 56,551,891	49.39%	\$ 3,890,985	\$ 4,598,332	\$ 32,586,534	\$ 38,292,777	(14.9%)	(\$707,348)	\$ (5,706,243)	\$ 4,451,846	\$ 1,231,642	\$ 4,943,549

**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
 WORLD HUNGER APPEAL
 SUMMARY OF REVENUE AND EXPENSE
 For the Period Ended September 30, 2010**

	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Income and Expense Variances</u> <u>Favorable (Unfavorable)</u>	
			<u>Actual Vs. Budget</u>	<u>Current Vs. Previous Year</u>
Beginning Balance	\$ 2,631,516			
Income:				
Through Synods	\$ 4,194,660	\$ 5,250,000	\$ (1,055,340)	\$ (865,428)
Direct Giving	2,759,802	3,033,333	(273,531)	(624,728)
Endowments	336,834	435,000	(98,166)	(11,749)
Bequests, Miscellaneous	348,692	360,000	(11,308)	(161,668)
Total Income	<u>7,639,988</u>	<u>9,078,333</u>	<u>(1,438,345)</u>	<u>(1,663,573)</u>
Expense:				
Global Mission	5,463,388	6,051,178	587,790	187,683
Church in Society	1,950,918	2,447,475	496,557	(86,289)
Vocation and Education	107,252	120,825	13,573	(16,519)
Development Services	831,926	1,138,707	306,781	(93,552)
Total Expense	<u>8,353,484</u>	<u>9,758,185</u>	<u>1,404,701</u>	<u>(8,677)</u>
Net	<u>\$ (713,496)</u>	<u>\$ (679,852)</u>	<u>\$ (33,644)</u>	<u>\$ (1,672,250)</u>
Ending Balance	<u>\$ 1,918,020</u>			

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EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
Consolidating Statement of Financial Position

	Churchwide Operations	Endowment Funds	Deferred Gift Funds	Total September 2010	Total September 2009
ASSETS					
Cash and Cash Equivalents	10,470,295	685,379	5,358,095	16,513,769	9,806,521
Cash and Securities Held as Collateral for Securities Loaned	-	-	30,406,783	30,406,783	33,142,001
Payables Under Securities Loan Agreements	-	-	(30,406,783)	(30,406,783)	(33,142,001)
Investments	37,130,837	368,729,722	175,647,836	581,508,395	538,442,401
Accounts Receivable	5,602,079	-	166,232	5,768,311	6,607,199
Notes Receivable	4,642,054	-	1,131,550	5,773,604	3,973,657
Due from Affiliates	1,586,637	-	-	1,586,637	2,652,086
Interest Receivable	277,785	-	1,024,260	1,302,045	1,067,600
Advances and Other Assets	2,484,767	-	12,284	2,497,051	2,317,686
Real Estate Investments	74,961	-	-	74,961	74,961
Beneficial Interest in Outside Trusts	-	14,301,929	1,244,769	15,546,698	13,974,920
Cash Surrender Value of Life Insurance	1,375,582	3,499,810	-	4,875,392	4,544,920
Property, Plant & Equipment	67,314,428	-	130,080	67,444,508	65,047,451
Accumulated Depreciation/Amortization	(38,018,332)	-	-	(38,018,332)	(36,089,906)
Other Non-Current Assets	925,649	-	-	925,649	959,618
TOTAL ASSETS	93,866,742	387,216,840	184,715,106	665,798,688	613,379,114
LIABILITIES					
Accounts Payable	1,958,833	131,867	143,027	2,233,727	4,284,725
Mortgage and Notes Payable	3,094,340	-	-	3,094,340	4,609,550
Accrued Liabilities	928,005	-	9,666	937,671	2,103,715
Due to Related Organizations	-	797,349	412,084	1,209,433	2,043,686
Deferred Revenue	121,584	217,591	1,235,222	1,574,397	1,430,519
Annuities Payable	-	-	105,039,260	105,039,260	82,629,756
Funds Held for Others in Perpetuity	-	42,499,476	-	42,499,476	37,013,172
Funds Held for Others	88,019	146,704,968	46,796,188	193,589,175	170,146,890
Total Liabilities	6,190,781	190,351,251	153,635,447	350,177,479	304,262,013
NET ASSETS					
Unrestricted/Undesignated	38,846,433	12,726,117	820,058	52,392,608	44,003,702
Designated	13,674,650	-	-	13,674,650	15,496,651
Temporarily Restricted	35,154,878	51,773,867	16,779,957	103,708,702	107,925,007
Permanently Restricted	-	132,365,605	13,479,644	145,845,249	141,691,741
Total Net Assets	87,675,961	196,865,589	31,079,659	315,621,209	309,117,101
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	93,866,742	387,216,840	184,715,106	665,798,688	613,379,114

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
Statement of Financial Position
Churchwide Operations

	September 2010	September 2009
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
ASSETS		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	10,470,295	3,457,942
Investments	37,130,837	34,829,049
Accounts Receivable	5,602,079	6,406,246
Notes Receivable	4,642,054	3,068,657
Due from Affiliates	1,586,637	2,652,086
Interest Receivable	277,785	-
Advances and Other Assets	2,484,767	2,305,401
Real Estate Investments	74,961	74,961
Cash Surrender Value of Life Insurance	1,375,582	1,545,744
Property, Plant & Equipment	67,314,428	64,955,769
Accumulated Depreciation/Amortization	(38,018,332)	(36,089,906)
Other Non-Current Assets	925,649	959,618
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>93,866,742</u>	<u>84,165,567</u>
LIABILITIES		
Accounts Payable	1,958,833	2,287,468
Mortgage and Notes Payable	3,094,340	4,609,550
Accrued Liabilities	928,005	2,033,542
Funds Held for Others	88,019	59,073
Deferred Revenue	121,584	16,584
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Total Liabilities	<u>6,190,781</u>	<u>9,006,217</u>
NET ASSETS		
Unrestricted/Undesignated	38,846,433	32,837,455
Designated	13,674,650	15,496,651
Restricted	35,154,878	26,825,244
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Total Net Assets	<u>87,675,961</u>	<u>75,159,350</u>
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	<u>93,866,742</u>	<u>84,165,567</u>

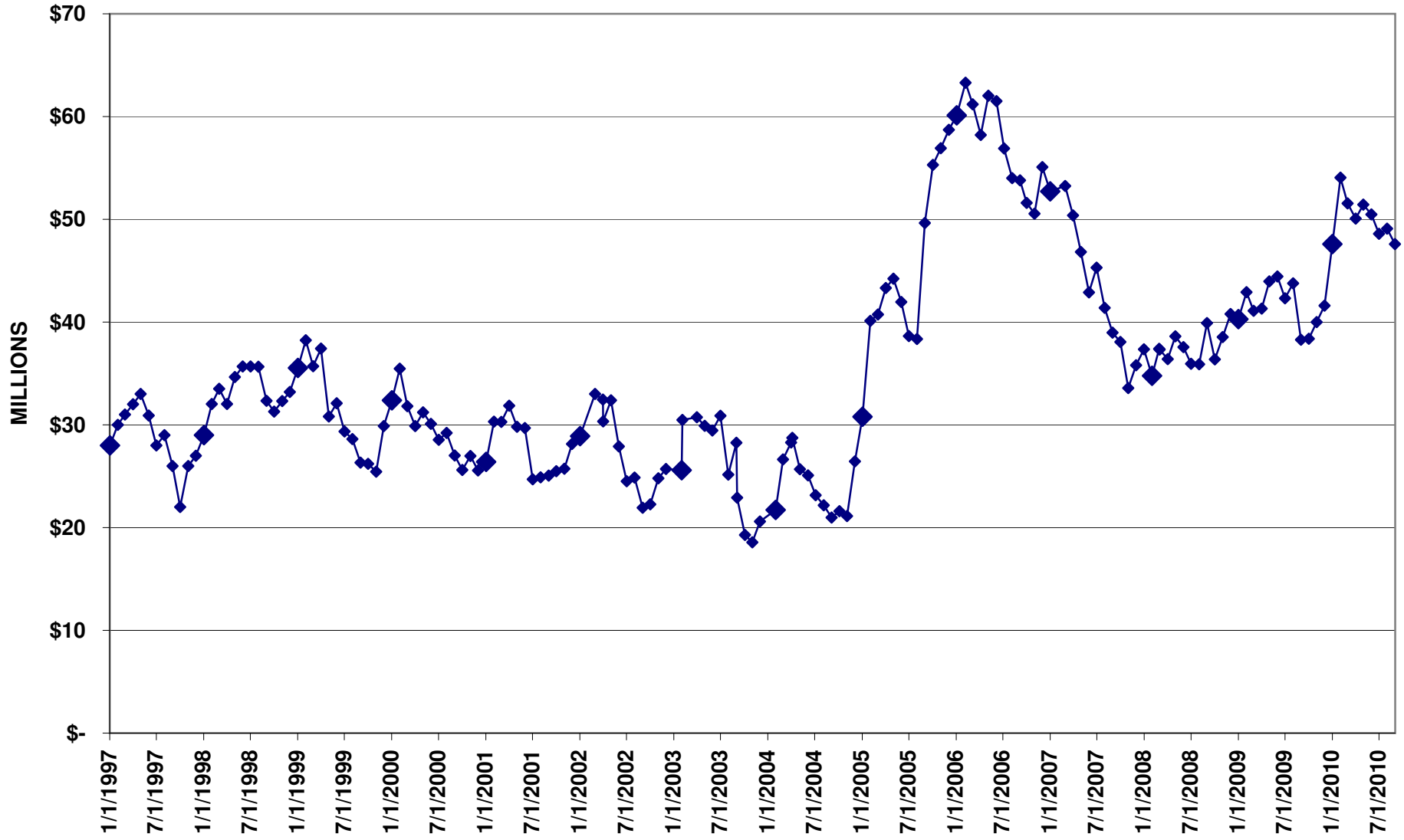
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
Statement of Financial Position
Endowment Funds

	<u>September 2010</u>	<u>September 2009</u>
ASSETS		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	685,379	(112,943)
Investments	368,729,722	326,456,326
Accounts Receivable	-	-
Beneficial Interest in Outside Trusts	14,301,929	12,846,132
Cash Surrender Value of Life Insurance	3,499,810	2,999,176
	<u>387,216,840</u>	<u>342,188,691</u>
LIABILITIES		
Accounts Payable	131,867	234,182
Due to Affiliates	797,349	2,007,970
Deferred Revenue	217,591	192,041
Funds Held for Others in Perpetuity	42,499,476	37,013,172
Funds Held For Others	146,704,968	124,229,903
Total Liabilities	<u>190,351,251</u>	<u>163,677,268</u>
NET ASSETS		
Unrestricted	12,726,117	3,694,736
Temporarily Restricted	51,773,867	45,059,231
Permanently Restricted	132,365,605	129,757,456
Total Net Assets	<u>196,865,589</u>	<u>178,511,423</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	<u>387,216,840</u>	<u>342,188,691</u>

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
Statement of Financial Position
Deferred Gift Funds

	<u>September 2010</u>	<u>September 2009</u>
ASSETS		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	5,358,095	6,461,522
Cash and Securities Held as Collateral for Securities Loaned	30,406,783	33,142,001
Payables Under Securities Loan Agreements	(30,406,783)	(33,142,001)
Investments	175,647,836	177,157,026
Accounts Receivable	166,232	200,953
Notes Receivable	1,131,550	905,000
Prepaid Expenses and Other Assets	12,284	12,285
Interest Receivable	1,024,260	1,067,600
Beneficial Interest in Perpetual Trusts	1,244,769	1,128,788
Property, Plant & Equipment	130,080	91,682
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>184,715,106</u>	<u>187,024,856</u>
LIABILITIES		
Accounts Payable	143,027	1,763,075
Due to Affiliates	412,084	35,716
Other Liabilities	9,666	11,100
Deferred Revenue	1,235,222	1,221,894
Annuities Payable	105,039,260	82,629,756
Funds Held for Others	46,796,188	45,916,987
Total Liabilities	<u>153,635,447</u>	<u>131,578,528</u>
NET ASSETS		
Unrestricted	820,058	7,471,511
Temporarily Restricted	16,779,957	36,040,532
Permanently Restricted	13,479,644	11,934,285
Total Net Assets	<u>31,079,659</u>	<u>55,446,328</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	<u>184,715,106</u>	<u>187,024,856</u>

Cash and Short Term Investments 1997-2010



**SUMMARY OF REVENUE, EXPENSE AND NET ASSETS FOR ALL FUNDS
 FOR THE PERIOD ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2010**

	Current Funds	Designated Funds				Restricted Funds				Total All Funds
		Youth Gathering	The Lutheran	Other	Total Designated	World Hunger (1)	Disaster Response	Other	Total Restricted	
Revenue	\$41,964,094	\$135	\$1,997,661	\$909,461	\$2,907,257	\$8,172,943	\$9,656,549	\$3,266,323	\$21,095,815	\$65,967,166
Expense	<u>43,059,767</u>	<u>538,296</u>	<u>1,783,425</u>	<u>629,979</u>	<u>2,951,700</u>	<u>8,884,098</u>	<u>3,396,705</u>	<u>\$4,303,193</u>	<u>16,583,996</u>	<u>62,595,463</u>
Net Revenue In Excess of Expense	(\$1,095,673)	(\$538,161)	\$214,236	\$279,482	(\$44,443)	(\$711,155)	\$6,259,844	(\$1,036,870)	\$4,511,819	\$3,371,703
Beginning Net Assets	39,942,106	3,354,709	106,868	10,257,516	13,719,093	4,037,083	12,337,808	14,268,168	30,643,059	84,304,258
Ending Net Assets	<u>\$38,846,433</u>	<u>\$2,816,548</u>	<u>\$321,104</u>	<u>\$10,536,998</u>	<u>\$13,674,650</u>	<u>\$3,325,928</u>	<u>\$18,597,652</u>	<u>\$13,231,298</u>	<u>\$35,154,878</u>	<u>\$87,675,961</u>

(1) Includes designated World Hunger programs.

2010 Capital Projects
As of September 30, 2010

<i>Type</i>	<i>PROJECT DESCRIPTION</i>	<i>JOB KEY</i>	<i>Original Budget</i>	<i>Projects Approved</i>	<i>Expenses YTD</i>	<i>Project Balance</i>	<i>Unallocated Category Budget</i>
	Computer Software and Systems (Non PC) 001	Annual Budget	\$1,630,000				1,630,000
	Communications/Collaboration Suite Upgrade	01-10001-001		216,770	146,648	70,122	1,413,230
	Integrated Data - Phase I & II for revenue integr	01-10002-001		725,000	684,450	40,550	688,230
	IT Service Management System	01-10004-001		79,500	58,100	21,400	608,730
	"Living Lutheran" Online Member Destination	01-10006-001		59,500	29,750	29,750	549,230
	Church Council Soundsystem Upgrade	01-10009-001		112,250	51,688	60,562	436,980
	Deferred Gift System	01-10012-001		43,000		43,000	393,980
	Commvault License Conversion	01-10016-001		49,500		49,500	344,480
	ECIS Phase II	01-10017-001		495,000		495,000	(150,520)
	HRIS System and Migration	01-10018-001		109,000		109,000	(259,520)
	LDR.org re-development	01-10019-001					(259,520)
	Adobe Creative Suite Update	01-10020-001		5,155		5,155	(264,675)
	Data Network Update	01-10021-001		244,775		244,775	(509,450)
	Unit Cubicle Configurations 002	Annual Budget	10,000				10,000
	Equipment Purchases 003	Annual Budget	268,250				268,250
	Postage Tracking System	01-10022-003		15,265		15,265	252,985
	Building/Complex Maintenance 004	Annual Budget	1,741,750				1,741,750
	Computer Room Cooling	01-10003-004		10,500	10,200	300	1,731,250
	Floor Security Card Access	01-10005-004		35,850	24,092	11,758	1,695,400
	Variable Frequency Drives	01-10007-004		57,915		57,915	1,637,485
	Generator fencing and landscaping	01-10008-004		11,565		11,565	1,625,920
	Archives sidewalk and loading dock	01-10010-004		5,010	4,830	180	1,620,910
	Computer Room HVAC Replacement	01-10011-004		273,165	87,187	185,978	1,347,745
	Augsburg Room	01-10013-004		75,000	45,391	29,609	1,272,745
	Parking Garage Gates	01-10014-004		26,730		26,730	1,246,015
	Lutheran Center Roof	01-10015-004		750,000		750,000	496,015
	Tenant Lease Allowances 005	Annual Budget	350,000				350,000
	New Building Purchases 006	Annual Budget	-				-
	Contingency	Annual Budget	-				-
	Total Available		\$4,000,000	\$3,400,450	\$1,142,337	\$2,258,113	609,550

Previously Approved Projects Not Yet Completed

		Original Amount	Unspent Balance	Expenses 2010	Project Balance	
COGNOS Upgrade	01-07012-001	30,000	1,100		1,100	Closed
IFAS 7i Web-Based Upgrade	01-08007-001	147,000	27,075	3,018	24,057	Closed
SAN and SQL Hardware	01-08017-001	200,000	4,504	2,899	1,605	Closed
Data Center Server Refresh	01-09001-001	283,500	13,811	13,703	108	Closed
IT Disaster Recovery Plan	01-09002-001	291,420	23,164	33,335	(10,171)	Closed-Overage ok
Integrated Data	01-09005-001	1,000,000	14,652	14,652	0	Closed
Conference Room Audio/Visual	01-09006-004	47,695	12,504		12,504	
Total Other Previous Year Projects		<u>1,999,615</u>	<u>96,811</u>	<u>67,608</u>	<u>29,203</u>	
Total 2010 Expenses				<u><u>1,209,944</u></u>		

2011 Income Estimate
With 2010 Revised Estimates

	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	
	Revised Estimate	CWA Total	Revised Total
Current Fund			
Unrestricted:			
Mission Support	\$51,000,000	\$62,500,000	\$48,000,000
Vision for Mission	1,200,000	1,000,000	1,300,000
Investment Income	600,000	1,000,000	600,000
Bequests & Trusts	1,100,000	1,100,000	1,100,000
Endowment	742,000	644,600	748,000
Rent	900,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
Other	326,000	400,000	339,500
Total Unrestricted	<u>\$55,868,000</u>	<u>\$67,644,600</u>	<u>\$53,087,500</u>
Temporarily Restricted:			
Missionary Support	3,650,000	3,800,000	3,700,000
Bequests and Trusts	1,400,000	1,400,000	1,400,000
Endowment	1,332,000	1,233,400	1,627,000
Unit Designated	350,000	400,000	300,000
Mission Investment Fund	1,500,000	1,500,000	1,500,000
Grants	1,000,000	800,000	1,000,000
Total Temporarily Restricted	<u>\$9,232,000</u>	<u>\$9,133,400</u>	<u>\$9,527,000</u>
Total Current Funds	<u>\$65,100,000</u>	<u>\$76,778,000</u>	<u>\$62,614,500</u>
World Hunger			
Gifts:			
Through Synods	\$ 10,400,000	\$ 11,300,000	8,900,000
Through Direct Giving	7,300,000	6,750,000	7,000,000
Endowment	500,000	450,000	500,000
Bequests and Misc.	500,000	500,000	600,000
Total World Hunger	<u>\$18,700,000</u>	<u>\$19,000,000</u>	<u>\$17,000,000</u>
Total	<u>\$83,800,000</u>	<u>\$95,778,000</u>	<u>\$79,614,500</u>

**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
 2011 Expenditure Proposal**

	Current Fund	World Hunger	Total
Congregational and Synodical Mission	\$26,515,000	\$2,618,550	\$29,133,550
Global Mission	12,170,000	12,061,200	24,231,200
Mission Advancement	4,780,000	2,320,250	7,100,250
Office of the Presiding Bishop	4,626,600		4,626,600
Office of the Secretary	3,190,500		3,190,500
Office of the Treasurer	5,867,000		5,867,000
General Treasury			
Retiree Minimum Health Obligation	2,500,000		2,500,000
Depreciation	2,037,900		2,037,900
Strategic Initiative Fund	114,540		114,540
Other	812,960		812,960
	<u>\$62,614,500</u>	<u>\$17,000,000</u>	<u>\$79,614,500</u>

2012-2013 Income Estimate

With 2010-2011 Estimates

	2010	2011	2012		2013	
	Revised Estimate	Revised Estimate	Change	Potential Income	Change	Potential Income
Current Fund:						
Mission Support	\$51,000,000	\$48,000,000	(\$1,500,000)	\$46,500,000	(\$1,500,000)	\$45,000,000
Vision for Mission	1,200,000	1,300,000	100,000	1,400,000	100,000	1,500,000
Investment Income	600,000	600,000		600,000		600,000
Bequests & Trusts	1,100,000	1,100,000		1,100,000		1,100,000
Endowment	742,000	748,000	(25,850)	722,150	(24,651)	697,500
Rent	900,000	1,000,000	100,000	1,100,000	50,000	1,150,000
Other	326,000	339,500	10,500	350,000		350,000
Total Unrestricted	<u>\$55,868,000</u>	<u>\$53,087,500</u>	<u>(\$1,315,350)</u>	<u>\$51,772,150</u>	<u>(\$1,374,651)</u>	<u>\$50,397,500</u>
Missionary Support	3,650,000	3,700,000		3,700,000		3,700,000
Bequests and Trusts	1,400,000	1,400,000		1,400,000		1,400,000
Endowment	1,332,000	1,627,000	(56,250)	1,570,750	(53,849)	1,516,900
Unit Designated	350,000	300,000	50,000	350,000	75,000	425,000
Mission Investment Fund	1,500,000	1,500,000		1,500,000		1,500,000
Grants	1,000,000	1,000,000		1,000,000		1,000,000
Total Restricted	<u>\$9,232,000</u>	<u>\$9,527,000</u>	<u>(\$6,250)</u>	<u>\$9,520,750</u>	<u>\$21,151</u>	<u>\$9,541,900</u>
Total Current Funds	<u>\$65,100,000</u>	<u>\$62,614,500</u>	<u>(\$1,321,600)</u>	<u>\$61,292,900</u>	<u>(\$1,353,500)</u>	<u>\$59,939,400</u>
World Hunger:						
Gifts:						
Through Synods	\$ 10,400,000	8,900,000	100,000	9,000,000	100,000	9,100,000
Through Direct Giving	7,300,000	7,000,000	150,000	7,150,000	150,000	7,300,000
Endowment	500,000	500,000		500,000		500,000
Bequests and Misc.	500,000	600,000		600,000		600,000
Total World Hunger	<u>\$18,700,000</u>	<u>\$17,000,000</u>	<u>\$250,000</u>	<u>\$17,250,000</u>	<u>\$250,000</u>	<u>\$17,500,000</u>
Total	<u>\$83,800,000</u>	<u>\$79,614,500</u>	<u>(\$1,071,600)</u>	<u>\$78,542,900</u>	<u>(\$1,103,500)</u>	<u>\$77,439,400</u>

**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
 2011 Capital Budget**

	Years Depreciated	2010 Budget	2011 Proposal
Tenant Build-Outs	20	350,000	\$ 1,000,000
Churchwide Projects and Purchases			
Computer Software and System	5	1,630,000	100,000
Unit Cubicle Reconfiguratio	10 - 20	10,000	-
Equipment Purchases	5 - 10	268,250	-
Building/Complex Capital Main	20	1,741,750	400,000
Contingency			-
Total		<u>\$ 4,000,000</u>	<u>\$ 1,500,000</u>

**Summary of Church Council Designated Funds
 1999 - 2009 (1)
 September 30, 2010**

Designation	Year	Amount	Expended	Balance
Second Mile Ministry Fund	1999	\$ 12,000,000	\$ 11,985,482	\$ 14,518
Culture-Specific Resources	2001	400,000	122,829	277,171
Leadership Development Initiative	2005	2,587,622	2,363,092	224,530
 Total		<u>\$ 14,987,622</u>	<u>\$ 14,471,403</u>	<u>\$ 516,219</u>

(1) Does not include Church Council Designated Funds Functioning as Endowment.

Church Council Designated Fund Report for: **SECOND MILE MINISTRY FUNDS**
Year Designated by Church Council: **1999**
Estimated Period of Designation: **1999 - 2009**
Reporting Date: **September 30, 2010**

Activity	Allocation	Expended	Balance
Ministry Among People in Poverty			
Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission	\$900,000	\$900,000	\$0
Global Mission	900,000	900,000	-
Church in Society	1,200,000	1,200,000	-
Sub-Total	<u>\$3,000,000</u>	<u>\$3,000,000</u>	<u>\$0</u>
Supporting Ministry That Needs Special Attention			
Special Needs Retirement Fd Functioning as Enc	500,000	500,000	-
In the City for Good Funds Function as Endow	600,000	600,000	-
Leadership Development	500,000	500,000	-
Anti-Racism projects with Ecumenical Partners	300,000	285,482	14,518
World Hunger Appeal Anniversary	100,000	100,000	-
Identity Project	2,000,000	2,000,000	-
Sub-Total	<u>\$4,000,000</u>	<u>\$3,985,482</u>	<u>\$14,518</u>
Total Expense to Operating/Designated Fund	<u>\$7,000,000</u>	<u>\$6,985,482</u>	<u>\$14,518</u>
Lutheran Center Mortgage Relief	<u>\$5,000,000</u>	<u>\$5,000,000</u>	<u>\$0</u>
Grand Total	<u><u>\$12,000,000</u></u>	<u><u>\$11,985,482</u></u>	<u><u>\$14,518</u></u>

Church Council Designated Fund Report for: CULTURE-SPECIFIC RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
Year Designated by Church Council: 2001
Estimated Period of Designation: On-going
Reporting Date: September 30, 2010

<u>Activity Name</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Inception - To Date</u>	<u>Balance</u>
Chinese / Mandarin Worship Resource	\$130,800	\$55,387	\$75,413
Pan Asian Songbook	\$10,000	\$5,547	\$4,454
Alaska Native Worship Resource	\$67,860	\$28,808	\$39,052
Multicultural Catalog	\$30,000	\$22,281	\$7,719
Asian / Evangelism Language Resources	<u>\$10,806</u>	<u>\$10,806</u>	<u>(\$0)</u>
Planned Projects	\$249,466	\$122,829	\$126,637
Unallocated to date:	<u>\$150,534</u>	<u> </u>	<u>\$150,534</u>
Total Church Council Funds	<u><u>\$400,000</u></u>	<u><u>\$122,829</u></u>	<u><u>\$277,171</u></u>

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Church Council Designated Fund Report for:
Year Designated by Church Council:
Estimated Period of Designation:
Reporting Date:

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE
2005
2005 -- 2009
September 30, 2010

<u>Expense Type</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Inception-To-Date</u>	<u>Balance</u>
Leadership Development			
Grants - other	\$0	\$6,000	(\$6,000)
Salaries and Benefits	463,422	405,997	57,425
Travel	19,800	26,339	(6,539)
Contracts	16,500	1,500	15,000
Accommodations	16,500	1,245	15,255
Event Travel	13,200	1,142	12,058
Meals	3,800	3,211	589
Speakers	2,200	-	2,200
Office Expenses	(0)	4,454	(4,454)
Catering	2,200	3,386	(1,186)
<i>Multicultural Ministries:</i>			
Arab/Middle Eastern Ministries	-	30,000	(30,000)
<i>Pacific Lutheran University</i>			
Thrivent Leadership Development Initiative	-	10,000	(10,000)
Seminarian & Student debt Consultation	-	11,696	(11,696)
<i>Center for Creative Leadership</i>			
Leadership at the Peak	-	10,600	(10,600)
<i>US Congregational Life Survey</i>	-	22,052	(22,052)
Total Leadership Development	\$537,622	\$537,622	(\$0)

<u>Expense Type</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Inception-To-Date</u>	<u>Balance</u>
Leadership Development Initiative Grants			
<i>Vocation and Education:</i>			
Next Generation of PhDs	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$0
Making the Connections	400,000	400,000	\$0
Lutheran Center at Atlanta	133,000	133,000	\$0
Developing Leaders	100,000	100,000	\$0
Candidacy Committee Training	10,000	420	\$9,580
Developing Mission Leaders (25%)	789	789	\$0
Missiologists/Leadership Consultation	4,844	4,844	\$0
<i>Multicultural Ministries:</i>			
Come, See, Discover	108,000	89,433	\$18,567
African Descent Horizon	105,000	105,000	\$0
Asian Leadership Development	60,000	60,000	\$0
American Indian/AK Native Community Center	15,000	15,000	\$0
Asian American Young Adult Network	10,000	9,885	\$115
Leaders of Color Gathering	25,000	25,000	\$0
American Indian/AK Native Youth Gathering	32,000	32,000	\$0
American Indian/AK Native Leadership	30,000	30,000	\$0
<i>Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission:</i>			
Emerging Leaders Network	63,000	18,069	\$44,931
Evangelical Horizon Internships	100,000	100,000	\$0
Congregational Latino/Hispanic	300,000	148,663	\$151,337
Coaching Trainers Network	15,000	15,000	\$0
<i>Church in Society:</i>			
A Call to Public Justice	100,000	100,000	\$0
<i>Global Mission:</i>			
Young Adult Program	100,000	100,000	\$0

Church Council Designated Fund Report for:
Year Designated by Church Council:
Estimated Period of Designation:
Reporting Date:

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE
2005
2005 -- 2009
September 30, 2010

<i>Gettysburg Seminary:</i>			\$0
Intersections Institute	26,000	26,000	\$0
<i>Metropolitan New York Synod:</i>			\$0
Urban Leaders Institute	20,000	20,000	\$0
<i>Region 1:</i>			\$0
American Indian/Alaska Native Ministry	20,000	20,000	\$0
<i>Lutheran School of Theology-Chicago</i>			\$0
Leadership Development Grant	7,000	7,000	\$0
<i>Non-Staff Travel</i>			\$0
Transforming Leaders Event ('07)	6,115	6,115	\$0
Leadership Grant Strategy Committee Meeting ('0	1,862	1,862	\$0
<i>Lighthouse Partnership</i>			\$0
Support for Developing Leaders	9,500	9,500	\$0
<i>Alaska Synod-ELCA</i>			\$0
Multicultural Leadership Development Grant	20,000	20,000	\$0
<i>Lutheran Church of the Redeemer</i>			\$0
Transforming Leaders Initiative	60,000	60,000	\$0
<i>Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary</i>			\$0
Support for TEEM Students	15,000	15,000	\$0
<i>Center for creative Leadership</i>			\$0
Leadership at the Peak	1,365	1,365	\$0
<i>US Congregational Life Survey</i>	1,525	1,525	\$0
	<u>\$2,050,000</u>	<u>\$1,825,470</u>	<u>\$224,530</u>
Total Available	<u><u>\$2,587,622</u></u>	<u><u>\$2,363,092</u></u>	<u><u>\$224,530</u></u>

Report of the Director for Mission Support

Regional Consultations on Missional Capacity

At the request of Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson, consultations are being held in each of the nine regions with synod bishops, vice presidents, directors for evangelical mission and synod stewardship staff, together with two or three churchwide representatives. To this date, consultations have been held in regions 5, 2, 4, 7, 9, 1 and 8, with the remaining regional consultations to be completed by the end of this month. These consultations include discussion of the new design proposal for the churchwide organization, reports from the directors for evangelical mission on the status of mission tables within each synod, discussion of anticipated mission support for the remainder of 2010 and for 2011, and discussion of synod and churchwide “primary roles” in the coming years. A DEM from the region has served as a recorder for each consultation, and a report of all nine consultations will be shared with the LIFT task force.

Synodical-Churchwide Consultations

Synodical-churchwide consultations continue as a primary opportunity to meet with Synod Councils to discuss the significant interdependence of the three expressions of this church. The consultations are a part of the shared financial responsibility of congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization as stated in the governing documents of this church:

“Since congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization are partners that share in God’s mission, all share in the responsibility to develop, implement, and strengthen the financial support program of this church.” 8.15, ELCA Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions.

In 2010 consultations have been held in 26 synods. Within the context of the severe economic recession, and the loss of members and congregations in response to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly, these consultations have involved candid discussion of the impact of reduced mission support on synod staff and programs, as well as the impact on the churchwide organization. The principle of mutual accountability has been at the heart of the conversations, with the recognition that decisions made by congregations, synods and the churchwide organization impact on all three expressions, thus necessitating on-going consultation and transparency in decision making.

In each consultation there has been discussion of the percentage of sharing of mission support between the synod and churchwide organization. In spite of the significant financial impact on synods of declining mission support, 12 synods have indicated their intention to increase the percentage of sharing in 2011, while 6 synods have indicated their intention to reduce the percentage of sharing. At this point, there are 10 synods sharing mission support at 55% or higher (with Greater Milwaukee remaining at 60.1%), and an additional 23 synods sharing between 50% and 55%.

It is my intention to schedule consultations with the synods that did not have a synodical-churchwide consultation in 2010. I am available to meet with Synod Councils or other synod

leaders at the invitation of the synod at any time, particularly if a synod is considering a reduction in the percentage of sharing.

In my work with synod bishops, vice presidents and Synod Councils I am continually moved by the expressions of support for ELCA churchwide ministries and the strong affirmation of continued partnership as we respond to decreased giving in many congregations, and the subsequent decline in mission support. We are at a critical time in the life of this church and we will need to work together to share the story of what God is doing through the ELCA in this time. I hope and pray that we will not experience further diminishment of our capacity to carry out God's mission.

Pastor A. Craig Settlage

2010 and 2011 Revised Synod Mission Support Plans
With 2009 Actual

SYNOD NAME	#	2009		2010				2011	
		ACTUAL	MS %	ORIGINAL PLANS		REVISED ESTIMATES		SYNOD PLANS	
				AMOUNT	MS %	AMOUNT	MS %	AMOUNT	MS %
ALASKA	1A	167,429	38.00%	189,190	39.00%	159,120	39.00%	162,240	39.00%
N.W. WASH	1B	627,055	45.50%	655,000	45.50%	627,900	45.50%	582,400	45.50%
S.W. WASH	1C	415,250	38.00%	442,750	38.50%	423,500	38.50%	438,750	39.00%
E.WASH/ID	1D	299,056	30.18%	418,700	39.50%	229,500	30.00%	288,300	30.00%
OREGON	1E	448,049	41.26%	511,140	42.00%	420,000	42.00%	436,900	42.50%
MONTANA	1F	422,558	39.40%	468,000	40.00%	414,750	39.50%	369,325	39.50%
SIERRA-PACIFIC	2A	1,073,401	51.00%	1,332,949	51.50%	1,081,500	51.50%	1,210,250	51.50%
SW CALIFORNIA	2B	603,114	48.00%	686,000	49.00%	686,000	49.00%	514,165	49.00%
PACIFICA	2C	962,765	53.00%	1,155,763	53.00%	832,000	52.00%	757,120	52.00%
GRAND CANYON	2D	1,123,714	51.00%	1,377,000	51.00%	950,000	50.00%	975,000	50.00%
ROCKY MTN	2E	1,351,639	50.00%	1,625,000	50.00%	1,258,750	50.00%	1,258,750	50.00%
W. NO.DAK	3A	385,040	42.00%	379,950	42.50%	379,950	42.50%	384,420	43.00%
E. NO.DAK	3B	411,523	40.00%	500,000	40.00%	440,000	40.00%	480,000	40.00%
SO. DAK.	3C	855,362	42.00%	964,410	43.00%	727,413	43.00%	755,495	44.00%
NW. MINN.	3D	792,596	51.00%	887,400	51.00%	765,000	51.00%	782,901	51.00%
NE. MINN.	3E	633,709	49.00%	700,210	49.00%	632,100	49.00%	641,900	49.00%
SW. MINN.	3F	1,182,179	52.50%	1,312,958	52.50%	1,162,350	52.50%	1,142,529	52.50%
MINPLS. AREA	3G	1,881,702	55.00%	2,090,000	55.00%	1,870,000	55.00%	1,870,000	55.00%
ST PAUL (M)	3H	1,092,985	50.00%	1,160,000	50.00%	1,070,000	50.00%	1,100,000	50.00%
SE. MINN.	3I	1,091,183	52.50%	1,190,175	52.50%	1,001,175	52.50%	1,090,950	52.50%
NEBRASKA	4A	2,306,834	57.00%	2,365,500	57.00%	2,000,000	57.00%	2,100,000	57.00%
CENTRAL STATES	4B	1,089,488	53.00%	1,249,672	53.00%	930,818	51.00%	1,122,093	52.00%
ARK/OK	4C	249,200	42.80%	293,724	42.90%	238,463	40.20%	245,472	40.20%
N.TEX/N.LOU	4D	632,001	45.90%	683,928	47.00%	662,700	47.00%	676,875	47.50%
S.W.TEXAS	4E	1,018,663	55.00%	1,188,825	55.00%	737,000	50.00%	800,000	50.00%
GULF COAST	4F	725,834	50.16%	782,500	50.00%	750,000	50.00%	750,000	50.00%
METRO CHGO	5A	1,898,316	55.00%	2,005,633	55.00%	1,831,195	55.00%	1,936,586	55.00%
NO. ILL	5B	1,429,605	55.00%	1,552,106	55.00%	1,306,250	55.00%	1,347,500	55.00%
CEN.SO. ILL	5C	975,393	56.00%	1,078,000	56.00%	924,000	56.00%	924,000	56.00%
SE IOWA	5D	1,577,321	53.50%	1,512,800	53.50%	1,566,480	53.50%	1,597,809	53.50%
WEST IOWA	5E	484,440	43.54%	636,800	49.75%	351,048	35.10%	385,537	36.72%
NE IOWA	5F	732,668	42.00%	798,000	42.00%	680,000	42.50%	275,275	20.00%
N GRT LKES	5G	521,268	53.50%	505,000	50.00%	450,000	50.00%	460,000	50.00%
NW.SYN (W)	5H	798,359	55.00%	814,550	55.00%	805,750	55.00%	814,550	55.00%
EC WISC	5I	935,552	55.00%	976,250	55.00%	885,398	55.00%	907,500	55.00%
GRTR MILWKEE	5J	1,446,307	60.10%	1,472,450	60.10%	1,341,733	60.10%	1,412,350	60.10%
SO.-CENT (W)	5K	911,784	57.90%	929,000	55.00%	911,200	55.00%	893,400	55.00%
LACROSSE (W)	5L	461,944	55.00%	475,000	55.00%	462,000	55.00%	462,000	55.00%

Shaded areas reflect notification of plan changes received since the April Church Council meeting.

2010 and 2011 Revised Synod Mission Support Plans
With 2009 Actual

SYNOD NAME	#	2009		2010				2011	
		ACTUAL	MS %	ORIGINAL PLANS		REVISED ESTIMATES		SYNOD PLANS	
				AMOUNT	MS %	AMOUNT	MS %	AMOUNT	MS %
SE. MICH	6A	661,744	44.00%	782,000	46.00%	690,000	45.00%	630,000	45.00%
N/W LOWER MICH	6B	853,234	51.00%	994,500	51.00%	771,000	50.00%	890,200	50.00%
IND/KY	6C	1,217,091	51.50%	1,442,000	51.50%	1,133,000	51.50%	1,158,750	51.50%
NW OHIO	6D	1,111,498	51.00%	1,302,250	51.00%	1,093,440	51.00%	1,093,440	51.00%
NE OHIO	6E	1,006,085	49.00%	1,029,000	49.00%	869,750	49.00%	869,750	49.00%
S. OHIO	6F	1,028,953	50.00%	1,288,000	50.00%	800,000	40.00%	955,700	45.50%
NEW JERSEY	7A	1,180,358	50.00%	1,200,000	50.00%	1,150,000	50.00%	1,180,000	50.00%
NEW ENGLAND	7B	1,148,033	55.00%	1,193,844	54.00%	1,115,053	54.00%	1,129,117	54.00%
METRO NY	7C	612,562	47.50%	672,000	48.00%	648,000	48.00%	654,750	48.50%
UPSTATE NY	7D	693,795	47.00%	781,350	48.00%	668,820	47.10%	686,375	47.50%
NE PENN	7E	1,392,788	51.00%	1,560,000	52.00%	1,404,000	52.00%	1,431,000	53.00%
SE PENN	7F	1,260,381	53.50%	1,471,375	53.50%	1,297,375	53.50%	1,297,425	53.50%
SLOVAK ZION	7G	30,900	30.51%	37,000	30.00%	36,000	30.00%	33,600	30.00%
NW PENN	8A	456,363	49.50%	467,000	50.00%	468,225	50.00%	458,596	50.00%
SW PENN	8B	1,201,318	55.00%	1,290,000	55.00%	1,100,000	55.00%	987,500	50.00%
ALLEGHENY	8C	463,248	48.52%	515,000	50.00%	450,000	50.00%	450,000	50.00%
LOW SUSQ	8D	1,777,404	50.00%	2,000,000	50.00%	1,610,000	46.00%	1,610,000	46.00%
UPP SUSQ	8E	565,860	50.00%	620,000	50.00%	601,000	50.00%	588,000	49.92%
DEL-MRYLND	8F	1,221,580	53.00%	1,472,000	53.00%	1,245,500	53.00%	1,441,600	53.00%
METRO DC	8G	1,026,363	55.00%	1,120,213	55.00%	1,045,000	55.00%	1,000,000	50.00%
W. VA/W.MYLD	8H	293,152	51.50%	342,872	52.00%	255,683	45.00%	255,683	45.00%
VIRGINIA	9A	1,016,562	50.60%	1,140,387	50.60%	628,949	35.10%	640,617	37.34%
NO. CAROLINA	9B	1,470,233	40.50%	1,865,000	38.77%	1,865,000	39.26%	1,435,000	39.07%
SO. CAROLINA	9C	1,362,986	43.34%	1,591,500	45.47%	1,416,435	45.00%	1,269,000	40.90%
SOUTHEASTERN	9D	1,270,370	50.00%	1,544,600	50.00%	1,050,000	50.00%	1,200,000	50.00%
FLORIDA-BAHAMAS	9E	1,336,275	51.00%	1,428,944	51.125%	1,144,618	51.13%	1,165,938	51.25%
CARIBBEAN	9F	26,201	15.00%	50,000	18.00%	30,000	12.50%	30,000	16.00%
TOTAL REMITTANCES		\$59,700,627	50.52%	\$66,567,168	50.40%	\$56,551,891	49.39%	\$56,894,383	48.96%

REPORT OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE

At the June 9, 2010 meeting, management presented a preliminary draft of financial statements of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for the year ended January 31, 2010. It was noted that the preliminary draft included an unqualified opinion from Crowe Horwath that the financial statements present fairly the financial position of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as of January 31, 2010, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the year then ended were in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles. In addition, the committee reviewed and discussed the Crowe Horwath SAS 114 Report to the Audit Committee with the external auditors, including, but not limited to, any changes required in the original audit plan or any serious difficulties or disputes with management during the course of the audit. In this letter Crowe Horwath indicated that there were no such changes required or serious difficulties or disputes encountered.

The committee also:

- Reviewed the items presented verbally to management in lieu of a formal management letter, since the items were not significant enough to warrant a formal letter;
- Received and reviewed the internal auditor's report outlining audits executed, issues raised and management's responses;
- Received and reviewed the report from Fishnet Security on the Information Security Program and Architecture Review, along with, an outside consultant for IT security and risk management, along with management's responses;
- Reviewed and confirmed the independence of the external auditors by monitoring fees paid for consulting or other non-audit services and reviewing any relationships that may impact the objectivity or independence of the auditor;
- Met with the internal auditor to discuss any fraud or "whistle blower" complaints, of which none have been reported; and
- Executed all the other duties and responsibilities as outlined in, and in compliance with its Charter. No exceptions were noted.

Upon completion of a review of the documents provided, the committee voted to receive and approve the financial statements for the year ended January 31, 2010 and to receive the report of the director for internal audit.

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ELCA AUDIT COMMITTEE CHARTER

Purpose

The primary purpose of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) Audit Committee is to assist the Budget and Finance Committee of the Church Council in fulfilling its general oversight of the churchwide organization's accounting and financial reporting, internal control systems and audit functions.

Authority

Subject to the approval of the ELCA Budget and Finance Committee, the Audit Committee shall have the authority to retain special legal, accounting or other consultants to advise the committee. The Audit Committee shall have the authority to request any officer or employee of the churchwide organization, its outside counsel or independent auditor to attend a meeting of the committee, or to meet with members of the committee.

Responsibility

Church management is responsible for preparing financial statements in accordance with GAAP, maintaining a system of internal controls and complying with appropriate laws and regulations. The director of internal audit is responsible for evaluating the adequacy and effectiveness of the system of internal controls. The independent auditor is responsible for performing an independent audit as a basis for providing an opinion that the Church's financial statements are fairly presented in accordance with GAAP.

The Audit Committee is responsible for reviewing significant accounting and reporting issues and judgments made in connection with the preparation of the financial statements, including analyses of the effects of alternative GAAP methods on the financial statements.

The Board of Pensions, Augsburg Fortress Publishers, the Mission Investment Fund (MIF), **Lutheran Men in Mission** and the Women of the ELCA (W/ELCA) are separately incorporated units and, as such, have independent financial statement audits. The ELCA Audit Committee has no responsibilities with respect to the Board of Pensions, Augsburg Fortress Publishers, the MIF, **LMM** or W/ELCA.

Membership

The Audit Committee shall consist of six members. A minimum of 2 members should be Church Council Budget and Finance Committee members. Members of the committee shall be appointed by the Budget and Finance Committee and forwarded to the Church Council for approval. Budget and Finance Committee members should be appointed for a 2-year term with the possibility of reappointment up to their Church Council term. Non-Church Council members should be appointed for a 2-year term, renewable for 2 additional terms. Terms need to be staggered in recognition of the need for continuity of committee membership from year to year.

The chair of the committee shall be a member of the Budget and Finance Committee and shall be appointed by the chair of the Budget and Finance Committee. Members of the committee will have no relationship to the church that may interfere with the exercise of the member's independence and must be financially literate. At least one member shall have accounting or related financial management experience.

In order to provide for an effective committee, attendance at the Audit Committee meeting is required of all members. Upon two successive absences that have not been approved by the committee, the member's position shall be declared vacant by the chair.

Meetings

The Audit Committee will meet at least two times per year or more frequently as circumstances require. Meeting agendas will be cleared by the committee chair in advance of the meeting. Minutes will be prepared by one of the churchwide staff, approved by the committee and maintained in the permanent records of the church.

Duties and Responsibilities

The Audit Committee shall have the following duties and responsibilities with respect to:

Financial Statements

Inquire of the independent auditors and churchwide organization management as to the acceptability and appropriateness of financial accounting practices and disclosures used or proposed.

Review the church's audited financial statements and related footnote disclosures and consider whether they are complete and consistent based on information known to committee members.

Discuss with the independent auditors, the effect of regulatory and accounting initiatives on the ELCA's financial statements.

Review with the independent auditors any matters related to the conduct of the audit which are required to be communicated to the committee under generally accepted auditing standards, including, but not limited to, any significant changes required in the original audit plan or any serious difficulties or disputes with management during the course of the audit.

External Audit

Recommend to the Budget and Finance Committee the engagement, retention or discharge of the independent auditors and consider the appropriateness of rotating independent auditors on a regular basis.

Evaluate the performance of the independent auditors.

Review and approve the independent auditors' audit fees and the proposed audit plan.

Review and confirm the independence of the external auditors by monitoring fees paid to the auditor for consulting or other non-audit services and reviewing any relationships that may impact the objectivity or independence of the auditor.

Internal Audit

Review and approve the appointment or dismissal of the director of internal audit in consultation with the Executive for Administration.

Review with the director of internal audit the charter, staffing and organizational structure of the internal audit function.

Review the effectiveness of the internal audit function by obtaining assurance there are no restriction that would limit the director of internal audit's ability to carry out his audit responsibilities.

Review and approve the annual internal audit plan and schedule based on a mutually acceptable risk assessment. As part of this responsibility, review the fraud risk assessment with management and internal audit, providing guidance and input as appropriate.

Internal Control

Review any internal control comments and recommendations in the independent auditor's management letter that are classified as material weaknesses or reportable conditions as well as management's response to these comments and recommendations.

Review internal audit's report to the committee, including significant comments and recommendations to management and management's responses to these comments and recommendations.

Review, on an annual basis, the code of ethics policy.

Communication and Reporting

Meet, in separate executive sessions, as necessary, with the independent auditor, the director of internal audit or churchwide staff to discuss any matters that the Audit Committee believes should be discussed privately.

Provide for an open avenue of communications between the independent auditor or director of internal audit and the committee chair.

Review and assess the adequacy of this Charter annually and submit proposed changes to the Budget and Finance Committee for their review and submission to the Church Council for approval.

Report the committee's performance of the duties and responsibilities defined in this charter, including any recommendations the Committee deems appropriate, to the Budget and Finance Committee of the Church Council.

Review any whistle-blower complaints that have been brought to the attention of the Director for Internal Audit.

Develop a calendar of anticipated work for the biennium at the Committee's first meeting following each Churchwide Assembly.

Other Tasks

The Audit Committee shall accomplish other tasks that may be assigned by the Church Council.

The effective date of this Charter is November 8, 2002.

Last Revised: November 12, 2010

Last Reviewed by Audit Committee: November 12, 2010

Investing in Commodities

Background

Wells Fargo manages approximately \$55.6 million in Charitable Remainder Trust and Pooled Income Fund assets as of June 30, 2010 on behalf of the ELCA. They are recommending an investment allocation to commodities to provide: 1) improved diversification, 2) better long-term risk adjusted performance and 3) a hedge against inflation.

Rationale

Commodities are considered a real asset which is typically either a “hard” or “soft” asset. Hard assets are nonperishable such as real estate and commodity related assets, e.g. energy, precious metals, industrial metals and timber. Soft assets are perishable and consumable, i.e. agricultural products and livestock. There are a number of ways to gain exposure to real assets however; historically Commercial Real Estate (domestic and international) Commodities and Timber provide the best opportunities for portfolio diversification. The focus of this write-up is on commodities as we are already investing in real estate through the current asset allocation models.

Since commodities are difficult for the average investor to source, investment vehicles that track commodity future indices were developed. The three most commonly used indices are the Dow Jones-UBS Commodity Index (a basket of 19 commodities diversified by sector), the S&P GSCI Commodity Index (a basket of 24 commodities heavily weighted toward energy) and the Rogers International Commodity Index (a basket of 35 commodities weighted by global consumption patterns).

Benefits

- 1) Diversification-The returns of real assets typically are not perfectly synchronized with the returns of stocks and bonds. Negative or low correlation means that when the returns of stocks and bonds go down the returns of real assets may not drop as much or may go up. This can enhance the overall portfolio returns while reducing the volatility of the returns.

The chart below exhibits this concept:

Correlation Table

	S&P 500 Index	Barclays Aggregate Index
Publicly Traded REITs	0.54	0.05
Private Real Estate	0.16	-0.15
Commodities	0.15	-0.14

Timberland	0.05	0.10
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Source: Wells Fargo
 4/91-12/09

- 2) Inflation hedge-The commodities asset class is considered a real asset and has tended to react differently to economic instability than financial assets such as equities. One reason is that commodity prices are highly correlated with inflation-as the costs of commodities rise, so do the costs of goods in general which can be detrimental to financial assets. Therefore commodities had proven to be a solid diversifier as well as a hedge against inflation.

- 3) Improved risk/return-the chart below shows how the expected risk/return of a 60% equity/40% fixed income portfolio can be reduced with the addition of commodities.

<u>Asset Mix Comparison</u>	<u>Current</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
Cash	4%	2%
Investment Grade Fixed Income	26%	26%
High Yield Fixed Income	6%	6%
International Bonds	4%	4%
Emerging Market Debt	4%	4%
Large Cap Equity	17%	17%
Mid Cap Equity	7%	7%
Small Cap Equity	5%	5%
International Equity	11%	11%
Emerging Market Equity	5%	5%
Global REITs	11%	11%
Commodities	0%	2%
 Total	 100%	 100%
 Expected Annual Return	 7.87%	 7.98%
Standard Deviation (Risk)	9.34%	9.31%
As of June 30, 2010		

Additionally, the case for commodities has correlated to the demand from emerging market economies such as China. As developing markets continue to industrialize and modernize their per capita consumption of energy and raw materials increases substantially.

Challenges

- The commodities asset class can be volatile when evaluated over a short time period.
- Commodities can underperform during cyclical downturns.

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 Equivalent-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.

DEFERRED GIFTS OPERATING CASH MANAGEMENT AND INVESTMENT POLICY

1. PURPOSE

The policy is applicable to cash administered by the ELCA within its deferred gift program, including that in excess of ongoing daily operating needs of the Deferred Gifts program (Charitable Gift Annuities, Charitable Remainder Trusts, and Pooled Income Funds). Such cash generally fluctuates due to the settlement timing and variability in management fees as well as the seasonality of disbursements. This policy does not apply to the residual cash managed by BNY Mellon Cash Investment Strategies.

2. OBJECTIVE

The objective of this policy is to provide the philosophy and general operating procedures necessary for the Deferred Gifts program to meet its cash disbursement and liquidity needs.

3. INVESTMENT POLICY

A. Special Constraints and Considerations

1. Monitoring cash flow-The Controller is responsible for monitoring cash balances and needs on a daily, weekly, monthly and as-needed basis. Liquidity requirements will be communicated to investment managers in writing from time to time by the ELCA.
2. Liquidity-Cash and investments to support the average monthly operating needs of the Deferred Gifts program should be maintained. However, to avoid the costs of borrowing, the temporary operating cash needs may be met by allowing the level of cash to decrease below the average monthly level. Cash will be maintained as readily available in an interest bearing demand account or invested in an overnight short term government or money market vehicle with daily liquidity offered by the investment manager.
Investment Income-Income received in the operating account is recorded as unrestricted revenue of the ELCA and is used to support the program and structure of the ELCA, which include the administrative costs associated with the appeals and programs that may generate these excess funds, as well as the costs and fees related to cash and investment management. Gains and losses are likewise absorbed and recorded as unrestricted activity.

4. INVESTMENT GUIDELINES

- A. Quality-all investments must be of the highest quality rating by a nationally recognized rating agency. Ratings issued by Standard & Poor's, Moody's Investors Services or Fitch must be rated Aaa, AAA or AAAMmf respectively.
- B. Eligible securities-money market and short-term government funds with daily liquidity.

5. SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE INVESTING

The operating 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 list. Investments in mutual funds are not required to adhere to the social restrictions.

6. EVALUATION AND REVIEW

Review of guidelines and reporting-ELCA staff and the investment manager shall review the investment objectives and guidelines at least annually. At least monthly the manager shall provide staff with investment performance reports.

7. ADOPTION

Adopted by Church Council November 2010

Index to LIFT task force recommendations for amendments
November 8, 2010

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Other proposed amendments</u>
8.32.02. CWA	
10.61. Relationships	
11.35. Program Committees	<i>CWA redesign</i>
12.31. CWA	
12.31.A11. CWA	
12.41.31. Program Committees	<i>CWA redesign</i>
13.52.A05. Program Committees [proposed 15.14.A10.]	<i>CC redesign</i>
14.31. CC/CoB	
14.32.01. CC/CoB	<i>General CBCR amendments</i>
14.32.02. CC/CoB	
14.32.03. CC/CoB	
14.32.04. CC/CoB	
14.32.A10. CC/CoB	
14.41.C05. CWA	
16.12.10. Program Committees	
16.12.11. Program Committees	<i>General CBCR amendments</i>
16.12.12. Program Committees	
16.12.13. Program Committees	
16.12.14. Program Committees	
16.12.15. Program Committees	
19.02. CC/CoB	
19.04. Program Committees	
19.05.01. Program Committees	<i>General CBCR amendments</i>
19.05.02. Program Committees	
19.11.01. Program Committees	
19.21.B05. CWA	<i>General CBCR amendments</i>
19.51.01. Program Committees	
19.61.02. Program Committees	<i>General CBCR amendments</i>
†S12.01. Relationships	

Amendments Related to the Living into the Future (LIFT) Task Force
November 8, 2010

The charter for “Living into the Future Together: Renewing the Ecology of the ELCA” (LIFT) task force was approved by the ELCA Church Council at its November 2009 meeting. The charter identified seven major areas for the scope of the work of the task force, including identity, opportunities for the future, the changing context of this church, interrelationships of church expressions, partnerships, financial resources, and structure and governance. The task force is organized into seven work groups that focus on one of the areas identified in the scope of the task force charter; each work group has developed a plan to guide its work. As the task force engages these areas, it is guided by the following overarching questions: What is God calling this church to be and to do in the future? What changes are in order to help us respond most faithfully?

The LIFT Task Force is proposing recommendations in several areas of structure and governance.

1. LIFT Recommendations: Churchwide Assembly

The work group on structure and governance concluded that the legislative and oversight functions of the Churchwide Assembly described in the governing documents should not be altered at this time. In addition, it concluded that the size of the Churchwide Assembly and the method of allocation of voting members, which provides for elected voting members from synods, are appropriate. The work group on structure and governance believes, however, that current economic realities in the churchwide organization and throughout the ELCA militate for changing the cycle of the Churchwide Assembly, with non-legislative functions of the assembly addressed in other ways. In addition, the category of advisory members should be eliminated or amended; whether categorized as advisory members or guests, such persons should attend at the expense of their organizations or alternative funding sources obtained. Guests should be encouraged to attend at their own expense. Technological options also should be explored and expanded to broadcast the assembly to a wider audience and to disseminate more broadly its activities. (See Exhibit E, Part 2a, pages 16–20 for more detail and rationale.)

The specific recommended amendments to the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions* are as follows:

8.32.02. Colleges and universities of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may relate to this church in various ways, including relationship with the Churchwide Assembly, a synodical assembly, or a corporation whose voting members are, or have been elected by, synodical assemblies, other organizational units (conferences, clusters, etc.), or congregations. Subject to approval by the appropriate synods, a college or university may be owned by a not-for-profit corporation (1) that has voting members, at least 90 percent of whom shall consist of members of the **biennial** Churchwide Assembly, and (2) that shall hold the **biennial** meeting of such a corporation in conjunction with the Churchwide Assembly for the purpose of electing or ratifying members of the governing board and approving amendments to the governing documents. At least 60 percent of the members of the governing boards of the corporations that meet in conjunction with the Churchwide Assembly shall be members of this church.

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.A11. *To implement the transition to a triennial cycle, the Church Council shall make recommendations to the 2013 Churchwide Assembly regarding elections to the Church Council, boards, and committees. This continuing resolution shall expire upon adjournment of the 2013 Churchwide Assembly.*

14.41.C0511. *Planning and Evaluation Committee*

*A Planning and Evaluation Committee shall be composed of members of the Church Council elected by the council and shall have staff services provided by the Office of the Presiding Bishop. This committee shall assist the presiding bishop in coordinated, strategic planning for the work of the churchwide organization. This committee also shall be responsible for the ongoing evaluation of churchwide units and the structure of the churchwide organization, making recommendations to the Churchwide Assembly through the Church Council. This committee shall establish a process for a periodic review of all churchwide units. Further, in consultation with the executive for administration, this committee shall evaluate and report annually to the Church Council and **biennially** to the Churchwide Assembly on how the churchwide organization complies with and implements commitments and policies adopted by the Churchwide Assembly and the Church Council.*

19.21.B0511. *On behalf of the Nominating Committee, the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America—in the **first half of the biennium 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.*

2. LIFT Recommendations: ELCA Church Council and the Conference of Bishops

The work group on structure and governance and the LIFT task force planning team believe that the current size of the Church Council is in a reasonable range from a governance perspective. Given the current number of synods, it would not be desirable, either from a cost standpoint or a governance perspective, to increase the size of the Church Council to 69 members. Further, increasing the size to 69 by election of a voting member from each synod would not address the issue of ensuring the requisite skills and expertise of the Council. It also necessarily would increase the role of the Executive Committee.

Foundational principles of the ELCA call for equitable representation of the people of God in this church. Lutheran tradition also emphasizes that life in the church be maintained decently and in order. The work group on structure and governance and the LIFT task force planning team believe that the size of the Church Council is reasonable, although a range in size would be desirable. However, changes in the method that some members are elected for the sake of suitable representation from the membership of the ELCA and for

the sake of good order in ELCA governance are recommended. Specifically, it is desirable to elect some members to the Church Council who have the skills and expertise crucial to the governance of the churchwide organization. These people with specialized skills can be elected with specific and current issues in mind rather than assigning a “slot” or “category” for a theologian, lawyer, accountant or the like. Efforts should be undertaken to draw people with the necessary experience and expertise from as wide a pool of this church as possible.

In an era of reduced mission support, the current number of advisory members, whose expenses are borne by the churchwide organization, is not financially justifiable. Input from constituencies can be provided in other ways. (See Exhibit E, Part 2b, pages 21–24, for more detail and rationale.)

The work group on governance and structure and the LIFT task force planning team also believe that the Conference of Bishops is underutilized as a resource in this church. However, options to expand the role legislatively would be inconsistent with the history and polity of this church, and amending the governing documents to specify a role in particular circumstances is complex and raises the possibility of unintended consequences. Therefore, the work group recommends as follows:

Expand the role of the Conference of Bishops in its consultative capacity by developing practices and procedures for the Church Council to refer issues to it and for the Conference of Bishops to make recommendations to the Church Council. However, no change in the governing documents regarding the legislative role of the Conference of Bishops is recommended.

Within the existing framework, the Church Council should work proactively to elicit input and recommendations from the Conference of Bishops as part of the legislative decision-making process, and the Conference of Bishops should work proactively to provide specific input and recommendations on important policy issues. This process for cross-referral could include requests for theological papers or input on important issues, as well as convening other tables across synodical lines to address issues of importance to this church.

A recommended change is to provide for the chair of the Conference of Bishops to be an *ex officio* member of the Church Council and the Executive Committee (i.e., a voting member by virtue of the bishop’s position). Liaison bishops provide an important input to the Church Council, but having the chair of the Conference of Bishops serving as a full voting member of the Church Council and the Executive Committee strengthens the governance connection between the groups and will facilitate the opportunity for cross-referral of matters from one group to the other. (See Exhibit E, pages 25–27 for more detail and rationale.)

The specific recommended amendments to the ELCA *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions* in this area are as follows:

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 and not more than 45 other persons, elected by the Churchwide Assembly.**

14.32.01. The Church Council shall have as liaison members nine synodical bishops, each elected by the Conference of Bishops to one four-year term. One bishop shall be elected from each region. ~~In addition, the chair of the Conference of Bishops shall be present for meetings.~~

[Alternative amendment proposed in general CBCR amendments.]

~~**14.32.02.** The Church Council shall have two youth advisory members, each elected by the board of the youth organization of this church to a three-year term.~~

~~**14.32.03.** The Church Council shall have as advisory members each president, or the designated representative of the president, of the African American Lutheran Association in the ELCA, the Association of Lutherans of Arab and Middle Eastern Heritage, the Association of Asians and~~

Pacific Islanders in the ELCA, the Association of Latino Ministries in the ELCA, the American Indian and Alaska Native Association in the ELCA, and the European-American Association in the ELCA.

~~14.32.04.~~ One individual representing this church's seminaries, one individual representing the ELCA-related colleges and universities, and one individual representing the social ministry organizations, chosen by the respective associations of these institutions and agencies, shall serve as advisory members of the Church Council.

~~14.32.A10.~~ *The chairs of the program committees for the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit and the Global Mission unit shall serve as advisory members of the Church Council with voice but not vote. In addition, the chairs of the respective boards of trustees of the Publishing House of the ELCA and Women of the ELCA shall serve as advisory members of the Church Council with voice but not vote.*

19.02. The members of the Church Council shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly. **Each biennium 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 thirty-three of the council members, the** 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.** Excluding the churchwide officers, there shall not be more than **one two** members of the Church Council from a synod, nor shall more than two-thirds of the synods in a region have members on the Church Council at the same time. The Church Council shall have at least one member 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.

3. *LIFT Recommendations: Program Committees*

The work group on governance and structure and the LIFT task force planning team recommend amending the governing documents to eliminate program committees and to reallocate their responsibilities to a committee of the Church Council.

1. A single Church Council committee—the Planning and Evaluation Committee or a newly configured committee—would receive reports on policies and strategies from all program units on a regular basis, probably at least yearly. Such a committee would have the advantage of receiving reports from all units and would be able to synthesize them and make coordinated recommendations to the Church Council. While this approach would expand the work of members of the Church Council, it would facilitate the coordination of oversight responsibilities and substantially reduce costs associated with the meetings of individual program committees.
2. If additional reporting and/or oversight are needed or desirable, meetings by teleconference or webinars can be arranged. If special expertise is needed, guests can be invited to participate in the meetings.
3. Methods need to be explored and developed to obtain input from congregations, synods and individual

members and to disseminate information regarding the work of program units more effectively.
(See Exhibit E, Part 2b, pages 28–31, for more detail and rationale.)

The specific recommended amendments to the ELCA *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions* in this area are as follows:

11.35. Each program unit shall relate to a program committee and each separately incorporated unit shall be governed by a board.

[Alternative amendment proposed in redesign amendments.]

12.41.31. Members of the Church Council, unless otherwise elected as voting members, shall serve as advisory members of the Churchwide Assembly. Likewise, program committee chairpersons and board chairpersons or their designees, and the president of the Lutheran Youth Organization or a designee, unless elected as voting members, shall serve as advisory members of the Churchwide Assembly. In addition, executive directors of units of the churchwide organization, churchwide program units, executive directors of churchwide service units, executives for sections related to the officers, presidents of separately incorporated churchwide units, the executive for administration, and executive assistants to the presiding bishop 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.

[Alternative amendment proposed in redesign amendments.]

13.52.A05. Responsibilities of the Office of the Treasurer

- a. This office shall be related to the treasurer, who shall be its full-time executive officer.
- b. This office shall have the sole authority and responsibility to establish and maintain banking relationships.
- c. This office shall have the authority to borrow; issue bonds, notes, certificates, or other evidence of obligation; or increase contingent liabilities within the overall limits determined by the Churchwide Assembly and the more restrictive limits established by the Church Council. No churchwide board or program committee shall make a commitment that binds the churchwide organization to an outside lending or other similar institution or which creates a liability of this church to such an institution without prior approval of the Office of the Treasurer.

[Amendment proposed to November CC meeting; to be amended and renumbered as 15.14.A10]

16.12.10. Program Committees

16.12.11. Each program committee, which normally shall meet two times each year, shall function as specified in this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions regarding its responsibilities in relation to a particular unit of the churchwide organization.

[Alternative amendment proposed in general CBCR amendments.]

16.12.12. Each program committee shall be composed of 15 persons elected to one six-year term, with no consecutive reelection, and with one-third of the members being elected every biennium, as provided in Chapter 19. The presiding bishop of this church, or the presiding bishop's designee, shall serve as an advisory member of each program committee. The Conference of Bishops shall select one bishop to serve as an advisory member of each program committee. A member of the Church Council shall be appointed by the Church Council to serve as a liaison member of each program committee with voice but not vote.

16.12.13. Each program committee shall review proposed policies and strategies for its areas of

responsibility in the preparation of such policies and strategies for submission by the executive director of the unit to the appropriate committee of the Church Council, for presentation to the Church Council.

~~16.12.14. Proxy and absentee voting shall not be permitted.~~

~~16.12.15. Each program committee shall seek to ensure that the unit operates within the expenditure authorization established by the Church Council.~~

19.04. Other than elections of officers and executive directors of units, elections shall be for one six-year term, without consecutive reelection, and with one-third of the members of the Church Council and of each board, program committee, or advisory committee elected each biennium.

19.05.01. Each voting member of the Church Council, board, program committee, or advisory committee of this church shall cease to be a member of the Church Council, board, program committee, or advisory committee if no longer a voting member of a congregation of this church. Upon two successive absences that have not been excused by the Church Council, board, program committee, or advisory committee, a member's position shall be declared vacant by the secretary of this church, who shall arrange for election by the Church Council to fill the unexpired term.

[Alternative amendment proposed in general CBCR amendments.]

19.05.02. For purposes of nomination to and service on the Church Council, a program committee, or a board of a churchwide unit, "synodical membership" shall be defined as follows:

...

19.11.01. In the nomination and election process the following general considerations shall be observed:

...

f. The Conference of Bishops shall select one bishop from each region to serve a four-year term as a liaison member of the Church Council. Each biennium the Conference of Bishops shall select a bishop to serve as an advisory member of each board, program committee, and advisory committee of the churchwide organization. ~~No synodical bishop shall serve as a voting member of the Church Council or of a board or committee of any churchwide unit.~~

[Alternative amendment proposed in general CBCR amendments.]

19.51.01. The Churchwide Assembly shall elect all members of ~~each program committee and~~ 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 ~~committees and~~ boards have within their membership persons with the expertise and experience essential to the fulfillment of the work of the unit.

19.61.02. No member of the Church Council, a committee of the Church Council, a board, ~~a program committee~~, or other 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 or board of the churchwide organization.

...

[Alternative amendment proposed in general CBCR amendments.]

4. LIFT Recommendations on Interrelationships

The LIFT Task Force is proposing recommendations that focus on strengthening the vitality of congregations in ways that also strengthen connections within and across the expressions and partners of this

church. (For more detail and rationale, see Exhibit E, Part 2b, pages 6–7).

The specific recommended amendments to the ELCA *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions* in this area are as follows:

- 10.61.** **Opportunities for groupings of congregations and institutions in specified geographic areas of the synod shall be provided by the synod to foster interdependent relationships among congregations, institutions, the synod, and churchwide units for mission purposes. These groupings may be formed as conferences, clusters, coalitions, or other area subdivisions. This synod may establish conferences, clusters, coalitions, area subdivisions, and networks as appropriate within its territory and in collaboration with other synods and partners as specified in the bylaws and continuing resolutions. The purpose of such groupings shall be to foster interdependent relationships among congregations, institutions, and synodical and churchwide units.**
- †S12.01. This synod ~~shall~~ may establish conferences, clusters, coalitions, ~~or other~~ area subdivisions, ~~and~~ networks as appropriate within its territory and in collaboration with other synods and partners as specified in the bylaws and continuing resolutions. The purpose of such groupings shall be to foster interdependent relationships among congregations, institutions, and synodical and churchwide units for mission purposes.

**Index to Potential Constitutional Changes for 2011
 November 12, 2010**

Numerous amendments are being proposed in order to clarify the meaning of the phrase “this church” wherever it is used throughout the governing documents. Currently it is unclear whether that phrase, as used in many provisions, is intended to refer to the whole church—meaning the denomination known as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)—or the incorporated churchwide organization, also known as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The confusion begins in Chapter 1 of the ELCA Constitution with provisions 1.01., 1.02., and 1.11., and the accompanying bylaws. Bylaw 1.01.01. was adopted by the 1993 Churchwide Assembly to require “specific references” whenever the phrase “this church” signifies the churchwide organization. The amendments now being proposed are designed to clarify those specific references to the churchwide organization. In some cases, making the distinction is not necessary and no amendment is proposed.

Amendments are also being proposed to clarify that when the constitution and bylaws are referenced, the meaning includes continuing resolutions as well.

1.01.01.	<i>(this church)</i>	11.31.	<i>(this church)</i>	LIFT
1.11.	<i>(this church)</i>	11.33.	<i>(this church)</i>	19.11.01(<i>new ministry</i> ; LIFT)
1.21.01.	<i>(this church)</i>	11.41.	<i>(this church)</i>	19.61.02. (<i>this church</i> ; LIFT)
1.31.01.	<i>(this church)</i>	11.41.06.	<i>(this church)</i>	19.61.B98. (<i>clarification</i>)
1.31.02.	<i>(this church)</i>	11.41.07.	<i>(clarification)</i>	20.11. (<i>clarification</i>)
6.02.	<i>(this church)</i>	12.41.	<i>(clarification)</i>	20.15. (<i>this church</i>)
7.22.	<i>(this church)</i>	12.41.21.	<i>(this church)</i>	20.21.01. (<i>this church</i>)
7.31.11.	<i>(clarification)</i>	12.51.31.	<i>(new ministry)</i>	20.22.01. (<i>this church</i>)
7.31.13.	<i>(clarification)</i>	13.11.	<i>(this church)</i>	20.31.01. (<i>this church</i>)
7.52.11.	<i>(clarification)</i>	13.31.	<i>(this church)</i>	20.51. (<i>this church</i>)
7.52.23.	<i>(clarification)</i>	13.41.	<i>(this church)</i>	20.52.A05. (<i>this church</i>)
8.17.	<i>(this church)</i>	13.51.	<i>(this church)</i>	20.53.A92 (<i>this church</i>)
8.40.	<i>(outdated)</i>	14.11.	<i>(this church)</i>	21.01. (<i>indemnification</i>)
8.41.	<i>(outdated)</i>	14.12.01.	<i>(new ministry)</i>	21.02. (<i>indemnification</i>)
8.41.01.	<i>(outdated)</i>	14.14.	<i>(this church)</i>	21.03. (<i>indemnification</i>)
8.72.10.	<i>(new ministry)</i>	14.15.	<i>(this church)</i>	21.04. (<i>indemnification</i>)
8.72.11.	<i>(new ministry)</i>	14.21.06.	<i>(this church)</i>	22.11. (<i>this church</i>)
8.72.13.	<i>(new ministry)</i>	14.21.15.	<i>(this church)</i>	22.31. (<i>this church</i>)
8.72.16.	<i>(new ministry)</i>	14.21.16.	<i>(this church)</i>	†S2.01. (<i>this church</i>)
8.74.01.	<i>(new ministry)</i>	14.32.01(<i>new ministry</i> ; LIFT)		†S2.02. (<i>this church</i>)
8.74.02.	<i>(new ministry)</i>	14.32.05.	<i>(clarification)</i>	†S2.03. (<i>this church</i>)
9.21.d.	<i>(clarification)</i>	14.41.11.	<i>(clarification)</i>	†S6.03. (<i>this church</i>)
9.62	<i>(clarification; new policy)</i>	15.21.01.	<i>(this church)</i>	†S6.06. (<i>consistency</i>)
9.71.	<i>(clarification)</i>	16.12.	<i>(clarification)</i>	S7.12. (<i>consistency</i>)
10.02.01.	<i>(clarification)</i>	16.12.11. (<i>this church</i> ; LIFT)		†S8.12. (<i>clarification</i>)
10.21.	<i>(this church)</i>	19.01.	<i>(this church)</i>	S8.23. (<i>consistency</i>)
10.31.	<i>(clarification)</i>	19.03.	<i>(this church)</i>	†S8.41. (<i>new policy</i>)
10.41.04.	<i>(clarification)</i>	19.05(<i>this church</i> ; <i>new policy</i>)		†S8.51. (<i>new policy</i>)
10.52.	<i>(new ministry)</i>	19.05.01.		S8.52. (<i>new policy</i>)
10.63.	<i>(consistency)</i>		<i>(this church; new policy;</i>	†S8.54. (<i>consistency</i>)

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- S9.05. *(new policy)*
- S9.06. *(new policy)*
- S9.07. *(new policy)*
- S10.06.
 (clarification; new policy)
- S10.07.01. *(new policy)*
- †S13.01. *(this church)*
- †S14.15. *(clarification)*
- †S16.01. *(indemnification)*
- †S16.02. *(indemnification)*
- †S16.03. *(indemnification)*
- †S16.04. *(indemnification)*
- †S16.05. *(indemnification)*
- †S18.11. *(this church)*
- †S18.21. *(this church)*
- †S18.31. *(this church)*
- *C3.03. *(this church)*
- *C4.06. *(this church)*
- *C5.03. *(this church)*
- *C6.03. *(consistency)*
- *C6.05. *(new policy)*
- *C7.03. *(new policy)*
- *C7.04. *(new policy)*
- *C9.07. *(consistency)*
- C10.03. *(new policy)*
- C12.08. *(clarification)*
- *C16.03. *(clarification)*
- *C17.04. *(clarification)*

**2011 CBCR proposed changes
November 12, 2010**

- 1.01.01.** The name, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, as used herein, refers, in general references, to this whole church, including its three **primary** 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 are made herein.
- 1.11.** **The This church churchwide organization shall be incorporated.**
- 1.21.01.** The seal of **the this church churchwide organization** is a cross with three united flames emanating from the base of the cross and three entwined circles beside the cross. The year of the constituting convention of this church is included at the base of the cross. The name of this church forms the circular outer edge of the seal.
- 1.31.01.** The principal office of **the this church churchwide organization** shall be located in Chicago, Illinois.
- 1.31.02.** **The This church churchwide organization** may maintain offices in such other locations as the Churchwide Assembly or the Church Council shall determine.
- 6.02.** **The voting members of the this church churchwide organization shall be those persons elected to serve as members of the Churchwide Assembly. Membership in a congregation does not, in itself, confer voting rights in this corporation.**
- 7.22.** **An ordained minister 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 shall comply with the constitution of this church's constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions.**
- 7.31.11.** Persons admitted to and continued in the ordained ministry of this church shall satisfactorily meet and maintain the following, as defined by this **church's constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions 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:
- ...
- 7.31.13. Preparation and Approval.** Except as provided below, a candidate for ordination as a pastor shall have:
- membership in a congregation of this church and registration, by its pastor and council, of the candidate with the candidacy committee;
 - been **endorsed-granted entrance to candidacy** by and under the guidance and supervision of the appropriate committee for at least a year before being approved for **ordination call**;
 - satisfactorily completed the requirements for the Master of Divinity degree from an accredited theological school in North America, including practical preparation, as defined by the appropriate churchwide unit, such as internship and supervised clinical work;
 - completed at least one year of residency in a seminary of this church or of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, except when waived by the appropriate committee in consultation with the faculty of a seminary of this church or of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada;

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- e. been recommended for approval by the faculty of a seminary of this church or of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada;
- f. been examined and approved by the appropriate committee according to criteria, policies, and procedures ~~established~~ **recommended** by the appropriate churchwide unit after consultation with the Conference of Bishops and adoption by the Church Council;

...
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:**

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 established recommended** by the appropriate churchwide unit after consultation with the **seminaries and colleges of this church that offer programs designed to prepare persons for rostered service as associates in ministry** ~~Conference of Bishops and adoption by the Church Council;~~
- 5) received and accepted a properly issued and attested letter of call, ~~and~~
- ~~6) been commissioned, according to the rite of this church, as an associate in ministry;~~

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 **and consecration;**
- 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 **established recommended** by the appropriate churchwide unit after consultation with the Deaconess Community of the ELCA and the **seminaries and colleges of this church that offer programs designed to prepare persons for rostered service as deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America** ~~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; and
 - 8) been consecrated, according to the rite of this church, as a deaconess.

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 **consecration 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;
- 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 **established recommended** by the appropriate churchwide unit **for such candidacy 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; and
- 11) been consecrated, according to the rite of this church, as a diaconal minister.

7.52.23. . . .

- d.** ~~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.

8.17. References herein to the nature of the relationship between the three **primary** expressions of this church—congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization—as being interdependent or as being in a partnership relationship describe the mutual responsibility of these expressions in God’s mission, and the fulfillment of the purposes of this church as described in Chapter 4, and do not imply or describe the creation of partnerships, co-ventures, agencies, or other legal relationships recognized in civil law.

8.40. **SPECIAL INTEREST CONFERENCES**

8.41. ~~This church cherishes the diversity of cultural and linguistic groups as they are brought together in the geographic synods, recognizing, however, that certain groups, for historical~~

reasons, may be able to meet needs and share resources through special interest conferences, which for the present cannot occur in the regular life within the geographic synods.

8.41.01. — Because of both official and informal international contacts with other churches, the Danish Special Interest Conference, Finnish (Suomi) Special Interest Conference, German Lutheran Conference in North America, and Hungarian Special Interest Conference shall relate to this church under the authority of the presiding bishop of this church through an executive or designated unit as determined by the presiding bishop. Official contacts and relationships of the special interest conferences with leaders and representatives of other churches shall be coordinated through the Office of the Presiding Bishop.

8.72.10. Ecumenical Availability of Ordained Ministers and Rostered Laypersons

8.72.11. 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 policy 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.

8.72.13. Whenever an ordained minister, associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is to serve or is serving in a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by the Churchwide Assembly, or whenever an ordained minister of a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been so declared and established is to serve or is serving in this church, a full sharing of relevant information concerning such rostered leader's ordained minister's experience and fitness for ministry is expected between the synodical bishop (or other appropriate office or entity) of this church and the appropriate person, office, or entity in the other church. Relevant information related to fitness for ministry shall include, but is not limited to, any information concerning disciplinary proceedings or allegations that could result, or could have resulted, in

disciplinary proceedings.

8.72.16. An ordained minister, associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, while serving in an ecumenical setting, remains subject to the standards, policies, and discipline of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. An ordained minister of a church body with which a relationship of full communion exists is understood by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as subject to the standards, policies, and discipline of the church body in which the ordained minister is rostered or holds ministerial membership. Such an ordained minister, while serving in an ELCA congregation or other ministry, is expected to abide by the standards and policies of this church related to ordained ministers.

8.74. **This church, in accord with constitutional provision 2.05., acknowledges as one with it in faith and doctrine all churches that accept the teaching of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession and understands that altar and pulpit fellowship with congregations and other entities of such churches may be locally practiced. Local practice of altar and pulpit fellowship, in accord with churchwide constitutional provision 2.05., is subject to the approval of the Synod Council, upon endorsement by the synodical bishop. Notice of such approval is to be given to the presiding bishop as the chief ecumenical officer of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.**

8.74.01. The approval is granted initially for one year only and must be reviewed and approved annually by the Synod Council. Any time that the local practice of altar and pulpit fellowship no longer serves the mission and ministry needs of this church, the synodical bishop may withdraw endorsement and the Synod Council may withdraw the approval.

8.74.02. An ordained minister of a church body with which the ELCA is not in full communion who is serving in a ministry involving the local practice of altar and pulpit fellowship with an ELCA congregation is understood to be subject to the standards, policies, and discipline of the church body in which the ordained minister is rostered or holds ministerial membership. Such an ordained minister, while serving an ELCA congregation or other ministry, is expected to abide by the standards and policies of this church related to ordained ministers. An ordained minister of this church, while serving in a ministry involving the local practice of altar and pulpit fellowship with a non-ELCA congregation, remains subject to the standards, policies, and discipline of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

9.21. **This church shall recognize, receive, and maintain on the roster those congregations which by their practice as well as their governing documents:**

...

d. **agree to call pastoral leadership from the clergy roster of this church in accordance with the call procedures of this church, except in special circumstances as defined in the bylaws accompanying this provision, and with the approval of the synodical bishop;**

...

9.62. **A congregation may terminate its relationship with this church by the following procedure:**

~~**a.** **A resolution indicating desire to terminate its relationship must be adopted at a legally called and conducted special meeting of the congregation by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present.**~~

~~**b.** **The secretary of the congregation shall submit a copy of the resolution to the synodical bishop and shall mail a copy of the resolution to voting members of the congregation. This notice shall be submitted within 10 days after the resolution has been adopted.**~~

~~**c.** **The bishop of the synod shall consult with the congregation during a period of at least 90**~~

days.

- ~~d. If the congregation, after consultation, still desires to terminate its relationship, such action may be taken at a legally called and conducted special meeting by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present, at which meeting the synodical bishop or an authorized representative shall be present. Notice of the meeting shall be mailed to all voting members at least 10 days in advance of the meeting.~~
- ~~e. A certified copy of the resolution to terminate its relationship shall be sent to the synodical bishop, at which time the relationship between the congregation and this church shall be terminated.~~
- ~~f. Notice of termination shall be forwarded by the synodical bishop to the secretary of this church and published in the periodical of this church.~~
- ~~g. Congregations which had been members of the Lutheran Church in America shall be required, in addition to the foregoing provisions in 9.62., to receive synodical approval before terminating their membership in this church.~~
- ~~h. Congregations that are established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be required, in addition to the foregoing provisions in 9.62., to receive synodical approval before terminating their membership in this church.~~

A congregation may terminate its relationship with this church by the following procedure:

- a. A resolution indicating the intent to terminate its relationship must be adopted at a legally called and conducted special meeting of the congregation by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present. Such meeting may be held no sooner than 30 days after written notice of the meeting to the bishop of the synod, during which time the congregation shall consult with the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any. The times and manner of the consultation shall be determined by the bishop in consultation with the congregation council. Unless he or she is a voting member of the congregation, the bishop, and the bishop's designee if any, shall have voice but not vote at the meeting.**
- b. The secretary of the congregation shall submit a copy of the resolution to the bishop, attesting that the special meeting was legally called and conducted and certifying the outcome of the vote, and shall mail a copy of the resolution to voting members of the congregation. This notice shall be submitted within 10 days after the resolution has been adopted.**
- c. The bishop of the synod and the congregation shall continue in consultation, as specified in a. above, during a period of at least 90 days after receipt by the synod of the notice as specified in b. above.**
- d. If the congregation, after such consultation, still seeks to terminate its relationship, such action may be taken at a legally called and conducted special meeting by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present. Notice of the meeting shall be mailed to all voting members and to the bishop at least 10 days in advance of the meeting. Unless he or she is voting member of the congregation, the bishop, and the bishop's designee if any, shall have voice but not vote at the meeting.**
- e. A copy of the resolution, attesting that the special meeting was legally called and conducted and certifying the outcome of the vote, shall be sent to the bishop within 10 days after the resolution has been adopted, at which time the relationship between the congregation and**

this church shall be terminated subject to paragraphs g. and h. below. Unless this notification to the bishop also certifies that the congregation has voted by a two-thirds vote to affiliate with another Lutheran denomination, the congregation will be conclusively presumed to be an independent or non-Lutheran church.

- f. Notice of termination shall be forwarded by the bishop to the secretary of this church, who shall report the termination to the Churchwide Assembly.**
- g. Congregations seeking to terminate their relationship with this church which fail or refuse to comply with each of the foregoing provisions in 9.62., shall be required to receive Synod Council approval before terminating their membership in this church.**
- h. Congregations which had been members of the Lutheran Church in America shall be required, in addition to the foregoing provisions in 9.62., to receive synodical approval before terminating their membership in this church.**
- i. Congregations established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be required, in addition to complying with the foregoing provisions in 9.62., to satisfy all financial obligations to this church and receive Synod Council approval before terminating their membership in this church.**
- j. If a congregation fails to achieve the required two-thirds vote of voting members present at the congregation's first meeting as specified in 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 congregation fails to achieve the required two-thirds vote of voting members present at the congregation's second meeting as specified in d. above, another attempt to consider termination of relationship with this church must follow all requirements of 9.62 and may begin no sooner than six months after that second meeting.**

9.71. Subject to the provisions of 9.52., the following shall govern the ownership of property by congregations of this church:

...

- d. Title to the property of a congregation that has acted to terminate its relationship with this church by the provisions of 9.62. and has acted by a two-thirds vote to relate to another Lutheran church body shall continue to reside in the congregation.**
- e. Title to the property of a congregation that has acted to terminate its relationship with this church by the provisions of 9.62. and has acted by a two-thirds vote to become independent or to relate to a non-Lutheran church body shall continue to reside in the congregation only with the consent of the Synod Council. The Synod Council, after consultation with the congregation by an 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 the congregation. If the Synod Council fails to give such approval, title shall remain with those members who desire to continue as a congregation of this church.**

10.02.01. The Slovak Zion Synod shall continue as a nongeographic synod of this church. In all other respects it shall be bound by the provisions of the constitutions, and bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this church. In addition, it shall enter into relationships with geographic synods in order to provide opportunities for congregations, ordained ministers, and other leaders to share

- in the programmatic services of such synods, workshops, and conferences. It shall also periodically review and evaluate its ministries to ascertain their continuing effectiveness.
- 10.21. **Each synod, in partnership with the churchwide organization, shall bear primary responsibility for the oversight of the life and mission of this church in its territory. In fulfillment of this role, the synod shall:**
- ...
- c. **Provide for discipline of congregations, ordained ministers, and persons on the official lay rosters; as well as for termination of call, appointment, adjudication, and appeals consistent with the procedures established by this church in Chapter 20 of this the ELCA constitution and bylaws.**
- 10.31. ...
- b. **The vice president shall chair the Synod Council. In the event of the death, resignation, or disability of the bishop, the vice president, after consultation with the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, shall convene the Synod Council to arrange for the conduct of the duties of the bishop until a new bishop shall be elected, or, in the case of temporary disability, until the bishop resumes full performance of the duties of the office.**
- 10.41.04. Synods may establish processes that permit representatives of congregations under development mission settings formed with the intent of becoming chartered congregations and synodically authorized worshipping communities of the synod, under bylaw 10.02.03., to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with bylaw 10.41.01.
- 10.52. **The Synod Council shall consist of the four officers of the synod, 10 to 24 other members, at least one young adult and at least one youth, all elected by the Synod Assembly. Each person elected to the Synod Council shall be a voting member of a congregation of the synod, with the exception of ordained ministers on the roster of the synod who reside outside the territory of the synod. The process for election and the term of office when not otherwise specified herein shall be determined by each synod. A member of the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America from the synod, unless otherwise elected as a voting member of the Synod Council, may serve as an advisory member of the Synod Council with voice but not vote.**
- 10.63. **Each synod shall have an Executive Committee, a Consultation Committee, an Audit Committee, and a Committee on Discipline. Each synod also shall establish a Mutual Ministry Committee to provide support and counsel to the bishop.**
- 11.31. **The legislative function of the churchwide organization shall be fulfilled by the Churchwide Assembly as described in Chapter 12 of this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions.**
- 11.33. **Leadership of this church shall be vested in the churchwide officers, the Churchwide Assembly, the Church Council, the Conference of Bishops boards, and executive directors of churchwide administrative units. The full-time officers shall be the presiding bishop of this church, secretary of this church, and treasurer of this church. The vice president shall be non-salaried and shall serve as chair of the Church Council.**
- 11.41. **Within the limits established by the Churchwide Assembly in the constitution, and bylaws, and continuing resolutions, the Church Council, as the board of directors of the**

- ~~churchwide organization~~, shall establish the fiscal policies of ~~this church~~ ~~the churchwide organization~~.
- 11.41.06. No churchwide appeal to congregations or individuals of this church for the raising of funds shall be conducted by ~~the this church churchwide organization~~ or churchwide units without the consent of the Churchwide Assembly, following consultation with the Conference of Bishops. No appeal to selected congregations and individuals of this church for the raising of funds shall be conducted by ~~the churchwide organization this church~~ or churchwide units without the consent of the Church Council, following consultation with either the Conference of Bishops or specific synods as appropriate. Proposals for such special appeals shall be presented to the Church Council through the appropriate council committee with recommendations by the Office of the Presiding Bishop.
- 11.41.07. ~~This church shall not, in any manner, be responsible for the debts or liabilities of other Lutheran organizations, institutions, or agencies, whether independent of or affiliated with this church.~~
- 12.41. ~~The voting members of the Churchwide Assembly shall be the voting members of this corporation church.~~ The requirements for voting members of the assembly and other members shall be specified in the bylaws.
- 12.41.21. The officers of ~~the this church churchwide organization~~ and the bishops of the synods shall serve as *ex officio* members of the Churchwide Assembly. They shall have voice and vote.
- 12.51.31. A Nominating Committee, elected by the Churchwide Assembly, shall nominate ~~at least one two~~ persons 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, ~~and~~ bylaws, ~~and continuing resolutions~~ of this church.

Chapter 13.

OFFICERS ~~OF THIS CHURCH~~

- 13.10. OFFICERS
- 13.11. ~~This church shall have as its~~ ~~The~~ officers ~~shall be~~ the presiding bishop, vice president, secretary, and treasurer.
- 13.31. The vice president ~~of this church~~ shall be a layperson who shall serve as chair of the Church Council and, in the event the presiding bishop is unable to do so, as chair of the Churchwide Assembly. The vice president shall serve under the presiding bishop of this church, providing leadership as specified in provision 11.33. of this ~~church's~~ constitution, ~~bylaws, and continuing resolutions.~~
- 13.41. The secretary ~~of this church~~ shall serve under the presiding bishop of this church, providing leadership, as specified in Chapter 11 of this ~~church's~~ constitution, ~~bylaws, and continuing resolutions~~, and shall fulfill the normal functions of the secretary of a corporation.
- 13.51. The treasurer ~~of this church~~ shall serve under the presiding bishop of this church, providing leadership as specified in Chapter 11 of this ~~church's~~ constitution, ~~bylaws, and continuing resolutions~~, and shall fulfill the normal functions of the treasurer of a corporation.
- 14.11. ~~This church shall have a~~ ~~The~~ Church Council which shall be the board of directors of ~~this church~~ and shall serve as the interim legislative authority between meetings of the Churchwide Assembly.

- 14.12.** The Church Council shall meet at least two times each year.
- 14.12.01.** ~~The Church Council and its committees may hold meetings by remote communication, including electronically and by telephone conference, and, to the extent permitted by state law, notice of all meetings may be provided electronically.~~
- 14.14.** The Church Council shall elect the treasurer ~~of this church.~~
- 14.15.** The Church Council shall fulfill responsibilities for elections as provided in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* and, in the event that a vacancy on the council or on a board or committee of the churchwide organization is declared by the secretary ~~of this church~~, the Church Council shall elect a member to serve the balance of the term.
- 14.21.06.** The Church Council shall adopt personnel policies for ~~the churchwide organization this church.~~ Salary structures of churchwide units shall be within the personnel policies of ~~the churchwide organization this church,~~ unless exceptions are granted by the Church Council.
- 14.21.15.** The Church Council shall determine, unless otherwise specified in ~~this church's the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions,~~ the appropriate churchwide unit for the fulfillment of particular program or policy responsibilities identified in the bylaws.
- 14.21.16.** The Church Council shall establish the criteria and policies for the relationship between ~~the churchwide organization this church~~ and independent, cooperative, and related Lutheran organizations. The policies adopted by the Church Council shall be administered by the appropriate unit of the churchwide organization. The determination of which organization shall relate to a specific unit of the churchwide organization shall be made by the Church Council.
- 14.32.01.** The Church Council shall have as liaison members nine synodical bishops, each elected by the Conference of Bishops to one four-year term. One bishop shall be elected from each region. In addition, the chair of the Conference of Bishops shall ~~serve as a liaison member of the Church Council be present for meetings of the Church Council.~~ *[Alternative amendment proposed by the LIFT task force.]*
- 14.32.05.** Advisory ~~and liaison~~ members of the Church Council shall have voice but not vote.
- 14.41.11.** The Church Council shall have an Executive Committee composed of the churchwide officers 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:
- ...
- ~~g. when necessary, serve as members of the U.S.A. National Committee of the Lutheran World Federation.~~
- 15.21.01.** The presiding bishop shall recommend to the Church Council the personnel policies of ~~the churchwide organization this church.~~ Such policies shall be binding ~~on all churchwide units~~ unless exceptions are granted by the Church Council or specified in the constitution, ~~and~~ bylaws, ~~and continuing resolutions~~ of this church.
- 16.12.** Each unit shall ~~be responsible report~~ to the Churchwide Assembly and will report to the Church Council in the interim. The policies, procedures, and operation of each unit shall be reviewed by the Church Council in order to assure conformity with the ~~constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions governing documents of this church~~ and with Churchwide Assembly actions.
- 16.12.11.** Each program committee, which normally shall meet two times each year, shall function as specified in ~~the this church's~~ constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions regarding its

- responsibilities in relation to a particular unit of the churchwide organization. *[Alternative amendment proposed by the LIFT task force.]*
- 19.01.** The Churchwide Assembly shall elect the presiding bishop, vice president, and secretary of this church and such other persons as the constitution and bylaws may require, according to procedures set forth in the constitution, ~~and bylaws,~~ **and continuing resolutions of this church.**
- 19.03.** In the event an interim vacancy on a board, committee, or **the Church** Council is declared by the secretary ~~of this church,~~ the Church Council shall elect a member to serve the balance of the term.
- 19.05.** Each nominee for an elected ~~or appointed~~ position in ~~this church~~ **the churchwide organization** shall be a voting member of a congregation of this church. **Each nominee for an appointed position in the churchwide organization should be a voting member of a congregation of this church.**
- 19.05.01.** Each voting member of the Church Council, board, program committee, or advisory committee of ~~the churchwide organization this church~~ shall cease to be a member of the Church Council, board, program committee, or advisory committee if no longer a voting member of a congregation of this church. Upon two successive absences that have not been excused by the Church Council, board, program committee, or advisory committee, a member's position shall be declared vacant by the secretary of this church, who shall arrange for election by the Church Council to fill the unexpired term. *[Alternative amendment proposed by the LIFT task force.]*
- 19.11.01.** In the nomination and election process the following general considerations shall be observed:
...
c. Members of the ~~boards or~~ committees of churchwide units, other than those in restricted categories, who have served less than one-half of a term shall be eligible for election to one full term to be served consecutively upon the conclusion of the partial term.
f. ~~The Conference of Bishops shall select one bishop from each region to serve a four-year term as a liaison member of the Church Council.~~ Each biennium the Conference of Bishops shall select a bishop to serve as an advisory member of each board, program committee, and advisory committee of the churchwide organization. No synodical bishop shall serve as a voting member of the Church Council or of a board or committee of any churchwide unit. *[Alternative amendment proposed by the LIFT task force.]*
g. The youth organization of this church shall elect for terms of ~~three~~ **two** years two persons to serve as advisory members of the Church Council.
- 19.61.02.** No member of the Church Council, a committee of the Church Council, a board, a program committee, or other 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 or board of the churchwide organization.
Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit the payment ~~by this church~~ 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, a board, or committee against any liability asserted against and incurred by such person in or arising from that capacity, whether or not ~~the churchwide organization this church~~ would have been required to indemnify such person against the liability under provisions of law or otherwise. *[Alternative amendment proposed by the LIFT task force.]*

19.61.B9811. Nominations Desk and Nominations Form

- ...
- 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.**

20.11. There shall be set forth in the bylaws a process of discipline governing officers, ordained ministers, 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 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 **and jointly with it.**

20.15. The procedures for consultation and discipline set forth in the bylaws shall be the exclusive means of resolving all matters pertaining to the discipline of congregations of this church. Neither **the churchwide organization this church** nor a synod of this church shall institute legal proceedings in which conduct described in provision 20.31.01. is the basis of a request for relief consisting of suspension of that congregation from this church or removal of that congregation from the roll of congregations of this church. A congregation of this church shall not institute legal proceedings against **the churchwide organization this church** or a synod of this church seeking injunctive or other relief against the imposition or enforcement of any disciplinary action against that congregation.

20.21.01. Ordained ministers 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 Word and Sacrament;
- d. willfully disregarding the provisions of the **constitutions, or bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this church;** or
- e. willfully failing to comply with the requirements ordered by a discipline hearing committee under 20.23.08.

20.22.01. Laypersons on official rosters 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;
- c. willfully disregarding or violating the functions and standards established by this church for the lay roster or rosters;
- d. willfully disregarding the provisions of the **constitutions, or bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this church;** or
- e. willfully failing to comply with the requirements ordered by a discipline hearing committee under 20.23.08.

- 20.31.01.** Congregations shall be subject to discipline for:
- a. departing from the faith confessed by this church;
 - b. willfully disregarding or violating the criteria for recognition as congregations of this church;
 - or
 - c. willfully disregarding or violating the provisions of the constitutions, or bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this church.
- 20.51.** **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, and bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this church;**
 - 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 minister or as a member of a congregation of this church.**
- 20.52.A0511.** *Recall or Dismissal of a Churchwide Officer*
- ...
- d. *In the case of alleged willful disregard or violation of the constitutions, and bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this church or of alleged conduct as would subject the officer to disciplinary action, the following procedures shall apply:*
- ...
- 20.53.A9211.** *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, and bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this church or the constitution and bylaws of the synod;*
 - 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 or as a member of a congregation of this church.*
- ...
- g. *If the case of alleged willful disregard or violation of the constitutions, and bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this church or the constitution and bylaws of the synod or of alleged conduct as would subject the officer to disciplinary action, the following procedures shall apply:*
- ...
- 21.01.** **Except as otherwise provided in this constitution, indemnification of any person who is or was made or threatened to be made a party to any proceeding is prohibited. For purposes of this chapter, the term, "proceeding," means a threatened, pending, or completed civil, criminal, administrative, arbitration, or investigative proceeding, including a proceeding in the right of this church, any other churchwide unit, or any other organization, but excluding (a) a proceeding by this church and (b) a disciplinary hearing or other proceeding described in Chapter 20. For purposes of this chapter, the term, "indemnification," includes advances of expenses. Subject to the limitations and duties imposed by law, each person who is or was made or threatened to be made a party to any**

proceeding by reason of the present or former capacity of that person as a Church Council member, officer, employee, or committee member of the churchwide organization, or member of the Conference of Bishops, shall be indemnified against all costs and expenses incurred by that person in connection with the proceeding. Indemnification by the churchwide organization of any person by reason of that person's capacity as a director, officer, employee, or committee member of a separately incorporated churchwide unit or of any other organization is subject to the provisions of section 21.02.

a. The term "proceeding" means a threatened, pending, or completed lawsuit, whether civil or criminal, an administrative or investigative matter, arbitration, mediation, alternative dispute resolution, or any other similar legal or governmental action. Except as otherwise required by law, the term "proceeding" does not include (a) any action by the churchwide organization or any unit thereof against the individual seeking indemnification, or (b) a disciplinary hearing or related process described in Chapter 20 of this constitution.

b. The term "indemnification" includes reimbursement and advances of costs and expenses for judgments, penalties, fines, settlements, excise taxes, reasonable attorneys' fees, disbursements, and similar required expenditures.

21.02. To the full extent permitted from time to time by law, each person who is or was made or threatened to be made a party to any proceeding by reason of the present or former capacity of that person as a Church Council member, officer, employee, or committee member of this church shall be indemnified against judgments, penalties, fines, settlements, excise taxes, and reasonable attorneys' fees and disbursements incurred by that person in connection with the proceeding. While indemnification of any person by reason of that person's capacity as a director, officer, employee, or committee member of a separately incorporated churchwide unit may be made by such separately incorporated unit, indemnification of such person by this church is prohibited. Indemnification of any person by reason of that person's capacity as a director, officer, employee, or committee member of any other organization is subject to the provisions of section 21.03.

21.03.02. Where a person who, while a member of the Church Council, officer, employee, or committee member of the churchwide organization, or member of the Conference of Bishops, or committee member of this church, is or was serving at the request of this church the churchwide organization as (or whose duties in that position involve or involved service in the capacity of) a director, officer, partner, trustee, employee, or agent of another organization, is or was made or threatened to be made a party to a proceeding by reason of such capacity, then such person shall not be entitled to indemnification unless only if (a) the Church Council has established a process for determining whether a person serving in the capacity described in this section shall be entitled to indemnification in any specific case, and (b) that process has been applied in making a specific determination that such person is entitled to indemnification.

21.04.03. This church The churchwide organization may purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of itself or any person entitled to indemnification pursuant to this chapter against any liability asserted against and incurred by this church or by such other person in or arising from a capacity described in section 21.02.01, or section 21.03.02.

22.11. **The This constitution of this church may be amended only through either of the following procedures:**

...

22.31. Continuing resolutions not in conflict with the constitution or bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may be adopted or amended by a majority vote of the Churchwide Assembly or by a two-thirds vote of the Church Council. Such continuing resolutions become effective immediately upon adoption. Matters related to the administrative functions of the churchwide organization this church shall be set forth in the continuing resolutions.

Constitution for Synods

†S2.01. This synod possesses the powers conferred upon it, and accepts the duties and responsibilities assigned to it, in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* (ELCA or “this church”), which are recognized as having governing force in the life of this synod.

†S2.02. The name Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA or “this church”) as used herein refers in general references to this whole church, including its three expressions—congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization. The name Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is also the name of the corporation of the churchwide organization to which specific references may be made herein.

†S2.02.03. No provision of this constitution shall be inconsistent with the constitution and bylaws of this church.

†S6.03. To fulfill these purposes, this synod, in partnership with the churchwide organization, shall bear primary responsibility for the oversight of the life and mission of this church in the territory of this synod. In fulfillment of this role, this synod shall:

...

c. Provide for discipline of congregations, ordained ministers, and persons on the official lay rosters; as well as for termination of call, appointment, adjudication, and appeals consistent with the procedures established by this church in Chapter 20 of the ELCA constitution and bylaws of the churchwide organization.

†S6.06. References herein to the nature of the relationship between the three expressions of this church—congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization—as being interdependent or as being in a partnership relationship describe the mutual responsibility of these expressions in God’s mission and the fulfillment of the purposes of this church as described in this chapter, and do not imply or describe the creation of partnerships, co-ventures, agencies, or other legal relationships recognized in civil law.

S7.12. Special meetings of the Synod Assembly may be called by the bishop with the consent of the Synod Council, and shall be called by the bishop at the request of one-fifth of the voting members of the Synod Assembly.

a. The notice of each special meeting shall define the purpose for which it is to be held. The scope of actions to be taken at such a special meeting shall be limited to the subject matter(s) described in the notice.

b. If the special meeting of the Synod Assembly is required for the purpose of electing a successor bishop because of death, resignation, or inability to serve, the special meeting shall be called by the Synod Council after consultation with the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in cooperation with the Synod Council.

†S8.12. As this synod’s pastor, the bishop shall be an ordained minister of Word and Sacrament who shall:

...

f. Install (or provide for the installation of):
1) the pastors of all congregations of this synod;
2) ordained ministers called to extraparish service within this church synod; and
3) persons serving in the other rostered ministries within this synod.

...

- i. Oversee and administer the work of this synod and in so doing:
- ...
- 9) Annually bring to the attention of the Synod Council the names of all rostered persons on leave from call or engaged in approved graduate study in conformity with the constitution, ~~and~~ bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this church and pursuant to prior action of this synod through the Synod Council;
- ...
- S8.23.** In the event of the death, resignation, or disability of the bishop, the vice president, after consultation with the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, shall convene the Synod Council to arrange for the conduct of the duties of the bishop until a new bishop shall be elected or, in the case of temporary disability, until the bishop resumes full performance of the duties of the office.
- †**S8.41.** The treasurer may shall be elected by the Synod Assembly or may be appointed by the Synod Council. The treasurer shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod. The treasurer may be either a layperson or an ordained minister.

- †S8.51. The terms of office of the officers of this synod shall be:
- a. The bishop of this synod shall be elected to a term of six years and may be reelected.
 - b. The vice president; ~~and secretary; and treasurer~~ of this synod shall be elected to a term of _____ years and may be reelected.
 - c. The treasurer of this synod shall be [elected] [appointed] to a _____-year term and may be reelected or reappointed.
- S8.52. The terms of the officers shall begin on the first day of the _____ month following election or, in special circumstances, at a time designated by the Synod Council.
- †S8.54. Should the bishop die, resign, or be unable to serve, the vice president, after consultation with the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, shall convene the Synod Council to arrange for the appropriate care of the responsibilities of the bishop until an election of a new bishop can be held or, in the case of temporary disability, until the bishop is able to serve again. Such arrangements may include the appointment by the Synod Council of an interim bishop, who during the vacancy or period of disability shall possess all of the powers and authority of a regularly elected bishop. The term of the successor bishop, elected by the next Synod Assembly or a special meeting of the Synod Assembly called for the purpose of election, shall be six years with the subsequent election to take place at the Synod Assembly closest to the expiration of such a term and with the starting date of a successor term to be governed by constitutional provision S8.52.
- S9.05. The Nominating Committee shall nominate at least one two persons for vice president; additional nominations may be made from the floor.
- S9.06. The Synod Council shall nominate at least one two persons for secretary; additional nominations may be made from the floor.
- S9.07. If the treasurer is elected, the The Synod Council shall nominate at least one two persons for treasurer; additional nominations may be made from the floor.
- S10.06. If a member of the Synod Council ceases to meet the requirements of the position to which she or he was elected be a member in good standing on a roster of this synod, if an ordained minister, or to be a voting member of a congregation of this synod, if a layperson, the office filled by such member shall at once become vacant.
- S10.07. The composition of the Synod Council, the number of its members, and the manner of their selection, as well as the organization of the Synod Council, its additional duties and responsibilities, and the number of meetings to be held each year shall be as set forth in the bylaws.
- S10.07.01. To the extent permitted by state law, meetings of the Synod Council and its committees may be held electronically or by telephone conference, and notice of all meetings may be provided electronically.
- †S13.01. Each congregation, except those certified as congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America by the uniting churches, prior to being listed in the register of congregations of this synod, shall adopt the *Model Constitution for Congregations* or one acceptable to this synod that is not in contradiction to the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- a. **New congregations.** A congregation newly formed by this church and any congregation seeking recognition and reception by this church shall:

...

- 2) Adopt governing documents that include fully and without alterations the Preamble, Chapter 1, where applicable, and all required provisions of Chapters 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 15, 16, 17, 18, and 19 in the *Model Constitution for Congregations* consistent with requirements of ~~this constitution and the constitution~~ the constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this church. Bylaws and continuing resolutions, appropriate for inclusion in these chapters and not in conflict with these required provisions in the *Model Constitution for Congregations*, the constitution of this synod, or the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, may be adopted as described in Chapters 16 and 18 of the *Model Constitution for Congregations*.

...
†S14.15. 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 of each congregation shall be kept in a separate book which shall remain its property. 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, or
- b. the issuance of a certificate of dismissal or transfer.

†S16.01. Except as otherwise provided in this constitution, indemnification of any person who is or was made or threatened to be made a party to any proceeding is prohibited. For purposes of this chapter, the term, "proceeding," means a threatened, pending, or completed civil, criminal, administrative, arbitration, or investigative proceeding, including a proceeding in the right of this synod or any other organization. Except as otherwise required by law, (a) the term, "proceeding," does not include a proceeding by this synod and (b) indemnification for expenses incurred in a disciplinary hearing or other proceeding described in Chapter 20 of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* shall be permitted only as provided in †S16.05. For purposes of this chapter, the term, "indemnification," includes advances of expenses.

†S16.02.01. To the full extent permitted from time to time Subject to the limitations and duties imposed by law, each person who is or was made or threatened to be made a party to any proceeding by reason of the present or former capacity of that person as a Synod Council member, officer, employee, or committee member of this synod shall be indemnified against judgments, penalties, fines, settlements, excise taxes, and reasonable attorney's fees and disbursements all costs and expenses incurred by that person in connection with the proceeding. Indemnification of any person by reason of that person's capacity as a director, officer, employee, or committee member of any other organization, regardless of its form or relationship to this synod, is subject to the provisions of section †S16.03-02.

- a. The term "proceeding" means a threatened, pending, or completed lawsuit, whether civil or criminal, an administrative or investigative matter, arbitration, mediation, alternative dispute resolution, or any other similar legal or governmental action. Except as otherwise required by law, the term "proceeding" does not include (a) any action by this synod against the individual seeking indemnification, or (b) subject to †16.04., a disciplinary hearing or related

process described in Chapter 20 of this constitution.

- b. The term “indemnification” includes reimbursement and advances of costs and expenses for judgments, penalties, fines, settlements, excise taxes, reasonable attorneys’ fees, disbursements, and similar required expenditures.

†S16.03.02. Whenever a person who, while a Synod Council member, officer, committee member, or employee of this synod, is or was serving at the request of this synod as (or whose duties in that position involve or involved service in the capacity of) a director, officer, partner, trustee, employee, or agent of another organization, is or was made or threatened to be made a party to a proceeding by reason of such capacity, then such person shall not be entitled to indemnification unless only if (a) the Synod Council has established a process for determining whether a person serving in the capacity described in this section shall be entitled to indemnification in any specific case, and (b) that process has been applied in making a specific determination that such person is entitled to indemnification.

†S16.04.03. This synod may purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of itself or any person entitled to indemnification pursuant to this chapter against any liability asserted against and incurred by this synod or by such other person in or arising from a capacity described in section †S16.02.01. or section †S16.03.02.

†S16.05.04. When in proceedings under Chapter 20 of the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America written charges against an ordained minister or a layperson on an official roster of this church are made in disciplinary proceedings under Chapter 20 of the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America by the synodical bishop or when written charges against a congregation are made in disciplinary proceedings by the Synod Council or the synodical bishop, and the discipline hearing committee determines that no discipline shall be imposed, and then if such determination is not reversed or set aside if an on appeal, is taken, then indemnification shall be made by the synod to the accused for reasonable attorney’s fees and other reasonable expenses related to the defense of the charges. The determination of the reasonableness of such fees and expenses shall be decided by the Synod Council.

†S18.11. Certain sections of this constitution incorporate and record therein required provisions of the constitution and bylaws of this church. If such provisions are amended by this church—the Churchwide Assembly, corresponding amendments shall be introduced at once into this constitution by the secretary of this synod upon receipt of formal certification thereof from the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

†S18.21. This synod may adopt bylaws not in conflict with this constitution nor with the constitution and bylaws of this church—the churchwide organization. This synod may amend its bylaws at any meeting of the Synod Assembly by a two-thirds vote of voting members of the assembly present and voting. Newly adopted bylaws and amendments to existing bylaws shall be reported to the secretary of this church.

†S18.31. This synod may adopt continuing resolutions not in conflict with this constitution or its bylaws or the constitution, and bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this church—the churchwide organization. Such continuing resolutions may be adopted or amended by a majority vote of the Synod Assembly or by a two-thirds vote of Synod Council. Newly adopted continuing resolutions and amendments to existing continuing resolutions shall be reported to the secretary of this church.

Model Constitution for Congregations

***C3.03.** 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.

***C4.06.** References herein to the nature of the relationship between the three expressions of this church—congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization—as being interdependent or as being in a partnership relationship describe the mutual responsibility of these expressions in God’s mission and the fulfillment of the purposes of this church as described in this chapter, and do not imply or describe the creation of partnerships, co-ventures, agencies, or other legal relationships recognized in civil law.

***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, ~~and~~ amendments to the bylaws, as specified in Chapter 16, and continuing resolutions, as provided in Chapter 18.

***C6.03.** This congregation acknowledges its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in which:

- a. This congregation agrees to be responsible for its life as a Christian community.
- b. This congregation pledges its financial support and participation in the life and mission of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- c. This congregation agrees to call pastoral leadership from the clergy roster of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in accordance with its call procedures except in special circumstances and with the approval of the bishop of the synod. These special circumstances are limited either to calling a candidate approved for the roster of ordained ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or to contracting for pastoral services with an ordained minister of a church body with which the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America officially has established a relationship of full communion.

***C6.05.** This congregation may terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America by the following procedure:

- ~~a.~~ A resolution indicating the desire of this congregation to terminate its relationship must be adopted at a legally called and conducted special meeting of this congregation by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present.
- ~~b.~~ The secretary of this congregation shall submit a copy of the resolution to the synodical bishop and shall mail a copy of the resolution to voting members of this congregation. This notice shall be submitted within 10 days after the resolution has been adopted.
- ~~c.~~ The bishop of the synod shall consult with this congregation during a period of at least 90 days.
- ~~d.~~ If this congregation, after consultation, still desires to terminate its relationship, such action may be taken at a legally called and conducted special meeting by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present, at which meeting the bishop of the synod or an authorized representative shall be present. Notice of the meeting shall be mailed to all voting members

at least 10 days in advance of the meeting.

- ~~e.~~ A certified copy of the resolution to terminate its relationship shall be sent to the synodical bishop, at which time the relationship between this congregation and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be terminated.
- ~~f.~~ Notice of termination shall be forwarded by the synodical bishop to the secretary of this church and published in the periodical of this church.
- ~~g.~~¹ Since this congregation was a member of the Lutheran Church in America, it shall be required, in addition to the foregoing provisions in *C6.05., to receive synodical approval before terminating its membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- ~~h.~~² Since this congregation was established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, it shall be required, in addition to the foregoing provisions in *C6.05., to receive synodical approval before terminating its membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

A congregation may terminate its relationship with this church by the following procedure:

- a. A resolution indicating the intent to terminate its relationship must be adopted at a legally called and conducted special meeting of the congregation by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present. Such meeting may be held no sooner than 30 days after written notice of the meeting to the bishop of the synod, during which time the congregation shall consult with the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any. The times and manner of the consultation shall be determined by the bishop in consultation with the congregation council. Unless he or she is a voting member of the congregation, the bishop, and the bishop's designee if any, shall have voice but not vote at the meeting.
- b. The secretary of the congregation shall submit a copy of the resolution to the bishop, attesting that the special meeting was legally called and conducted and certifying the outcome of the vote, and shall mail a copy of the resolution to voting members of the congregation. This notice shall be submitted within 10 days after the resolution has been adopted.
- c. The bishop of the synod and the congregation shall continue in consultation, as specified in a. above, during a period of at least 90 days after receipt by the synod of the notice as specified in b. above.
- d. If the congregation, after such consultation, still seeks to terminate its relationship, such action may be taken at a legally called and conducted special meeting by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present. Notice of the meeting shall be mailed to all voting members and to the bishop at least 10 days in advance of the meeting. Unless he or she is voting member of the congregation, the bishop, and the bishop's designee if any, shall have voice but not vote at the meeting.
- e. A copy of the resolution, attesting that the special meeting was legally called and conducted and certifying the outcome of the vote, shall be sent to the bishop within 10 days after the resolution has been adopted, at which time the relationship between the congregation and

¹ This provision is to be used in the constitutions of all congregations that formerly were a part of the Lutheran Church in America, in accord with provision 9.62.g. in the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

² This provision is to be used in the constitutions of all congregations that have been established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, in accord with provision 9.62.h. in the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

this church shall be terminated subject to paragraphs g. and h. below. Unless this notification to the bishop also certifies that the congregation has voted by a two-thirds vote to affiliate with another Lutheran denomination, the congregation will be conclusively presumed to be an independent or non-Lutheran church.

- f. Notice of termination shall be forwarded by the bishop to the secretary of this church, who shall report the termination to the churchwide assembly.
- g. Congregations seeking to terminate their relationship with this church which fail or refuse to comply with each of the foregoing provisions in 9.62., shall be required to receive synod council approval before terminating their membership in this church.
- h. Congregations which had been members of the Lutheran Church in America shall be required, in addition to the foregoing provisions in 9.62., to receive synodical approval before terminating their membership in this church.
- i. Congregations established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be required, in addition to complying with the foregoing provisions in 9.62., to satisfy all financial obligations to this church and receive synod council approval before terminating their membership in this church.
- j. If a congregation fails to achieve the required two-thirds vote of voting members present at the congregation's first meeting as specified in 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 congregation fails to achieve the required two-thirds vote of voting members present at the congregation's second meeting as specified in d. above, another attempt to consider termination of relationship with this church must follow all requirements of 9.62 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.

***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 providing assistance shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a pastor. Unless previously agreed upon by the Synod Council,

- C10.03.** an interim pastor is not available for a regular call to the congregation served.
Notice of all meetings of this congregation shall be given at the services of worship on the preceding two consecutive Sundays and by mail to all [voting] members at least 10 days in advance of the date of the meeting. The posting of such notice in the regular mail, with the regular postage affixed or paid, sent to the last known address of such members shall be sufficient. Electronic notice of meetings may be provided in addition to notice by regular mail.
- C12.08.** The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the employment and supervision of the salaried lay workers staff of this congregation. Nothing in this provision shall be deemed to affect the congregation's responsibility for the call, terms of call, or termination of call of any employees who are on a roster of this church.
- *C16.03.** Changes to the bylaws may be proposed by any voting member provided, however, 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, and that the The Congregation Council shall notify the congregation's members by mail of the proposal with the council's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the Congregation Meeting.
- *C17.04.** 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 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 _____ voting members of the congregation, the Congregation Council shall such notice and recommendations. Following the adoption of an amendment, the secretary of the congregation call such a meeting and submit shall submit a copy thereof to the synod. Such provisions shall become effective immediately following a vote of approval.

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SUMMARY OF CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES FOR REDESIGN OF THE CHURCHWIDE ORGANIZATION
As of November 12, 2010

- 1. Continuing Resolutions deleted by Church Council Action on October 8, 2010**
 - 14.32.A05.** Chairs of named program committees serve as advisory members of the Church Council
 - 14.32.B05.** The chair of the consulting committee on work on behalf of women serves as an advisory member of the Church Council
 - 15.11.E05.** *Responsibility for Anti-Racism and Diversity Training*
 - 15.11.H05.** *Responsibility for Worship and Liturgical Resources*
 - 16.11.A05.** *Program Units*
 - 16.12.A05.** *Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission Unit*
 - 16.12.B05.** *Global Mission Unit*
 - 16.12.C06.** *Vocation and Education Unit*
 - 16.12.D06.** *Church in Society Unit*
 - 16.12.E07.** *Multicultural Ministries Unit*
 - 17.11.A05.** *Identification of Service Units*
 - 17.21.A06.** *Communication Services*
 - 17.41.B05.** *Development Services*
 - 17.41.C09.** Implementation of staggered terms for Foundation board members
 - 17.51.A05.** *Operation of the Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA*
 - 17.51.B09.** Implementation of staggered terms for MIF board members
 - 19.04.A05.** *Implementation Process* for changes in size of boards and program committees
 - 19.21.D05.** Process for soliciting nominations to program committees
 - 19.51.A09.** *Nomination for Multicultural Ministries Program Committee*

- 2. Continuing Resolutions added by Church Council Action on October 8, 2010**
 - 14.32.A10.** Chairs of program committees serving as advisory members of the Church Council
 - 15.11.K10.** *Responsibilities for Relationship with Separately Incorporated Ministries*
 - 16.11.A10.** *Program Units*
 - 16.12.A10.** *Congregational and Synodical Mission Unit*
 - 16.12.B10.** *Global Mission Unit*
 - 17.11.A10.** *Mission Advancement Unit*
 - 17.51.A10.** *Operation of the Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA*
 - 19.04.A10.** *Implementation Process*

Two additional forms of redesign amendments are being proposed: changes to continuing resolutions that may be passed by the Church Council at this meeting, and changes to provisions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions that are dependent upon those provisions and bylaws that the Church Council may recommend to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly for action.

In the wake of the restructuring, several chapters of the ELCA constitution will be altered. Chapter 13 "Officers of This Church," will focus solely on the four officers and their duties. Responsibilities of

the offices will be transferred to Chapter 15, “Churchwide Offices and Administration,” where they logically belong.

Chapter 14, “Church Council” is largely unchanged. Changes to the description of the responsibilities of the Budget and Finance Committee reflect the transfer of the duties of the Development Services unit to the Mission Advancement unit. Alterations to the process of acting on Corporate Social Responsibility questions are proposed because of the elimination of the Church in Society unit. Some technical changes also are proposed for the process of electing and terminating executive directors of units.

Chapter 16, formerly “Program Units of the Churchwide Organization,” will be renamed “Units of the Churchwide Organization” and will consist of the responsibilities of the Congregational and Synodical Mission, Global Mission, and Mission Advancement units.

Chapter 17, formerly “Service Units of the Churchwide Organization” will become “Separately Incorporated Ministries,” and the descriptions and responsibilities of separately incorporated ministries will be gathered there.

Isolated changes to other chapters are proposed because of changes in nomenclature, such as from “program and service units” to “units” or from “separately incorporated units” to “separately incorporated ministries.”

3. Proposed Continuing Resolutions for Church Council Action in November 2010

- | | | |
|-------------------|---|--|
| 13.22.A04. | <i>Ecumenical Representatives</i> | Delete here; amend and add to new 15.12.B10. |
| 13.41.A03. | <i>Responsibilities for Risk Management</i> | Delete here; amend as new 15.13.A10. |
| 13.52.A05. | <i>Responsibilities of the Office of the Treasurer</i> | Delete here; amend as new
15.14.A10. |
| 13.52.B05. | <i>Responsibilities for Information Technology</i> | Delete here; new 15.14.B10. |
| 13.52.C05. | <i>Responsibility for Operational Support</i> | Delete; responsibilities added to 15.14.A10. |
| 14.32.C05. | <i>Separately incorporated ministries</i> | Amendment |
| 14.41.A05. | <i>Budget and Finance Committee</i> | Amend as new 14.41.A10. |
| 15.11.A04. | <i>Duties of the Executive for Administration</i> | Amend as new 15.12.A10. |
| 15.11.B05. | <i>Responsibility for Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations</i> | Amend as new
15.12.B10. |
| 15.11.C05. | <i>Responsibility for Federal Chaplaincy Ministries</i> | Amend as new 15.12.C10. |
| 15.11.D05. | <i>Responsibility for Human Resources</i> | Amend as new 15.12.D10. |
| 15.11.F05. | <i>Responsibility for Research and Evaluation</i> | Amend as new 15.12.E10. |
| 15.11.G05. | <i>Responsibility for Synodical Relations</i> | Amend as new 15.12.F10. |
| 15.11.G10. | <i>Responsibility for Theological Discernment</i> | New ministry |
| 15.13.A10. | <i>Responsibility for Risk Management</i> | former 13.41.A03. amended |
| 15.14.A10. | <i>Responsibilities of the Office of the Treasurer</i> | former 13.52.A05. amended |
| 15.14.B10. | <i>Responsibility for Information Technology</i> | former 13.52.B05. |
| 15.21.A05. | <i>Staffing Assumptions</i> | deleted |
| 15.21.B05. | <i>Appointment by Presiding Bishop</i> | deleted |
| 15.31.C03. | <i>Staff Services for the Conference of Bishops</i> | amended as 15.31.C10. |

4. Proposed Redesign Amendments for Consideration by the Churchwide Assembly All are amended unless otherwise noted.

- 5.01. *Separately incorporated ministries*
- 11.35. *Separately incorporated ministries [LIFT amendment also proposed]*
- 12.41.31. *Separately incorporated ministries [LIFT amendment also proposed]*
- 13.21. *Deletion of preparation of the Cabinet of Executives agenda*
- 13.41.02. *Change in responsibilities of the secretary*
- 14.21.14. *Corporate social responsibility*
- 14.21.21. *Process for election of executive directors of churchwide units*
- 15.11. *Definition of offices* **New**
- 15.11.02. *Administrative Team*
- 15.12. *Office of the Presiding Bishop* **New heading**
- 15.12.01. *Responsibilities of the Office of the Presiding Bishop* **New**
- 15.13. *Office of the Secretary* **New heading**
- 15.13.01. *Responsibilities of the Office of the Secretary* **New**
- 15.14. *Office of the Treasurer* **New heading**
- 15.14.01. *Responsibilities of the Office of the Treasurer* **New**
- 15.21. *Churchwide Staff*
- 15.21.02. *Approval of the presiding bishop needed for authorizing staff positions*
- 16.10. *Churchwide Units*
- 16.11. *Definition of churchwide units*
- 16.11.A11. *Identity of units* **Amendment and renumbering of 16.11.A10.**
- 16.12.01. *Responsibilities of churchwide units*
- 16.12.C11. *Mission Advancement Unit* **Amendment and renumbering of 17.11.A10.**
- 16.12.D11. *The Lutheran Magazine* **Amendment and renumbering of 17.30. through 17.31.A06.**
- 16.12.E11. *The ELCA Foundation* **Amendment and renumbering of 17.40. through 17.41.A05.**
- 16.20. *Separately Incorporated Program Units* **Amendment and renumbering as 17.10.**
- 16.21. *Separately Incorporated Program Units* **Deleted**
- 16.30. *Publishing House of the ELCA* **Deleted**
- 16.31. *Augsburg Fortress, Publishers* **Deleted; now amended as 17.40.**
- 16.31.01. *Augsburg Fortress, Publishers* **Deleted; now 17.40.01. Also LIFT.**
- 16.31.02. *Augsburg Fortress, Publishers* **Deleted; now 17.40.02.**
- 16.31.03. *Augsburg Fortress, Publishers* **Deleted; now 17.40.03.**
- 16.31.04. *Augsburg Fortress, Publishers* **Deleted; now 17.40.03.**
- 16.31.A05. *Augsburg Fortress, Publishers* **Deleted; now 17.40.A11.**
- 16.40. *Women's Organization* **Deleted**
- 16.41. *Women's Organization* **Deleted; now 17.50.**
- 16.41.01. *Women's Organization* **Deleted; now 17.50.01.**
- 16.41.02. *Women's Organization* **Deleted; now 17.50.02.**
- 16.41.03. *Women's Organization* **Deleted; now 17.50.03.**
- 16.41.04. *Women's Organization* **Deleted; now 17.50.04.**
- 16.41.05. *Women's Organization* **Deleted; now 17.50.05.**
- 16.41.06. *Women's Organization* **Deleted; now 17.50.06.**
- 16.41.07. *Women's Organization* **Deleted; now 17.50.07.**
- 16.41.A05. *Women's Organization* **Deleted; now 17.50.A11.**

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- 17.10. *Separately Incorporated Ministries* **New title**
- 17.11. *Service units* **Deleted**
- 17.11.A10. *Mission Advancement Unit* **Deleted here and moved to 16.12.C11.**
- 17.12. *Separate incorporation* **Deleted**
- 17.20.01. *Accountability of Service Units* **Deleted**
- 17.20. *Board of Pensions* **Amendment and renumbering of 17.61.**
- 17.20.01. *Board of Pensions* **Former 17.61.01.**
- 17.20.02. *Board of Pensions* **Former 17.61.02.**
- 17.20.03. *Board of Pensions* **Former 17.61.03., amended**
- 17.20.04. *Board of Pensions* **Former 17.61.04.**
- 17.20.05. *Board of Pensions* **Former 17.61.05.**
- 17.20.06. *Board of Pensions* **Former 17.61.06.**
- 17.20.07. *Board of Pensions* **Former 17.61.07.**
- 17.20.A11. *Board of Pensions* **Former 17.61.A05.**
- 17.20.B11. *Board of Pensions* **Amendment and renumbering of 17.61.B05.**
- 17.20.C11. *Board of Pensions* **Former 17.61.C09.**
- 17.21.01. *Constitutional provisions that apply to service units* **Deleted**
- 17.30. *Mission Investment Fund* **Amended; former 17.51.**
- 17.30.01. *Mission Investment Fund* **Former 17.51.01.**
- 17.30.02. *Mission Investment Fund* **Former 17.51.02.**
- 17.30.03. *Mission Investment Fund* **Former 17.51.03.**
- 17.30.04. *Mission Investment Fund* **Former 17.51.04.**
- 17.30.A11. *Mission Investment Fund* **Former 17.51.A10., amended**
- 17.30. *Church Periodical* **Deleted; now 16.12.D11.**
- 17.31. *Church Periodical* **Deleted; now 16.12.D11.**
- 17.31.01. *Church Periodical* **Deleted; now 16.12.D11.**
- 17.31.02. *Church Periodical* **Deleted; now 16.12.D11.**
- 17.31.03. *Church Periodical* **Deleted; now 16.12.D11.**
- 17.31.04. *Church Periodical* **Deleted; now 16.12.D11.**
- 17.31.10. *Church Periodical* **Deleted; now 16.12.D11.**
- 17.31.11. *Church Periodical* **Deleted; now 16.12.D11.**
- 17.31.12. *Church Periodical* **Deleted; now 16.12.D11.**
- 17.31.A06. *Church Periodical* **Deleted; now 16.12.D11.**
- 17.31.B05. *Church Periodical* **Deleted; now 16.12.D11.**
- 17.40. *Augsburg Fortress, Publishers* **Renumbering of 16.31.**
- 17.40.01. *Augsburg Fortress, Publishers* **Former 16.31.01. Also LIFT.**
- 17.40.02. *Augsburg Fortress, Publishers* **Former 16.31.02.**
- 17.40.03. *Augsburg Fortress, Publishers* **Former 16.31.03.**
- 17.40.04. *Augsburg Fortress, Publishers* **Former 16.31.04.**
- 17.40.A11. *Augsburg Fortress, Publishers* **Former 16.31.A05.**
- 17.40. *ELCA Foundation* **Deleted; now 16.12.E11.**
- 17.41. *ELCA Foundation* **Deleted; now 16.12.E11.**
- 17.41.01. *ELCA Foundation* **Deleted; now 16.12.E11.**

- 17.41.02. *ELCA Foundation* Deleted; now 16.12.E11.
- 17.41.03. *ELCA Foundation* Deleted; now 16.12.E11.
- 17.41.05. *ELCA Foundation* Deleted; now 16.12.E11.
- 17.41.06. *ELCA Foundation* Deleted; now 16.12.E11.
- 17.41.A05. *ELCA Foundation* Deleted; now 16.12.E11.
- 17.50. *Women's Organization* Former 16.41.
- 17.50.01. *Women's Organization* Former 16.41.01.
- 17.50.02. *Women's Organization* Former 16.41.02.
- 17.50.03. *Women's Organization* Former 16.41.03.
- 17.50.04. *Women's Organization* Former 16.41.04.
- 17.50.05. *Women's Organization* Former 16.41.05.
- 17.50.06. *Women's Organization* Former 16.41.06.
- 17.50.07. *Women's Organization* Former 16.41.07.
- 17.50.A11. *Women's Organization* Former 16.41.A05.
- 17.50. *Mission Investment Fund* Title deleted
- 17.51. *Mission Investment Fund* Deleted; now 17.30.
- 17.51.01. *Mission Investment Fund* Deleted; now 17.30.01.
- 17.51.02. *Mission Investment Fund* Deleted; now 17.30.02.
- 17.51.03. *Mission Investment Fund* Deleted; now 17.30.03.
- 17.51.04. *Mission Investment Fund* Deleted; now 17.30.04.
- 17.51.A10. *Mission Investment Fund* Deleted; now 17.30.A11.
- 17.60. *Board of Pensions* Title deleted
- 17.60. *ELCA Endowment Fund* New
- 17.60.01. *ELCA Endowment Fund* New
- 17.60.02. *ELCA Endowment Fund* New
- 17.60.03. *ELCA Endowment Fund* New
- 17.60.04. *ELCA Endowment Fund* New
- 17.61.B05. *Corporate Social Responsibility Committee of the Board of Pensions* Amended and
renumbered; now
17.20.B11.
- 17.70. *Other Separately Incorporated Ministries* New
- 17.70.A11. *The Deaconess Community* New
- 17.70.B11. *Lutheran Men in Mission* New
- 17.70.C11. *National Lutheran Campus Ministry, Inc.* New
- 17.70.D11. *Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Risk Management, Inc.* New
- 19.05.03. *Boards of Separately Incorporated Ministries*
- 19.51.02. *Nomination of program committee for Multicultural Ministries* Deleted

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**Redesign of the Churchwide Organization
Continuing Resolutions for Church Council Action
November 12, 2010**

13.22.A04. Ecumenical Representatives

- ~~Ecumenical representatives shall be chosen by the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America according to the following pattern:~~
- ~~a. The presiding bishop, in consultation with the Executive Committee of the Church Council, shall appoint members of delegations to national and international inter-church entities in which this church holds membership.~~
 - ~~b. The presiding bishop, in consultation with the Executive Committee of the Church Council, shall appoint members of inter-Lutheran, inter-faith, and ecumenical discussions, including bilateral dialogues and conversations, in which this church participates.~~
 - ~~c. All such appointments shall be reported to the Church Council as information.~~

13.41.A03. Responsibilities for Risk Management

~~The Office of the Secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, in collaboration with the treasurer of this church, shall provide and manage insurance (exclusive of life and health) programs for the churchwide organization and shall make available insurance programs to congregations, synods, regions, and related institutions, agencies, and organizations. Recommendations on standards for adequate, continuous insurance coverage to be maintained by synods, as required in constitutional provision 10.74., shall be provided.~~

13.52.A05. Responsibilities of the Office of the Treasurer

- ~~a. This office shall be related to the treasurer, who shall be its full-time executive officer.~~
- ~~b. This office shall have the sole authority and responsibility to establish and maintain banking relationships.~~
- ~~c. This office shall have the authority to borrow; issue bonds, notes, certificates, or other evidence of obligation; or increase contingent liabilities within the overall limits determined by the Churchwide Assembly and the more restrictive limits established by the Church Council. No churchwide board or program committee shall make a commitment that binds the churchwide organization to an outside lending or other similar institution or which creates a liability of this church to such an institution without prior approval of the Office of the Treasurer.~~
- ~~d. This office, through the Budget and Finance Committee of the Church Council, shall recommend to the Church Council a certified public accounting firm to audit the financial records of the churchwide organization. Synodical financial reports shall be submitted to this office for compilation.~~
- ~~e. This office shall provide for internal audit procedures of the churchwide organization.~~
- ~~f. This office shall provide legal documents pertaining to the financial and property management matters of the churchwide organization. These legal documents shall be signed by the officers authorized by the Church Council.~~
- ~~g. This office shall be authorized, within policies established by this church, to purchase or otherwise acquire title to real property; to mortgage, lease, sell, or otherwise dispose of the same; and to act on behalf of the units of the churchwide organization after receiving their~~

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- direction regarding the purchase or disposition of real property.*
- h. This office shall provide for a common system of financial reporting from synods and regions.*
 - i. This office shall provide, upon request, a financial management system for synods.*
 - j. This office shall provide, upon request, counsel in financial matters to the women's organization, congregations, synods, regions, and institutions.*
 - k. This office, within the policies established by the Church Council, shall assure the implementation of a donor gift acknowledgment process in consultation with the Foundation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.*
 - l. This office, in consultation with the Foundation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, shall recommend:
 - 1) approved policy for the valuation process for noncash gifts;*
 - 2) the management of assets of life-income agreements;*
 - 3) the establishment and management of memorial funds received by the foundation, and*
 - 4) the distribution of earned-income payments to remainder beneficiaries as regulated by the life-income, trust, and other fiduciary donor agreements.**
 - m. This office shall provide for the management of capital funds.*
 - n. This office shall manage capital loan funds established by the Church Council. The management shall be within policies established jointly by the Office of the Treasurer and other affected churchwide units.*
 - o. This office, in collaboration with the Office of the Secretary, shall examine the risk management and insurance needs of the churchwide organization and synods.*

13.52.B05. Responsibility for Information Technology

The treasurer shall provide for information technology in support of the work of this church and the operation of Chicago-based churchwide units. In so doing, the treasurer shall have an executive for information technology, appointed by the treasurer, who shall be responsible for the development and review of guidelines and policies for computer standards, security of electronic data, application development, data storage and data retrieval, and shall enable use of electronic technologies for churchwide staff to assist in support of congregations, synods, and related institutions and agencies of this church.

13.52.C05. Responsibility for Operational Support

The treasurer shall make provision for facilities management in support of the operation of the Lutheran Center and the function of Chicago-based churchwide units and, in so doing, the treasurer shall maintain management services with an executive for management services appointed by the treasurer who shall be responsible for building management for the churchwide organization and the coordination of central services for Chicago-based churchwide units.

14.32.C05:10. *One voting member of the Church Council shall be selected in each biennium to serve as a liaison with voice but not vote on each program committee of the program churchwide units. In addition, a member of the Church Council, upon invitation, may serve as liaison for the respective boards of trustees of the separately incorporated program units (i.e., Publishing House of the ELCA and Women of the ELCA) ministries.*

14.41.A05:10. Budget and Finance Committee

A Budget and Finance Committee shall be composed of members of the Church Council elected

by the council and the treasurer of this church as an ex officio member of the committee. This committee shall have staff services provided by the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Office of the Treasurer. The committee shall prepare and present a comprehensive budget to the Church Council for its consideration and presentation to the Churchwide Assembly. ~~In addition, the The~~ committee shall relate to the work of the Office of the Treasurer ~~and the Development Services unit.~~

15. ~~11.A04;12.A10.~~ Duties of the Executive for Administration

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 ~~have an appointment 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;
- e. provide staff services and documentation to the Planning and Evaluation Committee ~~and the Board Development Committee~~ of the Church Council; ~~and~~
- ~~f. oversee the coordination of central services for Chicago-based churchwide units.~~

15. ~~11.B05;12.B10.~~ Responsibility for Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations

Responsibility for ecumenical and inter-religious relations shall be exercised by the Office of the Presiding Bishop.

- a. An executive for ecumenical and inter-religious relations, appointed by the presiding bishop, shall coordinate the ecumenical, inter-Lutheran, and inter-religious activities of this church, and shall recommend, through the presiding bishop, policies ~~relative thereto~~ to the Church Council and the Churchwide Assembly. To fulfill these responsibilities, the executive for ecumenical and inter-religious relations shall:
 - 1) assist the presiding bishop of this church in carrying out the presiding bishop's role as the chief ecumenical officer of this church;
 - 2) administer the ecumenical, inter-Lutheran, and inter-religious discussions (including bilateral dialogues) in which this church is involved;
 - 3) ~~administer (including personnel and financial support) provide active support of~~ the membership of this church in ecumenical organizations, such as World Council of Churches, National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., and Lutheran World Federation;
 - ~~4) study and give advice in matters of fellowship and unity with other Lutheran churches;~~
 - 5) ~~4) guide the process of reception of theological agreements and give advice in matters of fellowship and unity with other Lutheran churches; and~~
 - 6) ~~encourage the study of theological topics of common concern; and~~

- 7)5) assist the synods, congregations, and churchwide units of this church in carrying out their ecumenical, inter-Lutheran, and inter-religious responsibilities by giving guidance and by preparing guidelines for action.
- b. From time to time as necessary, the Executive Committee of the Church Council shall convene as the U.S.A. National Committee of the Lutheran World Federation. In serving in such capacity, the committee shall be augmented by The U.S.A. National Committee also consists of the members of this church and the Lithuanian Evangelical Lutheran Church in Diaspora who serve as voting members of the council of the Lutheran World Federation. One staff member of the Global Mission unit and the executive for ecumenical and inter-religious relations shall serve as a consultant to the U.S.A. National Committee of the Lutheran World Federation.
- c. Ecumenical representatives shall be chosen by the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in consultation with the Executive Committee of the Church Council. These representatives include members of delegations to national and international inter-church entities in which this church holds membership and members of inter-Lutheran, inter-faith, and ecumenical discussions, including bilateral dialogues and conversations, in which this church participates. All such appointments shall be reported to the Church Council as information.

15.11.C05;12.C10. Responsibility for Federal Chaplaincy Ministries

Responsibility for To assist in the fulfillment of constitutional provision 13.21.j., the presiding bishop shall have a staff member appointed by the presiding bishop who shall be an assistant to the presiding bishop of this church to carry out duties related to the chaplaincies of this church in the U.S. armed forces, the Veterans Affairs Administration, and other federal agencies and institutions shall be carried out by an The assistant to the presiding bishop for federal chaplaincy ministries, who shall:

- a. supervise the operation of the Bureau for Federal Chaplaincy Ministries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;
- b. fulfill the requirements for endorsement of candidates for services in federal chaplaincies; and
- c. seek periodically the advice and counsel of the inter-Lutheran committee for federal chaplaincies, whose members from this church shall be appointed by the presiding bishop, and;
- d. be appointed by the presiding bishop.

15.11.D05;12.D10. Responsibility for Human Resources

Responsibility for human resources shall be exercised by the Office of the Presiding Bishop to provide management of which shall develop and manage the personnel policies and procedures for the churchwide organization, except as otherwise determined, including policies and procedures regarding equal-employment opportunity and affirmative action; recruitment, interview, and selection of staff; compensation and benefits; employee-assistance programs; fair-employment practices, staff position description, just and equitable employee-relations practices; performance evaluation; maintenance of personnel records; and training. In accordance with bylaw 14.21.06., the Church Council shall adopt personnel policies upon recommendation of the Office of the Presiding Bishop.

- a. To fulfill these responsibilities, the executive for human resources shall:

- 1) recommend personnel policies, procedures, and standards to the presiding bishop for submission to the Church Council, and, upon approval by the Church Council, be responsible for the implementation, administration, and evaluation of personnel policies, procedures, and standards for units, as applicable, of the churchwide organization;
- 2) guide the recruitment, personnel interviews, and process of selection of staff;
- 3) authorize necessary research to update compensation packages and make recommendations to the Church Council for upgrading pension and other benefits plans;
- 4) make employee assistance programs, such as family-crisis counseling and retirement-planning services, available to the employees of this church;
- 5) recommend policy and procedures to the Church Council for ongoing performance evaluation;
- 6) provide for just and equitable employee-relations practices, including grievance procedures, and provide employee services appropriate to the churchwide office;
- 7) maintain personnel records for all employees, including employee-performance evaluations; and
- 8) offer such policies to the synods and congregations as guidelines and be available to counsel and advise the synods as requested.

b. The executive for human resources shall be appointed by the presiding bishop.

15.11.F05.12.E10. Responsibility for Research and Evaluation

Responsibility for research and evaluation shall be exercised by the Office of the Presiding Bishop to provide reliable and valid research, relevant information, and appropriate evaluation related to the purposes of this church in order to assist the presiding bishop, other leaders, and staff of the churchwide organization to accomplish their duties.

a. To fulfill these responsibilities, the executive for research and evaluation shall:

- 1) recommend research and evaluation policies, processes, procedures, and standards through the presiding bishop to the Church Council and implement them upon approval by the Church Council.
- 2) serve as the center for this church in the area of research and evaluation by:
 - a) conducting systematic, ongoing research on issues, attitudes, and contextual developments;
 - b) conducting individual research projects on behalf of the churchwide organization and its units;
 - c) overseeing the development and execution of research plans for each unit; and
 - d) providing consultation to all churchwide units on matters related to research and evaluation.
- 3) undertake at the direction of the presiding bishop coordinated comprehensive research and evaluation of the work of the churchwide organization.
- 4) provide interpretation of the results of research conducted or reviewed in support of the work of churchwide units.
- 5) provide the churchwide organization, its units, and other expressions of this church with demographic data and analysis.
- 6) offer upon request counsel and advice about research and evaluation to congregations, synods, regions, agencies, and institutions of this church.

~~b.~~ *The executive for research and evaluation shall be appointed by the presiding bishop.*

15.11.G05:12.F10. Responsibility for Synodical Relations

Responsibility for synodical relations shall be exercised by the Office of the Presiding Bishop in order to coordinate the relationships between the churchwide organization and synods, develop and implement synodical-churchwide consultations and services, render support for synodical bishops and synodical staff, and provide staff services for the Conference of Bishops. To fulfill these responsibilities, an executive for synodical relations, appointed by the presiding bishop, shall:

- a. relate to the Conference of Bishops in fulfillment of the conference's assigned responsibilities and provide staff services for development of programs and other needs;*
- b. relate to the Bureau for Federal Chaplaincy Ministries and the assistant to the presiding bishop of this church for federal chaplaincy ministries;*
- c. plan and coordinate synodical-churchwide consultations and churchwide participation in synodical assemblies;*
- d. provide for synodical services, including assistance to synods for organizational concerns, long-range planning, and ongoing evaluation; and*
- e. direct efforts for growth and strength in mission-support contributions from congregations for synodical and churchwide ministries;*
- f. coordinate the interaction of churchwide units with synodical responsibilities and programs; and*
- g. oversee churchwide participation in regions.*

15.12.G10. Responsibility for Theological Discernment

Responsibility shall be exercised in the Office of the Presiding Bishop for serving the Church's theological work by promoting, coordinating, and facilitating theological discernment of the Church's message and its theological foundations in collaboration with all who share in the responsibilities to be teachers of the faith in the Church, including the Conference of Bishops, the seminary faculties, the association of teaching theologians, networks such as Lutheran ethicists and women theologians, the editorial staff of the ELCA publishing ministry and publications, and all rostered leaders. To fulfill these responsibilities the presiding bishop shall appoint an executive for theological discernment, who will assist the presiding bishop and coordinate the service of staff groups that provide theological resources and assistance in programmatic implementation.

13.41.A03:15.13.A10. Responsibility for Risk Management

The Office of the Secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, in collaboration with the Office of the Treasurer ~~treasurer of this church,~~ shall provide and manage insurance (exclusive of life and health) programs for the churchwide organization and shall make available insurance programs to congregations, synods, regions, and related institutions, agencies, and organizations. Recommendations on standards for adequate, continuous insurance coverage to be maintained by synods, as required in constitutional provision 10.74., shall may be provided.

13.52.A05:15.14.A10. Responsibilities of the Office of the Treasurer

- a. This office shall be related to the treasurer, who shall be its full-time executive officer.*
- b. This office shall have the sole authority and responsibility to establish and maintain banking relationships.*

- c. This office shall have the authority to borrow; issue bonds, notes, certificates, or other evidence of obligation; or increase contingent liabilities within the overall limits determined by the Churchwide Assembly and the more restrictive limits established by the Church Council. No churchwide board or program committee shall make a commitment that binds the churchwide organization to an outside lending or other similar institution or which creates a liability **of this church** to such an institution without prior approval of the Office of the Treasurer.
- d. This office, through the Budget and Finance Committee of the Church Council, shall recommend to the Church Council a certified public accounting firm to audit the financial records of the churchwide organization. Synodical financial reports shall be submitted to this office for compilation.
- e. This office shall provide for internal audit procedures of the churchwide organization.
- f. This office shall provide legal documents pertaining to the financial and property management matters of the churchwide organization. These legal documents shall be signed by the officers authorized by the Church Council.
- g. This office shall be authorized, within policies established by **this church the Churchwide Assembly and the Church Council**, to purchase or otherwise acquire title to real property; to mortgage, lease, sell, or otherwise dispose of the same; and **otherwise** to act on behalf of **the units** of the churchwide organization **after receiving their direction** regarding **the purchase or disposition of** real property.
- h. This office shall provide for a common system of financial reporting from synods and regions.
- ~~i. This office shall provide, upon request, a financial management system for synods.~~
- ~~j. This office shall provide, upon request, counsel in financial matters to the women's organization, congregations, synods, regions, and institutions.~~
- ~~ki. This office, within the policies established by the Church Council, shall assure the implementation of a donor gift acknowledgment process **in consultation with the Foundation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.**~~
- ~~li. This office, in consultation with the Foundation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, shall recommend:~~
- ~~1) approved policy for the valuation process for noncash gifts;~~
 - ~~2) the management of assets of life-income agreements;~~
 - ~~3) the establishment and management of memorial funds received by the foundation; and~~
 - ~~4) the distribution of earned-income payments to remainder beneficiaries as regulated by the life-income, trust, and other fiduciary donor agreements.~~
- ~~mk. This office shall provide for the management of capital funds.~~
- ~~nl. This office shall manage capital loan funds established by the Church Council. The management shall be within policies established jointly by the Office of the Treasurer and other affected churchwide units.~~
- ~~om. This office, in collaboration with the Office of the Secretary, shall examine the risk management and insurance needs of the churchwide organization and synods.~~
- ~~n. This office shall be responsible for building management and the coordination of central services for the churchwide organization.~~

The treasurer shall provide for information technology in support of the work of this church and the operation of Chicago-based churchwide units the churchwide organization. In so doing, the treasurer shall have an executive for information technology, appointed by the treasurer, who shall be responsible for the development and review of guidelines and policies for computer standards, security of electronic data, application development, data storage and data retrieval, and shall enable use of electronic technologies for churchwide staff to assist in support of congregations, synods, and related institutions and agencies of this church.

15.21.A05. Staffing Assumptions

Wherever practical, staff should be shared between churchwide units and synods, either as deployed staff or shared-time staff. When staff are “deployed” or are “shared synodical-churchwide” staff, this shall occur only after all affected organizations of this church in use of such staff have agreed to the purposes and details of such an arrangement.

- a. Deployed staff shall be understood to mean fully funded by the deploying churchwide unit(s).*
- b. Shared synodical-churchwide staff shall be understood to mean shared funding by the deploying churchwide unit(s) and the synod(s).*

15.21.B05. Appointment by Presiding Bishop

The executive for a unit, section, or function for whom selection is not otherwise provided in the bylaws shall be appointed by the presiding bishop for a defined term to a maximum of four years. The appointment may be renewed for a defined term upon the decision of the presiding bishop. Service of an executive for a unit, section, or function, who was appointed by the presiding bishop, may be terminated by the presiding bishop, consistent with the personnel policies of the churchwide organization.

15.31.C03-10. Staff Services for the Conference of Bishops

Staff services for meetings of the Conference of Bishops shall be provided by the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Office of the Secretary. The executive assistant to the presiding bishop for synodical ministries relations shall coordinate the operation of the Conference of Bishops.

**Proposed Constitutional Amendments on the Churchwide Organization Redesign
for Church Council Recommendation to the CWA
November 12, 2010**

- 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:
- The congregations, synods, and churchwide organization shall act in accordance with the Confession of Faith set forth in Chapter 2 of this constitution and with the Statement of Purpose set forth in Chapter 4.
 - This church, in faithfulness to the Gospel, is committed to be an inclusive church in the midst of division in society. Therefore, in their organization and outreach, the congregations, synods, and churchwide units of this church shall seek to exhibit the inclusive unity that is God's will for the Church.
 - The congregations, synods, and churchwide organization of this church are interdependent partners sharing responsibly in God's mission. In an interdependent relationship primary responsibility for particular functions will vary between the partners. Whenever possible, the entity most directly affected by a decision shall be the principal party responsible for decision and implementation, with the other entities facilitating and assisting. Each congregation, synod, and separately incorporated **unit of the churchwide organization ministry**, as well as the churchwide organization itself, is a separate legal entity and is responsible for exercising its powers and authorities.
- 11.35. Each **program unit** shall relate to a program committee and each separately incorporated **unit ministry** shall be governed by a board. *[A separate amendment also has been proposed by the LIFT task force.]*
- 12.41.31. Members of the Church Council, unless elected as voting members, shall serve as advisory members of the Churchwide Assembly. Likewise, program committee chairpersons and board chairpersons or their designees, and the president of the Lutheran Youth Organization or a designee, unless elected as voting members, shall serve as advisory members of the Churchwide Assembly. In addition, executive directors of churchwide program units, executive directors of churchwide service units, executives for sections related to the officers, presidents of separately incorporated **churchwide units ministries**, the executive for administration, and executive assistants to the presiding bishop shall serve as advisory members of the Churchwide Assembly. *[A separate amendment also has been proposed by the LIFT task force.]*
- 13.21. ~~This church shall have a presiding bishop~~ **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 be an ordained minister of this church. The presiding bishop may be male or female, as may all other officers of this church.** The presiding bishop shall:
...
c. Provide for the preparation of the agenda for the Churchwide Assembly, Church Council, Executive Committee, **and** Conference of Bishops, **and** **Cabinet of Executives,**

and preside at the Churchwide Assembly.

...

13.41.02. The secretary shall:

- a. Be responsible for the minutes and records of the Churchwide Assembly, Church Council, Executive Committee, **and** Conference of Bishops, **and Cabinet of Executives**, and shall receive complete minutes for permanent record of all boards and committees of the churchwide organization.
- b. Maintain the rosters of ordained ministers, all other rostered persons, congregations, and synods.
- c. Provide for the publication of official documents and policies of this church, pre-assembly reports, assembly minutes, a directory of congregations, rostered persons, and entities of this church, and other informational and statistical material.
- d. Receive the annual report of the congregations in a form devised by the secretary, summarize the information, and make the summary available to this church.
- e. Coordinate the use of legal services by the churchwide organization.
- f. Be responsible for the archives of this church.
- g. Implement and operate a records management system for the churchwide organization.
- h. Arrange for and manage **churchwide** meetings, **including of** the Churchwide Assembly, **and** Church Council, **Conference of Bishops, and others**.
- I. Have custody of the seal, maintain a necrology, and attest documents.

~~j. Provide library and reference services for the churchwide office.~~

14.21.14. The Church Council, **acting through the designated churchwide unit, shall have** ~~may direct the churchwide organization to exercise responsibility for~~ the corporate social responsibility of this church **and shall have the authority to file by filing** shareholder resolutions, **and cast-casting** proxy ballots, **and taking other actions as it deems appropriate,** ~~thereon on~~ stocks held by the churchwide units that are not separately incorporated. In addition, the Church Council may make recommendations to the churchwide units that are separately incorporated concerning the filing of shareholder resolutions and the casting of ballots on stocks held by those units.

14.21.21. Unless otherwise specified in ~~this the~~ constitution, **and** bylaws, **and continuing resolutions,** the Church Council shall elect the executive director for each churchwide **program** unit to a four-year term in consultation with and with the approval of the presiding bishop **of this church.** Nomination of a candidate for election shall be made by the presiding bishop **after consultation with the appropriate program committee for each position.** The presiding bishop, as chief executive officer, shall arrange within the ~~policy of this church~~ **personnel policies of the churchwide organization** for an annual review of each executive director. A unit executive director shall be eligible for reelection. The employment of the executive director may be terminated jointly by the presiding bishop **of this church** and the Executive Committee of the Church Council. ~~With the prior consent of the presiding bishop of this church, the Church Council may elect two executive directors for a program unit in the manner provided in this bylaw.~~

15.11. An office **is a unit** of the churchwide organization **is** directly related to and under the authority of a full-time officer of this church. Each office is related to the Church Council through the officer, who reports to the Church Council in the interim between regular meetings of the Churchwide Assembly. Each office may have executive assistants to

- undergird the officer in the performance of specified functions that are the responsibility of that officer.
- 15.11.02. *Administrative Team.* The presiding bishop, secretary, treasurer, and executive for administration, along with the executive directors of the churchwide units, shall function as an administrative team, directed by the presiding bishop. This administrative team shall assist the presiding bishop in the fulfillment of the presiding bishop's responsibilities for providing leadership, planning, oversight, management, supervision, and coordination in the operation of the churchwide organization.
- 15.12. OFFICE OF THE PRESIDING BISHOP**
- 15.12.01. Responsibilities of the Office of the Presiding Bishop, in addition to those specified in the bylaws, shall be set forth in continuing resolutions.**
- 15.13. OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY**
- 15.13.01. The responsibilities of the Office of the Secretary, in addition to those specified in the bylaws, shall be set forth in continuing resolutions.**
- 15.14. OFFICE OF THE TREASURER**
- 15.14.01. The responsibilities of the Office of the Treasurer, in addition to those specified in the bylaws, shall be set forth in continuing resolutions.**
- 15.21. The churchwide units organization shall employ staff according to churchwide policy policies.
- 15.21.02. In consultation with the executive for administration, Approval by the presiding bishop, upon recommendation of the executive for administration, shall be required to authorize all staff positions in the churchwide units organization.

Chapter 16.

PROGRAM UNITS OF THE CHURCHWIDE ORGANIZATION

16.10. PROGRAM CHURCHWIDE UNITS

16.11. A program unit is a unit of the churchwide organization to which is assigned leadership responsibility for a major, identified portions of the program mission and ministry of this church.

16.11.A10.11. Program Identity of Units

Program units Units of the churchwide organization, which shall function through cooperation, coordination, and collaboration, are the following:

- a. Congregational and Synodical Mission unit;*
- b. Global Mission unit;*
- c. Mission Advancement unit.*

16.12.16.01. The responsibilities of the program units shall be enumerated described in continuing resolutions.

17.11.A10.16.12.C11. Mission Advancement Unit

The service unit of the churchwide organization is the Mission Advancement unit, which 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.*

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 reelection. 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 reelection 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.

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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.*

16.20. ~~SEPARATELY INCORPORATED PROGRAM UNITS~~

16.21. ~~Provision shall be made and maintained for the separate incorporation of the Publishing House of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as program units of the churchwide organization.~~

Chapter 17.

**SERVICE UNITS OF THE CHURCHWIDE ORGANIZATION
SEPARATELY INCORPORATED MINISTRIES**

17.10. — SERVICE UNITS SEPARATELY INCORPORATED MINISTRIES

17.11. — A service unit is a unit of the churchwide organization to which is assigned particular identified responsibility for services on behalf of churchwide programs and, in certain units, for specific services to members, congregations, synods, and related institutions and agencies. This church may fulfill some of its purposes, as described in Chapter 4, through separately incorporated ministries.

17.11.A10. Mission Advancement Unit

— *The service unit of the churchwide organization is the Mission Advancement unit, which 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.*

17.12. — Separate incorporation shall be maintained for the Foundation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Mission Investment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and the Board of Pensions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, in addition to the Publishing House of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

17.20.01. Accountability of Service Units

17.21.01. — Except as otherwise stated in bylaws, the requirements of constitutional provision 16.12. and bylaws 14.21.01. through 14.21.07. and 16.12.14. shall apply to service units of the churchwide organization.

17.30. — CHURCH PERIODICAL

17.31. — The church periodical, *The Lutheran*, shall be published by this church through the Publishing House of the ELCA and shall be identified as a magazine of this church.

17.31.01. — 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.

17.31.02. — 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 reelection. 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.

17.31.03. — 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 editorial content.

17.31.04. — Official notices of this church shall be published in the periodical.

17.31.10. Advisory Committee for the Church Periodical

17.31.11. — The advisory committee of the church periodical shall be composed of nine members elected by the Church Council.

- *a. 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*

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- ~~_____~~ understanding of periodical publishing.
- ~~_____~~ b. Each member of the advisory committee for *The Lutheran* shall be elected for one six-year term, with no consecutive reelection and with one-third of the members elected every two years.
- ~~_____~~ c. 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 Churchwide Assembly.
- ~~_____~~ d. The Church Council shall appoint one voting member of the council to serve as an advisory member of this committee.
- ~~_____~~ e. The Conference of Bishops shall elect one bishop to serve as an advisory member of this committee.
- 17.31.12.** The specific responsibilities of the advisory committee shall be specified in a continuing resolution.
- 17.31.A06.** *The publishing house, in consultation with the editor, shall produce and distribute the church periodical, and provide such services as mutually agreed by the president of the publishing house and the editor of the church periodical.*
- 17.31.B05.** *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.*
- 17.40.** **FOUNDATION OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**
- 17.41.** **This church shall provide major gift and deferred giving programs for individual donors, pooled investment services for endowment funds of this church and its related congregations, synods, agencies, and institutions, and educational and support services in major gift and deferred giving programs to congregations, synods, agencies, and institutions of this church. These programs and activities may be conducted through a separate corporation known as the Foundation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.**
- 17.41.01.** The program and activities of the Foundation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be coordinated with the Development Services unit of the churchwide organization.
- 17.41.02.** The Foundation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall have a board of trustees that shall be comprised of at least nine but not more than 12 persons elected to six-year terms by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, with no consecutive reelection and with approximately one-third of the members elected each biennium. In addition to the treasurer of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the board may identify advisors as it may deem appropriate from time to time. A synodical bishop elected by the Conference of Bishops shall serve as an advisory member of the board with voice but not vote.
- 17.41.03.** The president of the Foundation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be elected by the board of trustees to a four-year term in consultation with and with the approval of the presiding bishop of this church. The president shall be eligible for reelection. The employment of the president may be terminated jointly by the board of trustees of the Foundation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the presiding bishop of this church.
- 17.41.04.** The board of trustees of the Foundation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall

consult with the Office of the Treasurer with regard to the assessment of management fees or provision of other assets available for the budget of the foundation.

17.41.05. Constitutional provision 16.12. and bylaws 14.21.02., 14.21.03., 14.21.07., 16.12.11., 16.12.13., and 16.12.14. shall apply to the operation of the Foundation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

17.41.06. The specific responsibilities of the Foundation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be enumerated in a continuing resolution.

17.41.A05. Responsibilities of the Foundation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

The Foundation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall:

a. conduct—on behalf of this church, its congregations, synods, churchwide units, and institutions—a program of major gifts and deferred giving.

b. provide consultation, support, and guidance to members of this church in the areas of major gifts and deferred giving.

c. provide coordination and support in major gifts and deferred giving to this church, including congregations, synods, churchwide organization, and agencies and institutions.

d. provide educational materials, seminars, and workshops in the area of deferred giving.

e. coordinate its programs and ministries with the objectives and programs of other stewardship and financial-resource development activities of this church.

f. consult with 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.

g. engage—in cooperation with congregations, synods, and 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 the programs of the Foundation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America with the ministry objectives of the churchwide organization and the synods of this church.

h. offer pooled investment services for endowment funds of this church and its congregations, synods, agencies, and institutions.

i. provide assistance for the establishment and growth of mission endowment funds in congregations.

j. coordinate the operation of the Foundation of the ELCA with the Development Services unit.

17.60. BOARD OF PENSIONS

17.61.17.20. This church shall have a **separately incorporated ministry, known as the Board of Pensions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, to provide a church pension retirement and other benefits plans unit. This Board of Pensions shall be incorporated.** The president of the corporation shall serve as its chief executive officer.

17.61.01.17.20.01. The Churchwide Assembly shall:

a. approve the documents governing the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program that have

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- been referred by the Church Council; and
- b. refer any amendments to the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program initiated by the Churchwide Assembly to the Board of Pensions for recommendation before final action by the Church Council, assuring that no amendment shall abridge the rights of members with respect to their **pension-retirement** accumulations.

17.61.02.17.20.02. The Church Council shall:

- a. review policy established by the board and take action on any policy that would change significantly the documents establishing and governing the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program.
- b. approve any changes in the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program when there is to be:
 - 1) a significant increase in cost to the employers or members; or
 - 2) a significant increase or decrease in benefits to the members.
- c. refer any amendments to the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program initiated by the Church Council to the board for recommendation before final action by the Church Council, assuring that no amendment shall abridge the rights of members with respect to their **pension retirement** accumulations.
- d. refer, as it deems appropriate, proposed amendments to the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program to the Churchwide Assembly for final action.

17.61.03.17.20.03. The Board of Pensions shall have a board of trustees composed of **1514-18** persons elected for one six-year term with no consecutive reelection and with one-third elected each biennium as provided in Chapter 19.

- a. The board of trustees of the Board of Pensions shall include persons with expertise in investments, insurance, and **pensions retirement plans**, and two to five persons who are members of the plan, at least one of whom shall be a lay plan member or lay recipient of plan benefits and at least one of whom shall be an ordained minister who is a plan member.
- b. The presiding bishop shall serve as an advisory member of the board of trustees, with voice but not vote, or shall designate a person to serve as the presiding bishop's representative as provided in constitutional provision 13.21.
- c. The Conference of Bishops shall elect one bishop to serve as an advisory member of the board of trustees with voice but not vote.
- d. The treasurer of this church shall serve as an advisory member of the board of trustees with voice but not vote.

17.61.04.17.20.04. The board shall organize itself as it deems necessary.

17.61.05.17.20.05. Constitutional provision 16.12. and bylaws 14.21.02., 14.21.07., **16.12.11.**, and 16.12.14. shall apply to this board.

17.61.06.17.20.06. The president shall be elected by the board of trustees of the Board of Pensions to a four-year term in consultation with and with the approval of the presiding bishop of this church. Nomination of a candidate for president shall be made jointly by the presiding bishop and the search committee of the board. The board, together with the presiding bishop, shall arrange for an annual review of the president. The president shall be eligible for reelection. The board shall establish the salary of the president with the concurrence of the presiding bishop. The president may be terminated at any time jointly by the board of trustees of the Board of Pensions and the presiding bishop of this church, following recommendation by the executive committee of the board of trustees.

17.61.07.17.20.07. The specific responsibilities of the Board of Pensions shall be enumerated in continuing resolutions. Such continuing resolutions may be amended by a majority vote of the Churchwide Assembly or by a two-thirds vote of the Church Council. Should the board disagree with the action of the Church Council, it may appeal the decision to the Churchwide Assembly.

17.61.A05.17.20.A11. *Responsibilities of the Board of Pensions*

The Board of Pensions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall:

- a. *manage and operate the Pension and Other Benefits Program for this church and plans for other organizations operated exclusively for religious purposes, and shall invest the assets according to fiduciary standards set forth in the plans and trusts.*
- b. *provide pension retirement, health, and other benefits exclusively for the benefit of eligible members working within the structure of this church and other organizations operated exclusively for religious purposes.*
- c. *provide summary plan descriptions outlining all benefits to be provided as a part of the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program.*
- d. *report to the appropriate committee of the Church Council on the financial effect of changes to the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program.*
- e. *report to the Churchwide Assembly through the Church Council, with the Church Council making comments on all board actions needing approval of the Churchwide Assembly.*
- f. *maintain appropriate communication with other units of this church.*
- g. *be self-supporting, except for certain ELCA minimum pensions and post-retirement health benefits of certain ELCA retirees, with all costs being paid from the administrative and management charges to the employers and members utilizing the plans and from investment income.*
- h. *manage its finances in a manner that assures an efficient and effective administration of the plans for pension retirement and other benefits. The board shall maintain its own accounting, data processing, personnel, and other administrative functions essential to the ongoing work of this organization.*
- i. *not be responsible, nor assume any liability for, health-insurance programs provided by colleges and universities of this church through voluntary employees' beneficiary associations or similar arrangements.*
- j. *manage and operate those portions of The American Lutheran Church and Lutheran Church in America plans requiring continuation in this church.*
- k. *provide an appeal process with the Board of Pensions to enable members in the plans to appeal decisions.*
- l. *make editorial and administrative changes and routine modifications to the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program, as well as changes required to comply with federal and state law.*
- m. *set contribution rates for the ELCA Survivor Benefits Plan, the ELCA Disability Benefits Plan, and the ELCA Medical and Dental Benefits Plan, and establish interest crediting rates for the ELCA Retirement Plans.*
- n. *manage assets, as requested, for the ELCA and other organizations operated exclusively for religious purposes.*

17.61.B05:17.20.B11.

The Corporate Social Responsibility Committee of the Board of Pensions shall receive advice and counsel from the churchwide organization, Advisory Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility formed by the appropriate churchwide unit and within the context of fiduciary responsibility for ELCA assets, make appropriate recommendations to the board.

17.61.C09:17.20.C11.

To implement staggered terms for plan members and plan recipients on the board of trustees of the Board of Pensions and to move to a board consisting of at least four plan members, at least one of whom is a lay plan member or lay recipient of plan benefits, at least two people, one ordained minister who is a plan member and

one lay plan member or lay recipient of plan benefits, shall be elected by the 2009 Churchwide Assembly. Thereafter, at least one plan member shall be elected as a trustee by the 2011 Churchwide Assembly, and one additional plan member shall be elected by the 2013 Churchwide Assembly. An amendment to 17.61.03.a. shall be proposed to the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to provide that the board shall include at least four persons who are members of the plans, at least one of whom shall be a lay plan member or lay recipient of plan benefits and at least one of whom shall be an ordained minister who is a plan member.

17.50. MISSION INVESTMENT FUND OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

17.51.17.30. This church shall have a **fund separately incorporated ministry**, known as the Mission Investment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, to provide investment opportunities to individuals, congregations, synods, institutions, agencies, and organizations, and administer loans to congregations, synods, the churchwide organization, and other organizations and institutions that are related to this church. The Mission Investment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be incorporated.

17.51.01.17.30.01. The Mission Investment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall have a board of trustees of at least nine but not more than 12 members, who shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly for six-year terms with no consecutive reelection and with approximately one-third elected each biennium as provided in Chapter 19.

17.51.02.17.30.02. Unless the Church Council determines that the treasurer of this church shall be the president of the Mission Investment Fund corporation, the president shall be elected by the board of trustees of the Mission Investment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to a four-year term in consultation with and with the approval of the presiding bishop of this church. Nomination of a candidate for president of the Mission Investment Fund shall be made jointly by the presiding bishop and the search committee of the board. The board, together with the presiding bishop, shall arrange for an annual review of the president. The president shall be eligible for reelection. The employment of the president may be terminated jointly by the board of trustees of the Mission Investment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the presiding bishop of this church, following recommendation by the executive committee of the board of trustees.

17.51.03.17.30.03. Constitutional provision 16.12. and bylaws 14.21.02., 14.21.03., 14.21.06., 14.21.07., ~~16.12.11., 16.12.13.,~~ and 16.12.14. shall apply to the operation of the Mission Investment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

17.51.04.17.30.04. The specific responsibilities of the Mission Investment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be enumerated in a continuing resolution.

17.51.A10.17.30.A11. Operation of the Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA

The Mission Investment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall:

- a. have primary responsibility for the development, administration, and promotion of Mission Investments;*
- b. develop and administer a loan program, including management responsibilities for the underwriting, legal, accounting, reporting, servicing, marketing, and other related functions;*

- c. *provide expertise for management of real property and execute all necessary documents for the acquisition and disposition of such property;*
- d. *relate to the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit, which shall request real estate acquisition for new and existing ministries within the limits of the capital funds available and within established criteria; ~~establish, in consultation with the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit, an annual capital budget for ministry development;~~*
- e. *have responsibility, within established guidelines for determining which congregations shall receive loans, the amount of each loan, and the repayment schedule; and shall confer with the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit on any loans to developing ministries;*
- f. *execute the loans, ensure safekeeping for the legal documents, provide accounting services for the repayment, and supervise collection;*
- g. *offer building and architectural consultative services to new congregations entering first-unit construction, to congregations relocating with synodical approval, to other congregations, and to other organizations and institutions that are affiliated with this church.*

16.30.

PUBLISHING HOUSE OF THE ELCA

16.31.17.40.

This church shall have a publishing house separately incorporated ministry, the Publishing House of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, to carry out the publishing ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. ~~The Publishing House of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be incorporated.~~ The president of the corporation shall serve as its chief executive officer. Upon authorization of the Church Council, portions of the activities of this church's publishing house may be conducted through separate corporations.

16.31.01.17.40.01.

This publishing house shall have a board of trustees of ~~12~~ 15 members, elected for one six-year term with no consecutive reelection and with one-third elected every two years as provided in Chapter 19.

- a. The board of trustees shall be composed of laypersons with expertise in publishing, education, business management, finance and investment, and ordained ministers with expertise in rural, urban, and suburban parish ministry in small and large congregations and advanced theological study.
- b. The presiding bishop shall serve as an advisory member of the board of trustees, with voice but not vote, or shall designate a person to serve as the presiding bishop's representative as provided in constitutional provision 13.21.
- c. The Conference of Bishops shall elect one bishop to serve as an advisory member of the board of the publishing house with voice but not vote.
- d. The board of trustees of the publishing house shall serve as the board of any separate corporation of this church's publishing house and the president of the publishing house shall be the chief executive officer of any such corporation.

16.31.02.17.40.02.

Constitutional provision 16.12. and bylaws 14.21.02., 14.21.03., ~~16.12.11.~~, and 16.12.14. shall apply to this publishing house.

16.31.03.17.40.03.

The president shall be elected by the board of trustees of the Publishing House of the ELCA to a four-year term in consultation with and with the approval of the presiding

bishop of this church. Nomination of a candidate for president shall be made jointly by the presiding bishop and the search committee of the board. The board, together with the presiding bishop, shall arrange for an annual review of the president. The president shall be eligible for reelection. The board shall establish the salary of the president with the concurrence of the presiding bishop. The president may be terminated at any time jointly by the board of trustees of the Publishing House of the ELCA and the presiding bishop of this church, following recommendation by the executive committee of the board of trustees.

16.31.04.17.40.04. The specific responsibilities of this publishing house shall be enumerated in a continuing resolution. The continuing resolution may be amended by a majority vote of the Churchwide Assembly or a two-thirds vote of the Church Council. Should the board disagree with the action of the Church Council, it may appeal the decision to the Churchwide Assembly.

16.31.A05.17.40.A11. ***Responsibilities of the Publishing House of the ELCA***

The Publishing House of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America— also known as Augsburg Fortress, Publishers—shall:

- a. be responsible for the publishing, production, and distribution of publications to be sold to accomplish the mission of this church.*
- b. work in close cooperation with congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization to provide a diversity of published resources.*
- c. relate to other churchwide units through resource planning groups. Materials published to assist congregations in fulfilling their life in mission shall be developed in coordination with other appropriate churchwide units. Development costs will be paid by the unit developing the publication.*
- d. develop, produce, and distribute materials required to carry out its functions.*
- e. be financed from the distribution of materials, not from the budget of this church.*
- f. create, develop, and publish a diversity of resources in various media; make available other publications, materials, and church supplies; produce the official documents and publications of this church; and produce materials in a manner that assures their ready availability.*
- g. establish a distribution center, as well as utilize other means for the wide distribution of resources within and beyond this church.*
- h. manage its finances and other resources in a manner that assures the continuity and extension of its activities. This publishing house shall maintain its own accounting, data processing, personnel, pension, and other functions essential to a cohesive, efficient, and effective operation.*
- i. identify and nurture talented authors, composers, artists, and others involved in creating various media.*
- j. produce and distribute the church periodical in accord with provisions of this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions.*
- k. determine its necessary financial reserves, appropriations, and publishing subsidies.*
- l. make available resources to meet unique language and cultural needs.*
- m. provide for production and distribution services for materials that originate in churchwide units, including the option of providing for competitive printing costs and delivery from independent printers, with costs for these services paid by the originating unit.*

16.40. WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION

16.41.17.50. This church shall have a **women's organization separately incorporated ministry, known as Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, to assist its women to commit themselves to full discipleship, affirm their gifts, and support each other in their particular callings.**

16.41.01.17.50.01. Membership of this organization shall be women of this church who wish to participate through local and other groupings that affirm the purposes of this organization. This organization shall function in local, synodical, and churchwide settings.

16.41.02.17.50.02. This organization shall be incorporated, self-supporting financially, and shall manage its own assets within the policies of this church. The personnel policies and salary structures of the churchwide organization shall be followed.

16.41.03.17.50.03. Constitutional provision 16.12. and bylaws 14.21.02., 14.21.03., 14.21.06., ~~16.12.11., 16.12.13,~~ and 16.12.14. shall apply to this organization. Bylaw 14.21.07. shall apply to the women's organization with the exception of the balance provisions for women and men and for laypersons and persons on the roster of ordained ministers.

16.41.04.17.50.04. This organization shall have a board of 21 members elected by the assembly of this organization for one three-year term with eligibility for one consecutive reelection. At least 10 percent of the members of this board shall be persons of color or primary language other than English. No more than one elected board member shall be from any one synod. Board members are to serve with the perspective of the interdependence of all units of this church. In the event of a vacancy, the board shall elect a member to serve the balance of the term. The Conference of Bishops shall select one bishop to serve as an advisory member of the board of this organization with voice but not vote.

16.41.05.17.50.05. 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, Section 4, Item 9, of the constitution and bylaws of the women's organization.

16.41.06.17.50.06. This organization's board shall elect its executive director to a four-year term in consultation with and with the approval of the presiding bishop of this church. This board, together with the presiding bishop, shall arrange for an annual review of the executive director. The executive director shall be eligible for reelection. Consistent with applicable personnel policies, the board shall establish the salary of the executive director with the concurrence of the presiding bishop. The board may terminate the employment of the executive director in consultation with and with the approval of the presiding bishop of this church.

16.41.07.17.50.07. The specific responsibilities of the women's organization shall be enumerated in a continuing resolution. The continuing resolution may be amended by a majority of the Churchwide Assembly or two-thirds of the Church Council. Should the board disagree with the action of the Church Council, it may appeal the decision to the Churchwide Assembly.

16.41.A05.17.50.A11. Responsibilities of the Women's Organization

The Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, as the program unit for the women's organization, shall:

- a. enable its members to grow through biblical study, theological reflection, and prayer.*
- b. cooperate with other units of this church in advocating for the oppressed and voiceless, urging change in systems and structures that exclude and alienate, and working for peace and justice as messengers of hope.*
- c. provide for development and distribution of resources for and to its members, including a magazine.*
- d. facilitate local initiative in creating programs and identifying alternative structural models that encourage and support flexibility.*
- e. design and implement a leadership development program for its members, assisting its members to identify, develop, and express their gifts for ministry.*
- f. develop networks for communication among women locally, ecumenically, and globally.*
- g. relate to other women's organizations ecumenically and globally.*
- h. work interdependently with all units of this church in program development, research, and planning in order to enhance the ministries and participation of women in church and in society.*
- I. develop working arrangements in areas of mutual responsibility with the Publishing House of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.*

17.60. This church shall have a separately incorporated ministry, known as the Endowment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, which shall hold and manage endowment assets and offer pooled investment services for endowment funds of this church and its related congregations, synods, agencies, and institutions.

17.60.01. The Endowment Fund shall have a board of trustees that shall be composed of at least nine but not more than 12 persons elected to six-year terms by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, with no consecutive reelection and with approximately one-third of the members elected each biennium. The board of trustees shall have advisory members as specified in the bylaws of the Endowment Fund.

17.60.02. The president of the Endowment Fund shall be elected by the board of trustees to a four-year term in consultation with and with the approval of the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The president shall be eligible for reelection. The employment of the president may be terminated jointly by the board of trustees and the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

17.60.03. Constitutional provision 16.12. and bylaws 14.21.02., 14.21.03., and 14.21.07. shall apply to the operation of the Endowment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

17.60.04. In addition to management of endowment assets and pooled investments, specific responsibilities of the Endowment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may be enumerated in a continuing resolution.

17.61.B05. The Corporate Social Responsibility Committee of the Board of Pensions shall receive advice and counsel from the Advisory Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility formed by the appropriate churchwide unit and within the context of fiduciary responsibility for ELCA assets make appropriate recommendations to the board.

17.70. This church may fulfill some of its purposes, as described in Chapter 4, through other separately incorporated ministries, which shall be described in continuing resolutions.

17.70.A11. *The Deaconess Community of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is a separately incorporated ministry of theologically trained, professionally prepared women called to ministry and service by congregations, synods, and agencies of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada. Its mission is "Compelled by the love of the Christ and sustained by community, we devote our lives to proclaiming the Gospel through ministries of mercy and servant leadership." Deaconesses are consecrated by the ELCA and the ELCIC.*

17.70.B11. *Lutheran Men in Mission is a separately incorporated self-supporting ministry whose vision is for every man to have a growing relationship with Jesus Christ through an effective men's ministry in every congregation. The purpose of Lutheran Men in Mission is, by God's grace, to build men's faith, relationships, and ministry through events, resources, and ongoing leadership development.*

17.70.C11. *National Lutheran Campus Ministry, Inc. is a separately incorporated ministry that helps to provide and support suitable facilities to carry out ELCA campus ministry at state-supported and non-ELCA-related colleges and universities.*

17.70.D11. *Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Risk Management, Inc. (ELCARM) is a separately incorporated ministry that provides risk management and insurance services to colleges, universities, and seminaries related to the ELCA.*

19.05.03. A board of directors or trustees of a separately incorporated churchwide unit ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may remove a director or trustee from the board, if done in accordance with the governing documents of such corporation after at least thirty (30) days' prior notice to the secretary of this church, at a duly held meeting by the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the total number of trustees, provided that not less than five and not more than thirty days written notice shall be given to each trustee that removal of a specific trustee will be on the agenda for such a meeting. No such removal of a trustee shall be effective without the approval of the Church Council by a majority of those present and voting. ~~The decision to remove a director or trustee shall be reported to of the Church Council by the secretary is final.~~

19.51.02. ~~The program committee for the Multicultural Ministries unit shall consist of 15 persons, 14 of whom shall be elected to six-year terms by the Churchwide Assembly. The committee shall include two persons from each of the following communities: African American or Black; Arab and Middle Eastern; Asian and Pacific Islander; Latino; American Indian and Alaska Native; European-American; and multiracial or biracial. One person shall be elected to a three-year term on the committee by the Multicultural Advisory Committee of the Lutheran Youth Organization.~~

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CHURCH COUNCIL
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Guide to Proposed Changes in the Roster Manual
Church Council
November 12–14, 2010

The following polices have been amended. All changes are highlighted. Additions have been underlined. Deletions have been struck through. Items with an asterisk (*) have significant changes.

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Part Two: Associates in Ministry, Deaconesses, and Diaconal Ministers

*Letters of Call, page 6
*Basic Standards for Associates in Ministry, Deaconesses, and Diaconal Ministers, pages 8–15
Guidelines Related to On-Leave-From-Call Status, page 16
*Ecumenical Availability of Rostered Laypersons, page 19
Guidelines for Shared-Time Ministries, page 20
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Policy and Procedures Related to Retired Status, page 25
Guidelines Related to Synodically Authorized or Licensed Ministries, page 27

Part Three: Inter-Lutheran Cooperation Between the ELCIC and the ELCA

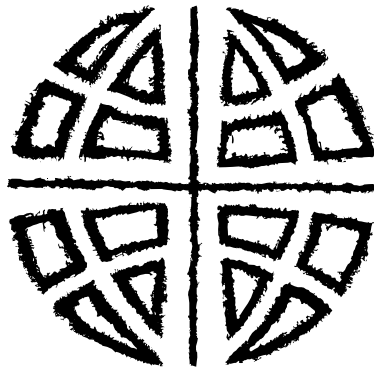
Transfer of Ordained Ministers Between Synods of the ELCA and Synods of the ELCIC, page 5

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
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Manual of Policies and Procedures for Management of the Rosters of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Revision proposed October 2010



Office of the Secretary
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
8765 West Higgins Road
Chicago, IL 60631

*The Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church
in America voted on November 14, 1994:*

To approve the *Manual of Policies and Procedures for the Management of the Rosters of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* and authorize its distribution for use by synodical bishops, synodical staff members, and others who hold responsibilities for such matters in this church; and

To authorize the secretary to provide periodic updates reflecting new or revised policies subsequently adopted by the Church Council.

Following approval by the 2005 Churchwide Assembly of the reorganization plan for the churchwide organization, the language of the manual required certain revisions to reflect the new terminology (e.g., Vocation and Education rather than Division for Ministry). In addition, constitution and bylaw citations were revised to reflect amendments introduced since the adoption of this manual. Editorial corrections also were made, where necessary, for issues of style and clarity. Subsequently,

*The Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church
in America voted on November 12, 2005:*

To approve the updated *Manual of Policies and Procedures for the Management of the Rosters of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* and authorize its distribution for use by synodical bishops, synodical staff members, and others who hold responsibilities for such matters in this church; and

To authorize the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to provide periodic updates reflecting new or revised policies subsequently adopted by the Church Council.

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Part One:

Ordained Ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Matters Related to Ordained Ministry in the Governing Documents

Chapter 7 in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* addresses matters related to ordained ministry in this church.

7.10. Ministry of the Baptized People of God

7.11. This church affirms the universal priesthood of all its baptized members. In its function and its structure this church commits itself to the equipping and supporting of all its members for their ministries in the world and in this church. It is within this context of ministry that this church calls or appoints some of its baptized members for specific ministries in this church.

7.20. Ordained Ministry

7.21. Within the people of God and for the sake of the Gospel ministry entrusted to all believers, God has instituted the office of ministry of Word and sacrament. To carry out this ministry, this church calls and ordains qualified persons.

7.22. An ordained minister 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 shall comply with the constitution of this church.

7.23. The standards for acceptance and continuance of pastors in the ordained ministry 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 who qualify on the basis of constitutional provisions 7.22., 7.23., 7.30., and 7.31., and related bylaws.

7.30. Standards for Ordained Ministers

7.31. In accordance with the description of an ordained minister stated in 7.22., pastors as ordained ministers shall be governed by the following standards, policies, and procedures.

7.31.10. Basic Standards

7.31.11. Persons admitted to and continued in the ordained ministry 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 Vocation and Education 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.

7.31.12. Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,

- a. Every ordained minister shall:
 - 1) preach the Word;
 - 2) administer the sacraments;
 - 3) conduct public worship;
 - 4) provide pastoral care;
 - 5) seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel;
 - 6) witness to the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation, and abroad; and
 - 7) 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 with a congregational call shall, within the congregation:
 - 1) offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead;
 - 2) supervise 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) with the council, administer discipline.

+ + +

See the current edition of constitutional provisions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions 7.31.13. through 7.47.01. in the churchwide Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America related to matters such as "preparation and approval," "reinstatement," "on leave from call" status, "service under call," "sources of call," "retirement," and other concerns. All of the following policies relate to the requirements of this church's governing documents.

Sources of Call for Ordained Ministers

The “Sources of Calls for Ordained Ministers” are defined in churchwide continuing resolution 7.44.A05.:

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,” 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*

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	
1.22 Other pastoral arrangements	
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	One 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 *Presiding bishop's staff* Church Council
 - 4.4 *Office staff* Church Council
 - 4.5 *Unit executive director* Church Council
 - 4.6 *Section executive* Church Council
 - 4.7 *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 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 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 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*

*12.2 Unusual ministries
(as in conjunction with
occupations and in
approved situations not
otherwise specified)*

*Synod Council or Church
Council upon recommenda-
tion by the Conference of
Bishops*

Full Communion Implementation Related to Availability of Ordained Ministers

For the implementation of church-to-church relationships of full communion, the following in the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America apply:

- 8.72.11.** 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 policy developed at the direction of the presiding bishop and secretary, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.
- A letter of call may be issued to an ordained minister of this church, serving temporarily in such a church body, by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or a Synod Council, in accord with the Table of Sources of Calls (ELCA churchwide continuing resolution 7.44.A05.b.).
 - A letter of call may be issued to an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister of this church, serving temporarily in such a church body, by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or a Synod Council, in accord with the Table of Sources of Calls (ELCA churchwide continuing resolution 7.52.A05.b.).
 - A letter of call issued by the Church Council or a Synod Council for service in a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been established by the Churchwide Assembly shall be governed by churchwide constitutional provision 7.43. and churchwide bylaw 7.43.01.
 - 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.
- 8.72.12.** An ordained minister of 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 authorized by the synodical bishop to serve in a congregation or employing entity of this church. Such service shall be rendered under a contract between the congregation or employing entity and the ordained minister in a form proposed by the synodical bishop and approved by the congregation or employing entity. Any such service shall be in accord with churchwide policies developed at the direction of the presiding bishop and secretary, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- 8.72.13.** Whenever an ordained minister of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is to serve or is serving in a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by the Churchwide Assembly, or whenever an ordained minister of a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been so declared and established is to serve or is serving in this church, a full sharing of relevant information concerning such ordained minister's experience and fitness for ministry is expected between the synodical bishop (or other appropriate office or entity) of this church and the appropriate person, office, or entity in the other church. Relevant information related to fitness for ministry shall include, but is not limited to, any information concerning disciplinary proceedings or allegations that could result, or could have resulted, in disciplinary proceedings.
- 8.72.14.** An ordained minister from 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 granted the privilege of both voice and vote in the Synod Assembly during the period of that ordained minister's service in a congregation of this church, in accord with ELCA churchwide bylaw 8.72.12.
- 8.72.15.** The availability of ordained ministers from 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 shall be understood normally in three categories: availability to serve in an occasional situation; availability to meet an extended need, including service in "yoked parish" settings; and availability for a transfer of roster status.
- Occasional service:* An occasional situation is defined as one in which an ordained minister of a church body with which a relationship of full communion exists may be asked to preach or administer the sacraments in an ELCA congregation on an occasional basis with the authorization of the synodical bishop.

- b. *Extended service:* An ordained minister of a church body with which a relationship of full communion exists may be invited to serve as the pastor of an ELCA congregation for an extended period of time, yet remain an ordained minister of his or her present church body. Such a person would be expected to preach, teach, and administer the sacraments in an ELCA congregation in a manner that is consistent with the Confession of Faith of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and to live in a manner consistent with the ministerial policy of this church. Such service shall be rendered only as authorized by the synodical bishop in order to serve the ministry and mission needs of the ELCA in a given situation.
- c. *Transfer:* An ordained minister of a church body with which a relationship of full communion exists who seeks to serve indefinitely within the ordained ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may apply for admission to the roster of ordained ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and be approved through the candidacy process for admission to the roster.

Such an ordained minister would then become an ELCA pastor upon receipt and acceptance of a regular call and installation in an ELCA congregation or other setting.

- d. Roster status in more than one church body is precluded in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. As required by ELCA churchwide constitutional provision 7.22. and bylaw 7.31.11., ordained ministers on the roster of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America must accept and adhere to this church's Confession of Faith, as well as abide by this church's standards and policies for ordained ministers.

See also churchwide bylaw 9.21.02.

Under special circumstances, subject to the approval of the synodical bishop and the concurrence of the congregation, an ordained minister of a church body with which the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America officially has established a relationship of full communion by action of a Churchwide Assembly may serve temporarily under contract as pastor of a congregation of this church.

***NOTE: Service of an ordained minister of a full-
communion partner church in an ELCA congregation is
UNDER CONTRACT, NOT UNDER CALL by the congregation.***

Which Bishop Authorizes Ordination?

The *ONLY* bishop with the authority to authorize an ordination is *the bishop of the synod in which a candidate has accepted a call*. That bishop has the authority to authorize the ordination, even if the candidate comes from another synod and may have been approved by the multi-synodical or synodical Candidacy Committee of another synod.

- A. **Power to ordain:** According to †S8.12.c. in the *Constitution for Synods* of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the bishop of a synod is to: “Exercise solely this church’s power to ordain (or provide for the ordination by another synodical bishop of) approved candidates who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested letter of call for the office of ordained ministry;” and “shall install (or provide for the installation of)” such pastors.
- B. **Jurisdiction:** In receiving and accepting a valid call, the candidate comes under the jurisdiction of the bishop of the synod in which the call was issued. That bishop, on the basis of the record of such a valid call, authorizes the ordination, even if the ordination is to take place on the territory of another synod.
- C. **Planning of ordination:** If the ordination is to occur on the territory of another synod (*e.g.*, at a candidate’s home congregation), the bishop who authorizes the ordination *shall* consult with the bishop of the synod on whose territory the ordination may be held *prior to* approving any plans for such an ordination.
1. No candidate shall make plans for ordination prior to consultation with the synodical bishop under whose authority the candidate is to be ordained.
 2. If an ordination is planned on the territory of another synod, the *patterns and practices of the synod of jurisdiction shall prevail*. No ordination is to be scheduled without the prior approval of the bishop on whose territory the rite is to occur.

Letters of Call

According to constitutional provision 7.41. in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*: “Letters of call to pastors as ordained ministers of this church or properly approved candidates for this church’s roster of ordained ministers 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.”

A. **Issuance of Letter of Call:** Pastors, unless retired, on disability status, or granted “on leave” status, are to serve under call. As specified in churchwide bylaw 7.41.11.:

An ordained minister of this church shall serve under a letter of call properly extended by a congregation, a synodical council or 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.
- b. Ordained ministers serving as interim pastors 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.

B. **Coterminous with Service:** Constitutional provision 7.43. indicates: “A letter of call issued by a Synod Council or the Church Council to an ordained minister of this church shall be either coterminous 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, as contained in this church’s constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions and in the policy and procedure documents of this church.”

C. **Attesting Signature:** The appropriate synodical bishop’s signature is required for the issuance of a valid, regular letter of call (churchwide constitutional provision 9.21.d. and bylaw 9.21.01. in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* and provisions †S8.12.e. and †S14.11.c. in the *Constitution for Synods*).

D. Termination of Call: A letter of call to an ordained minister may be terminated only as provided for in constitutional provisions 7.46., †S14.13., and *C9.05. If an ordained minister resigns from a call, the resignation may not be withdrawn by the pastor nor rejected by the congregation. No acceptance of the resignation is necessary. The call ends no later than 30 days after the date the resignation was submitted, unless the congregation agrees to a later date.

DE. Completion of Pastoral Responsibilities: The role of pastors in congregations to which they are not (or are no longer) called is governed by the *Constitution for Synods*, which states, “Ordained ministers 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” (†S14.14. in the *Constitution for Synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*).

Ordained ministers who have completed their pastoral call to a particular congregation change their role in how they relate to that congregation, and care should be taken to provide for an orderly transition. Certain ministerial functions are specific to, and performed on behalf of, the congregation not the individual, and are therefore the responsibility of the ordained minister serving under call, or one appointed by the synodical bishop or contracted by the Congregation Council for such ministry. Although to be regarded as affirmations of the pastor’s past service to the congregation, requests from members for the former pastor to preside at weddings, baptisms, funerals, and the like should politely be refused. Regardless of whether the pastor has accepted a call to another congregation or another expression of this church, the completion of pastoral responsibilities must be marked clearly and carefully.

The following guidelines are for pastors, the congregations they served, and synodical bishops in understanding the new status of a pastor who has resigned a call. They are intended to affirm the past ministry of such pastors, to give directions which seek to avoid some pitfalls that can present themselves during transitions, and to point to constructive and healthful interactions in the future.

1. Upon the effective date of the resignation, the ordained minister no longer is a pastor of the congregation, and therefore must discontinue the functions of the pastoral office in that congregation.
2. Care must be taken by the pastor to assure that the parochial record of pastoral acts conducted within the congregation is up to date. As required by *C9.14. in the *Model Constitution for Congregations* and †S14.15. in the *Constitution for Synods*, the secretary of the congregation shall attest in writing to the bishop that the record was received, in good order, before the departing pastor can be installed in a new charge or be granted retired status. Attention also must be given to “. . . make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations . . .” to the congregation before departure (*C.9.08. and †S14.16.).
3. Prior to, but as near to, the effective date of the resignation as is practicable, the ordained minister may make use of the rite of “Farewell and Godspeed” during which the pastor may return to representatives of the congregation the signs of the ministerial office that were given at the pastor’s installation.
4. If invited to exercise a ministerial role by a member of a congregation to which they are not called, ordained ministers should indicate that they are not (or are no longer) authorized to take such a role. If invited to

exercise such a role by the current pastor, care must be taken to assure that the parameters and limited scope of the activity are clear.

5. As part of the bishop's pastoral care, especially during times of transition, a synodical bishop or a member of the bishop's staff is encouraged to discuss these guidelines and their implications either in person or in correspondence.

*"Section E" was adopted by the Church Council
as policy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
November 2006.*

((Draft of letter of **completion of pastoral responsibility** of ordained ministers))

date

name

address

Dear Pastor -----:

Greetings in this season of (name of season in church year). Grace and peace be with you in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Congratulations upon your acceptance of a new call to serve (specify new call). The weeks ahead of you likely will be filled with the excitement and anticipation that come from such a transition, as you begin to envision what you can and should do in your new ministry context.

Please remember that members of your current congregation still are in the early stages of processing the announcement of your resignation. They have not had the same preparation for this transition that you have had, and some may be finding it difficult to conceive of anyone else providing their pastoral care. A few people (if they have not done so already) may even approach you to ask if you would return to the congregation to conduct a wedding or preside at a funeral.

While it may be tempting to agree to continue in such a pastoral relationship, upon the effective date of your resignation you no longer are the pastor of the congregation and do not have the authority to make such commitments. Receive these requests as affirmations of your past service to the congregation, but explain that, in light of †S14.14. in the *Constitution for Synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, you are not at liberty to accept their invitation, and assure the parishioner that pastoral care will be provided.

You may find it helpful to use the service of “Farewell and Godspeed” prior to your departure from the congregation. Whether incorporated into the usual Sunday liturgy or placed within a special service to celebrate your ministry within the congregation, consider including a moment wherein you return to representatives of the congregations those same symbols of the ministerial office with which you were presented at your installation, along with a parallel response, “I am no longer called to be among you to baptize ... proclaim the good news ... preside at the Holy Communion” It sometimes is an emotional experience as the procession moves from font, to pulpit, to altar, but this signals an important change in your relationship with the members of the congregation, and should help to discourage inappropriate invitations to return, allowing you to focus fully upon your new context for ministry.

Please take care to assure that the parochial record of pastoral acts you conducted within the congregation is up to date. As required by †S14.15. of this synod’s constitution, the secretary of the congregation shall attest in writing to me that the record was received, in good order, before you can be installed in a new charge. Also be mindful of the necessity to “. . . make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations . . .” to this congregation (†S14.16.) before your departure.

Thank you for your years of service as an ordained minister. Be assured that this church remains grateful to you for your pastoral ministry. May God bless you in your new arena of endeavor.

Sincerely,

---Name---

Bishop

Guidelines Related to On-Leave-From-Call Status

In accord with churchwide bylaw 7.31.16., the Church Council voted in April 1996: “To adopt the following document, ‘Guidelines Related to On-Leave-from-Call Status in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America’”:

I. DEFINITION AND CRITERIA FOR “ON-LEAVE-FROM-CALL” STATUS

- A. At the termination of the call of a pastor or a rostered lay minister (associate in ministry, deaconess, diaconal minister), **and if** the rostered minister has not received and accepted a subsequent call, the following procedure is to be followed:
1. At the termination of a call the bishop will write to the rostered minister, providing information and these guidelines for on-leave-from-call status.
 2. On-leave-from-call status is not automatically granted. It must be requested and a rationale provided by the rostered minister as to why the on-leave-from-call status should be granted. A rostered minister seeking on-leave-from-call status shall make a written request to the synodical bishop within 45 days following the termination of a prior call. Failure to do so may result in removal from the roster.
 3. The request for on-leave-from-call status should include:
 - a. a statement of the rostered minister’s commitment to be available for a letter of call;
 - b. a statement of how the rostered minister’s gifts and abilities can contribute to the ministry and mission of this church;
 - c. the anticipated date when the rostered minister will be available for a letter of call;
 - d. a statement describing the ability and willingness of the rostered minister to provide ministry services while on leave from call at the direction of the synodical bishop;
 - e. the rostered minister’s plan for continuing education while on leave from call; and
 - f. a statement describing the rostered minister’s current and intended participation in a congregation of this church.
 4. A rostered minister on leave from call must be an active member of a congregation of this church.
 5. A rostered minister on leave from call remains accountable to the synodical bishop and must be willing to meet the criteria and standards of this church for its rostered ministers.
 6. If a rostered minister requesting on-leave-from-call status desires to make a personal statement relative to the request, the Synod Council may, at its discretion and in the manner of its determination, allow for a personal appearance by the rostered minister to the Synod Council (or its designated committee).
 7. Action granting or denying on leave from call is to be taken by the Synod Council [ELCA constitutional provision 20.17., bylaws 7.31.16., 7.52.22., and †S8.12.i.9) in the *Constitution for Synods*] upon recommendation by the synodical bishop. A committee may be designated by the bishop to evaluate applications and bring recommendations to the Synod Council through the synodical bishop for action.
 8. The effective date for on-leave-from-call status, if granted by the Synod Council, begins the day the rostered minister is no longer serving under a regularly issued letter of call. **This date is not affected by severance payments.**
 9. Synod Council action related to a rostered minister’s on-leave-from-call status is reported as information to the annual Synod Assembly in the report of the bishop or the Synod Council.
 10. Written notification is sent to the rostered person requesting on-leave-from-call status reporting the action of the Synod Council.
 11. The secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Board of Pensions are notified of the action of the Synod Council in granting on-leave-from-call status. Similar notification is given by the synod to the secretary of this church and the Board of Pensions when such status is ended.
 12. Prior to the annual anniversary of the effective date of the Synod Council’s decision granting on-leave-from-call status, the rostered minister on leave will need to request renewal of the on-leave-from-call status. Annual action by the Synod Council is necessary for the continuation of that status.
- B. A rostered minister engaged in graduate study, in a field of study that will enhance service in the rostered ministry of this church, may be retained on the roster of this church for a maximum of six years by annual action of the Synod Council, in consultation with the Vocation and Education unit [see bylaw 7.31.16.].
- C. On-leave-from-call for family responsibilities is available to rostered ministers who have had at least three years of active service under call, with demonstrated circumstances that fulfill the criteria for this status. A rostered minister may request on-leave-from-call status for family responsibilities for a maximum of six years, by annual action of the Synod Council, based upon either of the following reasons [see bylaw 7.31.16.]:
1. For the birth or care of a child or children of the rostered minister.
 2. For the care of an immediate family member (child, spouse, or parent) with a serious health problem. A serious health problem is an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves either a period of incapacity or treatment with inpatient care in

a hospital, hospice, or residential medical facility, or a period of incapacity or subsequent treatment following inpatient care. A medical certification of such a serious health problem must be submitted to the Synod Council as part of the request for on-leave-from-call status.

- D. With approval of the Synod Council, either by general policy or by specific authorization, the synodical bishop may place limitations or restrictions upon the availability for service of a rostered minister who is on leave from call.
- E. Six months prior to the end of the third year of on-leave-from-call status, the bishop or bishop's designee will contact the rostered minister on leave from call to review:
 - 1. Pension and health insurance implications, with a recommendation that the Board of Pensions be contacted.
 - 2. The implications and expectations of being in a non-rostered status, including for ordained ministers the **document**, "Guidelines for Persons Formerly Rostered as Ordained Ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America," **which are contained in the policy on Removal from the Roster in this manual.**
 - 3. The criteria for continuation of on-leave-from-call status beyond three years.
 - 4. The process for reinstatement to the roster.
- F. Ordinarily, a rostered minister on leave from call cannot be transferred to another synod while on leave from call. In unusual circumstances, *e.g.* in the case of a married couple, both of whom are on a roster of this church, the transfer of an rostered 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.
- G. The secretary of this church should report to the Conference of Bishops any person whose on-leave-from-call status has gone beyond three years (six years in the case of approved graduate study and family leave) without action by that person's Synod Council. This report should be made within six months following notification to the synodical bishop by the secretary of this church of the expiration of on-leave-from-call status. The Conference of Bishops may then, upon recommendation of the Roster Committee of the Conference of Bishops, recommend removal from the roster of such an individual by the secretary of the church.

II. CRITERIA FOR CONTINUATION OF ON-LEAVE-FROM-CALL STATUS

- A. On-leave-from-call status normally terminates at the end of three years. A rostered minister may remain on leave from call beyond three years (six years in the case of approved graduate study and family leave) when such continuation contributes to the ministry and mission of this church, and when the particular circumstances of the on-leave-from-call status warrant an exception to the normal three-year limitation. Such continuation on the roster of this church is contingent upon recommendation by the synodical bishop and action of the Synod Council and the Conference of

Bishops.

- B. A rostered minister who seeks to remain on leave from call beyond three years must provide a written request to the synodical bishop and Synod Council for the continuation of that status. This request should be received no later than six months prior to the end of the third year of on-leave-from-call status.
- C. This request must state clearly the reason(s) for such a request and how these reasons relate to ~~the~~ **this** church's ministry and mission.
- D. The request must include the following information:
 - 1. The rationale for the rostered minister's remaining on leave from call, including a statement of the rostered minister's commitment to be available for a letter of call, and an articulation of how the rostered minister's gifts and circumstances can contribute to the ministry and mission of this church;
 - 2. The anticipated date when the rostered minister will be available for a call;
 - 3. A statement describing the ability and willingness of the rostered minister to provide ministry services at the direction of the synodical bishop, consistent with the ministry and mission needs of the synod;
 - 4. The rostered minister's plan for continuing education while on leave from call;
 - 5. A statement describing the rostered minister's current participation in a congregation of this church.
- E. Graduate Study: A rostered minister engaged in graduate study, in a field of study that will enhance service in the rostered ministry of this church, may be retained on the roster of this church beyond six years, upon the approval by the synodical bishop, by annual action of the Synod Council in consultation with the Vocation and Education unit, and by action of the Conference of Bishops. The written request must indicate clearly the educational goals of the rostered minister, the time line for completion of study, and a statement of commitment that the rostered minister intends to be available for a letter of call within this church upon completion of graduate study.
- F. Family Leave: A rostered minister on leave for family responsibilities may be retained on the roster of this church beyond six years, upon the approval by the synodical bishop, by annual action of the Synod Council, upon authorization by the Conference of Bishops for a maximum of two years. The written request must indicate clearly the continuing family needs of the rostered minister, the possible time line for conclusion, and a statement of commitment that the rostered minister intends to be available for a letter of call within this church upon conclusion of these circumstances.
- G. Action by the Synodical Bishop and Synod Council
 - 1. The synodical bishop reviews the request for continuation of the on-leave-from-call status beyond three years (six years in the case of approved graduate study and family leave) and forwards that request to the Synod Council together with the bishop's evaluation of

the request.

2. At the request of the synodical bishop, the Synod Council considers the request of the rostered minister and how it relates to the mission and ministry of the synod. Should the decision of the Synod Council be to recommend approval, the Synod Council shall make such a request to the Conference of Bishops.
3. The Synod Council forwards its decision, together with the statement of the rostered minister and the rationale of the Synod Council in recommending approval, to the Conference of Bishops.
4. A rostered minister on leave from call must provide an annual, written request to the synod bishop for recommendation to the Synod Council for continuation of that status.
5. The Synod Council must review and act annually on requests for continuance of on-leave-from-call status beyond the three-year norm (six years for graduate study and family leave).

H. Action by Conference of Bishops

1. The Roster Committee of the Conference of Bishops reviews such requests and reports its recommendations to the Conference of Bishops.
2. The Conference of Bishops, at a regular meeting of the conference, by a majority vote acts upon requests for continuation of on-leave-from-call status. It shall report its decision to the Synod Council seeking such a continuation.
3. The action of the Conference of Bishops in approving the request of a Synod Council is valid for two years.
4. A Synod Council may act to continue the on-leave-from-call status for a second year [beyond the normal three-year limit] before requesting subsequent action by the Conference of Bishops for a further exception.

*Adopted by the Church Council
as policy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
in this revised form,
April 1996 [CC96.04.36d]
and amended April 2003, August 2005, and November 2010.*

Procedures for Dealing with Allegations of Physical or Mental Incapacity of a Pastor Under Synodical Constitution †S14.13.b. and †S14.13.c.

1. When allegations of physical or mental incapacity of a pastor have come to the attention of the bishop of the synod, the bishop in his or her sole discretion may investigate such conditions personally in company with a committee of two ordained ministers and one layperson.
2. When allegations of physical or mental incapacity of the pastor 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 must investigate such conditions personally in company with a committee of two ordained ministers and one layperson.
3. The committee of three persons who accompany the bishop shall be appointed by the Executive Committee of the Synod Council. These three persons must be members of congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, but not necessarily of congregations of the synod in which is rostered the pastor who is the subject of the allegations.
4. The pastor who is the subject of the allegations shall be advised either orally or in writing of the appointment and composition of the committee and the purpose of the committee's inquiry.
5. The cooperation of the pastor shall be solicited by the bishop or other committee member designated by the bishop. To this end, the pastor may be requested to do one or more of the following:
 - Execute appropriate releases authorizing his or her own health care providers to provide information to the committee and bishop.
 - Execute appropriate releases authorizing hospitals or similar institutions to provide information to the committee and bishop.
 - Submit to examination, testing, and evaluation by physicians or other professionals designated by the committee and bishop and to execute appropriate releases authorizing such physicians and other professionals to provide the results of such examination, testing, and evaluation to the committee and bishop.
 - Provide releases authorizing employers, educational institutions, or others to provide information to the committee and the bishop.
 - Provide written information to the committee and the bishop.
 - Meet with the committee, the bishop, or both, either separately or at the same time, to respond to questions.
6. All information obtained by the committee and the bishop under item 5 (above) shall be shared with the pastor.
7. If the pastor has complied with all of the requests made by the committee and bishop under item 5, the pastor, at his or her own expense, may submit to the committee and bishop the report of physicians or other professionals who, after examining the pastor, are in disagreement with the conclusions of any of the physicians or other professionals whose report was obtained under item 5.
8. If the pastor does not comply with any request made of him or her under item 5, the committee and the bishop may retain one or more competent physicians, psychiatrists, psychologists, or other professionals, who may give testimony to the committee and the bishop based upon available evidence of the pastor's physical or mental condition. Such evidence may include, but is not limited to, written or verbal statements of persons who have observed the pastor. Any testimony given pursuant to this paragraph shall be considered "competent medical testimony" for the purpose of required provision †S.14.13.c. of the *Constitution for Synods*.
9. On the basis of all of the evidence considered, the committee and the bishop shall determine whether physical or mental incapacity of the pastor is evident. The committee and bishop shall find that physical or mental incapacity is evident if, based upon the evidence, the committee and the bishop determine that it is more likely than not that the pastor is physically or mentally incapable of fulfilling adequately his or her duties and responsibilities.
10. If the committee and the bishop decide that the pastor is physically or mentally incapacitated, the bishop shall declare the pastorate vacant, and the status of the pastor shall be designated as "on continuing disability." The Synod Council shall grant such status.
11. During the period of the pastor's physical or mental incapacity, the bishop or his or her representative shall work with the pastor and the pastor's family to assist the pastor in receiving appropriate care and treatment.
12. Upon restoration of a disabled pastor to health, the bishop shall take steps to enable the pastor to resume ministry, either in the congregation last served if the incapacity has been of short duration or in another field of labor if the incapacity has been of longer duration.
13. **If no call is available, the pastor should apply for on-leave-from-call status, following the normal procedures.**

The cost associated with any of the foregoing, to the extent not reimbursed by the pastor's medical insurance plan, shall be paid by the synod.

Adopted by the Church Council as policy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, December 1993 [CC93.12.97] and amended November 2010.

Removal from the Roster

Administration of this procedure is the responsibility of the synod in which the person is listed on the roster [†S8.12.i.10)a) in the *Constitution for Synods*].

A. Factors for removal

1. Bases for removal include:
 - a. Death;
 - b. Resignation;
 - c. End of “on leave” status; and
 - d. Discipline.
2. Annual review of “on leave” status is required (†S8.12.i.9) [see detail in “on leave” policy].

B. Guidelines for Persons Formerly Rostered as Ordained Ministers

1. *Introduction:* The purpose of this document is to clarify the status of those no longer on the roster of ordained ministers and the activities that are appropriate for them in the life of this church.
2. *The Ministry of the Baptized:* This church affirms the integrity and importance of the ministry of the baptized. When a person’s name is removed from the roster of ordained ministers of this church, it is a change of calling and function but it is not a change to a less valuable ministry.
3. *The Ministry of the Ordained:* Some persons are called by God in the Church to the public ministry of Word and Sacrament. For a variety of reasons, there may be a time in the life of these persons when they are no longer called by this church to serve in this ministry.
 - a. When a person’s name is removed from the roster of ordained ministers, the privileged rights and responsibilities of that person to serve as an ordained minister of the ELCA are suspended.
 - b. Persons removed from the roster of ordained ministers may apply for reinstatement and may be reinstated. If this occurs, the change is again in calling and function, but it is not a change to a more valuable ministry.
 - c. This church understands that ordained ministers are called to a ministry of Word and Sacrament under the discipline of the ELCA. This church is held accountable for their actions. Persons who are not under call by this church and not on its roster of ordained ministers are not under the discipline of the ELCA and may not function as pastors in the name of this church.

- d. For the sake of the Gospel, there may be occasional exceptions to this rule. For instance, formerly rostered persons may be authorized for a stated place and period of time by the synodical bishop to preside at the sacraments and provide other pastoral ministry when, in the bishop’s judgment, this will best serve the Gospel in this church.

4. *The Participation of Formerly Rostered Persons:* Removal from the roster of ordained ministers suspends the rights and privileges this church confers at ordination. Formerly rostered persons should participate in the life of this church as laypersons. Several specific changes follow for the formerly rostered person:
 - a. Use of the stole, sacramental vestments, and other clothing or symbols associated with the public ministry of Word and Sacrament must be avoided.
 - b. Use of titles such as “Pastor” or “the Reverend” must be discontinued by the individual.
 - c. Formerly rostered persons may not preside at the sacraments and rites of this church unless specifically authorized by the synodical bishop for the sake of the Gospel. The gifts, training, and experience of a formerly rostered person can be valuable to a congregation. The use of these gifts in the congregation should be discussed with the synodical bishop at the time the rostered person is removed and with that person’s parish pastor in consultation with the bishop. When preaching, a formerly rostered person functions as a lay preacher and not as a supply pastor.
 - d. The synodical bishop is responsible to oversee and administer the work of the synod, including providing pastoral care and leadership to congregations and ordained ministers. It is, therefore, important that formerly rostered persons consult with the synodical bishop and observe synodical guidelines regarding their service in this church.
3. See the “model” letters provided by the secretary of this church for transmission of this information to persons removed from the roster.

*Adopted at the March 1992 meeting
of the Conference of Bishops [CB92.03.15]*

*((Draft of letter of notice of **removal** from roster of ordained ministers—revised version as of February 2001))*

date

name

address

Dear -----:

Greetings in this season of name of season in church year. Grace and peace be with you in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

As required under the provisions that govern the official rosters of this church, ordained ministers who are without a current letter of call may be retained on the roster by annual action of the Synod Council, upon endorsement by the synodical bishop, for a maximum of three years. You have now reached the end of the privilege of that “on leave” status.

By a copy of this letter, I am notifying (name) , secretary of this church, that your name is to be removed from the roster of ordained ministers, effective (specify date).

Your roster file will be retained by the secretary of this church, as prescribed by ELCA churchwide bylaw 7.41.19. You may provide annually to the secretary of this church, if you so desire, your current address and other appropriate information for that roster file.

Should you desire at some point in the future to seek reinstatement to the roster of ordained ministers, application will need to be made to the bishop of this synod for referral to the Candidacy Committee. The possibility of reinstatement is governed by ELCA churchwide bylaw 7.31.15. and other applicable policies that outline steps in that process.

Please bear in mind that, from the perspective of this church, you are now to function as a layperson in a congregation. While you are not on this church’s roster of ordained ministers, the privileges and responsibilities conveyed at ordination are suspended your ordained status is in suspension.

As someone who is not on the roster of ordained ministers of this church, you must no longer perform any duties or acts associated with ordained ministry. You are not to use the title “Pastor” or “the Rev.” Neither are you to baptize, preside for Holy Communion, perform marriages, or wear vestments normally associated with an ordained minister, such as a stole or clerical collar.

If under some circumstance, you were asked to substitute due to the absence of a pastor, you could do so not as a supply pastor but as a layperson serving without clerical vestments in leading a Service of the Word. Only in the most unusual circumstance and then only with the explicit permission of the synod bishop could you preside for Holy Communion, in keeping with the policy of this church defined in “The Use of the Means of Grace—A Statement on the Practice of Word and Sacrament.”

You must not remain a member of the congegation that you were serving at the time of your removal. Transferring your membership to another congregation assists the current leaders and members to carry out their ministry. It also provides an opportunity for you to enter fully into the life of a different congregation with clarity about your role. It is your responsibility to sever ties with your former congregation.

Thank you for your years of service as an ordained minister. Be assured that this church remains grateful to you for your pastoral ministry. God bless you in your new arena of endeavor.

Sincerely,

---Name---

Bishop

xc: Name , secretary of this church

((Draft of notice of **removal** from roster of ordained ministers without reinstatement language—revised version, November 1997))

date

name

address

Dear -----:

Grace and peace be with you in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, **who summons us through the Gospel to faith and grants us hope.**

I am writing to inform you of the removal of your name from the roster of ordained ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. This action has been taken in keeping with the constitutional and bylaw provisions that govern the roster of ordained ministers.

By a copy of this letter, I am notifying (name), secretary of this church, that your name is to be removed from the roster of ordained ministers, effective (specify date).

Your roster file will be retained by the secretary of this church, as prescribed by ELCA churchwide bylaw 7.41.19. You may provide annually to the secretary of this church, if you so desire, your current address and other appropriate information for that roster file.

From the perspective of this church, you are no longer an ordained minister. Therefore, you are to function as a layperson in a congregation.

You must not remain a member of the congregation that you were serving at the time of your removal. Transferring your membership to another congregation assists the current leaders and members to carry out their ministry. It also provides an opportunity for you to enter fully into the life of a different congregation with clarity about your role. It is your responsibility to sever ties with your former congregation.

As someone who is not on the roster of ordained ministers of this church, you must no longer perform in any congregation or other setting of this church any duties or acts associated with ordained ministry. You are not to use the title “Pastor” or “the Rev.” Neither are you to baptize, preside for Holy Communion, perform marriages, or wear vestments normally associated with an ordained minister, such as a stole or clerical collar.

Removal of your name from the roster brings to a close, in some sense, a particular chapter in your life. May our gracious God grant you wisdom, strength, and courage in your new arena of endeavor.

Sincerely,

---Name---

Bishop

xc: Name, secretary of this church

*((Draft of letter of notice of **removal** from roster of ordained ministers—revised version as of August 2010))*

date
name
address

Dear :

Greetings in this season of _____. Grace and peace be with you in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

I write to advise you of your removal from the roster of ordained ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, effective _____. By copy of this letter, I am notifying _____, secretary of this church, of your removal from the roster

In accordance with the constitution and bylaws of the ELCA, your roster record will be transferred to the Office of the Secretary in Chicago. Annually you may, if you wish, provide to the secretary of the ELCA your current address and other pertinent information for your file.

If and when you should desire to apply for reinstatement to the ELCA roster, that request needs to **go to be addressed to the bishop of this synod for possible referral** to the candidacy committee. The possibility of reinstatement is governed by ELCA churchwide bylaw 7.31.15. and other applicable policies that outline steps in that process.

Please bear in mind that, from the perspective of this church, you are no longer an ELCA pastor. As someone who is not on the roster of ordained ministers of this church, you must no longer perform any duties or acts associated with ordained ministry within the ELCA. Removal from the roster of the ELCA suspends the rights, responsibilities, and privileges that are conferred at ordination, including the celebration of the Sacraments and presiding at services of marriage as an ELCA pastor.

If under some circumstance, you were asked to substitute due to the absence of an ELCA pastor in an ELCA congregation, you would do so only with the permission of the synodical bishop.

As you make your transition to another church body, we wish you well. Please understand that this letter is not a repudiation of your ministry, but rather an acknowledgment of what you have sought—namely to be removed from the roster of the ELCA.

In Christ,

Bishop

c: _____, secretary of the ELCA

Resignation from the Roster

An ordained minister may voluntarily resign from the roster of ordained ministers by giving written notice to the bishop of the synod.

1. A resignation is effective when delivered and may not be withdrawn or rejected. No acceptance is necessary.
- 1.2. The bishop responds with a letter describing the implications of the resignation (see model letter below).
- 2.3. The ordained minister's roster file is transferred to the secretary of the church (churchwide bylaw 7.41.18.).
- 3.4. For information on possible reinstatement, see the policy, "Reinstatement to the Rosters of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America" and the "Candidacy Manual."

*((Draft of letter of notice of **resignation from roster** of ordained ministers—revised version as of February 2001))*

date

name

address

Dear -----:

Greetings in this season of _____. Grace and peace be with you in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

I write to acknowledge your letter of resignation from the roster of ordained ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, effective (specify date). By a copy of this letter, I am notifying (name), secretary of this church, of your resignation.

Your roster file will be retained by the secretary of this church, as prescribed by ELCA churchwide bylaw 7.41.19. You may provide annually to the secretary of this church, if you so desire, your current address and other appropriate information for that roster file.

Should you desire at some point in the future to seek reinstatement to the roster of ordained ministers, application will need to be made to the bishop of this synod for referral to the Candidacy Committee. The possibility of reinstatement is governed by ELCA churchwide bylaw 7.31.15. and other applicable policies that outline steps in that process.

Please bear in mind that, from the perspective of this church, you are now to function as a layperson in a congregation. While you are not on this church's roster of ordained ministers, your ordained status is in suspension the privileges and responsibilities conferred by ordination are in suspension. You must not remain a member of the conegagation that you were serving at the time of your resignation from the roster. Transferring your membership to another congregation assists the current leaders and members to carry out their ministry. It also provides an opportunity for you to enter fully into the life of a different congregation with clarity about your role. It is your responsibility to sever ties with your former congregation.

As someone who is not on the roster of ordained ministers of this church, you must no longer perform any duties or acts associated with ordained ministry. You are not to use the title "Pastor" or "the Rev." Neither are you to baptize, preside for Holy Communion, perform marriages, or wear vestments normally associated with an ordained minister, such as a stole or clerical collar.

If under some circumstance, you were asked to substitute due to the absence of a pastor, you could do so not as a supply pastor but as a layperson serving without clerical vestments in leading a Service of the Word. Only in the most unusual circumstance and then only with the explicit permission of the synodical bishop could you preside for Holy Communion, in keeping with the policy of this church, as defined in "The Use of the Means of Grace—A Statement on the Practice of Word and Sacrament."

Thank you for your years of service as an ordained minister. Be assured that this church remains grateful to you for your pastoral ministry. God bless you in your new arena of endeavor.

Sincerely,

---Name---

Bishop

xc: Name, secretary of this church

Reinstatement to the Rosters of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

I. REINSTATEMENT PROCESS

- A. Reinstatement to the rosters of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) is the responsibility of the Candidacy Committee of the synod where the applicant was last rostered as an ordained minister, associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.¹
- B. In the case of an applicant whose rostered ministry was last 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. For a period of two years, from January 1, 2010, until December 31, 2011, Candidacy Committees may begin to consider, without waiting for five years to elapse, applications from those whose removal or resignation from the roster was solely the result of being in a lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationship.
- D. Except as provided in paragraph I.C. above, in the case of an applicant whose removal from the roster was the result of either:
 - 1) the official disciplinary process of this church, or
 - 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 or without 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

- A. The applicant provides the completed "Application for Reinstatement" to the appropriate roster of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to the synod, and the synod sends a copy to the Vocation and Education unit for information.

- B. Upon receipt of the application, the synodical bishop will notify the Office of the Secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and request any pertinent information the churchwide office may have concerning the applicant.
- C. With the approval of the ELCA secretary, the reinstatement process may be transferred from the synod of previous roster to the synod of current residence, upon the written concurrence of **the chairs of** both candidacy committees and both synodical 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 arranges an interview with the applicant. The purpose of this interview is to determine the applicant's eligibility to be a candidate in the synod for ministry. The bishop also determines whether the application is timely under paragraph I.C. or premature under paragraph I.D. 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 applicant for indications of repentance and amendment of life as well as indication of or attempts at reconciliation with those injured by the conduct, and documents the corrective actions that have occurred before proceeding with the reinstatement process. The bishop should invite comments from those directly affected by the applicant's inappropriate conduct or alleged misconduct.
- F. The applicant is considered for reinstatement by the Candidacy Committee when the application is forwarded to the committee by the bishop. The bishop may, in his or her sole discretion, decline to forward the application to the Candidacy Committee or may forward the application to the Candidacy Committee with a written statement of the bishop's opinion of the application.

¹Any person removed from a lay roster that existed on December 31, 1987, 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 roster of associates in ministry, as identified in ELCA churchwide bylaw 7.52.13. This requirement shall apply to those certified during the period of January 1, 1988, through September 1, 1993, as associates in ministry of this church.

according to the expectations of this church.

III. CANDIDACY COMMITTEE

- A. The synod Candidacy Committee will receive and review the registration by the pastor and Congregation Council of the congregation of which the applicant is a member in good standing. The registration attests that the applicant is an active member of an ELCA congregation.
- 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 to the roster.
- D. The applicant must prepare an approval essay and submit it to the Candidacy Committee.
- E. 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 the Psychological Evaluation and Career Consultation according to the policies of the Vocation and Education unit. The expense of this evaluation is the responsibility of the applicant.
- F. The Candidacy Committee follows the Candidacy Manual standards and procedures for new applicants 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 to the roster 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 ordained, commissioned, or consecrated ministry in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 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

- G. The Candidacy Committee may request the Vocation and Education unit to convene a Review Panel to determine the applicant's theological readiness for ordained ministry. The Review Panel will make a recommendation to the committee following the procedures developed by the Vocation and Education unit.

IV. DECISION

- A. The Candidacy Committee will decide the applicant's suitability to serve as a rostered minister of this church. This decision is one of the following:
 - 1) approval of the candidate for reinstatement upon receipt and acceptance of a letter of call;
 - 2) postponement of approval with specific recommendations for remedial or developmental work before further consideration for reinstatement; or
 - 3) denial of 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 paragraphs I.D. 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 that approval 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 reviewing 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 through the Vocation and Education unit.
- B. If after consultation with the synodical bishop, the Vocation and Education unit determines that the process for reinstatement described herein has not been fully or properly completed, then the Vocation and Education unit shall postpone 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 by the Vocation and Education unit (“Candidacy Manual”), is the same as that for other candidates for rostered ministry.
- E. Upon receipt and acceptance of a properly issued and duly attested letter of call, the candidate is reinstated to the appropriate roster of this church.

See form for “Application for Reinstatement” in the Candidacy Manual.

Adopted by action of the Church Council as policy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, April 16, 1989, revised on November 14, 1994, and further revised by the Church Council April 12, 1999 [CC99.04.29], November 14, 2004 [CC04.11.69c], and November 15, 2009 [CC09.11.80].

Ecclesiastical Endorsement for Ministries in Chaplaincy, Pastoral Counseling, and Clinical Education (MCPCCE)

Background: *This resource is intended for use by synodical bishops and synod staff in working with individuals considering service in a ministry in chaplaincy, pastoral counseling or clinical education. Following all other applicable call guidelines, a synod may issue a letter of call to a rostered person to serve in such ministries even if that person does not have ecclesiastical endorsement or professional certification. However, synods are encouraged to seek endorsed and certified persons for such ministries. Those persons serving in these ministries who are not endorsed and certified should be encouraged and supported to seek MCPCCE ecclesiastical endorsement. This document describes both the values and limitations to such endorsement and certification as well as an overview of the process.*

INTRODUCTION

The ecclesiastical endorsement process in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for ministries in chaplaincy, pastoral counseling and clinical education (MCPCCE) provides the basis for a recommendation to the synodical bishop and Synod Council concerning a rostered person's suitability, readiness, aptitude, pastoral identity and competence and theological integration for a particular ministry in chaplaincy, pastoral counseling or pastoral clinical education. The professional certification process follows ecclesiastical endorsement.

I. DEFINITION OF ECCLESIASTICAL ENDORSEMENT AND PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION

- A. **Professional Certification:** The recognition by a professional chaplaincy, pastoral counseling or clinical pastoral education organization¹ that a person has met a level of professional competence of ministry in a specific setting.
- B. **Ecclesiastical Endorsement:** The recognition by the respective church body that a rostered person has met inter-Lutheran endorsement standards for theological and pastoral competence to serve in ministries in chaplaincy, pastoral counseling and clinical pastoral education.

Ecclesiastical endorsement is a necessary pre-requisite for certification by a professional organization. Ecclesiastical endorsement and professional certification are both normally required by an employing agency/institution. ELCA rostered persons who seek ecclesiastical endorsement are expected to seek and obtain professional certification.

Ecclesiastical endorsement for MCPCCE is a joint program of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod. In the ELCA the MCPCCE program is located in the Vocation and Education unit. In the LCMS the MCPCCE program is located in the Board for Human Care Ministries. These two units provide supervision and management of the ecclesiastical endorsement process. An Inter-Lutheran Coordinating Committee (ILCC), composed of ELCA and LCMS representatives,

¹ The following are recognized professional organizations: Association of Professional Chaplains (APC); American Association of Pastoral Counselors (AAPC); American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT); American Psychological Association (APA); Association for Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE); American Correctional Chaplains Association (ACCA); National Board of Certified Counselors (NBCC); National Association of Certified Mental Health Counselors (NACMHC); Association of Certified Social Workers (ACSW).

provides coordination of this process.

II. MCPCCE Endorsement Process

The Inter-Lutheran Coordinating Committee has developed the document, "Endorsement Standards and Procedures, Call Criteria and Program Guidelines for Ministries in Chaplaincy, Pastoral Counseling, and Clinical Education" (www.elca.org/chaplains/standards) that:

- Establishes standards for theological and pastoral competence for ministries in chaplaincy, pastoral counseling and clinical pastoral education
- Sets forth criteria for calls and appointments to ministries in chaplaincy, pastoral counseling and clinical pastoral education
- Presents guidelines for pastoral ministry programs in all affiliated or recognized social ministry organizations

The Inter-Lutheran Coordinating Committee has appointed area inter-Lutheran endorsement consultation conveners. These regionally appointed persons convene consultation committees based upon need and the request of candidates and judicatory personnel. Based upon material submitted by the candidate, and a meeting with the Inter-Lutheran Endorsement Consultation Committee, a recommendation is provided to the candidate's respective bishop regarding the readiness of the rostered person for a specific ministry. The synod bishop and the Synod Council have sole authority to grant or revoke the ecclesiastical endorsement.

III. VALUES OF ECCLESIASTICAL ENDORSEMENT

- A. Seeks to establish accountability between persons serving in the area of ministries in chaplaincy, pastoral counseling and clinical pastoral education and their respective judicatories and to emphasize the importance of appropriate conduct and practice of those who serve in these ministries.
- B. Seeks to emphasize the importance of ecclesiastical endorsement in a synod's consideration of a call to service in one of these ministries.
- C. Enables synod councils to issue a term call that permits a non-endorsed candidate engaging in the ecclesiastical endorsement process to serve while completing the endorsement process.
- D. Provides a standard set of expectations for rostered persons who seek to serve in a specific area of ministries in

chaplaincy, pastoral counseling and clinical pastoral education.

IV. ENDORSEMENT CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

- A. Renders an assessment of the readiness, pastoral competence and theological integration of rostered persons who seek to enter a specific field of ministry in chaplaincy, pastoral counseling and clinical pastoral education.
- B. Utilizes the professional gifts of rostered leaders who have long ministered in a specific area to assist in rendering a professional recommendation for ecclesiastical endorsement.
- C. Renders a recommendation on the professional pastoral competence of candidates to employing agencies and institutions that seek to meet national professional accreditation standards.
- D. Serves as a referral source and consultation to bishops and seeks to provide resources for rostered persons exploring vocational and training options in the area of ministries in chaplaincy, pastoral counseling and clinical pastoral education.

V. LIMITATIONS OF ECCLESIASTICAL ENDORSEMENT

- A. Does not imply or guarantee that professional certification will be achieved or that a call to serve in chaplaincy, pastoral counseling, or clinical education will be issued.
- B. Does not establish an employment, agency or supervisory relationship between the endorsing synod and the rostered person receiving the endorsement.
- C. Does not imply or assure that the endorsed person has undergone any background or reference checks, screening, psychological testing or evaluation as part of the ecclesiastical endorsement process.

VI. INITIATING THE ELCA ECCLESIASTICAL ENDORSEMENT PROCESS

When a rostered individual contacts the synod office regarding the ecclesiastical endorsement process, or when a synod is considering issuing a call to a ministry within the synod of chaplaincy, pastoral counseling or clinical education, questions related to ecclesiastical endorsement in the ELCA may be directed to **the MCPCCE office a staff person** in the Vocation and Education unit.

There are representatives of the MCPCCE program appointed **within each of the nine regions of the ELCA to serve as consultants and resource persons to the synods in the region, as well as a representative** in each synod to work directly with synod staff and persons considering serving in a ministry of chaplaincy, pastoral counseling, or clinical education.

*Prepared by ELCA Vocation and Education unit,
Reviewed by the Conference of Bishops
October 2005*

Suggestions for Chaplains and Congregations In Time of Military Involuntary Call-up

Involuntary call-up for military chaplains is a term applied: (a) to a reserve component chaplain who is assigned to a reserve unit that is activated for federal duty, or (b) to an individual reserve chaplain who is called to active duty when he or she has not requested it. The suggestions provided here for chaplains serving under call to congregations may be used as guidance for other employing entities, institutions, or agencies where pastors are serving under call outside of the congregational setting.

A. Procedures for Pastors

1. If you have not already done so, make your congregation aware of your status as a military reservist.
2. Notify your Congregation Council President and Executive Committee and arrange for a meeting with the Congregation Council to discuss your involuntary call-up to military service.
3. Notify your synod bishop and invite the bishop or a member of the bishop's staff to participate in the Congregation Council meeting where the issues related to your call-up will be considered.
4. Contact the ELCA Executive for Federal Chaplaincy Ministries, at telephone 202.408.8403 in Washington, D.C., or e-mail elcachap@aol.com.
5. Contact the ELCA Board of Pensions Service Center at 800.352.2876 for essential ELCA Retirement Plan and ELCA Health Benefits Plan information.
6. Note that no new ecclesiastical endorsement is necessary in order for you to respond to the call-up.

B. Considerations for Congregations

1. The federal Uniformed Service Employment and Reemployment Act (USERRA) was passed in 1994 to encourage military service by making it easier for service personnel to return to civilian life after duty. While it is doubtful that this law is directly applicable to pastors under call to congregations, efforts should be made to insure that members of the clergy are not placed at a disadvantage by their involuntary call-up.
2. For a call-up of 18 months or less, a leave of absence should be granted to the pastor by the Congregation Council. The synod should assist the congregation in arranging for interim or supply pastoral care during the leave of absence.
3. If the call extends for more than 18 months, the situation should be reviewed and possibly renegotiated. The leave of absence may be extended, or the pastor could submit a letter of resignation, allowing a new pastor to be called by the congregation.
4. The salary of the pastor should continue until military pay is received by the pastor or the pastor's family.
5. Although the congregation cannot sponsor the pastor in the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program during her/his active duty service, the congregation

should continue the pastor and the pastor's family's health benefits coverage until health benefits coverage is provided by the military. If the congregation does not continue the health benefits coverage, the Act does give employees on leave the right to continue their health insurance for 18 months at her or his own expense.

6. The congregation should consider accumulating make-up contributions for the pastor's ELCA Retirement Plan account for at least the 18 months of the leave of absence. It is necessary to confer with the Board of Pensions to determine what is appropriate and permissible under these circumstances.

C. Other Considerations:

1. There will be a delay of approximately thirty days for the chaplain's family members to be incorporated into the military medical system. For this reason, it is important that family members have copies of both (a) the military member's orders activating him or her to active duty, and (b) a reserve identification card. These items could help a family member to receive medical care during the thirty-day period.
2. Medical services for military members and their families are administered under the Tricare System. Further information on this system is available at www.tricare.osd.mil.
3. While on leave of absence, the pastor's housing allowance should continue until the military housing allowance is activated. If a pastor's family is living in a parsonage, arrangements should be made for their continuing in that setting during the leave of absence, or until a new pastor is called. When the military housing allowance is received, that amount should either be offered to the congregation in lieu of rent for the parsonage or used to pay utility costs.

Bureau for Federal Chaplaincy Ministries
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
1030 15th Street NW, Suite 1010
Washington, DC 20005-1503
202.408.8403

Suggestions for Chaplain Reentry into the Congregation

Operational commitments assigned to the Armed Forces of the United States (Active Duty, Reserve, and National Guard) in recent years have been at a level not experienced in several decades. A large number of Reserve and National Guard chaplains have been activated and had to leave their parishes for considerable periods of time, some up to 18 months.

Suggestions have been developed for chaplains and congregations in time of military involuntary call-up under the title "Suggestions for Chaplains and Congregations in Time of Military Involuntary Call-up" (Part One, page 27).

Congregations whose pastors are members of the Reserve or National Guard should have a standing "Mobilization Agreement" to provide for the needs of the pastor and family as well as the congregation during periods of mobilization.

When the period of active duty has been completed and the pastor returns to the parish the critical process of reentry begins. The form it may take and the time required for its completion will vary with each pastor and congregation; some estimates are 3-6 months. Chaplain Lance Kittleson has provided a helpful description of the variety of experience chaplains may have during their deployment in his article "Coming home from Iraq" (*The Lutheran*, September 2004). The experiences may range from frequent boredom to long periods of tension and tragedy. The effects of these experiences can be long lasting and chaplains are not immune to post-traumatic stress syndrome.

As marriage partners are advised to have patience with each other as they both make their way through the reentry process, the same patience is needed on the part of pastors and congregations. The most common instinct is the desire to "pick up where we left off and get on with it" as though nothing had changed in any of the relationships. Every effort should be made to resist this temptation since all persons in the relationships have changed and need time to get to know one another again. If a "returned chaplain" is available in the area, every effort should be made to invite the chaplain to meet with the congregation and congregation council to talk about the experience of deployment and reentry.

If at all possible, congregations are urged to make provision for the pastor and family to go away together for a couple of weeks and get reacquainted after the separation. This is the primary relationship and should be addressed first. It also may offer opportunity for the pastor to get body and emotions in the same place. With the rapid means of transportation available, it is possible for a person to be physically at home but emotionally still half a world away. Bishops should give consideration to organizing retreats for returning chaplains and their spouses, perhaps on a regional level, led by a skilled counselor who would help the couples process their experiences and adjust to ministry in the parish.

Perhaps the next planned event would be an overnight retreat for the pastor and Congregation Council where the pastor can listen as council members describe how they experienced the time of separation and the pastor's experience

also might be shared. Special attention should be paid to the new agreements that have been worked out within the congregation during this period. If a number of functions formerly performed by the pastor have been assumed by members of the congregation, some renegotiation will probably be necessary. When done with care and sensitivity, this process may produce new models of ministry to the benefit of the congregation.

For the congregation, the "get acquainted period" that was necessary when the pastor first arrived in the parish will need to be repeated in a shorter form at this time, perhaps the three to six months mentioned previously.

The pastor will experience some strong "pulls" in various directions:

- From the congregation. Some members of the congregation will require extended amounts of the pastor's time so the pastor can be brought up to date with the events in the member's life. The pastor must make special efforts to provide for this time.
- From the unit. Strong bonds are formed when people are together in a hostile environment. As the chaplain assisted the members of the unit to deal with events and experiences during the deployment, so she or he will usually feel the obligation to assist them in their family and community reentry process that may be prolonged and quite difficult. A chaplain's presence is in greater demand following a deployment than preceding it. Congregations can render valuable ministry to the community through sharing their pastor and facilities to assist soldiers as they navigate their individual reentry processes through such support activity.

The pastor will probably need to adjust to a different pace and focus upon return. Military operations are frequently characterized by a high level of activity and an intense focus on a particular task. The pace in most congregations is slower and the focus more diffused compared with military operations. This will call for some adjustment on the part of the returning chaplain who may experience the feeling of being "at loose ends" when the focus of activity is not as sharp.

The pastor may have experienced long periods of extreme tension produced by attempting to be aware of any imminent danger and instantly react appropriately. Ordinary sounds that occur without warning may be interpreted differently by persons returning from a combat theater and produce unusual reactions. It is not unusual for such persons to experience difficulty sleeping or have "nightmares" for a period of time following their return.

It would not be unusual for questions to arise in the hearts of both pastor and parishioners if this relationship still fits and is workable. All parties are urged to withhold judgment for some time and let the reentry process unfold.

A period of separation, be it between spouses or pastor

and congregation, tends to amplify the existing relationship. If the relationship was warm, close, and caring prior to the separation it will probably be even more so upon return. By the same token, if the relationship was troubled prior to the deployment, it will usually be even more difficult at the end of the separation.

Excellent resources are provided by the Army Chief of Chaplains in the document “Deployment Resources for America’s Clergy,” which is available on the Internet. Go to the Army’s Web site (www.chapnet.army.mil/) and click on “Civilian Clergy Resources” on the left hand side of the home page.

Essential elements of the process:

- Be patient with one another.
- Listen intently to what the other person is saying.
- Speak candidly and lovingly to one another.
- Hold on to the unity you have been given in Christ.

Policy and Procedures Related to the Designation of Disability **Roster Status**

I. INTRODUCTION

Disabled status is an ecclesial determination granted by the Synod Council in keeping with its constitutional authority. Such determinations are not necessarily dependent upon an ordained minister receiving disability benefits.

Bylaw 7.41.18. in the *Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* provides:

Disability. Ordained ministers may be designated as disabled and continue to be listed on the roster of ordained ministers of this church, upon endorsement by the synodical bishop, by action of the Synod Council in the synod in which the ordained minister is listed on the roster.

- a. The policies and procedures for designation of disability on the roster of ordained ministers 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 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 ordained minister is listed on the roster may grant permission for the ordained minister 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.

Constitutional provision 7.42. stipulates:

Each pastor on the roster of ordained ministers of this church shall be related to that synod:

- h. on whose roster the ordained minister, if designated as disabled, was listed when last called or the synod of current address, upon application by the ordained minister for transfer and the mutual agreement of the synodical bishops involved after consultation with and approval by the secretary of this church . . .

II. DISABILITY STATUS

A. An ordained minister who seeks disability status on the roster applies to the synodical bishop for such status.

B. In the case of a request for a designation of disability, the synodical bishop receives and reviews the medical assessment and determination of the Board of Pensions or other insurance carrier regarding the ordained minister's disability. This assessment informs the synod process, but is not determinative. When the synodical bishop concludes that such designation is appropriate, the recommendation is forwarded to the Synod Council for its action. In unusual circumstances, disability status may be granted apart from the individual's receipt of disability benefits. At the same

time the synodical bishop acts to provide for appropriate pastoral care of the congregation previously served by the ordained minister.

- C. The continuation of disability status granted to an ordained minister is subject to review and shall be reviewed in the event that disability benefits are terminated. Disability status granted to an ordained minister may be terminated by the Synod Council upon recommendation by the synodical bishop or in the event the ordained minister accepts a call.

D. Once the disability status ceases, an ordained minister who is not under call or has not received and accepted a call, should make application for on-leave-from-call status in accordance with the established process.

Policy and Procedures Related to Retired Status or the Designation of Disability

I. INTRODUCTION

Retired status or disabled status is an ecclesial determination granted by the Synod Council in keeping with its constitutional authority. Such determinations are not necessarily dependent upon an ordained minister receiving retirement or disability benefits.

Churchwide bylaw 7.41.17. in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* provides:

Retirement. Ordained ministers may retire upon attainment of age 60, or after 30 years on the roster of ordained ministers of this church or one of its predecessor bodies, or upon disability, and continue to be listed on the roster of ordained ministers of this church, upon endorsement by the synodical bishop, by action of the Synod Council in the synod in which the ordained minister is listed on the roster.

- a. The policies and procedures for granting retired status or for designation of disability on the roster of ordained ministers shall be developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.

Churchwide constitutional provision 7.42. stipulates:

Each pastor on the roster of ordained ministers of this church shall be related to that synod:

- i. on whose roster the ordained minister, if granted retired status, was listed when last called or the synod of current address, upon application by the ordained minister for transfer and the mutual agreement of the synodical bishops involved after consultation with and approval by the secretary of this church.

II. RETIRED STATUS

- A. An ordained minister who has attained the age of 60 or who has served for 30 or more years on the roster of this church or one of its predecessor bodies may be granted retired status by this church.
- B. An ordained minister who seeks retired status on the clergy roster upon attainment of age 60 or after 30 years on the roster of ordained ministers of this church or one of its predecessor bodies; or upon disability; applies to the synodical bishop for such status.
- C. In the case of an application for retired status, the synodical bishop shall make a determination that the ordained minister is eligible and then recommend to the Synod Council that such status be granted. At the same time the synodical bishop acts to provide for appropriate pastoral care of the congregation previously served by the retiring minister.
- D. An ordained minister who has been granted retired status shall retain that status as long as continued on the clergy roster or until acceptance of a call.

- E. If an ordained 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 ordained minister is rostered may grant permission for the ordained minister 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.

III. DISABILITY STATUS

- A. In the case of a request for a designation of disability, the synodical bishop receives and reviews the medical assessment and determination of the Board of Pensions or other insurance carrier regarding the ordained minister's disability. This assessment informs the synod process, but is not determinative. When the synodical bishop concludes that such designation is appropriate, the recommendation is forwarded to the Synod Council for its action. In unusual circumstances, disability status may be granted apart from the individual's receipt of disability benefits. At the same time the synodical bishop acts to provide for appropriate pastoral care of the congregation previously served by the ordained minister.
- B. The continuation of disability status granted to an ordained minister is subject to review and shall be reviewed in the event that disability benefits are terminated. Disability status granted to an ordained minister may be terminated by the Synod Council upon recommendation by the synodical bishop or in the event the ordained minister accepts a call.

Adopted by the Church Council April 1998 [CC98.04.40k] and amended November 2010.

Guidelines for Retired Ordained Ministers

Ordained ministers may retire upon attainment of age 60, or after 30 years on the roster of ordained ministers of this church or one of its predecessor bodies, or upon disability, and continue to be listed on the roster of ordained ministers of this church, upon endorsement by the synodical bishop, by action of a Synod Council in the synod in which the ordained minister is listed on the roster . . . (bylaw 7.41.17. in the Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America).

Persons who have served within the ordained ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and who have determined that they will enter retirement are not only to be honored for their past service but are seen as important resources for ministry within the life of this church. To enter this new phase of one's life is always a significant milestone. It is a transition into another important stage of life for every retired person. It is true also for the retired pastor (and spouse if the pastor is so blessed).

The following statement is a guideline for retired pastors, the congregations they served, and synodical bishops in understanding the new status of a retired pastor. It is intended to affirm the past ministry of retired pastors, to give directions which seek to avoid some pitfalls that can present themselves to the retired pastor, and to point to new arenas of service and support.

I. ROSTER OF ORDAINED MINISTERS

A retired pastor is on the roster of the synod in which last under call or in which the pastor resides. The retired pastor remains accountable to the synodical bishop where rostered. **Unless bylaw 7.41.17.b. applies, a** retired pastor must be a member of an ELCA congregation in order to remain on the roster of ordained ministers and remains subject to the standards for ordained ministers of this church.

II. CONGREGATIONAL MEMBERSHIP

A retired pastor should not remain a member of the congregation served at the time of retirement. Transferring one's membership to another congregation allows the successor pastor to assume pastoral leadership more readily. It also provides an opportunity for the retired pastor to enter fully into the life of a different congregation with clarity about the pastor's retired role.

III. PASTORAL SERVICE

At the time of retirement a pastor is no longer pastor of a congregation and therefore must discontinue the functions of the pastoral office in the congregation unless specifically authorized to do so.

The service of retired pastors is governed by the *Constitution for Synods* [†S14.14.], which describes the role of ordained ministers in congregations in which they do not serve: "Ordained ministers 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" (†S14.14. in the *Constitution for Synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*).

IV. INTERIM MINISTRY

One area of potential service for the retired pastor is interim ministry. Many retired pastors provide valuable and needed ministry to congregations in time of transition following the resignation of a pastor. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America invites retired pastors to consider this important arena of ministry.

A retired pastor may serve as an interim pastor during a time of pastoral vacancy only by the authorization of the synodical bishop. Retired pastors who wish to serve under call in an interim ministry must return to the active roster of ordained ministers.

V. COMPENSATION

Retirement benefits provided by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America through the Board of Pensions, combined with Social Security benefits, are intended to provide adequate compensation to pastors in retirement. Therefore, there shall be no financial commitment by a congregation or agency to retired pastors or their spouses.

- A. A retired pastor who is authorized to serve (not under call) in a congregation for a stated period of time and for pastoral services may be compensated according to compensation practices within the synod.
- B. The title of Pastor Emeritus has no official standing and carries with it no compensation or authorization for service or for other responsibilities.

VI. CONSULTATION WITH SYNODICAL BISHOP

As part of the bishop's pastoral care of retired pastors, a synodical bishop or a member of the bishop's staff is encouraged to meet with a pastor at the time of retirement to discuss these guidelines, the pastor's new retired status, and its implications.

*Adopted by the Church Council
as policy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,
November 1998 [CC98.11.45]*

Guidelines Related to Interim Pastoral Ministry

Congregations periodically experience transitions in pastoral leadership. Synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America provide for the care of congregations during a time of pastoral vacancy through the appointment by the bishop of the synod of an ordained minister to provide pastoral care on an interim basis. An interim pastor is appointed by the synodical bishop with the consent of the congregation or the Congregation Council (see provision *C9.06. in the *Model Constitution for Congregations*). Pastoral care is then provided on a contract basis, either through appointment or a term letter of call.

The following policy statement describes the guidelines by which interim ministry is provided to congregations.

I. CONGREGATIONS IN TRANSITION

- A. Because of the importance of the ministry of Word and sacrament, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America seeks to ensure appropriate pastoral leadership for congregations during a time of pastoral vacancy. Interim ministry is provided by synods during the time of transition following the completion of service by the congregation's former pastor and prior to the calling of a new pastor. This also is provided for in a congregation served by a multiple staff when a congregation's senior pastor leaves, or when an associate pastor or other pastoral staff leaves. The interim period is thus a time in which pastoral care is provided a congregation by the synod as the congregation moves through a process of self-study and change toward new pastoral leadership.
- B. A congregation facing the normal range of congregational concerns related to a pastoral transition may be served by an interim pastor without formal training. The synodical bishop arranges for the congregation to receive Word and Sacrament leadership during the period prior to the regular calling of a pastor through the appointment of an interim pastor.
 - 1. An appointed interim pastor assumes the rights and duties in the congregation of a regularly called pastor and may delegate the same in part to an "interim supply pastor" with the consent of the synodical bishop (§14.17. in the *Constitution for Synods*).
 - 2. The interim pastor normally serves the congregation in a contracted and compensated arrangement.
- C. A congregation in a situation of significant concerns and stress related to a pastoral transition may benefit from the leadership of an experienced and trained interim pastor. Situations in which this is particularly appropriate include the transition following a long pastorate, a congregation facing new mission opportunities and/or a changed context for ministry, a transition following the resignation of a pastor related to disciplinary action by the synod, or a transition marked by significant discord or upheaval within a congregation.

II. APPOINTED OR CALLED INTERIM MINISTRY

- A. An interim pastor may either be appointed by the synod bishop or may serve under a term call extended by the Synod Council (bylaw 7.41.11.b. in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical*

Lutheran Church in America).

- 1. Calls to interim ministry may not be extended by a congregation.
 - 2. A pastor serving either under appointment by the bishop or under a term letter of call normally serves the congregation in a contracted and compensated arrangement.
- B. Unless previously agreed to by the Synod Council, an interim pastor is not available for a regular call to the congregation served during this time of transition and shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a pastor (*C9.07. in the *Model Constitution for Congregations*).

III. GUIDELINES FOR CALLED INTERIM PASTORAL MINISTRY

- A. A called interim pastor shall provide a minimum of a half-time ministry (at least twenty hours per week) to the congregation with commensurate compensation in accordance with synod guidelines, and consistent with the ELCA guidelines for shared-time calls.
 - 1. A call to interim ministry shall be primarily for the benefit of the congregation served, not for the status of the ordained minister.
 - 2. Such a call may either be a term call to a specific congregation, or a term call to interim ministry in the synod. The determination of this will be with the concurrence of the congregation being served.
- B. Prior to being eligible for a call to interim ministry, the pastor shall normally receive appropriate training for interim ministry. The Vocation and Education unit will review interim ministry training programs and serve as consultant to synods in evaluating such programs.
- C. Only pastors who have served in a regular called congregational ministry for a minimum of three years are eligible to serve in a called interim ministry.
- D. The interim ministry agreement between the congregation and the called interim pastor will specify compensation, benefits, and the specific goals and expectations related to the period of interim ministry. The letter of call issued by the Synod Council may include salary and benefit matters. Normally, however, matters of compensation and benefits are stipulated in the interim ministry agreement with the congregation.
- E. In issuing a call to interim ministry, the synod assumes no responsibility for guaranteeing continuous employment,

compensation, or benefits for the pastor under call (ELCA churchwide constitutional provision 7.43.).

1. Compensation and benefits are normally provided entirely by the congregation or ministry setting being served. Where possible, continuity of Board of Pensions health benefits will be advocated by the synod.
 2. It is explicitly understood that the synod is the calling body and not the employer of record at any time during the service of an interim pastor under call from the Synod Council.
- F. Calls to interim service within a synod may be issued for a one to three-year term of service, with an annual review by the Synod Council or its designated committee.
1. If a pastor under a term call to interim ministry has not served in a congregation during the preceding twelve months, however, the call may be terminated by the Synod Council.
 2. A term letter of call issued by the Synod Council may also be coterminous with the duration of service within the congregation served (ELCA churchwide constitutional provision 7.43.).
 3. The term call may be terminated by action of the Synod Council.
 4. A pastor may resign a call to interim ministry at any time.
- G. Initial issuance of a call to interim ministry by the Synod Council shall be upon the recommendation of the synodical bishop. The initial interim ministry agreement with a congregation may be reviewed by the bishop or synod staff prior to the acceptance of the contractual arrangement by the interim pastor.

IV. GUIDELINES FOR APPOINTED INTERIM MINISTRY

- A. An appointed interim pastor is authorized to provide Word and sacrament ministry to a congregation by the synodical bishop with the concurrence of the Congregation Council.
1. The interim pastor assumes the rights and duties in the congregation of a regularly called pastor.
 2. The appointed interim pastor may delegate the same in part to an interim supply pastor with the consent of the synod bishop (§14.17. in the *Constitution for Synods*).
- B. A retired pastor or pastor on leave from call who serves an interim ministry is recommended by the bishop and signs an interim ministry agreement with the congregation which provides for the compensation, benefits, and the specific goals and expectations related to the period of interim ministry.
- C. Normally, only pastors who have previously served in a regular called congregational ministry for a minimum of three years will be eligible to serve in an appointed interim ministry.

Calls to Non-Congregational Service

Churchwide bylaw 7.41.13. provides for the possibility of letters of call being issued to a pastor for non-congregational service.

- A. The bishop of the synod in which the person being called is rostered should be consulted before a call to non-congregational service is issued.
- B. The decision on the Source of Call is determined in accord with ELCA continuing resolution 7.44.A05.a., and b.
- C. As the calling source for Calls to Non-Congregational Service, the Synod Council or Church Council must decide if the proposed call is appropriate.
 1. According to churchwide bylaw 7.41.13., “Synodical councils and the Church Council may seek the advice of the Conference of Bishops in specific situations.”
 2. The Roster Committee of the Conference of Bishops may act on such requests for advice.
- D. Annual reporting is required of each rostered person to the bishop of the synod in which the person is rostered.
- E. Those under call to non-congregational service in predecessor church bodies were received onto the ELCA roster (7.41.16.), but came under annual review through the report form provided by and submitted to the synodical bishop.
- F. Responsibility for such non-congregational calls should be noted in the minutes of the appropriate Synod Council or Church Council.
- G. Note churchwide constitutional provision 7.42., especially sections b. and c., regarding rostering of persons in non-congregational calls:

“Each pastor on the roster of ordained ministers of this church shall be related to that synod:

 - a. to which the congregation issuing the call to the ordained minister is related;
 - b. which issues a letter of call to the ordained minister; [or]
 - c. on whose roster the ordained minister was listed at the time of the issuance of a letter of call from the Church Council...”
- H. A person who receives a letter of call issued by the Church Council normally shall remain on the roster of the synod in which she or he served prior to receiving the call through the Church Council.
 1. Specific exceptions exist, as noted below:
 2. Under churchwide constitutional provision 7.42.d., “Each pastor on the roster of ordained ministers of this church shall be related to that synod . . . on whose roster the ordained minister, 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 assure proportionate representation of faculty and administration in each synod of its region. . . .”
 3. Under churchwide constitutional provision 7.42.e.,

“Each pastor on the roster of ordained ministers of this church shall be related to that synod . . . on whose roster the ordained minister 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 synod bishop and received by the Synod Council. . . .”
 4. Further, churchwide bylaw 7.42.01. indicates: “If the service of an ordained minister 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.”
 5. In addition, churchwide bylaw 7.42.03. provides: “In certain circumstances for the sake of the ministry and mission needs of this church, the transfer of an ordained minister 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.”

Guidelines Related to Non-Stipendiary Ministry

Under churchwide bylaw 7.41.14., guidelines related to non-stipendiary ministry in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America were developed, in accord with the applicable bylaws, by the Vocation and Education unit and reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, which recommended Church Council approval.

I. DEFINITION AND CRITERIA FOR NON-STIPENDIARY MINISTRY

Non-stipendiary ministry in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is understood to be service as a rostered minister without regard to compensation for such service.

- A. It may be either service for no stipend (or for reimbursed expenses only) or for a token stipend that is not commensurate with the normal salary guidelines for rostered ministry.
- B. Non-stipendiary calls are not eligible for participation in the ELCA Pension and Health Benefits Plan; therefore, it also is understood that such non-stipended service is possible only when there is clear evidence that the ordained minister has adequate alternative income and health insurance.
- C. A letter of call to non-stipendiary ministry in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may be issued only by a Synod Council following approval by the Conference of Bishops.
- D. The ordained minister serving in a non-stipendiary call shall be accountable to the synod bishop and Synod Council in the carrying out of this ministry.
- E. A call to non-stipendiary service shall be a one-year term call that may be renewed by the Synod Council only on the basis of the satisfactory fulfillment of the established criteria.
- F. A call to non-stipendiary ministry neither qualifies as an initial call to congregational service required for ordination nor does it imply any employment relationship or contractual obligation to the Synod Council (see ELCA churchwide constitutional provision 7.43. and churchwide bylaw 7.43.01.).¹
- G. The criteria under which a Synod Council may issue a letter of call to an ordained minister for non-stipendiary service include the following:

1. There shall be a clearly defined statement of the need for this pastor to provide for Word and Sacrament ministry in the synod and a rationale for this call to be for non-stipendiary service, including an annual ministry plan;
2. The minimum commitment by the ordained minister shall be a monthly average of 10 hours per week to the ministry to which called;
3. The ordained minister shall meet the criteria and standards of this church for its ordained ministers;
4. The Synod Council must determine that a call to non-stipendiary service is extended in order to carry out a specific ministry on behalf of the synod.

II. ACTION BY THE SYNOD BISHOP AND SYNOD COUNCIL

When the synod bishop and Synod Council believe that the criteria for a non-stipendiary letter of call are met by a specific ministry, the Synod Council may propose by a majority vote a letter of call.

- A. Final action to extend such a letter of call is contingent upon the approval of the Conference of Bishops.
- B. The Synod Council forwards its proposal, together with the rationale for issuing the call to non-stipendiary ministry, to the Conference of Bishops.
- C. Should the Conference of Bishops approve the request and the ministry begin, the Synod Council will conduct an annual review of the non-stipendiary call.
- D. Annual Synod Council action is required in order to continue the call to non-stipendiary ministry.

III. ACTION BY THE CONFERENCE OF BISHOPS

The Roster Committee of the Conference of Bishops receives all requests from Synod Councils for calls to non-stipendiary ministry.

- A. The Roster Committee reviews these requests and reports its recommendations to the Conference of Bishops.
- B. The Conference of Bishops, in a regular meeting of the conference, by a majority vote acts upon requests for calls to non-stipendiary ministry. It reports its decision to the Synod Council seeking such approval.
- C. When approval is given by the Conference of Bishops, the Synod Council may proceed with the issuance of a letter of call to non-stipendiary ministry and may annually renew such a call without subsequent action by the Conference of Bishops.

*Adopted by the Church Council
as policy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,
April 1994 [CC94.04.30]*

¹Churchwide constitutional provision 7.43. stipulates: "A letter of call issued by a Synod Council or the Church Council to an ordained 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 ordained ministry, as contained in this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions and in the policy and procedure documents of this church."

In addition, ELCA churchwide bylaw 7.43.01. indicates: "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 pastors as ordained ministers."

Exception for Three-Year Parish Rule

Service as a mission developer shall be considered as congregational service under the terms of bylaw 7.41.12. when such service is approved by the synodical bishop and the executive director of the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission unit and a call has been issued by the Synod Council where the mission development is located.

Requests for exception to the “three-year parish rule” (7.41.12.) are addressed to the Roster Committee of the Conference of Bishops.

- A. The Global Mission unit and the Office of the Presiding Bishop for military chaplaincies, with the approval of the Roster Committee of the Conference of Bishops, may seek and provide a call for candidates who have not completed the expected initial three-year experience of congregational service.
 1. Each request is to come directly from the candidate to the Roster Committee of the Conference of Bishops. A statement by the candidate, which provides an explanation of pertinent circumstances surrounding the request, is to accompany each request.
 2. Each request also must be accompanied by a letter either from the Global Mission unit, the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission unit, or the Presiding Bishop’s executive assistant for federal chaplaincy ministries that indicates the desire to place the person in specific areas of responsibility.
 3. Synod designation for a person ordained from seminary to serve in global-mission work or military chaplaincy will be determined by:
 - a. reassignment to a synod of the candidate’s choice;
 - b. reassignment to the synod of original candidacy; or
 - c. remaining, upon the candidate’s choice, in the synod of assignment determined in this church’s candidacy process.
- B. For other candidates and persons already rostered, requests for exceptions to the three-year provision must be reviewed by the Roster Committee of the Conference of Bishops.
 1. Other candidates requesting waiver of the three-year congregation service rule for pastoral service in non-congregational settings must file application with the Roster Committee of the Conference of Bishops.
 2. The application is to be accompanied by:
 - a. a statement by the applicant outlining the circumstances and reasons for the request;
 - b. a letter from the synodical bishop; and
 - c. a statement from the churchwide unit, synod-related institution, or organization that is seeking the person for service.
- C. By decision of the Conference of Bishops [CB92.10.48], exceptions to the three-year pattern of congregational service for global mission and military chaplaincy are to be approved by the Roster Committee and reported to the Conference of Bishops for ratification.

Revisions approved by the Church Council November 2008 [CC08.11.65].

Guidelines for Shared-Time Ministries

These guidelines describe the policies of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in extending calls to ordained ministers for shared-time ministry (churchwide bylaw 7.41.11.). They are for use by congregations, synods, and churchwide units of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

I. DEFINITION OF SHARED-TIME MINISTRY

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America understands shared-time ministry to exist when an ordained minister is called to serve in one or more settings of this church while earning income from other employment or while devoting substantial time to other activities.

Mission contexts change. Some examples of contexts and settings for which shared-time ministries may be appropriate are:

- ▶ *Small-membership congregations* with significant opportunities for mission and service.
- ▶ *New ministries* so limited in size or slow in development that they would require a disproportionate and unwise investment of time and money, if the more typical mission-development approach were employed.
- ▶ *Ministries* (e.g., *inner city, ethnic, and rural*) where the community's expectation is that the ordained ministers or rostered lay ministers will receive primary financial support from secular employment.
- ▶ *Multi-staff congregations* looking for ministry specialties, in addition to the services of pastors, rostered lay ministers, and contracted laypersons.
- ▶ *Parishes that would benefit from having two or more persons serving a single congregation or multiple congregations* but that cannot afford full-time salaries for several persons.
- ▶ *Specialized pastoral or ministry needs* of institutions and agencies that may call for a high degree of training and skill but that may neither warrant investment of appropriate full-time salary nor justify the engagement of a full-time staff person in that position.

The foregoing list is illustrative, not exhaustive. The particular settings for shared-time ministry will become more evident as this church gains experience with this style of ministry.

II. CRITERIA FOR SHARED-TIME MINISTRY

- A. Persons eligible for shared-time ministry must be on the rosters of this church or have been recently approved for initial call. Initial calls to ordained service normally are in a congregational setting.
- B. Experienced persons, whose ability to work in complex settings has already been tested, are preferred. Clergy couples in shared-time ministries, however, are not subject to this restriction.
- C. An ordained minister engaged in shared-time ministry shall

have a significant responsibility for a ministry of Word and Sacrament in a congregation, institution, or other expression of this church (churchwide bylaws 7.41.11. and 7.41.13.).

- D. An ordained minister may be under call to only *ONE* church entity. Other employment is by work agreement.
- E. A work-load for the call of at least an average of twenty (20) hours per week is normative, with not less than fifteen (15) hours absolutely required.
- F. Compensation shall be commensurate with synodical compensation guidelines that apply to persons in full-time positions.
- G. Any contemplated non-church employment for the rostered person shall be subject to the review and approval of the synodical bishop.

III. PROCEDURES FOR CALL TO SHARED-TIME MINISTRY

The *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* provides principles and procedures for the calling of ordained persons (churchwide continuing resolution 7.44.A05.). In addition to the regular procedures, a letter of call shall include the following:

- A. The range of duties and responsibilities shall be specified by adding appendices to the "Definition of Compensation, Benefits, and Responsibilities," related to the letter of call (*C9.09.).
 1. If an ordained person is called as the only pastor of a congregation, it shall be to the full range of such duties. If the call is to a congregational staff position, the shared-time pastor shall have significant responsibility for preaching and administration of the sacraments.
 2. If an ordained person is called to a ministry in a non-congregational setting, specialization of function may be appropriate, provided opportunity for pastoral care and witness to the Gospel is included.
- B. The decision to seek a shared-time pastor shall be based upon a study of mission and ministry needs in the particular setting. Appropriate synodical or churchwide leaders must participate in the study and decision.
- C. A periodic evaluation by the calling entity shall be encouraged by the appropriate synod bishop or churchwide leaders so that the called person is held accountable for the ministry in that particular situation. The calling body is accountable for adequate professional and financial support.
- D. Any exceptions to the guidelines governing time and compensation must be requested from the Roster Committee of the Conference of Bishops.

**IV. APPROPRIATE CANDIDATES
FOR SHARED-TIME MINISTRY**

Shared-time ministry demands the ability to use time efficiently, the flexibility to adjust to altering circumstances, and the willingness to make a positive contribution to Church and society through secular employment or other interests. The effective shared-time leader has a clear sense of personal ministry and professional integrity. He or she has a concept of ministry that values extensive shared leadership with laity.

It is appropriate for ordained persons to offer themselves for shared-time ministry, as with all specific ministries, on the basis of their own sense of vocation and their sense of the needs of this church. It is not appropriate, however, for this dual-vocational interest to take priority over the mission needs of this church.

**V. SUPPORT AND ACCOUNTABILITY
IN SHARED-TIME MINISTRY**

The nature of shared-time ministry requires that the employing entity pay particular attention to such matters as compensation and benefits, setting of non-working times for meetings, and specifying shared expectations, which acknowledge the special dynamics of this style of ministry.

- A. Accountability of the shared-time person is the same as with all ordained persons.
- B. Evaluation of the ministry should be based upon the stated goals and conditions established for that ministry at the time of call.
- C. The entity of this church that calls the individual will review the ministry annually to evaluate the ongoing appropriateness of the shared-time style for that particular mission opportunity.

VI. RECOGNITION OF SHARED-TIME MINISTRY

Through its rites, this church proclaims interdependence among congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization, and the person called.

- A. The rite of installation and other signs of recognition signal to the calling entity that a particular ministry is integral to the Church's overall mission in the world.
- B. This church exercises the option of shared-time ministries as one of the many ways that it responds to ministry needs and opportunities. When it is the chosen option, shared-time ministry should be exercised with vigor and appreciated for what it can offer for the sake of the Gospel.

Revision on minimum hours of service under call for ordained ministers (Section II.E.) adopted by the Church Council, November 2000 [CC00.11.64.a1].

Calls to Serve in Unusual Circumstances

Churchwide bylaw 7.41.15. provides for the exceptional possibility of calls to serve in unusual circumstances.

- A. Each application to serve under the roster category of “Unusual Circumstances” must receive a recommendation regarding call from the Roster Committee of the Conference of Bishops.
- B. Source of call and roster category must be determined by the Roster Committee of the Conference of Bishops.
- C. Criteria. The appropriateness of a potential call to serve in unusual circumstances should be examined using the following questions:
 - 1. Does the proposed call advance the interest of the Church in the care of the Gospel?
 - 2. What aspects of the position require that the worker be ordained?
 - 3. How would an ordained person serving in this position provide a distinct advantage for this church?
 - 4. Is there adequate provision for ecclesial accountability by the pastor to the synodical bishop?
 - 5. Is there realistic potential for abuse of the call for the personal or financial benefit of the pastor or for business advantage?

*Criteria adopted by the Church Council
of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, April 2001*

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Admission to the Roster of Ordained Ministers of Persons Ordained in Another Lutheran Church or Another Christian Tradition

This policy summarizes the process by which the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America approves for the roster of ordained ministers those persons previously ordained by another Lutheran church body or another Christian tradition. This policy shall apply to those who are citizens of the United States as well as those who seek to immigrate to the United States.

A detailed description of Additional information on this process is provided in the ELCA Candidacy Manual, section “Ordained B-13 through B-17.”

Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada. In the case of ordained ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, they shall be received by transfer upon acceptance of a valid call from a congregation, Synod Council, or the Church Council of this church following the certification of their good standing on the roster of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, completion of a Rostered Leader Profile, and with the approval of the bishop of the synod in which they are to serve.

I. BASIC STANDARDS FOR ORDAINED MINISTERS

A. Persons admitted to and continued in the ordained ministry of this church shall satisfactorily meet and maintain the following, according to churchwide bylaw 7.31.11.:

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. receipt and acceptance of a letter of call; and
7. membership in a congregation of this church.

B. Any person seeking admission to the ordained ministry of this church must be able to meet and maintain the above standards. In the case of a person previously ordained by another Lutheran church body or another Christian tradition it is implicit that the applicant is familiar with the Confession of Faith of this church and is committed to it.

II. INITIAL APPLICATION

A. The applicant registers with the synod of residence. In the case of an applicant who does not reside in the United States registration 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 synod assignment. Synods should consult with the Global Mission unit regarding candidates from outside the United States (other than ELCIC).

B. The applicant is to provide the synod with the following information:

1. Application for Candidacy (including Entrance information form, Application to the Roster of Ordained Ministers from a Pastor in Another Lutheran

Church or Another Christian Tradition, and signed release).

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.e.g., internship, clinical education, etc.
5. Statement or certificate of ordained status in another Lutheran church body or Christian tradition.
6. Letter of reference from applicant’s current or former ecclesiastical supervisor.
7. INS documentation (for those seeking to immigrate to the United States).
8. Completed Psychological Evaluation and Background Check.
9. Copy of at least one recent sermon.
10. A personal statement, including the theological rationale, on why the applicant seeks to serve on the ordained roster of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
11. A recent photograph.

C. Upon receipt of this information the synod bishop, in consultation with the Candidacy Committee of the synod, arranges an interview with the applicant. The purpose of this interview is to determine the applicant’s readiness to enter the candidacy process of this church. Entrance into the candidacy process is based upon the adequacy of the information provided by the applicant and the applicant’s statement of intention to serve in the ordained ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. If the applicant comes from a church overseas with which this church is related, the Global Mission unit will be consulted by the synod. The purpose of this consultation is to receive any additional information regarding the applicant that is available from the applicant’s church body. After the completion of the interview and the receipt of the required information, the applicant is considered for endorsement by the Candidacy Committee.

III. THEOLOGICAL REVIEW PANEL/ENDORSEMENT

- A. Following the Entrance of the candidate, the Candidacy Committee will request that the Vocation and Education unit convene a review panel. This panel should include or consult with the Candidacy Committee seminary representative. The Theological Review Panel may be convened on the territory of the synod or at an ELCA seminary.
- B. The panel will then make a recommendation to the Candidacy Committee concerning endorsement. Recommendations that may be made include:
 1. Immediate recommendation for an Approval interview with no additional requirements.
 2. Plan of preparation as outlined in the Theological Review Panel report, followed by an Approval interview.
 3. Plan or preparation as outlined in the report, with follow-up Theological Review Panel meeting prior to Approval interview.
 4. Recommendation that the Candidacy Committee consider denial of endorsement.
- C. The panel informs the Candidacy Committee and the Candidate in writing of its recommendation. The committee acts on the recommendation at its next regular meeting.

V. APPROVAL

Upon the successful completion of the required work and the recommendation of the panel, the candidate is considered for approval by the Candidacy Committee. A positive recommendation by the panel shall normally be necessary if the Candidacy Committee is to approve the candidate. In the case of a candidate who has been denied a positive recommendation by the panel, the Candidacy Committee must consult directly with the Vocation and Education unit. The Vocation and Education unit will arrange for a member of the panel to be present at the Approval Interview and to participate in the committee's deliberations. The approval decision is reported in writing to the Synodical Relations section of the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Vocation and Education unit. The candidate completes the Candidate Resume Form-churchwide assignment process forms and is assigned to a region and synod for consideration for a letter of call.

VI. ORDINATION OR RECEPTION OF THE CANDIDATE

- A. After receipt and acceptance of a letter of call by the candidate, the synodical bishop is to consult with the Office of the Secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America concerning the reception of the candidate.
- B. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America will receive ordained ministers from churches which that believe, teach, and confess the Apostles', the Nicene, and the Athanasian Creeds.
- C. Those from other traditions will be ordained according to the Service of Ordination of this church. The determination of how this policy applies in the case of each candidate is made by the Office of the Secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.¹
- D. The basis for this policy is the recognition that, while ordination is into the Church catholic, it is always particularized in a specific tradition of the Church and never in the abstract. As the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America determines its ecumenical vision and policy, it is necessary to avoid the impression that this church is taking unilateral action that implies the recognition or exchangeability of ordained ministers of another Christian tradition. At the same time it is important to give a clear witness to this church's willingness to affirm the ordination of those churches which believe, teach, and confess the ecumenical creeds.

VII. PASTORAL CARE AND SUPPORT

The beginning of service for those who come to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America from other churches is an important time. It is a time to establish significant relationships of support and growth. During the early years of service, it is recommended that the synod bishop offer the newly rostered pastor a mentor who would assist the bishop in providing this support and nurture.

See outline of the process in the Candidacy Manual, "Application to the Roster of Ordained Ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America by Persons Ordained in Another Lutheran Church or Another Christian Tradition."

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]. Further revisions approved by the Church Council in November 2010.

¹The process of determining how this policy applies to any specific candidate is carried out, on behalf of the presiding bishop, by the secretary of this church.

Theological Education for Emerging Ministries (Formerly Known as an Alternate Route for Admission to the Roster of Ordained Ministers)

This policy summarizes the process by which the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America approves for the roster of ordained ministers those persons “who by reason of age and prior experience” (churchwide bylaw 7.31.14.) are qualified to participate in an alternate route to ordination. Theological Education for Emerging Ministries (TEEM) is a program by which the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America responds to the missional needs of this church. The program takes into consideration the leadership gifts and ministry skills of a candidate in determining a program of preparation.

I. BASIC STANDARDS FOR ORDAINED MINISTERS

- A. Persons admitted to and continued in the ordained ministry of this church 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 of Christ and in so doing to be an example in faithful service and holy living;
 6. receipt and acceptance of a letter of call; and
 7. membership in a congregation of this church.
- B. The preparation of a candidate for ordination normally includes the following:
 1. membership in a congregation of this church and registration by its pastor and council;
 2. the guidance and supervision of a Candidacy Committee for at least one year prior to approval for ordination;
 3. a Master of Divinity degree from an accredited theological school in North America;
 4. supervised clinical work and one year of internship;
 5. at least one year of residency in a seminary of this church and the recommendation of the faculty of that seminary; and
 6. approval for ordination by a Candidacy Committee of this church.

II. IDENTIFICATION OF TEEM SETTINGS AND CANDIDATES

- A. **The Role of the Synod.** Synod bishops have primary responsibility for recommending people who may be suitable for the TEEM program, as well as providing oversight of any TEEM candidate’s preparation process. An ethnic community or churchwide unit may assist the bishop in identifying a person who meets the criteria established for TEEM ministry. Those identified may include a lay mission developer already employed by the church, or a person serving in an emerging ministry.

See the Candidacy Manual for the detailed description of the TEEM candidacy process.

III. CRITERIA FOR ADMISSION TO THE PROGRAM OF THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION FOR EMERGING MINISTRIES

- A. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America recognizes that there are those persons who by reason of age or prior experience can be approved for ordination without a Master of Divinity degree. Included in this category are those persons who, by reason of specific life experiences and recognized leadership qualities, have the gifts for ministry that are needed by this church. It is understood that the minimum age for persons seeking approval in this process is normally to be 40 years of age or older.
- B. Applicants who seek to serve in ordained ministry under this program of preparation come to this church bearing particular gifts for ministry. Some are indigenous leaders who can assist the ELCA in developing the critically needed leadership for ministry in the Asian and Pacific Islander, African Descent, Latino/Latina, Arab and Middle Eastern, American Indian, and Alaska Native communities. Others are persons who are available to serve in remote rural and small-town communities as non-stipendiary or bi-vocational ministers. In all cases they are persons who “by reason of age and prior experience” are qualified to participate in this non-degree program of preparation. Recognizing that leadership is a gift of God to the people of God gathered in diverse communities, this church seeks to affirm and utilize the gifts of those persons whose faith, commitment and experience is needed in the ordained ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

IV. TEEM PROGRAM STEPS IN CANDIDACY

- A. The program steps for TEEM candidacy are described in detail in the 2005-Candidacy Manual, section B, pages 10-12. It is important for the synod to convene an Initial Interview-Assessment panel as described in the Candidacy Manual prior to an applicant entering the candidacy process as a TEEM candidate.
- B. Upon successful completion of the candidate’s program of study, a Theological Review Panel/Competency Assessment Panel acts on behalf of an ELCA seminary faculty in making an approval recommendation to the candidate’s Candidacy Committee. The Candidacy Committee follows the regular approval process. TEEM candidates participate in the Churchwide Assignment Consultation and are administratively assigned to the synod that has previously identified a ministry setting.

Adopted by the Church Council as policy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America April 16, 1989 [CC89.04.54, with name of program changed in CC99.11.83.o].

Other Matters

- A. **Consent of the Bishop:** An ordained minister, serving under call, who either leaves the work of the ordained ministry or engages in another occupation without consent of the bishop of the synod shall cease to be an ordained minister of this church. The ordained minister's name shall be removed from the roster of ordained ministers by the bishop of the synod, who shall report such action to the secretary of this church and to the next Synod Assembly.
- B. **No Dual Roster Membership:** In accordance with bylaw 8.72.15.d., an An ordained minister of this church who enters the ordained ministry of another church body, or who joins a religious group or congregation of another church body (except as provided in 7.41.17.b), or who serves a group schismatic from this church or from a congregation thereof, shall cease to be a member of this church. The ordained minister's name shall be removed from the roster of ordained ministers by the bishop of the synod, who shall report the action to the secretary of this church and to the next Synod Assembly.
- C. **Discipline:** See Chapter 20 in the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* and the rules of procedures that govern the process on discipline.

Guidelines Related to Synodically Authorized or Licensed Ministries

These guidelines relate to bylaw 7.61.01. in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* that addresses the issue of providing Word and Sacrament ministry through the use of synodically authorized ministry, where it is not possible to provide appropriate ordained pastoral leadership. Those who are authorized for such ministry within a synod are not rostered by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (unless already serving on a roster of this church) but are authorized to provide a specific ministry within a particular setting for a designated period of time.

Principle 40 and related sections in “The Use of the Means of Grace—A Statement on the Practice of Word and Sacrament,” which was adopted “for guidance and practice” by the 1997 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, also address this issue.

- A. **Identification of Need:** The synod identifies a congregation or other ministry where ordained pastoral leadership is not available for an extended period of time and where synodically authorized ministry may be appropriate. Because of the relationship of an authorized lay ministry to those serving in the ordained ministry of Word and Sacrament, pastors serving congregations within the area where this ministry need is located normally will be consulted in this determination.
- D. **Synodical Committee for Authorized Ministry:** An appropriate synodical board or committee may be appointed by the Synod Council to provide the synodical bishop with recommendations concerning the authorization of and accountability for authorized ministries within the synod. This committee may be a sub-committee of the synodical Candidacy Committee. When it is a separate committee, it should be closely related to the synod Candidacy Committee. In either case, the work of the two is distinct.

- B. **Invitation to Service:** An individual who demonstrates the potential for service is invited by the synod to enter a program of preparation.

An individual who has been removed from rostered ministry in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America by reason of misconduct, or has been denied continuance in candidacy by reason of misconduct is precluded from serving in a synodically authorized ministry of this church.

- C. **Qualifications:** A person invited to prepare for a synodically authorized ministry should be an active member of an ELCA congregation for at least one year. Prior to preparing to serve in synodically authorized ministry an individual must have:

1. Been recommended by the individual’s pastor and congregation council;
2. Consulted with synodical staff and/or the synodical committee responsible for the synod’s program of preparation; and
3. Demonstrated the ability and willingness to participate in a program of preparation leading to possible service in a synodically authorized ministry **or a willingness to provide evidence of prior preparation that has achieved the goals and standards of the program of preparation outlined in these guidelines.**

In making its determination concerning an individual’s eligibility to serve in a synodically authorized ministry, the synod will interview the applicant and will obtain written responses to the **questions on the candidacy Entrance Form (see the link under “Forms for Applicants and Candidates” at www.elca.org/candidacy/forms.)** “Entrance Information Questions” in the “Candidacy Manual.” The synod will also obtain a background check, as outlined in the “Candidacy Manual,” on each individual being considered for authorization in the synod.

The synodical committee or synod staff determines the educational program within the synod for persons considered for service in an authorized ministry; determines the eligibility for individuals to enter this program of preparation; and advises the bishop on the suitability of an individual for service in a synodically authorized ministry.

- E. **Program of Preparation:** The synod defines the program of preparation for an authorized ministry of Word and Sacrament, consistent with guidelines developed by the **Division for Ministry Vocation and Education unit**, and in consultation with an ELCA seminary. Such programs shall prepare persons to have knowledge and abilities in the following areas:

1. Bible;
2. Lutheran theology, the Lutheran Confessions, and the Confession of Faith and polity of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;
3. Worship;
4. Spiritual discernment and faith development;
5. Leadership expectations and identity;
6. Contextual understanding; and
7. Pastoral skills including preaching, catechetics, worship leadership, visitation, pastoral care, and outreach.

The program of preparation can be accomplished in a variety of ways including educational programs that utilize current rostered leaders within the synod, ELCA seminaries and continuing education centers, the ELCA *SELECT* curriculum, and other appropriate resources.

The synod determines when an individual is prepared for service within the synod. There is no guarantee of service within the synod, and participation in a program of preparation does not mean that authorization for service will follow.

F. **Authorization for Service:** When the synod has determined that a specific need exists, and with the consent of the congregation to be served, an individual may be authorized for service within the synod by the synodical bishop, in consultation with the Synod Council. Such service shall fulfill assigned responsibilities, and authorization shall be for a specific period of time not to exceed one year, unless terminated earlier.

Persons who serve in synodically authorized ministry are to meet the following criteria:

1. evidence of mature Christian faith and commitment to Christ;
2. satisfactory participation in the synodical program of preparation, including demonstration of appropriate ministry skills;
3. knowledge and acceptance of the Confession of Faith of this church; and
4. willingness to meet this church's expectations concerning the personal conduct and behavior of persons serving in public ministry as described in "Vision and Expectations – Ordained Ministers in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America."

A person authorized by the synodical bishop is then installed in such service.

G. **Supervision and Accountability:** Accountability for synodically authorized ministry in a congregational setting is the direct responsibility of the Congregation Council. Accountability for a synodically authorized ministry in a non-congregational setting within a synod is the direct responsibility of the governing body of the entity that conducts that ministry, or if there is no such entity, the Synod Council. In all cases, a synodically authorized minister is to be under the direct supervision of an ordained minister appointed by the synodical bishop.

The supervising ordained minister shall report to the governing body and seek the advice and counsel of the synodical bishop or appropriate synodical staff person in relationship to the synodically authorized minister.

H. **Link to Candidacy for Ordination:** When, in the judgment of the authorizing bishop, a person whose service as a synodically authorized minister of Word and Sacrament likely will be long-term in one ministry or in a succession of ministries, that person normally shall enter the ELCA candidacy process for ordination and shall remain active in candidacy and theological preparation while serving in synodically authorized ministry.

Though it is usual that a mission development is led by a pastor rather than a person synodically authorized for Word and Sacrament, when a synodically authorized person is serving in that capacity, he or she normally shall have received a positive entrance decision for candidacy for ordained ministry before beginning that ministry and shall remain active in candidacy and theological preparation while serving in that mission development.

I. **Renewal and Revocation:** Renewal of authorization after one year may be given when a demonstrated need exists for its continuation. This need is determined by the synodical bishop at the request and with the consent of the congregation or other ministry within the synod being served, consultation with the supervising ordained minister, and a review of both the ministry setting and the service of the authorized minister.

Authorization to provide ministry within the synod may be revoked at any time by the synodical bishop, who need not specify the reason.

J. **Letter of Authorization:** The authorization may be evidenced by an appropriate letter describing the terms and conditions of the authorization or license. The description also may limit activities authorized to be conducted.

K. **Marriage Services.** Where permitted by law, synodically authorized ministers may officiate at marriage services for members of the congregation in which they are authorized to serve, with the concurrence of the congregation and the approval of the synodical bishop.

L. **Other Matters:** Persons may serve in a synodically authorized ministry only within the synod that has authorized that ministry. A synod may consider for authorization an individual trained and authorized by another synod, based on the individual's qualifications and ability to meet the new synod's criteria for authorized ministry.

Persons authorized for such ministries are not to wear clerical stoles, and should not wear clerical collars unless authorized by the synodical bishop. The title "Pastor" is reserved for ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament and is not to be used by synodically authorized ministers.

Synodically authorized ministers are not to offer therapy or counseling as a part of their ministries, but may provide appropriate pastoral care.

See also "A Statement of Understanding Concerning Synodically Authorized Ministry of Word and Sacrament" on the following page.

Adopted by the Church Council as policy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, April 1995 [CC95.04.47t] and amended April 2005, April 2006, and November 2008.

A Statement of Understanding Concerning Synodically Authorized Ministry of Word and Sacrament

The Conference of Bishops has reviewed the recommended approval of a revised “Policy and Guidelines Related to Synodically Authorized Ministries of Word and Sacrament” document and offers the following statement of understanding related to that policy and guidelines.

- A. To affirm the policies and guidelines of this church on synodically authorized ministries as stated in the bylaws, in “Policy and Guidelines Related to Synodically Authorized Ministries of Word and Sacrament” as revised, and in *Use of the Means of Grace*, and to encourage and support one another in applying and interpreting these policies.
- B. To affirm that synodically authorized ministry policies are intended to honor the God-given office of Word and Sacrament (Article V, The Augsburg Confession) and this church’s commitment to ordained ministry as the primary means for fulfilling this office. Synodically authorized ministry is intended to assist this church to respond pastorally and effectively to emerging opportunities in Christ’s mission where it is not possible to provide an ordained minister of Word and Sacrament.
- C. To affirm that when addressing the need for Word and Sacrament ministry in a congregation or other ministry where an ordained minister of this church is not available, that synods will seek the utilization of an ordained minister of a full-communication partner church, under the guidelines related to the orderly exchange of ordained ministers.
- D. To affirm that synodically authorized ministry of Word and Sacrament is normally intended for a specific congregation or other ministry where appropriate ordained ministry is not available for an extended period of time.
- E. To agree that, in keeping with the policies of this church, synodically authorized ministry of Word and Sacrament is not intended for and should not be used to authorize an individual to provide for short-term, intermittent absences of a specific congregation’s called pastor. However, we acknowledge that there is often need to provide for the celebration of the sacrament for such circumstances, and we acknowledge that in some areas and at some times neither an ELCA nor a full-communication partner church ordained minister is available to meet such a need. Such situations highlight a tension between a bishop’s authority to provide for “appropriate ordained pastoral leadership” (7.61.01.) and the guideline that authorization is only to be used when the need for such leadership is “for an extended period of time” (*Use of the Means of Grace*, Principle 40).
- one year and for the specific area. Like all synodically authorized ministers, such persons would be appropriately prepared and supervised. Though authorized for an area and for a term, such persons would only serve in specific ministry settings with the approval of the bishop. The synod should continue to seek ways to make available ordained ministers to serve in that area.
- F. To affirm that this church’s policies and commitments name four clear aspects in synodically authorized ministry: *an invitation to service, the preparation of persons to serve, supervision and accountability, and authorization for specific service*. All four aspects are vital to faithful use of synodically authorized ministries.
1. We agree to hold one another accountable for the ongoing recruitment of candidates for the ordained and rostered lay ministries of this church.
 2. We encourage congregations and other ministries to enhance the mission-effectiveness of the policies and guidelines by commending to the bishop persons who should be prepared for possible service in synodically authorized ministry.
 3. We encourage bishops and synods to plan for the preparation of persons to meet anticipated and unanticipated mission opportunities of that synod.
 4. We commit ourselves to seek always to authorize for ministry only individuals who have been well prepared and who will serve under supervision.
 5. We will encourage congregations and other ministries to become aware of these guidelines and, in collaboration with the synod, to seek to anticipate their own mission needs and opportunities and to plan for them.

*Adopted by the Conference of Bishops
as an agreed statement
March 2005 [CB05.03.01].*

We agree that for congregations in such areas, the inability to provide “appropriate ordained pastoral leadership” may require flexibility in interpreting “for an extended period of time.” This flexibility may be accomplished for a transitional period by the authorization of a person or persons to be available to provide Word and Sacrament ministry in congregations in the area where ordained leadership is chronically unavailable. Authorization would be for a renewable term not to exceed

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Policy and Procedures Related to the Availability of Ordained Ministers Between the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and Church Bodies with Which a Relationship of Full Communion Has Been Established

Background: In accordance with the governing documents of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, policy related to the orderly exchange of ordained ministers between the participating church bodies is developed by the Vocation and Education unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council. Such policy would apply to ordained ministers of this church who, while being retained on the roster of the ELCA, would serve temporarily in a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been established, and to ordained ministers of a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been established who would serve temporarily in a congregation or other ministry setting of this church.

I. ORDAINED MINISTERS OF ANOTHER CHURCH BODY SERVING IN THE ELCA

Occasional Service. An ordained minister of a church body with which a relationship of full communion exists may be asked to preach or administer the sacraments in an ELCA congregation on an occasional basis with the authorization of the synodical bishop.

Extended Service. An ordained minister of a church body with which a relationship of full communion exists may be invited by the synodical bishop to serve as the pastor of an ELCA congregation for an extended period of time, yet remain an ordained minister of another church body. Such a person will be expected to preach, teach, and administer the sacraments in an ELCA congregation in a manner that is consistent with the “Confession of Faith” of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and to live in a manner consistent with the expectations of this church as stated in “Vision and Expectations—Ordained Ministers in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.” Such service shall be rendered only as authorized by the synodical bishop in order to serve the ministry and mission needs of the ELCA or its ecumenical partners in a given situation.

Service in a congregation of this church or employing entity shall be rendered under a contract between the congregation or employing entity and the ordained minister, for a stated period of time in a form proposed by the synodical bishop and approved by the congregation. Extended service is reviewed annually by the Synod Council or Church Council.

Upon the recommendation of the synodical bishop and approval by the Synod Council, the synodical bishop authorizes an extended service ministry.

- A. Upon such authorization the ordained minister enters service in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America through the entry rite, “Invitation to Extended Service,” which acknowledges the ordained minister’s service as pastor in a congregation or other setting of ministry in this church.
- B. The Rite of Installation is *NOT* used as that rite is for use only for a regularly called ordained minister of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

- C. An ordained minister who is approved to serve in an extended service ministry in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may be granted voice and vote in a synod assembly.

At any time for the sake of the ongoing ministry, the synodical bishop may withdraw authorization for service—or the congregation, employing agency or ordained minister may terminate a contract for extended service—after consultation with the other parties to the contract.

Ordained ministers who cease to be rostered by a full-communion partner church body are not considered eligible for such service until they are received on the roster of the ELCA or of another full-communion church.

Transfer of Roster Status. An ordained minister of a church body with which a relationship of full communion exists who seeks to serve indefinitely within the ordained ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may apply for admission to the roster of ordained ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America under the policy of “Admission to the Roster of Ordained Ministers of Persons Ordained in Another Christian Tradition” for consideration of approval by a synodical Candidacy Committee of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Such an ordained minister would then become an ELCA pastor upon receipt and acceptance of a regular call and installation in an ELCA congregation or other approved setting. Roster status in more than one church body at a time is precluded in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

II. ORDAINED MINISTERS OF THE ELCA SERVING IN ANOTHER CHURCH BODY

An ordained minister of this church, serving for an extended period of time in a church body with which a relationship of full communion exists, may be retained on the roster of ordained ministers upon the recommendation of the synodical bishop and by action of the Synod Council in the synod in which the ordained minister is listed on the roster.

Congregations that cease to be rostered by a full-communion partner church body are not eligible for service by a pastor of the ELCA until the congregation is received by the ELCA or another church body with which a relationship of full-communion has been established.

III. PROCEDURES

A. **Resources.** The Vocation and Education unit recommends resources such as the following to assist synodical bishops in familiarizing ordained ministers of another church body with the life and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:

- *The Book of Concord*;
- *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, particularly chapters, 2-7, and 9;
- “Vision and Expectations – Ordained Ministers in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America”;
- “The Use of the Means of Grace”;
- *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*;
- *Christian Dogmatics* (Braaten and Jensen);
- *The Lutherans in North America* (Nelson); and
- *One Great Cloud of Witnesses* (Almen).

B. **Assessment.** Authorization for extended service is given by the Synod Council, on the basis of the synodical bishop’s assessment of the ordained minister’s suitability for service. The bishop may wish to appoint a panel to assist in this determination. The Vocation and Education unit recommends that this not be a responsibility of the full synodical Candidacy Committee, although members of the committee may serve on the panel.

C. **Pension and Medical Insurance.** A determination of the ordained minister’s medical and disability insurance will be made.¹

It is anticipated that a congregation of this church will be able to contribute to the plan of another church body in order to provide appropriate medical coverage and a pension plan. Similarly, an ordained minister of this church serving in another church body will need to determine that Board of Pensions (or another comparable plan) coverage is provided by the employing body.

D. **Accountability and Pastoral Care.** An ordained minister of another church body is accountable to the jurisdiction or judicatory in which the ordained minister is “rostered” or in other ways a member. Similarly, an ordained minister of this church serving in another church body remains on the roster of this church and is accountable to the synodical bishop of the synod in which rostered. The synodical bishop is responsible for appropriate pastoral care and leadership for a congregation served by an ordained minister of another church body in the same manner as when the congregation is served by an ordained minister of this church (ELCA constitutional provision 10.31.a.3).

E. **Exchange of Information.** The assessments, authorizations, and reviews necessary to the orderly exchange of ordained ministers between church bodies with which a relationship of full communion exists require the complete and continuing disclosure to the synod of all information concerning the past and present ministry of ordained ministers serving in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, or of ELCA ordained ministers serving under call from the Synod Council or Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Such disclosure must include any disciplinary proceedings concerning such ordained ministers, including discipline related to conduct during service in the ELCA by an ordained minister of another church body.

F. **Source of Call.** An ordained minister of this church serving in a congregation, local, or regional ministry setting of another church body serves under a letter of call from the Synod Council in which the ordained minister is rostered. An ELCA ordained minister serving in a national ministry setting of another church body serves under a letter of call from the ELCA Church Council. This call is subject to annual review by the Synod Council or Church Council.

G. **Recognized Status of an Authorized Minister.** An ordained minister of another church body serving in a congregation or other ministry of this church needs to be appropriately recognized. While not a member of this church nor included in the roster of ordained ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, an ordained minister of another church body shall have a recognized status within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

IV. TITLES

The usual title “pastor of (insert name of congregation)” would be used for ordained ministers serving in an ELCA congregation. The professional title of “The Rev.” for an ordained minister also would be understood as applicable, in view of that ordained minister’s officially recognized status in a church body with which the ELCA has a relationship of full communion.

Manuals for the Orderly Exchange of Ordained Ministers are available online (www.elca.org/ecumenical/fullcommunion).

*Adopted by the Church Council
as policy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, April 1998
[CC98.04.03].*

¹The basic principle that has been established is that an ordained minister remains in his or her parent church body’s pension and benefits plan. The congregation or other ministry setting being served contributes to the pension and benefits plan of the ordained minister’s parent body.

Guidelines on Candidacy Issues For German Students or Pastors from the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD)

INTRODUCTION

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) has had an agreement since 1988 regarding cooperation with the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD), a federation of 23 regional Lutheran, Reformed, and United Protestant churches. In recent years these churches report having more students as theologically trained graduates than there are pastoral positions and compensation available for candidates for ordination. Students who have received theological degrees in Germany, as well as pastors from German churches, continue to express interest in serving in ELCA congregations in the United States.

Concern remains with the EKD about obligations of its churches should students come to the United States to become ordained and then return to Germany expecting positions. It is essential to honor the spirit of cooperation that has been present among our churches, and the Vocation and Education unit encourages all synods to practice diplomacy in issues related to German students with theological degrees and pastors from these German churches seeking to serve as ordained ministers in the ELCA.

“Occasional service” or “Extended Service” for German pastors may not lead to or require “Transfer” to the roster of the ELCA. Candidacy committees consider the application of such pastors seeking to Transfer, and of students from Germany who have pursued U.S. degrees and who seek ordination and service on the roster of the ELCA. Careful attention should be given to the distinctions between short-term (Occasional or Extended service) and long-term (Transfer or ordination) placements in ELCA ministries.

The particular needs of this church are an important factor in determining who is approved for rostered ministry in the ELCA. The mission of this church involves outreach, worship, service, advocacy for justice, and nurture. While the scope of our mission is global, our particular responsibility is for ministry in the United States and the Caribbean. It is essential, therefore, to have leaders who thoroughly understand and are experienced with the cultural context of this diverse area.

I. PROCESS FOR SHORT-TERM PLACEMENT

The short-term availability of ordained ministers from churches of the EKD, as established by mutual agreement, falls within two categories: availability to serve in an occasional situation and availability to meet an extended need, including service in “yoked parish” settings.

- A. Occasional Service:** An occasional situation is defined as one in which an ordained minister of a church body of the EKD may be asked to preach or administer the sacraments in an ELCA congregation on an occasional basis with the authorization of the synodical bishop.
- B. Extended Service:** An ordained minister of a church body of the EKD may be invited, as authorized by the synodical bishop, to serve as the pastor of an ELCA congregation for an extended period of time only with the consent of the member church of the EKD, and remains an ordained minister of that church body during such service. Such pastors are expected to preach, teach, and administer the sacraments within that ELCA congregation in a manner that is consistent with the Confession of Faith of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and to live in a manner consistent with the ministerial policy of this church. Such service shall be rendered only in order to serve the ministry and mission needs of the ELCA in a given situation.

The employing ministry site must reach an agreement on employment according to the relevant provisions of the EKD, must make adequate accommodation available, and must cover the costs of repatriation for the pastor and his or her family on the expiry of the service (*Agreement between the ELCA and the EKD, Section III, 4 and 5*).

II. PROCESS FOR ELCA ROSTERING

Prior to and during the application process for service on the ELCA roster, the synod must examine the desires and goals of applicants to determine their plans for the future. A written statement from the applicant of intent to remain in the ELCA for long-term service is to be retained with the candidacy file.

- A. Pastors:** The candidacy process for those who are “Ordained in Another Lutheran Church or Another Christian Tradition” is followed for ordained pastors of the EKD churches. All guidelines should be carefully followed in partnership with the synod Candidacy Committee. The prospective candidate first meets with an Initial Assessment Panel, which includes the synod bishop (or designee), the chair of the Candidacy Committee, and one additional Candidacy Committee member. The prospective candidate visits with this panel at his or her own expense for the purpose of mutual discernment. This meeting is held prior to the entrance interview for candidacy. The Vocation and Education unit convenes a review panel once an entrance/endorsement decision is made by the Candidacy Committee. An approval interview is scheduled once all recommendations have been met.
- B. Students:** Students from Germany who have theological degrees who are not ordained but desire to be rostered in the ELCA must follow the normal steps of candidacy (entrance, endorsement, ELCA seminary residency, approval, etc.) with the guidance of a synod Candidacy Committee. The Candidacy Committee must consult with the Vocation and Education unit before any candidacy decisions are made. Once an applicant is approved for entrance into candidacy, the candidate affiliates with an ELCA seminary where the candidate’s academic program will be reviewed by a panel

convened by the Vocation and Education unit. The panel makes a recommendation regarding recognition of prior academic or field work, including “Spezialvikariat” and other accomplishments and study. The seminary provides direction for supervised clinical ministry and internship placements as well as for any additional preparation that may be necessary.

After all practical and academic requirements have been completed by persons seeking ELCA rostering (including internship and clinical ministry [CPE] where required), the Candidacy Committee will schedule and conduct the approval interview. The timeline for this process will vary, depending upon the background of the candidate as well as familiarity with ELCA mission and ministry. Approved candidates participate in the churchwide Assignment of Candidates under the direction of the Vocation and Education unit. It is expected that candidates will be available to serve where they are needed for leadership in this church.

Cultural Immersion: Any time spent in the United States prior to serving should include an immersion in the life and culture of the ELCA, including active membership in an ELCA congregation. The normal requirement of one-year membership in an ELCA congregation is the guideline for adequate time to become familiar with the practice of ministry in the ELCA. Providing opportunities for German students to develop familiarity and skills so that they may serve well in ways that are fulfilling and effective in the ELCA is part of the responsibility of the synod Candidacy Committee as well as the congregation. For those who have theological degrees from Germany seeking ordination and rostering in the ELCA, the policies of this church regarding ordination must be observed, and it is preferred that the service of ordination be in an ELCA congregation as a way of further assimilation into the life of this church.

Record Keeping: The Vocation and Education unit maintains records for tracking German students and monitors the effectiveness of this cooperative effort. The synod Candidacy Committee should report such candidates and their progress to the director for candidacy in the ELCA Vocation and Education unit. Candidacy decisions and recommendations from the Review Panel should be reported to the unit.

III. CONSULTATION WITH THE PARENT CHURCH IN GERMANY

Extended service contracts can be authorized only with the consent of the EKD. Likewise, for admission to the ELCA roster, the synodical bishop must request a letter of reference from the candidate’s parent church body regarding any EKD pastor who seeks to transfer or German student who seeks to be approved for ordained ministry in the ELCA. The EKD will provide comments and observations regarding the individual’s relationship with the church. This should occur at the beginning of the candidacy process.

Correspondence should be directed to:

Evangelical Church in Germany
Secretary for North America Ecumenical Relations and
Ministries Abroad
Herrenhäuser Strasse 12
30419 Hannover, Germany
Tel: (49) 0511-2796-0
Fax: (49) 0511-2796-707

A copy of this letter from the synod bishop must be sent to the Vocation and Education unit, ELCA, 8765 West Higgins Road, Chicago, IL 60631.

IV. IMMIGRATION ISSUES

While applicants for service in ELCA ministry sites do not have to be U.S. citizens, they must pursue the appropriate immigration status with the government to allow for employment within the United States. The United States government has restrictions regarding those who seek change in status for religious purposes. It is essential that applicants address this issue and report their status to the synodical bishop or, in the case of persons seeking admission to the roster of ordained ministers, to their Candidacy Committee.

*Original policy adopted by the Church Council
of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
November 14, 1999 [CC99.11.83.n];
revised policy adopted by the Church Council
November 15, 2009 [CC09.11.97].*

Policy for Ordination in Unusual Circumstances in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

I. INTRODUCTION

This policy relates to bylaw 7.31.17. in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, as follows:

Ordination in Unusual Circumstances. For pastoral reasons in unusual circumstances, a synodical bishop may provide for the ordination by another pastor 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. 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 Vocation and Education unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.

- a. Ordination to the office of Word and Sacrament in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is a rite of the Church administered according to the practices of this church in order to extend the mission and ministry of the Church. It is not a personal privilege to be determined by the candidate.
- b. The purpose of this policy is to describe how a synodical bishop may exercise pastoral judgment in unusual circumstances to allow an exception to this church's established ordination practices.
- c. All requests for exceptions to this church's ordination practices shall be considered on a case-by-case basis.

II. DEFINITIONS

The terms, "for pastoral reasons in unusual circumstances," are broadly stated in order to allow the synodical bishop and the presiding bishop to use their judgment in evaluating individual cases according to their particular circumstances. However, the following principles should be considered as decisions are made:

- a. The decision should enhance and extend the ministry and mission purposes of this church.
- b. The decision should contribute to the unity of the Church.

III. PROCEDURAL STEPS

- a. A candidate for ordination who seeks an exception to the ordination practices of this church will meet promptly after assignment with the synodical bishop of assignment to discuss the candidate's request for an exception, and for the bishop to interpret to the candidate the bishop's concerns. A written statement explaining why a pastoral exception is warranted shall be provided to the synodical bishop. The statement shall deal with the two principles stated in Section II of this policy.
- b. The synodical bishop may, and when inclined to grant an exception shall, seek the advice of Synod Council and incorporate that advice in considering the request.
- c. The synodical bishop may, and when inclined to grant an exception shall, consult with the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The purpose of this consultation is to consider together whether such an exception to this church's ordination practices is consistent with the principles as stated in II a. and b. above. After such consultation, the synodical bishop shall exercise pastoral judgment and determine whether to authorize the ordination by another pastor of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. There is no appeal to the synodical bishop's decision.
- d. Should emergency circumstances prevent the presence of the synodical bishop at an ordination, the bishop may authorize another ELCA bishop or another ELCA pastor to serve as ordinator.
- e. This policy shall be evaluated periodically by the Vocation and Education unit and reviewed by the Conference of Bishops and by the Church Council.

Adopted by action of the Church Council as policy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America April 2001 and amended in April 2005.

Part Two:

Associates in Ministry, Deaconesses, and Diaconal Ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Which Bishop Authorizes Entry Rite?

The *ONLY* bishop with the authority to authorize the entry rite for an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister is *the bishop in the synod in which a candidate has accepted a call*. That bishop has the authority to authorize the entry rite, even if the candidate comes from another synod and may have been approved by the multi-synodical or synodical Candidacy Committee of another synod.

- A. **Power to commission or consecrate:** According to †S8.12.d. in the *Constitution for Synods* of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the bishop of a synod exercises this church's authority to commission or consecrate persons to the official lay rosters of this church and to install the same.
- B. **Jurisdiction:** In receiving and accepting a valid call, the candidate comes under the jurisdiction of the bishop of the synod in which the call was issued. That bishop, on the basis of the record of such a valid call, authorizes the entry rite, even if that rite is to take place on the territory of another synod.
- C. **Planning of entry rite:** If the entry rite is to occur on the territory of another synod (*e.g.*, at a candidate's home congregation), the bishop who authorizes that rite shall consult with the bishop of the synod on whose territory the rite may take place prior to approving any plans for such a service.
 - 1. Candidates shall make *NO* plans for the entry rite prior to consultation with the synodical bishop under whose authority the candidate is to be commissioned or consecrated.
 - 2. If the entry rite is to take place on the territory of another synod, the *patterns and practices of the synod of jurisdiction* shall prevail. No entry rite is to be scheduled without the prior approval of the bishop on whose territory the rite is to occur.

Matters in Governing Documents Related to Official Rosters of Laypersons

Chapter 7 in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* addresses matters related to the official rosters of laypersons.

7.50. OFFICIAL ROSTERS OF LAYPERSONS

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.

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. 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.

- 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 who shall be called by this church to positions that exemplify the servant life and that seek to equip and motivate others to live it. 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.

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:

- 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:
- 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;
 - 6) receipt and acceptance of a letter of call; and
 - 7) membership in a congregation of this church.

7.52.26. 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.

7.60. 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 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.

See the current edition of constitutional provisions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions 7.52.10. through 7.52.25. in the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America related to matters such as "preparation and approval," "reinstatement," "on leave from call" status, "service under call," "sources of call," "retirement," and other concerns. All of the following policies relate to the requirements of this church's governing documents.

Sources of Calls for Associates in Ministry, Deaconesses, and Diaconal Ministers

The principles governing sources of calls for ordained ministers shall, as appropriate, also govern sources of letters of call for associates in ministry.

a. Principles for Sources of Calls

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| <p>1) A “call” is an action by expressions of this church, as specified in the “Table of Sources of Calls for Ordained Ministers,” through which a person is asked to serve in a specified ministry. Such an action is attested in a “letter of call.”</p> <p>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.</p> <p>3) A call expresses a relationship between this church and the person called involving mutual service,</p> | <p><i>support, accountability, supervision, and discipline.</i></p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> |
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b. Table of Sources of Call for Associates in Ministry, Deaconesses, and Diaconal Ministers

<i>Setting</i>	<i>Calling Body</i>
<i>1.0 Congregational ministry</i>	
1.1 <i>Single congregation</i>	<i>Congregation meeting</i>
1.2 <i>Multiple-congregation parish</i>	<i>Congregation meetings, acting on a common proposal</i>
1.3 <i>Coalition and clusters</i>	<i>Synod Council</i>
1.4 <i>Other congregations</i>	
1.41 <i>Independent Lutheran</i>	<i>Synod Council</i>
1.42 <i>Other</i>	<i>Synod Council</i>
<i>2.0 Synodical ministry</i>	<i>Synod Council</i>
<i>3.0 Regional ministry</i>	<i>Church Council</i>
<i>4.0 Churchwide ministry</i>	
4.1 <i>Officer’s staff</i>	<i>Church Council</i>
4.2 <i>Unit executive director</i>	<i>Church Council</i>
4.3 <i>Section executive</i>	<i>Church Council</i>
4.4 <i>Other churchwide unit staff</i>	<i>Church Council</i>
<i>5.0 Social ministry institutions</i>	
5.1 <i>Institution/agency related or unrelated to a synod</i>	<i>Synod Council</i>
5.2 <i>Institution/agency related to more than one synod</i>	<i>Synod Council of one of the synods</i>
5.3 <i>ELCA-related institution/agency</i>	<i>Church Council upon request of appropriate churchwide unit</i>
5.4 <i>Other Church Council</i>	
<i>6.0 Campus ministry</i>	
6.1 <i>Staff</i>	<i>Synod Council</i>
<i>7.0 Church camp ministry</i>	
7.1 <i>Staff</i>	<i>Synod Council</i>
<i>8.0 Ecumenical ministry</i>	
8.1 <i>Related to a synod</i>	<i>Synod Council</i>
8.2 <i>Related to more than one synod</i>	<i>Synod Council of one of the synods</i>
8.3 <i>National/international organization</i>	<i>Church Council</i>

- 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 organization* *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 which college is located* *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 the appropriate churchwide unit* *Synod Council of the synod 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*
 - 12.2 *Unusual ministries (as in conjunction with occupations and in approved situations not otherwise specified)* *Synod Council or Church Council upon recommendation by Conference of Bishops*

Letters of Call

According to churchwide bylaw 7.52.21. in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*: “An associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister shall serve under a letter of call properly extended by a congregation, synod, or the churchwide organization. . . .”

A. **Issuance of Letter of Call:** “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 approved by the Church Council” (7.52.21.). 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 (7.52.21.).

1. 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.A05.
2. 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.
3. 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.

B. **Issuance and Termination of the Call:** See churchwide bylaw 7.52.23. and †§14.31. in the *Constitution for Synods*: “Policy on Call and Termination of Associates in Ministry, Diaconal Ministers, and Deaconesses of the ELCA.”

1. 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.
2. Each congregation shall consult its synodical bishop before taking any steps leading to the extending of a call to an associate in ministry, a deaconess, or a diaconal minister listed on this church’s official rosters of laypersons or an approved candidate for such rosters.
3. A congregational call to an associate in ministry, a deaconess of the ELCA, or a diaconal minister may

be extended following a two-thirds majority vote of members present and voting at a meeting regularly called for that purpose. When a congregation has voted to issue a call to an associate in ministry, a deaconess of the ELCA, or a diaconal minister, the letter of call shall be submitted to the bishop of the synod for the bishop’s signature.

4. No associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister shall seek or accept a letter of call without first conferring with the bishop of the synod.

2.5. 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. Termination of the Call:

1. **Congregation:** A letter of call from a congregation, when accepted by an associate in ministry, a deaconess of the ELCA, or a diaconal minister and attested to by the synodical bishop, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment which shall be terminated only following consultation with the synodical bishop.

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 after consultation with the synodical bishop, either (a) by a two-thirds majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop did not recommend termination of the call, or (b) by a simple majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop recommended termination of the call, under criteria, policies, and procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.

Termination of a call, like a call itself, is the prerogative of the congregation, not solely the congregation council: "The congregation is authorized to . . . call or terminate the call of associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers in conformity with the applicable policy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America . . ." (*Model Constitution for Congregations* required provision *C5.03.c.).

2. **Synod Council or Church Council:** 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.

- ~~C. **On-Leave Status:** Churchwide bylaw 7.52.22, states: "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.~~

- ~~1. **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.~~
- ~~2. **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.~~
- ~~3. **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, and adopted by the Church Council—for a maximum of six years, beginning at the completion of an active call.~~
- ~~4. **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.**~~

Basic Standards for Associates in Ministry in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Basic Standards, Academic and Practical Requirements, and Procedures for Commissioning

I. INTRODUCTION

— Associates in ministry are one of three officially recognized and rostered ministries in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Deaconesses, and diaconal ministers also serve as rostered lay ministers. The term “associate in ministry” was adopted by the 1993 Churchwide Assembly to refer to the lay rosters inherited from the three predecessor church bodies which formed the ELCA, and to those persons who are approved and commissioned according to the standards and procedures of this church to serve as ELCA associates in ministry. Associates in ministry are ELCA members called to specific programmatic ministries which provide leadership and support for the ministries of the whole people of God. Associates in ministry work in partnership with laity, pastors and bishops, diaconal ministers, and deaconesses to serve the mission and ministry needs of this church as they carry out responsibilities in congregations, agencies, or institutions of or related to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Through this service associates in ministry provide care and nurture of the people of God in the Christian faith.

— Associates in ministry are approved for commissioning through the candidacy process of the ELCA. They have prepared for service through appropriate courses of study which include theological education. They have been guided and approved by the appropriate synodical or multisynodical Candidacy Committee according to the procedures established by the Vocation and Education unit. Once approved, associates in ministry are eligible for call and serve under a letter of call issued by an appropriate expression of this church: congregation, synod council, or ELCA Church Council. Having received the first call, associates in ministry are received onto the roster of the ELCA through a Service of Commissioning authorized by the appropriate synod of this church (see Part Two, p. 1). An approved and commissioned associate in ministry has met all standards for service as an associate in ministry as established by the ELCA 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* (churchwide governing documents 7.50. and following).

II. BASIC STANDARDS

— Persons approved, commissioned, and rostered as associates in ministry of this church 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.):

- 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;
- 6) receipt and acceptance of a letter of call; and
- 7) membership in a congregation of this church.

III. CANDIDACY IN THE ELCA

— Candidacy is the churchwide process of discernment, preparation and approval for the officially recognized and rostered ministries of this church, both lay and ordained. This process of guidance, evaluation, and academic and practical preparation involves the partnership of candidate, congregation, synod, educational institution, and the Vocation and Education unit.

— There are three steps in the candidacy process: Entrance; Endorsement; and Approval.

A. **Entrance** – The synod office is the first point of contact for all interested persons. Synod staff are prepared to work with potential candidates in a process of early discernment of call to ministry. The synod office will provide interested applicants with a candidate packet which includes an Application for Candidacy. Completion of the application brings a person into contact with the Candidacy Committee of the synod who will arrange the Initial Interview and the Psychological Evaluation and Career Consultation. The candidacy process is the shared responsibility of candidate and committee. The Candidacy Committee will evaluate already completed academic work and make recommendations for future study.

— All candidates in the ELCA must be active members of an ELCA congregation for a minimum of one year. The congregation of which the applicant is a member is asked to complete a congregational registration packet which is available from the synod office.

Once the Candidacy Committee has determined the appropriateness for continuing in the candidacy process, the applicant applies for admission to an appropriate college, seminary, or program approved by the Vocation and Education unit for completion of all academic and theological education requirements.

B. Endorsement - An applicant becomes a "candidate" of the ELCA only after being endorsed by a Candidacy Committee. This process normally occurs following the first year of theological study and includes completion of the endorsement essay and an endorsement panel interview as arranged by the Candidacy Committee.

C. Approval - A candidate must be approved by a Candidacy Committee in order to receive a call to serve on the roster of this church. Following the completion of all academic and practical requirements, the approval process includes an essay and an approval interview with the Candidacy Committee. Upon final completion of all academic and field work requirements, approved candidates are presented to the Conference of Bishops for the first call assignment.

In order to be approved, associate in ministry candidates must demonstrate the following:

1. Knowledge of and ability to articulate and integrate in the ministry setting: biblical study and interpretation, church history, the history and confessional teachings of the Lutheran church, and the organization and operating principles of the ELCA;
2. Ability to articulate one's sense of calling as a baptized Christian and as an associate in ministry;
3. Commitment to living in accordance with the "Vision and Expectations for Associates in Ministry, Deaconesses, and Diaconal Ministers in the ELCA";
4. Competence in the area or areas of one's field of specialization; and
5. At least one year of satisfactory relationship with the appropriate Candidacy Committee.

IV. ACADEMIC AND PRACTICAL CRITERIA

FOR COMMISSIONING

All persons approved and commissioned as ELCA associates in ministry shall meet these basic requirements:

A. Degree Requirement: A minimum of a bachelor's degree or a graduate degree in a field appropriate to the designated field of specialization (see section V below). If the degree is in an unrelated field of study, significant work or competency in the field of specialization must be demonstrated. In some special cases a person not holding a bachelor's degree may be considered for candidacy under the provisions described in section VI below - Equivalencies/alternatives in Lieu of Academic Credentials.

B. Theological Education: Basic foundational course work in theological education shall include a minimum of 20 semester credit hours (or the equivalent quarter hours).

At least one course must be completed in each of the

following areas:

- Biblical studies - Old Testament
- Biblical studies - New Testament
- Lutheran Theology and Confessional Writings
- Introductory Systematic Theology
- Lutheran Church History (including North American context)

Additional courses may include Practical Theology appropriate to the specialization. All theological education credits must be earned through courses taken at an accredited college or seminary approved by the Candidacy Committee or through a course of study approved by the Vocation and Education unit (e.g., *SELECT*). The basic theological education requirement may not be met by equivalency.

C. Supervised Field Experience: A satisfactorily completed supervised field experience in the field of specialization as described in the candidacy document. Guidelines for Supervised Field Experience for Associates in Ministry. The normal duration of the supervised field experience is one year with a minimum of 600 supervised hours. Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) may be included as appropriate.

D. Additional Requirements: Professional certification when appropriate (e.g., day school teachers, counselors, parish nurses, etc.).

V. FIELDS OF SPECIALIZATION

AREAS OF FOCUS FOR MINISTRY

While an associate in ministry may serve in positions which call for diverse functions and skills, each associate in ministry is expected to have demonstrated training, qualifications and experience in one or more specialization. Approval in one area does not limit either the associate in ministry or the calling body when determining a position description which overlaps or includes several areas of responsibility. The following four general areas of ministry are recognized for service as an associate in ministry. Examples of positions within each area are included here as illustrative but not exhaustive of each area of ministry.

A. Education: Included in this category are directors for Christian education, youth and family ministers, early childhood educators, Lutheran day school teachers and administrators, librarians, college and seminary faculty.

B. Music and the arts: Included in this category are ministers of music, cantors, teachers of music and drama, liturgical artists and teachers.

C. Administration: Included in this category are church business administrators, parish administrators, administrators in synodical and churchwide agencies, administrators in social ministry organizations, administrators in ecumenical agencies.

D. **Service and General Ministries:** Included in this category are campus ministers, outdoor and camping ministers, counselors and lay chaplains, parish workers, parish nurses, and persons in social ministry positions.

VI. EQUIVALENCIES AND ALTERNATIVES IN LIEU OF

— ACADEMIC CREDENTIALS

— Persons interested in serving as an associate in ministry who have not completed the necessary academic requirement of the bachelor's degree may in some cases be considered for candidacy. This exception is reserved for those persons who for reason of age and prior experience, may not find it appropriate to complete the bachelor's degree requirement. Such persons may apply for consideration upon evaluation of gifts for ministry, the needs of the church, and the demonstrated abilities of the individual. Age is not the primary criterion for consideration under this provision.

— All requests for consideration under this provision will be evaluated by the Vocation and Education unit. Following evaluation a recommendation will be made to the appropriate Candidacy Committee for an alternative course of study and/or the granting of equivalencies. Evaluations will be based upon experience in non-degree studies and in demonstrated work performance comparable to that expected of a person holding a bachelor's degree.

— The following is an outline of the procedure to be followed by those wishing consideration under this provision:

A. Complete all entrance requirements.

B. Applicant submits a written request and rationale for consideration under this provision. Based upon this request and all materials submitted, the Candidacy Committee will determine whether the applicant should proceed under this provision.

C. Upon determination of appropriateness for consideration, the Candidacy Committee shall request a review and recommendation by the Vocation and Education unit. This request should be forwarded to the Director for Associates in Ministry in the Vocation and Education unit and should include the following material:

- 1. A copy of the Application to Candidacy;
 - 2. A copy of the written request and rationale for consideration;
 - 3. A detailed listing of the applicant's work experience, including relevant volunteer experience;
 - 4. A detailed listing of all education completed including related continuing education. All available transcripts should be included;
 - 5. A current position description if in the employment of a church or church related institution;
 - 6. Three letters of recommendation from those well acquainted with the candidate's background and work.
- Letters of recommendation should include more than character references, and should include knowledge and

illustration of the person's demonstrated ability. References should include one's pastor, a congregational leader familiar with the applicant's demonstrated leadership ability and gifts for ministry, and a person with competence and knowledge consistent with the candidate's area of specialization.

— Having received the evaluation and recommendation of the Vocation and Education unit, the final decision regarding equivalency or alternative study rests with the appropriate Candidacy Committee.

— Following a decision regarding equivalency or alternative study eligibility, the Candidacy Committee proceeds with endorsement, oversees the designated course of study and appropriate supervised field experience, and makes an approval decision.

— Candidates proceeding under this provision must complete the normal requirements for theological education. This provision applies only to the bachelor's degree requirement.

VII. SERVICE UNDER CALL

— An approved candidate is commissioned upon receipt and acceptance of a valid letter of call. All approved candidates participate in the churchwide assignment of candidates for first call through the Conference of Bishops. Those persons currently serving in a position who wish to remain in that position may do so providing appropriate call process is followed under the direction of the synodical bishop. The sources of call for associates in ministry are identified in churchwide continuing resolution 7.52.A05. of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. Once called and commissioned, the associate in ministry is placed on the roster of the synod of service and on the churchwide roster maintained by the Office of the Secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

— *Adopted by the Church Council,
December 1993*

Basic Standards for Members of the Deaconess Community of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Deaconesses must meet the “Basic Standards” for all rostered ministries as found in Chapter 7 of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. In addition, the Deaconess Community of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America maintains the following standards for admission and continuance in that community:

I. DEFINITION

A Deaconess is a woman who:

- A. is an active communing member of a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) or the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC);
- B. affirms that she is called by God to ministry in and through the diaconate and who has sought and received confirmation of that call by this church;
- C. is academically and professionally prepared to function within her chosen occupation;
- D. is prepared theologically to express and reflect upon 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 diaconate, as well as her own responsibility within and relationship to this total context;
- E. has been examined for such theological competence in her vocation, occupation, and personal life; and participates periodically in a formal period of reflection upon these themes;
- F. 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;
- G. is unashamedly willing to relate and witness to the mission and message of the Christ, not only in her occupation but in her total life;
- H. pledges to meet the established standards for Deaconess Community membership spiritually, personally, corporately, financially, and in matters of time;
- I. participates in continuing education and periodic evaluation in accordance with the highest recognized standards of her profession and/or occupation;
- J. Commits to living in accordance with the “Vision and Expectations for Associates in Ministry, Deaconesses, and Diaconal Ministers in the ELCA.”

H. ACADEMIC AND PRACTICAL CRITERIA FOR ENTRY RITE

- A. **Basic education requirements:** A candidate for the Deaconess Community of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is required to meet certain educational requirements as establish by the Vocation and Education unit:

1. She must be prepared to meet the academic and professional standards for her chosen occupation, e.g. nurse, social worker, parish deaconess, etc.
2. She must complete a course of theological studies prescribed by the Deaconess Community as detailed in item C, “Theological education,” found below. Such course of study is determined by the particular occupational focus of the deaconess. The course of theological study is designed to 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 within the diaconate, and her own responsibility within and in relation to this total context.
3. To be eligible for acceptance as a deaconess candidate, a woman is encouraged to complete all educational requirements, including internship, and be ready for full-time service as a deaconess by age 55.
4. In addition to professional or occupational and theological studies, the candidate is required to participate in candidate seminars where she spends time in residence at the Deaconess Community Center. During that time, she participates in the life of the Deaconess Community and pursues special studies in such areas as diaconics and spirituality.
5. A deaconess candidate also must participate in an internship, which in most cases would be for the period of one year. The internship is under the direction of the Deaconess Community; reports are sent to the synodical Candidacy Committee.

B. Academic and professional preparation for deaconess candidates:

1. Parish ministry: The deaconess candidate preparing to serve in a congregation of the ELCA must hold a bachelor’s degree in an appropriate field of study.
2. Other ministries: The deaconess candidate shall meet the educational requirements of her chosen occupation, e.g. nursing, social work, educator, etc., and any licensing or certification requirements for the state or province in which she will serve.
3. Candidates without a bachelor’s degree: The Committee on Education and Candidacy of the Deaconess Community of the ELCA shall evaluate the previous education and experience of candidates not holding a bachelor’s degree to determine whether there is satisfactory experience and skill in the chosen area of service. This shall be done in consultation with the

synodical Candidacy Committee. Examples include nurses who hold a Registered Nurse (RN) or Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN), rather than a bachelor of science degree in nursing (BSN), or occupations requiring only an Associate of Arts degree (AA), such as early childhood educator.

C. Theological education:

1. Deaconess candidates preparing to serve in a congregation of the ELCA must earn a master's degree in theological studies, such as a master of arts degree in religion (MAR), a master's degree in religious education (MRE), a master of arts degree (MA), or a master of theological studies degree (MFS). Such candidates shall confer with the director of education and interpretation regarding the selection of an appropriate seminary and the curriculum requirements of the Deaconess Community (see item C.2. below). One quarter of clinical or supervised pastoral education is required as part of the preparation for congregational service.

2. The deaconess candidate preparing for a ministry in which a seminary degree is not required shall complete a course of theological studies planned in consultation with the director for education and interpretation. This will include all the courses listed below with a minimum of 20 semester credit hours or its equivalent in the subjects note (*):

- Old Testament*
- New Testament*
- History*
- Ethics
- Lutheran Confessions*
- Pastoral Care and Counseling
- Systematic Theology*
- Worship and liturgy
- Field education
- Appropriate electives

3. The Committee on Education and Candidacy of the Deaconess Community is responsible for monitoring this course of study and will report successful completion, including transcripts, to the Synodical Candidacy Committee.

D. **Deaconess Candidate Seminar:** The purpose of the deaconess candidate seminar is to help the candidate grow in the understanding of the Deaconess Community of the ELCA, including its biblical roots, history, relationship to all the expressions of the Church and the ministries of deaconesses today; to have the candidate participate in the life and daily functioning of the Deaconess Community Center; to help the candidate discern the ministry to which she is called by God; to enable the candidate to interpret the Deaconess Community to persons both within this church and the community at large.

1. Each deaconess candidate normally spends at least three months in residence at the Deaconess Community Center. Usually, the candidate will participate in two three-month candidate seminars, one prior to theological education and one following it.

2. The seminars will include the following components: orientation to life at the Deaconess Community Center; history of the Deaconess Community, including review of the "Handbook of the Deaconess Community"; Bible study and spiritual development through classes, reading, and individual spiritual direction and special study according to the candidate's needs and interests; one week of observation and participation with a deaconess in active service; a project of interpretation; and an individual paper, as assigned, on a subject such as the meaning of ministry and the role of the Deaconess Community of the ELCA; leadership, as assigned, in the diaconal-year-program's orientation; leading weekday chapel services at least five mornings and five evenings; introduction to the structure and resources of the ELCA. Candidates will participate in several retreats.

E. **Investiture:** Upon completion of preparatory requirements and endorsement by the board of directors of the Deaconess Community of the ELCA, each candidate publicly participates in a service of mutual affirmation known as investiture, which admits her to the privileges and responsibilities of the Deaconess Community of the ELCA. Endorsement by the board of the directors of the Deaconess Community shall be reported to the Synodical Candidacy Committee.

F. Internship

1. Having completed her theological education requirements and following investiture, the deaconess candidate normally participates in a one-year internship which has a two-fold purpose:

- to use and improve professional skills
- to begin to function in her role as a deaconess

2. The deaconess candidate participates in her own internship placement which is developed through consultation with the directing deaconess and bishops of synods where internship placement is being sought.

3. In preparation for internship the deaconess candidate is provided with a copy of the *Manual of Internship for the Deaconess Community of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.

4. Internship evaluations are reviewed by the directing deaconess and the Committee on Education and Candidacy of the Deaconess Community of the ELCA. Final internship reports shall be sent to the Synodical Candidacy Committee.

G. **Entry Rite and First Call:** A deaconess candidate is approved for consecration by the Synodical Candidacy Committee upon successful completion of all requirements, receipt, and acceptance of a letter of call.

- 1. Deaconess candidates participate in the churchwide assignment of candidates under the direction of the Synodical Relations section of the ELCA.
- 2. Approval, assignment, and acceptance of a letter of call is reported to the board of directors of the Deaconess Community by the Committee on Education and Candidacy.
- 3. The service order for consecration is arranged and conducted under the direction and oversight of the bishop of the synod where the first call is received.

Basic Standards for Diaconal Ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

I. DEFINITION

—“This church shall establish and maintain a lay roster of diaconal ministers who shall be called by this church to positions that exemplify the servant life and that seek to equip and motivate others to live it. 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.” (churchwide bylaw 7.51.05., adopted by the 1993 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America).

— Significant features of the proposal to establish diaconal ministry included the following:

- ● Diaconal ministers will be ministers of the Word of God. They will be publicly charged to transmit, defend, and teach it and to be spokespersons for the faith of the Church. The message and its expression in service are not to be separated. In diaconal ministry, the work of God in specialized service and witness is primary.
- ● Diaconal ministers will be charged to equip the baptized for service in all aspects of their life.
- ● Diaconal ministry will strengthen the ELCA in the fulfillment of its declared mission. Among the components of that mission are:
 - ● “Proclaim God’s saving Gospel of justification by grace for Christ’s sake through faith alone, according to the apostolic witness in the Holy Scripture, preserving and transmitting the Gospel faithfully to future generations” (ELCA churchwide constitutional provision 4.02.a.);
 - ● “Carry out Christ’s Great Commission by reaching out to all people to bring them to faith in Christ and by doing all ministry with a global awareness consistent with the understanding of God as Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier of all” (4.02.b.);
 - ● “Serve in response to God’s love to meet human needs, caring for the sick, and the aged, advocating dignity and justice for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, and standing with the poor and powerless and committing itself to their needs” (4.02.c.);
 - ● “Lift its voice in concord and work in concert with forces for good, to serve humanity, cooperating with church and other groups participating in activities that promote justice, relieve misery, and reconcile the estranged” (4.03.g.);
 - ● “Study social issues and trends, work to discover the causes of oppression and injustice, and develop programs of ministry and advocacy to further human dignity, freedom, justice, and peace in the world” (4.03.i.);

— Recognizing that all the ministries of this church are committed to this mission, these purposes still confront the church with many unfulfilled challenges. Diaconal ministers are called to provide leadership which signals a commitment to new ways of augmenting our present ministries. Diaconal ministers will serve as a sign of Christ’s ministry which calls the whole church to ministries of service and witness exemplifying service in Christ’s name in the world. Diaconal ministry in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) is a form of leadership ministry designed to enable this church to fulfill more effectively its mission.

H. BASIC STANDARDS

A. Persons admitted to and continued as diaconal ministers of this church 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;
- 5. life consistent with the Gospel and personal qualifications including leadership abilities and competence in interpersonal relationships;
- 6. receipt and acceptance of a letter of call; and
- 7. membership in a congregation of this church.
- 8. Commitment to living in accordance with the “Vision and Expectations for Associates in Ministry, Deaconesses, and Diaconal Ministers in the ELCA.”

B. Diaconal ministers shall:

- 1. Be rooted in the Word of God. Diaconal ministers are ministers of the Word of God, committed to Christ, and called to be spokespersons for the Gospel, the apostolic faith, and the theological emphasis of this church to God’s world.
- 2. Be 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 the linkages between church and world. Programmatic ministries within congregational settings should be marked by extension of the witness and service of the church into the wider community.
- 3. Be committed and prepared to equip the baptized for ministry in the world and in the Church. Diaconal ministers along with pastors are called to lead and equip the baptized for ministry. Diaconal ministers support

the ministry of the baptized through appropriate programmatic ministries and by working with the laity in discerning and encouraging their gifts for ministry:

- 4. Give particular attention to ministries at the boundaries between church and world. Diaconal ministers carry public responsibility to speak for the needs of God's world to the Church as well as taking God's saving Gospel to the needs of the world through the actions of God's people both individually and collectively.
- 5. Exemplify the life of Christ-like service addressing all forms of human need. The call to diaconal ministry is a lifelong commitment that supports and compliments the ministry of Word and sacrament, focusing on ministry to the whole person. This "diaconal bias" provides the lens and vision for developing the diaconal mission of the Church carried out among and through its members.
- 6. Be grounded in community. Diaconal ministers need the support and shared vision of a community of leaders committed to a common calling. This grounding in a diaconal community serves as the reminder to seek to build community in all ministry settings.

III. PREPARATION AND TRAINING

A. The definition of diaconal ministry requires the following components to be included in any preparation and educational program designed to equip persons for this leadership role:

- 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 an identified area of service.

B. These components will be addressed through a comprehensive program of preparation that includes:

- 1. theological education;
- 2. formation for ministry, and
- 3. skill training.

IV. PREPARATION, APPROVAL, AND CALL

— Except as otherwise provided, a candidate for consecration as a diaconal minister 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 consecration;
- C. Demonstrated competence in at least one area of specialization or expertise according to guidelines established by the Vocation and Education unit;
- D. Satisfactorily completed a first theological degree from an accredited theological school in North America;
- E. Satisfactorily completed approved work in Lutheran studies as defined by the Vocation and Education unit;
- F. Satisfactorily completed the formational component of the preparation program for Lutheran diaconal ministry as defined by the Vocation and Education unit;
- G. Satisfactorily completed an approved internship or practical preparation as defined by the Vocation and Education unit;
- H. Been examined and approved by the appropriate committee according to criteria, policies, and procedures established by the Vocation and Education unit ("Candidacy Manual");
- I. Been recommended for call by the bishop of the synod to which the candidate has been assigned for first call in accordance with procedures recommended by the Vocation and Education unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council; and
- J. Received and accepted a properly issued and attested letter of call.

Guidelines Related to On-Leave-From-Call Status

In accord with churchwide bylaw 7.52.22., the Church Council voted in April 1996: To adopt the following document, “Guidelines Related to On-Leave-from-Call Status in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America”:

I. DEFINITION AND CRITERIA FOR

“ON-LEAVE-FROM-CALL” STATUS

- A. At the termination of the call of a pastor or a rostered lay minister (associate in ministry, deaconess, diaconal minister), **and if** the rostered minister has not received and accepted a subsequent call, the following procedure is to be followed:
1. At the termination of a call the bishop will write to the rostered minister, providing information and these guidelines for on-leave-from-call status.
 2. On-leave-from-call status is not automatically granted. It must be requested and a rationale provided by the rostered minister as to why the on-leave-from-call status should be granted. A rostered minister seeking on-leave-from-call status shall make a written request to the synodical bishop within 45 days following the termination of a prior call. Failure to do so may result in removal from the roster.
 3. The request for on-leave-from-call status should include:
 - a. a statement of the rostered minister’s commitment to be available for a letter of call;
 - b. a statement of how the rostered minister’s gifts and abilities can contribute to the ministry and mission of this church;
 - c. the anticipated date when the rostered minister will be available for a letter of call;
 - d. a statement describing the ability and willingness of the rostered minister to provide ministry services while on leave from call at the direction of the synodical bishop;
 - e. the rostered minister’s plan for continuing education while on leave from call; and
 - f. a statement describing the rostered minister’s current and intended participation in a congregation of this church.
 4. A rostered minister on leave from call must be an active member of a congregation of this church.
 5. A rostered minister on leave from call remains accountable to the synodical bishop and must be willing to meet the criteria and standards of this church for its rostered ministers.
 6. If a rostered minister requesting on-leave-from-call status desires to make a personal statement relative to the request, the Synod Council may, at its discretion and in the manner of its determination, allow for a personal appearance by the rostered minister to the Synod Council (or its designated committee).
 7. Action granting or denying on leave from call is to be taken by the Synod Council [ELCA constitutional provision 20.17., bylaws 7.31.16., 7.52.22., and †S8.12.i.9) in the *Constitution for Synods*] upon recommendation by the synodical bishop. A committee may be designated by the bishop to evaluate applications and bring recommendations to the Synod Council through the synodical bishop for action.
 8. The effective date for on-leave-from-call status, if granted by the Synod Council, begins the day the rostered minister is no longer serving under a regularly issued letter of call. **This date is not affected by severance payments.**
 9. Synod Council action related to a rostered minister’s on-leave-from-call status is reported as information to the annual Synod Assembly in the report of the bishop or the Synod Council.
 10. Written notification is sent to the rostered person requesting on-leave-from-call status reporting the action of the Synod Council.
 11. The secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Board of Pensions are notified of the action of the Synod Council in granting on-leave-from-call status. Similar notification is given by the synod to the secretary of this church and the Board of Pensions when such status is ended.
 12. Prior to the annual anniversary of the effective date of the Synod Council’s decision granting on-leave-from-call status, the rostered minister on leave will need to request renewal of the on-leave-from-call status. Annual action by the Synod Council is necessary for the continuation of that status.
- B. A rostered minister engaged in graduate study, in a field of study that will enhance service in the rostered ministry of this church, may be retained on the roster of this church for a maximum of six years by annual action of the Synod Council, in consultation with the Vocation and Education unit [see bylaw 7.31.16.].
- C. On-leave-from-call for family responsibilities is available to rostered ministers who have had at least three years of active service under call, with demonstrated circumstances that fulfill the criteria for this status. A rostered minister may request on-leave-from-call status for family responsibilities for a maximum of six years, by annual action of the Synod Council, based upon either of the following reasons [see bylaw 7.31.16.]:
1. For the birth or care of a child or children of the rostered minister.
 2. For the care of an immediate family member (child, spouse, or parent) with a serious health problem. A serious health problem is an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves either a

period of incapacity or treatment with inpatient care in a hospital, hospice, or residential medical facility, or a period of incapacity or subsequent treatment following inpatient care. A medical certification of such a serious health problem must be submitted to the Synod Council as part of the request for on-leave-from-call status.

- D. With approval of the Synod Council, either by general policy or by specific authorization, the synodical bishop may place limitations or restrictions upon the availability for service of a rostered minister who is on leave from call.
- E. Six months prior to the end of the third year of on-leave-from-call status, the bishop or bishop's designee will contact the rostered minister on leave from call to review:
 - 1. Pension and health insurance implications, with a recommendation that the Board of Pensions be contacted.
 - 2. The implications and expectations of being in a non-rostered status, including for ordained ministers the document, "Guidelines for Persons Formerly Rostered as Ordained Ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America."
 - 3. The criteria for continuation of on-leave-from-call status beyond three years.
 - 4. The process for reinstatement to the roster.
- F. Ordinarily, a rostered minister on leave from call cannot be transferred to another synod while on leave from call. In unusual circumstances, e.g., in the case of a married couple, both of whom are on a roster of this church, the transfer of an rostered 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.
- G. The secretary of this church should report to the Conference of Bishops any person whose on-leave-from-call status has gone beyond three years (six years in the case of approved graduate study and family leave) without action by that person's Synod Council. This report should be made within six months following notification to the synodical bishop by the secretary of this church of the expiration of on-leave-from-call status. The Conference of Bishops may then, upon recommendation of the Roster Committee of the Conference of Bishops, recommend removal from the roster of such an individual by the secretary of the church.

II. CRITERIA FOR CONTINUATION OF ON-LEAVE-FROM-CALL STATUS

- A. On-leave-from-call status normally terminates at the end of three years. A rostered minister may remain on leave from call beyond three years (six years in the case of approved graduate study and family leave) when such continuation contributes to the ministry and mission of this church, and when the particular circumstances of the on-leave-from-call status warrant an exception to the normal three-year limitation. Such continuation on the roster of this church is

contingent upon recommendation by the synodical bishop and action of the Synod Council and the Conference of Bishops.

- B. A rostered minister who seeks to remain on leave from call beyond three years must provide a written request to the synodical bishop and Synod Council for the continuation of that status. This request should be received no later than six months prior to the end of the third year of on-leave-from-call status.
- C. This request must state clearly the reason(s) for such a request and how these reasons relate to ~~the~~ this church's ministry and mission.
- D. The request must include the following information:
 - 1. The rationale for the rostered minister's remaining on leave from call, including a statement of the rostered minister's commitment to be available for a letter of call, and an articulation of how the rostered minister's gifts and circumstances can contribute to the ministry and mission of this church;
 - 2. The anticipated date when the rostered minister will be available for a call;
 - 3. A statement describing the ability and willingness of the rostered minister to provide ministry services at the direction of the synodical bishop, consistent with the ministry and mission needs of the synod;
 - 4. The rostered minister's plan for continuing education while on leave from call;
 - 5. A statement describing the rostered minister's current participation in a congregation of this church.
- E. Graduate Study: A rostered minister engaged in graduate study, in a field of study that will enhance service in the rostered ministry of this church, may be retained on the roster of this church beyond six years, upon the approval by the synodical bishop, by annual action of the Synod Council in consultation with the Vocation and Education unit, and by action of the Conference of Bishops. The written request must indicate clearly the educational goals of the rostered minister, the time line for completion of study, and a statement of commitment that the rostered minister intends to be available for a letter of call within this church upon completion of graduate study.
- F. Family Leave: A rostered minister on leave for family responsibilities may be retained on the roster of this church beyond six years, upon the approval by the synodical bishop, by annual action of the Synod Council, upon authorization by the Conference of Bishops for a maximum of two years. The written request must indicate clearly the continuing family needs of the rostered minister, the possible time line for conclusion, and a statement of commitment that the rostered minister intends to be available for a letter of call within this church upon conclusion of these circumstances.

G. Action by the Synodical Bishop and Synod Council

1. The synodical bishop reviews the request for continuation of the on-leave-from-call status beyond three years (six years in the case of approved graduate study and family leave) and forwards that request to the Synod Council together with the bishop's evaluation of the request.
2. At the request of the synodical bishop, the Synod Council considers the request of the rostered minister and how it relates to the mission and ministry of the synod. Should the decision of the Synod Council be to recommend approval, the Synod Council shall make such a request to the Conference of Bishops.
3. The Synod Council forwards its decision, together with the statement of the rostered minister and the rationale of the Synod Council in recommending approval, to the Conference of Bishops.
4. A rostered minister on leave from call must provide an annual, written request to the synod bishop for recommendation to the Synod Council for continuation of that status.
5. The Synod Council must review and act annually on requests for continuance of on-leave-from-call status beyond the three-year norm (six years for graduate study and family leave).

H. Action by Conference of Bishops

1. The Roster Committee of the Conference of Bishops reviews such requests and reports its recommendations to the Conference of Bishops.
2. The Conference of Bishops, at a regular meeting of the conference, by a majority vote acts upon requests for continuation of on-leave-from-call status. It shall report its decision to the Synod Council seeking such a continuation.
3. The action of the Conference of Bishops in approving the request of a Synod Council is valid for two years.
4. A Synod Council may act to continue the on-leave-from-call status for a second year [beyond the normal three-year limit] before requesting subsequent action by the Conference of Bishops for a further exception.

*Adopted by the Church Council
as policy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in this revised
form,
April 1996 [CC96.04.36d]
and amended April 2003 and August 2005.*

ECUMENICAL AVAILABILITY OF ROSTERED LAYPERSONS

Associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may serve entities of church bodies with which a relationship of full communion has been established by a Churchwide Assembly. Bylaws 8.72.11., 8.72.13., and 8.72.16. govern this service. The following Principles of Agreement also are to be observed.

1. Service is through invitation by the full-communion partner. Approval for service shall occur only in consultation with, and concurrence of, the sending church body. The rostered leader remains accountable to the sending body for continuation of rostered status.
2. Service shall consist only of those responsibilities appropriate to an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and may not include Word and Sacrament ministry.
3. It is important that one who would serve in a congregation or other entity of another church body first be formed and educated for ministry in one's own tradition, and have experience in serving in that church body. Such experience and grounding in one's own tradition are seen to be essential prior to serving in a setting of another tradition; therefore, such service is not intended for a first call.
4. To be eligible to serve in a full-communion partner church body, a rostered leader will demonstrate to the appropriate regional body of the inviting church knowledge of and an appreciation for the history, polity, theological and liturgical identity, practices of ministry, and discipline of that church. The leader also will be expected to carry out his or her responsibilities and participate in the church body in a manner consistent with that knowledge and appreciation.
5. Placement, supervision, and evaluation procedures of the inviting church shall be observed.
6. Responsibility for pastoral care of rostered leaders is shared by the local judicatories of the inviting and sending church bodies.
7. In any disciplinary process, the rostered leader remains under the jurisdiction of the sending body, but the inviting body may be asked to participate as appropriate.
8. A rostered leader serving in a full-communion partner entity will continue to participate in the pension and benefits program of the sending church. The congregation or other entity of the full-communion partner being served contributes to this pension and benefits program.

PROCEDURES

Assessment. Authorization for service in a church body with which the ELCA is in full communion is given by the Synod Council, on the basis of the synodical bishop's assessment of the lay rostered leader's suitability for service gifts, experience, skills, and training. The bishop may wish to appoint a panel to assist in this determination. The Vocation and Education unit recommends that this not be a responsibility of the full synodical Candidacy Committee, although members of the committee may serve on the panel.

Pension and Medical Insurance. A determination of the rostered leader's medical and disability insurance will be made. The basic principle that has been established is that an ordained minister a rostered leader remains in his or her parent church body's pension and benefits plan. The congregation or other ministry setting being served contributes to the pension and benefits plan of the lay rostered leader's church body.

Accountability and Pastoral Care. A lay rostered leader of this church serving in another church body remains on the roster of this church and is accountable to the synodical bishop of the synod in which rostered. Roster status in more than one church body is precluded in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA 8.72.15.d.). Responsibility for pastoral care of lay rostered leaders is shared by the local judicatories of the inviting and sending church bodies.

Exchange of Information. The assessments, authorizations, and reviews necessary to service in church bodies with which a relationship of full communion exists require the complete and continuing disclosure to the synod of all information concerning the past and present ministry of lay rostered leaders serving under call from the Synod Council or Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Such disclosure must include any disciplinary proceedings.

Source of Call. A lay rostered leader of this church serving in a congregation, local, or regional ministry setting of another church body serves under a letter of call from the Synod Council in which the leader is rostered. An ELCA lay rostered leader serving in a national ministry setting of another church body serves under a letter of call from the ELCA Church Council. This call is subject to annual review by the Synod Council or Church Council. The entity that the lay rostered leader serves extends a contract describing the terms and conditions of service.

Guidelines for Shared-Time Ministries

I. DEFINITION OF SHARED-TIME MINISTRY

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America understands shared-time ministry to exist when an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister is called to serve in one or more settings of this church while earning income from other employment or while devoting substantial time to other activities.

Mission contexts change. Some examples of contexts and settings for which shared-time ministries may be appropriate are:

- ▶ *Small-membership congregations* with significant opportunities for mission and service.
- ▶ *New ministries* so limited in size or slow in development that they would require a disproportionate and unwise investment of time and money, if the more typical mission-development approach were employed.
- ▶ *Ministries* (e.g., *inner city, ethnic, and rural*) where the community's expectation is that the ordained ministers or rostered lay ministers will receive primary financial support from secular employment.
- ▶ *Multi-staff congregations* looking for ministry specialties, in addition to the services of pastors, rostered lay ministers, and contracted laypersons.
- ▶ *Parishes that would benefit from having two or more persons serving a single congregation or multiple congregations* but that cannot afford full-time salaries for several persons.
- ▶ *Specialized pastoral or ministry needs* of institutions and agencies that may call for a high degree of training and skill but that may neither warrant investment of appropriate full-time salary nor justify the engagement of a full-time staff person in that position.

The foregoing list is illustrative, not exhaustive. The particular settings for shared-time ministry will become more evident as this church gains experience with this style of ministry.

II. CRITERIA FOR SHARED-TIME MINISTRY

- A. Persons eligible for shared-time ministry must be on the rosters of this church or have been recently approved for initial call.
- B. Experienced persons, whose ability to work in complex settings has already been tested, are preferred.
- C. An associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister engaged in shared-time ministry shall have a significant responsibility in a congregation, institution, or other expression of this church.
- D. An associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister may be under call to only one church entity. Other employment is by work agreement.
- E. A work-load for the call of at least an average of twenty (20) hours per week normally is required, with not less than 10

hours absolutely required.

- F. Compensation shall be commensurate with synodical compensation guidelines that apply to persons in full-time positions.
- G. Any contemplated non-church employment for the rostered person shall be subject to the review and approval of the synodical bishop.

III. PROCEDURES FOR CALL TO SHARED-TIME MINISTRY

The *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* provides principles and procedures for the calling of associates in ministry, deaconesses, or diaconal ministers (churchwide continuing resolution 7.52.A05.). In addition to the regular procedures, a call shall include the following:

- A. The range of duties and responsibilities shall be specified by adding appendices to the "Definition of Compensation, Benefits, and Responsibilities," attached to the letter of call.
- B. The decision to seek a shared-time associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister shall be based upon a study of mission and ministry needs in the particular setting. Appropriate synodical or churchwide leaders must participate in the study and decision.
- C. A periodic evaluation by the calling entity shall be encouraged by the appropriate synod bishop or churchwide leaders so that the called person is held accountable for the ministry in that particular situation. The calling body is accountable for adequate professional and financial support.
- D. Any exceptions to the guidelines governing time and compensation must be requested from the Roster Committee of the Conference of Bishops.

IV. APPROPRIATE CANDIDATES FOR SHARED-TIME MINISTRY

Shared-time ministry demands the ability to use time efficiently, the flexibility to adjust to altering circumstances, and the willingness to make a positive contribution to church and society through secular employment or other interests. The effective shared-time leader has a clear sense of personal ministry and professional integrity. He or she has a concept of ministry that values extensive shared leadership with laity.

It is appropriate for **ordained lay rostered** persons to offer themselves for shared-time ministry, as with all specific ministries, on the basis of their own sense of vocation and their sense of the needs of this church. It is not appropriate, however, for this dual-vocational interest to take priority over the mission needs of this church.

V. SUPPORT AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN

SHARED-TIME MINISTRY

The nature of shared-time ministry requires that the employing entity pay particular attention to such matters as compensation and benefits, setting of non-working times for meetings, and specifying shared expectations, which acknowledge the special dynamics of this style of ministry.

- A. Accountability of the shared-time person is the same as with all associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers.
- B. Evaluation of the ministry should be based upon the stated goals and conditions established for that ministry at the time of call.
- C. The church entity that calls the individual will review the ministry annually to evaluate the ongoing appropriateness of the shared-time style for that particular mission opportunity.

VI. RECOGNITION OF SHARED-TIME MINISTRY

Through its rites, this church proclaims interdependence among congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization, and the person called.

- A. The rite of installation and other signs of recognition signal to the calling entity that a particular ministry is integral to the church's overall mission in the world.
- B. This church exercises the option of shared-time ministries as one of the many ways that it responds to ministry needs and opportunities. When it is the chosen option, shared-time ministry should to be exercised with vigor and appreciated for what it can offer for the sake of the Gospel.

Reinstatement to the Rosters of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

I. REINSTATEMENT PROCESS

- A. Reinstatement to the rosters of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) is the responsibility of the Candidacy Committee of the synod where the applicant was last rostered as an ordained minister, associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.¹
- B. In the case of an applicant whose rostered ministry was last 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. For a period of two years, from January 1, 2010, until December 31, 2011, Candidacy Committees may begin to consider, without waiting for five years to elapse, applications from those whose removal or resignation from the roster was solely the result of being in a lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationship.
- D. Except as provided in paragraph I.C. above, in the case of an applicant whose removal from the roster was the result of either:
 - 1) the official disciplinary process of this church, or
 - 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 or without 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

- A. The applicant provides the completed "Application for Reinstatement" to the appropriate roster of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to the synod, and the synod sends a copy to the Vocation and Education unit for information.
- B. Upon receipt of the application, the synodical bishop will notify the Office of the Secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and request any pertinent information the churchwide office may have concerning the applicant.

¹Any person removed from a lay roster that existed on December 31, 1987, 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 roster of associates in ministry, as identified in ELCA churchwide bylaw 7.52.13. This requirement shall apply to those certified during the period of January 1, 1988, through September 1, 1993, as associates in ministry of this church.

- C. With the approval of the ELCA secretary, the reinstatement process may be transferred from the synod of previous roster to the synod of current residence, upon the written concurrence of **the chairs of** both candidacy committees and both synodical 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 arranges an interview with the applicant. The purpose of this interview is to determine the applicant's eligibility to be a candidate in the synod for ministry. The bishop also determines whether the application is timely under paragraph I.C. or premature under paragraph I.D. 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 applicant for indications of repentance and amendment of life as well as indication of or attempts at reconciliation with those injured by the conduct, and documents the corrective actions that have occurred before proceeding with the reinstatement process. The bishop should invite comments from those directly affected by the applicant's inappropriate conduct or alleged misconduct.
- F. The applicant is considered for reinstatement by the Candidacy Committee when the application is forwarded to the committee by the bishop. The bishop may, in his or her sole discretion, decline to forward the application to the Candidacy Committee or may forward the application to the Candidacy Committee with a written statement of the bishop's opinion of the application.

III. CANDIDACY COMMITTEE

- A. The synod Candidacy Committee will receive and review the registration by the pastor and Congregation Council of the congregation of which the applicant is a member in good standing. The registration attests that the applicant is an active member of an ELCA congregation.
- 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 to the roster.

- D. The applicant must prepare an approval essay and submit it to the Candidacy Committee.
- E. 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 the Psychological Evaluation and Career Consultation according to the policies of the Vocation and Education unit. The expense of this evaluation is the responsibility of the applicant.
- F. The Candidacy Committee follows the Candidacy Manual standards and procedures for new applicants 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 to the roster 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 ordained, commissioned, or consecrated ministry in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 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 the expectations of this church.
- G. The Candidacy Committee may request the Vocation and Education unit to convene a Review Panel to determine the applicant's theological readiness for ordained ministry. The Review Panel will make a recommendation to the committee following the procedures developed by the Vocation and Education unit.

IV. DECISION

- A. The Candidacy Committee will decide the applicant's suitability to serve as a rostered minister of this church. This decision is one of the following:
 - 1) approval of the candidate for reinstatement upon receipt and acceptance of a letter of call;
 - 2) postponement of approval with specific recommendations for remedial or developmental work before further consideration for reinstatement; or
 - 3) denial of 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 paragraphs I.D. 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 that approval 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 reviewing 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 through the Vocation and Education unit.
- B. If after consultation with the synodical bishop, the Vocation and Education unit determines that the process for reinstatement described herein has not been fully or properly completed, then the Vocation and Education unit shall postpone 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 by the Vocation and Education unit ("Candidacy Manual"), is the same as that for other candidates for rostered ministry.
- E. Upon receipt and acceptance of a properly issued and duly attested letter of call, the candidate is reinstated to the appropriate roster of this church.

See form for "Application for Reinstatement" in the Candidacy Manual.

Adopted by action of the Church Council as policy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, April 16, 1989, revised on November 14, 1994, and further revised by the Church Council April 12, 1999 [CC99.04.29], November 14, 2004 [CC04.11.69c], and November 15, 2009 [CC09.11.80].

Policy and Procedures Related to the Designation of Disability **Roster Status**

I. INTRODUCTION

Disabled status is an ecclesial determination granted by the Synod Council in keeping with its constitutional authority. Such determinations are not necessarily dependent upon an ordained minister receiving disability benefits.

Bylaw 7.52.25. in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* provides:

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 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.

II. DISABILITY STATUS

A. An associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister who seeks disability status applies to the synodical bishop for such status.

B. In the case of a request for a designation of disability, the synodical bishop receives and reviews the medical assessment and determination of the Board of Pensions or other insurance carrier regarding the ordained minister's disability. This assessment informs the synod process, but is not determinative. When the synodical bishop concludes that such designation is appropriate, the recommendation is forwarded to the Synod Council for its action. In unusual circumstances, disability status may be granted apart from the individual's receipt of disability benefits. At the same time the synodical bishop acts to provide for appropriate care of the congregation previously served by the associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister.

C. The continuation of disability status granted to an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister is subject to review and shall be reviewed in the event that disability benefits are terminated. Disability status may be terminated by the Synod Council upon recommendation by the synodical bishop or in the event the associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister accepts a call.

D. Once the disability status ceases, if the associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister is not under call or has not received and accepted a call, he or she should make application for on-leave-from-call status in accordance with the established process.

Policy and Procedures Related to Retired Status or the Designation of Disability

I. INTRODUCTION

Retired status ~~or disabled status~~ is an ecclesial determination granted by the Synod Council in keeping with its constitutional authority. Such determinations are not necessarily dependent upon a rostered layperson receiving retirement ~~or disability~~ benefits.

Churchwide bylaw 7.52.24, in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* provides:

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, or may be designated as disabled, 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 or 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.

II. RETIRED STATUS

- A. A layperson who has attained the age of 60 or who has served for 30 or more years on the roster of this church or one of its predecessor bodies may be granted retired status by this church.
- B. A layperson who seeks retired status on the clergy roster upon attainment of age 60 or after 30 years on the roster of laypersons of this church or one of its predecessor bodies, ~~or upon disability~~, applies to the synodical bishop for such status.
- C. In the case of an application for retired status, the synodical bishop shall make a determination that the layperson is eligible and then recommend to the Synod Council that such status be granted. At the same time the synodical bishop acts to provide for appropriate pastoral care of the congregation previously served by the retiring minister.
- D. A layperson who has been granted retired status shall retain that status as long as continued on the clergy roster or until acceptance of a call.
- E. If a layperson 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 layperson is rostered may grant permission for the ordained minister 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.

~~III. DISABILITY STATUS~~

- ~~A. In the case of a request for a designation of disability, the synodical bishop receives and reviews the medical assessment and determination of the Board of Pensions or other insurance carrier regarding the layperson's disability. This assessment informs the synod process, but is not determinative. When the synodical bishop concludes that such designation is appropriate, the recommendation is forwarded to the Synod Council for its action. In unusual circumstances, disability status may be granted apart from the individual's receipt of disability benefits. At the same time the synodical bishop acts to provide for appropriate pastoral care of the congregation previously served by the layperson.~~
- ~~B. The continuation of disability status granted to a layperson is subject to review and shall be reviewed in the event that disability benefits are terminated. Disability status granted to a layperson may be terminated by the Synod Council upon recommendation by the synodical bishop or in the event the layperson accepts a call.~~

*Adopted by the Church Council
as policy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,
April 1998 [CC98.04.40k]*

Guidelines Related to Non-Stipendiary Rostered Laypersons

I. DEFINITION AND CRITERIA FOR NON-STIPENDIARY MINISTRY

Non-stipendiary ministry in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is understood to be service as a rostered layperson without regard to compensation for such service. It may be either service for no stipend (or for reimbursed expenses only) or for a token stipend that is not commensurate with the normal salary guidelines for rostered ministry. Non-stipendiary calls are not eligible for participation in the ELCA Pension and Health Benefits Plan; therefore, it also is understood that such non-stipended service is possible only when there is clear evidence that the associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister has adequate alternative income and health insurance.

A letter of call to non-stipendiary ministry in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may be issued only by a Synod Council *following* approval by the Conference of Bishops. The rostered lay minister serving in a non-stipendiary call shall be accountable to the synodical bishop and Synod Council in carrying out this ministry. A call to non-stipendiary service shall be a one-year term call that may be renewed by the Synod Council only on the basis of the satisfactory fulfillment of the established criteria. A call to non-stipendiary ministry neither qualifies as an initial call to congregational service nor does it imply any employment relationship or contractual obligation to the Synod Council (7.43. and 7.43.01.). The criteria under which a Synod Council may issue a letter of call to an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister for non-stipendiary service (churchwide bylaw 7.52.26.) include the following:

- A. There shall be a clearly defined statement of the need for this rostered layperson to provide for ministry in the synod and a rationale for this call to be for non-stipendiary service, including an annual ministry plan;
- B. The minimum commitment by the rostered layperson shall be a monthly average of 10 hours per week to the ministry to which called;
- C. The rostered layperson shall meet the criteria and standards of this church for its rostered laypersons;
- D. The Synod Council must determine that a call to non-stipendiary service is extended in order to carry out a specific ministry on behalf of the synod.

II. ACTION BY THE SYNOD BISHOP AND SYNOD COUNCIL

When the synodical bishop and Synod Council believe that the criteria for a non-stipendiary letter of call are met by a specific ministry, the Synod Council may propose by a majority vote a letter of call. Final action to extend such a letter of call is contingent upon the approval of the Conference of Bishops. The Synod Council forwards its proposal, together with the rationale for issuing the call to non-stipendiary ministry, to the Conference of Bishops.

Should the Conference of Bishops approve the request and the ministry begin, the Synod Council will conduct an annual review of the non-stipendiary call. Annual Synod Council action is required in order to continue the call to non-stipendiary ministry.

III. ACTION BY THE CONFERENCE OF BISHOPS

The Roster Committee of the Conference of Bishops receives all requests from Synod Councils for call to non-stipendiary ministry. The Roster Committee reviews these requests and reports its recommendations to the Conference of Bishops. The Conference of Bishops, in a regular meeting of the conference, by a majority vote acts upon requests for calls to non-stipendiary ministry. It reports its decision to the Synod Council seeking such approval. When approval is given by the Conference of Bishops the Synod Council may proceed with the issuance of a letter of call to non-stipendiary ministry and may annually renew such a call without subsequent action by the Conference of Bishops.

*Adopted by the Church Council
as policy of this church,
April 1995*

Guidelines Related to Synodically Authorized or Licensed Ministries

These guidelines relate to bylaw 7.61.01. in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* that addresses the issue of providing Word and Sacrament ministry through the use of synodically authorized ministry, where it is not possible to provide appropriate ordained pastoral leadership. Those who are authorized for such ministry within a synod are not rostered by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (unless already serving on a roster of this church) but are authorized to provide a specific ministry within a particular setting for a designated period of time.

Principle 40 and related sections in “The Use of the Means of Grace—A Statement on the Practice of Word and Sacrament,” which was adopted “for guidance and practice” by the 1997 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, also addresses this issue.

A. **Identification of Need:** The synod identifies a congregation or other ministry where ordained pastoral leadership is not available for an extended period of time and where synodically authorized ministry may be appropriate. Because of the relationship of an authorized lay ministry to those serving in the ordained ministry of Word and Sacrament, pastors serving congregations within the area where this ministry need is located normally will be consulted in this determination.

B. **Invitation to Service:** An individual who demonstrates the potential for service is invited by the synod to enter a program of preparation.

An individual who has been removed from rostered ministry in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America by reason of misconduct, or has been denied continuance in candidacy by reason of misconduct is precluded from serving in a synodically authorized ministry of this church.

C. **Qualifications:** A person invited to prepare for a synodically authorized ministry should be an active member of an ELCA congregation for at least one year. Prior to preparing to serve in synodically authorized ministry an individual must have:

1. Been recommended by the individual’s pastor and congregation council;
2. Consulted with synodical staff and/or the synodical committee responsible for the synod’s program of preparation; and
3. Demonstrated the ability and willingness to participate in a program of preparation leading to possible service in a synodically authorized ministry.

In making its determination concerning an individual’s eligibility to serve in a synodically authorized ministry, the synod will interview the applicant and will obtain written responses to the [questions on the candidacy Entrance Form \(see the link under “Forms for Applicants and Candidates” at \[www.elca.org/candidacy/forms\]\(http://www.elca.org/candidacy/forms\).\)](#) “Entrance Information Questions” in the “Candidacy Manual.” The synod will also obtain a background check, as outlined in the “Candidacy Manual,” on each individual being considered for authorization in the synod.

D. **Synodical Committee for Authorized Ministry:** An appropriate synodical board or committee may be appointed by the Synod Council to provide the synodical bishop with

recommendations concerning the authorization of and accountability for authorized ministries within the synod. This committee may be a sub-committee of the synodical Candidacy Committee. When it is a separate committee, it should be closely related to the synod Candidacy Committee. In either case, the work of the two is distinct.

The synodical committee or synod staff determines the educational program within the synod for persons considered for service in an authorized ministry; determines the eligibility for individuals to enter this program of preparation; and advises the bishop on the suitability of an individual for service in a synodically authorized ministry.

E. **Program of Preparation:** The synod defines the program of preparation for an authorized ministry of Word and Sacrament, consistent with guidelines developed by the [Division for Ministry Vocation and Education unit](#), and in consultation with an ELCA seminary. Such programs shall prepare persons to have knowledge and abilities in the following areas:

1. Bible;
2. Lutheran theology, the Lutheran Confessions, and the Confession of Faith and polity of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;
3. Worship;
4. Spiritual discernment and faith development;
5. Leadership expectations and identity;
6. Contextual understanding; and
7. Pastoral skills including preaching, catechetics, worship leadership, visitation, pastoral care, and outreach.

The program of preparation can be accomplished in a variety of ways including educational programs that utilize current rostered leaders within the synod, ELCA seminaries and continuing education centers, the ELCA *SELECT* curriculum, and other appropriate resources.

The synod determines when an individual is prepared for service within the synod. There is no guarantee of service within the synod, and participation in a program of preparation does not mean that authorization for service will follow.

F. **Authorization for Service:** When the synod has determined that a specific need exists, and with the consent of the congregation to be served, an individual may be

authorized for service within the synod by the synodical bishop, in consultation with the Synod Council. Such service shall fulfill assigned responsibilities, and authorization shall be for a specific period of time not to exceed one year, unless terminated earlier.

Persons who serve in synodically authorized ministry are to meet the following criteria:

1. evidence of mature Christian faith and commitment to Christ;
2. satisfactory participation in the synodical program of preparation, including demonstration of appropriate ministry skills;
3. knowledge and acceptance of the Confession of Faith of this church; and
4. willingness to meet this church's expectations concerning the personal conduct and behavior of persons serving in public ministry as described in "Vision and Expectations – Ordained Ministers in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America."

A person authorized by the synodical bishop is then installed in such service.

- G. Supervision and Accountability:** Accountability for synodically authorized ministry in a congregational setting is the direct responsibility of the Congregation Council. Accountability for a synodically authorized ministry in a non-congregational setting within a synod is the direct responsibility of the governing body of the entity that conducts that ministry, or if there is no such entity, the Synod Council. In all cases, a synodically authorized minister is to be under the direct supervision of an ordained minister appointed by the synodical bishop.

The supervising ordained minister shall report to the governing body and seek the advice and counsel of the synodical bishop or appropriate synodical staff person in relationship to the synodically authorized minister.

- H. Link to Candidacy for Ordination:** When, in the judgment of the authorizing bishop, a person whose service as a synodically authorized minister of Word and Sacrament likely will be long-term in one ministry or in a succession of ministries, that person normally shall enter the ELCA candidacy process for ordination and shall remain active in candidacy and theological preparation while serving in synodically authorized ministry.

Though it is usual that a mission development is led by a pastor rather than a person synodically authorized for Word and Sacrament, when a synodically authorized person is serving in that capacity, he or she normally shall have received a positive entrance decision for candidacy for ordained ministry before beginning that ministry and shall remain active in candidacy and theological preparation while serving in that mission development.

- I. Renewal and Revocation:** Renewal of authorization after one year may be given when a demonstrated need exists for its continuation. This need is determined by the synodical bishop at the request and with the consent of the congregation or other ministry within the synod being served, consultation with the supervising ordained minister, and a review of both the ministry setting and the service of the authorized minister.

Authorization to provide ministry within the synod may be revoked at any time by the synodical bishop, who need not specify the reason.

- J. Letter of Authorization:** The authorization may be evidenced by an appropriate letter describing the terms and conditions of the authorization or license. The description also may limit activities authorized to be conducted.

- K. Marriage Services.** Where permitted by law, synodically authorized ministers may officiate at marriage services for members of the congregation in which they are authorized to serve, with the concurrence of the congregation and the approval of the synodical bishop.

- L. Other Matters:** Persons may serve in a synodically authorized ministry only within the synod that has authorized that ministry. A synod may consider for authorization an individual trained and authorized by another synod, based on the individual's qualifications and ability to meet the new synod's criteria for authorized ministry.

Persons authorized for such ministries are not to wear clerical stoles, and should not wear clerical collars unless authorized by the synodical bishop. The title "Pastor" is reserved for ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament and is not to be used by synodically authorized ministers.

Synodically authorized ministers are not to offer therapy or counseling as a part of their ministries, but may provide appropriate pastoral care.

Adopted by the Church Council as policy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, April 1995 [CC95.04.47t] and amended April 2005, April 2006, and November 2008.

A Statement of Understanding Concerning Synodically Authorized Ministry of Word and Sacrament

The Conference of Bishops has reviewed the recommended approval of a revised “Policy and Guidelines Related to Synodically Authorized Ministries of Word and Sacrament” document and offers the following statement of understanding related to that policy and guidelines.

- A. To affirm the policies and guidelines of this church on synodically authorized ministries as stated in the bylaws, in “Policy and Guidelines Related to Synodically Authorized Ministries of Word and Sacrament” as revised, and in *Use of the Means of Grace*, and to encourage and support one another in applying and interpreting these policies.
 - B. To affirm that synodically authorized ministry policies are intended to honor the God-given office of Word and Sacrament (Article V, The Augsburg Confession) and this church’s commitment to ordained ministry as the primary means for fulfilling this office. Synodically authorized ministry is intended to assist this church to respond pastorally and effectively to emerging opportunities in Christ’s mission where it is not possible to provide an ordained minister of Word and Sacrament.
 - C. To affirm that when addressing the need for Word and Sacrament ministry in a congregation or other ministry where an ordained minister of this church is not available, that synods will seek the utilization of an ordained minister of a full-communication partner church, under the guidelines related to the orderly exchange of ordained ministers.
 - D. To affirm that synodically authorized ministry of Word and Sacrament is normally intended for a specific congregation or other ministry where appropriate ordained ministry is not available for an extended period of time.
 - E. To agree that, in keeping with the policies of this church, synodically authorized ministry of Word and Sacrament is not intended for and should not be used to authorize an individual to provide for short-term, intermittent absences of a specific congregation’s called pastor. However, we acknowledge that there is often need to provide for the celebration of the sacrament for such circumstances, and we acknowledge that in some areas and at some times neither an ELCA nor a full-communication partner church ordained minister is available to meet such a need. Such situations highlight a tension between a bishop’s authority to provide for “appropriate ordained pastoral leadership” (7.61.01.) and the guideline that authorization is only to be used when the need for such leadership is “for an extended period of time” (*Use of the Means of Grace*, Principle 40).
- one year and for the specific area. Like all synodically authorized ministers, such persons would be appropriately prepared and supervised. Though authorized for an area and for a term, such persons would only serve in specific ministry settings with the approval of the bishop. The synod should continue to seek ways to make available ordained ministers to serve in that area.
- F. To affirm that this church’s policies and commitments name four clear aspects in synodically authorized ministry: *an invitation to service, the preparation of persons to serve, supervision and accountability, and authorization for specific service*. All four aspects are vital to faithful use of synodically authorized ministries.
 1. We agree to hold one another accountable for the ongoing recruitment of candidates for the ordained and rostered lay ministries of this church.
 2. We encourage congregations and other ministries to enhance the mission-effectiveness of the policies and guidelines by commending to the bishop persons who should be prepared for possible service in synodically authorized ministry.
 3. We encourage bishops and synods to plan for the preparation of persons to meet anticipated and unanticipated mission opportunities of that synod.
 4. We commit ourselves to seek always to authorize for ministry only individuals who have been well prepared and who will serve under supervision.
 5. We will encourage congregations and other ministries to become aware of these guidelines and, in collaboration with the synod, to seek to anticipate their own mission needs and opportunities and to plan for them.

*Adopted by the Conference of Bishops
as an agreed statement
March 2005 [CB05.03.01].*

We agree that for congregations in such areas, the inability to provide “appropriate ordained pastoral leadership” may require flexibility in interpreting “for an extended period of time.” This flexibility may be accomplished for a transitional period by the authorization of a person or persons to be available to provide Word and Sacrament ministry in congregations in the area where ordained leadership is chronically unavailable. Authorization would be for a renewable term not to exceed

Other Matters

- A. **Resignation from the Roster:** An associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister may voluntarily resign from the roster by giving written notice to the bishop of the synod.
1. The bishop responds with a letter describing the implications of the resignation (see model letters available from the Office of the Secretary).
 2. The individual's roster file is transferred to the secretary of the church (churchwide bylaw 7.52.25.)
 3. For information on possible reinstatement, see the Candidacy Manual and the policy in this manual.
- B. **Removal from the Roster:** Administration of this procedure is the responsibility of the synod in which the person is listed on the roster [†S8.12.i.10)a)].
1. Bases for removal include:
 - a. Death;
 - b. Resignation;
 - c. End of "on leave" status; and
 - d. Discipline.
 2. Annual review of "on leave" status is required [†S8.12.i.9)]. Extensions of this status beyond those provided in the bylaw are approved by the Conference of Bishops.
- C. **Discipline:** See Chapter 20 in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* and the rules of procedure that govern that process.
- D. **Other Policies:** See the Candidacy Manual for the texts of other policies.

*(Draft of letter of notice of **removal** from rosters
of associates in ministry, deaconesses, OR diaconal ministers—version as of November 1997)*

date

name

address

Dear -----:

Greetings in this season of name of season in church year. Grace and peace be with you in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

As required under the provisions that govern the official rosters of this church, associates in ministry, deaconesses, or diaconal ministers who are without a current letter of call may be retained on the roster by annual action of the Synod Council, upon endorsement by the synodical bishop, for a maximum of three years. You have now reached the end of the privilege of that “on leave” status.

By a copy of this letter, I am notifying (name), secretary of this church, that your name is to be removed from the roster of **[PICK ONE CATEGORY]** {associates in ministry,} {deaconesses,} {diaconal ministers,} consistent with ELCA churchwide bylaw 7.52.22., effective (specify date).

Your roster file will be retained by the secretary of this church, as prescribed by ELCA churchwide bylaw 7.52.25. You may provide annually to the secretary of this church, if you so desire, your current address and other appropriate information for that roster file.

Should you desire at some point in the future to seek reinstatement to the roster of associates in ministry, application will need to be made to the bishop of this synod for referral to the appropriate committee. The possibility of reinstatement is governed by ELCA churchwide bylaw 7.52.13. and other applicable policies that outline steps in that process.

Thank you for your years of service. God bless you in your new arena of endeavor.

Sincerely,

---name---

Bishop

xc: name, secretary of this church

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Part Three:

Inter-Lutheran Cooperation Between the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Inter-Lutheran Cooperation Between the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Inasmuch as the churches that formed the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC), constituted in 1985, and formed the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), constituted in 1987, have been integral parts of one another's life, continue to be one in faith and confession, and are determined to find as many ways as possible to work together and to strengthen one another as members of the Lutheran family of churches on the North American continent, it was determined that:

I. Mutual Recognition of Leadership

- A. Each church body takes appropriate steps to provide for a mutual recognition of the ordained ministry of the other church, which will be evidenced by:
 - 1. acceptance on the roster of ordained ministers by transfer upon receipt and acceptance of a call.
 - 2. acceptance on the roster of ordained ministers by transfer in the retired status.
 - 3. making provision so that ordained ministers may remain on the roster of the ordained ministers of one church while serving in a social service or educational agency/institution or on the staff of the other church.
 - 4. covenanting with one another to refuse acceptance on the roster of ordained ministers persons who have been excluded from the ordained ministry or have been denied acceptance on the roster of ordained ministers of the other church.
- B. Each church body takes the appropriate steps to recognize the seminaries of the other church as approved schools for the theological training of its candidates for the ordained ministry.
- C. Each church body takes the appropriate steps to recognize the "Deaconess Community" of the ELCA as a community that will serve both churches.
- D. Each church body takes the appropriate steps so that each church will recognize the rostered laypersons that are "certified," "commissioned," or "consecrated" by the other church.
- E. Each church body takes the appropriate steps to facilitate the mobility of pension-plan participants between the churches.

II. Interchurch Cooperation

- A. Each church body will provide for consultations between their corresponding units.
- B. Each church body will provide for the appropriate boards and program committees to explore the possibility of shared participation in the development and preparation of congregational materials.
- C. Each church body will provide for periodic conferences of the full-time elected officers will be held and that the elected officers of other Lutheran churches in North America will be invited to attend.
- D. Each church body will provide for the appropriate boards and program committees of the churches to explore the possibility of mutual cooperation in the preparation of social statements and the addressing of social concerns that have North American implications.
- E. Each church body will provide for the possibility of cooperation in the training, preparation, and continuing education for missionaries and in other appropriate areas.

See the following page for relevant action of the constituting convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Action as adopted by the constituting convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (1987):

Inasmuch as the churches that formed the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, constituted in 1985, and are forming the new Lutheran Church in the United States, to be constituted in 1987, have been an integral part of one another's life, continue to be one in faith and confession, and are determined to find as many ways as possible to work together and to strengthen one another as members of the Lutheran family of churches on the North American continent, it is recommended that:

A. Mutual Recognition of Leadership

1. Each commission take appropriate steps to provide for a mutual recognition of ordained ministry by the churches, which will be evidenced by:
 - a. acceptance on the roster of ordained ministers by transfer upon receipt and acceptance of a call.
 - b. acceptance on the roster of ordained ministers by transfer in the retired status.
 - c. making provision so that ordained ministers may remain on the roster of the ordained ministers of one church while serving in a social service or educational agency/institution or on the staff of the other church.
 - d. covenanting with one another to refuse acceptance on the roster of ordained ministers persons who have been excluded from the ordained ministry or have been denied acceptance on the roster of ordained ministers of the other church.
2. Each commission take the appropriate steps so that each church will recognize the seminaries of the other church as approved schools for the theological training of its candidates for the ordained ministry.
3. Each commission take the appropriate steps so that each church will recognize the "*Deaconess Community*" of the new Lutheran church in the U.S.A. as a community that will serve both churches.
4. Each commission take the appropriate steps so that each church will recognize the lay professionals that have been "certified" or "commissioned" by the other church.
5. Each commission recommend to the pension committee/board that arrangements be made to facilitate the mobility of pension participants between the churches.

B. Interchurch Cooperation

1. Each commission recommend to the new churches that provision be made for consultations between their corresponding units.
2. Each commission recommend that the appropriate boards of the new churches explore the possibility of shared participation in the development and preparation of congregational materials.
3. Each commission recommend to the new churches that periodic conferences of the full-time elected officers be held and that the elected officers of other Lutheran churches in North America be invited to attend.
4. Each commission recommend that the appropriate boards of the new churches explore the possibility of mutual cooperation in the preparation of social statements and the addressing of social concerns that have North American implications.
5. Each commission recommend that the Global/World boards of the new churches explore the possibility of cooperation in the training, preparation and continuing education of missionaries and in other appropriate areas.
6. Each commission, where applicable, recommend to the ALC, AELC, LCA, and ELCIC that the recommendations listed above be honored during the period January 1, 1986-December 31, 1987.

Relationships and Statement of Agreement Of the Deaconess Community of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America With the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada

The following statement was approved by the board of the Division for Ministry in October 1994 and adopted by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in November 1994.

- A. Members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC) will be approved, set apart according to the entry rite of that church, and rostered by the ELCIC.
- B. The Deaconess Community of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) will service both churches for the purpose of formation and community support and will relate to the candidacy process of both churches according to the guidelines established by each church.
- C. The Deaconess Community of the ELCA will include members of both the ELCA and the ELCIC.
- D. Deaconesses serving in the ELCIC shall be in a relationship of accountability for discipline, call, and mobility with the ELCIC according to the practices of that church.
- E. There shall be mutual transferability for deaconesses who are members of the Deaconess Community of the ELCA between both churches as presently exists for ordained ministers.
- F. The question of rostering needs to be determined by each church. While only members of the ELCA can be listed on the roster of the ELCA, it will be requested that the Yearbook listing of members of the Deaconess Community of the ELCA include ELCIC members with appropriate designation of which church roster they are a member. The ELCIC will determine how to list its deaconesses—which may be as “diaconal ministers.”

Transfer of Ordained Ministers Between Synods Of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America And Synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada

An ordained minister may be transferred by the bishop of a synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to the roster of a synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada in the same manner employed for the transfer of such an ordained minister between two synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (*see* 7.42.01.).

Likewise, an ordained minister in good standing on the roster of a synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada may be received through transfer by a bishop of a synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for service under call in this church. An ordained minister of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada shall be received by transfer upon acceptance of a valid call from a congregation, Synod Council, or the Church Council of this church following the certification of their good standing on the roster of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, completion of a Rostered Leader Profile, and the approval of the bishop of the synod in which they are to serve.

The principle of full disclosure shall apply to all such transfers. A completed ELCA Ordained Mobility Form and a bishop report from the current synod's bishop to the receiving synod's bishop shall be part of the transfer process to an ELCA synod. In addition, it It is recommended that the ELCA synod or calling body complete a criminal background check on the ordained minister. If a background check is done by the calling body, a copy should be shared with the synod.

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Approval of Synod Constitutions

1. Southwestern Minnesota Synod (3F)

RESOLVED, that S11.50 of the Southwestern Minnesota Synod Constitution be changed to **Serving in God's World Board**.

To amend S11.50. by deletion and insertion:

S11.50. Serving in ~~Christ's Mission~~ God's World Board

2. Oregon Synod (1E)

Approved by two-thirds votes at the 2009 Oregon Synod Assembly and the 2010 Oregon Synod Assembly

S15.40. Oregon Synod Endowment Fund

S15.41. The Oregon Synod Endowment Fund shall be maintained as a ~~restricted~~ clearly segregated fund of the Oregon Synod. *(The remainder is unchanged.)*

S15.42. An Endowment Fund ~~Committee~~ Board of Trustees shall direct the activities of the Fund and shall have fiduciary responsibility for the Fund. The ~~Committee~~ Board of Trustees will consist of 9 members elected by the Synod Assembly to three-year, staggered terms. Members may be once reelected. The bishop and the treasurer of this synod will be members ex-officio.

S15.43. The Endowment Fund ~~Committee~~ Board of Trustees shall focus on ministry through major gifts and estate planning, working to enhance the practice of Christian stewardship, to educate persons in the ministry needs of the Church, and to provide the opportunity to participate in the work and vision of the Church both now and for years to come.

Further, the Endowment Fund ~~Committee~~ Board of Trustees shall:
(a.-b. are unchanged.)

- c. submit a budget annually to the ~~treasurer,~~ Synod Council for inclusion ~~without change and clearly segregated from other synod activities,~~ in this synod's annual budget pursuant to S15.12. ~~Expenditure authorizations are subject to revision in light of changing conditions by the Endowment Fund Committee,~~
- d. designate a Custodian and other persons, as necessary, to execute the instructions of the ~~Committee~~ Board of Trustees, and
- e. propose such constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolution changes to the Synod Council ~~for adoption by the Assembly~~ and enact such operating guidelines, investment directions and other procedures as may be required for the preservation and orderly management of the Fund.

3. Pacifica Synod (2C)

Chapter 9.

NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

S9.03. There shall be a Nominating Committee consisting of seven members who shall be appointed by the Synod Council to serve for ~~one year effective January 1~~ two years from the time of the appointment, including each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly at which elections requiring nominations from the Nominating Committee are to be held. Additional nominations may be made from the floor for all elections for which nominations are made by the Nominating Committee, provided that the nominees meet the inclusivity qualifications, if any, established by the Synod Council. (See S9.04.01)

ELCA Churchwide Organization Electronic Communications Policy

Policy Overview

The churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) is committed to an environment that encourages the use of technical resources¹ and other forms of electronic communications as essential tools to support the ELCA's mission and ministry. In utilizing the ELCA's technical resources and electronic communications systems, it is important for all people using these systems (hereafter Users) to be aware of the ELCA's policy regarding proper and responsible use.

It is the responsibility of each User to ensure that technology is used for proper business purposes and in a manner that is consistent with good stewardship and the mission and ministry of the ELCA; is responsible, professional and legal; does not compromise the confidentiality of proprietary or other sensitive information; and does not compromise the security of the ELCA's computer resources.

Users are expected to use an ELCA provided e-mail address when representing the ELCA unless authorized by the executive for Information Technology. (Examples include elca.org, womenoftheelca.org and thelutheran.org.) Users are personally responsible for any activity conducted with an ELCA.org e-mail address, and/or any activity that can be traced back to the ELCA's domain and/or any activity that uses ELCA assets.

In addition, when using an ELCA provided e-mail address or ELCA assets to engage in any social media or professional social networking activity (including but not limited to Facebook, LinkedIn, personal blogs and Twitter), all actions are public and Users will be held fully responsible for any and all activities. Users shall obtain written approval from the executives for Mission Advancement and Information Technology before establishing any external social media or professional social networks. The executives for Human Resources and Information Technology have sole authority to approve the establishment of internal networks.

Owning and Acquiring Technical Resources

All technical resources provided to Users by or through the ELCA churchwide organization are assets of and owned by the ELCA and shall be purchased by Information Technology or with written approval of the executive for Information Technology. Software shall not be loaded, downloaded or received on ELCA technical resources unless approved by the executive for Information Technology.

Privacy Expectations

Users do not have a personal privacy or proprietary right in any matter created, received, sent or stored on ELCA technical and electronic resources, telephones or third-party resources used for work-related matters, whether or not the matter is designated as private or confidential.

The ELCA reserves the right, at any time and without prior notice, to monitor Users and to read, listen to and copy all files or data contained on any technical or electronic resource,

¹ The term "technical resources" includes, but is not limited to: all hardware (including, but not limited to personal computers, printers, scanners, servers, hand-held personal digital assistants, telephones, smartphones, faxes, computer systems), software, data, information, electronic mail, instant messages, social media sites, Intranet and Internet services, domain name registrations, and related systems.

including but not limited to e-mail messages, Internet access records, voice messages, faxes, official employee content on Internet discussion groups and personal file directories.

The ELCA reserves the right in its complete discretion to access all technical and electronic resources for the purpose of supporting the mission and ministry of this church, complying with statutory requirements and internal policies supporting the performance of internal investigations, and any additional issues that may arise when assisting with the management of the ELCA's electronic communications systems.

Prohibited Use

Examples of prohibited uses include but are not limited to any use that:

- a. violates any law, statute, regulation or ordinance;
- b. violates any policy or procedure of the ELCA;
- c. Jeopardizes the safety and security of ELCA members or staff;
- d. jeopardizes the security of any ELCA technical resource;
- e. jeopardizes the tax-exempt status of the ELCA, any synod or congregation of this church, or any affiliate listed under the ELCA group ruling for federal income tax exemption, including transmission of political or partisan campaign materials;
- f. violates the legal rights of any person or entity;
- g. creates unauthorized contractual liability for the ELCA;
- h. gives the impression a User is representing, giving opinions, making statements or commitments on behalf of the ELCA, unless specifically authorized to do so by the ELCA;
- i. results in the transmission or receipt of immoral, obscene, pornographic, discriminatory, harassing, or defamatory material, except where receipt is specifically authorized for work purposes;
- j. interferes with the use of ELCA technical resources or the computer resources of another person or entity;
- k. involves personal financial gain, lotteries, gambling or raffles;
- l. is inconsistent with norms of professional and business conduct;
- m. violates any ELCA policies or interferes with and hinders the mission of the ELCA; or
- n. reflects adversely on the ELCA.

(For additional information see ELCA Personnel Policy 18: *Ethics Policy*)

Using Personal Computer and Personal E-mail Address

Outside of the workplace, the ELCA seeks to recognize a User's privacy when it comes to online activity conducted on a personal computer with a personal e-mail address. However, what is published on such personal online sites should never be attributed directly or indirectly to this church or the ELCA churchwide organization and should not appear to be endorsed by or to originate directly or indirectly from the organization. If a User chooses to directly or indirectly disclose his or her work affiliation on a social network, or if the work place affiliation is commonly known, then such communication no longer would be regarded as personal.

Avoiding Harassing Behavior

Information that is shared via electronic means is generally public information that can easily be viewed by others. Users are expected to respect the ELCA, its employees, members, synods, congregations and vendors.

When communicating about the ELCA or ELCA-related matters, users should not send or display any information that may be construed as offensive or harassing. Offensive or harassing

Revised November 12, 2010

messages include, but are not limited to, pornographic images, sexual references, racial slurs, comments regarding an individual's gender, age, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, national origin, disability or any other characteristic protected by law, or comments that threaten or intimidate others.

Any behavior that can be construed as harassing or offensive must be reported immediately to the executive for Human Resources. (For additional information, see ELCA Personnel Policy 16. *Equal Employment Opportunity and Anti- Harassment.*)

Speaking on Behalf of the Organization and Issues of Confidentiality

All contact with news media is coordinated by Mission Advancement. Unless specifically instructed, Users are not authorized and therefore are restricted from speaking to the news media or others on behalf of the ELCA. Users are expected to protect the privacy of the ELCA churchwide organization and its employees and clients and are prohibited from disclosing personal employee and nonemployee information and any other proprietary and nonpublic information to which employees have access. Such information includes but is not limited to confidential, proprietary or restricted information about the ELCA, its employees, members, synods, congregations or vendors.

In the event that such information must be disclosed, prior written consent must be obtained from the unit supervisor and the executive for Mission Advancement.

Users are responsible for ensuring that all information they share in work-related Internet discussion groups, chat rooms, blogs or social networking sites is accurate and that any personal opinions they express are clearly identified as "personal" and not the opinion of the ELCA.

Posting Recommendations for Colleagues

The employment-related recommendations and comments Users post on social networking sites about other current and former churchwide employees can have consequences, even if a User is making the recommendations personally and not on behalf of the organization. Therefore, Users must clear all potential recommendations and comments with the executive for Human Resources if they refer to anyone who is or was ever associated with the ELCA churchwide organization.

Job Performance Safety and Mission

When electronic communications usage negatively affects impacts a User's job performance, the safety of others performance of others or the ELCA churchwide organization's mission or business interests, the matter may be treated as employment-related, regardless of whether the communication took place during or apart from work.

Reporting Violations

The ELCA churchwide organization expects Users to report any violations or possible or perceived violations of this policy to supervisors, unit executives, the executive for Human Resources or the ELCA General Counsel.

Discipline for Violations

Human Resources investigates and responds to all reports of violations of the ELCA Churchwide Organization Electronic Communications Policy and other related policies. Violation of the Policy will result in disciplinary action up to and including immediate termination.

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**Personnel Policies
Compensation Program**

7.0 COMPENSATION PROGRAM (Current)

~~The purpose of the compensation program is to provide adequate pay for services rendered and to insure equity in basic compensation. There are three elements in the program: The position evaluation process, the salary ranges, and the merit pay program.~~

7.1 Position Evaluation Process

~~A. All positions in churchwide units, sections and offices will be evaluated periodically, using the same criteria and process.~~

B. Evaluation Process

~~1. On-Going Process~~

- ~~a. Position Evaluation Team, composed of churchwide organization staff members, will be appointed by the executive for Human Resources. The team will be chaired by a staff member of Human Resources.~~
- ~~b. The team will meet at least quarterly or more frequently, if appropriate.~~
- ~~c. The team will evaluate all new positions with the exception of elected official positions and unit/section executive positions, which will be evaluated by an outside consultant for review and approval by the executive for administration and the executive for human resources.~~
- ~~d. The team will evaluate current churchwide positions, at the request of the unit/section executive, if the position requirements and/or principal accountabilities have become either more or less complex.~~
- ~~e. If the evaluation results in a salary grade increase, a current employee's salary should be, at least, equal to the minimum of the new salary range. If the employee's salary is already at or above the minimum of the new salary range, normally, an increase of 0% to 5% may be approved by the unit executive director for executive in consultation with Human Resources. If the evaluation results in a salary grade decrease, a current employee's salary must be within the new salary range. If salary inequities exist within the unit as a result of the evaluation, Human Resources will consult with the unit/section executive to recommend an appropriate salary while maintaining internal equity.~~

~~2. Disputed Evaluations~~

~~Evaluations results will be communicated by Human Resources to the executive director or executive of the employing unit or section. If the executive director or executive disagrees with the judgment of the Position Evaluation Team, the procedures listed below will be followed:~~

- ~~a. The team will perform a second evaluation of the disputed position if new information regarding the position has been provided~~
- ~~b. If the unit/section executive disagrees with the result of the second evaluation, he/she may request that the position be evaluated by an outside consultant at the unit's expense, or;~~

- ~~e. In the event that there is still a disputed evaluation, a decision will be made jointly by the executive for administration, the executive for human resources and the unit/section executive.~~

7.2 Ranges

Salary ranges and/or midpoint policy proposals will be developed by Human Resources and the Executive for Administration once every other year for review and approval by the Church Council.

7.3 Merit Pay

Merit pay allows an individual to directly influence his or her earnings through on-the-job performance. Increases may be granted, based upon improved or sustained performance. Generally, an employee must have completed 9 months of satisfactory service before being eligible for a merit increase. This practice is designed to attract and retain competent employees, to reward each individual in accordance with performance on the job, and to motivate each employee to his or her highest level of performance. The basis for merit pay is the annual performance appraisal.

7.4 Overtime

- A. All non-exempt employees are eligible for overtime pay at the rate of one and one-half times their regular hourly rate for time worked in excess of 40 hours in any normal work week.
- B. Overtime is calculated using actual hours worked. Sick leave, personal leave, vacation time, community service, holidays and other types of leave referenced in these personnel policies do not count as hours worked.
- C. Under limited circumstances, a non-exempt employee may be granted time off in lieu of overtime pay, if it meets the criteria for compensatory leave set forth in policy 11.15, and both the supervisor and the employee agree to the arrangement.
- D. Time spent in overnight travel that corresponds to a non-exempt employee's regular working hours must be counted as time worked. Travel hours on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays that correspond to a non-exempt employee's regular working hours on other days of the week are also counted as time worked as long as the travel involves an overnight stay. In addition, all time spent performing authorized ELCA-related work at the destination will be compensated based on actual hours worked. Non-working time, including non-working meal times and sleeping time are excluded as paid time.
- E. Supervisors have the right to manage an employee into a 40-hour workweek by altering the normal weekly work schedule.

7.5 Pay Periods

Pay periods for all employees will be semi-monthly, and payment will be made on the 15th and the 30th of the month (in February payment will be made on the 28th of the month). If a normal payday falls on a non-working day, paychecks will be issued on the last working day preceding the non-working day.

7.6 Fees for Services and Honorariums

Non-exempt (support staff), full-time churchwide employees of a unit or section may be paid for contract or part-time work performed in their off-hours for another churchwide unit or section. If the nature of the work performed for the second churchwide unit or section is similar to or an extension of the employee's regular job description, the payment must be at one and one-half times the employee's current hourly rate of pay for all hours worked in excess of 40 hours weekly. If the work is totally different from the employee's regular job responsibilities, then the employee and the contracting unit or section, in consultation with Human Resources, may negotiate a fee for those services.

Exempt (executive staff) employees of a churchwide unit or section will not be paid for contracted or part-time work performed for another churchwide unit or section, affiliated agency, organization or institution or non-ELCA related agency, if the nature of the work performed for the requester:

- is similar to or an extension of the employee's regular job responsibilities or,
- is to take place when the employee is carrying out his or her regular job responsibilities or,
- if the work to be done becomes part of the performance expectations in the employee's work plan and performance review.

If the work is totally different from the employee's regular job responsibilities, is carried out apart from the employee's regular work setting, and is outside of the employing unit's supervision and expectations, then the employee and the contracting entity, in consultation with Human Resources, may negotiate a fee for those services.

An employee is not to expect or accept additional income for performing the normal duties and responsibilities of his or her position. Any employee who receives an honorarium related to performing such activities or for representing the churchwide organization is to remit it to the Office of the Treasurer and it will be credited to the operation of the employee's unit or section.

7.7 Garnishments and Wage Assignments

The churchwide organization must honor wage assignments, as they represent a legal order to withhold and pay out a specified amount of employee earnings. If wages are attached, the employee will be notified, and must seek a release of the court in order to prevent deductions from being made.

7.8 Housing Allowance

An ordained or other qualified employee of the churchwide organization may request that a portion of his or her annual salary be designated as a housing allowance, in keeping with Internal Revenue Service regulations. The employee assumes full responsibility for compliance with IRS definitions of "costs to provide a home." Requests for housing allowances, on the form provided, must be forwarded annually, for the ensuing year, to Human Resources, with sufficient time allowed for the request to be recorded in the official files.

Personnel Policies Compensation Program

7.0 COMPENSATION POLICY (Revised)

The ELCA churchwide organization believes that it is in the best interest of both the organization and its employees to fairly compensate employees for the value of the work provided. It is the intention of the churchwide organization to use a compensation system that will determine the current market value of a position based on the skills, knowledge and behaviors required of a fully competent employee to the extent that funding permits.

The system used will be objective and non-discriminatory in theory, application and practice and will operate under the following criteria.

Criteria:

- The compensation system will use local and industry-specific survey market data where it is available.
- The market data will primarily include not-for-profit organizations and will address significant specialized job differences as well as significant market differences due to geographical location.
- The system will evaluate *external equity*, which is the relative marketplace worth of jobs directly comparable to similar jobs in the local economic marketplace and/or within the church.
- The system will evaluate *internal equity*, which is the relative worth of each job when comparing the required level of competencies, formal training and experience, responsibility and accountability of one job to others in the churchwide organization.
- The compensation system must be flexible enough to ensure that the churchwide organization is able to recruit and retain a highly qualified workforce, while providing the structure necessary to effectively manage the overall compensation program.

7.1 Administrative Team Responsibilities:

The Administrative Team of the ELCA churchwide organization is responsible for reviewing recommendations made by the executive for Human Resources and will give final approval for the compensation system that will be used.

On a regular basis the Administrative Team will review and approve changes recommended by the executive for Human Resources as determined through a market analysis process.

As part of the annual budgeting process, the Administrative Team will review and recommend to the Church Council for approval funds to be allocated for total compensation as part of the total budget. The Church Council shall establish the position levels and compensation package for the salaried officers of the ELCA.

7.2 Other Responsibilities

Individual determinations for each employee's salary adjustment shall be the responsibility of the head of the unit, office or separately incorporated entity where the position is housed with the approval of the executive for Human Resources.

The executive for Human Resources will ensure that all salaries are administered within appropriate guidelines and within the approved budget annually, that salary ranges are updated regularly and that pay equity adjustments are administered in a fair and equitable manner.

The executive for administration is charged with the responsibility of ensuring that the total compensation program is managed in a consistent and equitable manner.

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**Summary of Activities of Program Units and Service Units
of the Churchwide Organization**

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Sections of the Churchwide Organization

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The unit summaries provided in Exhibit J, Part 1 were prepared prior to the restructuring of the churchwide organization on October 8, 2010.

PROGRAM UNITS

Church in Society (CS)

Submitted by Rebecca Larson

Advocacy

ELCA advocacy ministries hosted Liberian Lutheran activist Leymah Gbowee for a March 2010 forum at the United Nations on the status of women and for congressional meetings in Washington on violence against women and peace.

The ELCA Washington office provided staff support for Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson's participation on the White House Task Force on Inter-Religious Dialogue and Cooperation. This

included an Easter prayer breakfast on April 5, 2010, with President Obama, Department of Human Services Secretary Napolitano, and other faith leaders.

The Washington office hosted Bishop Elizabeth Eaton (Northeastern Ohio Synod) and other Lutheran leaders at a White House meeting on economic opportunity and job creation, in collaboration with Lutheran Services in America. The Bishops Domestic Ready Bench chair, Bishop James Mauney (Virginia Synod), met with Secretary of Agriculture Vilsack and other faith leaders about child nutrition programs.

The director for environmental policy in the Washington office led a National Council of Churches joint advocacy effort on an alternative energy bill and wrote reflections and action alerts on the Gulf oil spill.

The director of the Lutheran Office for World Community at the United Nations and ELCA Washington office staff are getting co-signers in support of the pending Global Security Priorities Act (H. Res. 278) which would redirect nuclear stockpile savings to children's health and education programs.

ELCA state public policy office directors coordinated a July letter to members of Congress on the crisis states are experiencing with state budgets and what this means for human needs programs and jobs.

By the end of the 2010 shareholder season, five of 13 resolutions filed by the ELCA Board of Pensions had gone to vote. These resolutions received votes in favor of the resolution ranging from nine to 42 percent. The eight that did not go to vote were withdrawn due to positive dialogues.

The Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) program continues to address the cocoa industry concerning child and trafficked labor in Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire.

Community and Poverty Ministries

The director for congregation-based community organizing, in collaboration with the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission unit, established a new cohort of mission developers and redevelopers who use congregation-based organizing tools and principles as their main mode of operation. A total of 21 synods have held an introductory course on congregation-based organizing with 15 to 45 participants for each event.

The director for community development services has collaborated with the Multicultural Ministries unit and the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission unit to create a three-module curriculum for congregations designed to build capacity for sustainable social ministry programs.

Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR) was recognized by the National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters as the 2010 Member Organization of the Year because it is "a model for collaboration and cooperation for all members." LDR continued to deal with the domestic ramifications of the earthquake in Haiti, specifically work in Florida and Georgia with survivors and accompanying family members who were receiving medical care in the U.S.

Six new social ministry organizations have requested help in becoming affiliated with the ELCA.

Studies

The comment period for the draft social statement on genetics, released in March, ended on October 15, 2010. Over 40 synodical hearings and several hundred written responses will contribute to revising the draft.

The study for the social statement on criminal justice will be readied by the end of November. The release date for the study is yet to be determined. The initiation of the process for a social

statement on justice for women has been delayed due to currently limited resources, but names and credentials of potential task force members continue to be received.

The “Journal of Lutheran Ethics” (www.elca.org/jle) is a lively presence on the Web with over 24,000 hits per month and an increasing number from overseas. The social statement on human sexuality, the message on immigration reform and the draft social statement on genetics are now available in Spanish.

World Hunger

Domestic hunger grants totaling \$661,000 have been allocated thus far in 2010 for relief, development and organizing projects. In 2009, \$798,000, including overage monies, was distributed. Hunger education and advocacy grants, as of September 2010, have come in at \$361,000 compared to \$567,000 for 2009.

The *Taking Root* hunger curriculum has been expanded for use with kindergarten to second grade children, adult forums, vacation Bible school, and youth overnights. Hunger education curricula and activities were produced for the 2009 youth gathering, 2009 global formation events, and 2010 “glocal” mission gatherings.

ELCA World Hunger launched a comprehensive social media strategy using a hunger social networking site with Ning.com in Fall 2009, an ongoing Facebook presence, a blog (“HungerRumblings”), daily tweets, and an e-newsletter (“Go and Do News”). In Spring 2009, a college campus strategy was launched. Three regional “Ethics of Eating” leadership training events have been held since July 2009.

Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission (EO)

Submitted by Stephen Bouman

The Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission (EOCM) unit continues its commitment to increase capacity for evangelical outreach and mission congregations through their synods. The recent paradigm shift in EOCM’s *Evangelizing Congregations Mission Plan* includes a director for evangelical mission (DEM) in each synod with responsibility for generating local missional tables that will develop and implement synodical missional strategies, including the development of new and renewed evangelizing ministries and to increase mission support and stewardship education efforts in congregations. Synod bishops and DEMs are mobilizing a new set of leaders through their synod mission tables who enhance and amplify evangelical outreach and mission in their local settings. To date, sixty-three DEMs are in place with the additional two DEM positions in the interview process.

Mission is local and we are discovering growing interest, passion and resources in local congregations, conferences, among our ethnic communities and in partnership with our ecumenical partners for a renewed commitment to generating new missional initiatives that will be the new face of the ELCA in our diverse society. This is especially significant in the growing and collaborative efforts to grow and enhance our lay missional schools programs in the ELCA. While the financial resources of EOCM continue to be impacted (i.e., budget reduced by \$400,000 with an additional five percent under-spending totaling \$675,685), we continue to be grateful for and blessed by the missional imagination, adaptive leadership and renewed commitment to grow and enhance vibrant mission and ministry throughout the ELCA. The following are the key highlights of the ministries of EOCM since April 2010.

New Evangelizing Congregations

The year 2010 can be described as a very “fruitful” year in the development of new congregations in the ELCA. Seeds of missional focus and creativity throughout all the nine regions have yielded the approval of 63 new ministries with others still in the planning stages—a total of 70 new ministries by the end of the year. Fifty-one percent of all new starts are among the various ethnic and multicultural communities; 37 percent among urban dwellers; 24 percent in small-town and/or rural areas; and 15 percent among working class and among people living in poverty. Our commitment to be in ministry among ethnic communities and among those living in poverty continues to be very strong. An increasing number of congregations are being born out of existing missional churches and a growing number of ministries among young adults are surfacing throughout the ELCA. We give thanks to God that, amidst the difficulties and challenging times we live in, the Holy Spirit is active and generating new and creative opportunities for mission among leaders in ELCA congregations and synods.

Much of this work is coordinated through the newly formed missional tables in synods, convened by bishops and directors for evangelical mission. These DEMs direct the missional traffic in the synods, providing vision, strategic thinking, partnerships and systems of support.

In order to accompany DEMs and synods in this important work, EOCM staff portfolios are being organized into support systems that connect with synodical work, through the DEMs, for evangelical outreach efforts. One such system is leadership recruitment and screening. This system coordinates potential developers and redevelopers into a pool of available candidates for new synodical initiatives. These leaders are appointed to new starts, which then receive the outcomes of other systems like mission developers’ training, coaching, tracking of ministries, mission interpretation (i.e., stewardship, Mission Partners, Mission Founders) and opportunities for church multiplication.

Renewed Evangelizing Congregations

The 2011 partnership support allocations process review table gathered in mid-July to approve proposals for 159 congregations (164 requests) to be supported with \$2,488,130 in FY 2011 for renewed mission and ministry for evangelizing congregations. In 2010, 195 congregations are being supported with \$2,917,654, including partnership support for the strategic renewal of congregations, ethnic specific and multicultural ministries, ministries among people living in poverty and other specialized ministries (e.g., prison ministry, ministry with people with disabilities). The review table is inclusive of the many partners and allies supporting congregational renewal, including representatives from the ethnic strategies, bishops from each region, a seminary president and other partners. Staff from the Communications unit assured EOCM that stories of dynamic renewal would be published.

EOCM is committed to a consultation process to discern the next chapter of rural and small town ministry in this church. A major focus of a future rural and small town ministry capacity delivery system will be the synod mission tables and the emerging synod missional plans. An EOCM team, including four DEMs with extensive rural and small town ministry experience and the director for renewed evangelizing congregations are finalizing plans for a grassroots consultation process that will include multiple mediums and forums in coming months.

Over 400 people participated in the first national stewardship summit, “Rethinking Stewardship: Our Theology, our Culture, Our Practices” in mid-July 2010. The event was a collaborative venture between the ELCA churchwide organization and Luther Seminary, including representation from five denominations and speakers from three denominations other than the ELCA. Directors for evangelical mission and synod stewardship staff brought congregational clergy and lay leaders who will develop

follow-up goals. The presentations, with a common storytelling (mission interpretation) emphasis, will be published in a special edition of *Word and World: Stewardship* available from Luther Seminary in fall 2010.

The first printing of 10,000 copies of a pace-setting document that will impact ELCA congregations for the next decade, *Competencies in a Well-formed Steward Leader*, is almost fully distributed. This project involved collaboration with all ELCA seminary presidents, faculties, academic deans and directors for contextual education, the Stewardship of Life Institute, the summit for First Call Theological Education, ELCA Board of Pensions and representatives from the churchwide organization. A leaders guide is available. ELCA directors for evangelical mission, synod stewardship staff and others will use this resource for steward leader training in congregations, at synod assemblies and at theological conferences.

“The ELCA Macedonia Project: Your Table is Ready,” a two-year pilot project for increasing mission support, will be launched this fall in 12-15 synods. The ELCA Macedonia Project is a joint effort of the churchwide organization, synods and congregations supported by a grant from Thrivent Financial for Lutherans. Inspired by the generous offering given by Macedonian Christians for the relief of the saints in Jerusalem (Acts 16:1-10 and 2 Corinthians 8:1-7), this project will invite God’s people gathered in ELCA congregations to grow in their faith by embracing the grace of giving and invite ELCA congregations to grow their mission support so the work done together in synods and the churchwide organization might continue and expand.

In late 2009 and early 2010, EOCM, the ELCA Mission Investment Fund (MIF), the Office of the Secretary (OS), and others collaborated to develop procedures for ministries with past or current relationships with the synod, churchwide organization and/or other ELCA-related organizations that involve fiscal obligations as part of the termination or change in a ministry’s relationship with the ELCA. Fiscal obligations of a congregation or other ministry may include a mortgage with MIF or churchwide organization or synod funds that were provided to the ministry for interdependent ministry opportunities, including the development, redevelopment and/or transformation of the congregation to support evangelical outreach ministry and witness for Christ. These ministry partnerships often are organized with covenant relationships (e.g., mortgage, Partnership Support Covenant) with EOCM, the former Division for Outreach, MIF, the synod, and/or other ELCA-related organizations which specify that the congregation return all the funds received if the congregation terminates its relationship with the ELCA or closes. EOCM is facilitating many related consultation processes to finalize related reimbursement plans with several congregations that are forwarding payments to EOCM.

Discipleship/Faith Practices

The Faith Practices Team is an interunit team composed of staff from several ministries of the churchwide office including new starts, Women of the ELCA, stewardship, the Vocation and Education unit, the Church in Society unit and worship. The team recently held a retreat and developed a draft of the “Faith Practices Plan,” which the team is recommending in order to create a culture of discipleship in the ELCA. In selected synods, the team will be intentional about incorporating existing initiatives into the “Faith Practices Plan,” such as Book of Faith, Partners in Evangelical Worship (PEW), the Catechumenate and the evolving Macedonia Stewardship Project. The plan will be reviewed and additional input will be solicited from bishops, pastors, laypersons and directors for evangelical mission. The implementation is expected to impact and accompany local mission strategies and tables as they plan future new and renewed congregations.

Regional Consultations

EOCM is participating in each of the regional consultations this year, with a focus on building the synodical mission support tables. We give thanks to God for the growing and strengthening grassroots partnerships we share as we grow Christ's Church through synods, congregations and churchwide organization.

Global Mission (GM)

Submitted by Rafael Malpica-Padilla

The following report includes updates on ELCA Global Mission's implementation of Church Council and Churchwide Assembly actions (on Malaria and HIV and AIDS).

A New ELCA Priority: Malaria

The 2009 Churchwide Assembly affirmed malaria as a major ELCA priority and called for intensified engagement, both within the ELCA and throughout the world, to roll back this devastating disease. Awareness and financial resources raised in the United States in a malaria campaign will contribute directly to the ability of ELCA's companion churches and their health care programs to address the challenges of malaria control and prevention in their communities and also to participate in larger national programs that respond to this disease. While the form of the ELCA malaria fundraising campaign was being reshaped this year, Global Mission (GM) continued to intensify its malaria-specific engagement with companion churches in Africa.

The global framework for coordinated action against malaria, *Roll Back Malaria*, addresses all individuals living in areas where malaria is prevalent, particularly children under five years and pregnant women, who are most affected. The ELCA, working with companion churches, will contribute to that global effort, focusing on interventions that both reduce the incidence of malaria and provide necessary medical care to poor, vulnerable and hard-to-reach populations.

In 2010, GM worked with companion churches to lay a sound foundation for future years of malaria programming. Building upon the existing infrastructure and expertise of the Lutheran Communion of Southern Africa (LUCSA), GM held a regional programmatic planning summit in South Africa in January 2010. Church leaders and program staff from Angola, Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe participated. The planning event was a significant step toward finalizing regional objectives and creating country-specific program strategies. GM also deployed Dr. Ruth Goehle, a medical doctor with long mission experience and expertise in dealing with the Global Fund, to provide technical support to LUCSA and member churches in the region. In July, the first stage of capacity building began with malaria field officer training in Mozambique. This training addressed both malaria response strategies and large-scale mechanisms such as the President's Malaria Initiative and Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM).

In April, GM expanded its malaria planning with companion churches to the West Africa region, specifically Liberia and Central African Republic (CAR). Lutheran churches in those countries have the opportunity to engage in malaria efforts with ecumenical actors, building upon and strengthening Christian health associations and leveraging complementary financial support from the Global Fund. The ELCA's planned malaria efforts with companions also include engagement in Nigeria (in cooperation with Global Health Ministries and the Minneapolis Area Synod), in Tanzania (in cooperation with Lutheran World Relief) and in future years, in Ethiopia.

GM has finalized a strategic plan that builds on the strengths of companion churches and expresses the shared conviction that malaria needs to be addressed not just as a disease, but a disease that is intensified by poverty. In the remaining months of 2010 and throughout the coming years of the ELCA's malaria campaign, companion churches will utilize ELCA support to incorporate malaria control activities into existing programs for comprehensive and sustainable community development – thereby bringing hope and saving lives in communities throughout Africa.

ELCA Response to HIV and AIDS

“Transformed for Transformation” was the theme of the 2010 HIV and AIDS consultation held in Peru, which brought together church leaders from the Latin America and Caribbean region and representatives of diaconal ministries, The Lutheran World Federation and the ELCA. This consultation was planned as a way of implementing the ELCA HIV and AIDS strategy, which was adopted by the ELCA Church Council and affirmed by the 2009 Churchwide Assembly. This strategy builds on the ELCA's previous HIV and AIDS commitments with companions in Africa and throughout the world, even as it clarifies and focuses ELCA's direct response to HIV and AIDS in the United States and the Caribbean.

As a part of this renewed commitment to respond to HIV and AIDS, GM accompanied Latin American companion churches as they analyzed their work by mapping the response to date in the region. Key actors were then convened and applied a “see, judge, and act” hermeneutical approach to strengthening the strategy among companion churches in the region. A long-standing ELCA companion in ministry, EPES (Educación Popular en Salud–Chile) mapped the programmatic assets in the sector, with the goal of identifying best practices.

At this consultation, ELCA staff (both GM and those engaged in the implementation of the HIV and AIDS strategy) indicated that the ELCA's accompaniment with churches in the region is not simply the sharing of financial resources. Critical to all companions is mutual learning and support for regional programs through LWF to steward and share human resources and knowledge. The following “next steps” were prioritized:

- Training leaders in identified areas through scholarships, internships and specific training in advocacy and other areas;
- Increasing capacity and systemization of planning, monitoring and evaluation systems;
- Enhancing the theological foundation for engagement;
- Mobilizing events and community activities for advocacy; and
- Disseminating materials for continued reflection.

ELCA Disaster Response

Even as GM responded to Church Council and Churchwide Assembly actions and continued its ongoing work with companion churches and global partners, it also enabled the ELCA to respond to disasters, including:

Haiti

Nine months after the January 2010 earthquake, the government of Haiti reported that over two million people were affected by this disaster, which left 1.5 million people displaced and 188,383 houses damaged or destroyed. The ELCA supports a multi-national, multi-lateral response to the earthquake that includes the coordination of relief and development agencies through the ACT Alliance (Action by Churches Together), of which the ELCA has been a member since 1995. \$2

million has been provided to: Lutheran World Relief (LWR) for material aid; Church World Service (CWS) for material aid and distribution on the ground; The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) for emergency response, including support for internally displaced persons; and the Lutheran Church in Haiti (ELH) for response to the needs of affected individuals and families.

The ELCA also has contracted an emergency response specialist to accompany the ELH as this new companion church prepares and implements its response strategy. The ELH has proposed a five-year plan that will enable it to respond to the direct and secondary impact of this disaster, with an emphasis on education and renewing income-generating opportunities.

Most recently, the ELCA has affirmed its commitment to the LWF-Haiti program through the secondment of Louis Dorvilier, who served as GM IDDR Director, to serve as Country Director for LWF-Haiti. Programmatic emphasis with and through LWF and other partners will be finalized in the coming months.

Chile

Responding to a major earthquake, the Inter-Church Committee Chile 2010, comprised of ten churches and organizations, was formed on March 1, 2010. Seven of those institutions, including ELCA companions, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Chile (IELCH) and Popular Education in Health (EPES) are implementing a response coordinated by ACT with two proposed phases: emergency relief to 1,500 families and rehabilitation activities to be completed by February 2011. The ELCA has contributed approximately \$300,000 towards this response.

Pakistan

The worst flooding in recorded history has inundated over one-fifth of Pakistan, creating a humanitarian crisis of massive proportions, one that is reported to have affected more people than the 2005 Indian Ocean tsunami, the 2005 South Asia earthquake, and the 2010 Haiti earthquake combined. The UN reports that heavy rainfall and flooding created a moving body of water the size of the United Kingdom, which destroyed homes, crops and livelihoods. More than twenty million people—one-tenth of Pakistan's population—have been affected by the flooding that devastated villages from the Himalayas to the Arabian Sea. More than 1,700 people have lost their lives, and at least 1.8 million homes have been damaged or destroyed. Only a fraction of those in need of aid have received it.

ELCA's companion in ministry, Church World Service (CWS), has a historical and ongoing presence in Pakistan and was able to respond quickly to the humanitarian situation. The ELCA has financially contributed \$150,000 to CWS for immediate shelter and health services response. CWS is preparing a long-term rehabilitation strategy. Additionally, the ELCA, working in partnership with Lutheran World Relief, has contributed \$60,000 to Muslim Aid for immediate water, sanitation and shelter support to 500 families.

ELCA Mission Personnel

Young Adults in Global Mission

Forty-four young adults began a year of service in August 2010 with the Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM) program, which operates in eight countries around the world. Even as these young adults were in the initial stages of their journey, the returnees from the prior year gathered October 8-10, 2010 at a re-entry conference to reflect on their experiences and learn how they can become more engaged in ministries in the U.S. and, more specifically, within the ELCA. Four "YAGM alum" are

working as short-term recruiters, spread across the US to visit campus ministry programs, congregations, synod and “glocal” [global/local] events. To schedule a presentation, contact Heidi.Torgerson@elca.org.

Missionaries

Two hundred twenty-three mission personnel were under appointment of ELCA Global Mission as of September 3, 2010. This is 20 fewer than one year ago at this time. Budget reductions have limited GM's capacity to place more personnel in service. Fourteen mid- and long-term personnel attended orientation in July, down from 28 in 2009. Of the 233, the breakdown by continent is: 61 Africa, 51 Asia-Pacific, 37 Europe, 26 Latin America, 14 Middle East. Of these, 103 personnel began service in 2010.

Global Mission is working more closely with ELCA synods on "shared personnel placements." The process varies widely depending on the nature of the assignment, which might involve synod selection and notification provided to ELCA/GM or include a sharing of costs in a joint appointment. This collaboration is integral to GM's emerging domestic strategy.

Cooperation with a wider network of ecumenical partners has brought forth a new plan for orientation. In 2011, U.S. and Canadian denominations will jointly sponsor a North American ecumenical orientation program in Toronto. The Canadian Churches Forum for Global Ministries will provide staff leadership.

Lutheran Men in Mission (LM)

Submitted by Doug Haugen

The vision of Lutheran Men in Mission is for every man to have a growing relationship with Jesus Christ through an effective men's ministry in every congregation. Lutheran Men in Mission lives out that vision through the resources we publish, the events we produce and ongoing leadership development.

Events

Plans are underway for the 2011 triennial Lutheran Men in Mission Assembly (the LMM business meeting) and Lutheran Men's Gathering to be held at the Denver Marriott Tech Center July 21-22 and July 22-24, 2011.

Lutheran Men in Mission recently completed the eighteenth *One Year to Live* retreat. This experience was designed in collaboration with Lyman Coleman, founder and former CEO of Serendipity. The retreat is designed to help men take an honest look at their faith, what is keeping them from experiencing God more fully, and what they believe God is calling them to do for the rest of their lives within the safety of a small group. The retreat is completely “lay led” by the small group facilitators, who all have been participants in earlier retreats. The retreat has been held in the Rocky Mountain, Nebraska, South Carolina and South Central Wisconsin synods. The next one will take place in Leesville, SC in November. Our intent is to eventually bring this event to every synod.

Leadership

Lutheran Men in Mission recently completed the third Building Men for Christ training event. This event took place in Camp Hill, Penn. This training is designed to help rostered and lay leaders see ministry with and to men as an integral part of overall congregational ministry and to help them reach

and activate men for the congregation's ministry and outreach. The next Building Men for Christ events are scheduled for Cedar Falls, Iowa and Salisbury, NC in November 2001.

Resources

The *Master Builders Bible for Men* continues to be our strongest resource with nearly 50,000 in circulation. Along with the study questions written in the margins, what makes this resource unique is the thirty-two page section for men's ministry leaders. While we continue to hear from men in congregations, we are hearing from more and more prisoners and service people who are receiving the Bibles from congregational men's ministries. *El Nuevo Testamento* continues to be distributed to Spanish-speaking ministries through our synod and congregational men's ministries.

The most recent issue of the *Foundations* newsletter focused on what congregations are doing encourage men's involvement and ministering with the underemployed and unemployed. *Foundations* is distributed to approximately 7,000 men, and every ELCA congregation.

Young Men's Ministry

Lutheran Men in Mission's young men's ministry specialist, along with the young men's ministry council has produced a strategy to develop leaders among young men in congregations and synods. The initial training has been a three-step movement: learn (theology, discipleship, leadership), listening (discernment) and live (living out your calling). This took place through assigned readings, internet/conference calls, in-person discussions and coaching. Training for the first group will conclude this fall.

Multicultural Ministries (MM)

Submitted by Sherman Hicks

The work of Multicultural Ministries is guided by the churchwide organization's priorities for the next biennium which are:

The churchwide organization, working collaboratively with congregations, synods, agencies and institutions and other partners, will give priority to:

- Accompanying congregations as growing centers for evangelical mission; and
- Building capacity for evangelical witness and service in the world to alleviate poverty and to work for justice and peace.

Multicultural Ministries also continues to assist this church in working toward the goal of full partnership and participation of African Descent, Arab and Middle Eastern, Asian and Pacific Islander, Latino, American Indian and Alaska Native people in the life of this church and society. Following is a review of Multicultural Ministries' work.

The American Indian and Alaska Native Lutheran Association held its biennial assembly, July 22-25, 2010 at Mystic Lake Casino Hotel, Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Reservation Community, Prior Lake, Minn. There were about 45 in attendance at the meeting. Dr. Alfred Sagar led members of the assembly through a strategic planning process, using the ELCA American Indian and Alaska Native mission strategy as a foundation from which to work. The assembly came to consensus on 13 goals for the biennium under three priority headings: promoting traditional Native spiritual practices as acceptable forms of worship in American Indian and Alaska Native ministries, advocating for the rights of all indigenous people and providing cultural learning experiences that enhance understanding of our heritage as Native people.

The 10th biennial assembly of the Association of Asians and Pacific Islanders convened April 7-10, 2010, at the ELCA New Light Christian Church, Palatine, Ill. The theme of the assembly is "Living the Word." Approximately 100 people attended the assembly. Part of the assembly focused on discipleship training. This is a follow-up to the first discipleship training started at the last assembly in 2008. The association has developed resources in five tracks: 1) high school students; 2) college students; 3) young adults; 4) women; and 5) adults. This resource has been used in some congregations for two years as a pilot project. The association and the Asian desk of the Multicultural Ministries unit have produced this resource for broader use in the Asian community and European American congregations that have Asian membership.

The ELCA Asian and Pacific Islander Association is structured by ethnic caucuses. Each caucus has its own leaders and committees to assist in reaching, serving and developing their members. Four caucuses have gathered this year as follows: 1) The Hmong Caucus met August 6-8, 2010. Over 90 Hmong pastors and lay leaders gathered in Indian Sands Camp, Neshkoro, Wisc. 2) The Laotian Caucus met August 26-27, 2010. More than 50 Laotian pastors and leaders met at St. Paul Lutheran Church, Des Moines, Iowa.; 3) The Chinese Caucus met September 15-18, 2010. About 50 Chinese pastors and lay leaders gathered at Christ Lutheran Church, Monterey Park Calif.; 4) Paul Rajashekar, dean of Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, was the speaker for the South Asian Caucus that met at LSTP, September 22-24, 2010.

The European American Association's first biennial conference was held October 28-30, 2010 in Milwaukee, Wisc. and the Association of Lutherans of Arab and Middle Eastern Heritage held their General Assembly October 8-10, 2010 at the Lutheran Center, Chicago, Ill.

A consultation February 8-10, 2010 with 13 pastors serving predominately African Descent congregations or congregations in predominately African Descent communities resulted in the development of a training curriculum for "Building Capacity for Sustainable Ministries." The first of three training modules was implemented this past June, involving ministry teams from six congregations. The Lutheran Theological Center Atlanta hosted Module I training. This training included sessions on Asset Mapping, Conflict Resolution and Stewardship/Congregational Support for Ministry. Module II will be held Oct. 24-26 at the Lutheran Center in Chicago, focusing on Advocacy, Strategic Planning, Staff Management and Growing Your Congregation/Evangelism. A consultation titled "Latino Ministries Building Capacity Training" was held July 22-23, 2010 at the Lutheran Center, Chicago, Ill. with 15 pastors and lay leaders serving Latino congregations. This training also included sessions on Asset Mapping, Conflict Resolution and Stewardship/Congregational Support for Ministry. Both events were co-sponsored by Multicultural Ministries and Church in Society units.

In April 35 African Descent rostered leaders came together for "Preacher I Need A Word! Practical Steps for Prophetic, Passionate, Powerful Preaching." The two-day preaching and self-care conference was held in Columbus, Ohio as a pre-event to the annual Nelson W. Trout Lectures at Trinity Lutheran Seminary. Plans are underway for the pre-event to become an ongoing event held in conjunction with the Trout Lectures aimed at strengthening the capacity of African Descent leaders in the area of preaching, with special attention on "self care" for clergy.

Twenty-eight participants attended the Arab and Middle Eastern Lay and Clergy Leadership Training sponsored by Multicultural Ministries in partnership with the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission staff. The training took place May 29, 2010 at the Lutheran Center in Chicago, Ill. Attendees included 23 Arab and Middle Eastern members. There were three speakers: Pr. Brenda Smith, director for discipleship and evangelism, EOCM; talked about discipleship; Everett

Flanigan, director for leadership, talked leadership; and Pr. Said Ailabouni, pastor at Grace Lutheran Church in La Grange, Ill., talked about Lutheran identity.

The second “At the Sound of Our Name: Women of Color in Ministry” gathering was held September 24-25, 2010 at the Lutheran Center, Chicago, Ill. and focused primarily on leadership and discipleship. The 37 participants, including clergy and lay leaders from the African Descent, American Indian and Alaska Native, Arab and Middle Eastern, Asian and Pacific Islander and Latino/a communities, gained new insight and tools for effective outreach and ministry in their congregations. This event was designed to help these lay and clergy leaders to build a network of women who support one another’s ministry in the church and the world. Participants worked together cross-culturally as well as in ethnic-specific groupings to continue the work from the first “At the Sound of Our Name” held on April 2009.

“One Body, Many Members: a Journey for Christians across Race, Culture and Class” is an action-oriented biblically based resource for congregations in changing neighborhoods who want to reach out but are confused and uncertain about how to get started and how to change the congregational culture to be a place of welcome and authentic community. This project happened with the help of several people, including the writing team of Joyce Caldwell and Lily Wu. An introductory brochure has been completed along with a 20 minute instructional DVD. This introductory brochure and DVD was mailed out in October. A downloadable copy of the DVD will be posted on the Multicultural Ministries webpage.

“One Body, Many Members” is being utilized by Southeastern Synod to assist their congregations with predominantly European American membership in creating a mission plan for outreach to the growing population of African Descent people in that synod. A Bible study from the “One Body, Many Members” resource was presented at a Southeastern Synod consultation held September 17-18, 2010. After the Bible Study several congregations will be grouped together to discuss pre-work they have done: the progress they have made working through Part 1 of the “One Body, Many Members” resource.

“One Body, Many Members” was introduced to participants at the Central/Southern Illinois Professional Leadership Retreat in Carlinville, Ill., September 20–22, 2010, under the theme “Multicultural Ministries in the ELCA.”

Publishing House of the ELCA (AF)

Submitted by Beth A. Lewis

Strategic Focus

Throughout 2010, our work has been centered on the implementation of AF’s strategic plan with focus on two primary groups of constituents: congregations and higher education. For both groups, we are investing most of our human and financial resources on the creation of new, proprietary products (created by Augsburg Fortress, not purchased from third parties for resale) to be used in community. For congregations, this means that most of our work centers on the creation of faith formation and worship resources for children, youth and adults. For higher education, most of our work centers on the publication of text and reference resources for college, university, seminary and life-long learning. In concert with this refinement of our product line, we are dramatically reducing our inventory of non-proprietary church supplies. These are low-margin products that add needless complexity to our organization without being central to our calling as the ministry of publishing of the ELCA.

Resources for ELCA Congregations

Among the major success stories for Augsburg Fortress in 2010 in support of congregations are these new resources:

1. Continued expansion of the Book of Faith adult Bible study resources including:
 - A wide array of Book of Faith Bible studies in three series' [Books of Faith](#), [People of Faith](#) and [Together in Faith](#);
 - [Lenten](#) and [Advent](#) Bible study resources;
 - [Making Sense of Scripture](#) and [Making Sense of the Christian Faith](#); and
 - [The Greatest Story](#), an innovative 16-session introduction to the Bible resource that includes "sand art" videos.
2. In 2009, we launched [Spark Sunday School](#) in a traditional print format. This Bible-centered curriculum for children age two through grade six features two very successful children's Bibles, [Spark Story Bible](#) (age two through grade two) and [Spark NRSV Bible](#) (grades three through six). The success of *Spark* was expanded in 2010 with the launch of [Spark On-Line](#), a Web-based subscription resource.
3. In 2005, AF published the first Web-based subscription confirmation resource, *Here We Stand*. It has stood the test of time as the most popular confirmation resource for ELCA congregations. In summer 2010, it was significantly upgraded with the launch of [Here We Stand 2.0](#).
4. The ELW family of resources was extended in September with the publication of the much anticipated [Hymnal Companion to Evangelical Lutheran Worship](#).
5. In late 2010, we will publish *Washed and Welcome*, an exciting new baptismal education resource.

Resources for ELCA and Full Communion Partner Congregations

In August 2009, AF quietly launched a new publishing division, [sparkhouse](#), to serve not only ELCA, but also full communion partner congregations. A small group of talented AF staff people were moved out of our corporate headquarters in downtown Minneapolis and set up in a "design studio" environment in the Uptown neighborhood of Minneapolis. Our theory was that this dynamic, young-adult oriented context would help this group of editorial and marketing experts think in new and creative ways to meet the needs of a changing, less denominationally-centric church using both traditional ink-on-paper and digital delivery systems.

This publishing venture is still new, but early results are predominantly positive. One of the charges for this group was to create resources that were out of the traditional mold. This has been realized with [re:form](#), an ecumenical confirmation resource that features forty [humorous videos](#) along with print learner and leader resources that invite youth to explore theological questions rather than engaging in rote memorization. Just published in July, this resource is receiving rave reviews from confirmation leaders and students alike. Sales are already well ahead of estimates.

Resources for Higher Education

For almost 50 years, [Fortress Press](#) has been celebrated as the publisher of high quality academic resources written by ecumenical and international authors. In 2010, we have published several excellent textbooks to serve higher education students and professors:

- *A History of Lutheranism*, Second Edition by Eric W. Gritsch
- *The Writings of the New Testament*, Third Edition by Luke Timothy Johnson
- *The Bible: An Introduction* by Jerry L. Sumney

In addition, we have published a number of titles written by Lutheran authors including:

- *Transformative Lutheran Theologies: Feminist, Womanist, and Mujerista Perspectives*, edited by Mary J. Streufert
- *Two Kinds of Love: Martin Luther's Religious World* by Tuomo Mannermaa with Kirsi Stjerna, Translator
- *Redeeming the Gospel: The Christian Faith Reconsidered* by David A. Brondos
- *I Am a Christian: The Nun, the Devil, and Martin Luther* by Carolyn M. Schneider
- *Divine Complexity: The Rise of Creedal Christianity* by Paul R. Hinlicky
- *Shalom Church: The Body of Christ as Ministering Community* by Craig L. Nesson
- *Beyond Maintenance to Mission: A Theology of the Congregation*, Second Edition by Craig L. Nesson
- *Soundings in the Theology of Psalms: Perspectives and Methods in Contemporary Scholarship* by Rolf A. Jacobson, Editor
- *Lutherans in Crisis: The Question of Identity in the American Republic* by David A. Gustafson

In addition, we have published three major general interest titles in 2010:

- *Christmas: Festival of Incarnation* by Donald Heinz
- *Never to Leave Us Alone: The Prayer Life of Martin Luther King Jr.* by Lewis V. Baldwin
- *Good Grief, 50th Anniversary Edition* by Granger E. Westberg with Foreword by Dr. Timothy Johnson, M.D.

Conclusion

At Augsburg Fortress, we continue to work at balancing our dual role as the ministry of publishing for the ELCA while making challenging business decisions in our rapidly changing ink-on-paper and digital world during a time of economic challenge among our core customers.

Vocation and Education (VE)

Submitted by Stan Olson

Since the last report to the Church Council, the Vocation and Education program unit has continued the course it set five years ago, focusing on the nurturing of networks that engage our arenas of responsibility, the equipping of leaders for their work in and through this church and assisting people in fully claiming their vocations in Christ. It is important and satisfying work and we're pleased to be part of the ELCA mission. Here are some highlights of the last months. The routines of the daily work are equally important, but they do not lend themselves as well to highlighting. Please remember that much basic work goes on week after week.

Youth and Young Adult Ministries Group (Associate Executive Director Sue Rothmeyer)

- *Follow Me: Sharing the Gospel in a 2.0 World* was held in downtown Chicago August 11-14, 2010, including 350 campus ministry staff and chaplains, college and university students, and ELCA communicators who gathered to explore effective ministry in a social media context. Additionally, Lutheran Student Movement held its business meeting and passed legislation to become officially affiliated with the ELCA.

- *International Camp Counselors:* with World Hunger Appeal funding and in partnership with the Global Mission unit, 33 young adults from 22 countries spent three months sharing their gifts with children, youth and families during ELCA summer camp programs. Counselors came from ELCA companion churches in Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe and South America. Since 1992, we have been blessed to host 654 young adults from 49 different countries.
- *Alternative Spring Breaks:* with Lutheran Disaster Response we've developed a catalog of opportunities at ELCA-related ministries (including camps, social ministries, schools) for Alternative Spring Break (ASB) work trips and other service-learning experiences. This service-learning encourages the group to do intentional reflection and study and to consider making long-term commitments to particular service areas or ministries. Additionally, in the spring of 2010, Lutheran Student Movement offered grants to four ELCA campus ministry sites and one ELCA college to create a series of online resources to help college campuses think through principles relating to short term mission travel, accompaniment and service learning. All resources will be available for use in 2011 for a wide variety of groups: campuses, congregations, synods and other churchwide ministries.
- *The Board of the Lutheran Youth Organization (BLYO)* is launching a servant theme emphasis for 2011, as well as a periodic e-newsletter. BLYO leaders will host and help to lead an equipping and training event for synod youth leaders on Reformation weekend in partnership with the Nebraska Synod.
- *Citizens with the Saints*, based on Ephesians 2:4-19, will be the theme of the 2012 youth gathering to be held July 18-22 in New Orleans.
- *Youth and Young Adults in Governance Roles:* based on initial lists, we expect that 13 percent of the elected voting members for the 2011 Churchwide Assembly will be youth and young adults, a heartening response to the bylaw adopted by the 2009 Churchwide Assembly, "It is the goal of this church that at least 10 percent of the voting members of the Churchwide assembly, Church Council, and churchwide boards and committees be youth and young adults."

Educational Partnerships Group (Associate Executive Director Mark Wilhelm)

- *Equipping Leaders for Lifelong Learning:* Fishers Net/Select provides content management software, DVD resources and online non-degree theological education for the ELCA and the ecumenical community. This past summer, a five-year, \$300,000 project funded by Thrivent Financial for Lutherans successfully concluded, bringing FN/Select to a stable financial footing. Forty-five online courses have been developed.
- *Nurturing a Network for the Book of Faith Initiative (BFI)*
 1. Paul Lutz, pastor Prince of Peace in Princeton Junction, New Jersey, and former churchwide staff member in adult education, began work last July as part-time staff for the BFI. He will assist synod advocates in their work and lead a process of building them into a new lifelong learning leadership network to help sustain BFI across this church for the long term.
 2. Vocation and Education and Augsburg Fortress will convene a gathering of ELCA theologians at the annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature (SBL) in Atlanta on November 21, 2010. The meeting will encourage the teaching theologians at SBL to adopt the rhetoric and goals of the BFI in the course of their presentations at church gatherings.
 3. VE is working to embed the BFI in the adult catechumenate project of the ELCA Worship and Liturgical Resources section and in the faith practices project of Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission unit.

- *Colleges and the Churchwide Organization:* A shift in the relationship between the churchwide organization and the ELCA's colleges and universities is quietly underway. The relationship has been traditionally and primarily expressed as a component of the governance of ELCA higher education. Although the ELCA constitution allows colleges to structure their governance relationship with this church in several ways, including a relationship that gives no governance role to the churchwide organization, churchwide leaders have elected to define their role in higher education in terms of governance since the beginning of the ELCA. Hence the hallmark of churchwide ministry in higher education has been a voting or advisory seat on each college's governing board, as well as a seat on each presidential search committee at our colleges.

In recent years, the churchwide organization's role has moved in the direction of supporting the missional role of the colleges in the ELCA instead of participating in their governance. This role is not new, but it is increasingly seen as the primary role, not a secondary one. In this role, even though the churchwide organization continues to participate in college governance, its primary ministry is increasingly to nurture the network of ELCA colleges and universities, helping each institution claim its vocation as part of the outreach of the ELCA.
- *Changes in the Network of Colleges and Universities*
 1. Dana College, Blair, Nebraska, suspended operations in July after the Higher Learning Commission, the accrediting association for Dana, failed to approve a transfer control ("sale") of the college to a new for-profit educational corporation. After all technical matters are settled, it is expected that the Board of Regents will vote to dissolve the college. The Vocation and Education unit is unaware of other ELCA colleges considering a purchase agreement or closing. Even though several of our colleges with low enrollments continue to face financial and institutional challenges, all seem to have strategies in place that will allow each of them to sustain operations.
 2. V. Scott Koerwer was elected president of Newberry College effective June 2010. His installation will be November 12-13, 2010.
- *Equipping Leaders of Schools and Centers*
 1. The East Coast Lutheran Educators conference will bring together several hundred administrators and pastors of schools and early childhood education centers, Oct. 27-29, 2010, in Hershey, Pennsylvania.
 2. The Evangelical Lutheran Education Association (ELEA) is a membership association of ELCA schools and early childhood education center. The board of ELEA will meet Oct. 7-9 to consider a proposal from VE that ELEA take the lead in the oversight and support services to ELCA schools and centers.
- *Nurturing the Seminary System*
 1. The special project to reduce seminarian student debt, "Stewards of Abundance," has begun its work with the support of a \$1,000,000 grant from the Lilly Endowment. A progress report on "Stewards of Abundance," can be found in Exhibit O, Part 2.
 2. The ELCA's eight seminaries are exploring current governance patterns and new models/options (including patterns emerging in clusters) that would serve the sustainability and enhance the capacities of individual seminaries and the theological system as a whole. A special report by an outside blue ribbon Governance Task Force was reviewed at the October presidents' meeting.

Ministry Leadership Group (Associate Executive Director Greg Villalon)

- *Assignment:* The fall assignment consultation was held on Wednesday, September 29, 2010. Ninety-one candidates are eagerly awaiting the beginning of their ministries in the synods to which they've been assigned. Between the February and September consultations, we had 40 administrative assignments.
- *Candidacy/Assignment:* The ELCA presently has 2,373 candidates for rostered ministry in various stages of their formation process, 1,963 are in the process leading to ordination. The racial and gender distribution of these candidates is:

Ethnicity	Female	Male	Total
African American/Black	40	61	101
American Indian/Alaska Native	4	9	13
Arab/Middle Eastern	1		1
Asian/Pacific Islander	19	32	51
Caucasian	1,106	940	2,046
Latino/Latina	29	49	78
Other heritage	10	36	46
Did not Identify	22	15	37
Total	1231	1142	2373

- *Multicultural Leadership Development and Recruitment:* Over the years the dollars available to fund the Horizon Internship Program has been declining while costs continue to increase. The Horizon Internship Program provides excellent learning opportunities for interns in congregations that cannot afford an intern. This year ten congregations will receive a churchwide grant and have an intern for the 2011-2012 academic year. Priority is given to congregations in urban multicultural settings that are served by a pastor of color or a female pastor. All these ministry sites are in the regular seminary internship program.
- *Disability Ministries:* Staff members represented the churchwide organization at the Evangelical Lutheran Deaf Association (ELDA) convention in Malvern, Pennsylvania. Staff presence and participation reassured the community of the ELCA's commitment to this shared ministry. Staff experienced a new sense of dedication to our mutual ministry.

Women of the ELCA (WO)

Submitted by Linda Post Bushkofsky, Executive Director

Women of the ELCA, the women's organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, coordinates its ministry around this mission: mobilizing women to act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ. This is accomplished in many and varied ways.

The summer Bible study offered by *Lutheran Woman Today* magazine was "Pray Always," written by the Rev. Gladys Moore. The current Bible study, September 2010 – May 2011, is "The People of God: Unity in the Midst of Diversity," written by the Revs. Linda Johnson Seyenkulo and Jensen Seyenkulo. The magazine launches a new column, "Family Matters," in January.

Café, our highly acclaimed electronic magazine for younger women (also available in podcast), was awarded "Best in Class" for an independent web site for the sixth consecutive year from the Associated Church Press.

The organization continues to provide high quality program resources at no cost in PDF formats. Topics covered in recently published resources include being good stewards of water, journaling, how to lead a Bible study, and living a life of daily bread (based on the Lutheran World Federation assembly theme). They are available at [Women of the ELCA](#).

A smartphone app is in production, to be launched January 1, 2011. It will deliver a daily message of encouragement for the spiritual journey, drawing on the deep well of resources of Women of the ELCA.

Registration for the 2011 Triennial Gathering (July 14-17, 2011, in Spokane, Washington) is now open. Under the theme of “Renew, Respond, Rejoice!” women will gather for workshops, featured speakers, worship, servant events and more. The two featured speakers are Leymah Gbowee and Nora Gallagher. Leymah Gbowee boldly gathered together Christian and Muslim women in war-torn Liberia who had enough of death, destruction, rape, and physical violence. This unassuming Lutheran woman led an effort that challenged warlord Charles Taylor, called the elected leadership of Liberia and the opposition gangs to account, and ultimately brought peace to Liberia. Gallagher, an Episcopalian, is the author of several books, included her latest, *The Sacred Meal*, part of the Ancient Practices Series published by Thomas Nelson. Worship leaders for the gathering include the Rev. Dr. Wyvetta Bullock, the Rev. Susan Briehl, Dr. Jane Redmont, the Rev. Mary Louise Frenchman and the Rev. Megan Torgerson.

The eighth triennial convention of Women of the ELCA, the highest legislative authority for the organization, will be held July 12-July 14, 2011. Delegates will conduct the business of the churchwide organization, including consideration of proposed constitutional changes, memorials brought by synodical women’s organizations, resolutions presented by delegates, the proposed 2012 budget for the churchwide organization, and the election of churchwide officers and executive board. As in 2008, the 2011 triennial convention is separate from and precedes the 2011 Triennial Gathering. The convention will be held in the Spokane Convention Center.

Domestic and international grants for 2010 have been distributed. Twenty-five non-profit organizations in each ELCA region and seven different countries were awarded grants totaling more than \$57,000. Through these projects we continue to make a positive and healing difference in the lives of women and their families. Our next cycle begins with the application being available online December 15.

Over \$30,000 was awarded in 2010 through the organization’s scholarship program to ELCA women who are in college or graduate programs.

The organization’s health initiative, Raising Up Healthy Women and Girls, has made available \$50,000 in seed grants for congregational units. The grants are for health initiative programs that intentionally involve women across generations and are easily replicable by other units. These programs will be compiled into a new resource that will debut in the summer of 2011.

To date, 117 congregations that have left the ELCA had congregational units of Women of the ELCA. Conversations are ongoing with those women, providing them with various options regarding their relationship with Women of the ELCA. Meanwhile, several synodical boards have been faced with vacancies when a board member has had to step down because her congregation left the ELCA.

Women of the ELCA churchwide staff continue to work in partnership with other units of the church. For example, Inez Torres Davis, director for justice, worked with the ELCA’s Southeastern Pennsylvania Anti-racism Task Force at a two-day retreat in May; Davis also works with a cross-unit team addressing commercial sexual exploitation and is part of the HIV and AIDS strategy domestic implementation team. Valora Starr, director for discipleship, has been working with staff from

Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission in creating a new discipleship program and resource for congregational use. Starr is one of the plenary leaders at “At The Sound of Our Name,” a leadership event for women of color in ministry offered by Multicultural Ministries, Vocation and Education, and Church in Society. Partnering with Global Mission, Starr also has participated in the development and leadership of the short-term mission trips program at two of the seven “glocal” mission gatherings in 2010.

Women of the ELCA provided financial support for the National Council of Churches’ Justice for Women Workshop Group “Language Matters” conference held in Chicago in August 2010.

Church Periodical (LU)

Submitted by Mr. Daniel J. Lehmann

The church periodical, The Lutheran, shall be published by this church through the Publishing House of the ELCA and shall be identified as a magazine of this church. (17.31.)

The year 2010 poses both hope and challenge for the magazine.

A vendor was contracted early this year for a professional strategic plan to be completed by this fall. A preliminary report indicates that recommendations may range from a substantial revision of content and publication frequency of *The Lutheran* to creation of a new product for niche groups currently not served by the magazine. The advisory committee and staff of *The Lutheran* will receive this report at their Oct. 24-25, 2010, meeting in Chicago.

Meanwhile, circulation remains the biggest challenge facing the magazine. The current year is already on record as the worst for circulation in the magazine’s history. Paid circulation shrank 14.67 percent January through November (the magazine works a couple months ahead of the actual calendar), surpassing the previous record decline of 14.35 percent in 2004. (The worst year in number of paid copies lost was 1992, at 137,358.)

With congregations overwhelmingly pointing to budget concerns but with increasing numbers citing no interest or no reason, *The Lutheran* lost 36,252 subscribers in calendar 2009 and is off 36,608 with one month left in 2010. Of those losses, some 31 percent were sustained from congregations voting to leave the ELCA. Paid circulation as of the November 2010 issue stood at 212,904.

Falling subscription sales means reduced income, and that spells difficult days ahead. Using our current fulfillment rate (total sales by categories divided by rate per categories), subscription revenue will be off some \$300,000 in 2011 from 2010. Some of that will be offset by printing and mailing fewer magazines, but budget reductions will need to be made elsewhere to cover the shortfall.

Advertising, while running behind 2009 levels, is more encouraging. With two issues yet to close for 2010, ad sales reached \$759,034 out of a goal of \$819,160. Because of the lingering effects of the recession, the 2010 goal was reduced roughly 10 percent from actual sales of \$909,778 a year ago.

Fiscally for 2010, the magazine operated at a surplus of \$139,372 through the end of August. Income from all sources (*The Lutheran*, *The Little Lutheran* and *The Little Christian*) totaled \$1,690,066 while expenses from all sources totaled \$1,550,694. Expenses included \$26,568 for printing synod supplements, an unbudgeted line item that could be charged to the development account of the magazine’s endowment fund.

The Lutheran’s budget for 2010 projects income of \$2,703,149 and expenses of \$2,692,861 with a resulting surplus of \$10,288. The magazine’s endowment (cash reserves) totaled \$1.38 million as of June 30, 2010, up 11.3 percent (\$141,055) from a year ago. Funds were withdrawn from the endowment to pay for the strategic plan consultation.

Budgets in 2010 for *The Little Lutheran* project income of \$176,649 and expenses of \$172,339, while *The Little Christian* projects income of \$15,131 and expenses of \$14,609. Paid circulation as of the September 2010 issue stood at 9,083 for *The Little Lutheran* and 1,075 for *The Little Christian*, which represent a decrease of 5.65 percent and an increase of 105.5 percent, respectively.

In the past six months the magazine developed a business plan to manage its subscription fulfillment operations and all other services currently contracted with Augsburg Fortress, Publishers. The magazine is exploring its options for 2011.

The Advisory Committee for *The Lutheran* continues to meet in March and October. Joy Newcom of Forest City, Iowa, serves as chair of the committee. Rick White of Dalmatia, Pa., serves as secretary. Other members are Pr. Paul L. Campbell of Carefree, Ariz.; Keith E. Gatling of Syracuse, N.Y.; Pr. Jennifer M. Ginn of Salisbury, N.C.; Judy R. Korn of Morris, Minn.; Pr. Pamela S. Russell of Seattle, Wash.; John A. Wagner of Toledo, Ohio; and Susan L. Williams of Allentown, Pa.

Appointed advisers to the committee are Deborah L. Chenoweth, Hood River, Ore., representing the Church Council; Bishop Harold L. Usgaard, Southeastern Minnesota Synod, Conference of Bishops; and Kristi Bangert, executive director, Communication Services unit, Office of the Presiding Bishop.

Magazine staffers attended 27 synod assemblies this spring. Most synods provided podium time for staffers to tout the advantages of subscriptions to *The Lutheran* and to re-establish a relationship between the magazine and synods and congregations. Most of those synod assemblies missed this year will be attended in 2011, with the cycle repeating every two years.

Basic subscription plan rates for *The Lutheran* remain unchanged: \$7.95 per subscription on the Congregational Plan, \$11.75 per subscription for the Leadership Plan and \$3.95 per subscription for the quarterly Synod Plan. Individual subscriptions cost \$17.95 with discounts on two- and three-year subscriptions. Congregational subscription plans have not been increased in seven years and a rate increase in the next year or two is inevitable.

The Lutheran magazine's Web site (www.thelutheran.org) continues to average just under 24,000 unique visitors monthly, a slight decrease from the previous six-month period. Average visit length has increased to 114 seconds. The Web site continues to actively participate in social networks such as Facebook (<http://www.facebook.com/thelutheran>) and Twitter (<http://twitter.com/thelutheran>). The magazine offers a "green" (electronic subscription) group plan to congregations. Study guide usage remains strong but fluctuates with the church calendar. In the past six months, an average of 360 congregations used *The Lutheran's* study guides each month. A graphical redesign and redeveloped functionality for www.thelutheran.org was launched Sept. 27, 2010, with continued enhancements rolled out through mid-October.

The companion sites for *The Little Lutheran* (www.thelittlelutheran.org) and *The Little Christian* (www.thelittlechristian.org) are updated monthly with answers to questions children ask about God, resource reviews, special features and an e-newsletter. A second monthly e-newsletter will be launched with the October issue. Aimed at parents and caregivers, the sites complement the magazines for children six and younger. The sites include a subscription form for individuals and information about group subscription plans for congregations. Site usage for www.thelittlelutheran.org has increased to 7,600 unique monthly visitors while usage for www.thelittlechristian.org has decreased to 4,636 unique monthly visitors. A Facebook ad campaign to raise awareness about *The Little Lutheran* ran for two selected weeks during August and September.

Communication Services (CO)

Submitted by Kristi S. Bangert

The ELCA Communication Services unit continued its involvement in significant ministries for this whole church. Staff planned and participated in "Follow Me: Sharing the Gospel in a 2.0 World," a conference for ELCA communicators, campus ministry and youth ministry leaders; launched LivingLutheran.com, a new Web site for member engagement; worked on message development with Presiding Bishop Hanson; and planned and delivered several live Web casts.

Marketing and Creative Services Team

The team continues to develop and implement marketing communication strategies across all media. Its work in leading a message development team for the presiding bishop has culminated in the creation of ELCA key messages and theological themes. This groundwork supports Bishop Hanson's national media tour and ELCA communication messaging and theme development.

Work in social media continues with the ELCA Facebook fan page surpassing 19,000 fans (49 percent are 18-44 years old; 1,200 interactions a week on average). The ELCA Twitter stream has 2,246 followers and the ELCA YouTube channel just topped 300,000 views.

In September, LivingLutheran.com was launched as an online destination for ELCA members to interact, discuss and blog about what it means to "live Lutheran." The site features talk-worthy content from a variety of perspectives and encourages dialogue.

Seeds for the Parish continues to develop thematic issues loaded with stories and resources for church leaders. Overall readership grew by 7,887 last year, and e-mail acquisition efforts have resulted in 34,143 total records with e-mail addresses (or 20 percent).

Stories of Faith in Action was delivered this fall to 72,000 congregational and synodical leaders. The magazine illustrates the value of mission support and personal stewardship through 16 inspiring stories of ministries from across this church.

Additional workgroup activity includes 258 print and 34 video production projects.

ELCA News Service

The ELCA News Service staff reported on a variety of ELCA ministries. Since its last report (February 2010), stories related to the sexuality decisions of the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly have been fewer, but more than half of the 100-plus media inquiries handled by the News Service continued to focus on this subject.

From February 23 to September 27, the ELCA News Service completed and distributed 186 news stories. Topics included global mission stories featuring missionaries, ELCA responses to earthquakes in Haiti and Chile, floods in Pakistan, floods in Nashville and tornadoes in Minnesota; the LWF assembly; new ELCA ministry policies; Rite of Reception events and reinstatements; lawsuit against Augsburg Fortress and ELCA; Dana College's closing; and ELCA congregational statistics. Notable obituaries included G. Kenneth Andeen, Herman Cauble, Juan Cobrda, Darlene Grega, Howard Hong, Marj Leegard, J. David Simonson and Harvey Stegemoeller.

Stories with notable media placement were the Rite of Reception (New York Times, Chicago Public Radio, Associated Press, Minneapolis Star-Tribune); Bishop Hanson local interviews (Wisconsin, Grand Forks, N.D., Toledo Blade, Freeport News, Grand Bahama); new bishops (Baltimore Sun, Philadelphia Inquirer, Indianapolis Star); Dana College (Wall Street Journal); Town

Halls (Grand Forks Herald, Fargo Forum); and new ministry policies (Religion News Service, Associated Press, Chicago Public Radio).

Followers of the ELCA News Service include 1,377 on Twitter (an increase of 32 percent from the April 2010 report) and 5,225 on its listserv. The news service also added a Facebook page.

Web and Electronic Media Team

- iPhone Apps: In September the staff launched its first iPhone app, ELCA News. Another app is in development for Women of the ELCA, with others being planned for "Find an ELCA Congregation" and "The Common Lectionary."
- Live streaming events: Staff has produced three live-streaming events since April, each featuring Presiding Bishop Hanson: an EOCM staff meeting, a Q&A session at the 2010 "Follow Me" conference and the third in a series of town hall forums.
- e-newsletters: In January 2010 the staff began sending e-mail blasts using NetCommunity, which generates tracking reports to better understand the subscribing audience. More than \$300,000 in online donations can be attributed directly to these e-mails.
- Listserv: This service provides the ELCA with reliable e-mail delivery for high-volume broadcast lists (Global Links, 29,000 subscribers; Daily Bible readings, 7,000; Women of the ELCA BoldConnections, 6,000; ELCA News Service, 5,000). Listserv also supports discussion groups such as the ELCA Church Council, Conference of Bishops, assistants to bishops, bishops' administrative assistants, synod officers and groups to support the work of churchwide units. Listserv delivers around 1,000 messages each month to between 40,000 and 50,000 recipients.
- Photo library: The staff has categorized and placed key words over 14,000 photos and 2,200 illustrations for use in electronic media.
- Analytics: From April 1 to September 20, page views for ELCA.org totaled 5,258,663 with 4,102,113 unique views. The most popular page on the Web site, aside from the home page, remains "Find a Congregation" with 302,432 page views. The average daily page views for ELCA.org during this time period is 30,569.
- Ecunet: After 25 years of operating on servers they owned and operated, the Ecunet online community moved to a private version of Google Groups. Members will be able to keep their Ecunet e-mail addresses. LutherLink is one of the larger Ecunet member networks, with about 1,200 active members.

Resource Information Service (RIS)

RIS is the general information service for the ELCA churchwide office, providing complete telephone support for churchwide units and staff, single-order distribution service to churchwide units and support for the churchwide fund raising efforts through receipt of credit card donations (by phone). In April RIS began processing World Hunger resource orders through our new distribution service. From March through August 2010, RIS staff answered nearly 26,000 phone calls, recorded 169 gifts by telephone totaling \$32,817 and filled several orders for resource materials. RIS staff has also participated in Blackbaud Software training in preparation to assist with the ELCA Constituent Information System (ECIS), the ELCA's new integrated database system.

ELCA Board of Pensions (BOP)

Submitted by John G. Kapanke

The following updates, ranging from annuity and market performance to health care reform and contribution rates, reflect the ELCA Board of Pensions' work on behalf of this church and those who serve.

ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund

I appreciate the ELCA Church Council forming an Ad Hoc Committee to respond to synodical resolutions related to the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund and look forward to seeing its report and possible recommendations in November. We support the work of this committee and continue to work with and seek advice and counsel from ELCA churchwide leaders and the Conference of Bishops.

We continue to meet with and provide timely information to plan members about their annuity and our plans to restore the Fund to health. To date, Pastor Bob Berg and I have met with approximately 1,750 people in 33 meetings that we have conducted in 23 synods. These meetings are an important step in restoring trust and confidence in the Board of Pensions. Additionally, we are working toward our goal to reopen the Fund.

Investments

Over the last several months, our senior investment staff has commented that while a U.S. economic recovery seemed apparent earlier in the year, its sustainability—let alone future growth drivers—have not been easy to spot. This uncertainty continues to create a volatile period in the global capital markets. While it is easy to be distracted by the capital market gyrations and feel like action is needed, in reality, we believe the most successful investors over the long term select an asset allocation that is appropriate for their time horizon and risk tolerance and remain exposed to a diverse set of asset categories. In this way, when markets turn quickly and unpredictably, asset class exposures may be maintained to take advantage of those that are moving upward, while helping to manage the magnitude of declines in those asset classes that may be falling.

Contribution rates

In August 2010 we communicated good news, overall, about contribution rates for benefits coverage in 2011:

- Health benefits: On average, the 2011 employer contribution rates for health benefits will remain flat, including rates for plan members ages 65 and older with Medicare-primary coverage. Contrast our good news with other large U.S. employers that are expecting health care costs to increase by about 9 percent in 2011, according to recent surveys conducted by the National Business Group on Health and by PricewaterhouseCoopers. Generally, the expected change in health care costs is the principal driver of health plan prices.
- Disability benefits: No rate increase. The rate will remain at 2.6 percent of defined compensation.
- Retiree support: No rate increase. The rate will remain at 0.7 percent of defined compensation.
- Survivor benefits: After 10 years of suspended contributions, contributions for survivor benefits are again needed to cover expected claims and expenses. The contribution rate for survivor benefits will be reinstated at 1 percent of defined compensation.

Note: the total amount employers pay for benefits coverage in 2011 may be slightly more or less than in 2010, depending on the defined compensation of sponsored plan members.

Why are ELCA health plan rates remaining flat, on average?

Our collective efforts to get healthier, and use benefits more wisely, are paying off. For example:

- So far, self-reported health assessment results in 2010 show most plan members have held steady, or reduced, nine of 11 health risks. Lifestyle coaching has helped some eligible plan members and spouses lower their risks. Industry studies have shown that reducing health risks can lead to lower health costs in the future.
- Since 2004, when we began measuring the percent of medical and pharmacy claims that were potentially avoidable, the figure has dropped from over 42 percent to 37.8 percent as of December 31, 2009.
- Working with national benefits administrators and other church plans helps us control costs. About 90 cents of every \$1 collected goes back to plan members as benefits. The rest provides for administrative costs and changes in the plan's contingency reserves.

Health Care Reform

Through the work of the Church Alliance, we are continuing to monitor the developments concerning the Patient Protection and Affordability Care Act of 2010 and the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010, which were signed into law in March. There are many questions that will need to be answered as the regulations are in the process of being written, but it does appear that health care reform, in its present state, will have a significant impact on how church denominational benefits boards deliver health benefits to their plan members in the future.

Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act

To comply with the Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act for 2011, we are integrating our medical and mental health benefits into a single benefit. This change will have positive outcomes for many plan members and the health plan: better network match for plan members, simpler for plan members (one less ID card, one Web site) and \$300,000 in annual administrative savings.

Social media

In July 2010 we launched our Facebook page, *Live Well ELCA*, inviting plan members and those in the broader ELCA community to ask questions, share experiences, and exchange resources, videos and photos related to living well in mind, body and spirit. We believe the Facebook page will strengthen the quality and integrity of our Live Well conversation.

More to the Story

Did you know the legacy of Lutheran care for pastors, church workers and their families can be traced to 1783? I am excited about the recent publishing of *More to the Story: The Legacy and Promise of Lutheran Pension and Benefit Plans* by former ELCA Secretary Lowell Almen. Pastor Almen calls the book an account of visionary and courageous endeavors, adding, "It provides examples of people who used their skill, dedication, and wisdom to care for this aspect of the life of the church." Copies of *More to the Story* are available upon request.

As always, I welcome your comments and questions. I look forward to seeing you in November.

Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA (MIF)

Submitted by Eva Roby

Financial Update

As our nation's economic recovery gets slowly underway, the ELCA members, congregations and ministries that we serve continue to experience financial difficulties. Our members are grappling with unemployment or diminished wages and our congregations and ministries are experiencing falling contributions and tightened budgets. As a result, the Mission Investment Fund (MIF) has seen investments flatten and loan activity fall off sharply.

Loans by the Mission Investment Fund help fuel growth for our church, and the investment products we offer fund our lending activity. Through August 31 of this year, our investment obligations have remained relatively flat at \$471 million. There are currently 14,289 MIF investors holding 24,086 accounts.

Our lending activity is down as congregations defer significant building projects and avoid assuming new debt due to their weakened financial positions. As of August 31, 2010, MIF had 762 outstanding loans with balances of \$459 million, a decrease of 20 loans and \$8 million from year-end 2009.

Despite these challenges to meeting our growth objectives, the Mission Investment Fund remains a strong and stable institution. As of August 31, 2010, we have grown net assets to \$168.5 million—slightly ahead of budget and 3.3 percent or \$5.4 million over year-end 2009.

Loans

As congregations postpone building and renovation projects, applications for new loans have decreased. Fifty-three loans were paid off through August this year and one-third of those were by congregations using reserve funds to pay off their debt.

MIF continues to see an increase in requests for loan modifications. To date, MIF has received more than the total number of such requests received through December 2009. MIF is providing much-needed assistance to those congregations and ministries having difficulty in meeting their loan commitments. The delinquency ratio remains at a low 2.55 percent.

At the same time, in an effort to help ELCA congregations and ministries through this challenging period, MIF introduced three new loan products, all with lower interest rates, that are adjustable every one, three or seven years, with as much as a twenty five-year amortization. The three- and seven-year options have been especially well-received.

Marketing

One of MIF's strategic goals is to grow awareness and participation in the Mission Investment Fund, and that requires strong communications and marketing efforts.

This year, the Mission Investment Fund has heightened its direct mail efforts to encourage current customers to make better and more frequent use of MIF investment and loan products. Among the campaigns that are in process are mailings to: all ELCA congregations that do not currently have loans with MIF; loan customers that do not invest through MIF; and individual investors who invest in only one type of account. Before year-end, MIF is planning a campaign to target individual purchasers and custodians of MissionFuture4KIDZ accounts.

To increase awareness of MIF among church members who are not currently investors, MIF has planned and completed a Congregational Advocate Pilot Program in the Florida-Bahamas Synod. The

MIF marketing representative who serves the synod recruited seven congregations to participate in this program. Details for a new and expanded advocate program in 2011 are being finalized.

To encourage “green” initiatives among ELCA congregations, MIF has enhanced its Web site with a new section, “Caring for Creation—MIF Green Resources.” These pages include information on an energy audit that congregations can take resulting in suggestions for saving energy and conserving resources, and links to other Web sites on sustainability. In addition, an MIF advertisement that will debut in ELCA publications this fall will showcase an Iowa congregation that used an MIF loan to install a new geothermal heating and cooling system.

Partnerships

MIF continues partnerships with other churchwide units and external colleagues to support initiatives furthering the mission of the ELCA. As many units are considerably reshaped under the new churchwide design, MIF will look for new and creative ways to collaborate with appropriate churchwide partners to ensure that we are effectively supporting the mission and ministry of this church.

This year, in partnership with the ELCA Global Mission unit, MIF was privileged to make a \$1 million loan to complete new facilities for Dar-al-Kalima College in Bethlehem. Construction, which had been delayed due to lack of available funding, was finished in time for this academic school year. A ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Christmas Church in Bethlehem, the college provides young Palestinians with access to vocational training in fields such as tourism, media, music and communications. The campus sits atop Mt. Murair in southern Bethlehem.

Closer to home, the ELCA Foundation continues in its commitment to raise funds toward MIF’s matching grant challenge for the Mission Developer Scholarship that is part of the ELCA Fund for Leaders in Mission. This gift provides scholarship assistance to eligible students who are enrolled in qualified mission developer programs at ELCA seminaries. Ten scholarships have been awarded to date, including six at the recent Fund for Leaders scholarship banquet. The intention is to help raise up more mission leaders for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Mission ONE, the collaboration of the three financial units of the ELCA—the Mission Investment Fund, the ELCA Board of Pensions and the ELCA Foundation—is well under way. The three units will market their products together as ELCA Financial Services to the church’s social ministry organizations. The goal with this initiative is to make inroads in providing services to this specialized segment of our constituency. This initiative is scheduled to be up and running early in the new year.

Development Services/ELCA Foundation

Submitted by Cynthia J. Halverson

Development Services and ELCA Foundation continue to focus on the work of “strengthening the ministry capacities of the ELCA, its synods, congregations and related ministry expressions through annual fundraising, comprehensive gift planning and endowment management services.” While these efforts continue to be challenged by the economy and other events in the life of our church, significant support for current ministry needs and foundational support for the future are being generated.

Vision for Mission, the ELCA’s annual appeal for undesignated support, is an important focus for our fundraising in 2010. The goal for *Vision for Mission* in 2010 is \$1.2 million—a 20 percent increase over the 2009 goal. As of September 30, *Vision for Mission* has raised \$795,890 toward the goal and \$256,855 for the endowment. Current giving to *World Hunger* has trailed both prior year and budget from all sources with the greatest percent decrease from congregations through synods. Through September, current giving totaled \$7,639,987 or 40 percent of goal. Gifts to the *World Hunger* endowment for the same period totaled \$342,717. A multi-faceted plan to encourage focused attention upon giving to *World Hunger* in the last quarter is underway. Giving to *Global Mission* through September totaled \$2,821,597: \$1,778,310 designated for missionary sponsorship and \$1,043,287 for global gifts. Reductions in the number of mission personnel have challenging implications for the missionary sponsorship program, as sponsorship is directly related to the sending of long-term personnel.

A highlight of 2010 was the *Fund for Leaders Awards Banquet* on October 1. Twenty-three students came to Chicago to receive their scholarship awards from Bishop Hanson. This year marked the 10th anniversary of the scholarship program. The endowment stands at \$22 million. In 2010, the ELCA awarded \$1 million in scholarships to 187 seminary students.

The *Gift Planning* team continues to focus on a strategic objective to “build infrastructure and strengthen capacity for increased planned and major gift development.” In 2010, we shared with staff and every Lutheran Planned Giving partnership (LPG) the plans to move from the current LPG model to having field staff funded solely by the ELCA Foundation. In 2011, we hope to begin this process with two national staff. Our strategic plan also outlined outcomes for minimum thresholds for gift annuities and charitable trusts as well as increased major current gift income. We are pleased with both completed gifts and current proposals for charitable gift annuities. Achieving our 2010 goal of \$5.0 million in gift annuities is well within reach. Desired outcomes also included increases in bequest income and documented expectancies. 2010 included intentional efforts on bequest marketing, including donor appeals and newsletters. We are pleased with early results of the initial rollout of *Kalos: The ELCA Legacy Society*.

As of September 30, 2010, the *Charitable Gift Annuity* program had 4,897 active annuities with associated segregated assets totaling approximately \$96 million. The Foundation administers approximately 410 active charitable remainder trusts and a limited number of pooled income funds with investments totaling approximately \$78.4 million. Foundation staff began an overall program review of the *Charitable Trust and Pooled Income Fund* programs. Areas of review include: investments, constituent management, gift development, accounting/finance and marketing. Results of the review will be presented during 2011.

Despite the market volatility experienced during the year, the *Endowment Fund Pooled Trust* has experienced considerable growth in new investor participants and ELCA endowment contributions. The Pooled Trust has grown by 25 new investor participant accounts with approximately \$4.7 million

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in new investments through July 31, 2010. This growth for the first seven months of this year already has exceeded new participant activity for the full twelve months of the prior year. Approximately \$6 million in net deposits have been added to the Pooled Trust by existing investor participants, and 10 accounts totaling approximately \$1.1 million have been closed. Contribution revenue for unrestricted, temporarily restricted and permanently restricted endowments owned by the ELCA totaled \$11.3 million compared to \$5.2 million last year. As of September 30, 2010, the Pooled Trust held 1,808 accounts totaling \$359.3 million. Of those accounts, 874 were held by the ELCA and 928 by other investor participants. Of total Pooled Trust net assets, approximately \$142 million were to benefit ministries of the churchwide organization. The Pooled Trust's year-to-date investment performance (gross of investment management fees) through August 31, 2010 was -0.67 percent *vis-à-vis* a benchmark of +0.13percent. Board of Pensions staff will review investment performance with the Board of Trustees.

The Foundation continues to work with the Board of Pensions and the Mission Investment Fund to achieve objectives set forth through *Mission ONE* with a specific focus on social ministry organizations and the development of a coordinated distribution strategy that includes sales, marketing and customer relations. The action plan for moving the project forward includes the hiring and training of two sales staff before the end of the year.

The organizational redesign process has had significant impact on the **DS and FO units**. Moving forward, we will focus on facilitating a smooth transition to new ways of doing our work and strive to walk faithfully through this process in order to provide service to our church.

Augsburg Fortress, Publishing House of the ELCA
Submitted by Beth A. Lewis, President and CEO

Dates of Board Meeting: December 18, 2009; January 14, 2010; and April 23-24, 2010

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 fiscal year 2010 annual operating budget. (PH.09.12.11)

Voted to approve the first amendment to the Retirement Plan II for employees of Augsburg Fortress Publishers, the Publishing House of the ELCA (As adopted effective October 1, 2009) and to authorize the appropriate offices of the employer to take any actions which are in their judgment necessary or advisable to implement the foregoing resolutions. (PH.10.01.01)

Voted to approve the minutes from the October 23-24, 2009; December 18, 2009; and January 14, 2010 Board of Trustees meetings in open session. (PH.10.04.02)

Voted to elect Ms. Beth Lewis to a third four-year term as president and chief executive officer, beginning effective September 1, 2010, in keeping with bylaw 16.31.03 in the *Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*; and that the chair of the board of trustees, in consultation with the presiding bishop of the ELCA, prepare and execute, upon approval by the board's Executive Committee, a contract for the service of Ms. Lewis as president and chief executive officer for the period commencing September 1, 2010. (PH.10.04.03)

Executive Session actions

Voted to approved the Defined Benefit Pension Plan resolution authorizing the appropriate officers of the company to work with the Plan's actuaries and legal advisors to draft an amendment to the Plan termination priorities in Plan Section 12.2 (d) for final approval by the board no later than January 15, 2010. (ES/PH.09.12.05)

Voted to approve the minutes from the October 23-24, 2009; December 4, 2009; December 18, 2009; and January 14, 2010 meetings of the board of trustees in executive session. (ES/PH.10.04.01)

Voted to authorize Augsburg Fortress staff to research the potential market and valuation for divestiture of Fortress Press. (ES/PH.10.04.02)

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

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Women of the ELCA

Submitted by Linda Post Bushkofsky, Executive Director

Dates of Board Meetings: April 23-24, 2010; October 15-16, 2010

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.)*

Regarding the Eighth Triennium (2008-2011):

- Adopted proposed rules of procedure for the Eighth Triennial Convention (July 12-14, 2011).
- Determined that convention offerings will be divided with 50 percent going to Women of the ELCA's ongoing ministries, 25 percent to the Evangelical Lutheran Coalition for Mission in Appalachia and 25 percent to Lutheran outdoor Ministries, with the latter two relating to actions taken at the Seventh Triennial Convention.
- Referred to the Eighth Triennial Convention a resolution received from the Upper Susquehanna Synodical Women's Organization on United Nations Resolution 1325.
- Received an update on program planning for the Eighth Triennial Gathering (July 14-17, 2011, in Spokane, Washington) (more information is available at www.womenoftheelca.org/triennialgathering).
- Determined that offering received at the closing worship of the gathering will be divided between ongoing ministries of Women of the ELCA (50 percent), ELCA malaria efforts (25 percent) and the Women Peace and Security Network Africa (25 percent). The executive director of the latter, Leymah Gbowee, is a featured speaker at the gathering.
- Elected the Nominating Committee for the Eighth Triennial Convention (July 12-14, 2011).
- Approved appointments to the Memorials Committee and the Reference and Counsel Committee, as presented by the churchwide president.
- Adopted the agenda for the convention.
- Approved a FY2012 budget of \$2,333,555 and forwarded it to the convention.

Endorsed the ELCA's Lutheran Malaria Initiative and directed the executive director to establish a campaign in support of the initiative.

- Adopted a FY2011 budget of \$2,443,555.
- Recommended to the executive director the annual distribution from the India endowments.
- Received and approved the report of the Executive Director Evaluation Committee.
- Approved a special unit, Poynette Pioneering Women, of Poynette, Wisconsin.
- Adopted an investment policy, upon the recommendation of the board's Budget and Finance Committee.

Category 3: *(Other procedures and board actions.)*

Engaged in continued anti-racism education.

Engaged in continued stewardship education in hearing from Karen Wong, the director of Project Return, a 2009 Women of the ELCA grant recipient from Peoria, Illinois.

Learned that the board achieved a 100 percent participation rate in providing financial support to the churchwide women's organization.

Adopted a policy regarding the involvement of churchwide executive board members in the convention of their own synodical women's organization and congregational unit.

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Adopted a policy regarding the filling of executive board member vacancies.

Referred three of four recommendations from the 2010 Conference of Synodical Presidents to the executive director for further consideration, with the fourth recommendation going to the board's constitutional review committee

Engaged in continued stewardship education on the topic of gift planning and estate planning, led by David Novak, director for gift planning, ELCA Foundation.

Heard an updated report of the ELCA's HIV and AIDS efforts, given by Jennifer Barger, Associate Director for HIV and AIDS Strategy.

Received a report from the board of directors of Church Women United.

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ELCA Board of Pensions

Submitted by John G. Kapanke, President

Dates of Board Meetings: August 5-7, 2010 and November 5-7, 2010

Category I: *(Policies with an impact beyond the unit which require Church Council approval.)*

Approved amendments to the ELCA Retirement Plan that authorize the re-opening of the redesigned ELCA Participating Annuity Fund without the bridge fund component. All joint annuities will contain a 15-year minimum payout feature.

Approved an amendment to the ELCA Medical and Dental Benefits Plan to expand the plan's eligibility to allow additional organizations to sponsor their members in the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program.

Approved an amendment to the ELCA Retirement Plan to expand the plan's eligibility to allow additional organizations to sponsor their members in the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program.

Approved an amendment to the ELCA Survivor Benefits Plan to expand the plan's eligibility to allow additional organizations to sponsor their members in the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program.

Approved an amendment to the ELCA Disability Benefits Plan to expand the plan's eligibility to allow additional organizations to sponsor their members in the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program.

Category II: *(Policies related to the day-to-day functioning of the unit or to the specific mandate of the unit.)*

August amendments

Approved amendments to the ELCA Medical and Dental Benefits Plan to meet the federal regulations requirements of the Mental Health Parity Act and the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA), effective January 1, 2011. (Approval by Board of Trustees)

Approved an amendment to the ELCA Medical and Dental Benefits Plan to begin to comply with the PPACA, which requires coverage of children of members until age 26, effective January 1, 2011. (Approval by President)

Approved an amendment to the ELCA Medical and Dental Benefits Plan to allow termination of members from the plan who fraudulently or inappropriately use, misuse or overuse plan services and/or supplies. (Approval by President).

Approved an amendment to the ELCA Medical and Dental Benefits Plan at the request of the Appeals Committee to authorize emergency alternative behavioral health treatment (transcranial magnetic stimulation) for a member in certain limited circumstances. (Approval by President)

Approved an amendment to the ELCA Retirement Plan to allow members over the age of 59-1/2 greater access to their employer contributions in the plan, and raise the current annual 10 percent/\$10,000 withdrawal limit to the greater of 20 percent/\$20,000. (Approval by Board of Trustees)

Approved an amendment to the ELCA Disability Benefits Plan, which adds a subrogation provision to the plan in order to better align the plan with industry practice. (Approval by Board of Trustees)

Approved an amendment to the ELCA Disability Benefits Plan to clarify that, in the month a disability starts or ends, the member will only be paid for those days for which s/he is found to be disabled. (Approval by President)

Approved an amendment to the ELCA Flexible Benefits Plan to change terminology to be consistent with amendments to the ELCA Medical and Dental Benefits Plan, and eliminate over-the-counter drug coverage as required by the PPACA. (Approval by President)

November amendments

Approved amendments to the ELCA Medical and Dental Benefits Plan to bring the plan into line with Blue Cross, our benefits administrator. (Approval by President)

Approved an amendment to the ELCA Disability Benefits Plan to clarify that a member cannot terminate coverage, then become disabled and apply for benefits. (Approval by President)

Approved an amendment to the ELCA Disability Benefits Plan to eliminate return-to-work benefits from plan language because such benefits are included in the comprehensive disability benefits administration services provided by the Plan's Disability Benefits Administrator. (Approval by President)

Approved an amendment to the ELCA Disability Benefits Plan to expand the plan's eligibility for coverage for interim rostered lay members. (Approval by President)

May 2010 Mail Vote

Approved the retention of PricewaterhouseCoopers as the independent auditor for the year ending December 31, 2010.

August 5-7, 2010 Resolutions and Actions

Acknowledged the resignation of Trustee, Mary K. Gobber (class of 2011), and approved the recommendation not to fill the vacancy created by her resignation.

Approved changes to the Policy Governance Manual.

Approved changes to the charter and calendar for the Executive Committee.

Approved changes to the calendar for the Nominating Committee.

Approved changes to the Philosophy of Benefits statement.

Adopted the resolution approving the 2011 contribution rates for the ELCA Medical and Dental Benefits Plan, the ELCA Survivor Benefits Plan and the ELCA Disability Benefits Plan and Retiree Support.

Received the Board of Pensions' August 2010 management report.

November 5-7, 2010 Resolutions and Actions

Approved the resolution to engage the full Board of Trustees in the process of Enterprise Risk Management by assigning appropriate risks to each committee for monitoring and mitigating those risks.

Approved amendments to the 2009-2011 strategic plan.

Approved the resolution concerning the development of a new annuity product.

Approved the resolution establishing the annuity adjustment, dividend and interest-crediting rate for 2011 for the ELCA Participating Annuity of the ELCA Retirement Plan.

Approved the resolution amending the target contingency reserve.

Approved the resolution adopting the 2011 budget.

Approved a slate of candidates for the five trustees to be elected at the 2011 Churchwide Assembly.

Approved changes to the charters and calendars for the Audit, Appeals, Corporate Social Responsibility, Executive, Finance, Investment, Nominating, and Products and Services committees.

Adopted the resolution designating pension and disability payments as rental/housing allowance for 2011.

Adopted the resolution designating a portion of 2011 remuneration as rental/housing allowance for the following Board of Pensions' employees: Pr. Robert D. Berg; Pr. Philip A. Blom; Pr. Donald E. Fulton; Pr. Catherine A. Malotky; and Pr. Sandra L. Rothschilder.

Adopted a resolution electing a Board of Pensions' staff member to replace a retiring trustee of Thendra, Inc.

Adopted a resolution electing two Board of Pensions' staff members to replace two retiring trustees of the Augustana Annuity Trust.

Received the Board of Pensions' November 2010 management report

Category III. (*Other procedures and board actions.*)

None.

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Delayed schedule: Biennial CWA (2010-2015)

	Fall 2010	Winter 2011	Spring 2011	Summer 2011	Fall 2011	Winter 2012	Spring 2012	Summer 2012	Fall 2012	Winter 2013
Genetics	Hrgs.	Prop	CC	CWA	Pub				Study Guide	
Criminal Justice		Study	Study	Study	Study		Draft Hrgs	Hrgs	Hrgs	Prop
Justice for Women									TF	
Disablties Message	Prop; CC	Pub								
Mental Health					Consult	Prop	CC Pub			

Continued from above	Spring 2013	Summer 2013	Fall 2013	Winter 2014	Spring 2014	Summer 2014	Fall 2014	Winter 2015	Spring 2015	Summer 2015
Genetics										
Criminal Justice	CC	CWA	Pub				Study Guide			
Justice for Women							Study	Study	Study	To CWA 2017
Disablties Message										
Mental Health										

Key to abbreviations:
Prop = Proposed Statement
Hrgs = Hearings
TF = Task Force starts
Pub = Publish
CC = Church Council consideration

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1 **A message on**

2 **People Living With Disabilities**

3 ***I. Introduction***

4 As a church committed to the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in
5 America (ELCA) is called to welcome all people into full participation as baptized members of the
6 body of Christ in all its congregations and ministries. (1 Corinthians 12:14-26) Christians confess that
7 all members have been baptized into Christ and made part of his body. Just as in Christ “there is no
8 longer Jew or Greek, slave or free, male and female” (Galatians 3:28), so also in Christ there are
9 neither people with disabilities nor people without disabilities. All are one in Christ Jesus.

10 This church believes that God, as creator and sustainer, intends that society regard all people
11 as of equal worth and make it possible for all—those without and those with disabilities—to
12 participate freely and fully as members of society in all important aspects of common life.

13 God’s gift of unity in Christ and these convictions commit the ELCA to work toward the full,
14 just and equitable involvement of people living with disabilities in its own life and in this society. This
15 commitment has been expressed in the ELCA’s existing statements¹ and its various ministries. In
16 recent years people who live with disabilities have achieved greater participation within this church
17 and within society. In the latter half of the twentieth century the disability rights movement has
18 secured many needed legal and civil rights.

19 Nevertheless, there is much more to attain in both church and society. There also are crucial
20 reasons at this time for articulating better this church’s teaching, calling and commitments regarding
21 ministry and mission with those who live with physical, sensory, intellectual, mental² and
22 developmental disabilities.*

23 These crucial reasons are many. The Lutheran communion across the globe has registered the
24 need for closer attention to these concerns.³ Actions by governments, employers and various other
25 actors within U.S. society continue to reflect inequality and resistance to equitable participation. The
26 population of those with disabilities continues to face core issues of poverty, unemployment and
27 underemployment. People with disabilities remain significantly underrepresented as U.S. citizens in all
28 levels of the political process.

29 The positive trends toward in-home support have increased challenges around basic standards
30 of care, quality of life and access to personal, social and economic services. The cost of long-term

* See glossary for meaning of these terms.

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31 care, rising national debt and an aging population have led to a political debate that increasingly
32 expresses troubling signs. Political rhetoric increasingly expresses the belief that the economic cost of
33 providing accessibility or other means for enabling participation in society for people with disabilities
34 is too high or not worth the benefit to society.

35 Within the ELCA many believe and can testify from their own experience that this church's
36 ministry, life and work has fallen short of God's call to provide means for ministry with and to people
37 who live with disabilities. It is clear that this church can live into its identity as Christ's body better
38 than it has so far both by increasing its attention to and more fully opening itself to people with
39 disabilities. Its failures to do so in practice scandalize Christ's visible church and muffle its prophetic
40 witness to society.

41 This message, therefore, provides an occasion for the ELCA to address concerns related to the
42 participation of people with disabilities through theological reflection (Section II), confession (Section
43 III) and calls to renewed commitment and action within the ELCA (Section IV) and for the society at
44 large (Section V).

45 ***II. Perspectives of Christian Faith***

46 **Creation in the Image of God**

47 God freely creates humankind in God's image (Genesis 1:26-27), an image given clarity and
48 promise in Jesus Christ (Colossians 1:15-20). Just as God freely creates and commits God's self to
49 human beings, so human beings reflect God's image because they are creatures free to love and serve
50 God, other people and the creation itself. Human freedom for such relationships constitute the image
51 of God⁴ and is the ground of human dignity.⁵

52 While a person's dignity is a gift of God, it is within individual relationships, families,
53 communities and the larger society that human beings exercise that freedom. It is through participation
54 in face-to-face relationships involving bodily actions, postures and mutual recognition that human
55 freedom and dignity become apparent.⁶ All people with disabilities are created in God's image and
56 share the gift of freedom for relationship and its dignity, regardless of their particular disabilities or
57 range of personal capacities to respond to God and others.

58 The particular freedom of Christians is to live in the joyful assurance of a faith relationship
59 with the God revealed in Jesus Christ, who loves all despite their sins. Theirs also is the freedom to
60 live joyfully with and for their neighbor regardless of any disabilities that either they or others may
61 have.⁷

62 **The Human Condition and Disabilities**

63 Human beings are part of a world in which a variety of abilities and skills, impairments and
64 disabilities⁸ are a common feature of life.* Vulnerability to and the risk of disability are a natural part
65 of the human condition *for all people*. While most people may assume that they will never become
66 impaired and disabled themselves, many individuals, in fact, will be impaired or disabled at some
67 point in their life.⁹ For some, these impairments and disabilities will be temporary or moderate-term
68 conditions, perhaps occurring near the end of life; for others, these will be either long-term or life-
69 long.

70 Human life emerges from within the natural world and is limited and conditioned by it.
71 Physical and sensory, intellectual and mental, and developmental disabilities arise within the natural
72 and social worlds from factors that are genetic, chemical, behavioral, social, and accidental. A number
73 of disabilities appear to result from various combinations of these factors.

74 Whatever the causes, a disability or impairment requires a person to exercise his or her
75 abilities and skills in ways affected by that reality. Only in rare cases is the disability so severe that it
76 deprives or completely eliminates one's capacity to act. Even then there remains freedom for
77 meaningful human relationships.

78 Medical cures and assistance are blessings, but cures are rare and, sometimes, not desired.¹⁰
79 Like all aspects of health, living with a physical, intellectual or developmental disability is a fact of
80 life calling for the resourceful and determined exercise of one's other abilities and freedom for
81 relationship.

82 All people are free to care for each other in ways that are appropriate, purposeful and
83 meaningful to everyone involved. Flourishing relationships among people both with and without
84 disabilities will be lived out in various mixtures of support, interdependence and dependence. Various
85 forms can be mutually positive and can improve lives and social conditions.

86 **Sin and Injustice**

87 In contrast to a Christian view of the human being as free in relationship, the most prevalent
88 mindset within this culture—often present in the church—champions individual autonomy or
89 individual “independence.” This view equates “freedom” with being able to choose from among self-
90 selected alternatives and with being in control of one's own life.

* See glossary for meaning of these terms.

91 This mindset tends toward an idolatry of human will and often is connected with idealized
92 human perfection. It substitutes unfettered autonomous human choice for human freedom in mutually
93 responsible relationships. Instead of freely loving God and loving our neighbor as ourselves, this
94 mindset celebrates using freedom for one’s own wishes and toward one’s own perfectibility.

95 This view of individual autonomy is false. The actions of *all* people require interdependence
96 and are limited by natural causation, personal situation and location within a given social context. This
97 view, however, remains dominant and our society tends to equate an idealized and unrealizable human
98 perfection and autonomy with being “normal.” This view judges *all* people against this standard.

99 Against the standard of “individual autonomy,” people who have disabilities are judged as
100 socially different or even inferior from those who are “normal.” Because their capacity for individual
101 autonomy may be compromised to some degree, they are regarded or treated as somehow less fully
102 human than other people.

103 This standard contributes to the perception that people with disabilities are mainly objects in
104 need of charitable care. Such perception leads many to disregard how people living with disabilities
105 are worthy of respect and have the same basic rights as all members of society. Far too often being
106 “handicapped” or “disabled” has been a limiting label and a motive for either patronizing response or
107 unfair treatment. The standard also has been used to justify inequalities in opportunities for
108 employment and housing.

109 The standard of autonomy leads many to discount how people living with disabilities also
110 have wonderful capacities for relationships with others and significant abilities to contribute to society.
111 The resulting judgments and labeling too often have prevented the joyous inclusion of the gifts, skills
112 and personalities of many people with disabilities within families, churches and communities.

113 The emphasis on autonomy also has deprived people with disabilities of the freedom and
114 responsibility to participate fully in making important life decisions for themselves and in
115 experiencing the consequences. It has deprived others of the experience and joy of knowing and
116 working with them.

117 Whether intended or not, such attitudes and treatment demean and harm those who have
118 disabilities and, in fact, impoverish the lives of all. These views and attitudes, actions and outcomes
119 must be named for what they are—expressions of sin.

120 **Jesus Christ and Human Disabilities**

121 The life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ—the Word that became flesh (John 1:14)—
122 demonstrate that all aspects of life including disabilities and impairment are encompassed in God’s

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123 loving care. In being born of Mary and living among us, Jesus took on all the risks and vulnerabilities
124 of being human, including those of suffering hate, rejection, cruelty, injustice, disability and death.
125 Jesus did not do so for the purpose of suffering these things for their own sake. Rather, his suffering
126 was a necessary consequence of his walking the way of the cross, (Luke 24:27), so that *all* might be
127 reconciled to God (2 Corinthians 5:19).

128 Christians follow and pray to a living Lord who felt abandoned by God, suffered, and died, all
129 with hope in the promises of God. This crucified Lord no doubt experienced disability¹¹ and the risen
130 Christ's wounds were significant in his post-resurrection appearance to Thomas and the other
131 disciples. They demonstrated that the same Jesus who was crucified, died and was buried (Apostles'
132 Creed) in the flesh also was resurrected in the flesh (John 20:19-29). Death no longer has dominion
133 over him, nor ultimate power or dominion over those who trust in his grace (Romans 5:16–6:11).

134 In his earthly ministry, Jesus' attitude was marked by compassion, understanding and a
135 willingness to walk with all people, whatever their situation. He healed and cured people who were
136 sick, impaired and disabled "because in him was the full presence of God."¹² He related to all around
137 him in a way that acknowledged their full humanity. All believers who call Jesus Lord are called to
138 imitate his ways. Against this standard, it is clear that all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God
139 (Romans 3:23).

140 Christians, then, understand the need to confess what we have done and what we have left
141 undone that harms people living with disabilities. In light of sinful actions and God's call to love and
142 justice, we acknowledge the need for confession as members of this church and society.

143 **III. Confession**

144 When Christians examine themselves individually and corporately, they may be led to confess ways in
145 which as individuals they:

- 146 • assume, or act as if people with physical and sensory, mental and intellectual, or developmental
147 disabilities are fundamentally different or inferior rather than celebrate these individuals as sharing
148 a basic humanity given in the image of God;
- 149 • too often assume that a person's disability is the primary source of their identity rather than just a
150 condition they live with;
- 151 • doubt the capability of people with disabilities to function competently in their own ministry
152 settings in the positions to which God calls them in the church, whether rostered or non-rostered
153 leaders; and

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- 154 • assume an idealism of perfection that imposes a sense of being fundamentally different from and,
155 often, superior to people with disabilities.

156

157 When Christians examine themselves individually and corporately they may be led to confess ways in
158 which congregations and other local ministries in this church:

- 159 • fail to prepare hearts and minds to welcome people with disabilities as sisters and brothers in
160 Christ;
- 161 • fail to accept people living with disabilities as partners in a common ministry although many are
162 able to share their stories, invite others to faith in Christ, serve in the ministries of this church and
163 care for the needs of their neighbor in various ways;
- 164 • have fallen short of preparing church buildings to receive, welcome and ease the way for
165 individuals with disabilities into their sanctuaries; and
- 166 • have not actively opposed--or have even encouraged--religious explanations that teach or imply
167 that disabilities and impairments are punishment for individual sins or for those of parents and
168 other family members¹³ or are sent as a test from God meant to bless, refine or redeem.¹⁴

169

170 When Christians examine themselves individually and corporately as part of this society, they may be
171 led to confess ways in which:

- 172 • the common perception views people without obvious disabilities as self-controlled and
173 autonomous, while identifying people with noticeable disabilities, by contrast, as largely lacking
174 in autonomy and personal responsibility despite evidence to the contrary;
- 175 • the dominant mindset of this society idolizes the perfect body,¹⁵ often based on images of
176 perfection from the mass media;
- 177 • the practice of modern medicine too often exaggerates its ability to control natural processes¹⁶
178 regards people with disabilities primarily as those in need of a cure or as those who need to be
179 fixed and overlooks those who cannot be “cured”;
- 180 • social structures have been prone to isolate people with disabilities on its margins or to hide them
181 out of public view;
- 182 • political and social structures unduly and unjustly restrict the spheres of choice for people with
183 disabilities and the degree of personal responsibility they are able to assume for themselves as
184 participants and citizens in society; and

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- 185 • many perceive universal access as a special accommodation and therefore not worth the effort or
186 expense needed to change existing social structures, patterns of behavior or means of
187 communication.

188

189 Such confessions are not ends in themselves. By the power of the God who creates all and
190 who makes us alive in faith, such confession becomes the occasion for all people to recommit
191 themselves in freedom, hope and joy to one another. It becomes the occasion to articulate the
192 commitments and courses of action that could better conform this church to the ways of Jesus in the
193 treatment of people living with disabilities. It becomes the occasion to seek justice and fuller
194 participation in both church and society.

195 ***IV. The Church's Ministry and People with Disabilities***

196 This church commits itself to the full inclusion and equitable participation within its own life
197 of all people along *the entire spectrum of abilities and disabilities*. The ELCA rejoices in the presence
198 of individuals, congregations, ministries and organizations within it that have demonstrated this
199 commitment in creative and sustained ways. We commend their work and witness and encourage their
200 continued efforts.

201 At the same time, we acknowledge that this commitment belongs to every member of the
202 ELCA and that the Holy Spirit is calling for new, renewed and continuing efforts that will please God
203 and bless the neighbor in this respect. This church is called to make fresh commitments in all
204 dimensions of its ministry and mission among people with disabilities.

205 **Congregations**

206 Congregations gathered around word and sacrament bear crucial responsibilities in the life of
207 this church as centers for evangelical mission with doors open to all, including those living with
208 physical and sensory, intellectual, mental and developmental disabilities. The goal is that all people,
209 including those with disabilities, may participate fully in the assembly of God's people and may
210 experience together being the body of Christ. Without the presence of people with disabilities, the
211 visible church is less than the whole people of God.¹⁷

212 *We call upon and encourage congregations to:*

- 213 • ensure that members or non-members who are disabled have accessibility to the worship space and
214 transportation, with an appropriate companion, if desired;

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- 215 • ensure that necessary alteration to worship practices are undertaken to enable participation, such as
216 aids to interpretation of worship for people with visual and hearing impairments;¹⁸
- 217 • expect, encourage and support individuals with disabilities to assume leadership responsibilities in
218 all aspects of congregational life, ministry and governance, with particular concern for worship
219 leadership;
- 220 • plan for and include both children and adults with disabilities in the congregation's groups and all
221 of its programs and outreach;
- 222 • undertake a periodic accessibility study of the congregation's facilities, programs and activities,
223 and make results of this audit available to all, such as on its Web site;¹⁹
- 224 • make specific plans to address the shortcomings revealed by an accessibility study, consulting
225 with people who have disabilities or their caregivers when planning and implementing physical
226 improvements, programmatic innovations or schedule changes;
- 227 • welcome the leadership of individuals with disabilities as pastors, associates in ministry, diaconal
228 ministers, deaconesses and lay staff;
- 229 • find appropriate ways to support caregivers of people who live with disabilities;
- 230 • support people with disabilities and caregivers during difficult decisions regarding level and
231 location of care, independence and life milestones and honor those decisions;
- 232 • develop relationships with Lutheran or other social ministry and community organizations that
233 support people with disabilities so that opportunities and areas for cooperation, service and
234 learning may be explored; and
- 235 • support advocacy by its members for public policies, programs and adequate funding to benefit the
236 needs of people with disabilities and the common good.

237 *We commend:*

- 238 • congregations that audit and improve the accessibility of their facilities, programs, and activities to
239 people with disabilities; and
- 240 • congregations and synods that organize or host regular worship gatherings for people with
241 disabilities and their families and friends when it is not feasible for them to participate in existing
242 worship opportunities.

243 *We call upon rostered and lay leaders of congregations to:*

- 244 • be mindful of the circumstances and needs of people with disabilities and their caregivers for
245 pastoral care, and include in public worship, where appropriate, elements of lament with which the

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246 congregation can help them express their grief and frustrations as well as their praise, thanksgiving
247 and rejoicing;²⁰ and

248 • identify and encourage people with disabilities who show potential to enter rostered leadership to
249 consider such callings seriously.

250 *We urge individuals with disabilities to:*

251 • be clear and forthcoming about what they personally can and cannot do within congregational life
252 and as potential leaders and to share their unique gifts and perspectives in their congregations and
253 with the wider church;

254 • take initiative in exploring what accommodations in congregational life may be helpful, necessary
255 and possible; and

256 • take initiative to develop systems of social support based on their individual needs.

257 **Synods**

258 Synods and the ministries on their territories can play pivotal leadership roles in
259 demonstrating commitment to people with disabilities and the value of encouraging their participation
260 in its ministries. Synods also play a fundamental role in encouraging and supporting the development
261 of rostered leaders who have disabilities.

262 *We commend and encourage synods that:*

263 • recognize the importance of ministry with people with disabilities and have given attention to
264 foster such ministries;

265 • lift up congregations, outdoor ministries, campus ministries and other ministry sites that have
266 made their facilities accessible to people with physical and sensory disabilities, and included
267 people with all kinds of disabilities in their ministry and programs; and

268 • have supported participation of youth with disabilities in synod and churchwide²¹ youth activities.

269 *We encourage synods, their congregations and other ministry sites on their territory to:*

270 • find appropriate ways to share their knowledge, experience and means with other congregations
271 and ministry sites that wish to make facilities and activities more accessible and more inclusive of
272 individuals with all kinds of disabilities; and

273 • support efforts to ensure accessibility and participation in ministries in their jurisdiction such as
274 campus ministries, outdoor ministries, Lutheran schools, chaplaincies and others.

275 *We also call upon synods, their bishops and assistants to:*

276 • help identify and encourage people with disabilities to attend seminary and enter rostered
277 ministries;

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- 278 • work closely with candidates with disabilities in order to receive their gifts for ministry and be
279 willing to look carefully at their individual situations;
- 280 • work carefully and continuously with synod candidacy and call committees to help educate and
281 sensitize their members to the gifts for ministry of people with disabilities, and the value of calling
282 qualified people with disabilities to rostered leadership positions; and
- 283 • deliberately consider appointing people with disabilities, both rostered and lay, to their synod
284 candidacy and call committees.

285 *We commend:*

- 286 • those synods, synod staffs, call and candidacy committees that already have taken steps in these
287 areas and encourage them to continue to do so.

288 *We urge people with disabilities who wish to attend seminary or who have studied for the ministry to:*

- 289 • be clear and forthcoming with synodical staff and candidacy committees and congregational call
290 committees about what they can and cannot do in ministry settings; and
- 291 • take initiative to develop systems of social support based on their individual needs.²²

292 **The Churchwide Organization and Ministries**

293 In the ELCA people with disabilities and those who accompany them look to the churchwide
294 organization for leadership, resource coordination and collaboration. For this reason, it is important for
295 promises regarding financial resources and staff capacities to be realistic and clearly communicated as
296 the churchwide organization seeks to fulfill its role.

297 *We encourage the churchwide organization to:*

- 298 • strengthen efforts to publicize and provide existing resources and support to synods,
299 congregations, campus ministries, church-related educational institutions and communities of
300 people with disabilities in the ELCA;
- 301 • make a professional accessibility audit of the churchwide organization's Web site and create a
302 plan to implement changes in areas indicated by the audit;
- 303 • work with synods and Lutheran social ministry organizations to create, publicize and support
304 online forums and conference call support groups for people with disabilities and their caregivers;
- 305 • find ways to connect those congregations and other ministry sites desiring to make physical,
306 technological or communication improvements aimed at increasing universal access to their
307 facilities, programs and activities with relevant practical information and networks;

- 308 • encourage the production and distribution of worship, teaching and devotional materials in formats
309 that enable full participation by those with disabilities;
- 310 • continue to increase the accessibility of the ELCA Churchwide Assembly and all other
311 churchwide events for people with physical, sensory and other kinds of disabilities;
- 312 • continue to recognize and encourage networks and organized groups that support rostered leaders
313 who have disabilities;
- 314 • work together with ELCA members, congregations, synods and affiliated organizations to advocate
315 for public policies, programs and adequate funding to benefit the needs of people with disabilities and
316 the common good; and
- 317 • make its policies and practices regarding ministry with and advocacy for people with disabilities
318 substantially consistent with, whenever possible, those of its full communion partners and other
319 ecumenical partners, both here and internationally.

320 *We commend:*

- 321 • the churchwide organization for its work to involve youth with disabilities through the Definitely
322 Abled Youth Leadership Event, and in the Definitely Abled Advisory Committee (DAC),²³ and
323 urge it to strengthen its work with youth with disabilities;
- 324 • the young leaders of DAC, and of Lutheran Youth Organization for their spirited witness in and to
325 this church regarding the involvement of young people with disabilities;
- 326 • the churchwide organization's work with the Lutheran Network on Mental Illness/Brain Disorders
327 (LNMI),²⁴ and
- 328 • the Project Coordinators for Deaf Ministry and for Blind and Braille Ministry for their work on
329 behalf of hearing-impaired and visually-impaired people in the ELCA and the congregations and
330 ministries which serve them.

331 **Seminaries**

332 ELCA seminaries have a lasting influence in this church insofar as they seek to make their
333 institutions more accessible and increase sensitivity about people with disabilities among their
334 students, faculty and alumni. Their challenges include investing in improving the accessibility of their
335 facilities for people with disabilities and giving attention to curricula and instructional resources that
336 address ministry with people with disabilities. Such actions enhance the training for ministry of people
337 with and without disabilities, equip future leaders and offer signs of hope for this church.

338 *We call upon all the ELCA's seminaries to continue to:*

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- 339 • encourage and train students with disabilities for rostered and lay ministries in the church;
- 340 • periodically assess the physical accessibility of their campuses, the accessibility of instruction to
- 341 students with visual and hearing impairments and hospitality to and support of all students with
- 342 disabilities;
- 343 • deliberately seek people with disabilities for appointments to their boards, faculties and staffs
- 344 whenever appropriate;
- 345 • include attention in general instructional programs that help develop sensitivities to the long-term
- 346 issues and needs faced by people with disabilities; and
- 347 • equip seminary students and congregations to reach out to people with disabilities and to lead
- 348 congregations in becoming places of full participation.

349 **Social Ministry Organizations**

350 Lutheran social ministry organizations have been in the forefront of this church in addressing
351 the needs of people with disabilities and have a rich history and much experience with supporting
352 people with disabilities, their families and caregivers.²⁵ Because of their distinctive work and
353 experience, these organizations can provide critical initiatives and innovative models for this church.

354 *We call upon Lutheran social ministry organizations to:*

- 355 • innovate effective ways to support people with disabilities who need their support and services to
- 356 develop their abilities and to encourage them to participate in community life and society to the
- 357 fullest extent possible;
- 358 • reach out to congregations, synods, Lutheran schools, seminaries, colleges, campus ministries and
- 359 outdoor ministries in order to involve them in social ministry for people with disabilities and help
- 360 them better understand the needs of people with disabilities and how to improve their own
- 361 accessibility and inclusion of people with disabilities;
- 362 • advocate for public policies, programs and adequate funding to benefit the needs and interests of
- 363 people with disabilities and the common good; and
- 364 • encourage ministries and partnerships within the Lutheran World Federation to share with and
- 365 learn from efforts across the globe to minister with and to people with disabilities.

366 *We commend social ministry organizations for their attention to:*

- 367 • finding the most effective means to support people living with disabilities and their families; and
- 368 • modeling collaboration with people with disabilities, their families and caregivers by providing
- 369 carefully structured choice in all matters consistent with their abilities.

370 **V. Society and People Living with Disabilities**

371 Society has a long history of mistreatment of people with disabilities ranging from
372 discriminatory to demeaning to even cruel.²⁶ While there are exceptions, U.S. attitudes, laws and
373 practices unnecessarily and unjustly have restricted the opportunities of many people with disabilities
374 to act on their own behalf and to contribute to society.

375 This history began to change when people with disabilities and other concerned individuals
376 began to speak out publicly on behalf of people with disabilities. This coincided with social service
377 and social ministry organizations' efforts to improve their situations and care. The greatest progress,
378 however, has occurred when people with disabilities themselves formed the disability rights
379 movement in the latter half of the twentieth century.

380 This movement and its supporters have worked to change attitudes and behavior by the
381 passage of laws that have secured needed legal and civil rights. The goal has been to provide legal
382 tools for people living with disabilities to exercise their rights. The goal has not been to seek "special"
383 or "extra" rights, but to correct a long-standing history of denial of basic rights to people with differing
384 abilities.²⁷

385 Given the various social, economic and political challenges facing American society, there are
386 credible reasons to be concerned that these systems of care and these legal gains might be in jeopardy
387 for people with disabilities who need them.

388 This church is aware that numerous issues need to be addressed in order to foster full inclusion
389 and justice for people with disabilities. Toward that end it reaffirms these basic principles:

- 390 • all people have equal moral and legal status in this society, which includes a moral right to ethical
391 treatment and inherent rights of self-determination and independence despite disabilities or
392 impairment;
- 393 • all people deserve equal protection under the law. This protection includes equal access to public
394 accommodations, facilities, programs and educational and economic opportunities. It includes
395 protection from discrimination on the basis of ability/disability as well as protection from
396 violence, intimidation and neglect at home, at school and in all other settings, public or private;
397 and
- 398 • all people have a right to representation and participation in government and the exercise of
399 citizenship even when this requires reasonable forms of assistance for people with disabilities.

400 Further, the ELCA in its various ministries, organizations and expressions will:

- 401 • be guided by these principles in addressing those issues;

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- 402 • call upon its members, in their service in the world, to partner with people with disabilities and
403 other allies in pursuit of these principles; and
404• stand with those who share these commitments and speak on behalf of those who are unable to
405 speak for themselves.

406 **Employment and Poverty**

407 The most typical way for people in our society to participate and contribute is through
408 employment. Employment also provides structure to an individual's life, access to others without
409 disabilities, and a way out of poverty. There are very few people with disabilities who cannot work,
410 even though appropriate supports are necessary sometimes, and most desire to work.²⁸

411 People with disabilities are much less likely to be employed than the general population,
412 however and are more likely to be under-employed. They are likely to earn less than others, and they
413 and their households are more likely to live in poverty, especially if their disabilities are severe.²⁹

414 The employment provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act are necessary but not
415 sufficient alone to counter these problems by increasing employment and economic opportunity.

416 *In light of these realities, this church urges employers to:*

- 417 • think beyond entry- or low-level jobs for people with disabilities and to encourage appropriate
418 career paths they might follow; and
419 • go beyond the requirements of the law in creative accommodations for otherwise qualified work,
420 when necessary.

421 *It calls upon federal and state governments to:*

- 422 • work intentionally with people with disabilities, and especially those with severe disabilities, to
423 develop short and long term strategies to help low-income people with disabilities lift themselves
424 out of poverty; and
425 • review and revise laws and regulations that may threaten benefits, living arrangements or places
426 on waiting lists.

427 **Education**

428 This church has a long tradition supporting education for all. It has affirmed the importance of
429 education for developing the innate gifts and abilities of people with disabilities by calling for
430 qualified teachers, adaptive technology and other necessary provisions.³⁰ U.S. law has established the
431 policy of educating children with disabilities, regardless of their disability or set of skills, in an
432 individualized program of instruction in the least restrictive environment appropriate to their needs.³¹

433 *Toward the goal of providing education for all, this church calls upon the federal government to:*

- 434 • maintain and strengthen the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; and
435 • support appropriate funding for people with disabilities to receive higher education or technical
436 training.

437 *It urges all colleges and universities, especially those affiliated with the ELCA, to:*

- 438 • be mindful of their opportunity and calling to serve the needs of people with disabilities, and to
439 recruit them actively and also provide appropriate services and financial assistance.

440 **Family Caregivers**

441 A minority of people with disabilities need extensive individualized care-giving. Family
442 members, especially women, tend to provide a significant portion of this care. These arrangements
443 provide many benefits, such as maintaining mutually beneficial family relationships, but they also
444 present extra challenges.

445 Some family members provide care in addition to their employment and other home
446 responsibilities, while others forego employment and income in order to provide it. Caregivers who
447 also are employed outside the home generally face significant challenges fulfilling responsibilities for
448 both job and care-giving.

449 *This church encourages employers to:*

- 450 • accommodate the needs of employee caregivers with flexibility to the fullest extent possible; and
451 • refrain from penalizing employee caregivers by stigmatizing them or restricting their career paths.

452 The trend toward in-home services reflects not only a growing personal preference, but also a
453 more economical means for providing services. This commitment to increasing family support requires
454 significant political will and a comprehensive redesign of service systems.

455 U.S. society is beginning to face these issues, but they have not been resolved. While the
456 Medicaid Home and Community-Based Services Waiver Program provides a way for states to meet
457 their court-ordered responsibilities, spouses and minor children in this program usually cannot be paid
458 as providers of eligible waiver services.³² This exclusion often forces spouses or other family
459 members to choose between providing care and earning an income.

460 *This church calls upon federal and state governments to:*

- 461 • increase funding for home and community-based care and eliminate waiting lists for it; and
462 • eliminate the exclusion of spouses from the Medicaid Home and Community-based Services Waiver
463 Program.

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464 **Providing Support and Staffing the Caring Professions**

465 Both secular and faith-based social service agencies provide the support that many people with
466 disabilities need. These agencies deal with immense complexity in providing and administering
467 tailored support services for clients, often participating in a mix of public and private programs.

468 *This church calls upon governments at all levels to:*

- 469 • adequately fund public programs for health and support services for those people with disabilities
470 who depend on them and to remain current in their payments to social service; and
- 471 • simplify complicated eligibility and funding processes that obstruct much-needed service and
472 create unnecessary administrative expenses.

473 A staffing shortage is looming in the caregiving professions. This shortage can be attributed in
474 part to social attitudes and injustice related to society's care for people with disabilities. It is tied, as
475 well, to the public's low regard for many of these fields and the relatively low pay for such work.
476 Countering this shortage will require concerted and sustained efforts by government, schools,
477 churches, businesses and non-profit organizations.

478 *This church challenges colleges and universities, technical and vocational schools, hospitals and*
479 *social service agencies, especially its own affiliated institutions, to:*

- 480 • find and implement effective ways to attract, recruit and train people for service in these fields
481 work to retain them.

482 *We encourage congregations to:*

- 483 • lift up members who serve in these fields and invite them to share their experience with interested
484 young people and others.

485 **Disabled Veterans**

486 American servicemen and servicewomen who have disabilities resulting from military
487 service deserve excellent care. However, the record of their care demonstrates an uneven
488 quality and exposes a system riddled with problems. Resources available to the U.S.
489 Department of Veterans Affairs for care have been limited. Effective care for post-traumatic
490 stress disorder and mental illness often can be difficult to obtain.

491 Many believe that the bureaucratic fault lies in the adversarial nature of the current
492 process for qualifying for benefits.³³ In addition, a variety of political, fiscal and budgetary
493 pressures contribute to chronic underfunding. Reforms are needed to address these issues. This

494 church commends all efforts to improve the timeliness, accuracy and consistency of decisions for
495 benefits and the provision of accurate funding.

496 *This church calls upon the appropriate branches or institutions of the federal government to:*

- 497 • assure that reforms and ongoing veterans' medical care are funded consistently and adequately;
- 498 and
- 499 • assess and implement appropriate recommendations for reform in consultation with the
- 500 Government Accountability Office and relevant congressional committees.³⁴

501 **Citizenship**

502 American citizens living with disabilities have a moral claim that they should be able to
503 exercise their political and legal rights, despite disparities that may exist in terms of capabilities,
504 resources and knowledge. Forty-two states and three territories, however, bar at least some individuals
505 with intellectual disabilities from voting even when there is no cognitive impairment of a type that
506 would make voting an unrealistic social goal.³⁵

507 Such prohibitions reflect a false view of citizenship that assumes an idealized rationality; most
508 people with disabilities, however, are quite capable of making reasoned political choices.³⁶ Not only
509 do they understand their own desires and interests, but most also have a sense of the common good.

510 *This church calls upon all governmental jurisdictions to:*

- 511 • repeal prohibitions on the right to vote for people with disabilities except when there are kinds and
- 512 degrees of mental impairments that would preclude voting as untenable.

513 **VI Conclusion**

514 When the word of God is preached and the sacraments administered without the presence of
515 all believers among us as the church, including people who are disabled, we are less than the whole
516 people of God. We are less than we could be in the absence of their experiences, interests, skills and
517 abilities to contribute to God's work of mission and ministry.

518 The Holy Spirit is calling this church to be mindful that those within it who live with
519 disabilities are full companions in the journey of faith. A faithful response requires renewed efforts by
520 all to live out together with joy and hope the freedom Christians have in Christ to love God and to
521 serve the neighbor in worldly callings.

522 In both church and society much remains to be done to ensure inclusion and justice for people
523 with disabilities. Social and economic justice are not the sum total of what people with disabilities and
524 their caregivers need, but they need justice as urgently as they need support, friendship and love. This

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525 church, through its members and various ministries, partners and organizations is being called to
526 support this quest for justice and inclusion in both society and the church, and to accompany those
527 who seek it.

Glossary of terms

The choice of language used regarding people in relation to their disabilities is both significant in itself, and a highly sensitive matter for many. While it may be generally agreed that terms with negative and offensive connotation or denotation should be avoided, there is no single set of terms recognized as universally “correct.” The lack of a “standard” lexicon is a consequence of many factors. These factors include the fact that all human language is in constant transition and the preferences of different groups of concerned people from their experiences and insights about the meaning terms have been given. In general, the key terms regarding disability in this message can be read with the following background in mind.

Person or People with Disabilities

The use of the terms *person* and *people with disabilities* represents preferred ways to refer to those who live with disabilities. This form puts emphasis on one’s personhood; it designates a person who happens to live with one or more disabilities. It also helps to avoid categorizations that readily are depersonalized, such as the “Disabled” or “Handicapped.”

Disability

The use of the term *disability* describes a change in, a partial or complete loss of, or interference with one’s ability to perform a function or exercise a capacity that society considers typical of most individuals. People with disabilities seldom lack all ability to carry out most human activities. Rather, they often are differently abled or definitely abled. That is, they usually are able to accomplish the same activities in life as most others, if sometimes differently. Even when that is not the case, they have other abilities and gifts with which they live their lives and have relationships.

Impairment

This term identifies the physical injury or condition that results in a disability. An impairment that results in some level of disability, however, does not mean that a person with this disability cannot do the activities that most people do. People with disabilities often have both capacities and creativity to do things in effective ways not typical for others. This is true even if, sometimes, doing the activity may take longer or require different efforts than it would for a majority of people.

Disabilities

There are a number of broad categories of disabilities, each of which has its own primary characteristics. These characteristics often overlap and individuals may have more than one kind of disability. What people with different kinds of disabilities have in common, however, is twofold. The first is the reality of living with a disability. The second is the experience of being treated differently. This experience often includes paternalism and discrimination—overt and covert—from other individuals and a range of social, economic and even religious practices.

Although the variety of disabilities is broad, this message employs the following categories while recognizing there is considerable overlap and variation:

Physical and Sensory Disabilities

These terms indicate impairment of physical capacities, which limit or destroy one's ability to act and interact with others, or to receive sensory stimuli from the environment. Sensory disabilities affect a person’s ability to see, hear, taste, touch or smell. Physical disabilities may affect a person’s abilities to, for instance, walk, or handle physical objects and to use certain tools in ways most in society take

for granted. They also may affect the capacity, for instance, to communicate with others, eat, or breathe. People are known as visually impaired if they have a partial or total loss of their sight. People are referred to as having a hearing impairment if they have either a significant or total hearing loss.

Intellectual and Mental Disabilities

These disabilities affect the capacity to process, express or interpret one's own or other people's ideas and messages. This may include sensations, emotions or social cues. For example, Dyslexia rearranges written language in the brain and affects a person's abilities to read and write. Clinical depression is a condition of the brain that can negatively affect a person's moods, levels of energy, sense of self worth and behavior.

Developmental Disabilities

These disabilities result from sets of conditions that can adversely affect the development of children and youth, and in some cases mature adults. The disabilities may be physical, intellectual, emotional, social or some combination of these. For example, Down Syndrome causes delays in the ways children develop both physically and mentally. Autism (or Autism Spectrum Disorder) refers to a range of disorders in neurological development that give rise to various disabilities affecting behavior, communication and social interaction.

¹ See the ELCA social statements *Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All* (1997), *Caring for Health: Our Shared Endeavor* (2003), and *Our Calling in Education* (2007) along with the document by Dr. Ronald Duty, "Actions Taken by the ELCA and its Predecessor Churches Regarding Persons with Disabilities and Disability Ministry" (2010). Links to all of these can be found from the home page of www.elca.org/disabilitiesmessage

² Whether *all* mental and intellectual illnesses or conditions should be considered disabilities is a matter of contemporary debate, although some clearly are. This message does not try to settle this matter, but accepts that at least some do give rise to disabilities and recognizes that much here may be taken in general to apply also to anyone with mental illness. A social message on mental health has been authorized by the ELCA Church Council (CC09.11.86c)

³ One indicator of the worldwide concern about these issues is the adoption of Public Statement #13, "Advocacy for People with Disabilities." at the Eleventh Assembly of the Lutheran World Federation meeting July 20-27, 2010, in Stuttgart, Germany. It recommended the Federation to cooperation with the World Council of Churches and its Ecumenical Disabilities Advocates Network (www.lwf-assembly.org/fileadmin/user_upload/Assembly_Outcomes/Consolidated_Report-Actions_Taken_by_Eleventh_Assembly.pdf, accessed 9/03/10).

⁴ "Human freedom for God and for the other person and human freedom from the creature in dominion over it constitute the first human beings' likeness to God." Dietrich Bonhoeffer. *Creation and Fall: A Theological Exposition of Genesis 1-3*, tr. Douglas Stephen Bax, John W. De Grouchy, ed., in *Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works*, v. 3, Wayne Whitson Floyd, Jr., Gen. Ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996), 67. See also where Bonhoeffer argues why the human likeness to God is not an "analogy of being" but an "analogy of relationship." *Ibid.*, 65.

⁵ The most well-known theological or philosophical explanations of the *imago dei* ground human dignity in the capacity for reason or the existence of a "rational soul." See, for instance, Jean Porter, *Natural and Divine Law: Reclaiming the Tradition for Christian Ethics* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 126-127. This raises the question, then, whether some individuals are left out since it seems to require, by definition, having "normal" human intellect, will and memory of events or information. Luther and the Lutheran Confessions do not depend on such views. Luther, in fact, objected to interpreting the image of God in terms of any powers of human beings and made no strong claims about it. He did insist that whatever it is, the image of God is "a unique work of God"

and a work of the entire Trinity. Martin Luther. *Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 1-5*, Jaroslav Pelikan, ed., (St. Louis, Concordia Publishing Co., 1958), 57-64. Some relevant texts in *The Book of Concord* include Apostles' Creed, Article I, of "The Small Catechism," "The Formula of Concord, Solid Declaration," I, 9-16; and "The Apology to the Augsburg Confession," II, 15-22.

⁶ Theologians have recently begun to reflect upon these dimensions of being human vis-à-vis the image of God. Mary McClintock Fulkerson emphasizes bodily interactions of people in relationship with God and in face-to-face recognition and interaction with one another in worship, fellowship and mutual service. *Places of Redemption: Theology for a Worldly Church* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), see especially pp. 250-251. Hans Reinders stresses the relationship of friendship that God establishes and affirms in the Eucharist. See Hans J. Reinders, *Receiving the Gift of Friendship: Profound Disability, Theological Anthropology, and Ethics* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 162, 337-347, 351, 365-366, 369, 374, and 376-377.

⁷ *Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All*, 3; and Luther, *On Christian Liberty*, tr. W. A. Lambert, rev. by Harold J. Grimm (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003), 47-54.

⁸ In the literature an *impairment* refers to a reduced or missing bodily or mental function, which ordinarily a human being would be expected to have. A *disability* is any change, restriction or lack of ability to perform an activity in the manner considered typical for a human being, usually resulting from an impairment. See Martha C. Nussbaum, *Frontiers of Justice: Disability, Nationality, Species Membership*. The Tanner Lectures on Human Values (Cambridge: Belknap, 2006), 423-424, n. 5.

⁹ At any one time, nearly one-fifth of the population of the United States has a disability. See Bureau of the Census, "Selected Disability Measures by Selected Age Groups: 2005," www.census.gov/hhes/www/disability/sip/disable05.html (accessed 3/27/2010). A person of age twenty has a 30 percent chance of becoming chronically disabled by age sixty-five. See U.S. Social Security Administration, "Disability Benefits," *Social Security Online*, www.ssa.gov/pubs/10029.html#part2 (accessed 4/19/2010). The percentage of people with disabilities *rises with age*. Nearly 52 percent of the population over age 65 reports living with a disability; nearly 37 percent of them report that their disability is severe. Bureau of the Census, "Americans with Disabilities," *Statistical Brief* (January, 1994), 1.

¹⁰ This ambivalence has many sources. It may be the cost or complexity of treatment, for instance. Some in the hearing-impaired community, as another example, have rejected cochlear implants for personal use because of a strong identity with sign language and culture.

¹¹ A review of textual, historical and archaeological evidence about Roman practices of crucifixion in first century Palestine has led medical and biblical scholars to accept that Jesus, like others who were crucified, experienced impairments to his wrists and nervous system that would be considered disabilities if he had survived or had experienced the same injuries in other circumstances. See William D. Edwards, Wesley J. Gabel, and Floyd E. Hosmer, "On the Physical Death of Jesus Christ," *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 256:11 (March 21, 1986), 1460. Jesus' disablement during his trial and crucifixion has been identified and emphasized by Nancy L. Eiesland in *The Disabled God Toward a Liberatory Theology of Disability* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1994). Because she is primarily concerned with physical disability, Eiesland draws certain theological and anthropological implications from the fact of Jesus' disablement that are *not* assumed here. For one criticism of Eiesland's views see Hans J. Reinders, *Receiving the Gift of Friendship*, 166-180. The crucial point is that Jesus shared the risk and the experience of human vulnerability to suffering, disability and death.

¹² ELCA, *Caring for Health*, 2003, 5.

¹³ *Ibid.* The ELCA statement on health does not condone this view of the ultimate cause of illness. See page 3, for instance.

¹⁴ Such messages either inappropriately blame the person who is disabled or give disabilities a meaning they do not actually have. Undoubtedly many experience God's blessings in the midst of living with disabilities, but that fact is a completely different matter than justifying disabilities by claiming that God inflicts them *in order to* bless, refine or redeem. See Helen Betenbaugh and Marjorie Proctor-Smith, "Disabling the Lie: Prayers of Truth and Transformation," in *Human Disability and the Service of God: Reassessing Religious Practice*, Nancy L. Eiesland and Don E. Sailiers, eds., (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998); see also "Disability and Meaning," in Arne Fritzon and Samuel Kabue, *Interpreting Disability: A Church of All and for All* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 2004), 10-11.

¹⁵ Sharon V. Betcher, *Spirit and the Politics of Disablement*, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007), 3, 5. Betcher also refers to this idolatry as our culture's "hallucination of wholeness."

¹⁶ Gerald P. McKenny, *To Relieve the Human Condition: Bioethics, Technology, and the Body* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1997), 2, 18-19. Philip Hefner also argues that we tend to assume that "(1) Every possible technological advance should be brought to bear in health care . . . , (2) every ailment should be prevented. . . , (3) every ailment should be 'medicalized' . . . , (4) Our bodies are high-performance sophisticated machines that should always function at their optimal level . . . , [and] (5) our bodies are eminently fixable, and getting repairs when needed is a basic human right." Hefner, "Healthcare is about Bodies and Bodyselves," *Dialog*, 48:4 (Winter, December 2009), 309-310.

¹⁷ See Stanley Hauerwas, "The Church and Mentally Handicapped Persons: A Continuing Challenge to the Imagination," in *Religion and Disability*, Bishop, ed., 59.

¹⁸ This would entail, for instance, making available American Sign Language and Braille and large print worship materials; it also may require attention to providing elements of the Eucharist for people with multiple chemical sensitivities.

¹⁹ Instruments to help congregations do these things are available from the Congregational Accessibility Network, PO Box 959, Goshen, Ind. 46527-0959, Ph: 574-535-7053 or 877-214-9838, as well as on its Web site at: www.accessibilitynetwork.net (accessed 8/29/10). Other resources for various kinds of disability are also listed on this Web site.

²⁰ See Betenbaugh and Smith, "Disabling the Lie," 288-289.

²¹ The ELCA Youth Gathering and the Definitely Abled Youth Leadership Event are illustrations.

²² An example at the time of writing is the ELCA Disability Mentor Network.

²³ Information about the Definitely Abled Advisory Committee (DAC) and the Definitely Abled Youth Leadership Event (DAYLE) is available online at www.elca.org/Growing-In-Faith/Ministry/Youth-Ministry.aspx (accessed 8/27/10).

²⁴ Information about the Lutheran Network on Mental Illness/Brain Disorders appears on the ELCA Web site at: www.elca.org/Growing-In-Faith/Ministry/Disability-Ministries/Mental-Illness.aspx (accessed 8/30/10). It is a joint effort with The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod to assist Lutheran congregations toward more effective responses to individuals with mental illnesses or brain disorders and their families.

²⁵ Lutheran social ministry organizations support people with disabilities with dedicated and experienced professional staffs and volunteers, innovative management and services, imagination, and spirit in a challenging and changing social and fiscal environment. They also advocate for public policies, programs, and funding that benefit people with disabilities with federal and state governments. At present, 18 social ministry organizations with service locations in 33 states, the District of Columbia, and the Virgin Islands are members of the Disability

Network of Lutheran Services in America and support individuals with developmental disabilities. Several Lutheran hospital systems and other social ministry organizations also support people with rehabilitation services for physical disabilities, strokes, and brain and spinal cord injuries.

²⁶ Parts of this history are told in Susan M. Schweik, *The Ugly Laws: Disability in Public*, (New York: New York University Press, 2009) and also in Eiesland, *The Disabled God*, 49-64.

²⁷ Key federal laws enacted are the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 1975, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 (modified and expanded as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1997), and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (amended, 2008). Court opinions in recent years also have accorded people with disabilities certain rights because of their differing abilities. In the literature, it has been argued that there is historical correlation between the passage of disability rights legislation and the repeal of municipal laws designed to control the public appearance and public behavior of people with disabilities. The last known such law was repealed by the City of Chicago in 1972. See Schweik, *The Ugly Laws*, 280-281.

²⁸ U.S. Census Bureau, Distribution of Selected Characteristics of Individuals 25 Years and Older by Disability Status: 2005, www.census.gov/hhes/www/disability/sipp/disable05.html (accessed 3/22/10). About one-third of working people with disabilities are limited in the kind of work they can do.

²⁹ Ibid. In 2005, for example, the poverty rate for people whose disabilities were not severe was 25 percent higher than for people who were not disabled, and the poverty rate of people with severe disabilities was three times that of people without disabilities.

³⁰ Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, *Our Calling in Education*, (Chicago: ELCA, 2007), 26.

³¹ Nussbaum, *Frontiers*, 205, 207-208. Nussbaum notes the importance of the court's opinion in deciding the case of *Timothy W. v. Rochester New Hampshire School District* 875 F. 2nd 954 (1st Cir. 1989) cert. denied 493 U.S. 983 (1989). See also *Our Calling in Education*, 30, 34, 46-47 for the ELCA's position on these issues.

³² "Medicaid Home and Community-based Services (HCBS) Waivers – Overview," Workworld, Employment Support Institute, School of Business, Virginia Commonwealth University, www.workworld.org/webhelp/medicaid_home_and_community_based_services_hCBS_waivers_overview.htm, (Accessed May 6, 2010).

³³ In the current system, the burden of proof falls on the veteran to prove the legitimacy of a claim while the defined role of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs is to determine that *all* claims are not fraudulent before those claims are approved. Linda Bilmes, "Soldiers Returning from Iraq and Afghanistan: The Long-term Costs of Providing Veterans Medical Care and Disability Benefits, *Faculty Research Working Paper Series*, RWP07-001, (Cambridge, Mass: Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, January, 2007), 7, found at: <http://web.hks.harvard.edu/publications/workingpapers/citation.aspx?PubId=4329>, 12 (accessed 4/27/10).

³⁴ Recommendations have been made by a variety of organizations and commissions. One important example comes from the Veterans' Disability Benefits Commission of the U.S. Congress (see Eric Christensen et al in *Final Report for the Veterans' Disability Benefits Commission: Compensation, Survey Results, and Selected Topics*, prepared for the Veterans' Disability Benefits Commission by C.N.A. Corporation, Alexandria, Va., 2007 available at https://www.1888932-2946.ws/vetscommission/e-documentmanager/gallery/Documents/ReferenceMaterials/CNA_FinalReport_August2007.pdf, p. 13 [Accessed, 4/27/10]). A second important example comes from the President's Commission on Care for America's Returning Wounded Warriors (see "Serve, Support, Simplify: Report of the President's Commission on Care for America's Returning Wounded Warriors," Washington: 2007) <http://www.veteransforamerica.org/wp-content/uploads/2008/12/presidents-commission-on-care-for-americas-returning-wounded-warriors-report->

july-2007.pdf [accessed 4/27/10]);. Other recommendations by the Government Accountability Office are online at the GAO web site at: http://www.gao.gov/docsearch/featured/disability_benefits.html.

³⁵ Nussbaum, *Frontiers*. 195.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 98. For important research about voter choice and discussions of voter rationality that support this point, see Angus Campbell, Philip E. Converse, Warren E. Miller, and Donald E. Stokes, *The American Voter* (New York: Wiley, 1960; reprint, Chicago: U of Chicago, 1976) and Sidney Verba and Norman H. Nie, "The Rationality of Political Activity: A Reconsideration," in *Controversies in American Voting Behavior*, Richard G. Niemi and Herbert F. Weisberg, eds., (San Francisco: W. H. Freeman and Co., 1976) 46-47.

**Corporate Social Responsibilities Report
 August 2009-August 2010**

No.	Company	Issue	Communication with Company	ELCA Social Policy
1	Abbott	Access to Medicines	06/30/10 - Dialogue	International Access to
			07/21/10 - Dialogue	
2	Alexion Pharmaceuticals, Inc.	Board Diversity	12/17/09 - Board of Pensions filed resolution	Non Discrimination in Business Activities
			01/04/10 - Resolution withdrawn	
3	American Airlines	Commercial Sexual Exploitation	05/07/10 - Dialogue	Human Rights
4	Apache, Chesapeake, Halliburton & Williams	Hydraulic Fracturing	07/27/10 - Dialogue	Extractive Industries
5	Avery Dennison Corporation	PVC	10/14/09 - Correspondence	Environmental Topics
			11/12/09 - Correspondence from co.	
6	Bank of America	Tarp Update & Repayment Plans, Toxic Assets	10/19/09 - Dialogue	Access to Capital
		Foreclosures/ Loan Servicing	11/16/09 - Dialogue	Access to Capital
7	Boehringer Ingelheim	Access to Medicines	07/22/10 - Dialogue	International Access to
8	Bristol-Myers Squibb	Access to Medicines	02/19/10 - Dialogue	International Access to Pharmaceuticals
		HIV/ Plant closure - France	07/01/10 - Dialogue	
9	British Petroleum (BP)	Oil Sands	05/19/10 - Dialogue	Extractive Industries
10	C.R. Bard, Inc.	Sustainability Reporting/ Climate Change	11/12/09 - Board of Pensions filed resolution	Sustainability/ Climate Change
			April 2010 - Annual Meeting	
11	Campbell's	Sustainability	05/04/10 - Dialogue	Sustainability
		Cocoa	05/26/10 - Dialogue	
12	Capital One	Loan Servicing	07/12/10 - Dialogue	Domestic Access to Capital
13	Caterpillar	Human Rights	09/10/09 - Dialogue	Human Rights
14	Cimarex Energy Co.	Board Diversity	12/02/09 - Board of Pensions filed resolution	Non Discrimination in Business Activities
			01/20/10 - Resolution withdrawn	
15	Citigroup	Mountain Top Removal Funding	08/28/09 - Dialogue	Environmental Topics
		Foreclosures	09/29/09 - Dialogue	Access to Capital
		Credit Cards	11/05/09 - Dialogue	
			02/04/10 - Dialogue	
Loan Servicing	04/09/10 - Dialogue			
16	Community Health Systems	Sustainability Report	01/14/10 - Dialogue	Sustainability
17	ConocoPhillips	Sustainability/ Indigenous Rights	09/25/09 - Dialogue	Sustainability & Human Rights
18	Costco	Various; Sustainability Report	09/18/09 - Dialogue	Sustainability and Environmental Topics

* - denotes the ELCA is lead

No.	Company	Issue	Communication with Company	ELCA Social Policy
19	Devon	Oil Sands	06/07/10 - Dialogue	Extractive Industries
20	EOG Resources, Inc.	Board Diversity	11/23/09 - Board of Pensions filed	Non Discrimination in
			12/21/09 - Correspondence	
			1/04/10 - Resolution withdrawn	
21	EQT	Sustainability Reporting	04/21/10 - Annual Meeting	Sustainability
22	Freeport McMoran	Human Rights	09/14/09 - Dialogue	Human Rights
			03/02/10 - Dialogue	
		Extractive Industries	12/03/09 - Dialogue	Extractive Industries
23	<i>G8 Representatives</i>	Universal Access	06/08/10 - Sign-on letter	International Access to Pharmaceuticals
24	<i>G8/G20 Representatives</i>	HIV and Food	06/08/10 - Sign-on letter	International Access to Pharmaceuticals/ Sustainability
25	Gentex Corporation	Sustainability Reporting/ Climate Change	11/23/09 - Board of Pensions filed resolution	Sustainability/ Climate Change
			May 2010 - Annual Meeting	
26	General Mills	Sustainability	03/04/10 - Dialogue	Sustainability
27	Gilead Sciences	Access to Medicines	01/05/10 - Dialogue	International Access to Pharmaceuticals
			03/11/10 - Dialogue	
			07/21/10 - Dialogue	
28	GlaxoSmithKline	Access to Medicines	03/25/10 - Dialogue	International Access to Pharmaceuticals
29	Goldman Sachs	Foreclosure/ Servicing	09/24/09 - Dialogue	Access to Capital
30	Hershey*	Sustainability	10/27/09 - Dialogue	Sustainability
31	Hewlett Packard	Human Rights	02/10/10 - Dialogue	Human Rights
			03/30/10 - Dialogue	
32	Home Depot, Inc.	Equality and Diversity	12/08/09 - Board of Pensions filed resolution	Non Discrimination in Business Activities
			03/25/10 - Dialogue	
			05/20/10 - Annual Meeting	
33	Hotel Chains: Hilton, Hyatt, Starwood, Intercontinental, Accor, NH Hotels, Carlson, Best Western	Commercial Sexual Exploitation	04/21/10 - Sign-on letter	Human Rights
34	<i>House and Senate Appropriations Committees</i>	Community Development	06/22/10 - Sign-on letter	Access to Capital
35	Intuitive Surgical	Board Diversity	11/05/09 - Board of Pensions filed resolution	Non Discrimination in Business Activities
			02/22/10 - Resolution withdrawn	
36	J.P. Morgan Chase	Foreclosures	09/29/09 - Dialogue	Access to Capital
			04/09/10 - Dialogue	
37	Johnson & Johnson	HIV/AIDS	11/3/2009 - Dialogue	International Access to Pharmaceuticals
		Update Patent Pool	12/08/09 - Dialogue	
38	Jones Lang LaSalle	Sustainability Reporting	09/24/2009 - Ceres led call	Sustainability

* - denotes the ELCA is lead

No.	Company	Issue	Communication with Company	ELCA Social Policy
39	Liberty Global, Inc.	Board Diversity	12/17/09 - Board of Pensions filed resolution	Non Discrimination in Business Activities
			04/09/10 - Resolution withdrawn	
40	Merck	HIV programs	03/11/10 - Dialogue	International Access to Pharmaceuticals
		Access to Medicines	07/22/10 - Dialogue	
41	Morgan Stanley	Loan Servicing, Subprime Lending	04/08/10 - Dialogue	Domestic Access to Capital
42	Nestlé	Human Rights	10/09/09 - Dialogue	Human Rights
43	Newmont Mining	Sustainability	03/01/10 - Correspondence	Sustainability
44	NutriSystem, Inc.	Board Diversity	12/8/09 - Board of Pensions filed resolution	Non Discrimination in Business Activities
			03/29/10 - Resolution withdrawn	
45	Pfizer	HIV in Africa	10/21/09 - Dialogue	International Access to Pharmaceuticals
46	Phillips-Van Heusen	Supply Chain	11/11/09 - SIRAN led call	Human Rights
47	PMC Sierra	Board Diversity	11/12/09 - Board of Pensions filed resolution	Non Discrimination in Business Activities
			12/11/09 - Dialogue	
			01/04/10 - Resolution withdrawn	
48	PNC*	Loan Servicing	01/20/10 - Dialogue	Access to Capital
49	Procter & Gamble*	Sustainability	10/14/09 - Dialogue	Sustainability
			06/01/10 - Dialogue	
		Human Rights	02/08/10 - Dialogue	Human Rights
50	Range Resources Corporation*	Board Diversity	12/02/09 - Board of Pensions filed resolution	Non Discrimination in Business Activities
			01/14/10 - SEC challenge	
			01/20/10 - Dialogue	
			01/26/10 - Resolution withdrawn	
51	Royal Dutch Shell PLC	Oil Sands	05/15/10 - Sign-on letter	Extractive Industries
52	Shell Oil	Oil Sands	07/07/10 - Dialogue	Extractive Industries
53	Southern	Energy/ Climate Change	10/13/09 - Dialogue	Environmental Topics, Global Warming and Climate Change
			03/08/10 - Dialogue	
		Reduce Carbon Dioxide Emissions	12/08/09 - Board of Pensions filed resolution	
			May 2010 - Annual Meeting	
54	St. Jude Medical, Inc.	Sustainability Reporting/ Climate Change	11/23/09 - Board of Pensions filed resolution	Sustainability/ Climate Change
			May 2010 - Annual Meeting	
55	Target	Supply Chain	01/11/10 - Dialogue	Human Rights
56	United Technologies Corporation	Human Rights - Code of Ethics	08/17/09 - Dialogue	Human Rights
57	ViiV (GlaxoSmithKline & Pfizer)	Access to Medicines	01/22/10 - Dialogue	International Access to Pharmaceuticals
			04/29/10 - Dialogue	
			07/21/10 - Dialogue	

* - denotes the ELCA is lead

No.	Company	Issue	Communication with Company	ELCA Social Policy
58	Wal-Mart	Equality	05/28/10 - Dialogue	Non Discrimination in Business Activities
59	Wells Fargo	Credit Cards	01/05/10 - Dialogue	Access to Capital
		Loan Servicing	03/29/10 - Dialogue	

1 **EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**
2 **Corporate Social Responsibility – Updated ~~November 2007~~**

3
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: most stem directly from human activity (“Caring
10 for Creation,” 2.B-1).¹ As Christians, we understand human beings as fundamentally responsible
11 before God. With the reach of our contemporary human knowledge and the power we employ in
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 global warming and climate change.

14
15 These threats and changes were first summarized in the findings of the Intergovernmental Panel
16 on Climate Change (IPCC) 2001: Synthesis Report², which concludes that there is an increasing
17 body of observations that gives a collective picture of a warming world and other changes in the
18 climate system caused by human emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases.
19 Examples include rising surface temperatures, snow and ice melts, rising sea levels, and changes
20 in weather patterns, such as drought, flooding, and monsoons. This ~~is~~ was reinforced in the ~~2007~~
21 ~~report from the IPCC. 2007 Climate Change Assessment Report and additional special reports~~
22 from the IPCC.

23 ~~In April of 2007, CERES published a report, the Quiet Revolution in Business Reporting which~~
24 ~~summarized the key factors that are converging calling for companies to move this issue to a~~
25 ~~prominent place on their agendas and report on it in a more transparent manner.~~
26 Ceres is a network of investors, environmental organizations and other public interest groups
27 working with companies to integrate sustainability into capital markets for the health of the
28 planet and its people. Numerous reports are published by Ceres calling the corporate world to
29 address issues of climate change and sustainability.³

30 **II. ELCA Social Policy**

31 “Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope, and Justice” (ELCA, 1993): The social statement develops
32 this church’s vision of creation, while showing us the gift of hope. It calls us to justice through
33 principles of participation, solidarity, sufficiency, and sustainability. Specifically this social
34 statement calls the church to gather information and engage in dialogue with corporations on
35 how to promote justice for creation (5.E.1-1). ~~This includes~~ Dialogues around include
36 implementing comprehensive environmental principles, promoting healthy environments, and
37 cooperation between the public and private sector regarding sustainability.

38

¹ <http://www.elca.org/What-We-Believe/Social-Issues/Social-Statements/Environment.aspx>

² http://www.ipcc.ch/publications_and_data/publications_and_data.htm

³ <http://www.ceres.org/Page.aspx?pid=592>

39 The 1995 Churchwide Assembly passed a resolution on Environment – Energy Audits
40 (CA95.05.26b).⁴

41 The 1999 Churchwide Assembly (CA99.06.30)⁵ expressed great concern about the destructive
42 practice of mountaintop removal (MTR) coal mining and urged our church to advocate ending it.
43 ~~In addition,~~ The 2001 Churchwide Assembly in 2004 (CA01.07.57)⁶ reaffirmed the commitment
44 of this church to the care of creation, including global warming, as part of the web of complex
45 interwoven environmental concerns (Assembly Action CA01.07.57).

46
47 In 2005 the Churchwide Assembly passed a resolution on Caring for Creation (CA05.07.39)⁷
48 encouraging our church to renew the commitment to caring for creation, followed by a 2007
49 Churchwide Assembly memorial on Energy Efficiency (CA07.06.33g) and in 2009 the Genesis
50 Covenant (CA09.03.09)

51 52 **III. Corporate Response**

53 It has become accepted practice for a company to begin this work by evaluating and reporting on
54 ~~their~~ greenhouse gas emissions and ~~its~~ total “footprint”. Corporate reporting includes the amount
55 of how much greenhouse gases does from production and use of their products, emit, how their
56 the delivery process for their products, and operates, who their suppliers’ are emit) emissions.
57 ~~and by~~ Setting targets for decreasing their emissions and moving toward renewable technologies
58 is often included in reports. In addition, the company can review their probable risk exposure to
59 the financial and competitive consequences of climate change, ~~They can~~ ensure that they have
60 sufficient expertise to make informed and responsible decisions and set benchmarks. ~~themselves~~
61 ~~within their own industry sector.~~ Climate change strategies and strategic alliances can be built
62 into an overall business plan, ~~thus preparing the company for success in the future.~~

64 **IV. Social Criteria Investment Screens**

65 A screen is a pre-existing framework of principles specific to an issue by which a company’s
66 activities are evaluated. ~~The energy and environmental~~ social criteria investment screen approved
67 by the ELCA in 1990 and updated in 2007 responds to this issue.⁸ [http://www.elca.org/Our-](http://www.elca.org/Our-Faith-In-Action/Justice/Advocacy/Corporate-Social-Responsibility/CCA-3-ESCI-2-Enviromental-Social-Criteria-Screen.aspx)
68 [Faith-In-Action/Justice/Advocacy/Corporate-Social-Responsibility/CCA-3-ESCI-2-](http://www.elca.org/Our-Faith-In-Action/Justice/Advocacy/Corporate-Social-Responsibility/CCA-3-ESCI-2-Enviromental-Social-Criteria-Screen.aspx)
69 [Enviromental-Social-Criteria-Screen.aspx](http://www.elca.org/Our-Faith-In-Action/Justice/Advocacy/Corporate-Social-Responsibility/CCA-3-ESCI-2-Enviromental-Social-Criteria-Screen.aspx)

71 **V. Resolution Guidelines for ELCA**

- 72 1. We support reports on greenhouse gas footprints, as well as the establishment of targets for
73 their reduction, including requests that a company complete the Carbon Disclosure Project⁹
74 (CDP) questionnaire.
75 2. We support disclosure of the economic risks associated with past, present, and future
76 emissions and/or climate change.

⁴ <http://archive.elca.org/socialpolicyresolutions/resolution.asp?id=40&ref=hts>

⁵ <http://archive.elca.org/socialpolicyresolutions/resolution.asp?id=67&ref=hys>

⁶ <http://archive.elca.org/socialpolicyresolutions/resolution.asp?id=94&ref=hys>

⁷ <http://archive.elca.org/socialpolicyresolutions/resolution.asp?id=158&ref=hts>

⁸ <http://www.elca.org/corporate/environmentalscreen>

⁹ <https://www.cdproject.net/en-US/Pages/HomePage.aspx>

- 77 3. We support reports on the economic benefits of committing to a substantial reduction of
78 greenhouse gas emissions and a reduction of product emissions.
79 4. We support reports on public policies that enable and assist with the achievement of these
80 emission targets, including policies and procedures for political contributions and
81 expenditures.
82 5. We support reports on economic risks associated with a company's exposure to the myriad of
83 pending and adopted legislation from state, regional, and international bodies as it relates to
84 reduction of greenhouse gases and the adequacy of such legislation to protect human health,
85 the environment and the company's reputation.
86 6. We support reports on increased energy efficiency and conservation.
87 7. We support requests to adopt quantitative goals to reduce future emissions of carbon dioxide,
88 sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxide and heavy metals such as mercury.
89 8. We support reports and assessments of steps a company is taking to meet new fuel economy
90 and greenhouse gas emissions standards for its transportation fleet.
91 9. We support adoption of policies for safe low-carbon energy research, development and
92 production.
93 10. We support reports on strategic plans reviewing the scenario of demand for significantly
94 lowering fossil fuel use in the future.
95 11. We support amendments of a company's greenhouse gas emissions policies to observe a
96 moratorium and/or cease all financing, investment and further involvement in activities that
97 support MTR coal mining or the construction of new coal-burning power plants that emit
98 carbon dioxide.
99 12. We support reports that publicly disclose a company's current and projected water
100 withdrawals at each thermoelectric power plant.
101

102 **VI. Resolution guidelines for ELCA – General**

- 103 13. We support practices of good governance, specifically:
104 • a company having an independent chair or independent lead director;
105 • reports on policies and procedures for political contributions and expenditures (both
106 direct and indirect made with corporate funds;
107 • reports on any portion of any dues or similar payments made to any tax exempt
108 organization that is used for an expenditure or contribution which might be deemed
109 political; and
110 • guidelines or policies governing the company's political contributions and expenditures.
111
112
113
114
115

116 *Recommended by Advisory Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility, September 5, 2003*

117 *Endorsed by Division for Church in Society Board, October 24, 2003*

118 *Approved by Church Council, November 2003*

119 *Updated by Advisory Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility, September 28, 2007*

120 *Approved by Church Council, November 2007*

121 *Updated by Advisory Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility, September 10, 2010*

122 *Approved by Church Council _____, 2010*

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1 **EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**
2 **Corporate Social Responsibility – Updated November 2007**

3
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
18 gains. Humans, called to be stewards of God’s creation, are to respect the integrity and limits of
19 the earth and its resources” (pg. 14). We are challenged to pursue policies and practices which
20 will 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
23 rather 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, ~~specifically in the area of~~
27 ~~mortgage lending for housing.~~ Congress enacted the Community Reinvestment Act, with
28 regulations first issued in 1977 and revised in 1995, ~~This Act encourages~~ encouraging depository
29 institutions to meet the credit needs of all communities in which they operate, including low- and
30 moderate-income communities.² In 2009, the Home Affordable Modification program was
31 created in an effort to address the housing crisis related to the recession.³

32
33 ~~Over the last decade there was an increase in people living in credit nightmares.~~ Although many
34 institutions and legislatures have addressed ~~the~~ practices leading to individual credit ~~the nightmare~~
35 crises and although progress has been made, ~~too~~ many people today are still suffering.⁴ ~~Although~~ In
36 and of themselves ~~the following~~ certain practices are not necessarily predatory in nature, excessive
37 and/or inappropriate. However, the use of the following practices could be signs which lead to
38 issuing a predatory loan: indicators of predatory practices:

39

¹<http://www.elca.org/What-We-Believe/Social-Issues/Social-Statements/Economic-Life.aspx>

²<http://www.federalreserve.gov/dcca/cra/> and <http://makinghomeaffordable.gov/about.html>

³http://www.ustreas.gov/press/releases/reports/modification_program_guidelines.pdf

⁴<http://www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/sfh/pred/predlend.cfm>

- 40 • Flipping⁵ and asset-based lending;
41 • Points fees, yield spread premiums, and interest rates;
42 • Steering to subprime loans, when unnecessary;
43 • Forcing credit insurance;
44 • Prepayment penalties; and
45 • Refusing to report good credit.

46
47 Concerns regarding these abuses ~~and~~ as well as the steering of minorities toward the subprime
48 market contribute to the problem today.⁶ ~~The most recent~~ “Principles for Global Corporate
49 Responsibility,” *The Corporate Examiner* 31, nos. 4–6 (2001),⁷ stipulates that financial services—
50 including micro-financing, discounted loan services, and other fair lending practices—be made
51 available to local communities, including those underserved, on a fair and equitable basis. Most
52 recently the credit crisis has included housing foreclosures, predatory practices in the credit card
53 industry, and lack of access to credit.

54 55 **II. ELCA Social Policy**

56 “Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All” (ELCA, 1999): In its social statement, the church
57 ~~develops a vision of~~ delineates principles dedicated to sufficient and sustainable economic life
58 for all people, especially the poor and disenfranchised. It ~~particularly~~ calls for “scrutiny to ensure
59 that new ways of providing low-income people with assistance and services do not sacrifice the
60 most vulnerable 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. Corporate Response**

66 ~~The data concerning community reinvestment come from reports available as a result of the~~
67 ~~enactment of the Home Mortgage Disclosure Act (HMDA). This public information serves as a~~
68 ~~basis for working with financial institutions. One consultant used by the faith community is~~
69 ~~CANICCOR—a California-based organization, provides social evaluations of the financial~~
70 ~~sector’s performance. These assessments include trends in lending to low income and minority~~
71 ~~borrowers for housing. The financial institutions have come to value CANICCOR’s analysis and~~
72 ~~are willing to meet with CSR representatives to dialogue about solutions to their challenges in~~
73 ~~this area.~~

74
75 ~~Lawsuits have been filed over the predatory lending practices involved with some mergers and~~
76 ~~securing bundles of loans provided a natural platform to encourage the discussions. Financial~~
77 ~~institutions have been open to dialogue, with resolutions serving as catalysts to provoke an initial~~
78 ~~response from the companies.~~

79

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>

⁷ 3rd edition revised and released April 2003, <http://www.bench-marks.org>

80 Since the inception of the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility (ICCR), the faith
81 community has engaged the financial services community. Public information, analyzed through
82 the lens of those living in poverty, serves as a basis for working with financial institutions.
83 Trends in lending to low income and minority borrowers as well as policies regarding these
84 borrowers are the focus of the work. Dialogues over the last decade have moved from the
85 community reinvestment act to predatory lending to loan servicing and foreclosure.

86 87 **IV. Social Criteria Investment Screens**

88 A screen is a pre-existing framework of principles specific to an issue by which a company's
89 activities are evaluated. None currently apply to this paper.

90 91 **V. Resolutions Guidelines for ELCA – Issue specific**

- 92 1. We support fair-lending community reinvestment policies.
- 93 2. We support a general program goal for housing loans to low and moderate income people,
94 with the focus on minorities, so that an institution would achieve average industry levels in
95 the market area.
- 96 3. We support annual reports to shareholders on lending achievements.
- 97 4. We support oversight by outside committees to ensure that no employee or broker engages in
98 predatory practices.
- 99 5. We support reports on avoidance of predatory lending practices including instructions to
100 employees on avoidance of predatory lending practices.
- 101 6. We support higher standards in securitizing loans as well as procedures to ensure loan
102 screening and originator screening for predatory loans.
- 103 7. We support reports on evaluating overdraft policies and practices and the impact these
104 practices have on borrowers.
- 105 8. We support reports evaluating a company's credit card marketing, lending and collection
106 practices and the impact these practices have on borrowers.
- 107 9. We support reports that oversee and report on the development and implementation of a
108 consistent loans servicing policy and a comprehensive consumer lending policy.
- 109 10. We support public reporting of both the trades and their value in over-the-counter credit
110 default swaps.
- 111 11. We support reports of a company's foreclosure policies, home preservation rates and
112 foreclosure statistics. This report should disaggregate the data for all racial and ethnic groups,
113 including African-American, Hispanic, as well as Caucasian mortgage borrowers.
- 114 12. We support reports to (a) develop a standard of suitability for a company's products; (b)
115 develop internal controls relevant to the implementation of the suitability standard and (c)
116 create a public reporting standard that assesses the company's success in providing loans that
117 meet the suitability standard.
- 118 13. We support reports on policies that are in place to safeguard against the provision of any
119 financial services for any corporate or individual client that enables capital flight and results
120 in tax avoidance.

121 122 **VI. Resolution guidelines for ELCA – General**

- 123 14. We support practices of good governance, specifically:

- 124 • a company having an independent chair or independent lead director;
- 125 • reports on policies and procedures for political contributions and expenditures (both
- 126 direct and indirect made with corporate funds;
- 127 • reports on any portion of any dues or similar payments made to any tax exempt
- 128 organization that is used for an expenditure or contribution which might be deemed
- 129 political; and
- 130 • guidelines or policies governing the company's political contributions and
- 131 expenditures.

132
133
134 *Recommended by Advisory Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility, September 6, 2003*

135 *Endorsed by Division for Church in Society Board, October 24, 2003*

136 *Approved by Church Council, November 2003*

137 *Amendment recommendation by the Advisory Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility, March 11, 2004*

138 *Amendment Endorsed by the Division for Church in Society Board, October 22, 2004*

139 *Amendment Approved by Church Council, November 11, 2004*

140 *Updated by Advisory Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility, September 28, 2007*

141 *Approved by Church Council November 2007*

142 *Updated by Advisory Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility, September 10, 2010*

143 *Approved by Church Council _____, 2010*

144

1 **EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**
2 **Corporate Social Responsibility – Updated November 2007**

3
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. With the reach of
12 our contemporary human knowledge and the power we employ in new technologies, this
13 responsibility in terms of caring for creation now includes the global future itself.

14
15 Caring for a global future includes ~~the~~ a range of issues from health to environment to
16 biotechnology. Over the past few decades, hundreds of companies have begun to ~~voluntarily~~
17 issue statements about their environmental policies and practices. One could even say that a shift
18 has been occurring where companies no longer see environmental stewardship as an externally
19 imposed burden but rather, imposed from outside governmental forces, but they have begun to
20 see it as a market-driven opportunity that enhances productivity, corporate image-building, and
21 shareholder value. The key questions for investors then becomes: 1) whether these policies and
22 practices genuinely result in reducing negative environmental impact, and 2) whether one can
23 glean from a company’s report enough meaningful information about the environmental
24 performance and sustainable development strategies.

25
26 The faith-based investment community for many years has been ~~involved with~~ addressing
27 ~~looking at~~ environmental issues. ~~Two guidelines have been embraced to give foundations to the~~
28 ~~work. The first is “Principles for Global Corporate Responsibility: Bench Marks for Measuring~~
29 ~~Business Performance,”~~ *The Corporate Examiner* 31, nos. 4–6 (2001),² ~~where the first set of~~
30 ~~principles offered includes those around ecosystems. A second way of looking~~ evaluating at
31 environmental and sustainability reporting guidelines is found in the ~~new~~ Global Reporting
32 Initiative’s Reporting Framework.³ These, along with the ~~Ceres~~ extensive set of Ceres
33 comparative reports⁴ ~~(Coalition for Environmentally Responsible Economies) Principles,~~ set the
34 framework for the environmental dimension of sustainability concerns that an organization’s
35 impact has on living and nonliving systems.

36
37 ~~They~~ ~~These guidelines and reportings~~ provide an ethical a standard of measurement on which to
38 ~~base decisions about disclosure concerning a company’s environmental practices, corporate~~
39 ~~social responsibility. Companies are~~ challenged asked to look at analyze their actions ~~so they do~~
40 ~~not damage the global and~~ with a view toward minimizing local and global environmental

¹ <http://www.elca.org/What-We-Believe/Social-Issues/Social-Statements/Environment.aspx>

² ~~3rd~~ edition revised and released April 2003, <http://www.bench-marks.org>

³ <http://www.globalreporting.org/ReportingFramework/ReportingFrameworkOverview/>

⁴ <http://www.ceres.org/Page.aspx?pid=592>

41 ~~damage. The precautionary principle⁵ is invoked.~~ Clean-up is sought when damage has occurred,
42 and stakeholder consultation is desirable at every step along the way.

43

44 **II. ELCA Social Policy**

45 “Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope, and Justice” (ELCA, 1993): The social statement develops
46 the Church’s vision of creation, while showing us the gift of hope. It calls us to justice through
47 principles of participation, solidarity, sufficiency, and sustainability. Specifically this social
48 statement calls (section 5.E.1-1) the church to engage in dialogue with corporations on how to
49 promote justice for creation. This includes dialogues around implementing comprehensive
50 environmental principles, healthy environments, and cooperation between the public and private
51 sector regarding sustainability.

52

53 ~~In addition,~~ The 2001 Churchwide Assembly in 2001 (Assembly Action CA01.07.57)⁶
54 reaffirmed the commitment of this church to the care of creation, including global warming, as
55 part of the web of complex interwoven environmental concerns. Previously, the 1999
56 Churchwide Assembly (CA99.06.30)⁷ expressed great concern about the destructive practice of
57 mountaintop removal (MTR) coal mining and urged our church to advocate ending it.

58

59 The social statements, “Caring for Health: Our Shared Endeavor” (ELCA, 2007)⁸ and
60 “Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All” (ELCA, 1999)⁹ as well as the social policy
61 resolution, “Genetically Modified Organisms in the Food Supply” (CC04.11.57)¹⁰ support this
62 issue paper. ELCA Church Council passed a screen¹¹ relating to environmental issues on April
63 21, 1990 (CC90.4.38).

64

65 **III. Corporate Response**

66 ~~In becoming a good steward of creation, the corporate world can provide~~ Good corporate
67 environmental stewardship begins with comprehensive environmental reporting. This reporting
68 would include articulating the a corporate vision, outlining policies, and providing methods and
69 benchmarks to measure of measuring environmental performance. Companies must move from
70 being compliance-oriented to engaging in best practices in environmental management.

71

72 **IV. Social Criteria Investment Screens**

73 A screen is a pre-existing framework of principles specific to an issue by which a company’s
74 activities are evaluated. The energy and environmental social criteria investment screen approved

⁵ See principle 15 in the 1992 Rio Declaration on Environment and Development
<http://www.unep.org/Documents.multilingual/Default.asp?DocumentID=78&ArticleID=1163>

⁶ <http://archive.elca.org/socialpolicyresolutions/resolution.asp?id=94&ref=hys>

⁷ <http://archive.elca.org/socialpolicyresolutions/resolution.asp?id=67&ref=hys>

⁸ <http://www.elca.org/What-We-Believe/Social-Issues/Social-Statements/Health-and-Healthcare.aspx>

⁹ <http://www.elca.org/What-We-Believe/Social-Issues/Social-Statements/Economic-Life.aspx>

¹⁰ <http://archive.elca.org/socialpolicyresolutions/resolution.asp?id=155&ref=hts>

¹¹ ~~A screen is a pre-existing framework of principles specific to an issue by which a company’s activities are evaluated.~~

75 by the ELCA in 1990 and updated in 2007 ~~responds to~~ addresses this issue.¹²

76 [http://www.elca.org/Our_Faith_In_Action/Justice/Advocacy/Corporate_Social-](http://www.elca.org/Our_Faith_In_Action/Justice/Advocacy/Corporate_Social-Responsibility/CCA_3_ESCI_2_Environmental_Social_Criteria_Screen.aspx)
77 [Responsibility/CCA_3_ESCI_2_Environmental_Social_Criteria_Screen.aspx](http://www.elca.org/Our_Faith_In_Action/Justice/Advocacy/Corporate_Social-Responsibility/CCA_3_ESCI_2_Environmental_Social_Criteria_Screen.aspx)

78

79 **V. Resolutions Guidelines for ELCA – Issue specific**

80 **A. Energy**

- 81 1. We support reports for the gas and oil industry, including: environmental impact assessments
82 detailing legal, regulatory risks and plans to mitigate these risks; the assumptions made in
83 deciding to proceed; the possible long-term risks to the finances and operations of
84 companies; the financial impact of accidents and spills; and the likely and/or actual impact of
85 hydraulic operations, including air, water, and soil hazards.
86 2. We support reports that ask for risk assessments and propose measures to reduce ~~the~~ risks of
87 nuclear storage.
88 3. We support reports assessing (a) the impact of MTR mining by a company’s clients on the
89 environment and (b) the adoption of a policy concerning future financing of companies
90 engaged in MTR mining or the construction of new coal-burning power plants that emit
91 carbon dioxide.
92 4. We support reports on a company’s efforts, above and beyond legal compliance, to reduce
93 environmental and health hazards associated with coal combustion waste ponds,
94 impoundments and mines, and how those efforts reduce the company’s financial and
95 operational risks.
96 5. We support requests for reporting on the development of renewable energy sources.

97

98 **B. Environmental Reporting**

- 99 6. We support proposals asking for endorsement of the ~~CERES~~ Ceres Principles¹³ and
100 preparation of sustainability reports.
101 7. We support reports identifying environmental hazards and their impact on the communities
102 ~~in which a company operates~~ as well as reports on the development of a company’s policy
103 about such hazards and their work in environmentally or culturally sensitive areas, including
104 land procurement.
105 8. We support reports on a company’s progress in implementing the reforms required under a
106 settlement with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the commitments stated in a
107 company’s CSR report.
108 9. We support reports on the effects of a company’s marketing on the purchasing practices of
109 people living in poverty and what might be done to mitigate harm.
110 10. We support reports on the policies and procedures that guide a company’s assessment of host
111 country laws and regulations with respect to their adequacy to protect human health, the
112 environment and the company’s reputation.

113

114 **C. Food/Water**

- 115 11. We support reports regarding ~~the use of antibiotics~~ antibiotic use in the food supply chain.

¹² <http://www.elca.org/corporate/environmentalscreen>

¹³ <http://www.ceres.org/Page.aspx?pid=416>

- 116 12. We support reports regarding long term sustainability in the growing procurement and
117 delivery of food, including seafood and organic products.
118 13. We support reports evaluating the impact of a company's operations on land, water usage,
119 water resources, and land as well as the company's waste management policies, including the
120 potential environmental and public health impacts of each of its company-owned plants,
121 those of its affiliates as well as proposed ventures that extract water from water-scarce areas.
122 14. We support reports on the impact of a company's hydraulic fracturing operations, including
123 reduction or elimination of hazards to air, water, and soil quality from such fracturing.
124 15. We support reports on policy options to respond to the public concerns regarding bottled
125 water, including, but not limited to, providing additional information to consumers, or further
126 modifying the production, delivery or sale of bottled water products so as to minimize
127 environmental and energy impacts.
128 16. We support reports on a company's food product supply chain, including:
129 a) Strategies to significantly reduce waste, energy and water use throughout the supply
130 chain;
131 b) Resource conservation programs and pollution prevention measures for the full product
132 life-cycle;
133 c) Labeling products for country of origin and presence of genetically modified ingredients;
134 d) Internal controls related to potential adverse impacts associated with genetically
135 engineered organisms;
136 e) Safety testing and systems to ensure identity preservation and traceability from
137 production to consumption; and
138 f) Respect for and adherence to seed saving rights of traditional agricultural communities.
139

D. Forests

- 141 17. We support reports studying ways for a company to take leadership on the environmental
142 aspects of paper procurement, including stronger national paper recovery goals, setting goals
143 for recycled content in its magazines and books, and goals for a majority of its supply chain
144 to adopt strong forest management certification procedures, and the development of a
145 sustainable paper purchasing policy. This might include reports on costs and benefits,
146 greenhouse gas impact, and implementation.
147

E. Product Safety

- 149 18. We support requests for reports on toxin exposures or policies on exposure to, the reduction
150 of and/or elimination of toxins, pesticides, and/or radioactive materials in the environment,
151 including product safety or toxicity.
152 19. We support reports on product stewardship policies, including recycling strategies.
153 20. We support reports on the implications of a policy for reducing the potential harm and the
154 number of people in danger from potential catastrophic chemical releases by increasing the
155 inherent security of a company's facilities through steps including reducing the use, storage
156 and transportation of extremely hazardous substances, re-engineering processes, and locating
157 facilities outside high-population areas.
158 21. We support reports on a company's policies on the use of nanomaterials in product
159 packaging and product safety.

160 22. We support reports on policy options to reduce consumer exposure to and increase consumer
161 awareness of mercury and any other toxins contained in a company's compact fluorescent
162 products.
163

164 **VI. Resolution guidelines for ELCA – General**

165 23. We support practices of good governance, specifically:
166 • a company having an independent chair or independent lead director;
167 • reports on policies and procedures for political contributions and expenditures (both
168 direct and indirect made with corporate funds;
169 • reports on any portion of any dues or similar payments made to any tax exempt
170 organization that is used for an expenditure or contribution which might be deemed
171 political; and
172 • guidelines or policies governing the company's political contributions and expenditures.
173
174
175
176

177
178 *Recommended by Advisory Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility, September 5, 2003*
179 *Endorsed by Division for Church in Society Board, October 24, 2003*
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184 *Approved by Church Council _____, 2010*

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1 **EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**
2 **Corporate Social Responsibility – Updated November 2007**

3
4 **Caring for Health: International Access to Pharmaceuticals Issue Paper**

5
6 **I. Background**

7 “God creates human beings as whole persons—each one a dynamic unity of body, mind, and
8 spirit. Health concerns the proper functioning and well being of the whole person” (“Caring for
9 Health: Our Shared Endeavor,” Biblical and Theological Perspectives, page 3¹). “We of the
10 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America have an enduring commitment to work for and support
11 health care for all people as a shared endeavor” (Introduction, page 2).

12
13 Bearing in mind these principles, one is obliged to consider the effects of HIV/AIDS, malaria,
14 and tuberculosis (TB) in Africa and other ~~developing~~ countries. Infectious diseases threaten to
15 reverse development gains, reduce ~~ing~~ life expectancy and cutting productivity and income.
16 ~~According to the World Health Organization in 2008 Throughout the world, 4033.4 million~~
17 ~~people globally are were living with HIV with 52.7 million new cases identified each year.~~
18 ~~Malaria affected s an estimated 300-243 million people in more than 100 countries each year in~~
19 ~~2008. Over a million people die annually from TB worldwide and TB Tuberculosis is the main~~
20 ~~leading cause of death from a single infectious agent among adults in developing countries.”~~
21 ~~among people living with HIV.~~²

22
23 Ecumenical work on the African continent (in which the ELCA participates) shows that ~~14,000~~
24 ~~nearly 2 million~~ Africans are infected ~~daily~~ annually with HIV. What will this do to the
25 continent’s society, work force, economy, political stability, and hope for the future? Nine
26 million people need antiretroviral medication to combat the disease in developing countries, yet
27 less than 5% ~~33%~~ have access to such life saving medicines.³

28
29 **II. ELCA Social Policy**

30 The ELCA social statement “Caring for Health: Our Shared Endeavor” (August 2003) develops
31 the Church’s vision of health, illness, and healing. It calls for equitable access as a matter of both
32 love and justice and for international cooperation in public health efforts, including preventing
33 and combating infectious diseases.

34
35 ~~The ELCA has been addressing the issue through advocaey, financial assistance, and service~~
36 ~~together with: Church World Service; the Washington Office on Africa; the Ecumenical~~

¹<http://www.elca.org/socialstatements/health>

²<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs104/en/> and
http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/global_health/aids/News/aidsfaq.html and <http://www.who.int/features/factfiles/tuberculosis/en/index.html> ~~http://ddp-~~
~~ext.worldbank.org/ext/GMIS/gdmis.do?siteId=2&goalId=10&menuId=LNAV01GOAL6~~ and ~~http://ddp-~~
~~ext.worldbank.org/ext/GMIS/gdmis.do?siteId=2&goalId=10&targeted=21&menuId=LNAV01GOAL6SUB1~~

³http://data.unaids.org/pub/FactSheet/2009/20091124_FS_global_en.pdf
<http://www.churchworldservice.org/FactsHaveFaces/aidsfactsheet.htm>

37 ~~Advocacy Alliance; as well as The Lutheran World Federation; and the ELCA Stand with Africa~~
38 ~~Campaign among others.~~ In 2009 the Church Council (CC09.03.23) adopted the ELCA Strategy
39 on HIV and AIDS.⁴ The strategy seeks to halt the spread of HIV, reduce stigma and
40 discrimination and reduce the conditions of poverty and the marginalization that contribute to the
41 spread of HIV. This strategy calls for the corporate social responsibility program to advocate
42 with corporations on these goals as well as achieving universal accesses. In November 2002, the
43 ELCA Church Council (CC02.11.59) ~~adopted~~ approved a shareholder resolution requesting that
44 pharmaceutical companies in which the ELCA holds corporate shares support national and
45 international efforts to make generic antiretroviral (ARV) drugs accessible to people living with
46 HIV and AIDS in countries in need.

47
48 *Compassion, Conversion, Care: Responding as churches to the HIV/AIDS pandemic; an action*
49 *plan of The Lutheran World Federation*⁵ (January 2002) develops the basis for the LWF Lutheran
50 Communion's need to share in the call to respond role in responding to the pandemic. ~~because~~
51 Simply put, the church itself has HIV/AIDS. This disease and its effects provoke a significant
52 challenge to the whole community. In its action plan, the LWF puts forth 12 actions to counter
53 HIV/AIDS which can serve also as a framework for advocacy at the governmental and corporate
54 level:

55 Gaining knowledge and raising awareness;
56 Training of leadership;
57 Connecting of experiences;
58 Ensuring gender sensitivity;
59 Telling the truth about sexuality and sexual practice;
60 Promoting and making visible church reflection processes;
61 Articulating a "prophetic presence";
62 Providing educational resources;
63 Ensuring financial resources;
64 Connecting to civil society and government;
65 Advocacy; and
66 For the healing of the world.

67 68 **III. Corporate Response**

69 Publicly held United States corporations face the pandemic in many ways. It makes good
70 business sense for companies to respond to the epidemic because of the direct impact of
71 HIV/AIDS on business. ~~resulting from~~ These impacts include increased costs, loss of
72 productivity, and overall threats to the foundations of the economies in which they operate. The
73 current and future workforce is placed at increasingly high risk as the epidemic
74 disproportionately affects people during their most productive years.⁶

75

⁴<http://www.elca.org/Our-Faith-In-Action/Justice/Poverty-Ministries/HIV-and-AIDS.aspx>

⁵http://www.lutheranworld.org/LWF_Documents/HIVAIDS-Action-plan.pdf

⁶http://www.gbcaids.com/about_why.asp

76 The global corporate community, including the pharmaceutical sector, must become part of the
77 solution to the health challenges of HIV/AIDS, especially in developing countries.

78

79 **IV. Social Criteria Investment Screens**

80 A screen is a pre-existing framework of principles specific to an issue by which a company's
81 activities are evaluated. None currently apply to this paper.

82

83 **V. Resolution Guidelines for ELCA – Issue specific**

- 84 1. We support reports about the health pandemic and economic impact on a company's
85 operations and their business strategy.
86 2. We support resolutions asking for the establishment and implementation of standards for
87 responding to the health pandemic.
88 3. We support the development, in consultation with appropriate United Nations and related
89 intergovernmental agencies, of ways to offer accessible drug treatments to people in
90 developing countries.

91

92 **VI. Resolution guidelines for ELCA – General**

- 93 4. We support practices of good governance, specifically:
94 • a company having an independent chair or independent lead director;
95 • reports on policies and procedures for political contributions and expenditures (both
96 direct and indirect made with corporate funds;
97 • reports on any portion of any dues or similar payments made to any tax exempt
98 organization that is used for an expenditure or contribution which might be deemed
99 political; and
100 • guidelines or policies governing the company's political contributions and expenditures.

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104

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105

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106

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107

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108

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109

Updated by Advisory Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility, September 10, 2010

110

Approved by Church Council _____, 2010

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Toward Renewed Christian Education in the ELCA

At the request of the Administrative Team, an audit of Christian Education within the churchwide expression of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America was undertaken by the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission (EOCM), Vocation and Education (VE) and Augsburg Fortress (AF) units

The loss of the Christian Education desk within the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission program unit and the loss of a separate position for schools and early childhood education in the Vocation and Education program unit are sad consequences of the decline in mission support within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). Augsburg Fortress, Publishers also experienced significant downsizing in recent years due to the reduction in the purchase of AF resources by ELCA congregations. These realities, however, do not mean that these vital ministries are not important. Nor does it mean that they will not have a place in the renewed mission in the ELCA.

An Historical Perspective

An historical perspective is critical: there has been a gradual diminishment of staff and attention for Christian Education for many years. In the early years of the ELCA, Christian Education was housed in the Division for Congregational Life. Staffing was robust and resources were produced for congregations (e.g., Stephen Bouman produced such a resource on one-to-one mentoring in the faith with Ted Schroeder as project manager and editor). When the former Division for Outreach and Division for Congregational Ministries were combined into EOCM, the Christian Education staff was reduced to one desk with one staff person. Related areas of work were placed within Vocation and Education (including youth and family ministry, lifelong learning networks, Book of Faith Initiative, outdoor ministry curriculum, schools and early childhood education) and became part of the inter-unit Faith Practices Team.

Critical Networks

Ecumenical networks, such as the National Council of Churches, were having little impact on what congregations, synods and the churchwide organization actually were doing. Other networks like LACE (Lutheran Association of Christian Educators), Vibrant Faith (Youth and Family Institute), seminary Christian educators, lifelong learning networks, synod learning and networks and others were actively pursuing Christian education within their organizations and were relating to congregations and synods. Staff time to nurture these networks remains limited, but VE maintains active connections to Book of Faith Initiative synod advocates, Lifelong Learning Partners, LACE and the Evangelical Lutheran Education Association.

Augsburg Fortress routinely partners with leaders from across the ELCA in the creation of faith formation resources for children, youth, adults and families. AF conducts formal market research to obtain insights on ministry needs related to faith formation and has received input from hundreds of CE leaders from across this church over the past couple of years. In addition, authorship of these resources comes from pastors, CE directors, congregational lay leaders, ELCA college and seminary faculty and churchwide staff members. In particular, the ELCA Resource Center Directors provide valuable input for AF through monthly conference calls. In addition, AF staff actively participate in a wide range of faith formation networks including LACE, the Life Long Learning Network, the Western Mission, Covenant and Eastern Cluster meetings, the Book of Faith networks, the Catechumenate consultation and more.

Faith Formation Resources

Through these partnerships, AF has created a number of faith formation resources that have been very well received. Most recently these include:

- For children: [Spark Sunday School](#) (available in classroom, lectionary or rotation formats and both print and online), [Spark Story Bible](#) and [Spark Kids Bible](#).
- For youth: [Here We Stand Confirmation 2.0](#) and [re:form](#), an ecumenical confirmation resource that is being widely selected both by ELCA congregations and full communion partner denominations.
- For adults: *Lutheran Study Bible* and over [35 Bible study resources](#) related to the Book of Faith Initiative. Three that have proven to be especially popular are [Making Sense of Scripture](#), [Making Sense of the Christian Faith](#), and [The Greatest Story](#).
- For children, youth and adults: [Fed & Forgiven](#) and Washed & Welcome, a baptism education resource to be published later this year.

Book of Faith Initiative

The Book of Faith Initiative has been addressing these matters in numerous ways. The initiative has encouraged individual congregations and organizations to evaluate the depth and breadth of their scriptural engagement and education. Particular emphasis has been given to exploring multiple ways to more creatively teach and learn the Bible in a variety of age groups—from children and youth to adults, both young and older. Synod advocates have designed and sponsored workshops to further this educational emphasis. The initiative has been working with college and seminaries to help graduates re-imagine ways to help people deepen their engagement with Scripture. It also has been working with the Lifelong Learning Network, Evangelical and Congregational Mission (EOCM), the Lutheran Association of Christian Educators (LACE), seminary clusters, the Women of the ELCA, the Catechumenate consultation sponsored by the worship section, and a variety of other networks towards furthering this goal.

Global Formation Events

The Global Mission unit's global formation events are local events designed to equip Lutherans of all ages to engage in global mission. The events, held annually in locations throughout the ELCA, seek to deepen participants' understanding of the changing context and practice of global mission and invite them to receive the gifts of Christians and churches around the world.

Faith Practices Team

As part of the "Evangelizing Congregations Missional Plan," EOCM has been shaping a faith practices initiative that now is being led by an inter-unit Faith Practices Team. This initiative emphasizes the individual and communal faith practices of the disciple of Jesus and faith communities and continues the "Call to Discipleship" and "Teach the Faith" Initiative that emerged at the turn of the century and augments the Book of Faith Initiative. The Faith Practices Team and Book of Faith Initiative leaders have been attentive to related planning in recent months.

Plans for the Future

Churchwide staff will continue to work together in consultation with these networks as we move forward within the newly restructured churchwide expression. A conversation about Christian Education has begun and has two broad foci. First, Christian Education is integral to

the Faith Practices Team, where it will be integrated both central two and in relationship with the other faith practices. Second, Christian Education will be part of the local mission strategy begun by EOCM with many partners. This work focuses on building local synod mission tables for new congregations, renewed congregations and conversation about mission support as part of the Evangelizing Congregations Missional Plan.

A conversation in April 2010 involved several bishops, EOCM, VE, several directors for evangelical mission and the leaders of Select and Vibrant Faith concerning the possibility of a national "missional school," which would bring together several aspects of the education landscape already on the ground locally, but focusing and calibrating them toward mission.

These are:

1. *Existing lay schools across the country*, such as Diakonia or long-time synodical lay schools. The consultation discussed what would it look like to have a core curriculum of basic catechesis (for example: think I-Phones with catechesis as the basic platform). Two such schools and curricula were represented at the consultation: Latino lay schools and the Northwest Wisconsin Lay School.
2. *Guidelines for Synodically Authorized Ministries*. The consultation advanced the idea of supporting and credentialing various lay ministries needed in local mission strategies by exploring an Office of Lay Evangelist. With such an approach, there would be varieties of lay ministries with invitations to various networks to produce certificate programs. For example, think I-Phones again with basic catechesis as the platform and various leaders and groups writing "apps" (e.g., Vibrant Faith for lay ministries in youth and family ministry evangelists; LACE for parish Christian Education evangelists; churchwide units for steward leader and mission developer evangelists, community outreach evangelists and advocates, and others). There would be broad partnerships with our seminaries as we develop these schools and certificate programs, but local mission will redirect our Christian Education efforts in harmony with the other faith practices.
3. *The missional school concept* came out of the Multicultural Leadership Table and is being pursued by churchwide units working together, joining this conversation with the Conference of Bishops, the aforementioned networks and partners and others. We will update the Church Council on this growing confluence of Christian Education partners moving toward local mission.

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Annual Report ELCA Campus Ministry Fall 2010

Background

Campus Ministry Policies and Procedures, Section V.B.4.b states that the churchwide Campus Ministry Team is to “provide an annual summary report to the Vocation and Education Program Committee and the Church Council.”

Campus Ministry Policies and Procedures clarify the ways in which the work of the churchwide organization, synods, Area Campus Ministry Agencies (ACMAs), and Campus Ministry Agencies (CMAs) is coordinated to advance the mission of campus ministry throughout the ELCA. Mandated annual reports from CMAs who receive churchwide and/or synodical funding provide significant data to the Churchwide Campus Ministry Team (CCMT) as it allocates financial and programmatic resources. The CCMT has developed a series of “best practices” to support *Policies and Procedures*.

Highlights

The annual report asks CMAs to summarize their yearly activities in twelve categories and provide feedback to the CCMT concerning its effectiveness and needed programmatic resources. During the past year, with the help of ELCA Research and Evaluation and on its recommendation, the annual report form has been revised to provide clearer statistical data and improved sharing of program information. This does, however, make direct comparison with previous years difficult in some categories. The number of campus ministry agencies reporting is 151.

Worship

- 33 percent of ministries report average weekly worship attendance of 6-15; 40 percent of ministries report 16-50. Nine percent report attendance over 50.
- The majority of the ministries cite worship as the center of the ministry’s community and programming life. 90 percent of ministries make provision for students to receive the sacrament at least once a week.
- “Experimentation” in worship was a recurring theme. Traditional Lutheran liturgies and site-created liturgies are the most often cited worship forms, but most ministries mention using other styles as well (for example, jazz services, Taize, country western liturgy, “emergent” worship, and “prayer around the cross” contemplative services). Ministries continue to report a desire to “go green,” attempting to use less paper by projecting worship resources. Ministries reported that an additional benefit of this decision is being able to use more imagery in worship.
- A significant number of ministries report formal or functional partnerships with area congregations, so that their students’ primary worshipping community is in the congregation. The ministry offers supplementary worship during the week, in addition to virtually all the service, educational, and fellowship programming.
- A number of ministries report difficulty in finding a suitable time for mid-week worship, citing increased student work loads and long academic days, which make it hard to find space on the schedule.

Evangelism/Outreach

- Ministries made 25,019 initial contacts with students last year. For the prior year, 23,711.
- Sites report 45 baptisms, 24 of which were adults. The prior year, 61 baptisms, of which 24 were adults.
- A recurring theme in reports is the importance of one-on-one invitation. Ministries note the importance of keeping up-to-date in electronic outreach, but many are reemphasizing personal contact

by staff, peer ministers and core group members. Fifty-three percent use peer ministers for evangelism and outreach to students.

- It is worth noting that a number of campus ministries have found a favorable reaction on campus to this church's actions on sexuality and have used these decisions to emphasize the welcome offered by the gospel in outreach to the formerly unchurched.
- Ministries continue to see service and volunteer opportunities as effective ways to invite people into communities of faith.
- Ministries are offering "seeker dialogue" events and attempting to invite into conversation people who may not join the core group. One minister notes, "Outreach does not automatically mean getting them to come; it can mean doing a better job of meeting them where they are on their spiritual journey."

Christian Education/Faith Development

- In a given week 44 percent of ministries report engaging 6-15 students in educational and faith development opportunities; 30 percent report engaging 16-50.
- Bible study for students continues to be the most often offered Christian education opportunity; 90 percent offer a Bible study. 86 percent offer topical/issue studies.
- 69 percent of ministries offer educational activities for faculty; the most popular offerings are topical/issue studies (offered by 50 percent of ministries).
- Other than the Bible, the most often mentioned resources were book studies and DVD courses.
- "Seeker" and "inquirer" opportunities appear to be a growing trend as ministries attempt to go beyond nurturing the church to reaching out to those with little previous religious instruction. Gender-specific Bible studies appear to be another growing trend.
- A major niche for many Lutheran ministries on their campuses continues to be facilitating intellectual dialogue that includes a strong faith component. Many ministries report sponsoring or co-sponsoring speakers, theologians-in-residence, forums on faith/science issues and other opportunities for discussion and dialogue across academic disciplines.

Hospitality/Community Building

- A weekly shared meal is by far the most often reported means of developing community and demonstrating hospitality, reported by 76 percent of ministries. 70 percent offer wireless Internet access. During a semester, 48 percent offer a retreat.
- 64 percent of ministries are engaged in interfaith dialogue; a third of the ministries are designated as a Safe Zone and/or Reconciling in Christ. A significant number of ministries appear to find hospitality to the GLBT community to be a niche they can fill.
- While weekend retreats are reported, it appears that finances and tight schedules have curtailed this traditional means of fostering community.
- Facilities are utilized in a variety of ways to promote a sense of community, including exam breaks with food, coffee houses, movie nights, kitchen availability for residence hall students, service projects, special parties (e.g., Luther's birthday), sheltering of the homeless and international meals with programming and discussions.
- Ministries report that increasing academic demands on students, accompanied by a growing necessity for students to work to pay basic expenses, makes offering hospitality both more important and more difficult.

Community Service

- 35 percent of ministries report that 6-15 students engaged in at least one service opportunity during the previous year, 35 percent report 16-50 and 12 percent report over 51 students, including 3.3 percent where over 150 engaged in service.

- 51 percent of ministries offered a travel service/learning opportunity that offered educational information and group building activities before the event, individual and group reflection during the event, and group discussion upon return. The prior year, 48 percent.
- 42 percent of ministries report student participation in travel/service learning opportunities not offered by the ministry.
- Ministries offered a variety of service opportunities; the most popular (in order) involved serving youth, working in shelters or food pantries, cleaning up the environment, building or repairing homes and working with the elderly. The relative emphasis on these opportunities is in keeping with reports from previous years.

Justice/Advocacy

- The topics most reported as a focus of activities or programs related to justice and advocacy were hunger, 63 percent of ministries; sexuality and gender issues, 56 percent; poverty and wealth, 52 percent; environment, 50 percent; and homelessness 49 percent. This reflects essentially the same priorities from the previous year, with a slight increase in the priority of hunger.
- Immigration (27 percent) and biomedical/health issues (22 percent) were less reported than others.
- Discussions (70 percent), educational programs (53 percent), direct action (48 percent) and speakers (44 percent) were by far the most often used activities in this area.
- Creative efforts included:
 - Community gardens to teach about hunger and nutrition.
 - A benefit for Afghanistan schools arising out of a book study of *Three Cups of Tea*.
 - A “Crop Drop” (bagging of tons of gleaned potatoes) for distribution.
 - Keeping a box for advocacy letters near the entrance of worship space and bringing it forward once a month with the offering.
 - Tasting and sales of “fair trade” items in public spots on campus.
 - An urban immersion experience where students shared experiences of the homeless.
 - A worship experience to communicate the issue of human trafficking.

Pastoral Care

- 75 percent of ministry staff provide regular office hours. 94 percent of ministries cite pastoral conversation as a means of care.
- 89 percent of ministries report rendering pastoral care/counseling via electronic means. This is a growing trend.
- 41 percent of ministries report staff serving on university “care” or “response” teams.
- The average time spent per week in pastoral care conversations is reported to be 8.7 hours
- 148 weddings and 52 funeral/memorial services were conducted. 243 couples received pre-marital counseling.
- While the vast majority of pastoral care offered is by staff, some ministries report training of peer ministers in basic listening, reflection and referral skills.
- One pastoral care outreach effort: The campus pastor sets up on campus with a sign reading, “Spiritual but not religious? I’d love to hear.” Many subsequent conversations were facilitated.

Leadership Development

- 167 students from campus ministry are currently enrolled in seminary; 169 are currently in a candidacy process. For the prior year, 218 and 198.
- 149 former campus ministry students are now volunteering in programs such as Lutheran Volunteer Corps, Peace Corps, or AmeriCorps. For the prior year, 168.
- 608 former campus ministry students (graduated within the past five years) currently serve in congregational or synodical leadership.

- 87 percent of CMAs report a student leadership team which works in partnership with staff to plan and implement the program. 86 percent report student leadership in planning worship.
- 51 percent of ministries utilize a peer ministry program. Many ministries report efforts to institute or improve the training of peer ministers.
- Commenting on the fact that a number of her alumni were represented at the 2009 Churchwide Assembly, one campus pastor wrote, “We need to get the message across to congregations that campus ministries are ‘farm teams’ for future leadership—not only rostered leaders, but lay leaders of all kinds! Campus ministry makes it possible for a 23-year-old to go out into the world—into a congregation—and serve on a council, not as a rookie, but as a seasoned council member.”

Stewardship/Fundraising

- 65 percent (prior year, 68 percent) of CMAs conduct an annual financial appeal to alumni, parents and friends of the ministry. 77 percent (82 percent) receive congregational funds. 22 percent (31 percent) raise funds through organized sales. 38 percent of ministries have endowments and 29 percent utilize planned giving. 59 percent utilize special events/programs in fundraising.
- 42 percent of staff report spending less than 10 percent of available time in fundraising. 41 percent spend 11-30 percent in fundraising. 9 percent spend 31-50 percent in fundraising. 3 percent spend over 50 percent.
- A fundraising letter is the most often used means of solicitation (70 percent), followed by a print newsletter (56 percent), e-mail/listserv (56 percent) and face-to-face contact solicitation (50 percent).
- A weak economy and flat or declining grant lines continue to be a concern for ministries. Ministries increasingly are looking to non-traditional revenue sources (e.g., special events which supplement alumni appeals, line item support in congregational budgets and program grants from synodical and churchwide sources).
- Fundraising is not targeted solely to maintenance of staff, programs and property. A significant number of ministries report doing fundraisers for Haitian relief, Lutheran Hunger Appeal, Lutheran World Relief and a variety of local charities.
- One creative approach: Alumni and friends were asked to join a “12:15 club,” praying for the ministry each day at 12:15 and making a \$15 donation each month.

Vision and Planning

- Student input into the campus ministry annual report is the most often cited way of accomplishing evaluation and planning (52 percent of CMAs). 50 percent utilize monthly review of ministry staff needs. 38 percent conduct an annual board retreat.
- 78 percent of CMAs report engaging in annual goal setting; 78 percent the previous year. 92 percent include students in that process, 84 percent involve a board and 79 percent have staff participation. Faculty, area clergy and others in the campus community are included in less than 50 percent.
- One question a ministry used to focus its visioning: “What is our ‘elevator speech’ (30 seconds to catch people’s interest in the story)?”

Ecumenical/Interfaith Cooperation

- 72 percent of CMAs report staff serving as members of an ecumenical or interfaith organization.
- The most frequently reported ways in which ministries engage in ecumenical cooperation are joint service projects (60 percent), joint worship (57 percent), shared meals (57 percent) and joint sponsorship of speakers (41 percent)
- Interfaith programs and dialogues continue to be a growing area of ministry.
- CMAs report joint sponsorship of programming with a variety of Christian groups and religious traditions, but Episcopal ministries are by far the most often noted partners.
- Programs involving Islam appear to be growing in number.

Building Relationships

- Ministries worked to develop cooperative networks during the year. 42 percent (prior year, 47 percent) reported that a staff member served as a classroom resource on campus. 35 percent (39 percent) serve on crisis teams. 50 percent (59 percent) are involved in summer orientation at their university. 23 percent (25 percent) served as an LYO resource and 31 percent (45 percent) have students involved as staff in outdoor ministries.
- The often cited ways used to communicate the ministry within the synod and to congregations are a display at synod assembly (84 percent), leading worship or youth activities in local congregations (67 percent), working with local congregations in service projects (57 percent) and submitting articles to congregational newsletters (56 percent).
- Cultivation of congregations within close proximity of regional campuses continues to be a particularly high priority for CMAs serving such institutions.
- The Lutheran Student Movement (LSM) has not received strong support from CMAs. 29 percent of CMAs report attendance at regional retreats, 22 percent have a local LSM chapter, 20 percent report attendance at national LSM gathering. [Possible explanations of these low numbers might be strained local finances, lack of regional events to attend, the rising cost of national events, and the transition in the structure of LSM-USA]

Summary and Trends

- CMAs continue to experiment with a variety of worship forms. The ongoing challenge is to offer worship that draws on the riches of the Church's liturgical tradition while finding new language and forms which can speak to an increasingly unchurched population on campus. Campus ministries reflect the larger debate around the question, "What constitutes Lutheran worship?"
- Utilization of social networking sites such as Facebook, ministry Web sites and other electronic communication is a given in campus ministry. Virtually all ministries employ these means of communication. Finding ways to steer students to these sites, so that they actually see the information posted, is a significant challenge.
- Budget cuts at many universities, arising out of a weak economy, were a major concern for CMAs. Layoffs and program changes created pastoral care opportunities with faculty and staff. Increasing tuition costs, accompanied by tighter credit and less available student aid, created stress for students. Financial concerns were by far the most cited "hot topic" on campus.
- The weak economy, along with flat-to-declining grant lines for campus ministries, made meeting ministry budgets more difficult. Long term fiscal viability of some ministries is a serious concern. Ministries seem to be responding to this challenge by cultivating closer relationships to area congregations where possible and initiating new fundraising events such as a chili cook-off or golf tournament.
- CMAs reported widely varying reaction to the Churchwide Assembly actions regarding sexuality. Some reported that the actions opened up new opportunities, while others reported that they were a distraction or hindrance to ministry. Many reported the actions were the occasion for productive conversation.
- Local community service and spring break service trips continue to be popular, but funding and scheduling service opportunities in the midst of increasing academic demands on students are continuing and growing challenges.
- CMAs most want assistance from the CCMT in stewardship and fundraising (68 percent of CMAs), board development (43 percent) and evangelism and outreach (40 percent).
- Ministries report difficulty in knowing when Lutheran students are coming to campus; the "handoff" between youth ministry and campus ministry is an area deserving attention.

- An increase in programming related to Islam appears to reflect the national debate regarding the place of non-Christian faiths in the larger society.
- During this year regional coordinators were asked to assume new duties related to campus ministry. Generally speaking, CMAs felt that these staff were as responsive as they could possibly have been (coordinators were affirmed by name), given all the other responsibilities they continued to exercise.
- *First Monday*, an electronic publication on fundraising and board development prepared by Galen Hora, was the resource most often cited as helpful. *Campus E-Source*, a monthly newsletter, was also cited as helpful by some.

No revisions to *Campus Ministry Policies and Procedures* are proposed at this time.

Progress Report on the “Stewards of Abundance” Project

“Stewards of Abundance,” a project to reduce seminarian student debt, originated with Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson’s Consultation on Seminarian Student Debt, which was first convened in May 2007. Bishop Hanson and other church and seminary leaders were becoming increasingly concerned about the perception that student debt levels among ELCA seminarians were rising rapidly and were having a significant negative impact on the placement and wellbeing of recent graduates. Among the actions that resulted from the consultation were:

- An issue of *Lutheran Partners* (25:1) featured several articles on this subject.
- The Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA made a financial commitment to funding scholarships through the Fund for Leaders in Mission.
- Candidacy committees gave renewed attention to questions of financial wellness.
- The ELCA Board of Pensions incorporated a financial wellness segment into its “Wholeness Wheel.”
- An improved seminarian health insurance plan was implemented.
- A proposal for a three-year project titled “Stewards of Abundance” was developed and submitted to the Lilly Endowment, which provided nearly \$1 million in funding in June 2009. Lilly and ELCA in-kind services and matching funds to be raised together total approximately \$2 million.

Throughout, the project seeks both to strengthen current best practices and to design new initiatives, working with the seminaries and other partners. The project has three major objectives:

- To bring forth leaders who embody financial wellness, through financial education and counseling of seminarians.
- To support theological students, through increased scholarships and strengthened financial aid programs in ELCA seminaries, colleges, and synods.
- To strengthen seminaries and the economy of theological education, through an examination of the existing system of theological education—including current efforts to improve it—with an eye to increasing both the efficiency of the system and its revenue streams, so that student costs do not escalate.

Because so much of current knowledge about this problem is anecdotal, the project has a strong research component. The knowledge gained will be of use not only to the project but to many others as well, including our ecumenical partners. Five studies have been authorized:

- Leadership Recruitment: we will learn more about how potential leaders are identified in the ELCA and how financial realities impact this process.
- M.Div. Debt and the Quality of Congregational Ministry: we will try to ascertain the relationship between debt levels of leaders and the quality of ministry they are providing in their ministries.
- Student Debt Audits: building on the work of the Auburn Center, we will conduct rigorous triennial student debt audits to discover the exact statistics of student debt. The first such audit has been completed for the seminary Class of 2006, and we are currently auditing the Class of 2009.
- Financial Wellness in Future ELCA Leaders: we are creating a tool to be used with seminarians, beginning this year, which will attempt to assess their overall financial wellness, not only their debts.
- Funding for Theological Education in the ELCA: we are developing instruments to learn more about how rostered and lay leaders perceive the costs of theological education, how they think these costs should be funded and how the church might increase awareness and ownership of its system of theological education.

The work of the project is being carried out by three tables (one for each objective), a research staff and a coordinating committee. Members of the coordinating committee are:

- Jonathan Strandjord, project director and chair of table three—strengthening seminaries
- Marilyn Smith, chair of table one—financial wellness
- Paul Hanson, chair of table two—financial support
- Kenneth Inskeep, research director
- Donald Huber, project coordinator

The tables have representation from key stakeholders in theological education and include bishops, pastors, lay leaders, seminary and college faculty and staff, and students. They are responsible for ascertaining the parameters of the problem in their respective areas and of formulating plans to alleviate it.

At the end of the first year, accomplishments include the organization and convening of the tables, which have completed their preliminary work, the launching of the research studies, and the production of several internal documents that illuminate the history and the contemporary challenges of financing quality theological education. The second year will be devoted to the production and implementation of action plans for use by the various entities—seminaries, colleges, synods and candidacy committees—that must participate if the project is to be a success.

Preliminary feedback on the project has been very positive—we have clearly “touched a nerve.” Expectations are high that significant benefits will come from our efforts. The challenge now is to design and implement programming that actually will reduce student debt loads and, thus, begin to satisfy those expectations.

Use of Bylaw 7.31.17, Ordination in Unusual Circumstances through July 2010

Called to Common Mission, an agreement to enter into full communion, was adopted by the 1999 ELCA Churchwide Assembly and by the 2000 Convention of The Episcopal Church, U.S.A. Under the agreement, which went into effect for both churches on January 1, 2001, a bishop would preside at all ordinations. In the ELCA, an ELCA synodical bishop would preside.

The assembly action to adopt *Called to Common Mission* was supported by a two-thirds majority; nevertheless, the church was divided on the issue. Discussion continued, with some calling for provisions that would allow exceptions to respect the convictions of persons who saw this agreement as a rejection of a valid stream of Lutheran heritage. The 2001 Churchwide Assembly adopted bylaw 7.31.17., which states:

For pastoral reasons in unusual circumstances, a synodical bishop may provide for the ordination by another pastor 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. 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 Division for Ministry, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.

To prepare for possible adoption of this bylaw, policies were drafted by the former Division for Ministry in consultation with the Conference of Bishops and then referred by the Church Council in April 2001 to the 2001 Churchwide Assembly for approval. The bylaw became effective upon adoption by the assembly, and the policy went into effect at that same time. The policies were amended by the Church Council in April 2005, upon recommendation of the staff in consultation with the Conference of Bishops. The amended policy is included in the "Manual of Policies and Procedures for the Management of the Rosters, Part One," page 52. The manual is available electronically in Exhibit G, Part 3.

As with all matters concerning the rosters, the goal is consistent practice across this church through churchwide policies that are applied synodically. Ordinations under the bylaw have been authorized by 24 bishops in 21 synods and eight regions. The ordinands graduated from five ELCA seminaries. There have been a few informal anecdotal reports to the Office of the Presiding Bishop (OB) and to the Vocation and Education unit (VE) that the response to requests occasionally varies from synod to synod. However seeing no clear evidence or pattern of inconsistency and, on the contrary, finding that the bylaw is functioning as intended to allow the expression of the diversity of understanding on this matter, OB and VE conclude that the present policies are generally working well and do not need further amendment. Though the policy only requires a bishop to consult with the presiding bishop if he or she is inclined to grant a request for exception under the bylaw, VE suggests that bishops consider such consultation whenever a request is received. That level of transparency would help us develop a fuller picture of the bylaw's use.

Appendix: Statistical Information

<i>Year</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Under the Bylaw</i>	
2001	311	2	0.6%
2002	285	3	1.1%
2003	306	8	2.6%
2004	266	7	2.6%
2005	280	3	1.1%
2006	297	7	2.4%
2007	296	7	2.4%
2008	333	1	0.3%
2009	287	5	1.7%
2010*	<u>137</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0.0%</u>
<i>Total</i>	<i>2810</i>	<i>43</i>	<i>1.5%</i>

*2010 figures are those reported to OS as of July 31

To get another picture of the apparent decline in ordinations under the bylaw, VE looked at the totals for each three year period, ending July 31:

<i>36 Month Period</i>	<i>Ordinations under the Bylaw</i>
Through July 2003	17
Through July 2004	18
Through July 2005	18
Through July 2006	17
Through July 2007	17
Through July 2008	17
Through July 2009	14
Through July 2010	8

The policy does not direct the recording or reporting of requests made but not granted under the bylaw, thus those numbers are not available.

Bylaws of the Deaconess Community of the ELCA

~~September 2010~~

Deleted: August, 2008

BYLAWS

of

The Deaconess Community of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

PREAMBLE OF HISTORICAL ANTECEDENTS

The Deaconess Community of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America expresses the continuity of deaconess work in the Lutheran Church in America (a) as conceived in an agreement dated January 13, 1966, among three corporations existing at that time, viz. Mary J. Drexel Home and Philadelphia Motherhouse of Deaconesses, The Baltimore Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouse and School, Inc., and the Board of College Education and Church Vocations and its successor, the Division for Professional Leadership, both of the Lutheran Church in America, and (b) as of September 7, 1965, by joining with the sisterhood previously affiliated with the Immanuel Deaconess Institute of the former Augustana Lutheran Church. This continuity is particularly defined and shaped by the actions pertaining to deaconess work of the 1978 convention of the Lutheran Church in America and by the official documents of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (16.11.B95.c.; 8/01).

ARTICLE 1: NAME AND INCORPORATION

This document records the bylaws which regulate the corporation known as The Deaconess Community of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America which will be referred to herein as the "Deaconess Community." The corporation so named was formed by decree of the Court of Common Pleas of Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, dated August 5, 1966, approving the articles of incorporation. The decree, together with the articles of incorporation, were recorded on August 8, 1966, in the Office for the Recording of Deeds for Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, in Charter Book 14, at pages 301 and 302. The Deaconess Community, through corporate merger, is successor to The Baltimore Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouse and School, Inc., and The Mary J. Drexel Home and Philadelphia Motherhouse of Deaconesses. In 1988, the name was changed from the Deaconess Community of the Lutheran Church in America to The Deaconess Community of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

ARTICLE 2: CHURCH RELATIONSHIP

The Deaconess Community, affirmed by and under the direction of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, referred to herein as the "ELCA," is subject to policies established by that church including actions of the ELCA's Vocation and Education Unit taken under the official documents of the church.

ARTICLE 3: PURPOSE, MEMBERSHIP, AND FUNCTIONS

- 3.1 The Deaconess Community has been formed in order that skilled and committed women serving through 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

Bylaws of the Deaconess Community of the ELCA

~~September 2010~~

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situation, and to extend the ministry of the Gospel to all the world.

- 3.2 The Deaconess Community consists of women who have been consecrated to and continue as deaconesses in the ELCA or in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, referred to herein as the "ELCIC" together with those of its candidates who have met preparatory standards and publicly participated in the service of mutual affirmation known as investiture. Members are committed to full-time service and are strengthened for service through the Deaconess Community. If full-time service is not feasible, a deaconess may serve in an appropriate position on a part-time basis, as provided in the "Standards for Members of the Deaconess Community of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America," which will be referred to herein as the "standards."
- 3.3 In order to proclaim the Word directly and indirectly through the church's specialized ministries, the Deaconess Community shall support its members as follows:
 - 3.3.1 encourage spiritual, professional, educational and personal growth;
 - 3.3.2 provide mutual support in call, service and retirement;
 - 3.3.3 recommend to the ELCA's Vocation and Education Unit the standards; and
 - 3.3.4 enter into arrangements with the ELCA through the Vocation and Education Unit for promotion and interpretation of deaconess work throughout the church and for the recruitment and education of candidates.

ARTICLE 4: THE DEACONESS ASSEMBLY

- 4.1 The Deaconess Assembly is the gathering of the members of the Deaconess Community. Membership in good standing shall be defined in the standards. Voice and vote in sessions of the Deaconess Assembly shall be limited to those who are members in good standing. All members are obligated to attend sessions of the Deaconess Assembly unless duly excused.
- 4.2 The Deaconess Assembly shall be the highest authority within the Deaconess Community.
- 4.3 The Deaconess Assembly shall meet annually to review the work of the Deaconess Community and to plan for the future; its programs shall also include elements of inspiration, fellowship and education.
- 4.4 The Deaconess Assembly shall be called into session at a time and place determined by it or by the board of directors.
- 4.5 The directing deaconess shall chair sessions of the Deaconess Assembly. A vice chairperson and a secretary for each session of the Deaconess Assembly may be approved by the board of directors from among the members in good standing of the Deaconess Community.
- 4.6 The members present shall constitute a quorum provided that the entire membership has been notified by mail at least two months prior to the opening of a session.
- 4.7 The Deaconess Assembly shall elect members of the board of directors as provided in Article 5.
- 4.8 The executive director of the ELCA's Vocation and Education Unit shall be invited to attend

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each meeting of the Deaconess Assembly.

- 4.9 Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, shall be the governing parliamentary law of the Deaconess Assembly except as provided in these bylaws.

ARTICLE 5: THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- 5.1 The board of directors shall be elected by the Deaconess Assembly, and shall consist of six deaconesses and five other persons from the membership of the ELCA and/or the ELCIC. Biographical information, including the gifts and skills each prospective director offers to the board, shall be given to the Assembly so that the Assembly may make an informed vote. The nomination slate presented by the Committee on Governance may consist of two candidates for each deaconess position and a single candidate for each non-deaconess position. The executive director of the ELCA's Program Unit on Vocation and Education, or the director's designee; the directing deaconess, the director of vocation and education, and the executive director shall have seat and voice on the board of directors.

5.1.1 A majority of the voting members shall constitute a quorum for any board meeting.

- 5.2 The term of a director shall be four years, and the terms shall be arranged so that approximately half of the directors are elected every two years. No director shall serve more than two terms consecutively. Terms of newly elected directors shall begin on January 1st of the calendar year following their election, except that a person selected to fill a vacancy *ad interim* shall begin upon his or her acceptance of selection. Outgoing directors shall continue in office until their elected successors begin service on January 1st of the calendar year following their election.

5.2.1 Interim appointments. When a board vacancy is to be filled between elections, the Committee on Governance shall select a candidate to fill the unexpired term, and shall submit that person's name to the Deaconess Community for a mail vote. A simple majority of members in good standing is required to affirm the appointment. In computing an interim appointee's eligibility for continued board membership, service which precedes a full term without interruption shall be disregarded if less than half a term.

- 5.3 The board of directors shall be accountable to the Deaconess Assembly for the management of the affairs of the Deaconess Community and to the ELCA for policies relating to the Deaconess Community. The board of directors shall act for the Deaconess Community in the interim between sessions of the Deaconess Assembly, but may not act contrary to the Deaconess Assembly's decisions or those of the ELCA. Specifically, the board of directors shall

- 5.3.1 carry out corporate responsibilities on behalf of the Deaconess Community;
- 5.3.2 have power to authorize contracts;
- 5.3.3 plan and provide for the conduct and evaluation of all Deaconess Community programs including interpretation and the recruitment and education of candidates, and cooperate therein as appropriate with the ELCA's Vocation and Education Unit and synodical candidacy committees of the ELCA and the ELCIC;

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- 5.3.4 provide general oversight for the service of all members and develop guidelines for their temporal support;
- 5.3.5 oversee the responsibilities of the Deaconess Community to those retired under the cooperative plan;
- 5.3.6 exercise responsibility for all properties owned or leased by the Deaconess Community;
- 5.3.7 establish policy for the management of the financial resources of the Deaconess Community;
- 5.3.8 adopt annual current budgets which project no deficit spending;
- 5.3.9 determine staff structure for the Deaconess Community, and in consultation with the senior leadership team, employ executive and program staff;
- 5.3.10 determine the inability of a director to carry out his or her responsibilities, i.e. is absent from three consecutive meetings of the board of directors without cause;
- 5.3.11 determine the inability of the directing deaconess or any executive or program staff elected by the board of directors to carry out his or her responsibilities (see 5.4);
- 5.3.12 report annually to the members of the Deaconess Community and to the ELCA's Vocation and Education Unit;
- 5.3.13 guide planning for sessions of the Deaconess Assembly;
- 5.3.14 carry out such other responsibilities as the Deaconess Assembly may assign from time to time.

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5.4 Should the directing deaconess die, resign or be unable to serve, its chairperson shall convene the board of directors to arrange for the appropriate care of the responsibilities of the directing deaconess until an election of a new directing deaconess can be held or until the directing deaconess is able to serve again. The term of the successor directing deaconess, elected by the next Deaconess Assembly, or a special meeting of the Deaconess Assembly called for the purpose of election, shall be four years, with the subsequent election to take place at the assembly closest to the expiration of such a term.

The executive committee of the board of directors shall determine whether the directing deaconess is unable to serve; the directing deaconess may appeal the decision of the executive committee by requesting a hearing before the board of directors. A meeting to determine the ability of the directing deaconess to serve shall be called upon the request of at least two members of the executive committee. Prior notice of the meeting shall be given to the directing deaconess.

Should a senior leadership team or program staff person die, resign or be unable to serve, the remaining senior leadership team, with the approval of the executive committee of the board of directors, shall arrange for the appropriate care of the responsibilities of the staff person until a new staff person can be appointed or until the staff person is able to serve again.

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The dismissal of the directing deaconess or a member of the executive or program staff may be effected:

- a. for willful disregard or violation of the bylaws of this Community;
- b. for such physical or mental disability as renders the directing deaconess or staff person incapable of performing the duties of office; or
- c. for such conduct as would subject the directing deaconess or staff person to disciplinary action as a member of the roster of the ELCA or as a member of a congregation of this church.

Proceedings for dismissal of the directing deaconess shall be instituted at petition by:

- a. the board of directors on a vote of at least two-thirds of its members; and
- b. the Deaconess Assembly on a vote of at least two-thirds of its members.

- 5.5 The officers of the board of directors shall be a chairperson, a vice chairperson, a secretary and a treasurer. ~~They shall be elected biennially at the last board meeting of each calendar year in which directors are elected by the Deaconess Assembly. Their respective terms shall begin the first day of the following calendar year, and shall expire no later than the conclusion of their respective terms on the board.~~ Their duties and responsibilities shall be those customary to their respective offices and as set forth in Article 6, below.

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5.5.1 The treasurer may be chosen from outside the membership of the board of directors if necessary to provide for the requisite financial expertise. ~~If so chosen, he or she shall also be elected biennially by the directors at the last board meeting of each calendar year in which directors are elected by the Deaconess Assembly. A treasurer chosen from outside the board membership shall not serve more than four two-year terms consecutively. An outside treasurer shall~~ have seat and voice, but not vote, in meetings of the board of directors and of the executive committee.

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- 5.6 The board of directors shall meet twice annually, and at such other times as it may deem necessary. The chairperson or the executive committee may call meetings of the board of directors. The chairperson shall call a meeting when requested to do so in writing by five members of the board of directors or by a majority of members in good standing of the Deaconess Community. Notice of a meeting shall be mailed at least three weeks prior to its meeting date.

ARTICLE 6: OFFICERS

- 6.1 Vacancies
A vacancy in any office may be filled by the board of directors for the unexpired portion of the term.
- 6.2 The Chairperson
The Chairperson shall
- 6.2.1 preside at all meetings of the board of directors and of the executive committee;
 - 6.2.2 be responsible for the development of an agenda for each meeting;
 - 6.2.3 be responsible that the provisions of these bylaws are observed and that the enactments of the board of directors are carried out;

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- 6.2.4 have general charge of and control over the affairs and property of the corporation and general supervision over its officers and agents, subject to the direction of the board of directors;
 - 6.2.5 have seat and voice in all meetings of each standing committee and of all other committees of the board; and
 - 6.2.6 have such other powers and perform such other duties as may be incidental to this office, as are given by these bylaws, or as from time to time may be assigned by the board.
- 6.3 The Vice-Chairperson
The Vice-Chairperson shall:
- 6.3.1 in the absence of the chairperson preside at all meetings of the board of directors and the executive committee; and
 - 6.3.2 perform such other duties as from time to time may be assigned by the board of directors or the chairperson.
- 6.4 The Secretary
The Secretary shall:
- 6.4.1 record the minutes of the meeting of the board of directors and the executive committee;
 - 6.4.2 file with the minutes of the board of directors or the executive committee, as the case may be, the resolutions by which any actions taken without a meeting are authorized, together with the consents to such action;
 - 6.4.3 transmit promptly a copy of the minutes of each meeting of, and a copy of each resolution by which action is taken without a meeting by the board of directors or the executive committee to each director
 - 6.4.4 cause notices to be duly given in accordance with the provision of these bylaws and as required by law;
 - 6.4.5 see that all reports and other documents and records required by law are properly filed and kept;
 - 6.4.6 have custody of the records and seal of the corporation and cause the seal to be affixed as authorized; and
 - 6.4.7 have such other powers and perform such other duties as are given by the board of directors or the chairperson.
- 6.5 The Treasurer
The Treasurer shall:
- 6.5.1 be bonded;
 - 6.5.2 be the chief fiscal officer of the board;
 - 6.5.3 have responsibility for the receipt and distribution of all moneys, and for the safekeeping of moneys and securities, of the corporation;
 - 6.5.4 keep an accurate account of all financial transactions and report thereon at each meeting of the board of directors; and
 - 6.5.5 have such other powers and perform such other duties as from time to time may be assigned by the board of directors or the chairperson.

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- 6.6. Resignations
Any officer may resign at any time by giving notice in writing to the board of directors or the chairperson. Unless otherwise specified in the notice, the resignation shall take effect upon delivery.
- 6.7. Removal
Any officer or agent may be removed at any time, either for or without cause, by the board of directors.
- 6.8. Signing Authority
Each contract or other financial instrument shall be executed by any one of the following: directing deaconess, executive director, chairperson, vice chairperson, or treasurer. If the amount of any such instrument exceeds FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$5,000.00), it shall be executed by any two of the above.

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ARTICLE 7: COMMITTEES

- 7.1. Committees of the board of directors shall be appointed by the chairperson with the concurrence of the board of directors, except for the executive committee. Each committee shall be chaired by a member of the board of directors and, except for the executive committee, may include non-board members for their special competence, experience, and interest. At least two members of each committee shall be members in good standing of the Deaconess Community.
- 7.2. The board of directors shall have general oversight of the work of each committee, establishing policy as appropriate. Each committee shall report, after each meeting, to the board of directors.
- 7.3. The executive committee shall consist of the officers except that, if the treasurer is not a member of the board of directors, one additional "at large" director shall be elected to the committee by the board of directors. This committee shall have the power to act on behalf of the board of directors in instances requiring interim action, except that it shall not have power to modify any prior action of the board of directors. The executive committee shall also act as the Personnel Committee of the board. Actions of the executive committee shall be reported by mail to the entire board of directors within ten days.
- 7.4. The Committee on Finance and Budget shall consist of at least two directors and three other persons chosen for their competence in finance. The treasurer shall be included in its membership. This committee shall report to the board of directors on all matters concerning fiscal management and shall be responsible for the presentation of annual budgets to the board. It shall supervise the investments of the Deaconess Community under policies adopted by the board of directors.
- 7.5. The Committee on Community Life shall consist of at least one director and four other persons. In cooperation with the directing deaconess, it shall seek to enhance the life of the Deaconess Community through programs and events which emphasize spiritual growth, nurture, support, and fellowship among the members. It shall serve in an advisory

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relationship to the directing deaconess in matters related to community life, and shall appoint the planning committee for meetings of the Deaconess Assembly.

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7.6 ~~The Committee on Vocation and Education shall consist of at least one director and three other persons. This committee shall deal with all matters related to the candidacy process and continuing education for the Deaconess Community. The director of vocation and education shall have seat and voice on this committee.~~

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7.7 ~~The Committee on Communications shall consist of at least one director and three other persons. This committee shall develop a communication plan and oversee its implementation. The director of communication shall be included in its membership.~~

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7.8 ~~The Committee on Mission Support shall consist of at least one director and four other persons. It shall assist the Deaconess Community in seeking, responding to, evaluating, and selecting mission support opportunities that will facilitate, fulfill, and further its vision and mission.~~

7.9 ~~The Committee on Governance shall consist of at least one director and four other persons. It shall deal with all matters relating to a) the creating and updating of the Deaconess Community's governing documents; b) the screening and selection of candidates for election to positions on the board of directors; c) the screening and selection of candidates for election as directing deaconess; and d) recommendations for appointment of standing committee chairs and members.~~

7.10 ~~The board of directors may establish other committees from time to time as it deems necessary.~~

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ARTICLE 8: STAFF

8.1 The Deaconess Assembly shall elect a directing deaconess for a term of four years, renewable by election for one additional term. The term of office shall ordinarily begin ninety (90) days following election. The directing deaconess shall be chosen from among those who are members in good standing of the Deaconess Community and who are consecrated deaconesses.

8.2 The ~~three senior leadership team members shall be responsible to the Deaconess Community and board of directors for their respective leadership accountabilities. Each shall have seat and voice on all committees and the board of directors, providing assistance, counsel and guidance as appropriate. They shall work in partnership with the board, program staff, and one another to provide leadership, vision, and direction for the organization.~~

8.2.1 ~~The directing deaconess shall be elected by the Deaconess Community, with responsibility for overseeing the pastoral and spiritual care of the individual sisters and the Community as a whole. She serves as the Deaconess Community's ambassador and liaison to the church and the world.~~

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8.2.2 ~~The executive director shall be appointed by the board of directors with responsibility for oversight of the management and administration of the finances, programs and operations of the Deaconess Community. The executive director hires, supervises and evaluates support staff, and develops and implements organizational strategy.~~

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8.2.3 The director of vocation and education shall be appointed by the board of directors with responsibility for implementing, in cooperation with the Committee on Vocation and Education, the candidacy process and continuing education for candidates and deaconesses. The director of vocation and education serves as the Community's primary liaison with the ELCA and ELCIC directors for candidacy, seminaries, and synod staffs, to interpret and inform them regarding the Community's candidacy process.

- 8.3 In consultation with the senior leadership team, the board of directors shall periodically review all senior leadership team position descriptions, outlining specific responsibilities and accountabilities. The board of directors shall provide for periodic performance evaluation of the senior leadership team. In consultation with the board of directors, the executive director shall periodically review all support staff position descriptions, outlining specific responsibilities and accountabilities. The executive director shall provide for performance evaluation of all support staff.

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ARTICLE 9: FISCAL MATTERS

- 9.1 The fiscal year shall be the calendar year.
- 9.2 The Deaconess Community shall not incur deficits in current operations.
- 9.3 The support of retired deaconesses who were admitted to the cooperative plan prior to July 1, 1978, and who served under it throughout their years in the diaconate shall have priority in the allocation of the financial resources of the Deaconess Community.
- 9.4 The sale or purchase of real estate, the encumbrance of assets exceeding FIFTY THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$50,000.00), and the financing of capital improvements exceeding FIFTY THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$50,000.00), shall require approval by two-thirds of votes cast by the Deaconess Assembly or by two-thirds of votes cast by mail from the members in good standing of the Deaconess Community.
- 9.5 No part of the net earnings of the corporation shall inure to the benefit of any private individual, corporation or other organization. No substantial part of the activities of the corporation shall be to carry on propaganda, or otherwise attempt to influence legislation. The corporation shall not participate in, or intervene in any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office, including publishing or distributing statements for the candidate.

ARTICLE 10: INDEMNIFICATION

To the full extent permitted from time to time by law, each person who is or was made or threatened to be made a party to any proceeding by reason of the present or former capacity of that person as a member, director, officer, employee, or committee member of this church shall be indemnified against judgments, penalties, fines, settlements, excise taxes, and reasonable attorneys fees and disbursements incurred by that person in connection with the proceeding. This Deaconess Community may purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of itself or any person entitled to

indemnification pursuant to this chapter against any liability asserted against and incurred by this Deaconess Community or by such other person in or arising from a capacity described above.

ARTICLE 11: DISSOLUTION

Should the corporation cease to act and be dissolved, all of its property and assets remaining after the payment of its liabilities shall be paid and distributed to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, a Minnesota nonprofit corporation, or its successor or assigns, provided, however, that payment shall be made hereunder only to corporations, trusts, foundations, or other organizations which are organized and operated exclusively for charitable or religious purposes and which shall then be exempt from Federal income tax under Section 501 (a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended, as organizations described in Section 501 (c) (3) thereof (references to include corresponding provisions of any future revenue law).

ARTICLE 12: AMENDMENTS

- 12.1 Amendments to these bylaws may be presented: (a) by the board of directors or (b) in writing by five members in good standing of the Deaconess Community. When presented by five members, amendments shall be referred immediately to the board of directors which shall promptly submit its recommendations thereon to the Deaconess Assembly if it is in session or otherwise in writing to the members of the Deaconess Community immediately following the next meeting of the board of directors.
- 12.2 Amendments to Articles 1, 2, 3, 4.1, and 9 shall be adopted by majority vote of the Deaconess Assembly. Amendments to other articles may be adopted by the same procedure or by mail vote with approval by two-thirds of the members in good standing of the Deaconess Community.

- 12.3 Before becoming effective, all amendments shall be submitted, through the ELCA's Program Unit for Vocation and Education, to the ELCA Church Council or its executive committee for approval.

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As adopted by the Deaconess Community of the Lutheran Church in America,
In Assembly, December 30, 1978

And

As amended October 1, 1994, by the Deaconess Community of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

And

As amended May 16, 2004, by the Deaconess Assembly, approved by the Division for Ministry Board, June 2, 2004

And

As amended by the Deaconess Assembly, May 6, 2006 and approved by the ELCA Church Council Executive Committee July 28, 2006. **EC06.07.25**. Note: The ELCA Office of the Secretary interprets the Community's amended bylaws to mean that all amendments are to be submitted

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through the Vocation and Education unit to the Church Council or its Executive Committee for approval."

And

As amended by the Deaconess Assembly, April 26, 2008 and approved by the ELCA Church Council Executive Committee July 25, 2008. **EC08.07.16b**. Note: The ELCA Office of the Secretary interprets the Community's amended bylaws to mean that all amendments are to be submitted through the Vocation and Education unit to the Church Council or its Executive Committee for approval."

And

As amended by the Deaconess Assembly, September 29, 2010 and approved by (tbd)

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Bylaws of the Deaconess Community of the ELCA

September 2010

BYLAWS
of

The Deaconess Community of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

PREAMBLE OF HISTORICAL ANTECEDENTS

The Deaconess Community of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America expresses the continuity of deaconess work in the Lutheran Church in America (a) as conceived in an agreement dated January 13, 1966, among three corporations existing at that time, viz. Mary J. Drexel Home and Philadelphia Motherhouse of Deaconesses, The Baltimore Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouse and School, Inc., and the Board of College Education and Church Vocations and its successor, the Division for Professional Leadership, both of the Lutheran Church in America, and (b) as of September 7, 1965, by joining with the sisterhood previously affiliated with the Immanuel Deaconess Institute of the former Augustana Lutheran Church. This continuity is particularly defined and shaped by the actions pertaining to deaconess work of the 1978 convention of the Lutheran Church in America and by the official documents of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (16.11.B95.c.; 8/01).

ARTICLE 1: NAME AND INCORPORATION

This document records the bylaws which regulate the corporation known as The Deaconess Community of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America which will be referred to herein as the "Deaconess Community." The corporation so named was formed by decree of the Court of Common Pleas of Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, dated August 5, 1966, approving the articles of incorporation. The decree together with the articles of incorporation were recorded on August 8, 1966, in the Office for the Recording of Deeds for Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, in Charter Book 14, at pages 301 and 302. The Deaconess Community, through corporate merger, is successor to The Baltimore Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouse and School, Inc., and The Mary J. Drexel Home and Philadelphia Motherhouse of Deaconesses. In 1988, the name was changed from the Deaconess Community of the Lutheran Church in America to The Deaconess Community of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

ARTICLE 2: CHURCH RELATIONSHIP

The Deaconess Community, affirmed by and under the direction of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America referred to herein as the "ELCA," is subject to policies established by that church including actions of the ELCA's Vocation and Education Unit taken under the official documents of the church.

ARTICLE 3: PURPOSE, MEMBERSHIP, AND FUNCTIONS

- 3.1 The Deaconess Community has been formed in order that skilled and committed women serving through 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.
- 3.2 The Deaconess Community consists of women who have been consecrated to and continue

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as deaconesses in the ELCA or in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, referred to herein as the "ELCIC" together with those of its candidates who have met preparatory standards and publicly participated in the service of mutual affirmation known as investiture. Members are committed to full-time service and are strengthened for service through the Deaconess Community. If full-time service is not feasible, a deaconess may serve in an appropriate position on a part-time basis, as provided in the "Standards for Members of the Deaconess Community of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America," which will be referred to herein as the "standards."

- 3.3 In order to proclaim the Word directly and indirectly through the church's specialized ministries, the Deaconess Community shall support its members as follows:
- 3.3.1 encourage spiritual, professional, educational and personal growth;
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ARTICLE 4: THE DEACONESS ASSEMBLY

- 4.1 The Deaconess Assembly is the gathering of the members of the Deaconess Community. Membership in good standing shall be defined in the standards. Voice and vote in sessions of the Deaconess Assembly shall be limited to those who are members in good standing. All members are obligated to attend sessions of the Deaconess Assembly unless duly excused.
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- 4.6 The members present shall constitute a quorum provided that the entire membership has been notified by mail at least two months prior to the opening of a session.
- 4.7 The Deaconess Assembly shall elect members of the board of directors as provided in Article 5.
- 4.8 The executive director of the ELCA's Vocation and Education Unit shall be invited to attend each meeting of the Deaconess Assembly.
- 4.9 Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, shall be the governing parliamentary law of the Deaconess Assembly except as provided in these bylaws.

ARTICLE 5: THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- 5.1 The board of directors shall be elected by the Deaconess Assembly, and shall consist of six deaconesses and five other persons from the membership of the ELCA and/or the ELCIC. Biographical information, including the gifts and skills each prospective director offers to the board, shall be given to the Assembly so that the Assembly may make an informed vote. The nomination slate presented by the Governance Committee may consist of two candidates for each deaconess position and a single candidate for each non-deaconess position. The executive director of the ELCA's Program Unit on Vocation and Education, or the director's designee; the directing deaconess, the director of vocation and education, and the executive director, shall have seat and voice on the board of directors.
- 5.1.1 A majority of the voting members shall constitute a quorum for any board meeting.
- 5.2 The term of a director shall be four years, and the terms shall be arranged so that approximately half of the directors are elected every two years. No director shall serve more than two terms consecutively. Terms of newly elected directors shall begin on January 1st of the calendar year following their election, except that a person selected to fill a vacancy ad interim shall begin upon his or her acceptance of selection. Outgoing directors shall continue in office until their elected successors begin service on January 1st of the calendar year following their election.
- 5.2.1 Interim appointments. When a board vacancy is to be filled between elections, the Committee on Governance shall select a candidate to fill the unexpired term and submit that person's name to the Deaconess Community for a mail vote. A simple majority of members in good standing is required to affirm the appointment. In computing an interim appointee's eligibility for continued board membership, service which precedes a full term without interruption shall be disregarded if less than half a term.
- 5.3 The board of directors shall be accountable to the Deaconess Assembly for the management of the affairs of the Deaconess Community and to the ELCA for policies relating to the Deaconess Community. The board of directors shall act for the Deaconess Community in the interim between sessions of the Deaconess Assembly, but may not act contrary to the Deaconess Assembly's decisions or those of the ELCA. Specifically, the board of directors shall
- 5.3.1 carry out corporate responsibilities on behalf of the Deaconess Community;
- 5.3.2 have power to authorize contracts;
- 5.3.3 plan and provide for the conduct and evaluation of all Deaconess Community programs including interpretation and the recruitment and education of candidates, and cooperate therein as appropriate with the ELCA's Vocation and Education Unit and synodical candidacy committees of the ELCA and the ELCIC;
- 5.3.4 provide general oversight for the service of all members and develop guidelines

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- for their temporal support;
- 5.3.5 oversee the responsibilities of the Deaconess Community to those retired under the cooperative plan;
 - 5.3.6 exercise responsibility for all properties owned or leased by the Deaconess Community;
 - 5.3.7 establish policy for the management of the financial resources of the Deaconess Community;
 - 5.3.8 adopt annual current budgets which project no deficit spending;
 - 5.3.9 determine staff structure for the Deaconess Community, and in consultation with the senior leadership team, employ executive and program staff;
 - 5.3.10 determine the inability of a director to carry out his or her responsibilities, i.e. is absent from three consecutive meetings of the board of directors without cause;
 - 5.3.11 determine the inability of the directing deaconess or any executive or program staff elected by the board of directors to carry out his or her responsibilities (see 5.4);
 - 5.3.12 report annually to the members of the Deaconess Community and to the ELCA's Vocation and Education Unit;
 - 5.3.13 guide planning for sessions of the Deaconess Assembly;
 - 5.3.14 carry out such other responsibilities as the Deaconess Assembly may assign from time to time.
- 5.4 Should the directing deaconess die, resign or be unable to serve, its chairperson shall convene the board of directors to arrange for the appropriate care of the responsibilities of the directing deaconess until an election of a new directing deaconess can be held or until the directing deaconess is able to serve again. The term of the successor directing deaconess, elected by the next Deaconess Assembly, or a special meeting of the Deaconess Assembly called for the purpose of election, shall be four years, with the subsequent election to take place at the assembly closest to the expiration of such a term.
- The executive committee of the board of directors shall determine whether the directing deaconess is unable to serve; the directing deaconess may appeal the decision of the executive committee by requesting a hearing before the board of directors. A meeting to determine the ability of the directing deaconess to serve shall be called upon the request of at least two members of the executive committee. Prior notice of the meeting shall be given to the directing deaconess.
- Should a senior leadership team or program staff person die, resign, or be unable to serve, the remaining senior leadership team, with the approval of the executive committee of the board of directors, shall arrange for the appropriate care of the responsibilities of the staff person until a new staff person can be appointed or until the staff person is able to serve again.

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The dismissal of the directing deaconess or a member of the executive or program staff may be effected:

- a. for willful disregard or violation of the bylaws of this Community;
- b. for such physical or mental disability as renders the directing deaconess or staff person incapable of performing the duties of office; or
- c. for such conduct as would subject the directing deaconess or staff person to disciplinary action as a member of the roster of the ELCA or as a member of a congregation of this church.

Proceedings for dismissal of the directing deaconess shall be instituted at petition by:

- a. the board of directors on a vote of at least two-thirds of its members; and
- b. the Deaconess Assembly on a vote of at least two-thirds of its members.

- 5.5 The officers of the board of directors shall be a chairperson, a vice chairperson, a secretary and a treasurer. They shall be elected biennially at the last board meeting of each calendar year in which directors are elected by the Deaconess Assembly. Their respective terms shall begin the first day of the following calendar year, and shall expire no later than the conclusion of their respective terms on the board. Their duties and responsibilities shall be those customary to their respective offices and as set forth in Article 6, below.

5.5.1 The treasurer may be chosen from outside the membership of the board of directors if necessary to provide for the requisite financial expertise. If so chosen, he or she shall also be elected biennially by the directors at the last board meeting of each calendar year in which directors are elected by the Deaconess Assembly. A treasurer chosen from outside the board membership shall not serve more than four two-year terms consecutively. An outside treasurer shall have seat and voice, but not vote, in meetings of the board of directors and of the executive committee.

- 5.6 The board of directors shall meet twice annually, and at such other times as it may deem necessary. The chairperson or the executive committee may call meetings of the board of directors. The chairperson shall call a meeting when requested to do so in writing by five members of the board of directors or by a majority of members in good standing of the Deaconess Community. Notice of a meeting shall be mailed at least three weeks prior to its meeting date.

ARTICLE 6: OFFICERS

- 6.1 Vacancies
A vacancy in any office may be filled by the board of directors for the unexpired portion of the term.
- 6.2 The Chairperson
The Chairperson shall
- 6.2.1 preside at all meetings of the board of directors and of the executive committee;
 - 6.2.2 be responsible for the development of an agenda for each meeting;
 - 6.2.3 be responsible that the provisions of these bylaws are observed and that the enactments of the board of directors are carried out;

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- 6.2.4 have general charge of and control over the affairs and property of the corporation and general supervision over its officers and agents, subject to the direction of the board of directors;
 - 6.2.5 have seat and voice in all meetings of each standing committee and of all other committees of the board; and
 - 6.2.6 have such other powers and perform such other duties as may be incidental to this office, as are given by these bylaws, or as from time to time may be assigned by the board.
- 6.3 The Vice-Chairperson
The Vice-Chairperson shall:
- 6.3.1 in the absence of the chairperson preside at all meetings of the board of directors and the executive committee; and
 - 6.3.2 perform such other duties as from time to time may be assigned by the board of directors or the chairperson.
- 6.4 The Secretary
The Secretary shall:
- 6.4.1 record the minutes of the meeting of the board of directors and the executive committee;
 - 6.4.2 file with the minutes of the board of directors or the executive committee, as the case may be, the resolutions by which any actions taken without a meeting are authorized, together with the consents to such action;
 - 6.4.3 transmit promptly a copy of the minutes of each meeting of, and a copy of each resolution by which action is taken without a meeting by the board of directors or the executive committee to each director
 - 6.4.4 cause notices to be duly given in accordance with the provision of these bylaws and as required by law;
 - 6.4.5 see that all reports and other documents and records required by law are properly filed and kept;
 - 6.4.6 have custody of the records and seal of the corporation and cause the seal to be affixed as authorized; and
 - 6.4.7 have such other powers and perform such other duties as are given by the board of directors or the chairperson.
- 6.5 The Treasurer
The Treasurer shall:
- 6.5.1 be bonded;
 - 6.5.2 be the chief fiscal officer of the board;
 - 6.5.3 have responsibility for the receipt and distribution of all moneys, and for the safekeeping of moneys and securities, of the corporation;
 - 6.5.4 keep an accurate account of all financial transactions and report thereon at each meeting of the board of directors; and
 - 6.5.5 have such other powers and perform such other duties as from time to time may be assigned by the board of directors or the chairperson.

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- 6.6. Resignations
Any officer may resign at any time by giving notice in writing to the board of directors or the chairperson. Unless otherwise specified in the notice, the resignation shall take effect upon delivery.
- 6.7 Removal
Any officer or agent may be removed at any time, either for or without cause, by the board of directors.
- 6.8 Signing Authority
Each contract or other financial instrument shall be executed by any one of the following: directing deaconess, executive director, chairperson, vice chairperson, or treasurer. If the amount of any instrument exceeds FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$5,000.00), it shall be executed by any two of the above.

ARTICLE 7: COMMITTEES

- 7.1 Committees of the board of directors shall be appointed by the chairperson with the concurrence of the board of directors, except for the executive committee. Each committee shall be chaired by a member of the board of directors and, except for the executive committee, may include non-board members for their special competence, experience, and interest. At least two members of each committee shall be members in good standing of the Deaconess Community.
- 7.2 The board of directors shall have general oversight of the work of each committee, establishing policy as appropriate. Each committee shall report, after each meeting, to the board of directors.
- 7.3 The executive committee shall consist of the officers except that, if the treasurer is not a member of the board of directors, one additional "at large" director shall be elected to the committee by the board of directors. This committee shall have the power to act on behalf of the board of directors in instances requiring interim action, except that it shall not have power to modify any prior action of the board of directors. The executive committee shall also act as the Personnel Committee of the board. Actions of the executive committee shall be reported by mail to the entire board of directors within ten days.
- 7.4 The Committee on Finance and Budget shall consist of at least two directors and three other persons chosen for their competence in finance. The treasurer shall be included in its membership. This committee shall report to the board of directors on all matters concerning fiscal management and shall be responsible for the presentation of annual budgets to the board. It shall supervise the investments of the Deaconess Community under policies adopted by the board of directors.
- 7.5 The Committee on Community Life shall consist of at least one director and four other persons. In cooperation with the directing deaconess, it shall seek to enhance the life of the Deaconess Community through programs and events which emphasize spiritual growth, nurture, support, and fellowship among the members. It shall serve in an advisory relationship to the directing deaconess in matters related to community life, and shall appoint the planning committee for meetings of the Deaconess Assembly.

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- 7.6 The Committee on Vocation and Education shall consist of at least one director and three other persons. This committee shall deal with all matters related to the candidacy process and continuing education for the Deaconess Community. The director of vocation and education shall have seat and voice on this committee.
- 7.7 The Committee on Communications shall consist of at least one director and three other persons. This committee shall develop a communication plan and oversee its implementation. The director of communication shall be included in its membership.
- 7.8 Committee on Mission Support. The Committee on Mission Support shall consist of at least one director and four other persons. It shall assist the Deaconess Community in seeking, responding to, evaluating, and selecting mission support opportunities that will facilitate, fulfill, and further its vision and mission.
- 7.9 Committee on Governance. The Committee on Governance shall consist of at least one director and four other persons. It shall deal with all matters relating to a) the creating and updating of the Deaconess Community's governing documents; b) the screening and selection of candidates for election to positions on the board of directors; c) the screening and selection of candidates for election as directing deaconess; and d) recommendations for appointment of standing committee chairs and members.
- 7.10 The board of directors may establish other committees from time to time as it deems necessary.

ARTICLE 8: STAFF

- 8.1 The Deaconess Assembly shall elect a directing deaconess for a term of four years, renewable by election for one additional term. The term of office shall ordinarily begin ninety (90) days following election. The directing deaconess shall be chosen from among those who are members in good standing of the Deaconess Community and who are consecrated deaconesses.
- 8.2 The three senior leadership team members shall be responsible to the Deaconess Community and board of directors for their respective leadership accountabilities. Each shall have seat and voice in all committees and the board of directors, providing assistance, counsel and guidance as appropriate. They shall work in partnership with the board, program staff, and one another, to provide leadership, vision, and direction for the organization.
- 8.2.1 The directing deaconess shall be elected by the Deaconess Community with responsibility for overseeing the pastoral and spiritual care of the individual sisters and the Community as a whole. She serves as the Deaconess Community's ambassador and liaison to the church and the world.
- 8.2.2 The executive director shall be appointed by the board of directors with responsibility for oversight of the management and administration of the finances, programs and operations of the Deaconess Community. The executive director hires, supervises and evaluates support staff, and develops and implements organizational strategy.

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8.2.3 The director of vocation and education shall be appointed by the board of directors with responsibility for implementing, in cooperation with the Committee on Vocation and Education, the candidacy process and continuing education for candidates and deaconesses. The director of vocation and education serves as the Community's primary liaison with the ELCA and ELCIC directors for candidacy, seminaries, and synod staffs, to interpret and inform them regarding the Community's candidacy process.

- 8.3 After consultation with the senior leadership team, the board of directors shall periodically review all senior leadership team position descriptions, outlining specific responsibilities and accountabilities. The board of directors shall provide for periodic performance evaluation of the senior leadership team. In consultation with the board of directors, the executive director shall periodically review all support staff position descriptions, outlining specific responsibilities and accountabilities. The executive director shall provide for performance evaluation of all support staff.

ARTICLE 9: FISCAL MATTERS

- 9.1 The fiscal year shall be the calendar year.
- 9.2 The Deaconess Community shall not incur deficits in current operations.
- 9.3 The support of retired deaconesses who were admitted to the cooperative plan prior to July 1, 1978, and who served under it throughout their years in the diaconate shall have priority in the allocation of the financial resources of the Deaconess Community.
- 9.4 The sale or purchase of real estate, the encumbrance of assets exceeding FIFTY THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$50,000.00), and the financing of capital improvements exceeding FIFTY THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$50,000.00), shall require approval by two-thirds of votes cast by the Deaconess Assembly or by two-thirds of votes cast by mail from the members in good standing of the Deaconess Community.
- 9.5 No part of the net earnings of the corporation shall inure to the benefit of any private individual, corporation or other organization. No substantial part of the activities of the corporation shall be to carry on propaganda, or otherwise attempt to influence legislation. The corporation shall not participate in, or intervene in any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office, including publishing or distributing statements for the candidate.

ARTICLE 10: INDEMNIFICATION

To the full extent permitted from time to time by law, each person who is or was made or threatened to be made a party to any proceeding by reason of the present or former capacity of that person as a member, director, officer, employee, or committee member of this church shall be indemnified against judgments, penalties, fines, settlements, excise taxes, and reasonable attorneys fees and disbursements incurred by that person in connection with the proceeding. This Deaconess Community may purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of itself or any person entitled to indemnification pursuant to this chapter against any liability asserted against and incurred by this Deaconess Community or by such other person in or arising from a capacity described above.

ARTICLE 11: DISSOLUTION

Should the corporation cease to act and be dissolved, all of its property and assets remaining after the payment of its liabilities shall be paid and distributed to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, a Minnesota nonprofit corporation, or its successor or assigns, provided, however, that payment shall be made hereunder only to corporations, trusts, foundations, or other organizations which are organized and operated exclusively for charitable or religious purposes and which shall then be exempt from Federal income tax under Section 501 (a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended, as organizations described in Section 501 (c) (3) thereof (references to include corresponding provisions of any future revenue law).

ARTICLE 12: AMENDMENTS

12.1 Amendments to these bylaws may be presented: (a) by the board of directors or (b) in writing by five members in good standing of the Deaconess Community. When presented by five members, amendments shall be referred immediately to the board of directors which shall promptly submit its recommendations thereon to the Deaconess Assembly if it is in session or otherwise in writing to the members of the Deaconess Community immediately following the next meeting of the board of directors.

12.2 Amendments to Articles 1, 2, 3, 4.1, and 9 shall be adopted by majority vote of the Deaconess Assembly. Amendments to other articles may be adopted by the same procedure or by mail vote with approval by two-thirds of the members in good standing of the Deaconess Community.

12.3 Before becoming effective, all amendments shall be submitted, through the ELCA's Program Unit for Vocation and Education, to the ELCA Church Council or its executive committee for approval.

As adopted by the Deaconess Community of the Lutheran Church in America,
In Assembly, December 30, 1978

And

As amended October 1, 1994, by the Deaconess Community of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

And

As amended May 16, 2004, by the Deaconess Assembly, approved by the Division for Ministry Board, June 2, 2004

And

As amended by the Deaconess Assembly, May 6, 2006 and approved by the ELCA Church Council Executive Committee July 28, 2006. **EC06.07.25**. Note: The ELCA Office of the Secretary interprets the Community's amended bylaws to mean that all amendments are to be submitted through the Vocation and Education unit to the Church Council or its Executive Committee for approval."

And

As amended by the Deaconess Assembly, April 26, 2008 and approved by the ELCA Church Council Executive Committee July 25, 2008. **EC08.07.16b**. Note: The ELCA Office of the Secretary interprets the Community's amended bylaws to mean that all amendments are to be submitted through the Vocation and Education unit to the Church Council or its Executive Committee for approval."

And

As amended by the Deaconess Assembly, September 29, 2010, and approved by the (to be completed upon approval).

**Proposed Amendment to
ELCA Retirement Plan**

(To be effective upon approval of Church Council, November 2010)

Section 2.19 of Article II of the ELCA Retirement Plan is amended as follows:

ARTICLE II: DEFINITIONS

Sec. 2.19 Eligible Employer. An “Eligible Employer” is a legal entity which meets the requirements and conditions the ELCA Board of Pensions imposes, provided it meets one of the following criteria:

- (a) The ELCA, or an ELCA synod, seminary or Churchwide Unit that is part of a “church, or a convention or association of churches” within the meaning of Code § 414(e)(3) and ERISA § 3(33)(C).
- (b) Church congregations
 - (i) An ELCA congregation that is part of a “church, or a convention or association of churches” within the meaning of Code § 414(e)(3) and ERISA § 3(33)(C); or
 - (ii) A former ELCA congregation **other than a congregation included in (iv) below** that sponsored one or more Eligible Employees in this Plan on or after January 1, 2005; or
 - (iii) A congregation of a denomination that is in a full communion relationship with the ELCA; **or**
 - (iv) **A congregation or qualified church-controlled organization described in Code § 3121(w) of a non-ELCA church body that has common religious bonds with the ELCA and has petitioned to and been approved by the Board of Pensions to be the church body’s sole benefits provider.**
- (c) An organization that is an ELCA “qualified church-controlled organization” as determined by the ELCA within the meaning of Code § 3121(w).
- (d) An organization that is an ELCA “church-controlled organization,” but not a “qualified church-controlled organization” as determined by the ELCA within the meaning of Code § 3121(w).

- (e) A 501(c)(3) organization, other than an organization described in (a) through (d) above, that employs an individual who is performing service in the exercise of her/his ministry as an ELCA Ordained Minister or an ELCA Rostered Layperson.
- (f) A non-501(c)(3) organization that employs an individual who is performing service in the exercise of her/his ministry as an ELCA Ordained Minister.
- (g) An individual who is performing service in the exercise of her/his ministry as an ELCA Ordained Minister who is self-employed or who is employed by an organization described in (e) or (f) above but is not sponsored by her/his employer. Such individual shall be treated as her/his own employer.

Notwithstanding the above, an ELCA elementary or secondary school, day-care center, camp or conference center that is not a separately incorporated legal entity, shall be treated as a separate "Eligible Employer" under subsection (c) or (d) above, provided the employer otherwise meets the requirements of such subsection.

Explanation: This amendment expands the plan's eligibility to allow additional organizations, such as the NALC, to sponsor their members in the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program.

Cost Impact: Undetermined. Covering more congregations helps the plan maintain its economies of scale.

Legal counsel has reviewed this amendment.

Approval level: ELCA Church Council.

**Proposed Amendment to
ELCA Medical and Dental Benefits Plan**

(To be effective upon approval of Church Council, November 2010)

Section 2.01 of Article II of the ELCA Medical and Dental Benefits Plan is amended as follows:

ARTICLE II: ELIGIBLE EMPLOYERS

Section 2.01 Eligible Employer. An “Eligible Employer” is a legal entity which meets the requirements and conditions the ELCA Board of Pensions imposes, provided it meets one of the following criteria:

- (a) The ELCA, or an ELCA synod, seminary or Churchwide Unit that is part of a “church, or a convention or association of churches” within the meaning of Code § 414(e)(3) and ERISA § 3(33)(C).
- (b) Church congregations
 - (i) An ELCA congregation that is part of a “church, or a convention or association of churches” within the meaning of Code § 414(e)(3) and ERISA § 3(33)(C); or
 - (ii) A former ELCA congregation **other than a congregation included in (iv) below** that sponsored one or more Eligible Employees in this Plan on or after January 1, 2005; or
 - (iii) A congregation of a denomination that is in a full communion relationship with the ELCA; **or**
 - (iv) **A congregation or qualified church-controlled organization described in Code § 3121(w) of a non-ELCA church body that has common religious bonds with the ELCA and has petitioned to and been approved by the Board of Pensions to be the church body’s sole benefits provider.**
- (c) An organization that is an ELCA “qualified church-controlled organization” as determined by the ELCA within the meaning of Code § 3121(w).
- (d) An organization that is an ELCA “church-controlled organization” but not a “qualified church-controlled organization” as determined by the ELCA within the meaning of Code § 3121(w).
- (e) A 501(c)(3) organization, other than an organization described in (a) through (d) above, that employs an individual who is performing service in the exercise of her/his ministry as an ELCA Ordained Minister or an ELCA Rostered Layperson.

- (f) A non-501(c)(3) organization that employs an individual who is performing service in the exercise of her/his ministry as an ELCA Ordained Minister.
- (g) An individual who is performing service in the exercise of her/his ministry as an ELCA Ordained Minister who is self-employed or who is employed by an organization described in (e) or (f) above but is not sponsored by her/his employer. Such individual shall be treated as her/his own employer.

Notwithstanding the above, an ELCA elementary or secondary school, day-care center, camp or conference center that is not a separately incorporated legal entity shall be treated as a separate “Eligible Employer” under subsection (c) or (d) above provided the employer otherwise meets the requirements of such subsection.

Explanation: This amendment expands the plan’s eligibility to allow additional organizations, such as the NALC, to sponsor their members in the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program.

Cost Impact: Undetermined. Covering more congregations helps the plan maintain its economies of scale.

Legal counsel has reviewed this amendment.

Approval level: ELCA Church Council.

**Proposed Amendment to
ELCA Survivor Benefits Plan**

(To be effective upon approval of Church Council, November 2010)

Section 2.01 of Article II of the ELCA Survivor Benefits Plan is amended as follows:

ARTICLE II: ELIGIBLE EMPLOYERS

Section 2.01 Eligible Employer. An “Eligible Employer” is a legal entity which meets the requirements and conditions the ELCA Board of Pensions imposes, provided it meets one of the following criteria:

- (a) The ELCA, or an ELCA synod, seminary or Churchwide Unit that is part of a “church, or a convention or association of churches” within the meaning of Code § 414(e)(3) and ERISA § 3(33)(C).
- (b) Church congregations
 - (i) An ELCA congregation that is part of a “church, or a convention or association of churches” within the meaning of Code § 414(e)(3) and ERISA § 3(33)(C); or
 - (ii) A former ELCA congregation **other than a congregation included in (iv) below** that sponsored one or more Eligible Employees in this Plan on or after January 1, 2005; or
 - (iii) A congregation of a denomination that is in a full communion relationship with the ELCA; **or**
 - (iv) **A congregation or qualified church-controlled organization described in Code § 3121(w) of a non-ELCA church body that has common religious bonds with the ELCA and has petitioned to and been approved by the Board of Pensions to be the church body’s sole benefits provider.**
- (c) An organization that is an ELCA “qualified church-controlled organization” as determined by the ELCA within the meaning of Code § 3121(w).
- (d) An organization that is an ELCA “church-controlled organization” but not a “qualified church-controlled organization” as determined by the ELCA within the meaning of Code § 3121(w).
- (e) A 501(c)(3) organization, other than an organization described in (a) through (d) above, that employs an individual who is performing service in the exercise of her/his ministry as an ELCA Ordained Minister or an ELCA Rostered Layperson.

- (f) A non-501(c)(3) organization that employs an individual who is performing service in the exercise of her/his ministry as an ELCA Ordained Minister.
- (g) An individual who is performing service in the exercise of her/his ministry as an ELCA Ordained Minister who is self-employed or who is employed by an organization described in (e) or (f) above but is not sponsored by her/his employer. Such individual shall be treated as her/his own employer.

Notwithstanding the above, an ELCA elementary or secondary school, day-care center, camp or conference center that is not a separately incorporated legal entity shall be treated as a separate “Eligible Employer” under subsection (c) or (d) above provided the employer otherwise meets the requirements of such subsection.

Explanation: This amendment expands the plan’s eligibility to allow additional organizations, such as the NALC, to sponsor their members in the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program.

Cost Impact: Undetermined. Covering more congregations helps the plan maintain its economies of scale.

Legal counsel has reviewed this amendment.

Approval level: ELCA Church Council.

**Proposed Amendment to
ELCA Disability Benefits Plan**

(To be effective upon approval of Church Council, November 2010)

Section 2.01 of Article II of the ELCA Disability Benefits Plan is amended as follows:

ARTICLE II: ELIGIBLE EMPLOYERS

Section 2.01 Eligible Employer. An “Eligible Employer” is a legal entity which meets the requirements and conditions the ELCA Board of Pensions imposes, provided it meets one of the following criteria:

- (a) The ELCA, or an ELCA synod, seminary or Churchwide Unit that is part of a “church, or a convention or association of churches” within the meaning of Code § 414(e)(3) and ERISA § 3(33)(C).
- (b) Church congregations
 - (i) An ELCA congregation that is part of a “church, or a convention or association of churches” within the meaning of Code § 414(e)(3) and ERISA § 3(33)(C); or
 - (ii) A former ELCA congregation **other than a congregation included in (iv) below** that sponsored one or more Eligible Employees in this Plan on or after January 1, 2005; or
 - (iii) A congregation of a denomination that is in a full communion relationship with the ELCA; **or**
 - (iv) **A congregation or qualified church-controlled organization described in Code § 3121(w) of a non-ELCA church body that has common religious bonds with the ELCA and has petitioned to and been approved by the Board of Pensions to be the church body’s sole benefits provider.**
- (c) An organization that is an ELCA “qualified church-controlled organization” as determined by the ELCA within the meaning of Code § 3121(w).
- (d) An organization that is an ELCA “church-controlled organization” but not a “qualified church-controlled organization” as determined by the ELCA within the meaning of Code § 3121(w).
- (e) A 501(c)(3) organization, other than an organization described in (a) through (d) above, that employs an individual who is performing service in the exercise of her/his ministry as an ELCA Ordained Minister or an ELCA Rostered Layperson.

- (f) A non-501(c)(3) organization that employs an individual who is performing service in the exercise of her/his ministry as an ELCA Ordained Minister.
- (g) An individual who is performing service in the exercise of her/his ministry as an ELCA Ordained Minister who is self-employed or who is employed by an organization described in (e) or (f) above but is not sponsored by her/his employer. Such individual shall be treated as her/his own employer.

Notwithstanding the above, an ELCA elementary or secondary school, day-care center, camp or conference center that is not a separately incorporated legal entity shall be treated as a separate “Eligible Employer” under subsection (c) or (d) above provided the employer otherwise meets the requirements of such subsection.

Explanation: This amendment expands the plan’s eligibility to allow additional organizations, such as the NALC, to sponsor their members in the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program.

Cost Impact: Undetermined. Covering more congregations helps the plan maintain its economies of scale.

Legal counsel has reviewed this amendment.

Approval level: ELCA Church Council.

**Proposed Amendments to
ELCA Retirement Plan**

(To be effective on a yet-to-be determined date in 2011)

Section 1.02 of Article I; Sections 2.17 (formerly 2.27), with 2.18-2.26 renumbered in Article II; Section 4.05 of Article IV; Sections 7.01 and 7.02 of Article VII; Section 8.01 of Article VIII; Sections 9.02, 9.07 and 9.08 of Article IX; and Sections 10.01, 10.02 (addition), 10.03, 10.04, 10.05 and 10.06 of Article X of the ELCA Retirement Plan are amended as follows:

ARTICLE I: INTRODUCTION

Sec. 1.02 History of the Retirement Plan. Effective January 1, 2003, the ELCA Regular Pension Plan was amended and restated on the terms and conditions stated herein. At the same time, the ELCA Optional Pension Plan was merged and consolidated with the ELCA Regular Pension Plan, and the resulting plan was renamed the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Retirement Plan.

The Retirement Plan also includes funds from The American Lutheran Church Pension Plan for Clergy, The American Lutheran Church Pension Plan for Lay Workers, the Ministerial Pension and Death Benefit Plan of the Lutheran Church in America, and the Lay Pension Plan of the Lutheran Church in America (“Predecessor Pension Plans”), which were merged into the ELCA Regular Pension Plan on January 1, 1991. Effective January 1, 2007, the numerous methods for adjusting annuity payments to distribute excess investment earnings were simplified. Appropriate actuarial adjustments were made to ensure no benefits were diminished. The Plan was amended effective January 1, 2009 to conform to new 403(b) regulations. Effective April 3, 2009 at 5:00 p.m., the **ELCA Participating Annuity Fund (formerly the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund)** was closed to new contributions and transfers. **The Plan was amended to make available a redesigned participating annuity, effective on a yet-to-be determined date in 2011.**

The ELCA Continuation of the ALC and LCA Minimum and Non-Contributory Pension Plans remains separate and distinct from the ELCA Retirement Plan.

ARTICLE II: DEFINITIONS

Sec. 2.27 *Formerly Sec. 2.27, new definition moved to Sec. 2.17*
~~ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund.~~ The “~~ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund~~” is the fund into which accumulations from a Member’s Account were transferred or to which contributions were made in accordance with the provisions of Sec. 10.05 prior to the commencement of annuity payments in accordance with the provisions of Article X, and from which retirement benefits shall be paid with respect to any Member who elects an annuity form of benefit in accordance with the provisions of Article X. The ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund was closed to new

contributions and transfers on April 3, 2009, with annuitization after that date limited to accumulations in the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund as of April 3, 2009.

Sec. 2.17 **ELCA Participating Annuity Fund.**

The “ELCA Participating Annuity Fund” is the investment fund from which annuity benefits shall be paid with respect to any Member who was receiving an annuity as of the Effective Date or who thereafter elects an annuity form of benefit from the ELCA Participating Annuity Fund in accordance with the provisions of Article X.

The “ELCA Participating Annuity Fund Bridge Account” is a component of the ELCA Participating Annuity Fund into which accumulations from a Member’s Account were transferred or to which contributions were made in accordance with Sec. 10.05 on or before April 3, 2009.

ARTICLE IV: ELIGIBLE EMPLOYEES

Sec. 4.05 Duration of Sponsored Member Status. A Sponsored Member will continue to be a Sponsored Member in this Retirement Plan for as long as s/he has any amount remaining in her/his Account or the ELCA Participating Annuity ~~and Bridge Fund~~ **Bridge Account** or is receiving annuity payments in accordance with the provisions of Article X.

ARTICLE VII: TRANSFERS AND ROLLOVERS

Sec. 7.01 Transfers to and from the ELCA Retirement Plans. If contributions (including earnings attributable to such contributions) under the ELCA Master Institutional Retirement Plan or the ELCA Retirement Plan for The Evangelical Lutheran Good Samaritan Society are transferred to this Retirement Plan in accordance with the provisions of such plan, the amounts transferred on behalf of each Sponsored Member shall be deposited in the Investment Funds of this Plan, and an amount equal to such transfer shall be credited to the Sponsored Member’s Account in accordance with the provisions of Sec. 7.05 below. In addition, if an individual ceases to be a Sponsored Member in this Retirement Plan and thereafter becomes a Sponsored Member in the ELCA Master Institutional Retirement Plan or the ELCA Retirement Plan for The Evangelical Lutheran Good Samaritan Society, s/he may elect to transfer funds held in her/his Accounts under this Retirement Plan to such plan. Such transfer shall include the Member’s entire Account(s) not including any amount held in the ELCA Participating Annuity ~~and Bridge Fund~~ **Bridge Account.**

Sec. 7.02 Transfers to Certain Other Church Pension Plans. The ELCA Board of Pensions may enter into agreements with churches or other church pension boards under which it will transfer assets and liabilities from this Retirement Plan to such other plan with respect to

a Sponsored Member who has become a participant in such other plan after ceasing to be an Eligible Employee under this Retirement Plan. Such transfer shall include the Sponsored Member's entire Account(s) not including any amount held in the ELCA Participating Annuity ~~and Bridge-Fund~~ **Bridge Account**.

ARTICLE VIII: INVESTMENT FUNDS

Sec. 8.01 Investment Funds. The ELCA Board of Pensions shall, in its sole discretion, select the Investment Funds in which the ELCA Retirement Trust shall invest pursuant to Member investment instructions provided in accordance with Secs. 8.02 and 8.04; provided, however, that the ELCA Participating Annuity ~~and Bridge-Fund~~ shall not be considered an Investment Fund for purposes of this Article VIII. The ELCA Board of Pensions shall maintain a list of such Investment Funds available under the Plan. Such list is hereby incorporated by reference as part of the Plan.

ARTICLE IX: WITHDRAWALS AND DISTRIBUTIONS

Sec. 9.02 In-Service Withdrawals After Attainment of Age 59½. A Sponsored Member shall be entitled to make withdrawals from her/his Employer Account, ELCA Employer Transfer Account, TSA Transfer Account and Member Pretax Account upon the attainment of age 59½, whether or not s/he has had a Separation from Service, in accordance with the following provisions:

- (a) Withdrawals under this Sec. 9.02 may be made in one or a combination of the following forms:
 - (i) Payment in such amounts and at such times as the Sponsored Member may request.
 - (ii) Payment in a series of monthly, quarterly, semi-annual or annual periodic payments of a specified dollar amount.
- (b) With respect to the withdrawal of any amounts in a Sponsored Member's Employer Account or ELCA Employer Transfer Account, the total of all withdrawals in a calendar year shall not exceed the greater of ten percent (10%) of the sum of such Account and any amounts previously transferred from such Account to the ELCA Participating Annuity ~~and Bridge-Fund~~ **Bridge Account**, both determined as of December 31 of the preceding year, or ten thousand dollars (\$10,000). For a withdrawal with respect to one calendar year only, as selected by the Sponsored Member, the maximums referred to above shall be increased to twenty percent (20%) and twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000), respectively. These withdrawal limits shall be applied separately to the Employer Account and the ELCA Employer Transfer Account. A Sponsored Member who is entitled to

make a withdrawal pursuant to this Section may elect instead to transfer the amount eligible for such withdrawal to her/his Rollover Account. This subsection shall not apply to a Sponsored, Disabled or Retired Member who submits a doctor's statement or other evidence acceptable to the ELCA Board of Pensions certifying that the Member is terminally ill and death is expected within twelve (12) months.

Sec. 9.07

Payment of Annuity Benefits Upon Retirement. Distribution in the Form of a Participating Annuity. A Sponsored Member with an accumulation in the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund may elect a distribution in the form of an annuity administered by the ELCA Board of Pensions, for which the terms and conditions are described in Article X. The annuity distribution may commence upon her/his Retirement or upon attainment of age 60 following Separation from Service. **Members, including Surviving Spouses, Designated Beneficiaries and Alternate Payees who have an ELCA Participating Annuity Fund Bridge Account must elect a distribution in the form of an annuity. All other Members, including** Surviving Spouses, Designated Beneficiaries and Alternate Payees who have accumulations in the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund **an Account** may also elect a distribution in the form of an annuity administered by the ELCA Board of Pensions. All annuity distributions shall be subject to the following:

- (a) If the Member is a Sponsored Member, s/he must have either:**
 - (i) Retired after attainment of age 60 or completion of at least thirty (30) years of Church Service, or**
 - (ii) Attained age 60 after incurring a Separation from Service prior to meeting the conditions for Retirement.**
- (b) If the Member is a Sponsored Member, s/he must not be entitled to a monthly disability benefit under the ELCA Disability Benefits Plan.**
- (c) Payment shall be made in one of the following forms:**
 - (i) Payment of an annuity administered by the ELCA Board of Pensions in accordance with the provisions of Article X.
 - (ii) Purchase of a non-transferrable annuity contract from a commercial life insurance company providing "substantially non-increasing" period payments, the terms and conditions which shall be set by such commercial life insurance company, if the ELCA Board of Pensions, in its sole discretion, determines to make this payment option available under the Retirement Plan.

- (d) **A Designated Beneficiary that is not a natural person (such as an estate of trust) shall not be eligible to receive a distribution in the form of a Participating Annuity.**
- (b) ~~Annuity benefits may not commence if the Member is entitled to a monthly disability benefit under the ELCA Disability Benefits Plan.~~
- (c) ~~A Member must elect an annuity form of benefit under this Sec. 9.07(a)(i) prior to the later of attainment of age 80 or Separation from Service.~~
- (d) ~~A Member who has elected to transfer some or all of her/his Account to the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund in accordance with the provisions of Sec. 10.05, must begin to receive annuity benefits based on the amounts so transferred by April 1 of the year following the later of the date the Member retires or the date the Member attains age 70½.~~

Sec. 9.08 Distributions after Death of Member.

- (a) If a Member dies after reaching her/his “required beginning date” as defined in Code § 401(a)(9)(C), the remaining payments shall be made to her/his Designated Beneficiary at least as rapidly as under the method of distribution selected by the Member.
- (b) If a Member dies before reaching her/his “required beginning date” as defined in Code § 401(a)(9)(C), the Member’s Account shall be distributed to her/his Designated Beneficiary as follows:
- (i) If the Member has a Surviving Spouse and the Surviving Spouse has not waived her/his entitlement under this Sec. 9.08 and given appropriate written consent to the designation of another Designated Beneficiary in accordance with the procedure adopted by the ELCA Board of Pensions or its Agent, distributions may be made in accordance with the provisions of Secs. 9.06 and 9.07 and subject to the following requirements:
- (A) ~~If the Surviving Spouse elects a distribution under Sec. 9.06, any such distribution will not be subject to the limitations in Sec. 9.06(b).~~
- (B) ~~Any amount in the ELCA Participating Annuity **and** Bridge Fund at the time of the Member’s death shall be payable to the Surviving Spouse only in the form of an annuity under Sec. 9.07(a)(i).~~

- (C) ~~A Surviving Spouse shall not be able to elect an annuity form of benefit unless the Member had accumulations in the ELCA Participating Annuity **and** Bridge Fund at the time of the Member's death or the Surviving Spouse had accumulations in the ELCA Participating Annuity **and** Bridge Fund as of April 3, 2009. If the Surviving Spouse elects an annuity form of benefit under Sec. 9.07(a)(i), such benefit shall be in the form of a single life annuity. The fifteen-year term certain option shall not be available to a Surviving Spouse who has attained age 70½ at the time such payments must begin.~~
- (D) ~~(A) Payments under this Sec. 9.08(b)(i) may begin at any time after the Member's death and must begin by the end of the calendar year following the year in which the Member dies or, if later, the end of the calendar year in which the Member would have attained age 70½.~~
- (E) ~~(B) If the Surviving Spouse dies before distributions to her/him begin, this Sec. 9.08 shall be applied as if the Surviving Spouse were the Member.~~
- (C) **If the Surviving Spouse elects a distribution under Sec. 9.06, any such distribution will not be subject to the limitations in Sec. 9.06(b).**
- (D) **If the Surviving Spouse elects an annuity form of benefit under Sec. 9.07, such benefit shall be in the form of a Single Life Annuity or a Single Life Annuity with 15-Year Minimum Payout; provided, however, that the Single Life Annuity with 15-Year Minimum Payout shall not be available to a Surviving Spouse who has attained age 70½ at the time such payments must begin.**
- (ii) If the Member either does not have a Surviving Spouse, or if the Surviving Spouse has waived her/his entitlement under Sec. 9.12 or 10.01, distributions may be made in accordance with the provisions of Secs. 9.06 and 9.07 and subject to the following requirements:
- (A) ~~A Designated Beneficiary shall not be able to elect an annuity form of benefit unless the Member had accumulations in the ELCA Participating Annuity **and** Bridge Fund at the time of the Member's death or the Designated Beneficiary had accumulations in the ELCA Participating Annuity **and** Bridge Fund as of April 3, 2009. If the Designated Beneficiary elects an annuity form of benefit under Sec. 9.07(a)(i), such benefit shall~~

~~be in the form of a single life annuity. The single life annuity form of benefit shall not be available to a Designated Beneficiary who has attained age 70½ at the time such payments must begin, nor to a Designated Beneficiary that is an estate or other entity.~~

- ~~(B)~~ **(A)** Payments under this paragraph (ii) must begin not later than the end of the calendar year following the year of the Member's death, or any later date specified in regulations of the Secretary of the Treasury.
- ~~(C)~~ **(B)** If the Designated Beneficiary dies before receiving her/his entire benefit, the remaining amount will be paid to the Designated Beneficiary's Designated Beneficiary(ies).
- (C)** **If the Designated Beneficiary elects an annuity form of benefit under Sec. 9.07, such benefit shall be in the form of a Single Life Annuity or a Single Life Annuity with 15-Year Minimum Payout; provided, however, that the Single Life Annuity with 15-Year Minimum Payout shall not be available to a Designated Beneficiary who has attained age 70½ at the time such payments must begin.**
- (D)** Any amount in the ELCA Participating Annuity ~~and Bridge Fund~~ **Bridge Account** at the time of the Member's death shall be transferred into an account on behalf of the Designated Beneficiary and invested as directed by the Designated Beneficiary; provided, however, that if the Designated Beneficiary fails to designate any Investment Funds, any amount in the Designated Beneficiary's Account shall be invested by the ELCA Board of Pensions in accordance with the provisions of Sec. 8.03.
- (c) If any Designated Beneficiary has not yet attained age 21 at the time any payment is to be made under this Sec. 9.08, monthly withdrawals shall be paid in an amount determined by the ELCA Board of Pensions or its Agent after consulting the minor child's legal guardian.

ARTICLE X: ~~MONTHLY PARTICIPATING~~ ANNUITY BENEFITS ADMINISTERED BY THE ELCA BOARD OF PENSIONS

Sec. 10.01 Election of Form of Annuity Distribution. A Member who is eligible (or required) to receive an annuity administered by the ELCA Board of Pensions under Sec. 9.07(a)(i) may (or shall) elect to receive an annuity in accordance with the following:

- (a) Election of Distribution. The Member must indicate ~~the following in accordance with procedures established by the ELCA Board of Pensions:~~
- (i) ~~the amount of the initial monthly pension or the portion of her/his Account or her/his accumulation in the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund~~ **Bridge Account** to be applied to provide the annuity,
 - (ii) ~~the date~~ **month in which** annuity payments are to commence,
 - (iii) the form in which the annuity is to be paid, selected from the forms of annuity listed in ~~Sec. 10.02~~ **10.03(a)**, and
 - (iv) her/his contingent annuitant (if applicable), and ~~Designated Beneficiary,~~
 - (v) **her/his Designated Beneficiary (if applicable).**
- (b) **With respect to money in an ELCA Participating Annuity Fund Bridge Account, annuity payments must commence no later than April 1st of the calendar year following the calendar year in which the Member attains age 70½, or if later, the date on which the Member has a Separation from Service. With respect to all other money, annuity payments must commence prior to the date on which the Member attains age 80.**

~~Spousal or Eligible Same Gender Partner Consent. If a Member is married or has an Affidavit of Partnership on file with the ELCA Board of Pensions at the time annuity payments commence, the spouse or Eligible Same Gender Partner of the Member must give appropriate written consent in accordance with the procedure adopted by the ELCA Board of Pensions before such Sponsored Member can elect a single life annuity under Sec. 10.02(a)(iii). Also, such spouse or Eligible Same Gender Partner must be the contingent annuitant with respect to any benefits elected under Sec. 10.02(a)(i) or (ii), unless such Member's spouse or Eligible Same Gender Partner has given appropriate written consent in accordance with the procedure adopted by the ELCA Board of Pensions to the designation of another individual as the contingent annuitant.~~

- (c) ~~Other Requirements. The following requirements also apply to annuity payments:~~
- (i) ~~Annuity payments must commence prior to the date on which the Member attains age 80.~~
 - (ii) ~~With respect to money invested in the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund, annuity payments must commence prior to April 1st of the calendar year following the calendar year in which the Member attains~~

age 70½, or if later, the date on which the Member has a Separation from Service.

(iii) The Member may have up to three (3) annuities and may select a different commencement date, form of annuity and contingent annuitant for each annuity selected; provided, however, that **each annuity shall satisfy the rules, regulations and procedures of the ELCA Board of Pensions with respect to annuities, including rules with respect to the minimum amount that is permitted to be annuitized.**

(d) **If a Member is married or has an Affidavit of Partnership on file with the ELCA Board of Pensions at the time annuity payments commence, the spouse or Eligible Same Gender Partner of the member must give appropriate written consent in accordance with the procedure adopted by the ELCA Board of Pensions before such Sponsored Member can elect a single life annuity under Sec. 10.03(a)(ii) or (iii). Also, such spouse or Eligible Same Gender Partner must be the contingent annuitant with respect to any benefits elected under Sec. 10.03(a)(i), unless such Member's spouse or Eligible Same Gender Partner has given appropriate written consent in accordance with the procedure adopted by the ELCA Board of Pensions to the designation of another individual as the contingent annuitant.**

(e) **All annuity** distributions shall at all times comply with the applicable provisions of Code § 401(a)(9) and the regulations thereunder

Sec. 10.02 ELCA Participating Annuity Fund. The ELCA Board of Pensions shall, in its sole discretion, select the investment fund(s) to be offered as ELCA participating annuity funds and invested by the ELCA Participating Annuity Trust. The ELCA Board of Pensions shall maintain a list of such fund(s) available under the Plan, which list is hereby incorporated by reference as part of the Plan. The ELCA Participating Annuity Fund(s) shall include, but not be limited to:

ELCA Participating Annuity Fund, a balanced investment fund that was the source of annuity payments being made as of [the date prior to the effective date]; and

Sec. 10.02 03 Forms of Annuity.

(a) A Member may elect to receive payment of her/his annuity in one or more of the following forms:

(i) Joint and Survivor Annuity **with 15-Year Minimum Payout.** A Sponsored Member may elect a Joint and Survivor Annuity **with 15-Year Minimum Payout** form of benefit. Under this form of benefit, payments are made monthly for the joint lives of the Member and her/his contingent annuitant with payments continuing for the remaining life of

the survivor following the death of either of them. The monthly amount payable to the survivor shall be equal to 100%, 80% or 60% of the monthly amount payable during their joint lives. The Member shall select the applicable percentage prior to commencement of the annuity. **Under the 15-Year Minimum Payout feature, if the Member (and her/his contingent annuitant, if applicable) both die before one hundred eighty (180) monthly payments have been made (counting payments to both the Member and contingent annuitant), payments shall continue to the Designated Beneficiary until a total of one hundred eighty (180) monthly payments have been made (counting payments to the Member, contingent annuitant and Designated Beneficiary).**

- (ii) ~~Joint and Contingent Annuity. A Sponsored Member may elect a Joint and Contingent Annuity form of benefit. Under this form of benefit, payments are made monthly for the joint lives of the Member and her/his contingent annuitant with payments continuing for the remaining life of the survivor following the death of either of them. In the event that the Member survives her/his contingent annuitant, the monthly amount payable to the survivor shall be equal to one hundred percent (100%) of the monthly amount payable during their joint lives. In the event that the Member predeceases her/his contingent annuitant the monthly amount payable to the survivor shall be equal to eighty percent (80%) or sixty percent (60%) of the monthly amount payable during their joint lives. The Member shall select the applicable percentage prior to commencement of the annuity.~~ **Single Life Annuity with 15-Year Minimum Payout. A Sponsored Member, Surviving Spouse, Designated Beneficiary or Alternate Payee may elect a Single Life Annuity with 15-Year Minimum Payout. Under this form of benefit, payments are made monthly for the life of the member. Under the 15-Year Minimum Payout feature, if the Member (and her/his contingent annuitant, if applicable) both die before one hundred eighty (180) monthly payments have been made (counting payments to both the Member and contingent annuitant), payments shall continue to the Designated Beneficiary until a total of one hundred eighty (180) monthly payments have been made (counting payments to the Member, contingent annuitant and Designated Beneficiary). This form of annuity shall be available to a Surviving Spouse, Designated Beneficiary or Alternate Payee only until attainment of age 70½.**
- (iii) Single Life Annuity. A Sponsored Member, Surviving Spouse, Designated Beneficiary or Alternate Payee may elect a Single Life Annuity. Under this form of benefit, payments are made monthly for the life of the Member.

- (b) ~~Optional Fifteen-Year Term Certain. A Sponsored Member of any age, or a Surviving Spouse, Designated Beneficiary or Alternate Payee under the age of 70½ may elect an Optional Fifteen-Year Term Certain annuity form of benefit. The Member may elect to receive annuity payments under subsection (a) with or without a fifteen-year term certain. If the fifteen-year term certain has been elected and the Member (and her/his contingent annuitant, if applicable) both die before one hundred eighty (180) monthly payments have been made (counting payments to both the Member and contingent annuitant), payments shall continue to the Designated Beneficiary who was designated to receive this benefit by the Member or the contingent annuitant, whichever died last, until a total of one hundred eighty (180) monthly payments have been made (counting payments to the Member, contingent annuitant and Designated Beneficiary).~~
- (c) ~~(b)~~ Unless the Member's contingent annuitant is the Member's spouse, the Member may elect a particular form of benefit payment only if such form of payment would satisfy the incidental death benefit distribution requirements of Code §401(a)(9)(G) and Treas. Reg. § 1.401(a)(9)-2.
- (d) ~~(c)~~ If the provisions of Sec. ~~9.07(d)~~ **10.01(b)** require benefit payments to commence and the Member has not elected a form of annuity, payments to a Member who is married at the time benefit payments commence shall be made in the form specified in subsection (a)(i) with one hundred percent (100%) to the survivor. ~~and with the optional fifteen-year term certain.~~ Payments to such a Member who is not married at the time benefit payments commence shall be made in the form specified in subsection (a)(iii). ~~with the optional fifteen-year term certain.~~
- (e) ~~(d)~~ In the event that the Member elects **an annuity that includes the fifteen-year term certain option 15-Year Minimum Payout feature** under subsection (b) ~~(a)(i) or (ii)~~, payments to the Designated Beneficiary after the death of the Member (and contingent annuitant, if applicable) shall (for the remainder of the 180 month period) be made in the same monthly amount as would have been paid to the Member (or contingent annuitant, if applicable) if s/he had survived, including any adjustments described in Sec. ~~10.04~~ **10.05**. In lieu of the monthly survivor benefit, the Designated Beneficiary (other than a Designated Beneficiary who is under age 21) shall be entitled to elect to receive a lump-sum payment. Furthermore, the ELCA Board of Pensions may, in its sole discretion, direct a lump-sum payment in lieu of a monthly survivor benefit that would otherwise be payable in small amounts. The amount of any lump-sum payment to any Designated Beneficiary under this Sec. ~~10.02~~ **10.03** shall be the actuarial equivalent of the monthly payments the Designated Beneficiary would otherwise receive. If a Designated Beneficiary dies before receiving the entire benefit described in this paragraph, the unpaid balance shall be paid to the Designated Beneficiary's Designated Beneficiary(ies). Notwithstanding anything to the contrary, payments to the Designated Beneficiary shall be made in accordance with the applicable requirements of Code § 401(a)(9)(G).

Sec. 10.03 **04** Amount of Monthly Annuity Payment. **The amount required to provide the form and amount of annuity selected by the Member pursuant to Secs. 10.01 and 10.03 shall be determined in accordance with the rules, regulations and procedures adopted by the ELCA Board of Pensions, based on assumed rates of return, appropriate mortality tables and the funded ratio(s) of the participating annuity fund(s) from which the payments will be made.** Annuity benefits described in Sec. ~~10.02~~ **this Article X** shall be paid from the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund. At or before the time such benefits are scheduled to commence, the amount required to provide the specific form and amount of annuity selected pursuant to Sec. 10.02 shall be transferred from the Member's Account into the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund. The amount required to provide the form and amount of annuity selected by the Member pursuant to Secs. 10.01 and 10.02 shall be determined in accordance with rules, regulations and procedures adopted by the ELCA Board of Pensions, based on an assumed rate of return and appropriate mortality rates. **Any amount annuitized from a Member's Account shall be transferred from the ELCA Retirement Trust to the ELCA Participating Annuity Trust and allocated to ELCA Participating Annuity Fund as of the first of the month in which the annuity is to commence. Any amount annuitized from a Member's ELCA Participating Annuity Fund Bridge Account shall be retained within the ELCA Participating Annuity Trust and allocated to ELCA Participating Annuity Fund as of the first of the month in which the annuity is to commence.**

If any contributions are made to the Retirement Plan on behalf of a Sponsored Member for a year when such Sponsored Member is receiving benefit payments from the Retirement Plan in accordance with this Article X, the amounts contributed for such year shall be allocated to the Sponsored Member's Account and invested as provided under Article VII.

Sec. 10.04 **05** Periodic Adjustments to Monthly Participating Annuity Payments. Once annuity payments have commenced under this Article X, periodic adjustments that will increase or decrease such **annuity** payments **from the participating annuity fund** shall be made as determined by the ELCA Board of Pensions, based on such factors as it deems to be appropriate. The increases or decreases **for the participating annuity fund** shall apply to all ELCA annuities **payable from such fund**, except that annuities commenced prior to 1997 that provide **ELCA Participating Annuity Fund annuities that originally provided** for current year distribution of any excess investment earnings will have any decrease applied **as an adjustment** to the annuity payment and shall continue to receive **while** any increases **shall be paid** in the form of **a** dividends.

Sec. 10.05 **06** ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund Bridge Account. Effective April 3, 2009, no additional contributions shall be allowed to the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund. Amounts transferred to the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund **Bridge Account on or** before April 3, 2009, will remain in the fund **such account** until the accumulations are transferred to the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund

and annuitized in accordance with Sec. 9.07(a)(f). **Prior to annuitization, the following rules shall apply:**

~~Before April 3, 2009, a Member could transfer amounts from her/his Account(s) to the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund prior to the date annuity payments were scheduled to commence. Transfers to the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund were made in accordance with the following:~~

- (a) ~~A Member who was eligible to commence an annuity benefit or who attained age 55 or completed thirty (30) years of Church Service could elect to transfer some or all of her/his Account(s) to the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund. Such Member was required to specify:
 - (i) ~~the Account(s) from which amounts were to be transferred;~~
 - (ii) ~~the Valuation Date as of which the transfer was to commence;~~
 - (iii) ~~the percentage of her/his Account(s) to be transferred (in one percent (1%) increments), and~~
 - (iv) ~~the time period over which the transfer was to occur: either immediately or monthly in approximately equal amounts over 12, 24, 36, 48 or 60 months, or such other period as the ELCA Board of Pensions considered appropriate in the circumstances.~~~~
- (b) ~~A Member who commenced a gradual transfer described in this Sec. 10.05(a)(iv) above could stop that transfer by notifying the ELCA Board of Pensions.~~
- (c) ~~A Member was not required to have any amounts transferred to the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund unless and until s/he elected to receive an annuity pursuant to Secs. 10.01 and 10.02.~~
- (d) ~~Except as provided under Sec. 9.08(b)(ii)(D), amounts transferred to the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund could not be transferred back to a Member's Account.~~
- (e) ~~No withdrawals were permitted from the ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund.~~
- (a) **A Member's ELCA Participating Annuity Bridge Fund Account shall be increased or decreased at rate(s) declared from time to time by the Board of Trustees of the ELCA Board of Pensions, which rates shall be consistent with annuity adjustments, if any, declared for the ELCA Participating Annuity Fund.**

- (b) **No additional contributions or transfers shall be allowed to a Member's ELCA Participating Annuity Fund Bridge Account after April 3, 2009, and**
- (c) **No withdrawals or transfers shall be permitted from a Member's ELCA Participating Annuity Fund Bridge Account except in the case of the Member's death, as provided under Sec. 9.08(b)(ii)(D), or unless the balance in such account is less than the minimum amount required for annuitization under the rules of the ELCA Board of Pensions.**

Sec. 10.06 ~~Adjustment of ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund Accounts. A Member's ELCA Participating Annuity and Bridge Fund account shall be increased or decreased at rate(s) declared from time to time by the Board of Trustees of the ELCA Board of Pensions.~~

Explanation: These amendments authorize the reopening of the redesigned ELCA Participating Annuity Fund without the bridge fund component. All joint annuities will contain a 15-year minimum payout feature.

Cost Impact: None.

Legal counsel has reviewed this amendment.

Approval level: ELCA Church Council.

Draft Report
Communal Discernment Task Force
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
November 4, 2010

Preface

This Task Force has been on a walk—a journey of our own communal discernment. During our walk together we experienced frustrations, tensions, uncertainties, joys, and surprises, and we believe our learning resulted in discoveries that will serve as a model to help others begin to understand communal discernment. As we came together to do our work, our reading, praying, and dialogue surprised us with the gifts of both expected learning and unexpected discovery. It is our hope that this report will capture both experiences, and, perhaps, inspire others to embark on their own communal discernment journey.

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The Walk

We came together at our first meeting with our own individual ideas about communal discernment. Reading had been done in preparation, and there was a “get the job done” attitude in the room. We were a goal-oriented group with a desire for a clear outcome. If one considers the four phases of team building: *forming*, *storming*, *norming* and *performing*—we moved very quickly from *forming* right into *storming*. (Bruce Tuckman, 1965)

For many of us, communal discernment had been pre-defined as communal ***decision-making***. So, naturally, we were led into identifying various alternative methods of making decisions. Blessedly, some members of the task force challenged that set of assumptions, and a time of storming began. This was a “tipping point,” a defining moment in the life of the task force, a moment that we would return to again and again if we felt we were falling into the “easy answer” trap. The storming brought us face to face with the complexities of the very questions we had been charged to answer, and led the group into its own period of intense communal discernment, of listening for the Holy Spirit’s movement among us. We had become a microcosm of the whole, and the laboratory for this “experiment.”

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For the Task Force, community-building became of critical importance to our ability to remain committed to doing this work together, even when it became frustrating and confusing. The scripture-based practice of “Dwelling in the Word” was adopted. Each session of the Task Force’s work opened with a reading of Philippians 1:27; 2:5-11, followed by meditation and conversation. The richness of the different experiences each of us brought to the text deepened our communal understanding, and provided a grounding framework for abiding with Christ in this task. It also provided an “ah-ha! moment”—that our listening, respecting, and sharing different understandings of the same text had enriched our individual interpretations with common, communal understanding.

At the same time that we sought greater definition and focus about communal discernment, we also began to look at the way other communities make decisions; alternative models were reviewed for their relative strengths and weaknesses, and their potential viability for use in various expressions of the church. We continued to ask ourselves, “Is a decision-making model going to deepen communal discernment?” Then, another paradigm shift occurred: the task force shifted our goal away from finding an alternative model and toward imagining and addressing a change in the culture—away from being outcome-oriented and toward being relationship-focused—and finally, away from having to “fix it” and toward trusting the Holy Spirit to guide us.

This shift brought us to new learning. By Dwelling in the Word we were reminded that the Holy Spirit reveals God to us through scripture, and that this revelation is an ongoing inspiration. Through our relationship-building in the group, we saw firsthand the restlessness in us as a reflection of what is being felt throughout the larger church—a desire to fix it, and to do so quickly and independently. And, we saw firsthand that God works in conflict, in the very midst of profound differences, and that God would still allow us to experience, “see how they love one another.”

Initial Findings

The Task Force has found joy in this journey together, and we are happy to be able to share with you some of the discoveries we have made:

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Communal Discernment is not the same as making decisions.

This kind of discernment is ongoing: it precedes, happens during and continues to unfold even after a decision is made.

Decision-making can either deepen or damage trust.

Knowing when a group is prepared to move to a decision is a matter of discernment.

Communal discernment is not the same as individual discernment.

Communal discernment is rarely experienced.

It is more than individually sorting it out and voting in community.

It respects the individual gifts of the communal body.

It happens in the fabric of the community over time.

It involves both the formal and informal processes.

It is impacted by time boundaries.

It frequently brings surprise and discovery.

It is a Spirit-led process.

Discovering communal discernment may force us back one question from where we imagine we might be. We might have to ask again, in a new way:

What is the question we are discerning?

How do we discern God's will for this community?

How do we form and deepen Christian community?

In the words of Robert B. Parker's Boston P.I. character, Spenser, "things get real messy when you're up close." Sometimes, we need to step back to see what the Holy Spirit has been calling us to see, and gaining some perspective might come only when you look through the eyes of another.

Common Life without Communal Discernment: A Cautionary Tale

In a moment such as this, when the ELCA is deeply challenged by multiple pressures and an unknown future, it is tempting to seek some deeper clarity and a measure of control. One casualty in fulfilling this temptation could be the gift of communal discernment. What would our church body look like without it?

What would our church body look like without communal discernment?

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In a complex organization like the Church, any sort of Spirit-infused communal discernment is sacrificed in order to develop a well-run bureaucratic system that can efficiently deliver goods and services. In such a system, professional staff is hired based entirely on educational credentials and proven performance. The hierarchy is so well-organized that input from stakeholders, or church members, is sought only in regard to administrative matters—but not the mission and vision of the Church. Members are able to be affiliated with an organization that meets their religious needs but demands very little of them. Contemporary business models enable professional church staff to calculate the impact of initiatives through cost/benefit analyses. Such efficiency is enhanced by an over-reliance on technology. Members need not go to meetings to deliberate corporate decisions, but electronically send in their votes from the privacy of their home or office. The church bureaucracy can closely monitor changes in members' beliefs, opinions and preferences and adjust program delivery accordingly.

In a church without Communal Discernment, the messiness of human experience is minimized, conflict can be managed by those in power, and there is little or no room for a Spirit who “blows where it wills.” The *product* is more important than the *process*, *predictability* takes priority over *disruptions* of human experience.

Is this the Church we are called to be?

Is There a Better Future?

God is calling us toward a better future. When we know things are not working, we struggle with temptations of various kinds. One temptation is to fall into the fear that we cannot fix our problems. When we despair, we might accept, “that’s just the way things are.” Or, we are tempted to look to someone who will claim, “I can fix it.” But, we know better, as we watch one “leader” after another fail. God can fix this, but it will involve all of us talking together and hearing God’s call in Christian community.

God plants in us all a deep longing to bring our gifts, experiences and abilities together to build a better Church for the sake of the world that God loves. God stirs us up and keeps calling us to reform and improve our shared life in Christ.

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God calls to us work on how we discern where God is leading us. God calls us to wonder, “Can we improve the way we engage issues and make decisions so that trust is deepened and respect grows, even if we should disagree?”

We trust that God is calling us to find ways to improve our communal *discernment* around difficult issues, and our communal *deciding* as we seek to be faithful in our time. While we will never find perfection in this broken world and in our own brokenness, God will still be leading us toward new and greater life, even when we think we have failed.

Discerning the Times for Discernment

Discernment is at the heart of what it means to live a life of faith, what it means to be a part of the community of the baptized, and it is both an individual and a communal practice.

We are not born with a facility for communal discernment. Rather, we learn it from one another. We experience it, we develop it, nourish it, and learn it through practice. We have times when it goes well, and times when it does not go well at all. Communal discernment is not a town meeting. It is not democracy by referendum. It is not solo brilliance, and it is not groupthink. Communal discernment takes patience, prayer, forbearance, and non-anxious leadership.

Communal discernment is evidence of “the whole being greater than the sum of the parts.” But those parts must be working parts to make it happen. And those working parts need regular care and maintenance and upgrading. That is the faith journey of the Christian, in prayer and scripture reading and worship and other faith practices, individual and communal. People of faith seek God’s will in all that they do. They pray, meditate, study, read scripture, fast, sing, share-all as a part of seeking God’s will.

When Christians come together to seek God’s will communally, we don’t expect to start with a blank slate. We are not gathering a jury from among those who know none of the facts and have no opinions on the issues. Rather, we gather interested parties, who have a stake in the outcome, who have a deep loyalty to God and neighbor, and who

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have some understanding and practice in prayer, deep listening, confession and forgiveness, and seeking the greater good.

Discernment is not, fundamentally, about “me.” It is about God, and it is about neighbor. Communal discernment is, at its best, conversation with God and neighbor, with a lot of time dedicated to listening. Discernment is not snap decision making. There are times when decisions need to be made quickly. And there are issues that simply need to be decided, without engaging the spiritual resources of the community.

But there are times in the life of a family, a committee, a congregation, a synod, an institution, the wider church, when an issue cannot and should not be resolved quickly and decisively, with winners and losers. We, as Christians, need to become comfortable in identifying such situations and stating clearly, “We need a time of discernment here,” or “this is an issue for which we need a time of discernment.” In a parliamentary system a person can call for a vote, with the intention of settling the matter quickly and decisively. This is exactly the opposite. It prohibits the quick, decisive settling of the matter. And it opens the door to communal discernment, and a deep time spent listening for the Holy Spirit.

We have many people in our church who are skilled at conflict resolution, at problem-solving, at cultural competency, at listening, at non-anxious presence, at holding paradox in tension, at dwelling in the word, at group dynamics, at consensus building, at facilitating groups. We have people who can compile resources, who are fluent in a variety of traditions. We have all these gifts, and many more in this church. Each can play a vital part in communal discernment.

Therefore, it is not practical to attempt to produce a template for communal discernment. That would only set people up for failure. Rather, we can help people to identify when communal discernment might be appropriate, and show them ways to set the table so that it is possible.

The Churchwide Assembly is probably the most difficult place in the ELCA to expect communal discernment to be effective. Over a thousand people come together for a relatively short time together. They are one in Christ, but they have different backgrounds, different preparation for the assembly, possibly different value systems, and not

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enough time to build the kind of trust that is needed in the gathered community for effective communal discernment to take place.

A better place to start is locally, in congregations and in synods—in smaller groups where there is already enough trust in one another for those gathered to become vulnerable enough to risk deep listening. Advice from one congregational group who tested this practice was to “Check your emotional baggage at the door. Bring an open mind and a welcoming heart.”

Understanding Christian Discernment

Discernment is a key discipline and feature of Christian life. Undertaken individually and communally, it is among the most important spiritual exercises, and when done effectively and faithfully it will nurture the church’s health and vitality, and lead to fulfillment of vocation and mission in the world.

Yet, the word itself is a loaded word. There is little consensus on common usage, and a great deal of confusion about what the word actually means. In brief, then, discernment, as we in the task force have been using it, has to do with seeking and listening for God’s will, centering on questions such as “What would God have me/us do?”

Word studies and an exploration of origins can shed some light for us. *Discern* comes from the Latin, *discernere*: *dis* (apart) + *cernere* (to separate). *Discernment* also has origins in Greek: *diakrisis*, from the root, *krino*, to judge. *Discernment* relates also to: *krisis* (judgment, cf. crisis); *krima* (decision); *kriterion* (means of judgment, cf. criterion); *kritikos* (able to judge, cf. critic, critical, criticism); *synkrino* (to interpret); *krinein* (decide). Informally and loosely, emerging more playfully from these word origins, discernment can be viewed as a coming to decision or judgment through crisis, and the interpretation and analysis of what is needed for the process of making critical judgments.

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When we engage with scripture as “the norm of life and faith” we are making a decision about how we might use and understand the relationship between scripture and discernment. Thus, there is a connection in our biblical studies and explorations of, for example, the stories that describe occasions of discernment and decision making in

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the early church communities. Some of the key New Testament passages that might be helpful for further reflection are:

- ▶ **Acts 1:12-26** Choosing Matthias to replace Judas as an apostle by casting lots. While the decision for Matthias may seem arbitrary and the result of a gamble, the full passage suggests that a discernment process preceded this decision-making mechanism, resulting in two candidates being presented when others may well have been considered, too. The followers had devoted themselves to prayer (vs. 14), and the Lord's will was explicitly sought via prayer (vs. 24) to guide the decision for Matthias or Barsabbas. Given the background of such prayerful discernment, the choice of either candidate would have served the emerging church's leadership needs. And as is always the case, the early community lived within any limitations and constraints of decisions made, as we always "have this treasure in earthen vessels."
- ▶ **Acts 15:1-35** The Council at Jerusalem and the decision to extend the Gospel mission to the Gentiles. This passage reveals a discernment and decision-making process undertaken among the earliest of Jesus' followers.
- ▶ **Romans 12:1-2** "I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. 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." This passage suggests that discerning God's will emerges from our transformation in Christ, and results in our whole-hearted offering of ourselves in Christian life in the power of the Spirit.
- ▶ **1 Corinthians 1:18ff.** especially, "For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written, 'I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.'" Lest we rely too fully on our own powers of discernment, this passage suggests that faithful Christian discernment is undertaken in light of the cross and its logic.

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- ▶ **1 Corinthians 2:1-5** “When I came to you, brothers and sisters, I did not come proclaiming the mystery of God to you in lofty words or wisdom. For I decided (cf. *krinein*) to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and him crucified.” This suggests that the focus for all discernment and decision-making is the crucified Christ.

- ▶ **1 Corinthians 2:14-16** “Those who are unspiritual do not receive the gifts of God’s Spirit, for they are foolishness to them, and they are unable to understand them because they are spiritually discerned (*anakrinetai*). Those who are spiritual discern (*anakrinei*) all things, and they are themselves subject to no one else’s scrutiny (*anakrinetai*). ‘For who has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?’ But we have the mind of Christ.” According to this passage, discernment is faithfully undertaken with the mind of Christ revealed by the power of the Spirit.

Discernment in Our Culture

We have already mentioned that communal discernment does not come naturally for those of us in the 21st century American culture. We have reduced the discernment process into *decision-making* in two general categories: individual choices about personal matters and public decisions, made through the electoral process.

The rich heritage of the Enlightenment—which enabled societies to consider the independence, dignity, freedom and human rights of each person—has devolved into what is, too often, a hyper-individualism. Such a mentality lifts up the individual at the expense of the whole. We feel entitled to make personal decisions without reference to the common good, such that “my” decisions are a private matter over which I have complete control and responsibility. As long as I do not directly hurt others, *I am free to choose* to live, work, worship, speak, shop and think however I want. The incorporation of others’ input or concerns in my decision-making process is interpreted as an unwelcome limitation on my individual rights and personal privilege.

Thus, we have a society which funds highways for individual car owners more readily than funding public transportation. We protect our rights to own as many guns as we want, and accept the 30,000

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fellow citizens killed each year by gun violence as an un-avoidable cost for our freedom. We resist efforts to provide health care to the uninsured, and are more concerned about protecting the “right” to choose individual providers by those who already insured. As we choose a career path we are more likely to consider “what I like doing,” rather than what is needed to be done.

Individualistic decision-making is ingrained in us as a sign of personal growth and independence, “discernment” is what we call our private processes for making those decisions. Too often we have allowed our Christian faith to be adapted to a privatized understanding of God’s presence in our lives. Prayer becomes highly personal, and we experience the Spirit leading us on individual paths which sometimes intersect those of others. Such individualism is a distortion of the Gospel itself, which calls us out of self-absorption and into community. The parts of the Body of Christ can only function when they are in relationship to one another.

The individualism rampant in our culture and even in our churches has become so much a part of our habit that we do not notice it. It is just the way we are, even though many in our society, or within the Christian community, do not share the privilege of such decision-making capability. Personal choices about vocation, employment, purchases and housing, for example, are beyond the reach of many. The range of personal choices available and the freedom to choose among them is limited by social class, economic conditions, race, ethnicity, age, gender, and physical capacities. Still, we in the dominant culture hold onto the ideal of individual freedom of choice, even in the Church, and are blind to those who cannot enjoy it. And when one part of the body is limited in its ability, the whole body suffers.

But we have not just relegated our understanding of discernment to personal decision-making: there are public decisions that need to be made and we have public processes for making them. Our public “discernment” process is identified with watching carefully scripted debates by well-funded candidates engaged in public performances meant to influence our private decision in the voting booth. There is a level of cynicism and distrust in the process that we have come to accommodate and even expect. Americans are increasingly suspicious of attempts by media and government to manipulate them. We revere the public “discernment” process even as we hold doubts and distrust its integrity.

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Research shows that as our social trust continues to decline, so too our interaction with each other decreases. In fact, the two are mutually reinforcing: without interacting with each other, we lose the opportunity to build trust. And so even our “public discernment” becomes individualized and our capacity for the kind of honest and robust public conversation that is needed for communal discernment becomes severely limited. With only a thin layer of public trust, we put yellow tape around important questions, issues and sentiments in our public conversation. Taboos around the “impertinent questions” limit the honesty and depth of our dialogue.

How then can we really understand criminal justice, for example, without deeply engaging how poverty and racial understandings are active variables in the equation? How can we wrestle with the meaning of leadership in Church and society without having difficult conversations about gender? The integrity of discernment is handicapped by the demise in social trust and open and honest dialogue.

Further, by collapsing our collective decision-making (public discernment) into electoral politics, another dynamic is reinforced: a majority “wins,” and the losing minority needs to adapt. This “Too bad!” attitude toward the minority contributes to alienating large segments of society, who lost, perhaps, because they did not have access to power and influence. This breeds a widespread cynicism about our life together, that reinforces once again, the difficulty in developing social trust. By seeing society divided into winners and losers or insiders and outsiders, our capacity for empathy is eroded. The reality of the human vulnerability we all share is ignored.

With such distortions, it becomes all the more imperative to recover a sense of discernment which values both individual conscience and the common good. Such a reframing of our understanding of discernment runs against social understandings and what our culture tells us is simply “common sense.”

A new approach to discernment needs to identify, consider and challenge our points of distrust: To what extent should the concerns of others impact my personal decisions? How can we engage questions facing Church and society without being overly influenced by powerful interest groups and the media? How can we develop vehicles for communal dialogue which facilitate honest dialogue across “taboo topics,” and honors the experience and views of all? How can we

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struggle together about where God is leading us as a people in ways that do not divide us by social and political privilege but instead reinforce our shared humanity and common longings?

A new framework for discernment has to provide portals into seeing our own self-interest and experience—as well as that of others—so that we might more deeply appreciate the diversity, complexity and nuances of our society. Only then can we seek ways to move forward that do not alienate large segments of our community. Such a process is the vision of a democratic society, it also reflects the intentions of the Creator of the human community. As the Church comes to understand more deeply how we are to discern as Christ's Body where the Spirit is leading us, we can offer to the wider culture new models of public engagement, dialogue and decision making.

Discernment and Human Sin

Undertaking discernment casually, without fully understanding its dynamics, is fraught with danger and the potential for abuse, confusing human whim for God's will. Discernment is well-served when we take seriously the effects of human sin, the human capacity for self-delusion, denial, maintaining blind spots, resistance, the need to dominate and control, abusing power and authority, maintaining injustices, pride, greed, and selfishness. Our propensity to rebel against God and to demonize others with whom we disagree, all of these can interfere with discernment processes.

Many of the classic understandings of sin speak to sin's interference with faithful discernment of God's will: misplaced trust, missing the mark, being curved in on ourselves. Sin has the power and capacity to distort or even destroy our best efforts at faithful discernment that leads to decisions about our sharing in God's mission in the world.

Discernment is most effective when we can recognize and set aside our own agendas. Even after the most careful, studied discernment, we still see in a mirror dimly (cf. 1 Cor. 13:12) and discernment may/will lead to quite varied decisions/outcomes. Thus, we pray always: "O God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your

love supporting us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.” We are called in discernment, decision-making and living out our faith to “sin boldly, but to believe more boldly still” (attributed to Martin Luther).

Discernment and the Holy Spirit

Discernment is undertaken in the power and through the guidance and leading of the Holy Spirit. It is one of the “means” through which the Spirit guides us into all the truth (John 16:13a) and is best grounded in a robust pneumatology, or doctrine of the Holy Spirit, in a Lutheran key. Alas, Lutherans have historically shied away from considerations of the third person of the Trinity and major aspects of the third article of the creed.

The historical and cultural circumstances out of which Lutheranism was born contribute to a mistrust of the unbridled emotional and enthusiastic expressions which have often been associated with the Spirit’s coming. These factors can contribute to a kind of spiritual poverty in our Lutheran communities. Still, we have a great deal to offer about the work of the Holy Spirit, principally that the Holy Spirit works through means, particularly the means of grace, the voice and energy of God operative in and emanating from Word and Sacrament. In fact, the church exists, communally, where the Holy Spirit gathers God’s people around that very Word and those sacraments. Discernment is undertaken in close proximity to and with deep engagement in the means of grace in the church as a primary location and focus of the Spirit’s activity and energies.

Cultivating Practices and Habits

The primary question the ELCA is considering through the work of the LIFT task force is “*What is God calling the ELCA to be and do in the future?*” When it comes to decision-making and communal spiritual discernment, **who we are in Christ** leads to how we discern and decide. We are called to be a part of God’s mission in the world. Put in other words: the community of the Body of Christ is more important than the outcome of the decision-making; the journey is as important as the destination; it is better to be caught being Christian than being right. Discerning together what God is doing in our shared life and discerning God’s preferred and promised future for our church

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is one way of trying to understand God. We believe that discernment processes seeks truth while deepening community.

It is important to recognize that the historical methods of decision-making have served us well in many circumstances, and that we should appreciate those efforts. But local churches and indeed, the denomination have habits of decision-making that don't always make space or time for prayer, discernment, and deep listening, so they do not have the chance to try to understand God's will. However, as methods have evolved, new insights have led to new approaches. We believe this is one of those moments because the issues have become more volatile and previous methods do not adequately integrate our faith and our emotions.

Ideally, the culture for decision-making would be one which is open to all, which reflects tradition, contemporary context, and the sources of Lutheran identity. If the discernment is deep, wide, and sincere, the formal ratification of decisions will be more likely to build up the body of Christ.

Our Task Force feels it ought to be the church's ongoing task to cultivate a culture of discernment in our church in all its expressions. Such a culture develops habits and practices such as Dwelling in the Word, lectio divina, and other personal and communal prayer and meditation processes. Such a culture also develops the habit of deep listening to the other with respect and love. Deep listening, (to God and to the other,) cultivates dispositions and attitudes that reveal the fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5) as well as creating comfort in embracing silence and letting go of time sensitivity.

Here are some questions that we have reflected upon, which are illustrative of the discernment process:

Does the cultivation of such habits disregard reason and rationality? No. Indeed, deep dwelling in the Word requires a critical interpretation of scripture, and critical and intentional listening to one another. Reason completes meditation, discernment completes understanding.

Is voting or some other decision-making method appropriate?
Yes, when specifically called for through the church's processes and policies.

How will we know when we are ready and ripe for such a vote?
We will know when we have prayed and listened deeply long enough to know that everyone is ready.

Will there be times when we ripen at different paces? Yes. And then it is even more important to have communal discernment practices learned and functioning as habits, so that the community itself articulates that they are either ready or not yet ready to decide a matter by voting. If discernment goes deep, formal decision is the simple ratification of what has been discerned.

What is the status of communal discernment practices in the various expressions of the ELCA? Our Task Force asked for and recorded stories of congregations, parishes, and clusters engaged in communal spiritual discernment at the 2009 Churchwide Assembly, but they were few, and not many involved engagement with Scriptures, traditions and practices of the church. Several who told stories likened spiritual discernment to a moment when things fell into place serendipitously, “as if by magic.” Almost all those who were interviewed only had examples of discernment as an individual, rather than a communal, practice.

At the Churchwide level, the ELCA Church Council and Conference of Bishops already employ practices of communal spiritual discernment such as Dwelling in the Word, prayer before voting, small group Bible study, accountability documents, small group conversation and sharing, process observation, and communication and discernment exercises from www.TheWorldCafe.com.

Synodical activities may connect with and support communal spiritual discernment, such as participation in the Book of Faith initiative, which may help people encounter scripture in their search for discerning and understanding God truly; the “Bound Conscience” conversation following the 2009 Churchwide assembly, which may help us listen better and more deeply to one another; and the LIFT Task Force/ecology study that will create a wider understanding of the entire denomination and its various inter-relationships.

Faithful innovations recognize the complexity of the contemporary church body. As our structural relationships are fragile, experiments must serve to advance the process of discernment while strengthening our commitment to serve Christ and one another. Since

Some metaphors have been identified as useful in the process of communal discernment.

Holy Stewing. A good stew needs time to blend its ingredients. Even though it takes some time and some heat, the ingredients never lose their individual character. For a good stew, you need a good recipe. And, we need to be ready for neighbors who come to us who might not seem to “fit in” to the original recipe for stew.

Listening for God’s Call. One of the most puzzling stories of the Hebrew Bible is 1 Kings 19.

Immediately after demonstrating the power of the God of Israel and the near elimination of the official cult of Baal—in what should have been a moment of glory for the God of Israel and the prophet Elijah—Queen Jezebel, acting in conformity with her Phoenician ideals about royal privilege, causes the prophet to flee and hide in a cave.

Elijah, who had been so confident in God’s will and readiness to act, now struggled to discern the voice of God.

The Masks of God.
Reformation era Christians used this metaphor to explain

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risk is inherent in change, implementation of new methods must begin with trust-building and mutual respect. To that end, experimentation must happen at all levels of the church (congregational councils, synod councils, churchwide committees and council) as well as at the Churchwide Assembly.

It is our hope to learn from other church bodies how to more effectively participate in the processes of communal spiritual discernment as we are creating a culture that gives space and time to the work of understanding God's will. While there seems to be no silver bullet or panacea out there, we believe we can learn certain things from the way resolution language is changing, from the Consensus Model used by the World Council of Churches, and even by tweaking Robert's Rules of Order, as other church bodies have done, (percentage adjustments made by the LCMS.) The Task force would also like to continue learning how our full communion partners and global partners allow time and space for discernment, and how other Christian traditions seek to understand God as they deliberate the issues facing them.

Discernment may be impeded by decision-making methods that make trust building difficult and may reduce the clarity of the common vision by placing expediency before thorough understanding and agreement. There are some current practices that we believe could be eliminated or changed and some new methods that we think would be more consistent with discernment objectives.

The thrust of these recommendations is to enable the process of deliberation to be (a) supportive of those who have not yet arrived at a decision, (b) fair in representing multiple perspectives and (c) open to the influence of the Holy Spirit. These recommendations are identified in Appendix C.

These recommendations will be made in a timely fashion to the appropriate ELCA expressions.

Wider Communal Dimensions of Discernment

Individual discernment is taken up communally. And communal discernment respects the charisms, the gifts, of individual members of the body. Discernment is for all of God's people and all groupings and sub-groupings in Christian community (not just those, for example,

how exactly where we expect to encounter the numinous, it is not perceptible. A mighty wind, an earthquake, and a raging fire in succession passed before the prophet, but God was not in them. After this cacophony of natural disasters, or "acts of God" as most of our insurance policies call them, came the sound of absolute silence. In this inexplicable and untranslatable negative space, the authors choose to tell us that the Creator of All Things is present.

Organic Ripening.

Discernment can look like the ripening of organic plant life.

When a complicated or controversial subject arises, and it is clear that agreement cannot be reached, the issue is often said to be "not yet ripe."

What is interesting is the assumption that the technology will mature, and that people of good will eventually find ways to work it out. Like the natural growth of a human or an animal, or the ripening of fruits and vegetables in the garden, the process takes place over time, and with proper nutrients provided.

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considering public, rostered ministry.) All expressions of Christian community should make room for, provide occasion and processes for discernment among all of God's people. Specifically in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, it is the intention of the Communal Discernment Task Force that practices of discernment would be leaven in the whole loaf that is our church in all of its expressions: congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization. Discernment at its best is done interdependently among the expressions of our church, nurturing our interdependent ecclesiology, emerging from hoped for ever growing and deepening levels of trust among the expressions of the church.

Communal discernment in the ELCA is not limited to the constituent expressions of our church. Our interdependence extends beyond our structures to member churches of the Lutheran World Federation and to our full communion and other ecumenical partners. Moreover, interfaith dialog is crucial for discernment practices in our current mission and global, multicultural context. Furthermore theological reflection undertaken in the light of human experience, with knowledge of human and other sciences, philosophy and other academic disciplines enriches the practice of discernment. In short, full and rich discernment involves a multiplicity of conversation partners. Faithful discernment practice embraces the African concept of *ubuntu*, that we have no existence apart from others. And in a global village, the "other" extends to the far reaches of the planet.

Faithful discernment practice embraces the African concept of *ubuntu*, that we have no existence apart from others

And in a global village, the "other" extends to the far reaches of the planet

Building a culture for communal spiritual discernment will take real time and energy. It is not yet something Christians expect to do together. Recently 10 perceptive believers of truly good will watched 8 persons telling stories of both personal and congregational spiritual transformation. At the end, they could repeat the personal transformative moments they had heard but hadn't even noticed there were any stories of congregational, communal spiritual growth. As long as our vision of spirituality and discernment appears in personal terms, we will miss seeing its effects on our communities of faith. But with time, good practices and habits, and the action of the Holy Spirit, a culture of communal discernment can be created and nurtured.

Walking into a Better Future

Imagine a member of Trinity Lutheran choir's tenor section mowing his lawn on a Saturday afternoon. His neighbor, Ann, a single

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mom living with her children and her gay brother and his partner, leans over the fence and calls to him. He stops mowing and goes to her, listening carefully to her problem, and then texts two friends. They arrive to help Ann make an emergency repair to the bathroom, providing support and respect for the dignity of this unconventional family.

The family invites the neighbor and his family and the two friends to their house for a barbeque on the deck, and even though those two friends have always opposed gay marriage, they come and eat together. The smell of the grill and the sound of laughter and jazz wafts out over the neighborhood.

Imagine a synod assembly considering a change to an existing practice regarding administration of a sacrament. The room seems divided among at least three options. The large assembly “dwells” in a Bible story, and each person listens to a stranger speaking freely about where their imagination was caught by the text, or about a question they’d like to ask a Bible scholar. Some of these pieces of conversation are reported back to the large group, allowing the time of dwelling to shape the next part of the work.

Individual discernment is taken up communally. And communal discernment respects the charisms (the gifts) of individual members of the body

Then the large group breaks into table groups of strangers who walk through a familiar ritual, answering the question “*What might God be up to in this issue for us?*” They act and speak as though they expect the Holy Spirit to show up and be a part of the conversation. They bring cultural values and their own *communal* and *personal* experience into brainstorming possible answers to the question. They take time to converse deeply, letting go of their agenda anxiety and simply relax with one another in the exchange of ideas and questions. Their posture is engaged but comfortable. Their tone is respectful. Their actions demonstrate concern not only for their tablemates but also for those not present in the conversation. When the conversation time is coming to a close, a skillful table leader gathers the key themes that have emerged. The table group thanks God for being there, for leading them.

The large group returns to plenary session and themes are shared, and a remarkable number of them are similar. There is (not yet) a single direction discernable, but some unity has come out of the previously diverse perspectives. Someone proposes that the assembly is not yet ready to decide a direction, but all celebrate the presence of the Holy Spirit in their midst and rejoice that they are one in this Spirit.

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Plans are made to continue discernment conversation on the emerging themes, so that, at a later meeting, the group might be able to share one clear vision of the direction towards which God is calling them.

Imagine a church council meeting to resolve a tough budget shortfall. (Many council members thought the purpose of a council was to make businesslike decisions for the good of the church and to have budget questions answered before the annual meeting.) Yet this year, there is not enough money or information to meet that goal or that deadline.

Instead of a perfunctory prayer before the meeting, the whole council listens to the lectionary text for that week, hearing the story and talking about it together. Then the Chair asks, "*What is God up to in this financial dilemma for us?*" Silence unfolds (and is welcomed). One member recalls a similar experience on a different issue which was beautifully resolved by employing prayer and deep listening to those most affected by the decision. It was considered by many in the congregation a true moment of spiritual discernment for that church.

Invitations are made to persons who will be affected by the lack of funds, and those persons are listened to, their comments made part of the record, and their worth appreciated. When the council meets again, those comments and subsequent learnings are brought into the conversation, and the council members take turns saying the difficult things they know must be said, knowing their fellow members will have a hard time with them, and yet, will accept them graciously.

Some keep testing the possible decision alongside the mission of the congregation, which they all know well. Prayer, silence, more speaking and prayer ensue, then a vote is taken. The council determines to share the process, the journey, and the outcome with the congregation immediately, even though it is now past the budget deadline. The congregation responds with words of gratitude for the council's living out the Gospel as it discerned God's continued call to the congregation. They celebrate the council's faithful and effective work.

Imagine a Churchwide Assembly considering some aspect of consecrating persons called into service in the church. Among the hundreds of delegates attending are candidates who seek this consecration. They are spread out into a great many of the tables in the room. Each table has someone who can lead different styles of

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discernment conversation. Participants to whom these methods are new still contribute, and even people who are very familiar treat their fellow discerners with humility. No one makes fun of the process as weird or spooky, although some of the press covering the event report it so. When the group reconvenes in plenary, there is a sense in the room that something holy has happened, and yet there are many who are not yet convinced about the emerging direction the assembly might take. They are allowed to vote in such a way as to say, "I disagree but will not stand in the way of passage," or "I agree but urge a delay in implementation."

The assembly rejoices that it has been able to move forward and yet honor those who disagree, and they celebrate the work that has happened and the Spirit that has enabled it. The press cover the story including both (to them) the oddness of the process and the joy of the oneness, even in the remaining difference. As they interview a key leader, she tells them that this communal spiritual discernment is part of church life in every expression of the church, and that it is a mark of our identity as Christians, no matter the level of tension in the issue or division over possible outcomes. It is the way we are who we are as the Body of Christ.

The assembly rejoices that it has been able to move forward and yet honor those who disagree, and they celebrate the work that has happened and the Spirit that has enabled it

Discernment and the Stewardship of Mission

Communal discernment will help us in the church to become better stewards of our decision-making in assemblies and other arenas where decisions are made concerning our participation in God's mission in the world. There is no guarantee that our decisions will be better in any absolute sense, but a culture of communal discernment will encourage us to take better care of the community making the decisions.

Communal discernment may make us better stewards of time in that faithful discernment processes, while taking time, may lead to the kinds of decisions that may save time in the long term.

Communal discernment may help us be better stewards of our future. That is, faithful discernment processes may open us more fully to God's intended future and to live into that future more courageously. We are likewise called to be good stewards of communication in all its dimensions. Effective, full, forthright and loving communication makes for good and faithful discernment.

When it is all said and done, effective and faithful communal discernment will nurture our stewardship of the Gospel and our calling to live it and proclaim it to the world in mission

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Discernment helps us, in the power of the Spirit, to know our vocation in the world. When it is all said and done, effective and faithful communal discernment will nurture our stewardship of the Gospel and our calling to live it and proclaim it to the world in mission.

“The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world’s deep hunger meet.” (Frederick Buechner)

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Communal Discernment Task Force Members

Bishop Jon Anderson has learned about communal discernment as a farmer's son living in a small town, as an athlete playing team sports, serving on Bible Camp staffs, in the joy and complexity of marriage to artist, from aerospace and petroleum engineers in Houston Texas, in the experience of parenting three children who now are young adults, from many faithful and puzzling congregations, and most recently while serving as Bishop in Southwestern Minnesota Synod, ELCA.

Bishop Jessica Crist serves as Bishop of the Montana Synod, ELCA.

Dr. Katie Day is ordained in the Presbyterian Church USA and serves as the Charles A. Schieren Professor of Church and Society at Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia.

Dr. Pat Taylor Ellison believes that communal spiritual discernment is the way missional churches keep The Main Thing the main thing. She serves as Managing Director of Research for Church Innovations Institute in St. Paul, Minnesota.

Rev. Marcus Kunz serves as Executive for Discernment of Contextual and Theological Issues in the Office of the Presiding Bishop, ELCA.

Rev. Susan Langhauser serves as pastor of Advent Lutheran Church in Olathe, Kansas, and as Chair of Planning and Evaluation Committee for the ELCA Church Council.

Dr. Jonathan Linman is Bishop's Assistant for Formation in the Metropolitan New York Synod, ELCA. This position involves him in educational ministries and the candidacy process for discernment of those who will lead the church in public ministry. Pastor Linman's academic background is in Christian spiritual practices, and serves as an adjunct faculty member at The General Theological Seminary in New York City. He is the author of *Holy Conversation: Spirituality for Worship*.

Ms. Kathryn Lohre is the assistant director of the Pluralism Project at Harvard University and president-elect of the National Council of Churches USA.

Dr. Joel McKean writes, "To me, the evolution of this work in progress is more important than the product itself." He is President Emeritus of Bethany College, Lindsborg, Kansas, and a member of Epiphany Lutheran Church, Richmond, Virginia.

Dr. Peter T. Nash serves on the faculty of Wartburg College, Waverly, Iowa.

Prof. Hank Tkachuk serves on the faculty of Concordia College, Moorhead, Minnesota.

Ms. Suzanne Gibson Wise (Task Force Chair) has seen what the Holy Spirit can do through communal discernment in her work and in helping other social ministry organizations do strategic planning. She serves as Executive Director of Lutheran Family Services of the Carolinas.

APPENDIX A: One Congregation's Experience

A summary of discussions and lessons learned

Each session began with Dwelling in the Word using the above scripture. Small groups of two or three persons discussed their reaction to the reading. Because of the time limitation of meeting between worship services (45 min), we did not spend the desired amount of time in this practice, but it still was a productive experience.

After introducing the background of our task force and some of our recommendations for the last Churchwide Assembly, people felt free to express their thoughts. This first phase was typical, I think, where one brings personal emotions, agenda and biases forward. The trick here is to listen to all without interjecting rebuttals or objections. The idea of listening in an attempt to respect the speaker and comprehend the message was used throughout and served us well.

Subsequent discussions were lively and interesting as we followed, without direction or prompting, much of the path that our task force has taken. Although much of the early discussion centered on communications, the emphasis shifted to how God speaks to us through scripture, the importance of prayer, ways to invite and welcome the Holy Spirit, and the importance of making a distinction between discerning the will of God and decision making. The phrase, "...renewing your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God..." Romans 12:2 was helpful in focusing on the prerequisite (my word) for discernment rather the act itself.

There was general agreement that it is difficult to label a vote taken by a Churchwide Assembly as discerning the will of God by the majority, thus implying that the minority did not. This led to a discussion of validation (similar to the Presbyterian model), where failure to validate the decision would have the issue sent back to the body (Church Council or Council of Bishops) that submitted it to the assembly.

There is interest in continuing this discussion as an adult (not restricted to adults) forum during the rest of the year. The suggested study guide, mentioned in our conference call, would provide a needed foundation for discussion in our congregations and would be well received.

Purpose

To consider communal discernment in expressions of the Church

Place

*Epiphany Lutheran Church
Richmond, Virginia*

Participants

Invited members of the congregation (varied attendance 6-10)

Materials

Bibles

Scripture passages

*Philippians 1:27;
Philippians 2:5-11;
Acts 15:1-25;
Romans 12:2*

Sessions: 5

APPENDIX B: Dwelling in the Word

Here are the steps for dwelling in the Word:

1. 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.
2. 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. When your group assembles, be sure you set aside at least 20 minutes for this activity. 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. Next, instruct folks in this way:

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.

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.

APPENDIX C: Preliminary Recommendations for the Churchwide Assembly

These recommendations are in no particular order or priority, as the use of some of them might preclude others. They are submitted to enable the process of deliberation and follow the guidelines previously mentioned to be:

- a. supportive of those who have not yet arrived at a decision;
- b. fair in representing multiple perspectives; and
- c. open to the influence of the Holy Spirit.

First, we would like to affirm the discernment practices that were adopted for the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly and sharpen some of those practices as we move toward future churchwide assemblies. Specifically, we affirm the use of prayer partners, Bible study, and table discussions.

The use of general prayers for discernment that are open to all outcomes are important enough for us to recommend that there be no “free” prayers during deliberations. We suggest that a group be appointed to write prayers to be used throughout the deliberations without a specific order of use. These prayers might also come from *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*. This would allow the random assignment of prayers to avoid any “position” on items on the table. Some have felt that “free” prayer has meant an opportunity for a veiled form of speech to influence responses to the issue on the floor. This method of prayer use should eliminate that concern.

Another prayer option divides the room into sections. These sections could stand and gather for “local” prayer. Again, prayers should be provided for the groups to avoid the partisan concerns noted above. One possibility suggests that the small group prayers are used in a rotation, so that all are praying the same set of prayers but at different times. This might reinforce the idea of diversified unity.

We recommend the retention of Robert’s Rules at this time, but further request a consideration of methods for percentage approval voting on an experimental basis; perhaps using “test cases” on issues NOT being decided at this assembly or as a method of rapid evaluation.

Examples of these methods are:

1. Give voting members a number of votes—five, for example—which they can use all on one side, portioned out among the choices, or not at all, to indicate dissatisfaction with all alternatives.
2. Provide voting members with a range of colored cards from red to green so that they might indicate their relative “warmth” or “coolness” to the point being discussed.

Technology should be employed wherever possible to increase engagement, with appropriate concern for the non-technical participants. For example:

1. We recommend consideration of utilizing text messages to a dedicated number for questions during deliberation; perhaps even projected so the assembly can see them and provide feedback on which, if any, they would like to see answered.

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2. Or, explore the option of using a projection format like those used in webinars where questions are streamed next to the projected images of the speaker.

Likewise, we propose that some pre-assembly polling of the delegates be attempted to see where questions or potential bottlenecks might exist. This might be done on a blog or a FAQ page so that questions could be identified before the assembly. If subject areas where people are not clear about the facts or consequences of a resolution could be addressed in advance, it would increase voting member understanding as well as reducing the time of deliberation.

Since Robert's Rules often provoke anxiety among those who are less familiar with its intricacies, we propose some modifications and cautions in regard to the use of parliamentary procedure. We do, however, commend the continuing work of educating people concerning the benefits of Robert's Rules and the rules proposed for the assembly.

We believe that the assembly should limit the use of "calling the question on all matters" to assure that there is always debate on at least the main motion of all controversial issues. Trust can be reduced when voices are left unheard, especially when there is a perception that the process has been manipulated by those with the most parliamentary expertise.

We suggest that use of the "committee of the whole" be carefully considered in regard to controversial issues. Some have seen this as a tool which serves special interests, especially those related to changing a policy. If this approach is to be used, we suggest that people on all sides of the issue should be included in a discussion preceding the use of the parliamentary tool of "committee of the whole." Such work in advance of table conversation would serve to increase a variety of perspectives and build trust. In these conversations especially, a third microphone for people who are neither for or against the motion, but seeking information or clarification, might be used to give voice to those who have not decided their position on an issue.

When to postpone a decision indefinitely is a critical question. We need criteria to help leaders ascertain when this tool is appropriate. Certainly some kind of training about process and the difference between necessary and optional decisions is important.

To conclude these recommendations, we request that whether these methods are employed at the upcoming 2011 Churchwide Assembly or subsequently, we encourage a rapid evaluation of newly implemented methods so there is opportunity for an adjustment by the conveners. Perhaps there could be a show of cards and/or a place for short written comments (possibly at the tables,) as a way to make adjustments even during the assembly.

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