



## Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

The Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) met at the Lutheran Center, Chicago, Illinois, April 9-12, 2015. The council centered its work around daily worship, frequent prayer and personal reflections on faith. It lived into its commitment to be a “Book of Faith” council by participating in a Bible study led by Bishop David Zellmer, South Dakota Synod.

### **Among the items on which the Church Council took action were the following:**

- gave thanks to God for the life and faithful service of Bishop James R. Crumley and offered sympathy to Bishop Crumley’s family and friends upon his death
- recommended continuing the work of developing a proposal to unify the three existing lay rosters into one Word and Service roster and to bring this proposal to the November 2015 meeting of the Church Council; affirmed the Conference of Bishops’ recommendation to delay a proposal on the appropriate entrance rite and related issues until the November 2018 meeting of the Church Council
- took several actions related to the recommendations of the Bishop’s Think Tank on Mission Funding
- affirmed the pilot project being explored by the ELCA Mission Investment Fund to establish a Financial Services Organization
- received the ELCA Churchwide Organization Operational Plan Report for 2014
- extended the time for development of a social message on gender-based violence until the November 2015 Church Council meeting
- affirmed continued work on the ecumenical document Declaration on the Way
- offered appreciation for the ongoing work related to welcoming migrants and refugees
- declined to ask congregations of the ELCA to end “confirmation” as a ritualized right of youth
- affirmed the resolve by the 2013 ELCA Churchwide Assembly that this church be encouraged speak out as advocates for voting rights
- declined to initiate amendments to the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program concerning full insurance coverage for hearing aids
- reelected the Rev. Stephen Bouman as Executive Director for Congregational and Synodical Mission; the Rev. Rafael Malpica Padilla as Executive Director for Global Mission; and Christina Jackson-Skeleton as the Executive Director for Mission Advancement
- approved a revised 2015 fiscal year current fund spending authorization of \$69,323,020 and a revised 2015 fiscal year World Hunger spending authorization of \$20,600,000
- approved the report of the Audit Committee
- approved the amended bylaws of Trinity Lutheran Seminary, Columbus, Ohio
- elected members to the ELCA Executive Committee, and to the boards of the Board of Pensions (Portico Benefit Services), Publishing House of the ELCA (Augsburg Fortress, Publishers), Mission Investment Fund, Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago and Trinity Lutheran Seminary

**The Church Council received the following:**

- reports from the officers
- reports from its committees
- report from the Conference of Bishops
- report from the executive for administration
- update on the Campaign for the ELCA
- presentation from the Bishop's Think Tank on Mission Funding
- presentation from the Word and Service Task Force
- insights from the liaison bishops to the Church Council on the Conference of Bishops' recommendation regarding the Word and Service Roster
- presentation on the Ecumenical Journey to London, Geneva and Rome and Declaration on the Way
- received an update from the Theological Education Advisory Council
- training in Gender Justice
- update on the Ecclesiology of a Global Church Task Force
- update on Portico Benefit Services
- greetings from ecumenical partners
- primer on Women of the ELCA

**The Church Council also participated in:**

- Honoring members of the Church Council Class of 2015: Marit Bakken, Nick Barber, Karsten Decker, Louise Hemstead, Bill Horne, Carla Johnsen, Susan McArver, Fernando Mercado, Ray Miller, Kathryn Tiede and Man Hei Yip.
- process observations
- health and wellness activities
- sharing of joys and concerns