

**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN
AMERICA**

Church Council

MINUTES

Nov. 12–14, 2020

**Prepared by the
Office of the Secretary**

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**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
CHURCH COUNCIL**

**MINUTES
Nov. 12–14, 2020
Conference Call**

The 105th meeting of the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) was convened electronically Nov. 12–14, 2020. The Executive Committee of the Church Council met electronically Thursday morning, Nov. 12, 2020.

ORGANIZATION OF THE MEETING

The following people were present for all or part of the meeting:

Voting members

Officers:

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton, presiding bishop
Mr. William B. Horne II, vice president
Deacon Sue E. Rothmeyer, secretary
Ms. Lori S. Fedyk, treasurer

Chair of the Conference of Bishops:

The Rev. Tracie L. Bartholomew, bishop of the New Jersey Synod

Church Council:

Mr. Kevin Anderson	Ms. Cherrish Holland
Ms. Tracey A. Beasley	Mr. James J.F. Jennings
The Rev. Marcus A. Bigott	Ms. Patricia Kluetz
The Rev. Nicholas M. Billardello III	Mr. David M. Lenz
Ms. Susan Boxberger	The Rev. Tara R. Lynn
Ms. Lisa Burk	Mr. Keoni Newman
The Rev. William H. Callister	Mr. Joseph T. Nolte
The Rev. Karn S. Carroll	Mr. Gary A. Pederson
Ms. Cheryl T. Chatman	Mr. William D. Rice
Ms. Alyssa J. Cobb	The Rev. Ricardo Rivera
Mr. Ismael E. Danforth	Mr. Noah F. Roux
Ms. Divine	Ms. Valerie J. Shaw
The Rev. Joanne E. Engquist	Mr. Loren A. Solberg
The Rev. Dena M. Gable	The Rev. Kjersten L. Sullivan
The Rev. Daniel W. Gerriettes	Ms. Loni Taylor
The Rev. Emily C. Hartner	Ms. Sonja Wolfe
The Rev. Pamela J. Hoh	Ms. Merritt G. Zesinger

Representatives of the Conference of Bishops

Bp. Sue J. Briner, Region 4	Bp. John S. Macholz, Region 7
Bp. H. Jeffrey A. Clements, Region 5	Bp. Pedro M. Suárez, Region 9
Bp. Barbara J. Collins, Region 8	Bp. Andrew A. Taylor, Region 2
Bp. Donald M. Kreiss, Region 6	Bp. Shelley R. Wickstrom, Region 1
Bp. Patricia J. Lull, Region 3	

Resource People

Office of the Presiding Bishop:

Deacon Jennifer Baker-Trinity, program director for resource development
The Rev. M. Wyvetta Bullock, assistant to the presiding bishop and executive for administration
Ms. Deborah Coe, executive for planning, research, and evaluation
Ms. Rhondean Johnson, executive for human resources
Ms. Kathryn M. Lohre, assistant to the presiding bishop and executive for ecumenical and inter-religious relations and theological discernment

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Ms. BethAnn Lynch, coordinator for worship and liturgical resources
The Rev. Walter S. May, assistant to the presiding bishop and executive for synod relations
Ms. Mikka McCracken, executive for innovation and director for the ELCA Innovation Lab
Ms. Judith Roberts, program director for racial justice ministries
The Rev. Carmelo Santos, director for theological diversity and ecumenical and inter-religious relations
Mr. Joseph Schmidt, administrative services coordinator
Deacon Mary Ann Schwabe, natural systems coordinator
Ms. Jodi L. Slattery, assistant to the presiding bishop for governance
Deacon John E. Weit, assistant to the presiding bishop and executive for worship
The Rev. Roger A. Willer, director for theological ethics

Office of the Secretary:

Mr. Dana Adams, director for meeting management
Mr. Thomas A. Cunniff, general counsel
Ms. Aja Favors, associate general counsel
The Rev. N. Keith Fry, assistant to the secretary and executive for Office of the Secretary administration
Ms. Marit E. Johnson, manager for official documentation

Office of the Treasurer

Mr. Gui Hoang, operation technician
Mr. Oscar Miranda, IT service desk coordinator
Ms. Annette Roman, controller
Mr. Riz Syed, IT support technician

Unit Staff:

The Rev. Cherlyne Beck, director for leadership for mission and candidacy
Ms. Victoria Flood, director for Mission Support
Ms. Kathy Freeman Summers, executive director for the Mission Advancement unit and president of the ELCA Foundation
Ms. Jocelyn Fuller, senior director for strategic communications
The Rev. Philip C. Hirsch, executive director for the Domestic Mission unit
Mr. Nick Kiger, associate director for Mission Support
The Rev. Rafael Malpica-Padilla, executive director for the Global Mission unit
Ms. Evelyn B. Soto, director for operations and programs for the Domestic Mission unit
The Rev. Albert Starr Jr., director for ethnic-specific and multicultural ministries
Ms. Rachel Wind, executive for development

Separately Incorporated Ministries:

Mr. Tim Blevins, president and CEO, 1517 Media
Ms. Linda Post Bushkofsky, executive director, Women of the ELCA
The Rev. Martin A. Seltz, vice president for publishing and executive director for ELCA relations, 1517 Media
The Rev. Jeffrey D. Thiemann, president, Portico Benefit Services

Ethnic-Specific Ministry Associations:

The Rev. Joan Conroy, president, American Indian and Alaska Native Lutheran Association
Ms. Jennifer DeLeon, president, Latino Ministries Association of the ELCA
The Rev. Kahder El-Yateem, president, Association of Lutherans of Arab and Middle Eastern Heritage
The Rev. Russell Meyer, president, European Descent Lutheran Association for Racial Justice
The Rev. M. Gracia “Gigie” Sijera-Grant, president, Asian and Pacific Islander Lutheran Association
The Rev. Lamont A. Wells, president, African Descent Lutheran Association

Ecumenical Guests:

The Rev. Rachel Birkhahn-Rommelfanger, The United Methodist Church
The Rev. Judy Knopf, Moravian Church in North America
Mr. Steven Nishibayashi, The Episcopal Church

Media:

Ms. Candice Hill Buchbinder, Mission Advancement unit

Guests:

The Rev. Priscilla Austin

Ms. Anna Czarnik-Neimeyer

Ms. Cheryl Stuart, synod vice president, Florida-Bahamas Synod

Ms. Jane A. Cahill-Wolfgram, synod vice president, South-Central Synod of Wisconsin

Ms. Aubrey Thonvold, executive director, ReconcilingWorks

Thursday, Nov. 12, 2020
Plenary Session I

GATHERING PRAYER

Deacon John E. Weit, assistant to the presiding bishop and executive for worship, led a service of prayer. The Rev. Joanne E. Engquist, Church Council member from the Northwest Washington Synod, and the Rev. Ricardo Rivera, Church Council member from the Caribbean Synod, served as readers. Deacon Weit and Deacon Jennifer Baker-Trinity, program director for resource development, served as musicians. Ms. BethAnn Lynch served as digital sacristan.

CALL TO ORDER AND ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

(Agenda I.A.)

Agenda items were distributed electronically. Mr. William B. Horne II, vice president of the ELCA and chair of the Church Council, called the Church Council meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. (CST). He drew attention to meeting resource materials and deadlines for proposing new business as well as for removing items from *en bloc* consideration. The vice president then reviewed various elements of the proposed agenda.

A motion was made to adopt the agenda.

There being no discussion, the chair called for the vote.

VOTED:

CC20.11.22 To adopt the agenda and to permit the chair to call for consideration of agenda items in the order the chair deems most appropriate.

ADOPTION OF STANDING RULES

(Agenda I.B.)

To aid electronic meetings, the churchwide organization developed proposed “Rules of Procedure.” The document highlighted deadlines for removal from *en bloc* consideration, deadlines for new business, and instructions for questions, comments, and voting processes during the electronic meeting.

Vice President Horne reviewed the standing rules for electronic meetings.

There being no discussion, he called for the vote.

VOTED:

CC20.11.23 To adopt the Rules of Procedure for the Fall 2020 Church Council meeting.

REPORT OF THE PRESIDING BISHOP

(Agenda I.C.)

Presiding Bishop Eaton reflected on Psalm 46, the mission of the church, and the resilience and creativity demonstrated across the ELCA throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. She provided updates on the completion of *All Creation Sings*, a liturgy and song supplement to *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*. Work continued on the repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery. She also commented that the ELCA has engaged in ecumenical dialogue with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), which furthered the work of the policy statement, “A Declaration of Inter-Religious Commitment.”

The presiding bishop reported that the ELCA COVID-19 appeal had raised \$1.7 million to date. A seventh disbursement of grant funding would be distributed soon.

Presiding Bishop Eaton had installed six new bishops and would preside at three more installations.

The presiding bishop stressed that the churchwide organization has continued its work with diversity, equity, and inclusion, including creating meeting groups for colleagues of color and LGBTQ individuals. She also stated that employees of the churchwide organization will work remotely through at least June 1, 2020.

She concluded her report by expressing her excitement for the proposed Future Church design. She expressed her belief that this design would draw on the “collective genius” of ideas from across the ecology of the ELCA to invite more people into the way of Jesus.

REPORT OF THE VICE PRESIDENT

(Agenda I.D.)

Vice President Horne turned the chair over to Presiding Bishop Eaton in order to give his report. He noted that his written report had been submitted online for council members' consideration. The vice president reported on his meetings with synod vice presidents and how synod vice presidents hope to clarify their roles both in synods and across the wider ELCA. The presiding bishop returned the chair to Vice President Horne at the conclusion of his report.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

(Agenda I.E.)

The Delaware-Maryland and Northeastern Iowa Synod Councils nominated Ms. Alyssa J. Cobb, Pikesville, Maryland, to fill the vacancy of Ms. Emma Wagner, Delaware-Maryland Synod [8F], and the Rev. Daniel "Dan" W. Gerriets, Mason City, Iowa, to fill the vacancy of the Rev. Chad M. Huebner, Northeastern Iowa Synod [5F].

There being no discussion, the chair asked the Rev. Nicholas M. Billardello III, to lead the council in prayer before voting.

VOTED:

CC20.11.24 To elect Ms. Alyssa J. Cobb, Pikesville, Maryland [8F], and the Rev. Daniel W. Gerriets, Mason City, Iowa [5F], to the Church Council for a term ending in 2022.

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY

(Agenda I.F.)

Deacon Sue E. Rothmeyer, secretary of the ELCA, noted that her written report had been submitted to council members electronically. She highlighted materials that would be reviewed in later parts of the meeting. She thanked Presiding Bishop Eaton, Vice President Horne, Treasurer Fedyk, and Ms. Victoria Flood, director for Mission Support, for their work with 2020 synod bishop elections.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Secretary Rothmeyer invited council members to the evening's electronic fellowship session and reviewed the schedule for Friday.

PRAYER AND RECESS

The Rev. Dena M. Gable, Church Council member from the Allegheny Synod, led participants in prayer. The Nov. 2020 meeting of the Church Council recessed at 3:10 p.m.

Friday, Nov. 13, 2020
Plenary Session II

CALL TO ORDER AND PRAYER

Deacon John E. Weit, assistant to the presiding bishop and executive for worship, provided opening music. The Rev. Carmelo Santos, director for theological diversity and ecumenical and inter-religious relations, reflected on Luther's *The Freedom of a Christian* and invited participants to join in prayer. Vice President Horne William B. Horne II called the second plenary session to order at 10:17 a.m. (CST).

REPORT OF THE TREASURER

(Agenda II.B.)

Ms. Lori S. Fedyk, treasurer of the ELCA, presented financial results through Sept. 30, 2020. She reported that the churchwide organization has remained in compliance with investment and cash management objectives. Treasurer Fedyk reported that expenses were exceeding revenues by \$84,000; however, she projected that the organization would end the year with a balanced budget or better, especially given the organization's underspending plan. The churchwide organization spent only 83% of what was budgeted for the first eight months of the year due to reduced travel and building operations expenses, as well as some reductions in grants. Mission Support was over 98% of budget. She gave thanks for the faithful giving of congregations and synods throughout the uncertainty of the pandemic.

Treasurer Fedyk reported that the balance for ELCA World Hunger, as of Sept. 30, 2020, was \$7.2 million. The proposed 2021 budget for ELCA World Hunger included a reduction in direct giving; however, the plan proposed using some bequest income in excess of the 2020 budget so that, despite the reduction in income, programmatic work would not need to be reduced. The treasurer explained that there had been a reduction in direct giving to ELCA World Hunger in 2020, possibly due to the focus on the ELCA COVID-19 Appeal.

Lutheran Disaster Response had raised \$5.3 million to date with \$6.5 million distributed. Treasurer Fedyk noted that around \$1.2 million was distributed for COVID-19 responses, in addition to the ELCA COVID-19 Appeal.

Treasurer Fedyk reported on updates relating to health insurance for churchwide staff, the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan process, and the Workday financial system. The churchwide organization has continued to fund Health Savings Accounts (HSA) at 75% of the difference of the deductible of the Gold+ and Silver+ plans. Payments to HSA accounts will now be disbursed evenly throughout the year. Previously, the organization deposited a larger sum at the beginning of the year and then distributed more funds throughout the year to the HSA accounts. Healthcare plans will be covered in full for employees, while contributions (cost shares) must be made by the employee for spouses and dependents. Staff who make less than \$55,000 will have reduced cost shares in 2021.

The PPP loan funds were received in Apr. 2020. The Office of the Treasurer has begun the loan forgiveness process; however, the Small Business Administration has continued to update the guidance it gives for the process. Treasurer Fedyk hopes to complete the application for forgiveness before the end of the calendar year.

The Workday financial operating system was launched July 1, 2020. The budgeting module will be updated for 2021.

FUTURE CHURCH DESIGN

(Agenda II.C.)

Background:

At its July 2020 meeting, the Church Council received a preview of the proposed Future Church design. After further consultation, the decision was made in August 2020 to extend the timeline for the Church Council to review and consider the design at the November 2020 meeting.

Church Council discussion:

Members of the Future Church team presented an overview of the proposed Future Church design. Presiding Bishop Eaton explained that the vision from the proposed design was "A world experiencing the difference God's grace and love in Christ makes for all people and creation." She noted that while the world has been changing more rapidly, the good news in Christ has remained constant. The presiding bishop reported that this proposal stemmed from previous work with Future Directions 2025. Members of the Future Church team include:

- The Rev. M. Wyvetta Bullock, assistant to the presiding bishop and executive for administration
- The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton, presiding bishop

- Ms. Lori S. Fedyk, treasurer
- The Rev. Philip C. Hirsch, executive director for the Domestic Mission unit
- Mr. William B. Horne II, vice president
- Ms. Rhondean Johnson, executive for human resources
- The Rev. Rafael Malpica-Padilla, executive director for the Global Mission unit
- Ms. Mikka McCracken, executive for innovation and director for the ELCA Innovation Lab
- Deacon Sue E. Rothmeyer, secretary
- Ms. Savanna Sullivan, program director for young adult ministry
- Ms. Kathy Freeman Summers, executive director for the Mission Advancement unit

Vice President Horne reflected on his experience as a lay leader in this church, and the possibilities the proposed Future Church design presented for individuals to have “unity in Christ” amidst differences. He expressed his hope for this church to have bold leaders and better collaboration across all expressions of the ELCA.

Presiding Bishop Eaton reviewed the proposed Future Church design process. The Future Church team developed three priority areas, narrowed from Future Directions 2025 priorities:

- A Welcoming Church: Engaging new, young, and diverse people.
- A Thriving Church: Rooted in tradition and radically relevant.
- A Connected, Sustainable Church: Raising the bar—together.

Ms. Mikka McCracken spoke of ways the proposed design would allow innovation, agile leadership, and collaboration across the churchwide organization and throughout the ELCA. She reported that the ELCA had been awarded a \$1 million grant from the Lilly Endowment Foundation for ministry innovation.

Presiding Bishop Eaton stressed that the purpose for the proposed Future Church design was to activate each member of the ELCA so that “more people know the way of Jesus and discover community, justice, and love.”

The Rev. Philip C. Hirsch referenced the design’s shared ministry goal: “Share the story of Jesus and the ELCA by engaging with 1 million new people as we grow the church—together.”

Presiding Bishop Eaton reviewed design criteria of the proposed design, which included:

- Prioritize the engagement of new, young, and diverse people;
- Unite all expressions into one church—together;
- Align decision-making, accountability and leadership where best suited;
- Act based on data and measurable impact; and
- Eliminate silos and divisions.

Ms. Rhondean Johnson, executive for human resources, presented an overview of the proposed organizational structure under the Future Church design. The churchwide organization would be divided into four units: Operations, Service and Justice, Innovation, and Christian, Community, and Leadership.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Nov. 2020 meeting of the Church Council entered executive session at 11:46 a.m. (CST) to receive an update on personnel matters. The meeting recessed at 12:20 p.m. (CST), then continued in executive session at 1:00 p.m. (CST) to receive a legal briefing.

RECESS

The Nov. 2020 meeting of the ELCA Church Council recessed at 1:28 p.m. (CST)

Friday, Nov. 13, 2020
Plenary Session III

CALL TO ORDER

Vice President Horne called the third plenary session to order at 2:00 p.m. (CST). Ms. Tracey A. Beasley, Church Council member from the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod, opened the plenary session with prayer.

REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE OF BISHOPS

(Agenda III.A.)

The Rev. Tracie L. Bartholomew, chair of the Conference of Bishops and bishop of the New Jersey Synod, stated that her report had been submitted to council members online.

DEFINITIONS AND GUIDELINES FOR DISCIPLINE

(Agenda III.B.)

Background:

At its Spring 2020 meeting, the Church Council requested “that the Domestic Mission unit and the Committee on Appeals engage in conversation with the Conference of Bishops to seek further information and guidance regarding the needs of bishops to apply discipline as described in *Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline*, reporting that information to the Executive Committee of the Church Council at its October 2020 meeting” [CC20.03.05.].

Members of the Committee on Appeals met with the Conference of Bishops at its Oct. 2, 2020 meeting and presented to the Executive Committee of the Church Council at its Oct. 15, 2020 meeting.

Church Council discussion

Mr. Murray G. Sagsveen, chair of the Committee on Appeals; the Rev. Fritz Fowler, vice chair of the Committee on Appeals; and the Rev. Cheryl Meinschein, secretary of the Committee on Appeals, reported on the revision of *Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline*. The committee has met regularly since January 2020. To aid the committee’s work, members reviewed social messages and social statements, facilitated listening sessions and town halls, conducted a survey, and met with representatives of various constituencies across this church.

Topics for consideration for the updated document included confidentiality requirements for ministers of Word and Service, duties of shared-time ministers, family relationships, sexual matters, addiction, membership in certain organizations, racism, and hate speech, among others.

A draft will be submitted to the Conference of Bishops for review in March 2021 in hopes of presenting a revised document to the Church Council in April 2021 for approval and adoption.

REPORT OF THE LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

(Agenda III.C.)

Mr. Gary A. Pederson, chair of the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee, reported on items reviewed by the committee. Most were items under *en bloc* consideration, including:

- Mission Investment Fund Supplemental Executive Retirement Plan;
- Additional voting members for the 2022 Churchwide Assembly;
- Additions to churchwide organization personnel policies;
- Amendments to Portico Benefit Services plan amendments; and
- Amendments to Luther Seminary’s Articles of Incorporation.

He noted that amendments to continuing resolutions relating to the Committee on Appeals would be in a separate *en bloc* action that would require a two-thirds vote.

REPORT OF THE BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

(Agenda III.D.)

Mr. James J.F. Jennings, chair of the Budget and Finance Committee, highlighted two action items under *en bloc* consideration: approval of the ELCA Audit Committee report and extension of the Mission Support experiment to January 2022. Other items would be presented in more detail on Saturday, Nov. 14.

Mr. Jennings reported on an update from the Resource Development Committee. The ELCA COVID-19 Appeal had raised \$1.7 million since its April launch, with \$1.2 million distributed to 63 synods to date. The committee also discussed the proposed Future Church design and potential for fundraising with the proposed design.

REPORT OF THE PROGRAM AND SERVICES COMMITTEE

(Agenda III.E.)

Ms. Sonja Wolfe, chair of the Program and Services Committee, reported that the committee had four items for action under *en bloc* consideration: amendments to three issue papers and the pornography criteria screen. The council would also take action separately on editorial changes to the social message on “Suicide Prevention” (1999).

Ms. Wolfe relayed that the Rev. Pamela J. Hoh and Mr. Loren A. Solberg would serve as Church Council liaisons to the ELCA Task Force on Church, State, and Civic Participation. She reported that the social message on “Government and Civic Engagement in the United States: Discipleship in a Democracy” had been published in English and Spanish and could be downloaded from ELCA.org. Ms. Wolfe noted that individuals may also download a corresponding study guide to aid discussion of the document.

REPORT OF THE BOARD DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

(Agenda III.F.)

Ms. Cheryl T. Chatman, chair of the Board Development Committee, provided an overview of the committee’s work. She welcomed the Rev. Tara R. Lynn as a new member of the committee; Pastor Lynn filled Ms. Emma K. Wagner’s vacancy on the committee following Ms. Wagner’s resignation from the council.

Council members thanked committee members for their work to connect members in creative ways during the pandemic.

DISCUSSION: ASPIRATIONAL DOCUMENT

(Agenda V.C.)

Background:

At its Spring 2020 meeting, the Church Council requested that “the Domestic Mission unit engage in conversation with the Conference of Bishops at its Fall 2020 meeting and the Church Council at its November 2020 meeting to consider the goals and purpose behind a new aspirational document” [CC20.03.05.].

Church Council discussion:

The Rev. Philip C. Hirsch, executive director for the Domestic Mission unit, reviewed the history of ELCA aspirational documents. He reviewed possible criteria for a new aspirational document and recommended postponing development of a new document until *Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline* was revised. This recommendation was included under *en bloc* consideration.

A council member urged members to consider LGBTQ members under the diversity criteria in the proposed Future Church design.

INSTALLATION OF NEW CHURCH COUNCIL MEMBERS

(Agenda III.G.)

Presiding Bishop Eaton and Secretary Rothmeyer led the rite of installation for Mr. William D. Rice, Ms. Alyssa J. Cobb, and Rev. Daniel W. Gerrietts. The presiding bishop then declared the individuals installed as members of the ELCA Church Council.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Secretary Rothmeyer offered a number of announcements and reminded members of the deadline to remove items from *en bloc* consideration.

RECESS

Ms. Loni Taylor, Church Council member from the Montana Synod, offered a closing prayer. The Nov. 2020 Church Council meeting recessed at 3:14 p.m. (CST) for Friday, Nov. 13, 2020.

**Saturday, Nov. 14, 2020
Plenary Session IV**

CALL TO ORDER

The Rev. Tracie L. Bartholomew, bishop of the New Jersey Synod and chair of the Conference of Bishops, reflected on Psalm 118: 24 and Isaiah 11: 6–9 and led the council in prayer. Vice President William B. Horne II called the fourth plenary session to order at 10:00 a.m. (CST).

EXECUTIVE SESSION

(Agenda IV.B.)

The Nov. 2020 Church Council meeting entered executive session at 10:00 a.m. (CST) to receive committee reports related to the proposed Future Church design.

RECESS

The Nov. 2020 meeting of the ELCA Church Council recessed at 12:06 p.m. (CST).

Saturday, Nov. 14, 2020
Plenary Session V

CALL TO ORDER

The Rev. Emily C. Hartner, Church Council member from the North Carolina Synod, led meeting participants in prayer. Vice President Horne called the fifth plenary session of the Nov. 2020 Church Council meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. (CST).

REPORT OF ACTIONS TAKEN IN EXECUTIVE SESSION

(Agenda V.A.)

Vice President Horne reported on actions taken in executive session. Details of the design would be made public on Monday, Nov. 16, 2020.

VOTED:

CC(ES)20.11.25 To affirm the design proposed by the Future Church Implementation Team, as described in “Future Church Narrative,” to strengthen the churchwide organization and align this church for the purpose of activating all ELCA members in order that more people know the way of Jesus and discover community, justice, and love.

VOTED:

Two-thirds vote

CC(ES)20.11.26 To adopt the proposed amendments to continuing resolutions in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA* to implement the design proposal related to the administrative functions as detailed in “Future Church Continuing Resolutions;” and

To authorize the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to make editorial revisions as necessary and report them back to the Church Council at its April 2021 meeting.

VOTED:

CC(ES)20.11.27 To approve a 2021 fiscal year current fund spending authorization of \$65,847,000.

VOTED:

CC(ES)20.11.28 To approve a 2021 ELCA World Hunger spending authorization of \$21,500,000.

VOTED:

CC(ES)20.11.29 To hold in prayer the churchwide employees who will be separated from employment as part of the implementation of the Future Church design; and

To express gratitude to all who serve on the staff of the churchwide organization for their dedication and perseverance, acknowledging the challenging context of entering this Future Church design in a time of global pandemic and work from home.

REPORT OF THE TEMPORARY SELECT COMMITTEE

(Agenda V.B.)

Mr. Kevin Anderson, chair of the committee, reported on the committee’s work in reviewing Church Council committee structures and functions. Members of the committee included individuals from each of the current council committees: Ms. Cheryl T. Chatman, Board Development Committee; the Rev. Karn S. Carroll, Planning and Evaluation Committee; the Rev. Kjersten L. Sullivan, Budget and Finance Committee; the Rev. Nicholas M. Billardello III, Program and Services Committee; and Mr. Kevin Anderson, Legal and Constitutional Review Committee.

Members solicited feedback from their respective committees and reviewed committee charters. The committee selected four questions to guide deliberations:

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- How might the council help this church fulfill its mission and be stewards of human, vocational, and financial resources?
- How might the Temporary Select Committee help council members fully engage productively in their committees with relevant skills and experience?
- How might the Temporary Select Committee review and reconsider the committee structure?
- How might the Temporary Select Committee understand the role and responsibility of the Church Council in relation to the churchwide organization?

Mr. Anderson explained that, due to the Future Church design, the Temporary Select Committee would not provide a recommendation until current standing committees have an opportunity to relate to the new design. He noted that the committee would provide an update at the Spring 2021 council meeting.

CONSIDERATION OF ITEMS REMOVED FROM *EN BLOC*

(Agenda V.D.)

Secretary Rothmeyer announced that the following item had been removed from *en bloc* for consideration:

ELCA Disability Offset Policy for Dependents

Background:

East-Central Synod of Wisconsin (51) [2020]

WHEREAS, the Synod Council of the East-Central Synod of Wisconsin received a resolution from Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Plover, Wisconsin, with this resolve:

Resolved, that we petition the Church to amend the current disability policy with Portico Benefits, so that a disabled member's Social Security Dependents' Benefits are not factored into the Social Security offset of Portico's financial obligation to the disabled member.

WHEREAS, we are a church that has called ourselves "to make fresh commitments in all dimensions of its ministry and mission among people with disabilities." ("A Message on People Living with Disabilities" ELCA Social Statement, 2011).

WHEREAS, we call our congregations and ministries to "support advocacy by its members for public policies, programs, and adequate funding to benefit the needs of people with disabilities and the common good." ("A Message on People Living with Disabilities" ELCA Social Statement, 2011).

WHEREAS, Good Shepherd Lutheran Church of Plover also provides the following rationale in the WHEREAS portion:

- That the Social Security administration acknowledges and provides extra funds necessary to aid dependents of individuals living with disabilities.
- That these Social Security dependent benefits are paid to the dependent and are not considered income for the disabled individual.
- That the current disability policy with Portico does not offer extra funds because of dependents yet claims a right to offset the dependents' Social Security funds from Portico's financial obligation to the disabled member.
- That Portico Benefits ends up paying less money to individuals with dependents than those without.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that we request the ELCA Church Council to consult with Rev. Jeff Thiemann, President and CEO of Portico Benefits, and review the current disability policy of Portico Benefits and address the concern that a disabled member's Social Security Dependents' Benefits are factored into the Social Security offset of Portico's financial obligation to the disabled member.

Executive Committee Action (EC20.04.19)

To receive the resolution from the East-Central Synod of Wisconsin on "ELCA Disability Offset Policy for Dependents;"

To refer the resolution to Portico Benefit Services for a report or a timeline on when this resolution will receive further action; and

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

Response from Portico Benefit Services (November 2020)

ELCA Philosophy of Benefits

Portico Benefit Services [Portico] applauds the spirit and intent of this resolution and is always open to receiving and considering feedback and sharing information on the benefits offered. As the ELCA's benefits administrator, Portico is called to support the church's benefits as its ministry. As set forth in the ELCA Philosophy of Benefits, the guiding principles include:

- Benefits are an investment in God's ministry as carried out through the lives of rostered ministers and lay employees.
- As church together, pooling our collective purchasing power helps us support the church's unique needs in a cost-effective manner.
- Benefits are a shared responsibility of the ELCA—through sponsoring employers, plan members, and Portico.
- Benefits reflect a goal of total well-being.

ELCA Disability Benefits Plan

The ELCA Disability Benefits Plan ("Plan") is self-insured, which means that benefits are funded by the contributions made by congregations and other ELCA sponsoring employers and determined based on an actuarial estimate of the future need. The contributions are held in trust until they are needed to pay for the disabled members' benefits. On behalf of all who receive ELCA benefits, Portico is grateful for the generosity of congregations and ELCA sponsoring employers.

The Plan provides that the ELCA Disability Benefits Trust shall make the following payments for a disabled member's benefits:

- Monthly disability benefit payments to replace two-thirds of the member's prior compensation, less offsets.
- Fully paid premiums for health coverage under the ELCA Medical and Dental Benefits Plan for the disabled member and all family members regardless of family size.
- Contributions to the disabled member's retirement account under the ELCA Retirement Plan (10% contribution for clergy calculated on income prior to offsets).
- Contributions for basic group life insurance under the ELCA Survivor Benefits Plan.

Offsets include payments from the Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), and other government offsets, that are paid on account of the same disability for which the Plan is paying benefits. The Plan ensures a disabled member, in the aggregate, receives two-thirds of their prior income to assist with basic needs, in addition to seamless health, retirement, and survivor benefits. It is not the intent for the disabled member to receive duplicate insurance benefits for the same disability or for the member to receive more than two-thirds of the monthly income received prior to the disability. The Plan has included the SSDI offset in the Plan document since at least 2003 and it is clearly stated in the Summary Plan Description.

ELCA Social Message on People Living with Disabilities

Portico supports and acts in line with the recommendations of the ELCA social message on "People Living with Disabilities" (2011), stating, in part:

The Churchwide Organization and Ministries

In the ELCA, people with disabilities and those who accompany them look to the churchwide organization for leadership, resource coordination and collaboration. For this reason, *it is important for promises regarding financial resources and staff capacities to be realistic and clearly communicated* as the churchwide organization seeks to fulfill its roles. (pg. 11, *emphasis added*)

"People Living with Disabilities" social message also encourages the ELCA to:

- work together with ELCA members, congregations, synods and affiliated organizations to advocate for public policies, programs and adequate funding to benefit the needs of people with disabilities and the common good; and

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- make its policies and practices regarding ministry with and advocacy for people with disabilities substantially consistent with, whenever possible, those of its full communion partners and other ecumenical partners, both here and internationally. (pg. 12)

In line with this social message, the Plan policy to partner with Social Security Disability Insurance to fund two-thirds of prior income is consistent with the majority of the ELCA's full communion partners.

Administration of Benefits

In administering benefits, Portico practices stewardship to responsibly manage all resources entrusted to it, while providing robust and generous benefits consistent with the teaching and the compassion of the ELCA. This is a balance, a balance between the benefits paid out and the contributions collected, with the goal striking the right balance for both plan members and congregations. Portico receives no gain from the offset of Social Security, as its role is to administer the Trust. If benefits are increased, Portico must provide the same increase for all members, then pass along the additional expense to the ELCA ministries that contribute their resources to fund the Plan's benefits.

Portico Benefit Services Recommendation

The ELCA ministries that contribute to the ELCA Disability Benefits Plan also pay payroll tax that funds Social Security Disability Insurance. With the ELCA ministries making payments to the federal government and to the ELCA Disability Benefits Trust, a fitting partnership is established in allocating resources for monthly disability benefits to be paid to disabled members to fund two-thirds of prior income. Funding health coverage, retirement contributions, and survivor benefits are generous benefits provided by this church through the ELCA Disability Benefits Plan that are generally not included in disability benefits in the United States. Portico respectfully recommends the Plan continue these generous benefits along with the SSDI offset.

Vice president Horne called on Secretary Rothmeyer to move the original motion.

Moved;

Seconded:

To thank the East-Central Synod of Wisconsin for its resolution regarding "ELCA Disability Offset for Dependents;"

To receive the report and recommendation from Portico Benefit Services on this resolution;

To affirm that Portico Benefit Services continue to fund health coverage, retirement contributions, and survivor benefits along with the Social Security Disability Insurance offset through the ELCA Disability Benefits Plan, consistent with the ELCA Philosophy of Benefits and this church's social teachings; and

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

Ms. Patricia Kluetz offered a substitute motion:

Moved;

Seconded:

To thank the East-Central Synod of Wisconsin for its resolution regarding "ELCA Disability Offset for Dependents;"

To receive the report and recommendation from Portico Benefit Services on this resolution;

~~To affirm that Portico Benefit Services continue to fund health coverage, retirement contributions, and survivor benefits along with the Social Security Disability Insurance offset through the ELCA Disability Benefits Plan, consistent with the ELCA Philosophy of Benefits and this church's social teachings; and~~

To refer the resolution to Portico Benefit Services for a recommendation, pursuant to 17.20.02.c. of the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA, on a proposed change to the "ELCA Disability Offset Policy for Dependents" which excludes Social Security Disability Insurance paid to dependent children of disabled members from the offsets to the disability benefits paid to the disabled member; and

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

Ms. Kluetz outlined the rationale behind her proposed amendment. She expressed her belief that this presented an opportunity for Portico Benefit Services and the ELCA to live faithfully into the ELCA's social message "People Living with Disabilities" (2010). Ms. Kluetz stressed that the social message encourages ELCA members to treat disabled persons equitably, to ensure that children of disabled persons are not disadvantaged, and to not discriminate against disabled persons because of their parental status. Ms. Kluetz explained her belief that, as a Christian organization, the ELCA holds itself to a higher standard than the commercial insurance industry and the Social Security Administration.

The Rev. Jeffrey D. Thiemann, president of Portico Benefit Services, reviewed the benefits Portico offers to members with disabilities. He stressed that the plan was not meant to discriminate and was consistent with other plans offered by organizations involved with the Church Benefit Association. The Portico policy has been in place since 2003. He noted that Portico would also consider how a possible change would affect other similarly situated members and would address how to move forward in an equitable way. This would be dependent on the Church Council's action and the Portico Board of Directors' discussion and action.

Following discussion, Vice President Horne called for a vote on the amendment.

Moved;
Seconded;
Carried:

To thank the East-Central Synod of Wisconsin for its resolution regarding "ELCA Disability Offset for Dependents;"

To receive the report and recommendation from Portico Benefit Services on this resolution;

~~To affirm that Portico Benefit Services continue to fund health coverage, retirement contributions, and survivor benefits along with the Social Security Disability Insurance offset through the ELCA Disability Benefits Plan, consistent with the ELCA Philosophy of Benefits and this church's social teachings; and~~

To refer the resolution to Portico Benefit Services for a recommendation, pursuant to 17.20.02.c. of the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA, on a proposed change to the "ELCA Disability Offset Policy for Dependents" which excludes Social Security Disability Insurance paid to dependent children of disabled members from the offsets to the disability benefits paid to the disabled member; and

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

Vice President Horne declared that the amendment was carried and called for a vote on the amended action.

VOTED:
CC20.11.30

To thank the East-Central Synod of Wisconsin for its resolution regarding "ELCA Disability Offset for Dependents;"

To receive the report and recommendation from Portico Benefit Services on this resolution;

To refer the resolution to Portico Benefit Services for a recommendation, pursuant to 17.20.02.c. of the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA, on a proposed change to the "ELCA Disability Offset Policy for Dependents" which excludes Social Security Disability Insurance paid to dependent children of disabled members from the offsets to the disability benefits paid to the disabled member; and

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

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EN BLOC APPROVAL OF CERTAIN ITEMS

(Agenda V.E.)

Background:

An *en bloc* resolution on routine or noncontroversial actions was presented to the Church Council. Opportunity had been provided to Church Council members to request removal of items from *en bloc*.

Church Council action:

A motion was made to take *en bloc* action on the remaining recommendations on the consent calendars. As the items were voted *en bloc*, there was no discussion.

The vice president called for the vote.

VOTED:

Two-thirds vote

CC20.11.31 To approve the *en bloc* continuing resolution amendments to the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* as listed in *En Bloc Items*.

Proposed Amendments to the Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Related to the Committee on Appeals

Background:

The Committee on Appeals recommended proposed amendments to continuing resolutions relating to the work of the committee. The process for amending continuing resolutions is specified in Chapter 22 of the ELCA Constitution.

VOTED:

Two-thirds vote

CC20.11.31a To adopt the following amendment to the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.

20.61.A1320. Rules of the Committee on Appeals

- a. Any appeal to the Committee on Appeals shall be made in writing ~~within 30 days after the decision of the discipline hearing committee has been delivered to the accused and the accuser(s). Appeals may be made only by the accused or the accuser(s) or their respective designated representative. Notice of the appeal shall be given by certified or registered letter addressed to the Committee on Appeals (in care of the secretary of this church, 8765 West Higgins Road, Chicago, Illinois 60631), with a copy to the other party. The letter containing the notice of appeal must be postmarked within 30 days after the discipline hearing committee has delivered its decision to the accused and the accuser(s).~~
- ...
- m. Meetings of the Committee on Appeals may be held in person or by ~~conference telephone call~~ an aural method in which all parties can participate.
- n. A majority of the members of the Committee on Appeals who are not disqualified shall constitute a quorum for the conduct of its business at a scheduled meeting, ~~and three fourths of the members of the Committee on Appeals who are not disqualified shall constitute a quorum for the conduct of its business by conference telephone call.~~

VOTED:

Two-thirds vote

CC20.11.32 To approve the *en bloc* reconsideration of a social message as listed in *En Bloc Items*.

Reconsideration of a Social Message

Background:

ELCA social messages are adopted by the Church Council (CC) as part of the council's responsibility to oversee the development of ELCA social teaching. It is possible to recommend an edit, which is described in "Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns" (2018, p. 23) as an "update of particular wording for the sake of accuracy and relevance to the contemporary social context involving no change in substantive meaning." The director for theological ethics has recommended an edit to the social message on "Suicide Prevention" (1999).

VOTED: *Two-thirds vote*
CC20.11.32a **To reconsider the social message on "Suicide Prevention" (1999) for editorial changes for the sake of accuracy and relevance to the contemporary social context involving no change in substantive meaning, in accordance with "Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns" (2018).**

VOTED:
CC20.11.33 **To take action *en bloc* on the remaining items listed in *En Bloc* Items, Responses to Previous Church Council Actions, and Responses to Churchwide Assembly Actions.**

A. Audit Committee Report

VOTED: *EN BLOC*
CC20.11.33a **To approve the report of the ELCA Audit Committee describing its review of the audited financial statements, management letter, and response of management for the churchwide organization's fiscal year ended Jan. 31, 2020.**

B. Update to Mission Support Experiment

Background:

The recommendation to extend the Mission Support Experiment will allow those synods in the experiment to continue budget projections for the coming fiscal year as the Church Council prepares to receive final reports and recommendations in 2021.

VOTED: *EN BLOC*
CC20.11.33b **To extend the Mission Support Experiment to end January 31, 2022, in the following synods (Lower Susquehanna, Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Nebraska, New England, Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast); and**
 To affirm the previous process outlined in the CC19.04.13 resolution:

- **To request for final data/report from Mission Support Experiment Synods to be presented at the April 2021 Church Council meeting;**
- **To request Mission Support Experiment synods to prepare two scenarios for their FY 2022 budget (Continue or End); and**
- **To request a final report and decision from the Budget and Finance Committee to be presented for action at the November 2021 Church Council meeting.**

C. Mission Investment Fund Deferred Compensation Plan

Background:

The Mission Investment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America ("MIF"), a separately incorporated ministry of the ELCA, presented the MIF Deferred Compensation Plan and the MIF Supplemental Executive Retirement Plan (the "Plans") for adoption by the ELCA Church Council. The ELCA, as the employer for MIF staff, has the responsibility and authority to maintain employee benefits and will therefore be the plan sponsor. The Plans offer additional benefits that will allow MIF to retain and attract talent in a competitive marketplace.

The MIF Deferred Compensation Plan ("DCP") creates a vehicle by which the President and CEO of MIF (and potentially other staff selected by the President and CEO) can defer a broad range of compensation, as designated by the

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participant, to a later tax year. The DCP is considered a non-qualified deferred compensation plan. As such, it is not subject to the contribution caps of a 403(b) retirement plan. The deferred compensation is then paid out upon the occurrence of designated events, such as retirement, death, or a specified date. While the compensation deferred under the DCP remains an asset of the ELCA until paid out, the funds are vested in the participant. The DCP was developed utilizing the expertise of employee benefits attorneys at the law firm Locke Lord LLP, in consultation with MIF's management and Corporate and Compliance Counsel. The DCP has also been reviewed by the ELCA General Counsel.

The MIF Supplemental Executive Retirement Plan ("SERP") provides tailored retirement distributions to key executives in addition to those provided by the standard retirement savings plan. The SERP is also considered a nonqualified deferred compensation plan. It will facilitate additional employee retirement distributions based on peer benchmarks appropriate to executives of non-profit financial institutions. Funding for the SERP will be provided by MIF, and distributions will be paid out of the invested principal and earnings. Participants in the SERP will be limited to MIF's key executive positions. The SERP is being developed utilizing the expertise of D. Hilton Associates Inc., a benefits consultant, and employee benefits attorneys at the law firm Ogletree Deakins, in consultation with MIF's management and Corporate and Compliance Counsel. The DCP will also be reviewed by the ELCA General Counsel. The organization anticipates that the plan will be provided by October 30.

By resolution, the Presiding Bishop will be appointed to act on behalf of the ELCA in administering the Plans. The Presiding Bishop may delegate the day-to-day management of the Plans to a third-party administrator with expertise in deferred compensation plan investment management and administration, the costs of which will be covered by MIF.

VOTED:

EN BLOC

CC20.11.33c

RESOLVED, that the Church Council hereby adopts the Mission Investment Fund Deferred Compensation Plan and the Mission Investment Fund Supplemental Executive Retirement Plan, in the forms attached hereto as Exhibit A (the "Deferred Compensation Plan") and Exhibit B (the "Supplemental Executive Retirement Plan"), for the benefit of certain employees of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (the "ELCA") who provide services on a full-time basis to the Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA ("MIF"), effective as of January 1, 2021;

RESOLVED, that the Presiding Bishop is appointed to act on behalf of the ELCA as the "Plan Sponsor" and "Administrator" of the Deferred Compensation Plan and the Supplemental Executive Retirement Plan;

RESOLVED, that the Church Council retains the authority to amend or terminate the Deferred Compensation Plan and the Supplemental Executive Retirement Plan; provided, that, the Church Council delegates to the Presiding Bishop the authority to adopt any amendment that does not result in a material change in coverage, benefits, or costs and (i) is of an administrative or technical nature; or (ii) is deemed by the Presiding Bishop to be necessary or desirable in order to comply with legal requirements, including requirements of the Internal Revenue Code;

RESOLVED, notwithstanding any other delegation of authority by the ELCA to another person or committee with respect to similar matters, the Presiding Bishop is delegated the authority to enter into an administrative services agreement on behalf of the ELCA solely for the purpose of engaging a third-party administrator to handle the day-to-day administration of the Deferred Compensation Plan and the Supplemental Executive Retirement Plan;

RESOLVED, notwithstanding any other delegation of authority by the ELCA to another person or committee with respect to similar matters, the Presiding Bishop is delegated the authority to enter into a trust agreement on behalf of the ELCA solely for the purpose of establishing a trust to hold the assets of the Deferred Compensation Plan and the Supplemental Executive Retirement Plan and to appoint a trustee to oversee such trust; and

RESOLVED, that the Presiding Bishop keep and maintain appropriate records of all actions so authorized and, upon request, report such transactions to the Church Council.

D. Additional Voting Members for the 2022 Churchwide Assembly

Background:

For each Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the constitution provides for allocation of additional voting members.

VOTED: *EN BLOC*
CC20.11.33d **To allocate for the 2022 Churchwide Assembly one additional voting member to the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod (8H), making a total of six voting members; and
To allocate for the 2022 Churchwide Assembly two additional voting members to the Alaska Synod (1A), Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod (4C), Slovak Zion Synod (7G), and Caribbean Synod (9F), making a total of six voting members per synod.**

E. Policy Change to Churchwide Organization Personnel Policies

Background:

In accordance with ELCA Bylaw 14.21.06, the Church Council “shall adopt personnel policies for the churchwide organization.” An amendment to add Juneteenth as a paid holiday is being proposed to the Churchwide Organization Personnel Policies.

VOTED: *EN BLOC*
CC20.11.33e **To approve the policy change to the Churchwide Organization Personnel Policies.**

F. Portico Benefit Services

Background:

The Church Council is responsible for approving Portico Benefit Services plan amendments that involve a significant change in policy or a significant change in cost or benefits and shall approve trust amendments initiated by Portico Benefit Services [“Portico”].

VOTED: *EN BLOC*
CC20.11.33f **To approve the proposed amendments to the Restated ELCA Retirement Trust, ELCA Retirement Savings Trust, ELCA Participating Annuity Trust, and Restated ELCA Master Institutional Retirement Trust as listed in the “Church Council Summary of Plan and Trust Amendments” document.**

G. Proposed Amendments to Luther Seminary’s Articles of Incorporation

Background:

On October 9, 2020, the Luther Seminary Board of Directors approved amendments to the Articles of Incorporation. The proposed amendments were submitted for approval by the Church Council in accordance with ELCA bylaw 8.21.02. The proposed amendments included one substantive addition which would allow Luther Seminary’s Board of Directors to act by authenticated electronic communication without actually meeting. The proposed amendments also corrected an outdated statutory reference, removed obsolete language about the incorporators, and made other non-substantive edits.

VOTED: *EN BLOC*
CC20.11.33g **To approve the amended Articles of Incorporation of Luther Seminary.**

H. Corporate Social Responsibility Documents

Background:

The Church Council is responsible for reviewing this church's ongoing work in corporate social responsibility. The Program and Services Committee reviewed three issue papers and one social criteria investment screen.

VOTED: *EN BLOC*
CC20.11.33h **To approve the amendments to the following corporate social responsibility documents to serve as the basis for ongoing corporate social responsibility work in this church:**

- **Domestic Access to Health Care Issue Paper**
- **Extractive Industries Issue Paper**
- **Codes of Conduct Issue Paper**
- **Pornography Social Criteria Investment Screen; and**

To request that the original issue papers be archived for historical and research purposes.

I. Assessing the Need for and Feasibility of Initiating Social Message Processes

Background:

In November 2019, the Church Council postponed the question of developing social messages on U.S. National Drug Policy, aging, gender identity, or gun policy until Fall 2020 [CC19.11.47x; CC19.11.47z].

The director for theological ethics recommended deferring again the questions regarding these social messages because of the COVID-19 pandemic and its consequences. In the past months, it simply has not been possible to do the groundwork and assessment necessary to bring a recommendation to the Fall 2020 Church Council meeting. In addition, the pending reorganization and 2021 budget questions regarding the churchwide office make it nearly impossible to assess next year's staff capacity and finances. While the consequences of COVID-19 remain difficult to fully anticipate, an assessment and recommendation should be possible by the Spring 2021 Church Council meeting.

VOTED: *EN BLOC*
CC20.11.33i **To defer the questions of developing social messages on U.S. National Drug Policy, aging, gender identity, or gun policy until the Spring 2021 Church Council meeting, when a new assessment of each issue, staff capacity, and finances will be made; and**
To request that the secretary of this church inform the synods of this action.

J. Aspirational Document

Background:

At the March 2020 Church Council meeting, the council requested that "... the Domestic Mission unit engage in conversation with the Conference of Bishops at its Fall 2020 meeting and the Church Council at its November 2020 meeting to consider the goals and purpose behind a new aspirational document; ..." [CC20.03.05].

A preliminary conversation was conducted with the Conference of Bishops at its Fall 2020 meeting. Based on the feedback with the conference and other consultations, the executive director for Domestic Mission proposed a deferment on the question of developing an aspirational document.

VOTED: *EN BLOC*
CC20.11.33j **To defer the question of developing an aspirational document until after Spring 2021 when *Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline* is further redeveloped.**

K. Approval of the Minutes

Background:

The minutes of the June 24, 2020, meeting of the Church Council were provided to council members electronically. Minutes for July 20, 2020 and Aug. 26, 2020 meetings held in executive session were added to the protocol file in the Office of the Secretary.

The minutes of the council's Executive Committee meetings on Aug. 13, 2020, Sept. 15, 2020, and Oct. 15, 2020, were provided electronically. Minutes for July 31, 2020, and Nov. 5, 2020, meetings held in executive session have been added to the protocol file in the Office of the Secretary.

VOTED: *EN BLOC*
CC20.11.33k **To approve the minutes of the June 24, 2020, July 20, 2020, Aug. 26, 2020, and Nov. 5, 2020, meetings of the Church Council; and
To ratify actions of the council’s Executive Committee as indicated in the minutes of the July 31, 2020, Aug. 13, 2020, Sept. 15, 2020, and Oct. 15, 2020, meetings.**

L. Recommendation from Conference of Bishops on ELCA Candidacy Manual

Background:

At its October 2020 meeting, the Conference of Bishops recommended changes for the sake of clarity to the statement for the approval form and the entrance form in the ELCA Candidacy Manual. [CB20.10.10]

VOTED: *EN BLOC*
CC20.11.33l **To affirm the recommendation from the Conference of Bishops to amend the statement for the candidacy approval form and the entrance form;
To direct the Domestic Mission unit to revise the forms in the ELCA Candidacy Manual with this language, effective immediately:
“As a candidate for rostered ministry in this church, I understand I will be held accountable to the synod’s candidacy committee regarding this church’s expectations for my speech and conduct as set forward in *Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline of Rostered Ministers*. I understand that my candidacy for rostered ministry brings increased attention to my life. I am responsible for informing my bishop regarding any circumstance that might subject me to discipline according to *Definitions and Guidelines* were I a rostered minister. I understand that the candidacy committee may modify my candidacy status at any time in response to my speech and conduct.”**

M. Church Council Nominations and Elections

Background:

The Church Council has the responsibility of electing people to fill terms on boards of Separately Incorporated Ministries (SIMs), social ministry organizations, and seminaries. Bylaws 8.21.03. and 8.21.04. outline basic parameters for the election of members to the boards of ELCA seminaries. Pursuant to 14.22. of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, the Church Council is also to elect nominees to a vacancy on a board or committee of the churchwide organization.

VOTED: *EN BLOC*
CC20.11.33m1 **To elect to the board of trustees of the Publishing House of the ELCA—1517 Media—to fill two vacancies with the term expiring in August 2022: Mr. Brooke Selassie and the Rev. Joy J. Moore.**

VOTED: *EN BLOC*
CC20.11.33m2 **To elect to the board of directors of Wartburg Theological Seminary to a six-year term beginning Jan. 1, 2021 and expiring Dec. 31, 2026: The Rev. Michael D. Carlson and Mr. Anthony “Tony” Goodman.**

VOTED: *EN BLOC*
CC20.11.33m3 **To elect to the advisory board of Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary to a three-year term expiring in June 2023: The Rev. Jessica Crist, Mr. Justin W. Holmerud, the Rev. Sean Janssen, and the Rev. Ron C. Rucker.**

VOTED: *EN BLOC*
CC20.11.33m4 **To elect to the board of trustees of United Lutheran Seminary for a term expiring in 2022: The Rev. Cean R. James; and
To reelect to the board of trustees of United Lutheran Seminary for a term expiring in 2022: Ms. Cheryl Williams.**

VOTED: *EN BLOC*
CC20.11.33m5 To elect to the board of directors of Trinity Lutheran Seminary at Capital University to a three-year term expiring in 2023: Mr. Allan Bernard.

VOTED: *EN BLOC*
CC20.11.33m6 To elect to the Board of Directors of National Lutheran Campus Ministry, Inc. for a four-year term expiring in 2025: Mr. Thomas V. Matthews and the Rev. Paul Collinson-Streng.
To reelect to the board of directors of National Lutheran Campus Ministry, Inc. for a second four-year term expiring in 2025: The Rev. William E. Bentzinger II, Mr. Thomas T. Chase Jr., and the Rev. Joanne Conroy.

N. Synod Constitution Amendments

Background:

Provision †S18.13. of the *Constitution for Synods* describes the process for synods to amend non-required provisions in their constitutions. It stipulates, “All such amendments shall become effective upon ratification by the Churchwide Assembly or by the Church Council.”

VOTED: *EN BLOC*
CC20.11.33n1 To ratify the following amendment to the constitution of the Saint Paul Area Synod:

S7.22. All retired rostered ministers in this synod shall elect ~~40~~ **5** percent of their number to be voting members; all others shall be advisory members, with voice, but not vote.

VOTED: *EN BLOC*
CC20.11.33n2 To ratify the following amendments to the constitution of the Northeastern Minnesota Synod:

S11.11. This synod shall in its bylaws or by continuing resolution establish a process to ensure that the members of its committees and other organizational units will be persons possessing the necessary knowledge and competence to be effective members of such units, and to meet the requirements of †S6.04.. With the exception of ordained ministers on roster of this synod ministers of Word and Sacrament and ministers of Word and Service who reside outside the territory of this synod, each member of a committee of this synod, or any other organization unit created by this synod, shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod.

P. Declaration of the ELCA to People of African Descent

Background:

Church Council action [CA19.06.23.]

To adopt “A Declaration of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to the People of African Descent” as a statement of apology for this church’s complicity in the legacy of slavery;

To thank the African Descent Lutheran Association for their 2015 biennial assembly resolution asking for a declaration of the ELCA to the people of African descent;

To call this church into a time of study and to direct the Office of the Presiding Bishop to consider developing educational resources to support the apology and encourage congregations, synods and the churchwide organization to find ways to share this apology broadly;

To direct Planning, Research and Evaluation to measure and report progress on the discriminatory treatment within the call process and to urge Portico to assist with providing information to the churchwide organization to measure and report progress on inequitable compensation of clergy of color by the November 2021 meeting of the Church Council;

To request the presiding bishop to name a Day of Repentance for congregations, synods and churchwide organization to observe annually and to request the Office of the Presiding Bishop worship team develop a liturgical resource of lamentation and repentance to accompany this annual Day of Repentance; and

To affirm the June 2019 Lutheran World Federation Council resolution “Commemorating the 2019 Quad-centennial of the Forced Transatlantic Voyage of Enslaved African Peoples to the Americas—Human Beings Not for

Sale!” and, in particular, LWF’s call to engage in anti-racism and racial justice work, work toward economic justice (including the study of reparations), and work to address and end modern forms of slavery and human trafficking.

Response from the Office of the Presiding Bishop (November 2020)

The Office of the Presiding Bishop continues to work with congregations, synods, and ethnic associations to raise awareness of the apology by sharing the online resource link and by mailing print copies of the “Declaration of the ELCA to People of African Descent.” The apology also has been shared with full communion partners, including the National Council of Churches USA (NCC), Christian Churches Together (CCT), the Conference of National Black Churches (CNBC), the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), and the World Council of Churches (WCC). The question of reparations continues to be a growing topic of discussion within the ecumenical movement.

In response to the Church Council actions in 2019, the director for racial justice launched a preliminary study on reparations in early 2020. This report will be presented to members of the African Descent Strategy Team (ADST) and the African Descent Lutheran Association (ADLA) for review in early 2021. The preliminary report will serve as an outline in developing a more in-depth study proposal for engaging and educating the wider church on the history of reparations. The intent of the study is to collect existing information for the development of congregational resources. The research project will define reparations with a theological and socio-economic frame; provide an historical overview of the impact of the transatlantic slave trade; examine the current case for reparations within church and society; consider ecumenical actions of various partner churches; and align with advocacy efforts currently underway at the state, local, national, and international levels. Looking ahead to 2021 and beyond, a proposal is in development for a consultation on the study of reparations with key stake holders, scholars and various persons in leadership representing groups across this church. The reparations study will coincide with existing churchwide assembly actions and related resolutions, including “African Descent Lutheran Lives Matter” and “Condemnation of White Supremacy & Racist Rhetoric.” To complete this undertaking will require the work of experts and a proposed budget.

In addition, the June 2019 Church Council action called for an ELCA Day of Repentance from Racism. In 2020, the ELCA recognized June 17 as a Day of Repentance from Racism and the Remembrance of the Mother Emanuel 9. The churchwide organization launched a live web service and encouraged congregations, synods, and members to participate in the day. The Office of the Presiding Bishop worship team, the director for racial justice, the director for African Descent ministries, and the executive for ecumenical and inter-religious relations and theological discernment, in partnership with leaders across the Church planned and developed liturgical resources of lamentation and repentance to accompany the June 17 Day of Repentance. Conversations have been underway with the director for African Descent ministries, the director for racial justice, and the executive for worship to review the liturgical calendar for an additional date. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, no formal date has been proposed to the presiding bishop at this time.

VOTED:

EN BLOC

CC20.11.33p

To receive the response from the Office of the Presiding Bishop on the implementation of the resolution of the “Declaration of the ELCA to the People of African Descent” (a statement of apology for this church’s complicity in the legacy of slavery);

To thank the churchwide staff for their efforts in providing educational resources to support the apology and encouraging members, congregations, and synods to find ways to share this apology broadly;

To encourage the continuation of the research and work toward economic justice and the study of reparations and engagement in anti-racism and racial justice work; and

To request a further report from the Office of the Presiding Bishop on the naming of an annual Day of Repentance, including a liturgical resource of lamentation and repentance to accompany this annual Day of Repentance, to the Spring 2021 Church Council meeting.

Q. Carbon Fee and Dividend

Background:

Churchwide Assembly action [CA19.02.06d]

To receive with gratitude the memorial from the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin concerning Carbon Fee and Dividend;

To reaffirm the commitment of this church to engage in advocacy that seeks sufficient, sustainable livelihood for all; and

To refer to the Domestic Mission unit for the development of a plan that promotes educational resources on Carbon Fee and Dividend to assist in forming the basis for any potential advocacy strategy.

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Executive Committee action [EC19.09.28.a3]

To refer the 2019 Churchwide Assembly action on “Carbon Fee (and Dividend)” to the Domestic Mission unit for a report or for a timeline on when this will receive further attention; and

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

Response from the Domestic Mission unit (November 2019)

Reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions into the atmosphere requires multiple approaches which include carbon pricing, setting emissions performance standards, or GHG mitigation technologies.

Carbon pricing is generally believed by economists to be the best tool for having the greatest impact in the near-term to spur GHG emission reduction mitigation efforts. Carbon pricing can take many forms, with the most familiar being an emissions trading system (ETS) or a carbon fee or tax. This memorial’s focus is on a carbon fee with dividends.

The Domestic Mission unit through ELCA Advocacy will implement this action with deliverables along the following timeline:

- 11/14/2019 Develop a primer on this memorial entitled “Carbon Pricing Basics” with principles as a basis for ELCA endorsement of potential legislation.
Develop a Frequently Asked Questions Resource document for use by constituents in advocating for or against a carbon tax.
- 11/19/2019 Publish a blog post to introduce the carbon fee resources available for carbon fee and dividend.
- 12/1/2019 Develop criteria for comparison of the federal bills that address carbon pricing and post a comparison of the bills.
- 2/15/2020 Host a webinar on carbon pricing.

Church Council action [CC19.11.47n]

To receive the response on “Carbon Fee and Dividend” from the Domestic Mission unit;

To affirm the proposed timeline on the deliverables and to receive a final report on the implementation of the action at the Church Council’s Fall 2020 meeting; and

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

Response from the Domestic Mission unit (November 2020)

Reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions into the atmosphere requires multiple approaches which include carbon pricing, setting emissions performance standards, and/or GHG mitigation technologies. Carbon pricing is generally believed by economists to be the best tool for having the greatest impact in the near term to spur GHG emission reduction mitigation efforts. Carbon pricing can take many forms, with the most familiar being an emissions trading system (ETS) or a carbon fee or tax. This memorial’s focus is on a carbon fee with dividends.

The Domestic Mission unit, through ELCA Advocacy, developed a primer on the focus of this memorial entitled “Carbon Pricing Basics” with principles that serve as a basis for ELCA advocacy positions pertaining to potential legislation. ELCA Advocacy also developed questions to ask legislators to help synods better analyze any carbon fee legislation that may be put forth.

While carbon tax legislation remains a favorite among economists, it has not found a place in key legislation launched by either the Democratic or the Republican Party. The Domestic Mission unit reaffirms this church’s commitment to work through ELCA Advocacy with interreligious partners and other faith leaders and will continue to engage in efforts that seek sufficient, sustainable livelihood for all in addressing climate change. The developed carbon pricing primer and a forthcoming frequently-asked-questions document serve as carbon fee with dividend educational resources that will assist in forming the basis for any potential advocacy strategy. It is the Domestic Mission unit’s opinion that this proposed resolution’s request has been met, and this report will serve as the final report.

VOTED:

EN BLOC

CC20.11.33q To receive the final report from the Domestic Mission unit on the implementation of a plan that promotes educational resources on Carbon Fee and Dividend to assist in forming the basis for any potential advocacy strategy; and

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

R. Earth Charter

Background:

Churchwide Assembly action [CA19.02.06c]

To receive with gratitude the memorials from the Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast, New England, Upstate New York, and Southeastern Pennsylvania synods concerning endorsement of the “The Earth Charter”;

To endorse the Earth Charter;

To reaffirm the commitment of this church to engage in creation care through principles of sufficiency, sustainability, solidarity, and participation; and

To refer to the Domestic Mission unit for implementation consistent with this memorial.

Executive Committee action [EC19.09.28.a2]

To refer the 2019 Churchwide Assembly action on the “Earth Charter” to the Domestic Mission unit for a report or for a timeline on when this will receive further attention; and

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

Response from the Domestic Mission unit (November 2019)

The ELCA endorsed the Earth Charter on Oct. 4, 2019. Endorsement of the Earth Charter means that the ELCA will support the charter’s implementation, values, and principles and will work with others toward the same goal.

Endorsers are expected to contribute to the charter initiative and to charter-inspired action projects, implement the charter in its professional work, and agree with this endorsement statement: “We, the undersigned, endorse the Earth Charter. We embrace the spirit and aims of the document. We pledge to join the global partnership for a just, sustainable, and peaceful world and to work for the realization of the values and principles of the Earth Charter.”

To raise awareness of this endorsement, the Earth Charter logo and a link will be added to the elca.org/environment webpage. In early 2020, ELCA Advocacy will convene a staff team to develop a high-level formalized plan promoting the transition to sustainable ways of living into forthcoming resource development and projects. These will center on the Earth Charter action guidelines:

1. Respect and care for the community of life
2. Ecological integrity
3. Social and economic justice
4. Democracy, nonviolence, and peace

A progress report will be brought to the Fall 2020 Church Council meeting.

Church Council action [CC19.11.47m]

To receive the response on “Earth Charter” from the Domestic Mission unit;

To receive a progress report at Church Council’s Fall 2020 meeting; and

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

Response from the Office of the Presiding Bishop (November 2020)

The Earth Charter’s (“Charter”) pillars and 16 principles address equitable sustainability and sufficiency for all communities; and it aligns with ELCA social teachings. ELCA’s Sustainability Table (“Table”) conducts the implementation work to fulfill the Charter endorsement. The Table includes ELCA churchwide staff (Advocacy, Stewardship, World Hunger, Global Mission, Lutheran Disaster Response, Office of the Presiding Bishop, Lutheran Office for World Community, Campus Ministry, Outdoor Ministry, colleges and universities, Ethnic Specific and Multicultural Ministries, Mission Advancement, Faith Formation, and Young Adult ministries), Lutherans Restoring Creation, Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, rostered ministers, and lay leaders. Listed below is ongoing implementation work.

Pillar 1—Respect and Care for the Community of Life: Equip congregations and members for advocating in their communities’ interest; support #ELCAvotes initiative; advocate for child nutrition programs and housing reform; support federal disaster aid resources and equitable access programs that assist communities impacted by natural disasters; advocate for support for international antipoverty, humanitarian and global health funding; advocate for migrant rights and immigration reform both domestically and globally through Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities (“AMMPARO”) and our international companions; advance immigration reform; train Creation Care Ambassadors (to date over 50 trained).

Pillar 2—Ecological Integrity: Implement through pillar-focused leadership of the Delaware-Maryland Synod energy conservation and waste reduction (<https://youtu.be/Lo5qIVjTIVs>); explore funding options for projects with the Mission Investment Fund through the Table; lead a global interfaith “Good Trouble for a Healthy Planet” webinar with follow-ups; promote policies to protect all from the impacts of environmental degradation; received Stewardship of Life Institute grant with which synod leaders in four synods will be trained, accompanied and encouraged with skills identified by the ELCA Organized for Mission Network on local and state level stewardship of creation. (The Young Adult Ministry led efforts to give up plastics for Lent in the first quarter of 2020.)

Pillar 3—Social and Economic Justice: Produce resource series on intersectionality of racism and sexism for a just society supporting global health, racial equity, hunger eradication, environment, and housing; advance intra-ELCA and social efforts for equitable compensation; foster ongoing dialogical and theological engagement across this church towards gender and racial justice; address the disproportionate impact environmental injustice and climate change have on people of color and poor communities globally; utilize a racial justice lens to end the impacts of racism and develop models of equitable sustainability for all communities; assist migrants not covered by stimulus packages as well as support state and local advocacy through the AMMPARO network, congregations and synods.

Pillar 4—Democracy, Nonviolence, and Peace: Advocate for support of international funding for conflict prevention and peace-building programs; support and encourage global cooperation, such as the Paris Agreement, to protect the environment; protect human rights to defend democratic values, reject all forms of discrimination, encourage nonviolence and work for peace with the aim of creating a rich and varied space to enable sustainable development (SD); promote election integrity and voter protection; and participate in LWF’s Waking the Giant initiative focused on SD goals related to health, justice, education, reduced inequalities, and peace.

The Earth Charter implementation work is ongoing. The final report will be issued to the Fall 2021 Church Council meeting.

VOTED:

EN BLOC

CC20.11.33r

**To receive the progress report on “Earth Charter” from the Domestic Mission unit;
To request that a final report be provided at the fall 2021 Church Council meeting; and
To request that the secretary of this church inform the synods of this action.**

S. Motion A: “Emanuel 9” [2019 Churchwide Assembly]

Churchwide Assembly action [CA19.04.17]

To adopt Motion A as amended.

RESOLVED, that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America reaffirm its commitment to repentance from racism by:

1. Commemorating June 17th as a day of repentance in the ELCA for the martyrdom of the Emanuel 9; and
2. Having the names of the Emanuel 9 (Clementa C. Pinckney, Cynthia Marie Graham Hurd, Susie Jackson, Ethel Lee Lance, Depayne Middleton-Doctor, Tywanza Sanders, Daniel L. Simmons, Sharonda Coleman-Singleton, and Myra Thompson) added to future ELCA publications to venerate their martyrdom and lead us to repentance because of the white supremacy and racism in our church; and
3. Calling for this commemoration be grounded in prayer as the Emanuel 9 were murdered while in prayer at the end of the bible study; and
4. Directing the Office of the Presiding Bishop to help develop future worship prayers and litanies around repentance from racism; and
5. To encourage giving both prayer and financial support the memorial to be built in remembrance of the Emanuel 9 (<https://www.emanuelnine.org/>); and
6. Be in deeper conversations with the AME church on ways of reconciliation and repentance on the matters of white supremacy and racism.

Executive Committee action [EC19.09.28.a12]

To refer the 2019 Churchwide Assembly action on Motion A to the Office of the Presiding Bishop, in consultation with appropriate churchwide organization units, for a report or for a timeline on when this resolution will receive further attention.

Response from the Office of the Presiding Bishop (November 2019)

As the resolves of this motion cover a variety of areas, a team including the executive for worship, the executive for ecumenical and inter-religious relations and theological discernment, the program director for racial justice ministries, and the director for ethnic specific and multicultural ministries is coordinating action and implementation.

In early 2020, the presiding bishop will convene a consultation via video conference to include representation from churchwide staff, authors of this resolution, the African Descent Lutheran Association, the Conference of International Black Lutherans, and the European Descent Lutheran Association for Racial Justice. The purpose of this consultation will be to review and coordinate efforts in the churchwide organization and other grassroots work related to worship resource development as called for in the resolution. This work comes alongside strengthening ecumenical relations (both grassroots and church-to-church) with the African Methodist Episcopal church.

Church Council Action [CC19.11.47bb]

To receive the response on “Motion A: Establish June 17 as Emanuel 9 Day of Repentance” from the Office of the Presiding Bishop; and

To request that a report on the implementation of this resolution be provided at the Fall 2020 Church Council meeting.

Response from the Office of the Presiding Bishop (November 2020)

A churchwide staff implementation team, including the executive for worship, the executive for ecumenical and inter-religious relations and theological discernment, the program director for racial justice ministries, and the director for ethnic specific and multicultural ministries, has coordinated the implementation of this action over the last twelve months. In late January 2020, the presiding bishop convened a consultation including churchwide staff, authors of this resolution, the African Descent Lutheran Association, the Conference of International Black Lutherans, and the European Descent Lutheran Association for Racial Justice. This consultation looked to review and coordinate efforts in the churchwide organization and other grassroots work related to worship resource development as called for in the resolution.

The consultation highlighted the need for worship resources that both commemorate the martyrdom of the Emanuel 9 and respond to the sins of racism and white supremacy. In addition, the consultation encouraged this church to find ways to lift up our ongoing ecumenical relationship with the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

In the early months of 2020, the resource “Prayers, Litanies, and Laments for the Commemoration of the Emanuel Nine” was developed to include newly commissioned and crafted worship resources for use in congregations and synods on or near the June 17 commemoration. In cooperation with the Mission Advancement unit, a resource page was launched at www.ELCA.org/EmanuelNine as a central hub for worship resources. In cooperation with Augsburg Fortress, the Emanuel Nine commemoration has been added to the *Sundays and Seasons* family of worship planning resources.

In late spring, the consultation team was reconvened to review the implementation work to date and to consider plans going forward given the reality of the unfolding COVID-19 pandemic. Out of this group grew the idea of a national virtual service to complement numerous activities in congregations and synods. This service was shared with the whole church on June 17, the fifth anniversary of the martyrdom of the Emanuel Nine, with a sermon by Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton and including leaders from around the ELCA and ecumenical partners, including senior episcopal leadership from the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church, and executive leadership from the National Council of Churches and the Conference of National Black Churches. Over 1,500 people viewed the service together at noon Eastern Time on June 17, 2020, and over 7,000 viewed in the hours and days to follow. The service continues to be available for viewing at www.ELCA.org/EmanuelNine.

At the conclusion of the service, the ELCA Anti-Racism Pledge was launched. It outlines eight anti-racist actions individuals and congregations can take to reinforce our shared commitments in their churches and communities. Over 3,000 individuals and congregations signed the pledge within a month of the June 17 commemoration.

As this church continues to repent the sin of racism and white supremacy, ongoing worship resource development and raising awareness of this commemoration will continue to be a priority. The staff implementation team plans to convene the consultation group in late 2020 to continue this work and look to specific goals leading to the 2021 commemoration date. In addition, conversations with AME Church leaders about how we can deepen our partnership, including in future commemoration services and events, will be resumed in late October 2020.

VOTED:

EN BLOC

CC20.11.33s

To receive the report on “Motion A: Establish June 17 as Emanuel 9 Day of Repentance” from the Office of the Presiding Bishop;

To thank the churchwide staff implementation team and the consultation team for its comprehensive efforts to commemorate June 17 as a day of repentance in the ELCA for the martyrdom of the Emanuel 9 (Clementa C. Pinckney, Cynthia Marie Graham Hurd, Susie Jackson, Ethel Lee Lance, Depayne Middleton-Doctor, Tywanza Sanders, Daniel L. Simmons, Sharonda Coleman-Singleton, and Myra Thompson);

To encourage the ongoing conversations with the African Methodist Episcopal Church to deepen our partnership in future commemoration services and events, including on the matters of white supremacy and racism; and

To urge this church to continue its efforts to repent the sin of racism and white supremacy and to raise awareness of the June 17 commemoration.

T. Sanctuary

Churchwide Assembly action [CA19.03.07]

To receive with gratitude the memorial from the Metropolitan New York Synod concerning sanctuary;

To reaffirm the long-term and growing commitment of this church to migrants and refugees and to the policy questions involved, as exemplified most recently in the comprehensive strategy “Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities” (AMMPARO);

To recognize that the ELCA in congregations, synods and the churchwide organization are already taking the actions requested by this memorial; and

To request that appropriate staff on the AMMPARO team, LIRS, and the Domestic Mission, Global Mission, and Mission Advancement units review the existing strategies and practices by the five current sanctuary synods and develop a plan for additional tools that provide for education and discernment around sanctuary;

To declare the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America a sanctuary church body; and

To request the ELCA Church Council, in consultation with the appropriate churchwide units and offices, provide guidance for the three expressions of this church about what it means to be a sanctuary church body and provide a report to the 2022 Churchwide Assembly.

Executive Committee Action [EC19.09.28.a6]

To refer the 2019 Churchwide Assembly action on Sanctuary to the Global Mission and Domestic Mission units, in consultation with the AMMPARO (“Accompany Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities”) team, LIRS and other appropriate churchwide organization units, for a report or for a timeline on when this will receive further attention; and

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

Response from the AMMPARO Team (November 2019)

There are essentially three requests from the 2019 Churchwide Assembly for further action:

1. educational materials for congregations and synods;
2. guidance for the three expressions of this church on what it means to be a sanctuary church body from the Church Council in consultation with the churchwide organization; and
3. a report to the 2022 Churchwide Assembly.

In terms of educational materials, the churchwide office has already produced talking points, an overview of sanctuary, and a video answering frequently asked questions. A new congregational study titled “Transformed Communities: Freed for Radical Welcome,” originally produced by Lutheran Outdoor Ministries, has been edited by Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services (LIRS) with significant input by AMMPARO (Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities) staff as a Bible study for congregations to begin to discern their work with migrants, refugees, and asylum-seekers. More materials will continue to be produced.

In order to provide the requested guidance for the three expressions on what sanctuary means, AMMPARO staff, as well as others at the churchwide office, have reached out to other denominations who have supported sanctuary congregations to receive any materials and resolutions that they have produced. A small group of churchwide staff has been assembled as an advisory team to the AMMPARO Sanctuary team to oversee this process and recommends the following five-step process:

1. Convene the five sanctuary synods and selected sanctuary hosting congregations to receive their guidance and suggestions in January 2020. Representatives from LIRS and churchwide staff will be included.
2. Get feedback, if possible, on preliminary conclusions at the March 2020 joint meeting of the Church Council and Conference of Bishops.
3. Present a draft of the final report to the Fall 2020 Conference of Bishops meeting for feedback.
4. Present the definitions and final report to the Church Council at its fall 2020 meeting.
5. Release the definitions, together with tools for synods and congregations, to use following the Church Council's action. These tools will be guides for those who wish to engage around sanctuary. Resources will be available shortly after the approval of the definitions by the Church Council.

A report will be presented at the Spring 2022 Church Council meeting with a final report presented to the 2022 Churchwide Assembly.

Church Council action [CC11.19.47t]

To receive the response on “Sanctuary” from the AMMPARO (“Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities”) team;

To affirm the timeline proposed in the response;

To request that the definitions and guidelines about what it means to be a sanctuary church body for the three expressions of this church be provided to the Church Council's Fall 2020 meeting;

To request a final report be provided to the Church Council's Spring 2022 meeting in anticipation of the 2022 Churchwide Assembly; and

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

Response from the AMMPARO Sanctuary Team (November 2020)

The ELCA AMMPARO Team received significant input at the March 2020 joint Conference of Bishops and Church Council meeting as well as through the online feedback form for congregational members. A variety of opportunities were contemplated but were not possible to carry out as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. To respond to these changed conditions, the online feedback survey was heavily promoted and kept open for additional time in order to receive more input. The analysis of the input timeline was modified, which has delayed the drafting of definitions and guidelines.

The current uncertainty around future policy makes the drafting of effective guidelines about what it means to be a sanctuary church body most difficult at this time. The ELCA constituency would best be served by guidelines that respond to the post-election context.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the uncertain policy future around immigration issues as a result of the fall elections, the ELCA AMMPARO Team respectfully requests the Church Council postpone its receipt of the definitions and guidelines about what it means to be a sanctuary church body until the Spring 2021 meeting of the Church Council.

VOTED:

EN BLOC

CC20.11.33t

To receive the update from the AMMPARO (“Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities”) Team on definitions and guidelines about what it means to be a sanctuary church body;

To extend the deadline for these definitions and guidelines to the Spring 2021 Church Council meeting; and

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

NEW BUSINESS

(Agenda V.F.)

Secretary Rothmeyer announced that there were no items of new business.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Secretary Rothmeyer encouraged members to make an offering designated for the ELCA COVID-19 Appeal and reminded members to fill out electronic evaluation forms.

**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
CHURCH COUNCIL
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SENDING WORD AND PRAYER

Ms. Cheryl T. Chatman offered a prayer and thanksgiving for the life and work of Rev. Cheryl Stewart Pero.

Deacon Weit led council members in song. Mr. Keoni Newman, Church Council member from the Southwest Washington Synod, served as reader. Vice president Horne led the closing prayer.

ADJOURNMENT

The 105th meeting of the Church Council adjourned at 2:59 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 14, 2020.

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