

**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN
AMERICA**

Church Council

MINUTES

April 15–17, 2021

**Prepared by the
Office of the Secretary**

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**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
CHURCH COUNCIL**

**MINUTES
April 15–17, 2021
Conference Call**

The 107th meeting of the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) was convened electronically at 2:00 p.m. (CDT). The Executive Committee of the Church Council met electronically at 10:00 a.m. (CDT).

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 (<i>excused</i>)	Bp. Shelley R. Wickstrom, Region 1
Bp. Patricia J. Lull, Region 3	

Churchwide Staff Resource People:

Mr. Dana Adams, director, meeting management
Ms. Sarah Bartelt, meetings and events manager
The Rev. M. Wyvetta Bullock, executive for administration
Ms. Mary Campbell, program director, AMMPARO
Ms. Deborah Coe, executive, research, information, and data
Mr. Thomas A. Cunniff, general counsel
Ms. Heather Dean, program coordinator, theological discernment
Ms. Jennifer DeLeon, director, racial justice
Ms. Aja Favors, associate general counsel
Ms. Victoria Flood, director, Mission Support
The Rev. N. Keith Fry, executive, Office of the Secretary administration

Ms. Jocelyn Fuller, senior director, strategic communications
The Rev. F. Javier Goitía Padilla, senior director, education for leadership
The Rev. Philip C. Hirsch, executive director, Christian Community and Leadership
The Rev. Louise N. Johnson, executive for administration
Ms. Jennifer Johnson, program director, synod relations
Ms. Marit E. Johnson, manager, official documentation
Ms. Rhondean Johnson, executive, people and diversity, equity, and inclusion
Mr. Nick Kiger, associate director, Mission Support
Ms. Kathryn M. Lohre, executive, ecumenical and inter-religious relations and theological discernment
Ms. BethAnn Lynch, worship and liturgical resources coordinator
Ms. Sonia Mackenzie, executive assistant
The Rev. Rafael Malpica-Padilla, executive director, Service and Justice
Ms. Mikka McCracken, executive director, innovation
Mr. Hassan Niaz, IT service desk technician
Ms. Judith Roberts, senior director, diversity, equity, and inclusion
The Rev. Carmelo Santos, director, theological diversity and engagement
Mr. Joseph Schmidt, administrative services coordinator, governance
Deacon Mary Ann Schwabe, executive, synod relations
Ms. Jodi L. Slattery, executive, governance
Ms. Evelyn Soto, senior director, resources and relationships
Ms. Kathy Summers, executive director, development
Ms. Haley Toresdahl, ELCA GrantMaker administrator
Deacon John E. Weit, executive, worship
The Rev. Roger A. Willer, director, theological ethics

Separately Incorporated Ministries:

Mr. Tim Blevins, president and CEO, 1517 Media
Ms. Linda Post Bushkofsky, executive director, Women of the ELCA
Ms. Eva Roby, president and CEO, Mission Investment Fund
The Rev. Martin A. Seltz, publisher, 1517 Media
The Rev. Jeffrey D. Thiemann, president, Portico Benefit Services

Ethnic-Specific Ministry Association Guests:

The Rev. Joan Conroy, president, American Indian and Alaska Native Lutheran Association
The Rev. Khader N. El-Yateem, representative, Association of Lutherans of Arab and Middle Eastern Heritage
The Rev. Russell Meyer, president, European Descent Lutheran Association for Racial Justice
The Rev. Gigie Sijera-Grant, president, Asian and Pacific Islander Lutheran Association
Ms. Shari Seifert, vice president, European Descent Lutheran Association for Racial Justice
The Rev. Lamont A. Wells, president, African Descent Lutheran Association

Ecumenical Guests:

The Rev. Judy Knopf, Moravian Church in America
Mr. Steven Nishibayashi, The Episcopal Church
Deacon Kyle Tau, The United Methodist Church

Media:

Ms. Candice Hill Buchbinder, public relations manager

Guests:

The Rev. Fritz Fowler, vice chair, Committee on Appeals
Ms. Olivia LaFlamme, program director, Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries
The Rev. Cheryl Meinschein, secretary, Committee on Appeals
Ms. Aubrey Thonvold, executive director, ReconcilingWorks
Mr. Murray G. Sagsveen, chair, Committee on Appeals
Ms. Elyssa Salinas-Lazarski, PhD Candidate, Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary

**Thursday, Apr. 15, 2021
Plenary Session I**

GATHERING PRAYER

Deacon John E. Weit, executive, worship, began the Service of Word and Prayer at 2:00 p.m. (CDT). The Rev. William H. Callister, Church Council member from the Northern Illinois Synod, presided and Ms. Valerie J. Shaw, Church Council member from the Southwest California Synod, served as reader. Deacon Weit served as musician. Ms. BethAnn Lynch, worship and liturgical resources coordinator, was the 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 meeting to order at 2:18 p.m. (CDT).

A motion was made to adopt the agenda.

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

VOTED:

CC21.04.03 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.)

Vice President Horne reviewed the standing rules that concerned electronic meetings.

There being no discussion, he called for the vote on the rules.

VOTED:

CC21.04.04 To adopt the Rules of Procedure for the Spring 2021 Church Council meeting.

REPORT OF THE PRESIDING BISHOP

(Agenda I.C.)

Presiding Bishop Eaton highlighted items from her written report. She noted the need for internal (churchwide organization, Church Council, Conference of Bishops) and external (the wider ELCA) communication strategies for the Future Church design. Since implementation of the new design, the Operations Leadership Team has met twice and the Strategy and Innovation Leadership Teams will meet in late April.

The presiding bishop stressed that the new design must be grounded in Scripture and be open to the Spirit's movement, in the midst of agile project development, to serve the needs of this church. She asked members to ponder the question, "Why is it important that there is an ELCA witness to the gospel?"

REPORT OF THE VICE PRESIDENT

(Agenda I.D.)

Vice President Horne relinquished the chair to Presiding Bishop Eaton, who then invited him to give his report.

The vice president reflected on race relations in the United States and the meditation included in his written report. Vice President Horne reported that he will be the representative at four synod assemblies and will lead two bishop elections.

Vice President Horne gave thanks for the deep reflection the Conference of Bishops provides on church matters and encouraged council members to review a panel discussion on the post-pandemic church from the Conference of Bishops March 2021 meeting.

At the conclusion of the report, Presiding Bishop Eaton returned the chair to Vice President Horne.

ELCA DISABILITY OFFSET FOR DEPENDENTS

(Agenda I.E.)

Background:

Response from Portico Benefit Services on ELCA Disability Offset Policy for Dependents

At the Fall 2020 Church Council meeting, the Church Council received the response from Portico Benefit Services [Portico] on the ELCA Disability Offset Policy for Dependents and acted to refer the resolution back to Portico. [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.

At its March 16 meeting, the Executive Committee discussed the response and recommendation from Portico.

Church Council action:

Deacon Sue E. Rothmeyer, secretary of the ELCA, read the motion.

Moved;

Seconded:

To receive the report and recommendation from Portico Benefit Services regarding a proposed change to the “ELCA Disability Offset for Dependents” to exclude Social Security Disability Insurance paid to dependent children of disabled members from the offsets to the disability benefits paid to the disabled member;

To affirm Portico’s recommendation not to change the ELCA Disability Offset for Dependents;

To encourage Portico to fund health coverage, retirement contributions, and survivor benefits, 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.

Vice President Horne called on the Rev. Jeffrey D. Thiemann, president, Portico Benefit Services, to address the council.

Pastor Thiemann reviewed Portico’s disability and medical benefits and compared them to those in the commercial market. He pointed out that the Portico plan includes free healthcare coverage for the disabled member, the member’s spouse, and dependents in addition to providing two-thirds of the disabled member’s compensation. Also included is a 10% contribution to the individual’s retirement account and contributions to survivor benefits. Pastor Thiemann noted that Portico’s board of trustees had reviewed the implications of removing the offset and had voted not to change the disability policy, citing the plan intent, industry practices, and financial implications.

Vice President Horne facilitated discussion of the item. Some council members expressed concerns with the current policy. Others raised questions about the possibility of the council overstepping its governance role and interfering with decisions made by Portico’s board of trustees.

Ms. Patricia Kluetz, Church Council member from the East-Central Synod of Wisconsin, offered a substitute motion.

Moved:

Seconded:

To request that the Office of the Secretary convene a group for further research and dialogue on the topic of the ELCA Disability Offset for Dependents, including representatives from the Church Council, Portico Benefit Services, the East-Central Synod of Wisconsin, and Portico members with dependent children who are receiving disability benefits; and

To request a report with recommendations be provided through the Executive Committee and presented at the November 2021 Church Council meeting.

Ms. Kluetz explained that the resolution originated in her synod and that synod members engaged in discussion leading up to the Church Council meeting. She stated that the East-Central Synod of Wisconsin remained committed

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to discontinuing the offset practice. Ms. Kluetz believed that the current practice is inequitable and encouraged dialogue between the affected parties to address the offset practice.

Pastor Thiemann addressed the financials in the written report. He noted that the two-thirds of income payments begin immediately upon approval of disability benefits, whereas Social Security payments may be delayed. A council member expressed concern about an increase in premiums or a change to benefits if the current policy were changed.

Following further discussion, Mr. James J.F. Jennings, Church Council member from the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, called the question to end debate.

Vice President Horne called for a voice vote.

Moved;

Seconded;

Carried: **To end debate.**

Vice President Horne then led the vote on the substitute motion. Council members voted electronically.

Moved;

Seconded;

Defeated:

Yes-16; No-23

To request that the Office of the Secretary convene a group for further research and dialogue on the topic of the ELCA Disability Offset for Dependents, including representatives from the Church Council, Portico Benefit Services, the East-Central Synod of Wisconsin, and Portico members with dependent children who are receiving disability benefits; and

To request a report with recommendations be provided through the Executive Committee and presented at the November 2021 Church Council meeting.

The vice president declared that the substitute motion had failed, then called for the vote on the main motion. Council members voted electronically.

VOTED:

CC21.04.05

Yes-33; No-5

To receive the report and recommendation from Portico Benefit Services regarding a proposed change to the “ELCA Disability Offset for Dependents” to exclude Social Security Disability Insurance paid to dependent children of disabled members from the offsets to the disability benefits paid to the disabled member;

To affirm Portico’s recommendation not to change the ELCA Disability Offset for Dependents;

To encourage Portico to fund health coverage, retirement contributions, and survivor benefits, 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.

Vice President Horne declared that the motion had passed.

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY

(Agenda I.F.)

Deacon Sue E. Rothmeyer, secretary of the ELCA, noted that council members had received her written report. She introduced Deacon Mary Ann Schwabe, executive, synod relations, and Ms. Sarah Bartelt, meetings and events manager and Churchwide Assembly registrar.

There being no questions, Vice President Horne thanked the secretary for her report and proceeded to the report of the Conference of Bishops.

REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE OF BISHOPS

(Agenda I.G.)

The Rev. Tracie L. Bartholomew, chair of the Conference of Bishops and bishop of the New Jersey Synod, referenced her written report. She stressed that standing with the Asian American and Pacific Islander community was part of the conference's call to stand with the neighbor, and one of the ways the Conference of Bishops was demonstrating commitment to continued anti-racism work.

The conference reviewed the proposed revision of *Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline* at the March 2021 meeting. Bishop Bartholomew noted that the Conference of Bishops did not achieve consensus on the document, particularly regarding section B5, "Sexuality and Public Ministry." The Committee on Appeals made further revisions following the Conference of Bishops meeting in response to suggestions from the bishops. She thanked the committee for its work and affirmed her belief that more conference members would be in agreement with the newly updated version presented to the Church Council.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Secretary Rothmeyer reminded council members that offerings for this meeting designated to "where needed most" could be submitted through a hyperlink posted in Microsoft Teams. Council members were invited to attend informal fellowship over Zoom videoconference at 7:00 p.m. (CDT) that evening.

The secretary announced that committees of the Church Council would meet Friday morning. The deadline to remove items from *en bloc* consideration or to submit new business items was Friday noon (CDT). The full council would meet in executive session at 1:00 p.m. (CDT) on Friday for a legal briefing and would return to open session at 2:00 p.m. (CDT).

PRAYER AND RECESS

Mr. Kevin Anderson, Church Council member from the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod, led participants in prayer. The Apr. 2021 meeting of the Church Council recessed at 4:00 p.m. (CDT).

Friday, Apr. 16, 2021
Plenary Session II

The committees of the Church Council met electronically throughout the morning. The Apr. 2021 meeting of the Church Council entered into executive session to receive a legal briefing at 1:00 p.m. (CDT) and recessed at 1:30 p.m. (CDT). Minutes taken in executive session are kept in the protocol file in the Office of the Secretary.

CALL TO ORDER

(Agenda II.A.)

Deacon Weit opened the plenary with song. Mr. William B. Horne II, vice president of the ELCA and chair of the Church Council, called the Church Council meeting to order at 2:01 p.m. (CDT). The Rev. Louise N. Johnson, executive for administration, led council members in a *lectio divina* focused on Isaiah 43. Members were then asked to reflect on what they hoped to leave behind and what they hoped to carry forward following the COVID-19 pandemic.

REPORT OF THE LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

(Agenda II.B.)

Mr. Gary A. Pederson, Church Council member from the Southeastern Synod and chair of the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee, detailed items under *en bloc* consideration that had been reviewed by the committee, including amendments to the bylaws of United Lutheran Seminary, Luther Seminary, and the ELCA Foundation; ratification of amendments to the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod Constitution; revisions to the *Manual of Policies and Procedures for the Management of the Rosters of the ELCA* to provide guidance on receiving rostered ministers from the Lutheran World Federation; and a review of topics and a possible timeline for constitutional amendments to be presented to the 2022 Churchwide Assembly.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON APPEALS

(Agenda II.C.)

Background:

In accordance with ELCA constitutional provision 20.21, the Committee on Appeals establishes definitions and guidelines, subject to approval by the Church Council, to enable clear and uniform application of the grounds for discipline of officers, rostered ministers, congregations, and members of congregations.

At its Fall 2020 meeting, the Church Council received an update on the revisions to *Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline*. The 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 the conference’s Spring 2021 electronic meeting to receive further input for the committee’s work on the document. The Executive Committee received an update on the document at its Feb. 23, 2021, meeting.

Church Council discussion:

Secretary Rothmeyer introduced the officers of the Committee on Appeals (Mr. Murray G. Sagsveen, chair; the Rev. Fritz Fowler, vice chair; and the Rev. Cheryl Meinschein, secretary) and provided background on the committee’s work. The committee’s officers presented the revision of *Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline* for the council’s discussion and offered an overview of significant changes in the redlined document shared with the council. Revisions included adding a section with fifteen defined terms, the expansion of confidentiality requirements to include ministers of Word and Service, the addition of hate speech and membership in hate organizations as disciplinable offenses, and the inclusion of respect for intellectual property, along with other edits. Mr. Sagsveen noted that Section B5, “Sexuality and Public Ministry,” complied with the social teaching documents of this church, in particular with the social statement *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* (2009). The Committee on Appeals will continue to monitor implementation of the revised document and will come to the Church Council with revisions as needed.

Conference members engaged in discussion of the proposed revisions. Some members expressed concern with a perceived subjectivity of certain clauses. Members of the Conference of Bishops explained that, while it may seem subjective, the ambiguity could allow for pastoral discretion regarding the type of disciplinary action. Other members of the

Conference of Bishops commented on a letter that had been submitted by the liaison bishops and discussed the importance of marriage in this church.

Council members agreed that a definition for “promiscuity” was needed and encouraged the Committee on Appeals to incorporate a definition at a later date. A question was raised regarding consistency of the use of “is grounds for discipline” and “may be grounds for discipline.” Secretary Rothmeyer reminded the council of the Office of the Secretary’s role with editorial corrections. Any future substantive edits would come from the Committee on Appeals for council action.

REPORT OF THE PLANNING AND EVALUATION COMMITTEE

(Agenda II.D.)

The Rev. Joanne E. Engquist, Church Council member from the Northwest Washington Synod and chair of the Planning and Evaluation Committee, reported that much of the committee’s meeting focused on the Future Church design and the ELCA Strategy Toward Authentic Diversity. The committee was pleased to welcome the Rev. Louise N. Johnson, executive for administration, who discussed internal and external communication plans for the Future Church design. Current projects include a project hub for the churchwide organization to process and generate ideas and the Open Doors grant, which would be discussed later in the meeting.

Pastor Engquist noted that Ms. Judith Roberts, senior director, diversity, equity, and inclusion, reviewed the process and key actions for the ELCA Strategy Toward Authentic Diversity, as well as a toolkit. Ms. Roberts pointed to the Churchwide Assembly resolution condemning white supremacy and racist rhetoric and reminded committee members of the research on reparations. Other resources in development included a database of lay and rostered ministers of color to aid their networking and a study on economic issues for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) leaders.

Pastor Engquist concluded by referencing the committee’s discussion of the potential impact of the proposed committee restructuring.

CONSIDERATION OF ITEMS REMOVED FROM *EN BLOC*

(Agenda II.E.)

Secretary Rothmeyer announced that no items had been removed from *en bloc*.

EN BLOC APPROVAL OF CERTAIN ITEMS

(Agenda.F.)

Background:

An *en bloc* resolution was presented to the Church Council of routine or noncontroversial actions. Opportunity had been provided to Church Council members to request removal of items from *en bloc*, but there had been no requests to remove items.

Church Council action:

A motion was made to take *en bloc* action on the remaining recommendations on the consent calendar. As the items were voted *en bloc*, there was no discussion; the vice president called for the vote.

VOTED:

CC21.04.06 To take action *en bloc* on the remaining items listed in *En Bloc* Items, Responses to Previous Church Council Actions, Responses to Synod Council Actions, and Responses to Churchwide Assembly Actions.

A. Appointment of Assistant Officers

Background:

In March 2020, the Church Council adopted CC20.03.03a regarding the Appointment of Assistant Officers. A revision was proposed to update the appointments and remove the assistant vice president appointments.

VOTED:

CC21.04.06a RESOLVED, that for the sole purpose of executing, when necessary, documents approved and authorized in accordance with actions of the Church Council, the following are hereby appointed as assistant treasurers of this corporation: Cecilia Favela, ~~Kathy~~ *EN BLOC*

~~Freeman Summers~~, Santiago Padilla, and Annette Roman, to serve until replaced or removed by subsequent appointments, with such subsequent appointments to be based upon the nomination and recommendation of the Treasurer;

RESOLVED, that for the sole purpose of executing or attesting, when necessary, documents approved and authorized in accordance with actions of the Church Council, the following are hereby appointed as assistant secretaries of this corporation: Thomas A. Cunniff, Aja M. Favors, and Norman K. Fry to serve until replaced or removed by subsequent appointments, with such subsequent appointments to be based upon the nomination and recommendation of the Secretary.

RESOLVED, that prior resolutions adopted by this Council, including CC15.04.31b and the prior actions identified in CC15.04.31b, addressing the appointment of assistant officers are hereby rescinded and replaced by this action.

B. Authorization to Act for the ELCA as a Trustee

VOTED:
CC21.04.06b

EN BLOC

RESOLVED, that the Treasurer and the Executive for Development ~~Director of the Mission Advancement unit~~ are appointed as a committee having the authority of the Church Council in the management of the business and fiscal affairs of any trust for which the churchwide organization is acting as trustee to authorize and approve, on behalf of this corporation as trustee, transactions to which such trust is a party.

RESOLVED, that the Treasurer and the Executive for Development ~~Director of the Mission Advancement unit~~ are appointed as a committee having the authority of the Church Council to authorize and approve establishment of any gift annuity agreement for which the churchwide organization is guarantor, on behalf of this corporation as guarantor.

RESOLVED, that the Treasurer or the Executive for Development ~~Director of the Mission Advancement unit~~, or in absence of both of the foregoing, any two assistant treasurers may execute, and the Secretary or any assistant secretary may attest, any document previously authorized and approved as provided in this resolution, which is required or desirable in connection with the establishment of any gift annuity agreement for which the churchwide organization is guarantor or which is necessary and appropriate for the management of the business and fiscal affairs of any trust for which the churchwide organization is acting as trustee.

RESOLVED, that the Development team within the Office of the Presiding Bishop ~~Mission Advancement unit~~ must keep and maintain appropriate records of all transactions so authorized and, upon request, report such transactions to the Budget and Finance Committee of the Church Council.

C. FY2021 Revised ELCA World Hunger Spending Authorization

VOTED:
CC21.04.06c

EN BLOC

To revise the fiscal year 2021 ELCA World Hunger spending authorization from \$21,500,000 to \$23,500,000.

D. FY2020 Designation of Revenues Over Expenses

VOTED: *EN BLOC*
CC21.04.06d **To approve an addition to the Church Council Designated Fund in the amount of \$1.3 million representing excess revenue over expenses from fiscal year 2020 to be released to fund budget shortfall in future years.**

E. Revised *Manual of Policies and Procedures for the Management of the Rosters of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*

While protocols for sending ELCA missionaries to serve with companion churches are well established, there has been no clear guidance concerning a process for receiving rostered ministers from Lutheran World Federation member churches who wish to be considered for service in the ELCA. The Service and Justice unit, in consultation with the Office of the Secretary, requested that the *Manual of Policies and Procedures for Management of the Rosters of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* be amended.

VOTED: *EN BLOC*
CC21.04.06e **To adopt the revision to the *Manual of Policies and Procedures for Management of the Rosters of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* related to protocols for rostered ministers from member churches of The Lutheran World Federation who wish to serve in ELCA ministry settings; and**
To authorize the Office of the Secretary to make any necessary editorial corrections to the manual for clarity and accuracy.

F. Synod Constitution Amendments

Background:

Provision 10.12 of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* stipulates: “Each synod shall have a constitution, which shall become effective upon ratification by the Church Council. Amendments thereto shall be subject to like ratification....”

VOTED: *EN BLOC*
CC21.04.06f **To ratify the following amendments to the constitution of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod:**

~~†S8.51.c. The treasurer of this synod shall be elected appointed to a four-year term and may be re-elected or reappointed. The treasurer shall serve until his or her successor takes office.~~

S8.55. Should the vice president or secretary ~~or treasurer~~ die, resign, or be unable to serve, the bishop, with the approval of the Executive Committee of the Synod Council, shall arrange for the appropriate care of the responsibilities of the officer until an election of a new officer can be held, or, in the case of temporary disability, until the officer is able to serve again. The term of the successor officer, elected by the Synod Assembly, shall be four years.

~~**S9.07.** The Synod Council shall nominate at least two persons for treasurer; additional nominations may be made from the floor.~~

G. Proposed Amendments to ELCA Foundation Bylaws

Background:

In March 2021, the ELCA Foundation Board of Trustees considered amendments to its bylaws. The proposed amendments are submitted for approval by the Church Council in accordance with ELCA bylaw 17.60.05.

VOTED: *EN BLOC*
CC21.04.06g **To approve the amended bylaws of the Endowment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America—ELCA Foundation.**

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H. Proposed Amendments to United Lutheran Seminary Bylaws

Background:

The United Lutheran Seminary Board of Trustees considered amendments to its bylaws. The proposed amendments were submitted for approval by the Church Council in accordance with ELCA bylaw 8.21.02.

VOTED: *EN BLOC*
CC21.04.06h **To approve the amended bylaws of the United Lutheran Seminary.**

I. Proposed Amendments to Luther Seminary Bylaws

Background:

The Luther Seminary Board of Trustees considered amendments to its bylaws. The proposed amendments were submitted for approval by the Church Council in accordance with ELCA bylaw 8.21.02.

VOTED: *EN BLOC*
CC21.04.06i **To approve the amended bylaws of Luther Seminary.**

J. Churchwide Organization Annual Report

VOTED: *EN BLOC*
CC21.04.06j **To receive the ELCA Churchwide Organization Annual Report for 2020; and
To thank the staff of the churchwide organization for their ongoing work.**

K. Corporate Social Responsibility Roles and Responsibilities Chart

VOTED: *EN BLOC*
CC21.04.06k **To approve the amended Corporate Social Responsibility Roles and Responsibilities Chart.**

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

Background:

In November 2020, the Church Council postponed the question of developing social messages on U.S. National Drug Policy, aging, gender identity, or gun policy until Spring 2021 [CC20.11.33i].

The director for theological ethics recommended deferring again the questions regarding these social messages because it has not been possible to do the groundwork and assessment. The process of assessment and recommendation should be possible for the Fall 2021 Church Council meeting.

VOTED: *EN BLOC*
CC21.04.06l **To defer the questions of developing social messages on U.S. National Drug Policy, aging,
gender identity, or gun policy until the Fall 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.**

M. Approval of the Minutes

Background:

The minutes of the Nov. 12–14, 2020, and Mar. 3, 2021, Church Council meetings were provided to council members electronically on Microsoft Teams. Minutes for Nov. 12–14, 2020, and Mar. 3, 2021, 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 Nov. 12, 2020, Dec. 8, 2020, Jan. 19, 2021, Feb. 23, 2021, and Mar. 16, 2021, meetings were provided electronically on Microsoft Teams to members. Minutes for the Feb. 23, 2021, meeting held in executive session were added to the protocol file in the Office of the Secretary.

VOTED: *EN BLOC*
CC21.04.06m **To approve the minutes of the Nov. 12–14, 2020, and Mar. 3, 2021, meetings of the Church
Council; and
To ratify actions of the council's Executive Committee as indicated in the minutes of the
Nov. 12, 2020, Dec. 8, 2020, Jan. 19, 2021, Feb. 23, 2021, and Mar. 16, 2021, meetings.**

N. St. John Lutheran Home—Subordination of the ELCA’s Right of Reverter and Re-Entry

Background:

St. John Lutheran Home wishes to refinance the mortgage on its property. At one time, the land on which the property sits was owned by the American Lutheran Church (ALC). In 1971, the ALC sold the land to St. John Lutheran Home. The deed states that if St. John Lutheran Home ever ceases to operate the title to the land it would revert back to the ALC (paraphrased). The lender cannot have a valid mortgage on the property unless the ELCA subordinates its right of reverter and re-entry to mortgage. The transaction can only proceed if the ELCA signs a subordination agreement.

VOTED: *EN BLOC*
CC21.04.06n **RESOLVED, that for the sole purpose of permitting St. John Lutheran Home to refinance the mortgage of the property at County Road 5 in Springfield, Minnesota, the ELCA shall subordinate, but not release, its right of reverter and re-entry as it pertains to the property; and**
 Be it further RESOLVED, that St. John Lutheran Home shall have the authority to sign the mortgage and other loan documents relevant to the transaction without any further action required by the ELCA or its Church Council (Board of Directors).

O. Church Council Nominations and Elections

Background:

The Church Council has the responsibility of electing people to fill terms on boards of Separately Incorporated Ministries, 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.

VOTED: *EN BLOC*
CC21.04.06o1 **To elect to the board of trustees of the Endowment Fund of the ELCA—ELCA Foundation—to fill a vacancy with the term expiring in August 2022: Ms. Ingrid S. Stafford.**

VOTED: *EN BLOC*
CC21.04.06o2 **To re-elect to the board of directors of Mosaic, Inc. to a three-year term expiring in 2024: Ms. Patricia A. Nimtz and the Rev. Keith D. Hohly.**

VOTED: *EN BLOC*
CC21.04.06o3 **To elect to the board of directors of Wartburg Theological Seminary to a six-year term beginning April 2021 and expiring Dec. 31, 2026: Ms. Miji Bell.**

VOTED: *EN BLOC*
CC21.04.06o4 **To elect to the board of directors of Luther Seminary to a four-year term beginning July 1, 2021 and expiring June 30, 2025: The Rev. Jeanne Hartfield and the Rev. Linda Norman.**

VOTED: *EN BLOC*
CC21.04.06o5 **To elect to the advisory board of Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary to a term expiring in June 2023: The Rev. Jim Johnson; and**
 To elect to the advisory board of Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary to a three-year term beginning in June 2021 and expiring in June 2024: Ms. Kara Lynne-Benson Haug.

VOTED: *EN BLOC*
CC21.04.06o6 **To elect to the board of directors of Trinity Lutheran Seminary at Capital University to a term expiring June 30, 2023: Ms. Marla Butke; and**
 To elect to the board of directors of Trinity Lutheran Seminary at Capital University to a three-year term beginning July 1, 2021 and expiring June 30, 2024: The Rev. Abraham Allende.

VOTED: *EN BLOC*
CC21.04.06o7 To elect to the board of trustees of United Lutheran Seminary to a three-year term expiring in 2024: Sr. Marianne Brock.

VOTED: *EN BLOC*
CC21.04.06o8 To elect to the board of directors of Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago to a term beginning Oct. 1, 2021 and expiring Sept. 30, 2024: Mr. Oswald Gregory Lewis.

RESPONSES TO PREVIOUS CHURCH COUNCIL ACTIONS

P. Declaration of the ELCA to the People of African Descent

Church Council action [CC19.06.23.]

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.

Church Council action [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.

Response from the Office of the Presiding Bishop (Spring 2021)

The 2016 Churchwide Assembly adopted a social policy resolution “Renewed Action Regarding Racism Toward Lutherans of African Descent Communities, Congregations, and Ministries” and to “recommit this church to growing its ethnic and racial diversity” in leadership, congregations, and communities. The resolution also called the ELCA to confess and repent of the Lutheran church’s complicity in 400 years of enslavement, oppression, and marginalization of African descent people and other marginalized populations. In 2019, a “Declaration of the ELCA to the African Descent Community” was issued during the Churchwide Assembly. In addition, the ELCA Church Council adopted an action to encourage congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization to observe an annual Day of Repentance. In 2021, the presiding bishop in consultation with the director for racial justice, executive for worship, and the director for African descent ministries, named an additional ELCA Day of Repentance from Racism to be observed on the Tuesday following the

celebration of the birthdate of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. The date aligns with the National Day of Racial Healing (NDORH), which was established in 2017 by more than 550 leaders from around the United States who wanted to act together to end racism. This annual observance continues to grow in communities across the U.S., including among this church's full communion partners.

This date will mark the second day of ELCA observance against racism. The 2019 Churchwide Assembly adopted a resolution designating June 17 as a day of commemoration for the Emanuel 9—the nine persons shot and killed on June 17, 2015, during a Bible study at Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina. The resolution called the ELCA to ground the day in prayer, to develop worship prayers and litanies around repentance from racism. On June 17, 2020, the ELCA observed the first commemoration with a virtual worship service. Worship leaders included ecumenical guests and the development of additional liturgical resources, including an antiracism pledge.

The resource “Lamenting Racism” was commissioned for *All Creation Sings*, the new worship and song supplement for use in the ELCA. This lament and prayer may be used in preparation for the work of faithful listening in discussions about racism and racial reconciliation, and at other appropriate times. This resource has been shared as part of the initial worship resources for the Commemoration of the Emanuel 9, as well as the recent worship resources for the Day of Lament Against Anti-Asian Racism. These are examples of the kinds of worship resources that might be developed for the ELCA Day of Repentance from Racism.

An additional planning consultation with the presiding bishop, executive for worship, the director for racial justice, the ethnic specific directors, the ethnic specific associations, leadership from the Service and Justice and Christian Community and Leadership home areas, and strategic communications will take place in early Spring 2021.

VOTED:

EN BLOC

CC21.04.06p

To receive the response 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 affirm the presiding bishop's decision to name the Tuesday following the celebration of the birth of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. as an annual ELCA Day of Repentance from Racism; and

To encourage members, congregations, and synods to use the “Lamenting Racism” resource in *All Creation Sings* and other liturgical resources of lamentation and repentance offered by the worship team to accompany this annual Day of Repentance.

Q. Deacon Cross Design Update

Church Council Action [CC18.11.22]

... To define the symbols of this ministry as a deacon's stole and cross, both to be presented at the entrance rite, and to request the Office of the Presiding Bishop worship staff share information about the appropriate use of the deacon stole and facilitate a conversation among deacons regarding a unified cross design;...

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

In early Fall 2019, Deacon John Weit of the Worship team of the Office of the Presiding Bishop consulted with Deacon Sue Rothmeyer and Deacon Krista Anderson from the churchwide organization to begin addressing the need to facilitate a conversation among deacons regarding a unified cross design to be worn as a pin. A consultation with five additional deacons representing various ministry contexts was held in October. This consultation discussed the various cross designs that already exist within diaconal communities, both those represented by ELCA deacons and by ecumenical partners. We addressed several paths forward including looking to name a metal worker/designer that could work with the ELCA to potentially both design and produce pins for purchase by individual deacons.

Staffing transitions on the worship team caused this project to slow through the winter months. This work will continue this spring with the hope of engaging a designer to consider a sustainable process for production and a potential design. Although we anticipate that the production costs of the individual pins would likely be offset by individual purchases, we will likely need to identify funding to begin this design work. As this will become an official symbol of the ministry of Word and Service, a final design would be presented to the Program and Services Committee for affirmation, likely in Fall 2020.

Response from Christian Community and Leadership (Spring 2021)

On Feb. 1, the Worship team in the Office of the Presiding Bishop moved to Christian Community and Leadership.

Since the previous update to Church Council in February 2020, the swift change in focus due to the pandemic necessitated delaying further conversation regarding a unified deacon cross design. The subsequent elimination of a staff position on the worship team further required reprioritization of this work.

Deacon Krista Anderson and Deacon John Weit looked to resume this work in January 2021. Throughout the month of February, informal sharing and conversation among deacons occurred via social media and soliciting direct feedback. It was hoped that this conversation and collaboration might offer some consensus around imagery and concepts that would inform a jewelry designer to be commissioned to craft a proposed design. The feedback among deacons showed that there is a considerable variety of opinions on design concepts, or in some cases, an apparent lack of interest in a common cross design for ELCA ministers of Word and Service. The team's research and conversation have found dozens of symbols used by diaconal communities worldwide, including former and current communities that include ELCA ministers of Word and Service.

This unified cross pin, once designed, will need sustainable manufacturing and distribution venues. A preliminary conversation with Old Lutheran has presented a possible path forward. Such a partnership will need further collaboration and coordination with other ELCA ministries who have existing partnerships with Old Lutheran. The production and sale of these pins should be financially self-sustaining at a reasonable price point for deacons. The manufacturing and sales process must also account for a higher number of pins to be sold in the first months of availability. Subsequent sales will be generally limited to deacons soon to be ordained and those who need to purchase a replacement. Some funding for design, prototype, and start-up costs may be necessary.

A grass-roots effort for online Zoom conversation with ELCA deacons and candidates from across this church will occur in March and April 2021. We hope this emerging venue will allow an additional conversation opportunity prior to commissioning a design. With a designer, funding, and manufacturing and distribution venues in place by Summer 2021, it is possible that a final design could be affirmed in Fall 2021.

VOTED:

EN BLOC

**CC21.04.06q To receive the update from the Christian Community and Leadership unit on a unified cross design for ministers of Word and Service; and
To request a final design be presented to the Fall 2021 Church Council meeting.**

RESPONSES TO SYNOD COUNCIL ACTIONS

**R. ELCA Advocacy Support for the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act
Northeastern Iowa Synod [5F]**

WHEREAS, God created heaven and earth and everything therein and proclaimed it good (Gen 1:1ff); and God has entrusted humankind with the care of the earth (Gen 2:15); and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has adopted social policy statements, *Caring for Creation* (1993) and *Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood* (1999) that call for economic and environmental justice, to protect the health and integrity of creation both for its own sake and for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations, and for economic justice, to consider how our actions affect the ability of all people to provide for their material needs and the needs of their families and communities; and

WHEREAS, in 1993 with the *Caring for Creation* social statement, we realized the urgency was already “widespread and serious, according to the preponderance of evidence from scientists worldwide [of] dangerous global warming, caused by the buildup of greenhouse gases, especially carbon dioxide” from the burning of fossil fuels, and that “action to counter degradation, especially within this decade, is essential to the future of our children and our children’s children. Time is very short;” and

WHEREAS, carbon pricing is one policy tool to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from fossil fuel combustion, which complements other tools like regulations on polluting industries and tax incentives encouraging investment in energy efficiency and renewable forms of energy production; and

WHEREAS, in January 2019, over 3,500 of our nation’s leading economists across the political spectrum, including 28 Nobel Laureates and four former chairs of the Federal Reserve, issued a joint “Economists’ Statement on Carbon Dividends” that argued “A carbon tax offers the most cost-effective lever to reduce carbon emissions at the scale and speed that is necessary” but also recommended “the revenue should be returned directly to U.S. citizens through equal lump-sum rebates,” and concluded “The majority of American families, including the most vulnerable, will benefit financially by receiving more in ‘carbon dividends’ than they pay in increased energy prices;” and

WHEREAS, in 2019 the Churchwide Assembly received with gratitude a memorial from the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin regarding a Carbon Fee and Dividend, and the Church Council directed the Domestic Mission unit to develop “a plan that promotes educational resources on Carbon Fee and Dividend to assist in forming the basis for any potential advocacy strategy;” and

WHEREAS, in October 2019 ELCA Advocacy published a primer on “Carbon Pricing Basics” that provides an overview to the topic and identifies several principles rooted in ELCA social statements that should be used to assess carbon pricing proposals; and

WHEREAS, the “Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act of 2019” has received bipartisan support in the last two sessions in Congress and is consistent with the principles outlined in ELCA Advocacy’s “Carbon Pricing Basics;” and

WHEREAS, ELCA Advocacy does advocate for particular pieces of legislation after careful review and moral grounding in the ELCA’s social statements; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Upper Iowa River Conference of the Northeast Iowa Synod urges ELCA Advocacy to advocate for the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act, or similar legislation during the 117th United States Congress and, if necessary, future Congresses; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Upper Iowa River Conference directs the Synod Council to consider this resolution at their next meeting and to forward it to the ELCA Church Council or its Executive Committee for further consideration and action by directing ELCA Advocacy to advocate for the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act or similar legislation.

VOTED: *EN BLOC*
CC21.04.06r **To refer the “ELCA Advocacy Support for the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act” resolution from the Northeastern Iowa Synod Council to the Service and Justice 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.

**S. Guidance on Retired or Retiring Ministers from the Roster of the ELCA
Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod [8B]**

Background:

Bishop Kurt Kusserow submitted a letter to the Church Council on behalf of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod Council seeking guidance with retired or retiring ministers from the rosters of this church whose status is in question or uncertain. Specifically, the synod council asked about the required triennial review of the ministers on this church’s retired roster and to propose that the guidance be added to the *Manual of Policies and Procedures for the Management of the Rosters of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* for the benefit of this whole church.

VOTED: *EN BLOC*
CC21.04.06s **To receive the request from the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod Council requesting guidance regarding the review of retired ministers on the roster of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;**
 To refer the matter to the Office of the Secretary for further research and to request that a response be provided at the Fall 2021 Church Council meeting; and
 To request that the secretary of this church inform the synod of this action.

RESPONSES TO CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY ACTIONS

T. Social Purpose Funds (Portico)

Churchwide Assembly action [CA19.02.06s]

To receive with gratitude the memorial from the Greater Milwaukee Synod concerning Portico Benefit Services Social Purpose Funds; and

To urge Portico Benefit Services to conduct an educational campaign for plan members designed to increase awareness of the Social Purpose Investment Funds and provide an update to the November 2020 Church Council meeting.

Response from Portico Benefit Services (April 2021; originally received in November 2020)

Portico welcomed this request to conduct an educational campaign to increase awareness of social purpose funds, and the memorial influenced much of its work in 2020.

- In January 2020, Portico surveyed a randomly selected group of members to gauge social purpose (SP) fund awareness.

- February through April, staff conducted a multi-touch campaign designed to educate all 27,000 sponsored, retired, and non-sponsored members about its SP funds, and stepped-up SP fund information in quarterly financial communication and on social media.
- In the spring, survey results helped to inform the new investment lineup for Fall 2020—we chose to create both SP and unscreened target date funds and to default new members into a SP target date fund.
- In July, a second multi-touch campaign was launched, educating members about the new investment fund lineup, target date funds, and the continuing importance of SP funds.

Portico sent an online survey to 6,000 randomly selected sponsored, retired, and non-sponsored members, and received a very good 15.8% response rate. Findings demonstrated that a significant majority are aware of the SP fund options and support their place in the ELCA Retirement Plan’s fund lineup.

- 92% correctly stated that not all of Portico’s funds are SP funds.
- 82% were aware, prior to taking this survey, that they have the choice to invest in SP funds.
- 79% felt it very or somewhat important for Portico to offer SP funds.
- 76% strongly agreed or agreed that they would be comfortable investing in SP funds with different risk and return projections than unscreened funds.
- 74% were confident or somewhat confident that they know what steps to take to change their fund selection.
- 68% were aware that Portico’s default fund was not a SP fund.

The late February campaign targeted 27,000 sponsored, retired, and non-sponsored members via mail, email, and web with a simple two-step call to action—“Read about SP funds, then look at your Retirement Account Summary on myPortico and ask: ‘Am I in the fund(s) I want to be in?’ If not or you’re not sure, call a Portico Financial Planner for help.” Staff measured strong engagement on several fronts.

- Staff tracked a net total increase in investments into the SP funds of \$2.2 million during the first week of March 2020, a significant step up from the pre-campaign \$130,000 increase tracked a month earlier during the first week of February 2020.
- Page views of the personalized Retirement Account Summary on myPortico nearly doubled: 2,643 during the first week of March 2020, compared to 1,442 during the same week in 2019.
- Calls to Portico Financial Planners regarding asset allocation and risk assessment spiked significantly: 242 in March 2020, compared to 31 in March 2019.

The July campaign built on the earlier campaign, targeted the same 27,000 members via mail, email, and web to inform them of the upcoming fall change to the ELCA Retirement Plan’s investment fund lineup and the addition of target date funds—both SP and unscreened. Already oriented to their investment choices and SP funds, members were more prepared in July to understand and appreciate their new investment fund choices.

VOTED:

EN BLOC

CC21.04.06t To receive the update from Portico Benefit Services on an educational campaign for plan members designed to increase awareness of the Social Purpose Investment Funds; and To request that the secretary of this church inform the synod of this action.

U. Unaltered Augsburg Confession

Churchwide Assembly action [CA19.02.09q]

To receive with gratitude the memorials from Allegheny and Southeastern synods concerning renewed awareness and use of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession; and

To refer the proposed actions to the Office of the Presiding Bishop, in consultation with 1517 Media, Mission Advancement unit and other units, for additional analysis and planning in the churchwide organization for a report and possible recommendations to the Church Council.

Executive Committee action [EC19.09.28.a11]

To request that the Office of the Presiding Bishop, in consultation with 1517 Media and other appropriate churchwide organization units, provide a report or a timeline on when the Unaltered Augsburg Confession will receive further attention; and

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

Church Council action [CC19.11.47u]

*To receive the response on “Unaltered Augsburg Confession” from the Office of the Presiding Bishop;
To request that a report with possible recommendations be provided to the Church Council’s Spring 2021 meeting; and
To request that the secretary of this church inform the synods of this action.*

Response from the Office of the Presiding Bishop (April 2021)

Over the past 18 months, the focus of the work of the Office of the Presiding Bishop related to the 500th anniversary of the Reformation has been the 2020 initiatives on Luther’s “The Freedom of a Christian.” 1517 Media generously made a .pdf of the treatise freely available to accompany a study guide and compendium of case studies developed and published at elca500.org A number of public events drew upon these resources and themes.

Consideration is currently being given to marking the 500th anniversary of the Diet of Worms this year.

Given these projects, an extension is requested for the work detailed in the November 2019 report. As this church journeys toward the anniversary of the Augsburg Confession in 2030, the Rev. Marcus Kunz (executive, discernment of contextual and theological issues) will serve as the facilitator for processes and consultations that will:

- clarify or define the purpose of any organized action by the churchwide organization in the years leading to the 500th anniversary of the Augsburg Confession;
- assess what resources already are or will be available and what activities will likely be planned and undertaken by other organizations (for example, resources already available or planned by the ELCA publishing house; activities that may be undertaken by theological faculties and/or ecumenical groups, the work of the Lutheran World Federation and the 13th assembly in 2023);
- consider which, if any, of the actions requested in the memorials are appropriate for the churchwide organization to undertake itself or to coordinate with or among others, and considering what other actions related to the Augsburg Confession may be beneficial;
- give full attention to the letter and spirit of the ELCA’s representational principles in any and all related processes and consultations; and
- make a progress report with possible recommendations for next steps to the Fall 2022 Church Council meeting.

VOTED:

EN BLOC

**CC21.04.06u To receive the response on “Unaltered Augsburg Confession” from the Office of the Presiding Bishop;
 To request that a progress report with possible recommendations be provided to the Fall 2022 Church Council meeting; and
 To request that the secretary of this church inform the synods of this action.**

V. 50th Anniversary of the Ordination of Women

Churchwide Assembly action [CA19.05.30]

...To direct the Office of the Presiding Bishop, in consultation with other churchwide units, to conduct a gap analysis of rostered women, with a particular focus on the challenges faced by rostered women of color;...

Church Council action [CC19.11.47p]

*To receive the response on “50th Anniversary of Women Ordination” from the Office of the Presiding Bishop;
To request that a report on the gap analysis results with possible recommendations be provided to the Church Council’s Spring 2021 meeting; and
To request that the secretary of this church inform the synods of this action.*

Response from the Office of the Presiding Bishop (April 2021)

The 2019 Churchwide Assembly and Church Council requested a “gap analysis results with possible recommendations.”

This request flowed from the memorials from many synods in 2019, calling upon this church to address the systemic causes of gender-based problems, including disparities among ELCA rostered ministers. The 2019 Churchwide Assembly called upon this church through Implementing Resolution #7 of *Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action*, “To urge congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization to address inequities (in pay, senior

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leadership, availability of second and third calls, etc.), as well as the systemic causes of such inequities, for rostered and lay women of various backgrounds, identities, and personal experiences, and to advocate for adequate and equitable leave for all parents and families” (*Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action*, pp. 81–82).

Based on a comparative analysis of compensation data collected from Portico Benefit Services [Portico] in 2015 and a survey of a representative sample of rostered ministers in late 2019/early 2020, the requested data show many clear differences by race/ethnicity and gender. However, it should be noted that the self-reported data shown for 2020 will be less accurate than what was provided by Portico for 2015, and that could affect the comparison being made.

Based on that data, there were significant differences by gender for compensation in 2019/2020.¹ (See Table 1.) The churchwide staff working on the analysis selected only respondents with full-time congregational calls for these analyses due to the large variation among part-time and non-congregational calls. Men had higher levels of compensation compared to women, with a difference of about \$6,600.

Table 1: Compensation Differences by Gender

	Full-Time Women (N=249)	Full-Time Men (N=206)	Differences
Mean	\$68,245	\$74,880	\$6,635
Median	\$65,365	\$72,000	\$6,635

The differences by race were also significant, with white rostered ministers reporting higher compensation levels, with a difference of about \$8,000. (See Table 2.)

Table 2: Compensation Differences by Race and Ethnicity

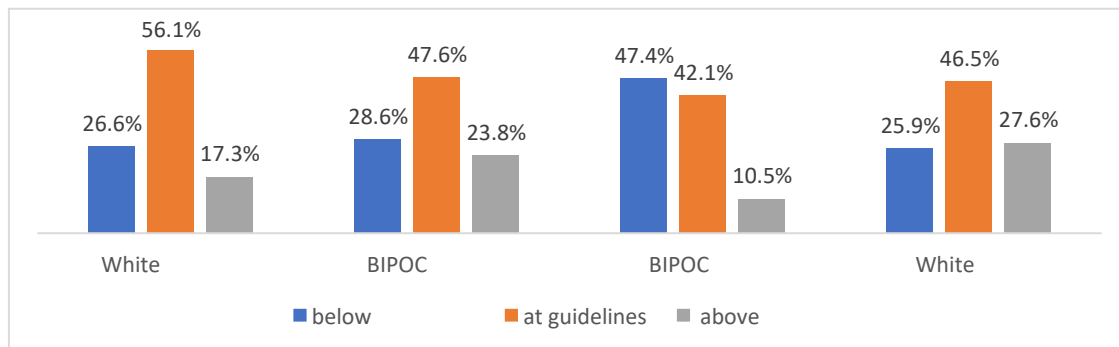
	Full-Time BIPOC (N=27)	Full-Time White (N=428)	Difference
Mean	\$64,320	\$71,686	\$7,366
Median	\$60,000	\$68,579	\$8,579

Based on the respondents’ reports in 2019/2020, there were also significant differences by race/ethnicity for synod guidelines. (See Figure 1.) Note that small sample sizes for BIPOC (Black, Indigenous or People of Color) ministers can also affect accuracy of data. Despite staff efforts to survey 100% of BIPOC rostered ministers, response rates were low.

Based on that data, more white men (28%) reported being above the synod guidelines than any other group. More white women (56%) reported being at the synod guidelines while more BIPOC men (47%) reported being below the guidelines.

These results are very similar to the 2015 study with one exception. In 2015, BIPOC women were more likely to be below synod guidelines, while in 2019/2020 BIPOC men were most likely to be below the guidelines. In 2019/2020, the BIPOC women’s results followed the pattern of results for white men, rather than the results for BIPOC men.

Figure 1: Differences among Word and Sacrament Ministers with Respect to Synod Compensation Guidelines



¹ All reported differences are significant at the .05 level.

Although a full report of efforts to serve all the implementing resolutions related to the social statement from the 2019 Churchwide Assembly will be shared with the Church Council at the Fall 2021 meeting, here are some of the ways people through this church are working to address compensation disparities specifically.

1. The Quality of Call initiative team provides reports and other tools to cultivate reflection and action in collaboration with synod bishops, synod staff members, and pastors. For example, in March 2021 the bishops received a report on family leave policies for families adding a child. (See *Parental Leave Policies Across the ELCA* report).
2. The Quality of Call initiative team is working collaboratively with synod bishops, synod staff members, and pastors to support conversations, practices, and protocols to foster equitable compensation for rostered ministers.
3. The bishops and synod offices of Region 9 work within an eight-point relational agreement, which includes using a regional worksheet to guide conversations with congregations on compensation.
4. The Justice for Women director is collaborating with others to have an online study guide for *Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action* for congregational and other use available Fall 2021. Root causes of inequities is a central feature of the learning focus. Learning activities focus on applying ELCA social teaching and policy on patriarchy and sexism from an intersectional perspective to personal, congregational, ecclesial, and social life, which encompasses compensation.

VOTED:

EN BLOC

CC21.04.06v

**To receive the gap analysis of rostered women, with a particular focus on challenges faced by rostered women of color, from the Office of the Presiding Bishop;
To commend the ongoing efforts of congregations, synods, and churchwide organization to address compensation disparities; and
To request that the secretary of this church inform the synods of this action.**

W. Seminary Tuition

Churchwide Assembly action [CA19.02.06t]

... *To direct the Domestic Mission unit, in consultation with other churchwide units, to conduct a comprehensive analysis of current and potential seminary tuition funding sources, with a report and recommendations regarding funding for seminary tuition to be provided to the Church Council by its spring 2021 meeting.*

Response from the Christian Community and Leadership unit (April 2021)

On Feb. 1, the seminary portfolio in the Domestic Mission unit moved to Christian Community and Leadership.

The Montana Synod presented a full tuition memorial to the 2019 Churchwide Assembly. The assembly directed the Domestic Mission unit (now the Christian Community and Leadership unit), in consultation with other units, to conduct an analysis and provide this report and recommendations to the Church Council by its 2021 Spring meeting.

Since this memorial was adopted, all ELCA seminaries moved to offer free or greatly reduced tuition (90% discount) to full time Master of Divinity ELCA student candidates for Word and Service or Word and Sacrament ministry. In addition, the ELCA Fund for Leaders program is now providing full tuition equivalent scholarships for almost 300 current seminarians.

However, tuition alone only accounts for half the actual cost of attendance to seminary which averages \$45,000 (tuition averages \$19,000). To address these concerns (perhaps outside the scope but not the intent of the memorial), a more comprehensive approach is needed. See recommendations at the end of this report.

Seminarians' Debt

In the 1990s, average tuition for students in Master of Divinity programs (not specific to the ELCA) increased 74%. Inflation was only 30% for the same decade. Over that period, student aid levels remained relatively constant, meaning that most students at most schools paid considerably more than students ten years before, even after controlling for inflation. In addition to tuition increases, living expenses also increased. At the same time, support from churches (both denominationally and congregationally) was declining. These factors, in large part, accounted for a significant increase in educational debt (200%) during this period.

Educational debt, which includes previous college debt and seminary debt (private, government, and seminary loans applied for books, housing, living expenses, etc.), continued to rise throughout the 2000's. These increases produced a host of concerns for theological schools and denominations, including the difficulty of repayment that graduates might face, the potential stress that carrying a large amount of educational debt may produce, and the

possibility that a high level of debt might directly impact a graduate's persistence or longevity in ministry. The Auburn Center posited that a higher number of theological school graduates were reporting their level of debt was affecting their career choices, holding them back from purchasing homes, preventing them from saving for their children's education, limiting their retirement savings, causing them to delay health care needs, and creating stress in their personal and professional lives.

In the same way that the COVID-19 pandemic affected the finances of society at large, the finances of the ELCA churchwide organization, seminaries, synods, congregations, seminarians, and their families were likely impacted. All churchwide expressions, along with seminaries, adjusted rapidly to this new panorama. The ability of seminaries to provide their academic programs online not only helped seminarians and seminaries to address this emergency, but also created a much-needed infrastructure and academic alternative that can help address debt in the future. Online programs can contribute to a reduction in living expenses for seminarians and their families.

ELCA Initiatives to Address Educational Debt

Response to educational debt, which addresses the tuition concern, includes: 1) the Stewards of Abundance Program (2009–2013); 2) the Resourceful Servants Program; 3) the Fund for Leaders scholarships provided to seminarians; and 4) by the seminaries movement toward offering full tuition.

Stewards of Abundance

The emphasis of the Stewards of Abundance project was on the extent, the causes, and the consequences of educational debt among seminarians in the ELCA. Research conducted as part of Stewards of Abundance indicated that more than 75% of graduates from ELCA Master of Divinity programs between the years of 2006 and 2013 borrowed educational loans to finance their seminary education. Over that time, the average theological education debt at graduation of those who borrowed increased from approximately \$34,000 to \$41,500. Over the same time period, the proportion of graduates who carried undergraduate debt increased from 34% to 47%, and among these borrowers, average undergraduate indebtedness rose from \$14,000 to \$18,000. In 2013, overall, 84% of graduates carried educational debt (either undergraduate, theological, or both) at graduation. The average amount among borrowers was just over \$49,000. Data from 2015 onward has been difficult to gather and research.

Resourceful Servants

Several years after the completion of Stewards of Abundance, and as a follow up grant from the Lilly Endowment, the Resourceful Servants project was developed. The project is part of the Lilly Endowment national initiative called Economic Challenges Facing Pastoral Leaders (ECFPL). The research conducted with ELCA rostered ministers identified three main financial pressure points: 1) educational debt; 2) a lack of emergency savings; and 3) a lack of retirement savings.

Both the Stewards of Abundance and the Resourceful Servants have taken a more comprehensive approach to identify and research seminarians' financial situations, provided valuable information about financial wellness among current and future ELCA rostered ministers and fostered meaningful networks with leadership in synods and seminaries.

ELCA Fund for Leaders

The ELCA Fund for Leaders scholarship program supports students attending ELCA seminaries. These scholarships make seminary more affordable, and the fund enables more future ministers to go to seminary and helps them graduate with less debt. In 2019–2020, the fund supported 283 students and awarded \$3,008,142. In 2020–2021, Fund for Leaders will grant 45 new scholarships, support 297 students, and distribute almost \$3,000,000 in scholarships.

Seminary tuition initiatives

Seminaries have transitioned from being mainly funded by the denomination to being funded mainly by donors, third party institutional grants, and development strategies.

In the last three to five years, seminaries have been able to move toward offering full tuition. Three seminaries provide full tuition. The other four seminaries provide generous and renewable financial aid for most students that generally account for at least 90% of full tuition. Overall, the total FTE (full time equivalent) in the system is 1056. Of these, 63% receive full tuition. The remaining 37% receive 90% or more of full tuition. When paired with Fund for Leaders scholarships, students receive stipends for living expenses, helping them manage their

finances and lessen their debt. We also have 102 Theological Education for Emerging Ministries (TEEM) students systemwide. Generally, TEEM students do not participate in the full tuition programs available.

The movement toward covering tuition fully is encouraging and exciting; however, there are additional costs to attending seminary. On average, the annual cost of tuition at an ELCA seminary is \$19,000. The average cost of attendance for a full-time residential learner at an ELCA seminary is about \$45,000. Therefore, a more comprehensive way to analyze and address the cost of seminary attendance would consider these additional expenses. This wider approach would serve to address issues of justice and the situations of ethnic-specific seminarians, seminarians living in rural areas, single mothers, and other marginalized communities.

The combination of Fund for Leaders scholarships and the seminaries' movement to offer full tuition have addressed, although timidly and not strategically, seminary tuition costs in this church's theological education system. While seminary tuition costs are a part of seminarians' debt, other substantial issues are previous educational debt, living expenses, and family matters (including emergencies). Additionally, on the other side of seminary, rostered ministers' vocational opportunities may not provide sufficient financial resources to easily manage accrued educational debt.

Recommendations

- To continue supporting the Resourceful Servants program and its recommendations;
- To continue supporting Fund for Leaders as an intentional strategy to provide for seminarians and address educational debt in this church's theological education system;
- To broaden the call for comprehensive reporting on full tuition to request reports on seminarian's educational debt and cost of attendance;
- To explore alternatives to address educational debt and cost of attendance of seminarians;
- To call seminaries and churchwide to include TEEM students in full tuition programs, scholarships and this church's educational debt and cost of attendance efforts; and
- To explore financial alternatives in our three expressions of the Church addressing educational debt of first call pastors.

VOTED:

CC21.04.06w

EN BLOC

To receive the response and recommendations for "Seminary Tuition" from the Christian Community and Leadership unit;

To continue supporting the Resourceful Servants program;

To continue supporting ELCA Fund for Leaders as an intentional strategy to provide for seminarians and address educational debt in this church's theological education system;

To request the churchwide organization to broaden the call for comprehensive reporting on full tuition and request reports from ELCA seminaries on seminarian's educational debt and cost of attendance;

To direct the churchwide organization to explore alternatives to address educational debt and cost of attendance of seminarians;

To ask the seminaries of this church and the churchwide organization to include Theological Education for Emerging Ministries (TEEM) students in full tuition programs, scholarships, and this church's educational debt and cost of attendance efforts; and

To encourage this church's congregations, synods, and churchwide organization to explore financial alternatives to address educational debt of first call pastors.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Vice President Horne announced the opportunity to attend evening conversation groups on the ELCA Strategy Toward Authentic Diversity, sanctuary church body definition and guidelines, and *Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline*.

PRAYER AND RECESS

The Rev. Kjersten Sullivan, Church Council member from the North/West Lower Michigan Synod, led participants in prayer. The Apr. 2021 meeting of the Church Council recessed at 3:57 p.m.

**Saturday, Apr. 17, 2021
Plenary Session III**

CALL TO ORDER AND MORNING PRAYER

(Agenda III.A.)

Vice President Horne called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. (CDT) and introduced Ms. Mary Campbell, program director, Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation, and Opportunities (AMMPARO). She led a devotion on migration and concluded with prayer.

REPORT OF THE PROGRAM AND SERVICES COMMITTEE

(Agenda III.B.)

Ms. Sonja Wolfe, Church Council member from the Greater Milwaukee Synod and chair of the Program and Services Committee, noted that the committee's *en bloc* items were acted on the previous day. The committee reviewed the corporate social responsibility roles and responsibilities chart, received an update on social teaching documents, and discussed the sanctuary church body definition and guidelines.

ELCA SANCTUARY CHURCH GUIDELINES

(Agenda III.B.1.)

Background:

The 2019 Churchwide Assembly declared the ELCA a sanctuary church body. It also requested the Church Council to "provide guidance for the three expressions of this church about what it means to be a sanctuary church body..." [CA19.03.07]. In consultation with churchwide units and other groups, the AMMPARO Sanctuary Team has overseen the process of developing guidelines.

Church Council action:

Ms. Wolfe read the motion. No seconded was needed as it came from the committee.

Moved;

Seconded:

To recognize that the ELCA's ministry as a sanctuary church body is a public witness that calls ELCA members to value the dignity of each human being made in God's image;

To thank the churchwide staff for the development of additional resources that provided education and discernment around sanctuary;

To acknowledge that the word 'sanctuary' has no legal or universally accepted definition and to encourage an understanding of the word 'sanctuary' that is rooted in the principles of walking alongside, or accompanying, immigrants and refugees; and

To affirm the guidance provided in the "ELCA Sanctuary Church Guidelines" for ways congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization can accompany and support the ministry of sanctuary.

A council member thanked committee members and staff for their work to clarify the document.

Vice President Horne asked Ms. Divine to lead the council in prayer before the vote.

VOTED:

CC21.04.07

To recognize that the ELCA's ministry as a sanctuary church body is a public witness that calls ELCA members to value the dignity of each human being made in God's image;

To thank the churchwide staff for the development of additional resources that provided education and discernment around sanctuary;

To encourage an understanding of the word 'sanctuary' that is rooted in the principles of walking alongside, or accompanying, immigrants and refugees while acknowledging that the word 'sanctuary' has no legal or universally accepted definition; and

To affirm the guidance provided in the "ELCA Sanctuary Church Guidelines" for ways congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization can accompany and support the ministry of sanctuary.

REPORT OF THE TREASURER

(Agenda III.C.)

Ms. Lori S. Fedyk, treasurer of the ELCA, reported on fiscal year 2020 (FY2020) results. Revenues exceeded expenditures by \$1.6 million, and Mission Support was 97.6% of budget. Total operating revenues were approximately \$3 million less than budget. As such, the organization did not use the \$3.1 million set aside to bridge the originally projected budget deficit. These funds will be returned to the Board Designated Fund for use in later years.

Unit spending finished at 88.5% of the budget. Savings primarily came from administrative costs: limited travel (due to the COVID-19 pandemic), building costs, staffing vacancies, and benefit savings.

ELCA World Hunger received \$24.4 million in 2020—\$19.1 million in direct giving and \$4.2 million in bequest income. Treasurer Fedyk noted that the council had approved an *en bloc* action the previous day to increase the World Hunger spending authorization for FY2021 by \$2.7 million due to a higher fund balance at the conclusion of FY2020.

During FY2020 Lutheran Disaster Response received \$7.4 million and distributed \$10.7 million. International COVID-19 relief totaled around \$2 million. The ELCA COVID-19 Appeal raised and distributed \$1.6 million to ministries across the ELCA.

Treasurer Fedyk reviewed the updated FY2021 spending authorization for each home area. At the Nov. 2020 Church Council meeting, \$21.5 million was approved for World Hunger spending and \$65.8 million was approved for the churchwide organization. With Friday's *en bloc* action the World Hunger spending authorization was increased to \$23.5 million.

The churchwide organization completed a compensation study in 2020 to be more competitive with marketplace practices. Increases in compensation will be covered from a pool of funds from previous benefit cost savings.

The Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) application for loan forgiveness is in process. The organization added an additional week of payroll, rather than the original 8-week period, to better align with the designated categories for forgiveness.

Treasurer Fedyk announced her hope to begin using zero-based budgeting. This would allow the organization to build a new budget each year rather than making adjustments from the previous year's budget. This also would allow the budget to be more quickly aligned with the organization's priorities. Treasurer Fedyk concluded her report by stating her goal to engage in long-term budget planning.

REPORT OF THE BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

(Agenda III.D.)

Mr. James J.F. Jennings, Church Council member from the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod and chair of the Budget and Finance Committee, reviewed *en bloc* items that were acted on the previous day, including \$1.3 million added to the Church Council Designated Fund for future budgetary support, an increased spending authorization for ELCA World Hunger from \$21.5 to \$23.5 million, and updates to names and titles for Authority to Act in Financial Matters.

Other items the committee discussed were FY2020 results, the FY2021 budget, and reports from the director of Mission Support, the chair of the Audit Committee, the Resource Development Committee, and the ELCA Foundation.

UPDATE TO MISSION SUPPORT EXPERIMENT

(Agenda III.D.1)

Background:

At its November 2020 meeting, the Church Council acted to end the Mission Support Experiment on Jan. 31, 2022 [CC20.11.33b]. The one-year extension allowed the synods in the experiment to continue budget projections for the coming fiscal year as the Church Council prepared to receive final reports and recommendations in 2021, in accordance with the process outlined in the April 2019 Church Council action [CC19.04.13].

- To request 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 FY2022 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.

The first step in that process was for the Church Council to receive the final data and report from the Mission Support Experiment Synods at the April 2021 Church Council meeting. [CC20.11.33b]

MINUTES, page 26

Church Council action:

Mr. Jennings informed council members that the five synods reported a revenue-neutral experiment for Mission Support. Some synods did see increases in other forms of support such as restricted giving. These updates were consistent with previous reports.

Mr. Jennings read the motion. No second was needed as it came from the committee.

A council member asked if the experiment synods would need to prepare and present two different budgets for FY2022. Mr. Jennings said this was still under consideration. Some synods may wish to revert to the standard budget plan while others may wish to continue with the experiment plan. Ms. Victoria E. Flood, director, Mission Support, noted that she had consulted with each of the five synods to discuss ongoing plans. The Rev. Philip C. Hirsch, executive director, Christian Community and Leadership, explained that the roles and payment distribution plans for directors for evangelical mission (DEMs) were being reviewed. A draft plan would be released in a few weeks. Currently, about one-third of synods pay DEMs through a synod contract, not through the churchwide organization.

VOTED:

CC21.04.08 **To receive the final data/report from the Mission Support Experiment Synods (Lower Susquehanna, Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Nebraska, New England, Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast);**

To urge the churchwide organization and the synods to incorporate the learnings from the mission support experiments into future collaboration, as appropriate; and

To encourage the formation of a project team (including bishops, churchwide organization staff, and others) to discuss future strategies for mission support sharing between synods and the churchwide organization, including discussion on how revenue received from congregations can best be shared to support the ministries of this church.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON APPEALS (CONTINUED)

(Agenda III.E.)

Vice President Horne called on Secretary Rothmeyer for the motion.

Moved;

Seconded:

To approve the revised version of *Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline*, effective immediately, but applicable only to conduct occurring (or alleged to occur) after the date of adoption of this resolution;

To confirm that the version of *Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline*, as in effect immediately prior to the adoption of this resolution, shall be applied to conduct that occurred (or is alleged to have occurred) on or prior to the date of adoption of this resolution; and

To authorize the Office of the Secretary to make any necessary non-substantive editorial corrections.

The Rev. Joanne E. Engquist, Church Council member from the Northwest Washington Synod, offered an amendment.

Moved;

Seconded:

To amend lines 37–44 of the revised *Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline* as follows:

These guidelines are necessary ~~so as~~ we ~~can~~ “continue in the covenant God made with us”² in our baptism to ensure that ~~God’s~~ all people, and the church in particular, are protected from harmful or inappropriate actions, speech, communications, or other misconduct. As ~~a~~ church, we must abide in a context that holds ourselves, and one another, to account for the sake care of the whole church.

The following definitions and guidelines for discipline are set forth with the understanding that, following misconduct, the desired outcome is ~~the~~ restoration of right relationships with God and one another; ~~relationship with God and relationship with one another.~~

Pastor Engquist explained that her amendment was meant to strengthen the revision, in particular to strengthen the articulation of grounding values and grounding contexts. She stressed the importance of restoration of right relationships *following* misconduct. Footnote 2 would remain unchanged.

There being no further discussion, Vice President Horne led the vote on the amendment. Council members voted electronically.

Moved;

Seconded;

Carried:

Yes-34;No-0

To amend lines 37–44 of the revised *Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline* as follows:

These guidelines are necessary ~~so as we can~~ “continue in the covenant God made with us”² in our baptism to ensure that ~~God’s all~~ people, and the church **in particular**, are protected from harmful or inappropriate actions, speech, communications, or other misconduct. As ~~a~~ church, we must abide in a context that holds ourselves, and one another, to account for the sake care of the whole church.

The following definitions and guidelines for discipline are set forth with the understanding that, **following misconduct**, the desired outcome is ~~the~~ restoration of right relationships **with God and one another; relationship with God and relationship with one another.**

Vice President Horne declared the amendment approved.

Pastor Engquist offered an amendment for lines 198–208.

Moved;

Seconded:

To amend lines 198–208 of the revised *Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline* as follows:

Addiction and substance misuse: ~~Any misuse of substances (such as alcohol, or drugs), or medications or inappropriate behavior involving gambling, sex, pornography, or compulsions (such as gambling or use of pornography) that impairs the ministerial function of a rostered minister or adversely impacts self or others is conduct incompatible with the character of the ministerial office. The approach of this church to such misuse may be referral for and insistence on evaluation, and the church may counsel inpatient or outpatient treatment should addiction be indicated. Refusal to explore the possibility of misuse will result in referral to mental health resources with the expectation that they will be used and recovery maintained. Public ministry may not be appropriate until health and wellness are restored.~~ Continued high-risk behavior or refusal to ~~be compliant~~ **comply** with treatment also constitutes conduct incompatible with the character of the ministerial office.¹²

Insert additional footnote:

¹² Consistent with the value of restoration of right relationships, the approach of this church to such misuse may be referral for and insistence on evaluation, and the church may counsel inpatient or outpatient treatment should addiction be identified. Refusal to explore the possibility of misuse may result in referral to mental health resources with the expectation that they will be used and recovery maintained. Public ministry may not be appropriate until health and wellness are restored.

Pastor Engquist remarked that this amendment aimed to create consistency with the rest of the document while allowing pastoral discretion for the bishop. She argued that the footnote brought uniformity, as most other sections included further description in a footnote rather than in the body of the text.

Vice President Horne called for the vote on the amendment.

Moved;
Seconded;
Carried:

Yes-35; No-1

To amend lines 198–208 of the revised *Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline* as follows:

Addiction and substance misuse: ~~Any misuse of substances (such as alcohol, or drugs), or medications or inappropriate behavior involving gambling, sex, pornography, or compulsions (such as gambling or use of pornography) that impairs the ministerial function of a rostered minister or adversely impacts self or others is~~ conduct incompatible with the character of the ministerial office. ~~The approach of this church to such misuse may be referral for and insistence on evaluation, and the church may counsel inpatient or outpatient treatment should addiction be indicated. Refusal to explore the possibility of misuse will result in referral to mental health resources with the expectation that they will be used and recovery maintained. Public ministry may not be appropriate until health and wellness are restored.~~ Continued high-risk behavior or refusal to ~~be compliant~~ **comply** with treatment also constitutes conduct incompatible with the character of the ministerial office.¹²

Insert additional footnote:

¹² Consistent with the value of restoration of right relationships, the approach of this church to such misuse may be referral for and insistence on evaluation, and the church may counsel inpatient or outpatient treatment should addiction be identified. Refusal to explore the possibility of misuse may result in referral to mental health resources with the expectation that they will be used and recovery maintained. Public ministry may not be appropriate until health and wellness are restored.

The Rev. Emily C. Hartner, Church Council member from the North Carolina Synod, offered an amendment.

Moved;
Seconded:

To strike after footnote 10 on lines 190–192 “Such violations severely damage the credibility of the public ministry and how others hear the Gospel to which this church and its leaders are called.”

Pastor Hartner explained that striking this line honored concerns expressed by members of Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries (ELM). Secretary Rothmeyer clarified that this section originated from the social statement *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* (2009). Pastor Hartner indicated that the language was already present in footnote 10, which she noted would remain.

Pastor Engquist expressed her support for the amendment saying it provided better consistency. She said that the footnote was sufficient.

Moved;
Seconded;
Carried:

Yes-35; No-1

To strike after footnote 10 on lines 190–192 “Such violations severely damage the credibility of the public ministry and how others hear the Gospel to which this church and its leaders are called.”

Council members discussed the need for a definition of “promiscuity.” Secretary Rothmeyer recommended that the request for the definition be referred to the Committee on Appeals. She also instructed council members to submit potential revisions or editorial comments to the Office of the Secretary. Those comments and proposed edits would be compiled and forwarded to the Committee on Appeals.

Before leading the vote on the amended action, Vice President Horne asked the Rev. Nicholas M. Billardello III, Church Council member from the Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod, to pray.

VOTED: *Yes-36;No-1*
CC21.04.09 **To approve the revised version as amended of *Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline*, effective immediately, but applicable only to conduct occurring (or alleged to occur) after the date of adoption of this resolution;**
 To confirm that the version of *Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline*, as in effect immediately prior to the adoption of this resolution, shall be applied to conduct that occurred (or is alleged to have occurred) on or prior to the date of adoption of this resolution; and
 To authorize the Office of the Secretary to make any necessary non-substantive editorial corrections.

Mr. Sagsveen thanked the council for its thoughtful consideration. He pledged that the Committee on Appeals would continue to work with the Church Council and the Conference of Bishops in order to continually improve this document for the sake of this church.

Pastor Hartner offered a motion.

Moved;
Seconded: To encourage the Committee on Appeals to add a definition of “promiscuity” to the definitions section within *Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline*.

There being no discussion the vice president called for the vote.

VOTED: *Yes-34;No-3*
CC21.04.10 **To encourage the Committee on Appeals to add a definition of “promiscuity” to the definitions section within *Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline*.**

Secretary Rothmeyer thanked the Committee on Appeals for its work and for the members’ sense of commitment to this church.

NEW BUSINESS
(Agenda III.F.)

Secretary Rothmeyer reported that there was one item of new business and read the motion.
There being no discussion, the chair called for the vote.

VOTED:
CC21.04.11 **To ratify the amendments to the constitution of the Southwestern Texas Synod as outlined in the “4E SWTX CBCR Ratification” document.**

~~**S9.03.** **There shall be a Nominating Committee composed of nine persons appointed by the Synod Council. One of the appointees shall be a youth or young adult who shall be appointed for a two year term. Other members shall be appointed for six year terms. The appointees shall reflect the male/female and lay/clergy representation guidelines for the Synod. Additional nominations may be made from the floor for all elections for which nominations are made by the Nominating Committee.**~~

S9.03 **Nominating Committee: There shall be a Nominating committee consisting of 5 members who shall be appointed by the Synod Council to serve for each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly. Additional nominations may be made from the floor for all elections for which nominations are made by the Nominating Committee.**

- †S10.01. The Synod Council, consisting of the four officers of the synod, 10 to 24 other members, and at least one youth and at least one young adult shall be elected by the Synod Assembly.
- a. Each person elected to the Synod Council shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod, with the exception of ministers on a roster of this synod who reside outside the territory of this synod. The process for election and the term of office when not otherwise provided shall be specified in the bylaws. A member of the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, unless otherwise elected as a voting member of the Synod Council, may serve as an advisory member of the Synod Council with voice but not vote.
 - b. The term of office of members of the Synod Council, with the exception of the officers and the youth member, shall be ~~four~~ three years.

S10.08. Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of all meetings of the Synod Council.

PRAYER AND RECESS

Ms. Merritt G. Zesinger, youth Church Council member from the Southeastern Synod, led participants in prayer. The Apr. 2021 meeting of the Church Council recessed at 12:19 p.m.

Saturday, Apr. 17, 2021
Plenary Session IV

CALL TO ORDER AND
(Agenda IV.A.)

Deacon Weit opened the plenary with song. Vice President Horne called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. (CDT).

FUTURE CHURCH DESIGN: OPEN DOORS GRANTS

The Rev. Philip C. Hirsch, executive director, Christian Community and Leadership; Ms. Haley Toresdahl, ELCA GrantMaker administrator; Ms. Mikka McCracken, executive director, Innovation; and the Rev. Tara R. Lynn, Church Council member from the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod, presented the Open Doors grants.

To apply, an ELCA congregation would submit a specific and actionable idea for how the congregation might meet and welcome new people. All applicants will be placed in a common pool from which awardees will be selected at random. If selected, congregations will receive \$1,500–\$2,500. Those who are not selected may receive a small stipend. All participants, whether the congregations receive funding or not, will be asked to share their learnings over three years with the churchwide organization.

Grant applications will launch on Apr. 21, 2021. The deadline to apply is May 19. Awards will be granted in mid-June 2021. Ms. Toresdahl thanked the Project Core Team for their work, including Ms. Allison Beebe, Mr. Iain Chester, and Pastor Lynn.

Church Council members reflected in small groups on the Open Doors grants and ways their congregations could welcome, befriend, and engage new people.

“INDIGENOUS PERSPECTIVE IN OUR COUNTRY” PRIMER
(Agenda IV.B.)

Ms. Loni Taylor, Church Council member from the Montana Synod and member of the Chippewa Cree Tribe, led a primer on Indigenous perspectives in the United States. She highlighted boarding school trauma for Indigenous persons, forced assimilation, the “Dakota 38 plus 2,” missing and murdered Indigenous people, the Dakota Access Pipeline, and Jim Thorpe Day.

REPORT OF THE TEMPORARY SELECT COMMITTEE ON COMMITTEES
(Agenda IV.C.)

Background:

At its April 2019 meeting, the Church Council requested that the “Executive Committee establish a process to assess the existing committee structure and future needs for Church Council, and for recommendations to be presented by the April 2021 Church Council meeting.” [CC19.04.06]

At the November 2019 Executive Committee meeting, the Executive Committee established a temporary committee “to assess the existing committee structure and future needs for Church Council in accomplishing its governance role” and requested a final report and recommendation be presented by the April 2021 Church Council meeting. [EC19.11.43]

Church Council action:

Mr. Kevin Anderson, Church Council member from the Metropolitan, D.C., Synod and chair of the Temporary Select Committee on Committees, provided background on the committee’s work before presenting the two proposals the committee had forwarded for discussion. He noted that the two proposals would leave the current Budget and Finance Committee and the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee largely unchanged. Proposal A would establish four standing committees by subject matter: Diversity and Community Committee, which would loosely relate to the Service and Justice home area; Faith and Leadership Committee, which would loosely relate to the Christian Community and Leadership home area; Constitutional and Legal Matters Committee (formerly Legal and Constitutional Review Committee); and the Budget and Finance Committee. Proposal B would align committees with the home areas of the churchwide organization: Christian Community and Leadership, Service and Justice, Operations–(Treasurer) Budget and Finance, Operations–(Secretary) Legal and Constitutional Review Committee, and Operations–(Presiding Bishop). Mr. Anderson commented that the Temporary Select Committee was uncertain

what would comprise the work of the Operations–(Presiding Bishop) committee. The Temporary Select Committee also considered an additional committee to examine social statements and social teaching documents. Mr. Anderson asked council members to consider the timeline to implement the new committee structure. He put forward two possibilities: have the new committee structure in effect by Spring 2022 or implement the new structure in Nov. 2022 with the next class of council members following the 2022 Churchwide Assembly.

Mr. Anderson facilitated discussion and invited current committee chairs and Temporary Select Committee members to reflect on the two proposals. Council members agreed that the current committee structure needed to change and that the timeline for implementation was important. Presiding Bishop Eaton suggested that social statements and social teaching documents could reside under the Operations–(Presiding Bishop) committee in Proposal B. One council member inquired about having an Innovation committee. Treasurer Fedyk explained that in order for innovation to influence work across the organization, each committee should incorporate innovation.

Mr. Anderson read the motion, and the vice president called for the vote.

VOTED:

CC21.04.12 **To authorize an extension of a revised committee structure for Church Council to be presented to the November 2021 Church Council meeting.**

REPORT OF THE BOARD DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

(Agenda IV.)

Ms. Cheryl T. Chapman, chair of the Board Development Committee, reminded council members to complete the meeting evaluation form. She thanked Ms. Taylor for her primer on Indigenous perspectives and offered possible future primer topics: Microsoft Teams or the Church Council’s liaison role with synods.

She concluded by thanking the Rev. M. Wyvetta Bullock, outgoing executive for administration, for her many years of faithful service.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Secretary Rothmeyer invited council members to continue posting joys, concerns, and prayer requests on the Church Council Microsoft Teams site. She encouraged members to make an offering to “where needed most.” She noted that there was uncertainty whether the Fall 2021 council meeting would be electronic or in Chicago. This would be communicated to members as soon as the decision was made.

SENDING WORD AND PRAYER

Deacon Weit led the council in song and prayer. Ms. Sonja Wolfe, Church Council member from the Greater Milwaukee Synod, served as lector.

ADJOURNMENT

The 107th meeting of the Church Council adjourned at 4:07 p.m. on Saturday, Apr. 17, 2020.

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