

**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN  
AMERICA**

**Church Council**

**MINUTES**

**Nov. 11–13, 2021**

**Prepared by the  
Office of the Secretary**



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**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA  
CHURCH COUNCIL**

**MINUTES  
Nov. 11–13, 2021  
Chicago, Illinois**

The 109th meeting of the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) convened Nov. 11–13, 2021, at the Marriott Chicago O’Hare, Chicago, Illinois.

The Executive Committee of the Church Council met Thursday morning, Nov. 11, followed by worship with Holy Communion. The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton, presiding bishop of the ELCA, presided, and the Rev. Kjersten L. Sullivan preached. Ms. Divine served as assisting minister, and Mr. Joseph T. Nolte was lector. Deacon John E. Weit, executive for worship, and Ms. Marit E. Johnson, official documentation manager, served as musicians.

**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. Carlos E. Peña, interim 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 (*excused*)

**Church Council:**

Mr. Kevin Anderson	The Rev. Pamela J. Hoh
Ms. Tracey A. Beasley	Ms. Cherrish Holland
The Rev. Marcus A. Bigott	Mr. James J.F. Jennings
The Rev. Nicholas M. Billardello III ( <i>excused</i> )	Mr. David M. Lenz
Ms. Susan Boxberger	The Rev. Tara R. Lynn
Ms. Lisa Burk ( <i>excused</i> )	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 ( <i>excused</i> )
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
Ms. Kerry A. Fehrman	The Rev. Kjersten L. Sullivan
The Rev. Dena M. Gable	Ms. Loni Taylor
The Rev. Daniel W. Gerrietts	Ms. Sonja Wolfe
The Rev. Emily C. Hartner	Ms. Merritt G. Zesinger

***Representatives of the Conference of Bishops:***

Bp. Andrew A. Taylor, Region 2	Bp. Craig A. Schweitzer, Region 3
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***Churchwide Staff Resource People:***

Mr. Thomas A. Cunniff, general counsel  
Ms. Aja Favors, associate general counsel  
The Rev. N. Keith Fry, executive for Office of the Secretary administration  
The Rev. Philip C. Hirsch, executive director for Christian Community and Leadership  
The Rev. Louise N. Johnson, executive for administration  
Ms. Marit E. Johnson, official documentation manager  
Ms. Kathryn M. Lohre, executive for ecumenical and inter-religious relations and theological discernment  
The Rev. Rafael Malpica-Padilla, executive director for Service and Justice

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Deacon Mary Ann Schwabe, executive for synod relations

Mr. Joseph Schmidt, administrative coordinator

Ms. Jodi L. Slattery, executive for governance

Deacon John E. Weit, executive for worship

Thursday, Nov. 11, 2021  
PLENARY SESSION I

**CALL TO ORDER AND ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

(Agenda I.A.)

Mr. Carlos E. Peña, interim vice president of the ELCA and chair of the Church Council, called the Church Council meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. (CST). Agenda items were distributed electronically. He welcomed council members and guests. The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton, presiding bishop of the ELCA, opened the meeting with prayer.

Vice President Peña began by acknowledging that the meeting was taking place on the ancestral homelands of the Council of the Three Fires—comprising the Ojibwe, Odawa, and Potawatomi Nations—as well as the Miami, Ho-Chunk, Menominee, Sac, Fox, Kickapoo, and Illinois Nations. This acknowledgement was in keeping with “A Declaration of the ELCA to American Indian and Alaska Native People” and the Repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery. He drew attention to meeting resource materials, deadlines for proposing new business, and deadlines for removing items from *en bloc* consideration.

A motion was made to adopt the agenda.

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

**VOTED:**

**CC21.11.16 To adopt the agenda and to permit the chair to call for consideration of agenda items in the order the chair deems most appropriate.**

**REMEMBRANCE OF WILLIAM B. HORNE II**

(Agenda I.B.)

Vice President William B. Horne II died Aug. 14, 2021. There was a time of remembrance and thanksgiving for his life. Bishop Eaton read Philippians 4:8–9 and reflected on the memorial service that had been held for Vice President Horne.

Interim Vice President Peña shared memories of Vice President Horne’s service as a Church Council member, then asked for a moment of silence. The presiding bishop led the council in prayer before voting on the resolution.

**VOTED:**

**CC21.11.17 The ELCA Church Council gives thanks to God for the life and faithful service of William “Bill” Burt Horne II. As it meets for its biannual meeting, the council offers its prayers for comfort and peace for his family and friends upon Bill’s death. The council expresses its appreciation for his wise, fair, and strong leadership as vice president of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and his collaborative spirit, steadfast commitment, and genuine compassion for the congregations and communities throughout the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.**

**REPORT OF THE PRESIDING BISHOP**

(Agenda I.C.)

Presiding Bishop Eaton thanked council members for passing “A Declaration of the ELCA to American Indian and Alaska Native People.” The Repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery working group is proceeding with items called for by the 2016 Churchwide Assembly, including the declaration, land acknowledgements at the opening of gatherings, and the group’s current work, American Indian and Alaska Native reflections on the Small Catechism. The 2022 Churchwide Assembly will hold a time of remembrance and confession with a special liturgy based on the repudiation of the doctrine.

The Theological Discernment, Justice, and Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations team has reconvened dialogue with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), has begun work on a study guide for “A Declaration of the ELCA to American Indian and Alaska Native People,” and has drafted a study guide for the social statement, “Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action” (2019). The proposed update to “A Declaration of the ELCA to the Jewish Community” arose out of discussions leading to “A Declaration of the ELCA to American Indian and Alaska Native People.” The Government and Civic Engagement task force continues to research and develop a social statement on “Church, State, and Civic Participation.”

The presiding bishop spoke on the need to make Jesus’ story known by engaging one million new, young, and diverse people by the end of the decade. The Innovation home area conducted listening sessions with “Gen Z”

individuals and asked, “What gives your life meaning, purpose, and longing?” She stressed that the Lutheran movement has a unique message and voice to share and expressed her hope that ELCA Lutherans would rediscover and reengage an authentic Lutheran identity that welcomes all people.

Presiding Bishop Eaton reported that Ms. Mikka McCracken, executive director for the Innovation home area, resigned, and assured the council that the Innovation unit would carry the work forward as the search for a new executive director begins.

#### **REPORT OF THE INTERIM VICE PRESIDENT**

(Agenda I.D.)

Vice President Peña shared additional remembrances of Vice President Horne. He read Romans 12:2 and asked, “What do you think of when you think of the word ‘change’?” He noted that the months leading to the 2022 Churchwide Assembly will be filled with change. The vice president provided background information on himself and closed his report with prayer.

#### **REVISIONS TO “A DECLARATION OF THE ELCA TO THE JEWISH COMMUNITY”**

(Agenda I.E.1.)

Ms. Kathryn M. Lohre, executive for ecumenical and inter-religious relations and theological discernment, reviewed the history of “A Declaration of the ELCA to the Jewish Community” and the work of the ELCA Consultative Panel on Lutheran-Jewish Relations.

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

#### **VOTED:**

**CC21.11.18**

**To adopt the proposed revisions to “A Declaration of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to the Jewish Community” as an expression of this church’s continual opposition to rising anti-Semitism and ongoing work to repudiate the Doctrine of Discovery;**

**To reaffirm “A Declaration of the ELCA to the Jewish Community” as an enduring message for this church, this church’s Jewish neighbors, and all of this church’s ecumenical, inter-religious, and global partners; and**

**To call the ELCA into a time of study and reflection using the Declaration and other Lutheran-Jewish relations resources available from the Office of the Presiding Bishop.**

#### **2022 CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY VACCINATION REQUIREMENT**

(Agenda I.E.2.)

Vice President Peña asked Secretary Rothmeyer to move the motion. There being no discussion, the chair called for the vote.

#### **VOTED:**

**CC21.11.19**

**To direct the churchwide organization to require all participants (i.e., voting members, visitors, volunteers, contract staff, and churchwide staff) attending the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to either show proof of being fully vaccinated for COVID-19 or provide upon arrival a negative COVID-19 test result taken 1–3 days prior to traveling to the assembly for unvaccinated individuals, in accordance with the guidance from public health officials.**

#### **ANNOUNCEMENT AND RECESS**

Vice President Peña announced that the Executive Committee had requested a bylaw amendment to expand the size of the Executive Committee following the report from the Temporary Select Committee on Committees. The Legal and Constitutional Review Committee will review this proposal on Friday, Nov. 12.

The November Church Council meeting recessed at 3:56 p.m. and resumed at 4:07 p.m. (CST).



**REPORT OF THE SECRETARY**

(Agenda I.F.)

Deacon Sue E. Rothmeyer, secretary of the ELCA, shared reflections and memories of Vice President Horne and thanked council members for their condolences upon her father's death.

The secretary reported that the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee met twice electronically to review proposed amendments to the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA*. The committee will finalize amendments at the Friday, Nov. 12 committee meeting. The Church Council will then vote to forward the recommended amendments to the 2022 Churchwide Assembly.

Secretary Rothmeyer introduced Ms. Christina Ptack, meetings and events manager and churchwide assembly registrar. Other items were referenced in the secretary's written report.

**PERSONAL REFLECTION ON FAITH**

Ms. Sonja Wolfe offered a personal reflection on her faith.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Secretary Rothmeyer reminded council members of the Friday morning committee meetings. The council will meet as the St. Olaf College Corporation at 2:00 p.m. (CST) on Friday, Nov. 12. The deadline to remove items from *en bloc* consideration is 3:00 p.m. (CST) on Friday.

**RECESS**

The Rev. Marcus A. Bigott offered a closing prayer. The November 2021 meeting of the Church Council recessed at 4:27 p.m. (CST), Thursday, Nov. 11, 2021.

**Friday, Nov. 12, 2021**  
**PLENARY SESSION II**

**COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

The Budget and Finance, Legal and Constitutional Review, Planning and Evaluation, and Program and Services committees met beginning at approximately 9:00 a.m. (CST) at the Marriott Chicago O’Hare. There was a midday prayer service led by the Rev. Daniel W. Gerriets. Deacon John E. Weit, executive for worship, and the Rev. Emily C. Hartner served as musicians.

**ST. OLAF COLLEGE CORPORATION MEETING**

The Church Council met as the corporation of St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minnesota, at approximately 2:00 p.m. (CST). The college corporation meeting adjourned at approximately 2:20 p.m. (CST). Minutes of the meeting were kept by St. Olaf College.

**CALL TO ORDER AND EXECUTIVE SESSION**

(Agenda II.A.)

Vice President Peña called the second plenary session to order at 2:30 p.m. (CST) in the Marriott Chicago O’Hare. The Church Council entered into executive session for a legal briefing. Minutes for meetings held in executive session are added to the protocol file in the Office of the Secretary.

The council returned to open session at 2:52 p.m. (CST).

**REPORT OF THE LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL REVIEW COMMITTEE**

(Agenda II.B.)

Mr. Gary A. Pederson, chair of the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee, summarized the proposed constitution amendments the committee had reviewed at two previous electronic meetings and at its morning meeting. Most amendments suggested were for clarification or consistency. One section of amendments relating to 4.02.c. that were approved by the 2019 Churchwide Assembly would be forwarded to the 2022 Churchwide Assembly for ratification. The Church Council would also consider proposed continuing resolutions that would take effect upon adoption. The committee also examined amendments to the Mission Investment Fund bylaws. All items would be considered in the *en bloc* action, with the exception of bylaw 14.41.01. which was removed for separate consideration.

**REPORT OF THE PROGRAM AND SERVICES COMMITTEE**

(Agenda II.C.)

Ms. Sonja Wolfe, chair of the Program and Services Committee, reported that the committee received an update on the development of the social statement on “Church, State, and Civic Participation,” reviewed social policy resolutions that will be considered for archiving, and discussed an edit of the social message on “Suicide Prevention.”

Ms. Wolfe moved the action. Ms. Alyssa J. Cobb prayed before the chair led the vote.

**VOTED:**

*Two-thirds required*

**CC21.11.20**

**To adopt the proposed editorial update as the revised text of the ELCA social message on “Suicide Prevention” (1999) in order to provide accuracy and relevance to the contemporary social context;**

**To encourage conversation within ELCA congregations and to invite similar conversations with ecumenical and inter-religious partners to study this social message; and**

**To direct the churchwide organization to promote communication of this message throughout this church.**

**RECESS**

The November 2021 meeting of the Church Council recessed at 3:09 p.m. and resumed at 3:27 p.m. (CST).

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## REPORT OF THE PLANNING AND EVALUATION COMMITTEE

(Agenda II.D.)

The Rev. Joanne E. Engquist, chair of the Planning and Evaluation Committee, noted that the committee report had been uploaded to Microsoft Teams. She shared the committee's reflections on Psalm 90 and collective loss. Pastor Engquist challenged Church Council members to consider how each member could engage with someone who is new, young, and diverse. She expressed her hope that this would be at the forefront of the council's work. She encouraged members to share what they would commit to in coming weeks.

## NEW BUSINESS

(Agenda II.E.)

Vice President Peña announced that there was one item of new business.

Mr. Noah F. Roux moved "A Fresh Perspective: ELCA Church Council Young Adults."

**Moved;**

**Seconded:**

To receive the working document entitled "A Fresh Perspective: ELCA Church Council Young Adults" and prayerfully consider it;

To create a working group composed primarily of Youth and Young Adult members of the council, with additional youth and young adults of this church and other members of this church to be lifted up by the Executive Committee; and

To direct this group in consultation with other Church Council members, and churchwide staff, to discuss the ELCA goal to reach one million new, young, and diverse people, and to prepare a report consisting of ideas, concerns, recommendations, and aspirations to be given at the next regular meeting of the Church Council.

Mr. Keoni Newman presented the document and offered his perspective on why he continues to be an ELCA member. The document highlighted ideas and concerns and advocated for bold, rapid change.

Mr. Roux explained that the six youth and young adult members of the Church Council had drafted this document. He expressed his hope to include other young adults in a working group to discuss, "What makes young people feel like they belong in our church?"

Many council members affirmed the idea of the working group and the initial document. The Rev. Philip C. Hirsch, executive director for Christian Community and Leadership, expressed his support and offered his assistance in helping the group connect with various networks.

Ms. Divine led members in prayer before the chair led the vote.

**VOTED:**

**CC21.11.21**

**To receive the working document entitled "A Fresh Perspective: ELCA Church Council Young Adults" and prayerfully consider it;**

**To create a working group composed primarily of Youth and Young Adult members of the council, with additional youth and young adults of this church and other members of this church to be lifted up by the Executive Committee; and**

**To direct this group in consultation with other Church Council members, and churchwide staff, to discuss the ELCA goal to reach one million new, young, and diverse people, and to prepare a report consisting of ideas, concerns, recommendations, and aspirations to be given at the next regular meeting of the Church Council.**

## PERSONAL REFLECTION ON FAITH

The Rev. Emily C. Hartner provided a personal reflection on her faith.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

Secretary Rothmeyer announced that the Board Development Committee would meet at 4:15 p.m. (CST).

## RECESS

The Rev. Pamela Hoh offered a closing prayer. The November 2021 meeting of the Church Council recessed at 4:03 p.m. (CST), Friday, Nov. 12, 2021.

Saturday, Nov. 13, 2021  
PLENARY SESSION III

**CALL TO ORDER**

Vice President Peña called the third plenary session to order at 9:02 a.m. (CST) in the Marriott Chicago O'Hare. Presiding Bishop Eaton opened the session with prayer.

**REPORT OF THE BOARD DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

(Agenda III.B.)

Ms. Cheryl T. Chatman, chair of the Board Development Committee, reviewed the work of the committee, which includes planning effective meetings, requesting process observations, and collecting evaluations for each meeting. If the new proposed committee structure is approved, the Board Development Committee will organize new committee membership following a survey of members' skill sets.

The Board Development Committee will offer three primers in the spring: youth and young adult education, racial justice training, and the Church Council's role at the 2022 Churchwide Assembly.

**MORNING DEVOTION AND PRIMER ON INDIGENOUS PERSPECTIVE IN THE UNITED STATES**

(Agenda III.A.)

Ms. Loni Taylor, Church Council member from the Montana Synod and member of the Chippewa Cree Tribe, led a devotion and primer on the history of abusive treatment and cultural genocide of American Indian children experienced in residential boarding schools in the United States and Canada.

Following discussion, the Rev. Joanne E. Engquist led the council in prayer.

**REPORT OF THE TREASURER**

(Agenda III.C.)

Ms. Lori S. Fedyk, treasurer of the ELCA, shared financial results through Sept. 30, 2021. Operating revenues are exceeding expenditures by \$4.6 million. Income is running ahead of budget by \$1.4 million with Mission Support representing 64% of total revenues. Thirty-five synods are ahead of their 2020 dollar share amounts. With favorable income in FY2021, there is no need to release money from a designated fund to balance the budget. Spending is \$8.4 million below budget (81%). This is due to delayed grant releases, minimal travel, and staffing vacancies.

Direct giving for ELCA World Hunger is \$8.4 million for the first eight months of the year. This is \$0.5 million behind budget. The development team estimates that World Hunger will exceed the planned giving goal of \$18.5 million and is currently projecting a direct giving total of \$20.3 million. World Hunger expenditures are at 43% of budget. Much of the spending will take place late in the year. Treasurer Fedyk reminded council members that bequest income is held for one year before it may be spent.

Through September 30, 2021, Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR) received \$6.7 million in gifts and distributed \$5.2 million.

The treasurer reminded members that the Paycheck Protection Program loan was forgiven in July 2021. These funds will be recognized as a gain; however, the money will be set aside, as the organization can be audited on the loan funds over the next six years.

A council member noted previous discussion regarding mineral rights held by the churchwide organization. Treasurer Fedyk explained that mineral rights investments represent a small amount of the organization's income and discussed the complexities of mineral rights. A Budget and Finance Committee member explained that the churchwide organization's mineral rights were all received as gifts some time ago, and that development staff are not seeking new mineral rights gifts.

**REPORT OF THE BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE**

(Agenda III.D.)

Mr. James J.F. Jennings, chair of the Budget and Finance Committee, reviewed adjustments to the budget proposal for FY2022. Total unrestricted monies were decreased by \$1.56 million to \$63 million. Total revenues were projected at \$65.8 million. The proposed spending authorization totaled \$65.8 million. This includes a 2% salary increase for churchwide staff and a 3.5% medical benefits increase. The Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM) program is scheduled to resume in FY2022. The program will be fully offset by revenue.

On average, the churchwide organization spends 94% of budget. Given that, the committee recommended reducing the spending authorization to 95% of the proposed amount. Council members discussed how this reduction might communicate budgeting from a point of scarcity. Mr. Jennings explained that it was difficult to spend 100% of

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what was allocated. Treasurer Fedyk reminded members that, if needed, \$1.8 million from a designated fund could be used to balance the budget.

Mr. Jennings moved the action item, and Vice President Peña called for the vote.

**VOTED:**

**CC21.11.22** To revise the 2022 fiscal year current fund income proposal from \$68,507,018 to \$65,816,150;  
To approve a 2022 fiscal year current fund spending authorization of \$65,816,150;

Mr. Jennings then shared the budget proposal for ELCA World Hunger. There may be an opportunity to increase spending for ELCA World Hunger in FY2022. Historically, there has been an increase in direct giving during a Youth Gathering year. The income and spending authorization proposals both totaled \$22.6 million.

**VOTED:**

**CC21.11.23** To revise the 2022 fiscal year World Hunger income proposal from \$21,500,000 to \$22,665,000; and  
To approve a 2022 ELCA World Hunger spending authorization of \$22,665,000.

Mr. Jennings announced that, while the audit report is not yet completed, no adjustments are expected. The audit was delayed due to COVID-related workplace challenges and the transition to the Workday financial system. Audit Committee actions would be considered *en bloc*.

The Resource Development Committee is considering new fundraising priorities and how to better align communication and fundraising strategies. The “where needed most” fund is one area being examined. The Resource Development Committee is also discussing Mission Support engagement and will share observations as applicable.

**CONSIDERATION OF ITEMS REMOVED FROM *EN BLOC***

(Agenda III.E.)

Secretary Rothmeyer announced that one item was removed from *en bloc* consideration, a proposed amendment to bylaw 14.41.01.

**Moved:**

**Seconded:** To recommend the following for adoption by the 2022 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:

To adopt the following amendment to the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*:

**14.41.01. Executive Committee.** The Church Council shall have an Executive Committee composed of the churchwide officers, the chair of the Conference of Bishops, and ~~seven~~eight members of the Church Council elected by the council. The vice president of this church shall chair this committee. The Executive Committee shall:

- f. demonstrate concern for the spiritual, emotional, and physical well-being of the ~~full-time salaried~~ officers of this church; and

Mr. David M. Lenz requested that the bylaw amendment be considered following the report from the Temporary Select Committee on Committees. Vice President Peña agreed.

***EN BLOC* APPROVAL OF CERTAIN ITEMS**

(Agenda III.F.)

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:**

**CC21.11.24** To adopt the amendments to the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* as described in “Proposed Amendments—Continuing Resolutions.”

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**Chapter 5: Principles of Organization**

**5.01.C00C21.** The term, “persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English,” shall be understood to mean African American, African Descent, Black, Arab and Middle Eastern, Asian and Pacific Islander, Latino, American Indian, and Alaska Native people. This definition, however, shall not be understood as limiting this church’s commitment to inclusive participation in its life and work.

5.01.H21. For purposes of the representational principles set forth in 5.01.e. and f., the percentage of laypersons that is not allocated to women or men may be allocated to persons who identify as gender non-binary, gender fluid, women, men, or other genders.

**Chapter 7: Ministry**

**7.74.A19A21.** **Sources of Calls for Ministers of Word and Service**

...  
b. Table of Sources of Calls for Ministers of Word and Service

	Setting	Calling Body
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12.0	Independent Lutheran Organization	Church Council <u>upon request of appropriate churchwide unit</u>
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**Chapter 12: Churchwide Assembly**

**12.41.C04C21.** Congregation Observers. Each congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may register with the secretary of this church one congregation observer for the Churchwide Assembly prior to May 31 in the year of a Churchwide Assembly.

a. Provision shall be made for such an individual to have reserved seating in the observers section of the plenary hall. Such congregation observers will ~~receive~~ have access to a copy of the report of recommendations for assembly action and also materials distributed ~~on the plenary floor~~ to voting members, advisory members, and non-voting members during the assembly. Such observers shall have neither voice nor vote in plenary sessions of the assembly.

**Chapter 15: Churchwide Offices and Administration**

**15.12.B20B21.** **Responsibility for Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations**

Responsibility for ecumenical and inter-religious relations shall be exercised by the Office of the Presiding Bishop.

a. The presiding bishop shall appoint An-an executive for ecumenical and inter-religious relations, appointed by the presiding bishop, who shall coordinate the ecumenical, inter-Lutheran, and inter-religious activities of this church, and shall recommend, through the presiding bishop, policies to the Church Council and the Churchwide Assembly. To fulfill these responsibilities, the executive ~~for ecumenical and inter-religious relations~~ shall:

**15.12.C20C21.** **Responsibility for Human Resources People Solutions and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

Responsibility for ~~human resources~~ people solutions and diversity, equity, and inclusion shall be exercised by the Office of the Presiding Bishop, which shall develop and manage the personnel policies and procedures for the churchwide organization, including policies and procedures regarding equal-employment opportunity; recruitment, interview, and selection of staff; compensation and benefits; employee-assistance programs; just and equitable employee-relations practices; performance evaluation; maintenance of personnel records; and training. In accordance with bylaw 14.21.06., the Church Council shall adopt personnel policies upon recommendation of the Office of the Presiding Bishop. The presiding bishop shall appoint an executive for human resources who shall be responsible for people solutions and this church’s commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, ~~and shall be appointed by the presiding bishop.~~

**15.12.D20D21.** **Responsibility for Theological Discernment**

Responsibility shall be exercised in the Office of the Presiding Bishop for serving the Church’s theological work by promoting, coordinating, and facilitating theological discernment of the Church’s message and

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*its theological foundations in collaboration with all who share in the responsibilities to be teachers of the faith in the Church, including the Conference of Bishops, the seminary faculties, the convocation of teaching theologians, networks such as Lutheran ethicists and women theologians, the editorial staff of the publishing ministry and publications, and all rostered ministers. This responsibility for serving the Church's theological work also shall encompass theological work in and commitment to discern, understand, and respond to racism, classism, and sexism and issues of justice for women in the Church and in society in order to advance full participation, equal opportunity, and justice for all. To fulfill these responsibilities, the presiding bishop shall appoint an executive ~~for theological discernment~~, who will assist the presiding bishop and coordinate the service of staff groups that provide theological resources and assistance in programmatic implementation.*

**15.12.E20E21. Responsibility for Development**

*Responsibility for planning, coordination, and management of the execution of this church's fundraising efforts and donor communications shall be exercised by the Office of the Presiding Bishop. To fulfill these responsibilities, the presiding bishop shall appoint an executive ~~for development~~, who, in collaboration with the Endowment Fund of the ELCA, shall:*

**15.14.B20B21. Responsibility for Information Technology**

*The treasurer shall provide for information technology in support of the work of the churchwide organization. The treasurer shall appoint an executive ~~for information technology~~, who shall be responsible for the development and review of guidelines and policies for computer standards, security of electronic data, application development, data storage and data retrieval, and shall enable use of electronic technologies for churchwide staff to assist in support of congregations, synods, and related institutions and agencies of this church.*

**Chapter 16: Units of the Churchwide Organization**

**16.11.A21.** *As it pertains to the churchwide organization, a unit may also be described as a home area.*

**16.12.A20A21. Responsibilities of the Christian Community and Leadership Unit**

*The Christian Community and Leadership unit shall foster and facilitate the work of synods, congregations, the churchwide organization, and others in reaching and welcoming more people into the Christian faith. It energizes and engages the core membership and works with the whole of this church to recruit, develop, and deploy lay and rostered leadership to fulfill the Church's purpose. It works across all expressions of this church to accomplish these goals domestically and internationally.*

*This unit shall:*

- a. *create and revitalize congregations and ministries;*
- b. *enhance evangelism and discipleship;*
- c. *~~support multicultural ministries and the commitment of this church to become more ethnically diverse~~ oversee the development of multicultural ministries and collaborate on the commitment of this church to diversity and inclusivity;*
- d. *support efforts to reach new people, young people, and to become more economically diverse;*
- e. *foster relationships with educational institutions, including participation in and support of the Network of Colleges and Universities of this church;*
- f. *recruit, train, and help to deploy lay and rostered leaders;*
- g. *support the candidacy and assignment processes;*
- h. *coordinate the work of Young Adults in Global Mission and the ELCA Youth Gathering;*
- i. *oversee the chaplaincies of this church in domestic specialized ministry settings as well as federal chaplaincies both the U.S. armed forces at home and abroad, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and other federal agencies and institutions; and*

**16.12.D210. Responsibilities of the Service and Justice Unit**

*The Service and Justice unit shall foster and facilitate this church's engagement in service and promote efforts to call and act for justice. It shall engage in mission, service, and justice in accompaniment with churches and organizations in other countries; serve as the means through which churches in other countries engage in mission to this church and society; engage with communities, coalitions and*

networks, congregations, and synods in service and justice work within the territorial jurisdiction of this church; and provide guidance to members on matters of social justice.

The Service and Justice unit shall support the freedom of Christians to love and serve their neighbor through the following areas:

a. Peoples and Communities: maintain global church-to-church relationships and mutual endeavors for evangelical witness and sharing of mission personnel; ~~support ethnic specific and multicultural ministries and the commitment of this church to diversity and inclusivity~~ oversee the work of the ethnic specific ministries and collaborate on multicultural ministries and the commitment of this church to diversity and inclusivity;

...

c. Witness in Society: empower members to engage with systems and processes to promote the well-being of the human community and creation in the public square, local and federal government, and the international community; equip and encourage members to seek dignity and peace; advance justice in response to human suffering, marginalization, and exclusion; and promote equality, justice, and respect for the value of every person to reduce the systemic injustices impacting communities and societies; to advance corporate social responsibility through environmental, social, and justice principles to create a just and sustainable society.

## Chapter 17

### 17.20.~~A19~~A21. **Responsibilities of the Board of Pensions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

The Board of Pensions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America—also known as Portico Benefit Services—shall:

a. manage and operate the Pension and Other Benefits Program for this church and plans for other ~~non-profit organizations; operated exclusively for religious purposes having a formal affiliation with a church or a religious organization,~~ and ~~shall~~ invest the assets according to fiduciary standards set forth in the plans and trusts.

b. provide retirement, health, and other benefits for the benefit of eligible members working within the structure of this church and other ~~non-profit organizations; operated exclusively for religious purposes having a formal affiliation with a church or a religious organization.~~

...

j. not be responsible, nor assume any liability for, health-insurance programs provided by ~~colleges and universities of~~ this church through voluntary employees' beneficiary associations or similar arrangements.

### 17.30.~~A19~~A21. **Operation of the Mission Investment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

The Mission Investment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall:

a. have primary responsibility for the development, administration, promotion, and sale of ~~Mission Investments~~ investment obligations;

b. develop and administer a loan program, including management responsibilities for the underwriting, legal, accounting, reporting, servicing, marketing, and other related functions;

c. provide expertise for management of real property and execute all necessary documents for the acquisition and disposition of such property;

d. relate to the Christian Community and Leadership ~~Domestic Mission~~ unit, which ~~shall may~~ request real estate acquisition for new and existing ministries within the limits of the capital funds available and within established criteria;

e. confer with the ~~Domestic Mission~~ Christian Community and Leadership unit on any loans to developing ministries;

~~f. offer building and architectural consultative services to new congregations entering first unit construction, to congregations relocating with synod approval, to other congregations, and to other organizations and institutions that are affiliated with this church;~~

~~g. offer building and property consultative services to congregations of this church; and~~

~~h. offer financial management and consulting services to synods including, for example, banking and treasury management services, accounting services, payroll management services, audit coordination, financial reporting services, and budgeting services.~~



**Chapter 18: Regions**

**18.01.A08A21.** *The regions shall be numbered 1 through 9 and ~~comprised~~ composed of the following synods (as designated in bylaw 10.01.01.):...*

**Chapter 19: Nominations and Election Process**

**19.01.A18A21.** *In a year when the vice president or secretary shall be elected, those who will serve as voting members of the upcoming Churchwide Assembly ~~the voting members elected to serve at the Churchwide Assembly~~ shall be invited to identify the names of up to three persons who might be considered for election as vice president or secretary. Names shall be submitted to the Office of the Secretary at least four months prior to the assembly. The Office of the Secretary shall contact those persons identified and request biographical information. At least 60 days prior to the Churchwide Assembly, the biographical information received from those persons open to consideration shall be distributed to the voting members.*

**19.01.D19D21. Election Procedures Utilizing the Ecclesiastical Ballot**

a. *For each election by ecclesiastical or nominating ballot, the exact number of appropriate ballot sets equal to the number of voting members from each synod will be given to the bishop of ~~that~~ each synod. Unless an electronic or computerized voting system is being utilized, the bishops ~~of the synod~~, or ~~his or her~~ their designees, will be responsible for distributing the ballot sets to each of the voting members from ~~their~~ their synods. The Elections Committee will be responsible for distributing the ballot sets to each officer and member of the Church Council serving as an ex officio voting member of the assembly.*

...

i. *When the results of the first ballot are presented, the chair of the assembly will announce when and how persons nominated may withdraw their names prior to the casting of the second ballot.*

**19.02.A11A21.** *On behalf of the Nominating Committee, the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America—in the year preceding each regular meeting of the Churchwide Assembly—shall solicit from eligible synods on a rotating basis the names of two persons in specified categories, in keeping with the representation principles of this church, for possible election to the Church Council. Upon their selection as nominees by the assemblies of the respective synods, the names of the two persons shall be presented to the Nominating Committee for submission to the Churchwide Assembly. In the event that any nominee withdraws or is disqualified from possible service, the Nominating Committee shall ~~submit request that~~ the nominee's synod provide a replacement name ~~from the same synod as the original nominee~~. In the event that the vacancy occurs subsequent to the preparation of the report of the Nominating Committee to the Churchwide Assembly, a floor nomination shall be provided from the same synod as the original nominee. Except as provided herein, no floor nominations for positions on the Church Council shall be permitted at the Churchwide Assembly.*

**19.03.A91A21.** *With respect to committees that consider disciplinary cases or appeals:*

a. *Any member of the churchwide Committee on Discipline who has been appointed to serve on a discipline hearing committee for a particular pending case shall continue to serve to discharge that appointment notwithstanding that ~~his or her~~ a successor has been subsequently elected at a Churchwide Assembly.*

b. *Any member of the synod Committee on Discipline who is serving at the time that the Executive Committee of the Church Council appoints members from the churchwide Committee on Discipline to a discipline hearing committee shall continue as a member of that discipline hearing committee for the particular pending case, notwithstanding that ~~his or her~~ a successor has been subsequently elected at a Synod Assembly.*

c. *Any member of the Committee on Appeals who is serving at the time that an appeal is made shall continue to serve to decide that appeal, notwithstanding that ~~his or her~~ a successor has been subsequently elected at a Churchwide Assembly.*

- 19.11.A16A21. Churchwide Assembly Nominations Desk and Nominations Form**  
a. *Nominations from the floor at the Churchwide Assembly shall be made at the Nominations Desk, which shall be maintained under the supervision of the secretary of this church.*
- 19.11.B19B21. Churchwide Assembly Floor Nominations**  
a. *Floor nominations for the Church Council, the Nominating Committee, or other committee or board to be elected by the Churchwide Assembly require, in addition to the nominator, the ~~written~~ documented support of at least 20 other voting members.*
- 19.11.C05C21. Restrictions on Churchwide Assembly Floor Nominations for Boards and Committees**  
a. *Nominations from the floor for positions on ~~churchwide~~ boards or committees shall comply with criteria and restrictions established by the Nominating Committee and set forth in materials provided to each voting member of the assembly.*
- 19.11.D14D21. Restrictions on Churchwide Assembly Floor Nominations for Church Council**  
*Nominations for positions on the Church Council shall comply with criteria and restrictions established by the Church Council and Nominating Committee and set forth in materials provided to each voting member of the assembly.*
- 19.11.E98E21. Restrictions on Churchwide Assembly Floor Nominations for Nominating Committee**  
a. *Nominations from the floor for positions on the Nominating Committee shall comply with criteria and restrictions established by the Church Council and set forth in materials provided to each voting member of the assembly.*
- 19.11.F19F21. Election Procedures Utilizing the Common Ballot**  
a. *The common ballot is used in those elections when the ecclesiastical or nominating ballot is not used.*  
b. *Unless an electronic or computerized voting system is being utilized, the exact number of ballot forms equal to the number of voting members from each synod will be given to the bishop of ~~that~~ each synod. When instructed by the chair, the bishops ~~of the synod~~, or ~~his or her~~ their designees, will be responsible for distributing the ballot forms to each of the voting members from ~~their~~ its synods. The vice president of this church will be responsible for distributing the ballot forms to each member of the Church Council serving as an ex officio voting member of the assembly. The Elections Committee will be responsible for distributing the ballot forms to each officer of this church.*
- 19.11.G2198. Breaking Ties in Elections**  
b. *On the first common ballot, the blank ballots of the treasurer and vice president shall be held by the chair of the Elections Committee to be presented to the treasurer for ~~her or his~~ vote only in those elections where a tie would otherwise exist, and to be presented to the vice president for ~~his or her~~ vote only in those elections to break a tie remaining after the ballot of the treasurer has been counted.*

**Chapter 20: Consultation, Discipline, Appeals, and Adjudication**

- 20.61.A20A21. p.** *No member of the Committee on Appeals shall serve on any case if such a member is related (as defined in 19.06.07.) to the accused, the accuser(s), any witness who testified before the discipline hearing committee, or a member of the consultation or discipline hearing committee that considered the case, or where such member is a member or former member of a congregation that was an accuser or an accused. ~~A member~~ Members of the Committee on Appeals also may voluntarily disqualify themselves ~~himself or herself~~.*

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**VOTED:**

**CC21.11.25**

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

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**A. Additional Definition to *Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline***

In response to the Church Council action to “encourage the Committee on Appeals to add a definition of ‘promiscuity’ to the definitions section within *Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline*” [CC21.04.10], the Committee on Appeals proposed a definition.

VOTED: *EN BLOC*  
CC21.11.25a **To approve the additional definition of ‘promiscuity’ to the definitions section within *Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline*.**

**B. Audit Committee Membership**

VOTED: *EN BLOC*  
CC21.11.25b **To approve the reappointment of Mr. Kevin Anderson, Ms. Tracey Beasley, Mr. Gary Hecht, Mr. Keoni Newman, and Ms. Ingrid Stafford as members to the ELCA Audit Committee for a two-year, renewable term beginning November 2021; and  
To approve the appointment of Ms. Kerry Fehrman as a member to the ELCA Audit Committee for a two-year, renewable term beginning November 2021.**

**C. Audit Committee Report**

VOTED: *EN BLOC*  
CC21.11.25c **To receive the preliminary report of the ELCA Audit Committee for the churchwide organization’s fiscal year ended January 31, 2021; and  
To authorize the Executive Committee to approve the final report.**

**D. Synod Mission Support Experiment**

The Synod Mission Support Experiment was approved by the ELCA Church Council at its April 2015 meeting for three years (FY2016–FY2018) and extended at its November 2018 meeting for two years (FY2019–FY2020).

VOTED: *EN BLOC*  
CC21.11.25d **To express gratitude for all those who participated in the planning, implementation and assessment of the Synod Mission Support Experiment;  
To recommend that changes to congregational vitality grants and the funding/employment model for the Director for Evangelical Mission position (DEM) include a review of possible implications to future models of Mission Support sharing between synods and the churchwide expression (to be completed June 30, 2022), and these implications be shared with the Budget and Finance Committee;  
To recommend that the five synods which participated in the Synod Mission Support Experiment (4A-Nebraska, 4F-Texas Louisiana Gulf Coast, 7B-New England, 8D-Lower Susquehanna, 8G-Metropolitan Washington, D.C.) continue their models of Mission Support sharing with the churchwide expression until decisions have been made with respect to the Director for Evangelical Mission position and congregational vitality grants. At that time, it is recommended each synod meet with staff from the churchwide Christian Community and Leadership home area and the Mission Support team to discuss how their current models of funding and decision-making with respect to the DEM position and congregational vitality grants compares with the revisions that may be made to these ministry areas. It is recommended that these discussions include ways to move toward closer alignment if areas of difference remain between a synod’s model and the revised Christian Community and Leadership model;  
To remind all synods that any proposed changes in their models of Mission Support sharing between synods and the churchwide expression are to be undertaken through mutual conversation between representatives of the synod and of the churchwide organization. Section 10.71 of the ELCA Constitution states, “Each synod shall remit to the churchwide organization a percentage of amount of all donor-unrestricted receipts contributed to it by the congregations of the synod. The actual percentage or amount shall be determined through individual consultations with each synod;” and**

**To recommend that the Resource Development Committee (RDC) continue to review strategies for increasing Mission Support shared with the churchwide organization, as outlined in the RDC charter.**

**E. Revisions to Governance Policy Manual**

In accordance with the ELCA Church Council Governance Policy Manual, “At least triennially, provisions of this Church Council Governance Policy Manual shall be reviewed and amended, as necessary. Proposed amendments shall be reviewed by the Executive Committee in consultation with the Office of the Presiding Bishop and Office of the Secretary in advance of presentation for action to the Church Council. Any Church Council member, liaison bishop, or churchwide staff member may suggest amendments by submitting proposals to the Executive Committee. Amendments will be adopted by majority vote of the Church Council and become effective immediately upon adoption.”

**VOTED:** *EN BLOC*  
**CC21.11.25e**      **To approve the revisions to the ELCA Church Council Governance Policy Manual; and  
To authorize the Office of the Secretary to make any necessary editorial corrections for accuracy.**

**F. Appointments to Memorials Committee**

Churchwide bylaw 12.51.21. provides for the appointment of a Memorials Committee to review materials from synod assemblies and make recommendations for Churchwide Assembly action. The 15-member committee includes members of the Church Council and voting members of the assembly, including synod bishops. The Church Council appoints the committee at its November meeting prior to the Churchwide Assembly to allow for adequate notice to members for their participation in the meeting of the Memorials Committee subsequent to the completion of the 2022 synod assemblies.

**VOTED:** *EN BLOC*  
**CC21.11.25f**      **To appoint the members of the Memorials Committee for the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly:**

1. **Ms. Cheryl Chatman [3G; POC] (co-chair)**
2. **Mr. Joseph Nolte [5D] (co-chair)**
3. **The Rev. Joanne Engquist [1B]**
4. **Bp. Laurie Larson Caesar [1E]**
5. **Bp. Yehiel Curry [5A; POC]**
6. **Mr. Randall Foster [2B; POC]**
7. **Mr. Glenn Austad [2D]**
8. **Mr. Mark Hollabaugh [3E]**
9. **Mx. Joan Saltzman [4B; YA]**
10. **Ms. Melissa Peper-Firestone [6D]**
11. **The Rev. Carey Hovland [6F]**
12. **Mr. Arundel Clarke [7A; POC]**
13. **Mr. Christopher Vergara [7C; POC]**
14. **Deacon Alicia Anderson [8C]**
15. **The Rev. Viktoria Parvin [9A]; and**

**To authorize the Executive Committee of the Church Council to appoint additional members to the Memorials Committee for the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly as needed.**

**G. Appointments to Reference and Counsel Committee**

Churchwide bylaw 12.51.11. provides for the appointment of a Reference and Counsel Committee to review items—proposed resolutions—that are not germane to items contained in the stated agenda of the assembly and also to review all changes or additions to the constitution and bylaws submitted by voting members at the assembly. The 15-member committee includes Church Council members, assembly voting members of the assembly, including synod bishops.

**VOTED:** *EN BLOC*  
**CC21.11.25g**      **To appoint the members of the Reference and Counsel Committee for the 2022 ELCA  
Churchwide Assembly:**

1. **Ms. Tracey Beasley [7F; POC] (co-chair)**
2. **Mr. David Lenz [6E] (co-chair)**

3. Mr. Kevin Anderson [8G]
4. Bp. Regina Hassanally [3I]
5. Bp. Paul Erickson [5J]
6. Ms. Marjorie Fiedler [1F]
7. Ms. Dorothy Arata [2A]
8. Mr. Jason Langworthy [3H]
9. Deacon Timothy Siburg [4A]
10. Ms. Brenda Pinero [4E; POC]
11. The Rev. Michael Ashman [5F]
12. Ms. Hannah Limbong [6C; POC; YA]
13. The Rev. John Longworth [7B]
14. The Rev. Stephen Herr [8D]
15. Ms. Esther Smith [9F; POC]; and

To authorize the Executive Committee of the Church Council to appoint additional members to the Reference and Counsel Committee for the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly as needed.

#### H. 2022 Churchwide Assembly Process for Elections

VOTED:

*EN BLOC*

CC21.11.25h

To delegate to the Executive Committee of the Church Council responsibility for review and evaluation of and recommendations for Part 16 of the draft Rules of Organization and Procedure for the 2022 Churchwide Assembly, particularly the assembly discernment process; and

To bring to the Church Council recommendations for Part 16 of the Rules of Organization and Procedure for the 2022 Churchwide Assembly no later than the April 2022 meeting.

#### I. Ratification of Amendments to the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*

The 2019 Churchwide Assembly amended constitutional provision 4.02.c. [CA19.05.27.] and related provisions [CA19.05.28]. The adopted amendments must go to the 2022 Churchwide Assembly for ratification.

VOTED:

*EN BLOC*

CC21.11.25i

To recommend the following for ratification by the 2022 Churchwide Assembly of the *Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*:

To ratify, *en bloc*, the actions of the 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly regarding amendments to constitutional provision 4.02.c. and related provisions in the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.

- 4.02. To participate in God's mission, this congregation as a part of the Church shall:
- c. Serve in response to God's love to meet human needs, caring for the sick and the aged, advocating dignity ~~and~~ justice, ~~and equity~~ for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations, and standing in solidarity with the poor and ~~powerless-oppressed~~ and committing itself to their needs.
- 7.31.02. **Responsibilities.** Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,
- a. Every minister of Word and Sacrament shall:
    - 8) speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, ~~calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world~~ advocating dignity, justice and equity for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, and embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations.
- 7.61.02. **Responsibilities.** Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, every minister of Word and Service shall:
- c. speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, ~~calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world, witnessing to the realm of God in the community, the nation, and abroad~~ advocating dignity, justice, and equity for all people, working for peace and

reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, and embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations;

- †S6.02. To participate in God’s mission, this synod as a part of the Church shall:
- c. Serve in response to God’s love to meet human needs, caring for the sick and the aged, advocating dignity, ~~and~~ justice, and equity for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations, and standing in solidarity with the poor and ~~oppressed~~ powerless and committing itself to their needs.
- †S14.12. Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,
- a. Every minister of Word and Sacrament shall:
- 8) speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, ~~calling for justice and proclaiming God’s love for the world~~ advocating dignity, justice, and equity for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, and embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations.
- †S14.32. Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, every minister of Word and Service shall:
- c. Speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, ~~calling for justice and proclaiming God’s love for the world, witnessing to the realm of God in the community, the nation, and abroad~~ advocating dignity, justice, and equity for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, and embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations;
- \*C4.02. To participate in God’s mission, this congregation as a part of the Church shall:
- d. Serve in response to God’s love to meet human needs, caring for the sick and the aged, advocating dignity ~~and~~ justice, and equity for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations, and standing in solidarity with the poor and ~~powerless~~ oppressed and committing itself to their needs.
- \*C9.03. Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,
- a. Every minister of Word and Sacrament shall:
- 8) speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, ~~calling for justice and proclaiming God’s love for the world~~ advocating dignity, justice, and equity for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, and embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations.
- \*C9.23. Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, every minister of Word and Service shall:
- c. Speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, ~~calling for justice and proclaiming God’s love for the world, witnessing to the realm of God in the community, the nation, and abroad~~ advocating dignity, justice, and equity for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, and embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations;

**J. Proposed Amendments to the Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

The Churchwide Assembly adopts amendments to the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. The process for amending the governing documents is specified in Chapter 22 of the ELCA Constitution.

VOTED:

CC21.11.25j

*EN BLOC*

*To recommend the following for adoption by the 2022 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:*

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To adopt, *en bloc*, with the exception of such amendments as may be considered separately, the amendments to the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*; and

To authorize the Office of the Secretary to make appropriate changes in the *Constitution for Synods* and the *Model Constitution for Congregations* congruent with the ELCA Constitution as amended.

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*Chapter 5: Principles of Organization*

5.01. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be one church. This church recognizes that all power and authority in the Church belongs to the Lord Jesus Christ, its head. Therefore, all actions of this church by congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization shall be carried out under his rule and authority in accordance with the following principles:

- e. Except as otherwise provided in this constitution and bylaws, the appropriate office or unit of the churchwide organization, through the Church Council, shall establish processes that will ensure that at least 60 percent of the members of its assemblies, councils, committees, boards, and other organizational units shall be laypersons; that, as nearly as possible, at least 45 percent of the lay members of these assemblies, councils, committees, boards, or other organizational units shall be women and, as nearly as possible, at least 45 percent shall be men, and that, ~~where possible~~, the representation of rostered ministers ~~of Word and Sacrament~~ shall include both men and women. At least 10 percent of the members of these assemblies, councils, committees, boards, or other organizational units shall be persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English. Processes shall be developed that will assure that in selecting staff there will be a balance of women and men, persons of color and persons whose primary language is other than English, laypersons, and persons on the rosters of this church. This balance is to be evident in the selection of staff consistent with the inclusive policy of this church.
- f. Except as otherwise provided in this constitution and bylaws, synods, through synod councils, shall establish processes that will ensure that at least 60 percent of the members of their assemblies, councils, committees, boards, and other organizational units shall be laypersons; that, as nearly as possible, at least 45 percent of the lay members of their assemblies, councils, committees, boards, or other organizational units shall be women and, as nearly as possible, at least 45 percent shall be men, and that, ~~where possible~~, the representation of rostered ministers ~~of Word and Sacrament~~ shall include both women and men. Each synod shall establish processes that will enable it to reach a minimum goal that 10 percent of the membership of its assemblies, councils, committees, boards, or other organizational units be persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English.

*Chapter 7: Ministry*

7.31.03. **Preparation and Approval.** Except as provided in 7.31.04., a candidate for the ministry of Word and Sacrament shall have:

- b. been granted entrance to candidacy by and under the guidance and supervision of the appropriate committee ~~for at least a year~~ before being approved for call;
- c. satisfactorily completed the requirements for the Master of Divinity degree from an accredited theological school in North America or completed a program of study for those accepted into the TEEM program (Theological Education for Emerging Ministries), including practical preparation, as defined by the appropriate churchwide unit, such as internship and supervised clinical work;
- d. completed ~~at least one year of residency~~ the expectations and outcomes established for Lutheran learning and formation in a seminary of this church or of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, except when waived by the appropriate committee in consultation with the faculty of a seminary of this church or of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada;
- ...
- g. been recommended to a congregation ~~or other entity~~ by the bishop of the synod to which the candidate has been assigned for first call ~~in accordance with the procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council~~; and

- 7.41.07. **Retirement.** Ministers of Word and Sacrament may retire upon ~~attainment~~attaining the earlier of age 60; or ~~after~~ 30 years on the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament of this church or one of its predecessor bodies, and continue to be listed on the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament of this church, upon endorsement by the synod bishop, by action of the Synod Council in the synod in which the minister of Word and Sacrament is listed on the roster.
- 7.46. **The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between a minister of Word and Sacrament and a congregation shall be as follows:**
- a. The call of a congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment which shall be terminated only by the pastor's death or, following consultation with the synod bishop, for any of the following reasons:
    - 4) inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in view of ~~physical~~-disability or ~~mental~~ incapacity of the pastor;
  - b. When allegations of ~~physical~~-disability or ~~mental~~-incapacity of the pastor under paragraph a.4) above, or ineffective conduct of the pastoral office under paragraph a.3) above, have come to the attention of the bishop of this synod,
    - 1) the bishop, in his or her who has sole discretion, may investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson, or
  - c. In case of alleged ~~physical~~-disability or ~~mental~~-incapacity under paragraph a.4) above, the bishop's committee shall obtain and document competent medical opinion concerning the pastor's condition. When a disability or incapacity is evident to the committee, the bishop of this synod may declare the pastorate vacant. When the pastorate is declared vacant, the Synod Council shall list the pastor on the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament with disability status. Upon ~~removal~~ resumption of the ability to conduct the office effectively~~disability and restoration of the pastor to health~~, the bishop shall take steps to enable the pastor to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another appropriate call.
- 7.61.03. **Preparation and Approval.** Except as provided in 7.61.04., a candidate who is to be called and received onto the roster as a minister of Word and Service shall have:
- b. been granted entrance to candidacy by and under the guidance and supervision of the appropriate committee ~~for at least a year~~ before being approved for call;
  - ...
  - e. been recommended to a congregation or other entity by the bishop of the synod ~~to in~~ which the candidate ~~has been assigned is being considered~~ for first call in accordance with the procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council; and
- 7.71.04. **Retirement.** Ministers of Word and Service may retire upon ~~attainment~~attaining the earlier of age 60; or ~~after~~ 30 years on a roster of this church or one of its predecessor bodies, and continue to be listed on the roster of Ministers of Word and Service of this church, upon endorsement by the synod bishop, by action of the Synod Council in the synod in which the minister of Word and Service is listed on the roster.
- 7.75. **The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between a minister of Word and Service and a congregation shall be as follows:**
- a. The call of a congregation, when accepted by a minister of Word and Service, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment which shall be terminated only by the deacon's death or following consultation with the synod bishop for any of the following reasons:
    - 4) inability to conduct the office effectively in view of ~~physical~~-disability or ~~mental~~-incapacity of the minister of Word and Service;
  - b. When allegations of ~~physical~~-disability or ~~mental~~-incapacity of the deacon under paragraph a.4) above, or ineffective conduct of the office under paragraph a.3) above, have come to the attention of the bishop of this synod,
    - 1) the bishop, in his or her who has sole discretion, may investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one non-rostered person, or



- c. In case of alleged ~~physical~~ disability or ~~mental~~ incapacity under paragraph a.4) above, the bishop's committee shall obtain and document competent medical opinion concerning the minister of Word and Service's condition. When a disability or incapacity is evident to the committee, the bishop of this synod may declare the position vacant. When the position is declared vacant, the Synod Council shall list the deacon on the roster of Ministers of Word and Service with disability status. Upon ~~removal~~ resumption of the ability to conduct the office effectively ~~disability and restoration of the minister of Word and Service to health~~, the bishop shall take steps to enable the minister of Word and Service to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another appropriate call.

*Chapter 8: Relationships*

- 8.14. The churchwide organization shall implement the extended mission of the Church, developing churchwide policies in consultation with the synods and congregations, entering into relationship with institutions of higher education and with governmental, ecumenical, and societal agencies in accordance with accepted resolutions and/or in response to specific agreed-upon areas of responsibility.
- 8.21.04. Each unincorporated seminary shall have an advisory council or ~~governing~~ board distinct from the board of directors of the college or university of which the seminary is a school, department, or unit. The seminary advisory council or ~~governing~~ board shall relate to the Church Council through the appropriate churchwide unit. The members of the unincorporated seminary's advisory council or ~~governing~~ board shall be elected as specified in the governing documents of the related college or university, and shall consist of 12 to 30 members, as follows:
- at least one-fifth nominated by the Church Council upon recommendation of the appropriate churchwide unit after consultation with the seminary's advisory council or ~~governing~~ board;
  - two members nominated by the bishops of the supporting synods from among their number;
  - one member, who shall serve as chair of the advisory council or ~~governing~~ board and as a voting member of the board of directors of the college or university, nominated by the Church Council, upon recommendation of the appropriate churchwide unit after consultation with the seminary's advisory council or ~~governing~~ board; and
  - the remaining members to be from the supporting synods, nominated by the seminary's advisory council or ~~governing~~ board in consultation with the supporting synods.
- 8.21.06. Each unincorporated seminary shall have a chief administrative officer, such as an academic dean, seminary provost, or vice president, who is on the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament of this church. In the appointment or election of the chief administrative officer of the seminary, the college or university shall consult with the seminary advisory council or ~~governing~~ board, the presiding bishop of this church, and the appropriate churchwide unit. The college or university board shall exercise all other normal governance functions, including the appointment of tenured faculty, in consultation with the seminary's advisory council or ~~governing~~ board, and shall have authority to recruit students throughout this church.
- 8.22. **Colleges and Universities.** This church shall ~~express its responsibility for higher education through~~ relate to its colleges and universities in their mission to educate students for vocations in the Church and the world. The churchwide organization, through the appropriate churchwide unit, shall support an association of this church's colleges and universities. ~~the appropriate churchwide unit as determined by the Church Council, and its synods. While variation is possible in college or university relationships across this church, this church recognizes the desirability of some degree of uniformity of relationship for colleges and universities within the same region.~~
- ~~8.22.01. The relationship of this church to its colleges and universities shall be guided by policies fostering educational institutions dedicated to the Lutheran tradition wherein such institutions are an essential part of God's mission in the world; faithful to the will of God as institutions providing quality instruction in religion and a lively ministry of worship, outreach, and service; diligent in their preparation of leaders committed to truth, excellence, and ethical values; and pledged to the well-being of students in the development of mind, body, and spirit.~~

- 8.22.012.** ~~Colleges Each college and universities university of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America this church shall establish a may relate to this church in various ways, including~~ relationship with: ~~the Churchwide Assembly, the Church Council,~~
- ~~a. a synod assembly or synods; or~~
  - ~~b. a corporation whose voting members are, or have been elected or appointed by, a synod or synods assemblies, other organizational units (conferences, clusters, etc.), or congregations; or. Subject to approval by the appropriate synods, a college or university may be owned by a not for profit~~
  - ~~c. a corporation~~
    - (1) that has voting members, at least a majority of whom shall consist of members of the Churchwide Assembly or the Church Council, and
    - (2) that shall hold the meeting of such a corporation in conjunction with the Churchwide Assembly or the Church Council for the purpose of approving amendments to the articles of incorporation, and approving amendments to other governing documents which affect the relationship between the college or university and this church. A majority of the members of the ~~governing~~ board of a corporation that meets in conjunction with the Churchwide Assembly or Church Council shall be members of this church or of a church body with which this church is in a relationship of full communion, but under no circumstances shall fewer than forty (40) percent of the members of such board be members of this church.
- 8.22.0302.** ~~Primary Responsibility for the size and composition of a college or university's board of directors, including recruiting and electing board members, for its board belongs to each college or university of this church. This responsibility is best shall be exercised congruent with the form of relationship, as provided in 8.22.01, established by the college or university with this church. when appropriate structures of this church are substantially involved. The college or university and the appropriate synods shall determine how many of the college or university board members are to be elected or ratified by the approved form of relationship as provided in 8.22.02.~~
- 8.22.034.** ~~The Responsibility for initiating changes in constitutional governance and governance documents rests with each college or university of this church. This responsibility shall be exercised congruent with the form of relationship as provided in 8.22.01., established by the college or university with this church. Each college or university will reach agreement with the appropriate structures of this church as identified in 8.22.02. regarding changes in constitutional documents. This church's participation may range from prior consultation to final approval.~~
- 8.22.05.** ~~Representation of members of this church on college or university boards, limitation of terms for board members, whether or not college or university presidents shall be members of this church, and representation of bishops of synods on college or university boards shall be determined by each institution and the appropriate synods.~~
- 8.22.046.** In addition to and consistent with the above provision 8.22 and bylaws 8.22.01 through 8.22.035, colleges and universities of this church where a school, department, or unit of that institution is a seminary of this church must comply with all requirements, policies, procedures, and standards specified in provision 8.21 and bylaws 8.21.01 through 8.21.08.
- 8.63.01.** A minister of Word and Sacrament of this church or a minister of Word and Service, serving temporarily in a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by a Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, may be retained on the roster—upon endorsement by the synod bishop and by action of the Synod Council in the synod in which the minister is listed on the roster—under policies developed at the direction of the presiding bishop and secretary, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.
- b. A letter of call may be issued to a minister of Word and Service of this church, serving temporarily in such a church body, by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or a Synod Council, in accord with the Table of Sources of Calls (7.74.A19A21.b.).
- 8.63.05.** The availability of a minister of Word and Sacrament from a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by a Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical

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Lutheran Church in America shall be understood normally in three categories: availability to serve in an occasional situation; availability to meet an extended need, including service in “yoked parish” settings; and availability for a transfer of roster status.

- b. *Extended service:* A minister of Word and Sacrament of a church body with which a relationship of full communion exists may be invited to serve as the pastor of a congregation of this church for an extended period of time, yet remain a minister of Word and Sacrament of ~~his or her~~ the minister's present church body. Such a person would be expected to preach, teach, and administer the sacraments in a congregation of this church in a manner that is consistent with the Confession of Faith of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and to live in a manner consistent with the ministerial policy of this church. Such service shall be rendered only as authorized by the synod bishop in order to serve the ministry and mission needs of this church in a given situation.

### Chapter 9: Congregations

9.21.02. Under special circumstances, subject to the approval of the synod bishop and the concurrence of the congregation, a minister of Word and Sacrament of a church body with which ~~this church the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America~~ officially has established a relationship of full communion by action of a Churchwide Assembly may serve temporarily under contract as pastor of a congregation of this church.

9.23. In accord with constitutional provision 9.21.d. and its accompanying bylaws 9.21.01. and without invoking the provisions of Chapter 20, a congregation that calls or otherwise maintains as its pastor a person who is neither:

- a. minister of Word and Sacrament who has resigned or been removed from this church's roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament; nor  
b. or that calls as its pastor one who has not been approved for the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament and called pursuant to bylaw 9.21.01; nor  
c. authorized as a minister pursuant to bylaw 7.31.10; nor  
d. a minister of Word and Sacrament of a church body with which this church has established a relationship of full communion and contracted with pursuant to bylaw 9.21.02;

may be removed from the roster of congregations of this church by the Synod Council upon recommendation of the synod bishop.

9.24. A recognized and received congregation that is part of this church shall, when legally possible, be incorporated and may, in its sole discretion:

- a. own property and be responsible for its care; and  
b. call or employ staff.

9.27. Each congregation, except those which are in ~~partner~~relationship with the Slovak Zion Synod, shall establish a relationship with the synod in whose territory it is located.

9.62. A congregation may terminate its relationship with this church by the following procedure:

- a. A resolution indicating the intent to terminate its relationship must be adopted at two legally called and conducted special meetings of the congregation by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present at each meeting. The first such meeting may be held no sooner than 30 days after written notice of the meeting is received by the bishop of the synod, during which time the congregation shall consult with the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any. The times and manner of the consultation shall be determined by the bishop in consultation with the Congregation Council. Unless ~~he or she is a~~ the bishop and/or the bishop's designees are voting members of the congregation, ~~the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any,~~ they shall have voice but not vote at the meeting.

...

- d. If the congregation, after such consultation, is still considering termination of its relationship with this church, such action may be taken at a legally called and conducted special meeting by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present. Notice of the meeting shall be sent to all voting members and to the bishop at least 10 days in advance of the meeting. Unless ~~he or she is a~~ the bishop and/or the bishop's designees are voting members of the congregation, ~~the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any,~~ they shall have voice but not vote at the meeting.

- 9.81.02. A federated congregation may be formed by two or more separate congregations that shall continue to exist as separate but cooperating entities. The separate congregations in a federated congregation shall be related to their respective church bodies that have established a relationship of full communion in accord with 8.61. and 9.81. A federated congregation shall conduct its life and work under a plan of agreement approved by the two or more separate congregations upon recommendation of the synod in which the congregation is located, with the synod acting in concert with the comparable ecclesiastical entity of a church body with which a relationship of full communion exists.

*Chapter 10: Synods*

- 10.01.01. **Names and Boundaries.** The names and boundaries of the synods shall be:

Synod 2.C—Pacifica. The counties of Imperial, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego in the state of CALIFORNIA; the congregations St. Andrew, Salem Evangelical, Shepherd of the Hills, Good Shepherd Evangelical, and Prince of Peace, Los Angeles County, in the state of CALIFORNIA; the state of HAWAII; the territories of the U.S. in the Pacific Ocean.

...

Synod 5.L—La Crosse Area. The counties of Adams, Buffalo (south), Crawford, Jackson (south), Juneau, La Crosse, Monroe, Trempealeau (south), Vernon in the state of WISCONSIN; and parishescongregations in or near the towns of La Crescent, Caledonia, and Spring Grove in the state of MINNESOTA.

...

Synod 6.C—Indiana-Kentucky. The ~~states~~ of INDIANA and the commonwealth of KENTUCKY.

...

Synod 6.F—Southern Ohio. The counties of Adams, Athens, Belmont, Brown, Butler, Champaign, Clark, Clermont, Clinton, Coshocton, Darke, Delaware, Fairfield, Fayette, Franklin, Gallia, Greene, Guernsey, Hamilton, Highland, Hocking, Jackson, Knox, Lawrence, Licking, Logan, Madison, Meigs, Miami, Monroe, Montgomery, Morgan, Muskingum, Noble, Perry, Pickaway, Pike, Preble, Ross, Scioto, Shelby, Union, Vinton, Warren, Washington in the state of OHIO; the congregation St. Mark, Auglaize County, in the state of OHIO, and the congregation Bethel, Greenup County, in the state-commonwealth of KENTUCKY.

...

Synod 7.B—New England. The states of CONNECTICUT; MAINE; ~~MASSACHUSETTS;~~ NEW HAMPSHIRE; RHODE ISLAND; and VERMONT; the commonwealth of MASSACHUSETTS; and the counties of Clinton, Essex, and Franklin in the state of NEW YORK.

...

Synod 7.E—Northeastern Pennsylvania. The counties of Berks, Bradford, Carbon, Lackawanna, Lehigh, Luzerne, Monroe, Northampton, Pike, Schuylkill, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Wayne, Wyoming in the state commonwealth of PENNSYLVANIA.

Synod 7.F—Southeastern Pennsylvania. The counties of Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, Philadelphia in the state-commonwealth of PENNSYLVANIA.

...

Synod 8.A—Northwestern Pennsylvania. The counties of Armstrong (part), Cameron, Clarion, Crawford, Elk, Erie, Forest, Indiana (part), Jefferson, McKean, Mercer, Potter, Venango, Warren in the state-commonwealth of PENNSYLVANIA.

Synod 8.B—Southwestern Pennsylvania. The counties of Allegheny, Armstrong (part), Beaver, Butler, Fayette, Greene, Indiana (part), Lawrence, Washington, Westmoreland in the state-commonwealth of PENNSYLVANIA.

Synod 8.C—Allegheny. The counties of Bedford, Blair, Cambria, Centre, Clearfield, Huntingdon, Somerset in the state-commonwealth of PENNSYLVANIA; the congregation Christ, Garrett County, in the state of MARYLAND.

Synod 8.D—Lower Susquehanna. The counties of Adams, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Fulton, Lancaster, Lebanon, Perry, York in the state-commonwealth of PENNSYLVANIA; the congregations St. Michael and Zion in Schuylkill County in the state-commonwealth of PENNSYLVANIA.

Synod 8.E—Upper Susquehanna. The counties of Clinton, Columbia, Juniata, Lycoming, Mifflin, Montour, Northumberland, Snyder, Tioga, Union in the state-commonwealth of PENNSYLVANIA; the

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- congregation Trinity, Luzerne County, and the congregation Zion, Dauphin County, in the ~~state~~ commonwealth of PENNSYLVANIA.
- Synod 8.F—Delaware-Maryland. The state of DELAWARE; the city of Baltimore and the counties of Allegany, Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Caroline, Carroll, Cecil, Dorchester, Frederick, Harford, Howard, Kent, Queen Anne’s, Somerset, Talbot, Washington, Wicomico, Worcester in the state of MARYLAND; the congregation of Holy Trinity, Prince George’s County, in the state of MARYLAND; the congregation of Mt. Joy, Adams County, in the ~~state-commonwealth~~ of PENNSYLVANIA; the counties of Accomack, Northampton in the ~~state-commonwealth~~ of VIRGINIA.
- Synod 8.G—Metropolitan Washington, D.C. The District of Columbia; the counties of Calvert, Charles, Montgomery, Prince George’s, St. Mary’s in the state of MARYLAND; the counties of Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun, Prince William, and the independent cities within the territory of these counties in the ~~state~~ commonwealth of VIRGINIA; BERMUDA.
- Synod 8.H—West Virginia-Western Maryland. The county of Garrett in the state of MARYLAND; the state of WEST VIRGINIA; the congregation Mount Calvary, Allegany County, the congregations Holy Trinity Memorial and Salem, Washington County in the state of MARYLAND; the congregation Fairview, Frederick County, in the ~~state-commonwealth~~ of VIRGINIA.
- Synod 9.A—Virginia. The counties of Albemarle, Alleghany, Amelia, Amherst, Appomattox, Augusta, Bath, Bedford, Bland, Botetourt, Brunswick, Buchanan, Buckingham, Campbell, Caroline, Carroll, Charles City, Charlotte, Chesterfield, Clarke, Craig, Culpeper, Cumberland, Dickenson, Dinwiddie, Essex, Fauquier, Floyd, Fluvanna, Franklin, Frederick, Giles, Gloucester, Goochland, Grayson, Greene, Greensville, Halifax, Hanover, Henrico, Henry, Highland, Isle of Wight, James City, King and Queen, King George, King William, Lancaster, Lee, Louisa, Lunenburg, Madison, Mathews, Mecklenburg, Middlesex, Montgomery, Nelson, New Kent, Northumberland, Nottoway, Orange, Page, Patrick, Pittsylvania, Powhatan, Prince Edward, Prince George, Pulaski, Rappahannock, Richmond, Roanoke, Rockbridge, Rockingham, Russell, Scott, Shenandoah, Smyth, Southampton, Spotsylvania, Stafford, Surry, Sussex, Tazewell, Warren, Washington, Westmoreland, Wise, Wythe, York, and the independent cities within the territory of these counties in the ~~state-commonwealth~~ of VIRGINIA; the congregation of Immanuel in Mercer County in the state of WEST VIRGINIA; the congregation Lakeside in Halifax County in the state of NORTH CAROLINA.
- 10.01.03.** Any congregation in a border area desiring to change its synod relationship may do so upon approval of the synod assemblies of the synods concerned, which shall report any such change to the Churchwide Assembly through the Office of the Secretary.
- 10.31.** **The officers of each synod shall be a bishop, a vice president, a secretary, and a treasurer.**
- a. As the synod’s pastor, the bishop shall:**
- ...
- 6) ~~Exercise supervision over~~ Direct and guide the work of the other officers.**
- 10.32.01.** Whenever a synod bishop determines that a matter of the kind described in 10.32.02. may require ~~his or her~~ the bishop’s determination or action with respect to a related individual as defined in 10.32.03., the synod bishop shall withdraw from personal involvement in such matter and shall so notify the presiding bishop. The presiding bishop shall then appoint another synod bishop from the same region to handle the matter to conclusion. In dealing with such matter, the appointed bishop shall exercise all of the functions and authority to the same extent as if the appointed bishop were the elected bishop of the withdrawing bishop’s synod.
- 10.41.01.** Membership of the Synod Assembly, of which at least 60 percent of the voting membership shall be composed of laypersons, shall be constituted as follows:
- c.** A minimum of one lay member elected by each congregation with fewer than 175 baptized members and a minimum of two lay members elected by each congregation with 175 or more baptized members related to the synod, typically one of whom shall be a man and one of whom shall be a woman, shall be voting members. The Synod Council shall establish a formula to provide additional lay representation from congregations on the basis of the number of baptized members in the congregation. The Synod Council shall seek to ensure that, as nearly as possible, at least 45 percent of the lay members of the assembly shall be women and, as nearly as possible, at least 45 percent shall be men.

**Chapter 11: Churchwide Organization—Definition and Purposes**

**11.41.01.** A single treasury shall be maintained for the receipt and disbursement of unrestricted funds for the churchwide organization and its units receiving budgetary support, except as otherwise provided in the constitution and bylaws or as approved by the Church Council. Restricted and designated funds are maintained separately.

**Chapter 12: Churchwide Assembly**

**12.31.03.** At least 20 days prior to an assembly the secretary shall prepare and distribute to each congregation and to the voting members-elect a ~~pre-assembly report~~bulletin of reports. Distribution to congregations may be accomplished by posting the report on the website of this church. Distribution to voting members-elect may be accomplished electronically to those who have provided email addresses. A written copy of the ~~Pre-Assembly Report~~bulletin of reports will be mailed to any voting member-elect who does not provide an email address and to any congregation or voting member-elect who requests a written copy.

**12.31.05.** Physical-Logistical arrangements for churchwide assemblies shall be made by the secretary or by an assembly manager working under the secretary's supervision. Such committees as may be necessary to facilitate the planning for and operation of the assembly may be established by the secretary in consultation with the presiding bishop.

**12.41.15.** Except as defined in 12.41.16., employees of the churchwide organization or of a separately incorporated ministry, including those serving under call, appointment, employment agreement, or contract, shall not be eligible for election and service as voting members of the Churchwide Assembly.

**12.51.** **The Churchwide Assembly shall have a Reference and Counsel Committee, a Memorials Committee, ~~and~~ a Nominating Committee, ~~and~~ an Elections Committee.** The description of these committees shall be in the bylaws. The Churchwide Assembly may authorize such other committees as it deems necessary.

**12.51.04. Elections Committee.** An Elections Committee, appointed by the Church Council, shall be responsible for the conduct and supervision of elections.

**Chapter 13: Officers**

**13.21.** The presiding bishop shall be a minister of Word and Sacrament of this church who, as its pastor, shall be a teacher of the faith of this church and shall provide leadership for the life and witness of this church. The presiding bishop shall:

c. ~~In collaboration with the leadership of each group, provide for the preparation of the agenda for the Churchwide Assembly, Church Council, Executive Committee, and Conference of Bishops, and preside-Preside~~ at the Churchwide Assembly.

...

e. ~~Supervise-Oversee~~ the work of the other officers.

...

j. ~~Be responsible for~~Relate, through the appropriate churchwide unit, to the chaplaincies of this church in federal agencies, institutions, and armed forces ~~and provide for the pastoral care of those called to these ministries.~~

**13.41.01.** The secretary, as the recording officer of this church, shall keep the minutes, have responsibility for rosters, records, and reporting of parochial-congregation statistics, oversee the archives, attest to all documents that require such signature, be the custodian of the seal, and perform other duties as prescribed by the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.

**13.41.02.** The secretary shall:

c. Provide for the publication of official documents and policies of this church, ~~pre-assembly reports,~~ assembly minutes, a directory of congregations, rostered ~~persons~~ministers, and entities of this church, and other informational and statistical material.

...

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- h. In collaboration with the presiding bishop and the leadership of each group, provide for the preparation of the agenda for the Churchwide Assembly, Church Council, Executive Committee, and Conference of Bishops.
- i. Arrange for and manage churchwide meetings, including the Churchwide Assembly, Church Council, Conference of Bishops, and others.
- ii. Have custody of the seal, maintain a necrology, and attest documents.
- 13.41.04. The secretary shall prepare interpretations, as necessary, of the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. If a board (including a board of a separately incorporated ministry), committee, or synod disagrees with the interpretations, as rendered, the objecting entity may appeal the secretary's interpretation to the Church Council.
- 13.41.05. The secretary may, upon two successive unexcused absences of a member of the Church Council, board, or committee of the churchwide organization, declare that member's position vacant.
- 13.41.0506. The secretary shall provide staff services to the Nominating Committee of the Churchwide Assembly and the nomination process of the Church Council; shall be responsible for declaring an interim vacancy resulting from the resignation, death, removal, disqualification, or disability of a member of a board (including a board of a separately incorporated ministry), committee, or council; and shall arrange for an election by the Church Council to fill the vacancy consistent with Chapter 14.
- 13.51.01. The treasurer shall propose policy for review and action by the Church Council and provide for the implementation, within such policies, of the financial, accounting, insurance, property management, investment, and money management systems, and related services for the units of the churchwide organization.

**Chapter 14: Church Council**

- 14.15. **The Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may remove for cause a voting member of the Church Council, other than an officer or the chair of the Conference of Bishops, at a duly held regular meeting by the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the voting members of the Church Council, provided that at least 30 days written notice shall be given to each voting member of the Church Council that removal of a specific member of the Church Council will be on the agenda for such a meeting. The Church Council may remove an advisory member for cause, provided notice has been given as specified in this provision, by a majority vote of the voting members of the council.**
- 14.22. **The Church Council shall fulfill responsibilities for elections as provided in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* and, in the event that a vacancy on the council or on a board (including the board of a separately incorporated ministry) or committee of the churchwide organization is declared by the secretary, the Church Council shall elect an individual to serve the balance of the term.**
- 14.22.01. Before electing an individual to fill a vacancy on a board (including the board of a separately incorporated ministry) or committee, the Church Council shall consult with the board or committee.
- 14.32.03. Any Church Council members appointed to fill a vacancy of less than three years in a Church Council position not restricted to a specific synod shall not be deemed to have served a term and is are eligible for election to a full term if she or he they otherwise satisfy ies the criteria for election.

**Chapter 15: Churchwide ~~Offices and Administration~~ and Offices**

**15.10. OFFICES AND ADMINISTRATION**

- 15.11.02. **Administrative Team.** The presiding bishop, secretary, treasurer, and executive for administration, along with the executive directors of the churchwide units, shall function as an administrative team, directed by the presiding bishop. The presiding bishop may appoint up to two additional members to the administrative team for terms of one year with the possibility of reappointment. This administrative team shall assist the presiding bishop in providing leadership, planning, oversight, management, supervision, and coordination in the operation of the churchwide organization.

15.21.03. In conformity with this church's commitment to inclusive practice, churchwide units and offices will ensure that staff include a balance of genders, persons of color and persons whose primary language is other than English, laypersons, and rostered ministers.

*Chapter 16: Units of the Churchwide Organization*

~~16.11.01.~~ ~~In conformity with this church's commitment to inclusive practice, churchwide units and offices will assure that staff include a balance of women and men, persons of color and persons whose primary language is other than English, laypersons, and rostered ministers.~~

*Chapter 17: Separately Incorporated Ministries*

~~17.10.~~ ~~SEPARATELY INCORPORATED MINISTRIES~~

~~17.11.01.~~ ~~This church may fulfill some of its purposes, as described in Chapter 4, through separately incorporated ministries.~~

17.11. Each member of the board of directors of a separately incorporated ministry described in this chapter shall be a voting member of a congregation of this church, unless otherwise specified in the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this church.

17.11.01. A board of a separately incorporated ministry described in this chapter may remove a director or trustee from the board, if done in accordance with the governing documents of such corporation after at least 30 days' prior notice to the secretary of this church. The decision to remove a director or trustee shall be reported to the Church Council by the secretary, who shall then declare a vacancy.

17.11.02. The nominations and elections processes for separately incorporated ministries shall be more fully specified in Chapter 19.

17.11.03 When used in Chapters 17 and 19, the term "board" shall include the boards of separately incorporated ministries unless expressly excluded. When used other than in Chapters 17 and 19, the term "board" shall not include the boards of separately incorporated ministries unless expressly included.

17.20.01. The Churchwide Assembly shall:

- a. approve amendments to the documents governing the Pension and Other Benefits Program-ELCA Philosophy of Benefits that have been referred by the Church Council; and
- b. refer any amendments to the Pension and Other Benefits Program-ELCA Philosophy of Benefits initiated by the Churchwide Assembly to the Board of Pensions for recommendation before final action by the Church Council, assuring that no amendment shall abridge the rights of sponsored members in the ELCA Retirement Plan.

17.20.02. The Church Council shall:

- d. approve any changes to the ELCA Philosophy of Benefits.
- ed. refer, as it deems appropriate, proposed amendments to the Pension and Other Benefits Program-ELCA Philosophy of Benefits to the Churchwide Assembly for final action.  
Provisions a., b., and c. of this bylaw do not apply to benefit programs offered by the Board of Pensions to entities other than the ELCA, its separately incorporated ministries, its synods, and its congregations.

17.20.03. The Board of Pensions shall have a board of trustees composed of 14–18 persons elected by the Churchwide Assembly for three-year terms with the possibility of two consecutive re-elections. The terms of members of the board of trustees elected by the Churchwide Assembly shall begin at the commencement of the first board meeting following the assembly.

- a. The composition of the board of trustees shall comply with the representational principles described in constitutional provision 5.01.e. The board of trustees of the Board of Pensions shall include persons with expertise in investments, insurance, and retirement plans, and at least four persons who are members of the plan, at least one of whom shall be a lay plan member or lay recipient of plan benefits and at least one of whom shall be a rostered minister of Word and Sacrament who is a plan member. Up to two trustees may be members of congregations of church bodies with which this church is in a relationship of full communion, provided that both are not from the same church body.



- 17.20.05. Constitutional provision 16.12. and bylaws 11.34.01., 14.21.02., and ~~16.11.01~~ 15.21.03. shall apply to the operation of this organization.
- 17.20.07. The specific responsibilities of the Board of Pensions shall be enumerated in continuing resolutions. ~~Such continuing resolutions may be amended by a majority vote of the Churchwide Assembly or by a two-thirds vote of the Church Council. Should the board disagree with the action of the Church Council, it may appeal the decision to the Churchwide Assembly.~~
- 17.30. **This church shall have a separately incorporated ministry, known as the Mission Investment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, to provide investment opportunities to individuals, congregations, synods, institutions, agencies, and organizations, and administer loans to congregations, synods, the churchwide organization, and other organizations and institutions that are related to this church. ~~The Mission Investment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be incorporated. The president of the corporation shall serve as its chief executive officer.~~**
- 17.30.01. The Mission Investment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall have a board of trustees composed of 9–12 persons elected by the Churchwide Assembly ~~to one for three~~ six-year terms ~~with and shall not the possibility of be eligible for two~~ consecutive re-elections. The terms of members of the board of trustees elected by the Churchwide Assembly shall begin at the commencement of the first board meeting following the assembly. The composition of the board of trustees shall comply with the representational principles described in constitutional provision 5.01.e. Up to two trustees may be members of congregations of church bodies with which this church is in a relationship of full communion, provided that both are not from the same church body.
- a. The presiding bishop shall serve as an advisory member of the board of trustees, with voice but not vote, or shall designate a person to serve as the presiding bishop's representative as provided in constitutional provision 13.21.
- b. The Conference of Bishops shall elect one bishop to serve as an advisory member of the board of trustees with voice but not vote.
- 17.30.03. Constitutional provision 16.12. and bylaws 11.34.01., 14.21.02., 14.21.06., and ~~16.11.01~~ 15.21.03. shall apply to the operation of this organization.
- 17.30.04. The specific responsibilities of the Mission Investment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be enumerated in ~~a~~ continuing resolutions.
- 17.40.01. This publishing house shall have a board of trustees composed of 11–15 persons elected by the Churchwide Assembly for three-year terms with the possibility of two consecutive re-elections. The terms of members of the board of trustees elected by the Churchwide Assembly shall begin at the commencement of the first board meeting following the assembly.
- a. The composition of the board of trustees shall comply with the representational principles described in constitutional provision 5.01.e. Laypersons on the board of trustees shall include persons with expertise in publishing, education, business management, finance and investment. ~~Rostered Ministers of Word and Sacrament~~ shall include persons with expertise in rural, urban, and suburban ~~parish~~ ministry in small and large congregations and in advanced theological study. Up to two trustees may be members of congregations of church bodies with which this church is in a relationship of full communion, provided that both are not from the same church body.
- 17.40.02. Constitutional provision 16.12. and bylaws 11.34.01., 14.21.02., and ~~16.11.01~~ 15.21.03. shall apply to the operation of this organization.
- 17.40.04. The specific responsibilities of this publishing house shall be enumerated in ~~a~~ continuing resolutions. ~~The continuing resolution may be amended by a majority vote of the Churchwide Assembly or a two-thirds vote of the Church Council. Should the board disagree with the action of the Church Council, it may appeal the decision to the Churchwide Assembly.~~

- 17.50.03. Constitutional provision 16.12. and bylaws 11.34.01., 14.21.02., and 14.21.06. shall apply to this organization. Bylaw ~~16.11.01~~ 15.21.03. shall apply to the women's organization with the exception of the balance provisions for women and men and for laypersons and rostered ministers.
- 17.50.04. This organization shall have a board of ~~24~~15 members elected by the assembly of this organization for one three-year term with eligibility for one consecutive re-election. At least 10 percent of the members of this board shall be persons of color or persons whose primary language is other than English. No more than one elected board member shall be from any one synod. Board members are to serve with the perspective of the interdependence of all units of this church. In the event of a vacancy, the board shall elect a member to serve the balance of the term. The Conference of Bishops shall select one bishop to serve as an advisory member of the board of this organization with voice but not vote.
- 17.50.07. The specific responsibilities of the women's organization shall be enumerated in ~~a~~ continuing resolutions. ~~The continuing resolution may be amended by a majority of the Churchwide Assembly or two thirds of the Church Council. Should the board disagree with the action of the Church Council, it may appeal the decision to the Churchwide Assembly.~~
- 17.60. **This church shall have a separately incorporated ministry, the Endowment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, to hold and manage endowment assets, to offer pooled investment services for endowment funds of this church and its related congregations, synods, agencies, and institutions, and to provide planned giving programs that support this church's mission and ministry. The Endowment Fund shall be incorporated. The president of the corporation shall serve as its chief executive officer.**
- 17.60.02. The advisory members of the board of trustees of the Endowment Fund shall have voice but not vote and shall include: the treasurer of this church, a synod bishop elected by the Conference of Bishops of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and such other persons as may be designated by the board of trustees.
- 17.60.05. Constitutional provision 16.12. and bylaws 11.34.01., 14.21.02., 14.21.06., and ~~16.11.01~~ 15.21.03. shall apply to the operation of this organization.
- 17.60.06. The specific responsibilities of the Endowment Fund shall be enumerated in ~~a~~ continuing resolutions.

#### **Chapter 18: Regions**

- 18.01.03. Additional programs or services may be ~~developed in offered by~~ each region upon the request of two or more synods, or upon the request of the churchwide organization and one or more synods, providing that each requesting synod and the churchwide organization supply the necessary financial support for the services requested.
- ~~18.01.04. The funding of the region shall be shared by the participating synods and the churchwide organization according to a cost allocation as decided jointly by the synods and the churchwide organization.~~

#### **Chapter 19: Nominations and Elections Process**

- 19.01.02. The presiding bishop shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly by ecclesiastical ballot. The election shall proceed without oral nominations. If the first ballot for presiding bishop does not result in an election, it shall be considered a nominating ballot. On the first ballot, three-fourths of the votes cast shall be necessary required for election on the first ballot. If no one is elected, the first ballot shall be considered the nominating ballot. Thereafter only such votes as are cast for persons who received votes on the first or nominating ballot shall be valid. On the second ballot, three-fourths of the votes cast on the second ballot shall be necessary required for election. On the third ballot, the voting shall be limited to the seven persons (plus ties) who received receiving the greatest number of votes on the second ballot, and two-thirds of the votes cast shall be necessary required for election. On the fourth ballot, voting shall be limited to the three persons (plus ties) who receive receiving the greatest number of votes on the third previous ballot, and 60 percent of the votes cast shall be necessary for election elect. On subsequent ballots, voting shall be limited to the two persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the previous ballot, and a majority of the votes cast shall be necessary for election elect. These ballots shall be limited to the two persons (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of votes on the previous ballot.

- 19.01.03.** The vice president shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly by ecclesiastical ballot. The election shall proceed without oral nominations. If the first ballot for vice president does not result in an election, it shall be considered a nominating ballot. On the first ballot, three-fourths of the votes cast shall be required for election. Thereafter only such votes as are cast for persons who received votes on the first or nominating ballot shall be valid. On the second ballot, three-fourths of the votes cast shall be required for election. On the third ballot, the voting shall be limited to the seven persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the second ballot, and two-thirds of the votes cast shall be ~~necessary~~-required for election. On the fourth ballot, voting shall be limited to the three persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the previous ballot, and 60 percent of the votes cast shall elect. On subsequent ballots, voting shall be limited to the two persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the previous ballot, and a majority of ~~the~~ votes cast shall elect.
- 19.01.04.** The secretary shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly by ecclesiastical ballot. The election shall proceed without oral nominations. If the first ballot for secretary does not result in an election, it shall be considered a nominating ballot. On the first ballot, three-fourths of the votes cast shall be required for election. Thereafter only such votes as are cast for persons who received votes on the first or nominating ballot shall be valid. On the second ballot, three-fourths of the votes cast shall be required for election. On the third ballot, the voting shall be limited to the seven persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the second ballot, and two-thirds of the votes cast shall be ~~necessary~~-required for election. On the fourth ballot, voting shall be limited to the three persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the previous ballot, and 60 percent of the votes cast shall elect. On subsequent ballots, voting shall be limited to the two persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the previous ballot, and a majority of the votes cast shall elect.
- 19.02.** **The members of the Church Council, except the chair of the Conference of Bishops and the treasurer of this church, shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly.**
- a.** **In preparation for the Churchwide Assembly, the Church Council shall determine how this church's commitment to inclusive representation will affect the next election to the Church Council. For 32 of the council members, the Nominating Committee shall invite each eligible synod to submit suggested nominees and shall then nominate persons who fulfill the categories assigned by the Church Council. With respect to the other nominees, the Church Council shall review its size and composition and take into consideration the experience and expertise of existing members and synod nominees as well as the needs of the council in seeking to fulfill its duties and responsibilities. Based upon this analysis, the Church Council shall instruct the Nominating Committee to provide nominations in specific categories for the remaining positions up to 13.**
- b.** **Excluding the churchwide officers and the chair of the Conference of Bishops, there shall not be more than two members of the Church Council from a synod. The Church Council shall have at least two members from each region.**
- c.** **No synod bishop, with the exception of the chair of the Conference of Bishops, shall serve as a voting member of the Church Council.**
- d.** **The terms of office of persons elected to regular terms on the Church Council by the Churchwide Assembly shall begin at the conclusion of the Churchwide Assembly at which such persons were elected.**
- 19.04.01.** Each voting member of the Church Council, board, or committee of the churchwide organization shall cease to be a member of the Church Council, board, or committee if no longer a voting member of a congregation of this church. ~~Upon two successive absences that have not been excused by the Church Council, board, or committee, a member's position may be declared vacant by the secretary of this church, who shall arrange for election by the Church Council to fill the unexpired term.~~
- 19.04.02.** For purposes of nomination to and service on the Church Council, a committee of the churchwide organization, or a board of a separately incorporated ministry, "synod membership" shall be defined as follows:
- a. A layperson shall be recorded in the synod that includes the congregation in which such a person holds voting membership, with the recognition that such a person shall reside within the territory of the synod or in an area immediately adjacent to the territory in the case of border areas.
- b. A rostered minister ~~of Word and Sacrament~~ shall be recorded in the synod on whose roster such a minister's name is maintained.

- ~~e.—A minister of Word and Service shall be recorded in the synod on whose roster such a minister's name is maintained.~~
- ~~19.04.03. A board of directors or trustees of a separately incorporated ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may remove a director or trustee from the board, if done in accordance with the governing documents of such corporation after at least 30 days' prior notice to the secretary of this church. The decision to remove a director or trustee shall be reported to the Church Council by the secretary.~~
- 19.05. Further procedures for elections and qualifications for office may be set forth in the bylaws and continuing resolutions, provided that such provisions do not conflict with any other provisions in this constitution.**
- ~~19.05.03. Each triennium the Conference of Bishops shall select a bishop to serve as an advisory member of each board of a separately incorporated ministry and advisory committee of the churchwide organization. No synod bishop, with the exception of the chair of the Conference of Bishops, shall serve as a voting member of the Church Council.~~
- ~~19.05.04. The Church Council shall from time to time, by continuing resolution, establish committees and procedures for the conduct of elections at the Churchwide Assembly.~~
- 19.05.0503.** No member of the Church Council, a committee of the Church Council, a board of a separately incorporated ministry, or committee of the churchwide organization shall receive emolument for such service. Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit the payment of salaries and benefits of the officers of this church, nor to prohibit the payment of the costs of insurance on behalf of a person who is or was a member of the Church Council, a committee of the Church Council, or committee against any liability asserted against and incurred by such person in or arising from that capacity, whether or not the churchwide organization would have been required to indemnify such person against the liability under provisions of law or otherwise.
- 19.05.0604.** No employee of the churchwide organization of this church or its regions, nor any individual under contract to any unit of the churchwide organization or a region shall be eligible for nomination to or membership on the Church Council, an advisory committee, a board of a separately incorporated ministry, the Committee on Appeals, the Committee on Discipline, or the churchwide Nominating Committee during the period of employment or service under contract, except the full-time salaried officers as specified in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. (The phrase “under contract” shall not mean short-term contracts for specific, limited purposes, usually not to exceed six months.)
- 19.05.0705.** No person related to a staff member of the churchwide organization shall be eligible for nomination to or membership on the Church Council or a committee that advises the unit in which the person's relative is employed. For this purpose, a related individual is one who, with respect to the churchwide employee, is a spouse, parent, son, daughter, sibling, uncle, aunt, niece, nephew, grandparent, grandchild, including corresponding members of blended families and in-laws (parent, son, daughter, or sibling of a spouse, spouse of a sibling, or the parent or sibling of the spouse of a sibling).
- 19.11. ~~There shall be a Nominating Committee.~~ Further procedures relating to nominations may be set forth in the bylaws and continuing resolutions.**
- 19.11.01.** The Nominating Committee shall consist of 12–18 members elected by the Churchwide Assembly. Each member shall be elected to one six-year term and shall serve until a successor is elected. Members of the Nominating Committee shall not be eligible for consecutive re-election. The Church Council shall place in nomination the names of two persons for each position. The committee shall consist of at least one member but no more than three members from any region. Nominations from the floor shall also be permitted, but each floor nomination shall be presented ~~as an alternative to a~~ in the specific category named by the Church Council and shall therefore meet the same criteria as the persons against whom the nominee is nominated. In the materials provided in advance to each member of the assembly, the Church Council shall set forth the specific criteria applicable to each category that must be met by persons nominated from the floor.

- 19.11.02. Except as otherwise provided, the Nominating Committee shall nominate two persons for each council ~~board~~, or committee position, according to the process described in continuing resolutions, for which an election will be held by the Churchwide Assembly. ~~In the case of re-election, if authorized, or for nominees from church bodies with which this church is in a relationship of full communion, only one person need be nominated.~~ Nominations from the floor, where permitted in the nomination process, shall be presented ~~as an alternative to a~~ in the specific category named by the Nominating Committee and shall therefore meet the same criteria as the persons against whom the nominee is nominated. In the materials provided in advance to each member of the assembly, the Nominating Committee shall set forth the specific criteria applicable to each category that must be met by persons nominated from the floor.
- 19.11.03. The Nominating Committee shall nominate at least one person for each position on the board of trustees of each of the separately incorporated ministries identified in Chapter 17 of this constitution, according to the process described in continuing resolutions, for which an election will be held by the Churchwide Assembly. In the case of re-election, if authorized, or for nominees from church bodies with which this church is in a relationship of full communion, only one person need be nominated. Nominations from the floor, where permitted in the nomination process, shall be presented ~~as an alternative to a~~ in the specific category named by the Nominating Committee and shall therefore meet the same criteria as the persons against whom the nominee is nominated. In the materials provided in advance to each member of the assembly, the Nominating Committee shall set forth the specific criteria applicable to each category that must be met by persons nominated from the floor.

*Chapter 20: Consultation, Discipline, Appeals, and Adjudication*

- 20.20. There shall be a Committee on Appeals to which may be referred appeals from disciplinary proceedings and petitions for the recall of an officer as described in this chapter, as well as petitions for recall of synod officers as described in chapter 8 of the Constitution for Synods. The Committee on Appeals shall be ~~comprised~~ composed of six rostered ministers, at least one of whom shall be a minister of Word and Service, and six laypersons, elected by the Churchwide Assembly for a term of six years, without consecutive re-election. The Committee on Appeals shall elect its own officers.
- 20.21.01. The churchwide Committee on Discipline shall consist of 24–36 members, half of whom shall ~~ould~~ be rostered ministers (including at least two ministers of Word and Service) and half of whom shall ~~ould~~ be laypersons, elected by the Churchwide Assembly for a term of six years. Each member will serve until a successor is elected, without consecutive re-election, and will serve as needed on a discipline hearing committee in any of the synods in this church.
- 20.22.02. The disciplinary actions which may be imposed are:  
c. removal from the ~~roster of Ministersy~~ roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament
- 20.22.03. Charges against a minister of Word and Sacrament which could lead to discipline must be specific and in writing, subscribed to by the accuser(s), and be made by one or more of the following:  
a. at least two-thirds of the members of the ~~e~~ Congregation's e ~~Council of a congregation the congregation in which served by the minister of Word and Sacrament is serving,~~ submitted to the synod bishop;  
b. at least one-third of the voting members of ~~the a~~ congregation in which the served by the minister of Word and Sacrament is serving, submitted to the synod bishop;  
...  
d. at least 10 rostered ~~ministers of Word and Sacrament or ministers of Word and Service~~ of the synod on whose roster the accused minister of Word and Sacrament is listed, submitted to the synod bishop;
- 20.22.04. When there are indications that a cause for discipline may exist and before charges are made, efforts shall be made by the bishop of the synod to resolve the situation by consultation; for assistance in these efforts, the bishop may utilize either a consultation panel or an advisory panel as herein provided:  
a. When requested by the synod bishop, a consultation panel consisting of five persons (three rostered ~~ministers of Word and Sacrament~~ and two laypersons) appointed from the members of the Consultation Committee of the synod by the synod bishop, or, at the request of the synod bishop, by the Synod

- Council's Executive Committee or other committee authorized to do so by the Synod Council, shall assist the synod bishop in efforts to resolve a situation by consultation.
- b. When requested by the synod bishop, an advisory panel consisting of five persons (three ~~rostered ministers of Word and Sacrament~~ and two laypersons) appointed by the synod bishop shall assist the synod bishop in efforts to resolve a situation by consultation.
- 20.23.02.** The disciplinary actions that may be imposed are:
- b. suspension from the role and functions of a minister of Word and Service in this church for a designated period or until there is satisfactory evidence of repentance and amendment; or
- 20.23.03.** Charges against a minister of Word and Service of this church that could lead to discipline must be specific and in writing, subscribed to by the accuser(s), and be made by one or more of the following:
- a. at least two-thirds of the members of the Congregation Council of ~~the a~~ congregation ~~in which served by~~ the minister of Word and Service ~~is serving~~, submitted to the synod bishop;
- b. at least one-third of the voting members of ~~the a~~ congregation ~~in which the served by the~~ minister of Word and Service ~~is serving~~, submitted to the synod bishop;
- ...
- d. at least 10 ~~rostered ministers of Word and Sacrament or ministers of Word and Service~~ on the rosters of the synod on whose roster the accused minister of Word and Service is listed, submitted to the synod bishop; or
- 20.24.01.** Where the written charges specify that the accuser(s) will not seek the rostered minister's removal from the ministry of this church or suspension from the office/role and functions of the ministry of this church for a period not exceeding three months, 20.24.01. through 20.24.09. shall apply to the exclusion of 20.22.08. through 20.22.24. and 20.23.05. through 20.23.07.
- 20.31.02.** The disciplinary actions which may be imposed are:
- b. suspension from this church for a designated period, the consequences of such suspension being the loss of voting rights of any member (including ministers of Word and Sacrament and ministers of Word and Service) of the congregation at synod or churchwide assemblies, the loss of the right to petition, and the forfeiture of eligibility by any member of the congregation to serve on any council, board (including the board of a separately incorporated ministry), committee, or other group of this church, any of its synods, or any other subdivision thereof;
- 20.72.** When there is disagreement on a substantive issue between or among churchwide units and offices of the churchwide organization that cannot be resolved by the parties, the aggrieved party or parties may appeal to the presiding bishop, or ~~his or her~~ the presiding bishop's designee, for consultation. If this consultation fails to resolve the issue, a petition may be addressed by the parties to the Church Council requesting a resolution of the matter.

*Chapter 22: Amendments, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions*

- 22.21.** Bylaws not in conflict with this constitution may be adopted or amended at any regular meeting of the Churchwide Assembly when presented in writing by the Church Council or by at least 15 members of the assembly. An amendment proposed by at least 15 members of the assembly shall immediately be submitted to the Committee of Reference and Counsel for its recommendation. ~~It~~ ~~no event shall a~~ An amendment may not be placed before the assembly for action sooner than the day following its presentation to the assembly unless it has been presented in writing by the Church Council and sent with an official notice to the synods at least six months prior to the next regular meeting of the Churchwide Assembly. A two-thirds vote of the members present and voting shall be necessary for adoption.

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CONSTITUTION FOR SYNODS

**Chapter 6: Statement of Purpose**

- †S6.03.01. The responsibilities of the synod include the following:
- a. providing for pastoral care of congregations, ministers of Word and Sacrament, and ministers of Word and Service in the synod, including:
    - 1) approving candidates for ~~rostered ministry~~~~the ministry of Word and Sacrament~~ in cooperation with the appropriate seminaries of this church, which may be done through multi-synod committees;
    - 2) authorizing ordinations and ordaining rostered ministers ~~of Word and Sacrament~~ on behalf of this church;
    - ~~3) approving candidates for the ministry~~~~ers of Word and Service, which may be done through multi-synod committees;~~
    - ~~4) authorizing ordinations and ordaining ministers of Word and Service on behalf of this church;~~  
and
    - ~~3~~5) consulting in the call process for rostered ministers.

†S6.04. Except as otherwise provided in this constitution and bylaws, the Synod Council shall establish processes that will ensure that at least 60 percent of the members of the synod assemblies, councils, committees, boards, and other organizational units shall be laypersons; and that, as nearly as possible, at least 45 percent of the lay members of assemblies, councils, committees, boards, or other organizational units shall be women and, as nearly as possible, at least 45 percent shall be men; and that, where possible, the representation of rostered ministers ~~of Word and Sacrament~~ shall include both men and women. This synod shall establish processes that will enable it to reach a minimum goal that 10 percent of its assemblies, councils, committees, boards, or other organizational units be persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English.

~~†S6.04.01. It is the goal of this synod that 10 percent of the membership of synod assemblies, councils, committees, boards and/or other organizational units be persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English.~~

†S6.04.0201. It is the goal of this synod that at least 10 percent of the voting members of the Synod Assembly, Synod Council, committees, and organizational units of this synod be youth and young adults. The Synod Council shall establish a plan for implementing this goal. For purposes of the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this synod, the term “youth” means a voting member of a congregation who has not reached the age of 18 at the time of election or appointment for service. The term “young adult” means a voting member of a congregation between the ages of 18 and 30 at the time of election or appointment for service.

**Chapter 7: Synod Assembly**

S7.14. ~~One-half~~One-third of the members of the Synod Assembly shall constitute a quorum.

- †S7.21. The membership of the Synod Assembly, of which at least 60 percent of the voting membership shall be composed of laypersons, shall be constituted as follows:
- a. All rostered ministers ~~of Word and Sacrament~~ under call on the roster of this synod ~~in attendance at the Synod Assembly~~ shall be voting members of the Synod Assembly.
  - ~~b. All ministers of Word and Service, under call, on the roster of this synod shall be voting members in the Synod Assembly.~~
  - ~~eb.~~ A minimum of one lay member elected by each congregation with fewer than 175 baptized members and a minimum of two lay members elected by each congregation with 175 or more baptized members related to this synod, typically one of whom shall be a man and one of whom shall be a woman, shall be voting members. The Synod Council shall establish a formula to provide additional lay representation from congregations on the basis of the number of baptized members in the congregation. The Synod Council shall seek to ensure that, as nearly as possible, at least 45 percent of the lay members of the assembly shall be women and, as nearly as possible, at least 45 percent shall be men.
  - ~~dc.~~ Voting membership shall include the officers of this synod.

- †S7.21.01. Voting members shall begin serving with the opening of a regular Synod Assembly and shall continue serving until ~~voting members are seated at the opening of~~ the next regular Synod Assembly.
- †S7.21.02. If a special Synod Assembly is called and voting members at the previous assembly are unable to serve as voting members, where permitted by state law, the congregation through the Congregation Council may elect new members who shall continue to serve until the next regular Synod Assembly.
- S7.22. This synod may establish processes that permit retired rostered ministers, or those granted disability status, or on leave from call, on the roster of the synod to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, provided that such processes may not result in fewer than 60% of the voting members of the Synod Assembly being laypersons in contravention of consistent with †S7.21.e. If the synod does not establish processes to permit the rostered ministers specified above to serve as voting members, they shall have voice but not vote in the meetings of the Synod Assembly.
- S7.24. Ministers under call on the rosters of this synod shall remain as members of the Synod Assembly so long as they remain under call and so long as their names appear on the rosters of this synod. Lay members of the Synod Assembly representing congregations shall continue as such until the opening of the next regular synod assembly, or unless replaced by the election of new members for a special synod assembly, or until they have been disqualified by termination of congregation membership. ~~Normally, congregations will hold elections prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.~~
- S7.26. This synod may establish processes through the Synod Council that permit lay representatives of authorized worshiping communities of the synod, which have been authorized under ELCA bylaw 10.01.04., to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with †S7.21.
- S7.27. This synod may establish processes through the Synod Council to grant a minister of Word and Sacrament from a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by the Churchwide Assembly ~~of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America~~ the privilege of both voice and vote in the Synod Assembly during the period of that minister's service in a congregation of this church.

#### Chapter 8: Officers

- †S8.12. As this synod's pastor, the bishop shall:
- i. Oversee and administer the work of this synod and in so doing:
    - 4) ~~exercise supervision over~~ direct and guide the work of the other officers;
    - 5) ~~coordinate~~ exercise supervision over the work of all synod staff members;
    - ...
    - 12) appoint a statistician of the synod, who shall secure the ~~parochial~~ reports of the congregations and make the reports available to the secretary of this church for collation, analysis, and distribution of the statistical summaries to this synod and the other synods of this church.
- †S8.16.01. The following procedures shall govern matters of potential conflicts of interest for synod bishops:
- a. Whenever a synod bishop determines that a matter of the kind described in †S8.16.01.b. may require ~~his or her~~ the bishop's determination or action with respect to a related individual as defined in †S8.16.01.c., the synod bishop shall withdraw from personal involvement in such matter and shall so notify the presiding bishop. The presiding bishop shall then appoint another synod bishop from the same region to handle the matter to conclusion. In dealing with such matter, the appointed bishop shall exercise all of the functions and authority to the same extent as if the appointed bishop were the elected bishop of the withdrawing bishop's synod.
  - b. Matters include any proceedings under Chapter 20, proceedings under provisions 7.46. and 7.75. of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* (†S14.18. and †S14.43), candidacy, reinstatement, and similar matters where determinations or actions by the synod bishop could change, limit, restrict, approve, authorize, or deny the related individual's ministry on one of the official rosters of this church.
- ~~†S8.23. In the event of the death, resignation, or disability of the bishop, the vice president, after consultation with the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, shall convene the Synod~~



- ~~Council to arrange for the conduct of the duties of the bishop until a new bishop shall be elected or, in the case of temporary disability, until the bishop resumes full performance of the duties of the office.~~
- †S8.32. The secretary shall:
- a. Keep the minutes of all meetings of the Synod Assembly and Synod Council, be responsible for ~~the printing and~~ distribution of such minutes, and perform such other duties as this synod may from time to time direct.
- S8.42. The treasurer shall provide and be accountable for:
- c. Receipt and acknowledgment of offerings, contributions, and bequests made to this synod, collecting interest and income from its invested funds, and paying regular appropriations and orders on the several accounts as approved and directed by the Synod Council. The treasurer shall transmit each month to the treasurer of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America the funds received by this synod for the general work of this church as well as any funds to support restricted programs of this church.
- ...
- ~~f. Obtaining a fidelity bond in the amount determined by the Synod Council for persons handling synod funds, which bond shall be in the custody of the secretary. The premium for the bond shall be paid by this synod. Fidelity coverage provided by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be deemed a fulfillment of this requirement.~~
- †S8.51. The terms of office of the officers of this synod shall be as follows:
- b. The vice president and secretary of this synod shall be elected to a term of \_\_\_\_\_ years and may be re-elected. The officer shall serve until ~~his or her~~ a successor takes office.
  - c. The treasurer of this synod shall be [elected] [appointed] to a term of \_\_\_\_\_-years term and may be [re-elected] ~~or~~ [reappointed]. The treasurer shall serve until ~~his or her~~ a successor takes office.
- [Becomes required]*
- †S8.52. The terms of the officers shall begin on the first day of the \_\_\_\_\_ month following election or, in special circumstances, at a time designated by the Synod Council.
- †S8.57. The recall or dismissal of an officer and the vacating of office may be effected for willful disregard or violation of the constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this church; for such physical or mental disability as renders the officer incapable of performing the duties of office; or for such conduct as would subject the officer to disciplinary action as a rostered minister or as a member of a congregation of this church.
- e. In the case of alleged physical or mental incapacity of an officer of the synod, the procedures outlined in †S8.56. shall be followed, and such officer shall comply with the decision of the Synod Council. If such officer fails or refuses to comply, the Synod Council may proceed to petition for recall or dismissal as follows:
    - 2) the Committee on Appeals, ~~exclusive of any members other than those~~ who are disqualified, shall review the findings and decision of the Synod Council and by an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of those present and voting may adopt the findings and grant the petition.
- †S8.58. If the bishop is to be temporarily absent from the synod for an extended period not to exceed 90 days, the bishop, after consultation with the presiding bishop and with the consent of the Synod Council, may appoint as acting bishop for such period a minister of Word and Sacrament of this church. Except as limited by action of the Synod Council, an acting bishop shall possess all of the powers and authority of a regularly elected bishop other than authority to ordain or to authorize the ordination of properly approved candidates for ordination.

**Chapter 11: Committees (names of other organizational units)**

- †S11.02. The Consultation Committee of this synod shall consist of at least six persons and not more than 12 persons, of whom half shall be rostered ~~ministers of Word and Sacrament~~ and half shall be laypersons, who shall each be elected by the Synod Assembly for a term of six years without consecutive re-election. The functions of the Consultation Committee are set forth in Chapter 20 of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* and in Chapter 17 of this constitution. The size of the Consultation Committee, in accord with this provision, shall be defined in this synod's bylaws.

†S11.03. The Committee on Discipline of this synod shall consist of 12 persons, of whom six shall be rostered ministers ~~of Word and Sacrament~~ and six shall be laypersons, who shall each be elected by the Synod Assembly for a term of six years without consecutive re-election.

**S11.10. — General Provisions**

*[Becomes required]*

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

**Chapter 13: Congregations**

†S13.02. It shall be the responsibility of each congregation of this synod to ~~elect~~choose from among its voting members laypersons to serve as members of the Synod Assembly as well as persons to represent it at meetings of any conference, cluster, coalition, or other area subdivision of which it is a member. Normatively, congregations should hold elections prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly. The number of persons to be elected by each congregation and other qualifications shall be as prescribed in guidelines established by this synod.

**Chapter 14: Rostered Ministers**

S14.13. The pastor (a) shall keep accurate ~~parochial~~ records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from the congregation, (b) shall submit a summary of such statistics annually to this synod, and (c) shall become a member of the congregation upon receipt and acceptance of the letter of call. In a parish of multiple congregations, the pastor shall hold membership in one of the congregations.

S14.15. Each minister of Word and Sacrament on the roster of this synod shall submit a report of ~~his or her~~ ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.

†S14.18. The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between a minister of Word and Sacrament and a congregation shall be as follows:

- a. The call of a congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment which shall be terminated only by the pastor's death or, following consultation with the synod bishop, for any of the following reasons:
  - 4) inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in view of physical disability or ~~mental~~ incapacity of the pastor;
- b. When allegations of ~~physical~~ disability or ~~mental~~ incapacity of the pastor under paragraph a.4) above, or ineffective conduct of the pastoral office under paragraph a.3) above, have come to the attention of the bishop of this synod,
  - 1) the bishop, in his or her who has sole discretion, may investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson, or
- c. In case of alleged ~~physical~~ disability or ~~mental~~ incapacity under paragraph a.4) above, the bishop's committee shall obtain and document competent medical opinion concerning the pastor's condition. When a disability or incapacity is evident to the committee, the bishop of this synod may declare the pastorate vacant. When the pastorate is declared vacant, the Synod Council shall list the pastor on the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament with disability status. Upon ~~removal~~ resumption of the ability to conduct the office effectively ~~disability and restoration of the pastor to health~~, the bishop shall take steps to enable the pastor to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another appropriate call.

†S14.21. The ~~parochial~~ records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members transferred or dismissed, members who have become inactive, or members excluded from the congregation shall be kept accurately and permanently. They shall remain the property of each

congregation. At the time of the closure of a congregation, such records shall be sent to the regional archives. The secretary of the congregation shall attest to the bishop of this synod that such records have been placed in ~~the secretary's his or her~~ hands in good order by a departing pastor before:

- †S14.23. During service to a congregation, an interim pastor shall have the rights and duties in the congregation of a regularly called pastor. The interim pastor may delegate the same in part to an interim supply pastor with the consent of the bishop of this synod. The interim pastor and any rostered minister who may assist shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a pastor. Upon completion of service, the interim pastor shall certify to the bishop of this synod that the ~~congregation parochial~~ records, for the period for which the interim pastor was responsible, are in order.
- S14.34. Each minister of Word and Service on the roster of this synod shall submit a report of ~~his or her~~ ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.
- †S14.43. The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between a minister of Word and Service and a congregation shall be as follows:
- a. The call of a congregation, when accepted by a minister of Word and Service, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment which shall be terminated only by the deacon's death or, following consultation with the synod bishop, for any of the following reasons:
    - 4) ~~inability to conduct the office effectively in view of physical~~ disability or ~~mental~~ incapacity of the minister of Word and Service;
  - b. When allegations of ~~physical~~ disability or ~~mental~~ incapacity of the minister of Word and Service under paragraph a.4) above, or ineffective conduct of the ministry of Word and Service under paragraph a.3) above, have come to the attention of the bishop of this synod,
    - 1) the bishop, in his or her who has sole discretion, may investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson, or
  - c. In case of alleged ~~physical~~ disability or ~~mental~~ incapacity under paragraph a.4) above, the bishop's committee shall obtain and document competent medical opinion concerning the minister of Word and Service's condition. When a disability or incapacity is evident to the committee, the bishop of this synod may declare the position vacant. When the position is declared vacant, the Synod Council shall list the deacon on the roster of Ministers of Word and Service with disability status. Upon ~~removal-resumption~~ of the ability to conduct the office effectively ~~disability and restoration of the minister of Word and Service to health~~, the bishop shall take steps to enable the minister of Word and Service to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another appropriate call.

#### **Chapter 15: Financial Matters**

- †S15.11. Since the congregations, synods, and churchwide organization are interdependent expressions that share in God's mission, all share in the responsibility to develop, implement, and strengthen the financial support of the whole church. The gifts and offerings of the members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America are given to support all parts of this church; thus the unity of this church should be evidenced in determining each part's share of the gifts and offerings. Therefore:...
- †S15.31. This synod shall arrange to have an annual audit of its financial records conducted by a certified public accountant firm recommended by the synod Audit Committee and approved by the Synod Council. The audited annual financial report shall be submitted by this synod to the churchwide Office of the Treasurer and to the congregations of this synod. ~~The financial reports shall be in the format approved from time to time by the churchwide Office of the Treasurer.~~

#### **Chapter 16: Indemnification**

- †S16.01. Subject to the limitations and duties imposed by law, each person who is or was made or threatened to be made a party to any proceeding by reason of the present or former capacity of that person as a Synod Council member, officer, employee, or committee member of this synod shall be indemnified against all costs and expenses incurred by that person in connection with the proceeding. Indemnification of any person by reason of that person's capacity as a director, officer, employee, or committee member of any other organization, regardless of its form or relationship to this synod, is subject to the provisions of ~~section~~ †S16.02.

†S16.03. This synod may purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of itself or any person entitled to indemnification pursuant to this chapter against any liability asserted against and incurred by this synod or by such other person in or arising from a capacity described in ~~section~~ †S16.01. or ~~section~~ †S16.02.

†S16.04. When written charges against a rostered minister of this church are made in disciplinary proceedings under Chapter 20 of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* by the synod bishop or when written charges against a congregation are made in disciplinary proceedings by the Synod Council or the synod bishop, and the discipline hearing committee determines that no discipline shall be imposed, then if such determination is not reversed or set aside on appeal, indemnification shall be made by the synod to the accused for reasonable attorney's fees and other reasonable expenses related to the defense of the charges. The determination of the reasonableness of such fees and expenses shall be ~~made~~decided by the Synod Council.

#### ***Chapter 18: Amendments, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions***

†S18.31. This synod may adopt continuing resolutions not in conflict with this constitution or its bylaws or the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of the churchwide organization. Such continuing resolutions may be adopted or amended by a majority vote of the Synod Assembly or by a two-thirds vote of the Synod Council. Newly adopted continuing resolutions and amendments to existing continuing resolutions shall be reported to the secretary of this church.

### **MODEL CONSTITUTION FOR CONGREGATIONS OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**

#### ***Chapter 6: Church Affiliation***

\*C6.05. This congregation may terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America by the following procedure:

- a. A resolution indicating the intent to terminate its relationship must be adopted at two legally called and conducted special meetings of this congregation by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present at each meeting. The first such meeting may be held no sooner than 30 days after written notice of the meeting is received by the bishop of the synod, during which time this congregation shall consult with the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any. The times and manner of the consultation shall be determined by the bishop in consultation with the Congregation Council. Unless ~~he or she~~the bishop and/or the bishop's designees is-are a voting members of this congregation, ~~the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any, they~~ shall have voice but not vote at the first meeting.

...

- d. If this congregation, after such consultation, is still considering termination of its relationship with this church, such action may be taken at a legally called and conducted special meeting by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present. Notice of the second meeting shall be sent to all voting members and to the bishop at least 10 days in advance of the meeting. Unless ~~he or she is~~the bishop and/or the bishop's designees are voting members of this congregation, ~~the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any, they~~ shall have voice but not vote at the second meeting.

#### ***Chapter 9: Rostered Minister***

\*C9.05. The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between a minister of Word and Sacrament and this congregation shall be as follows:

- a. The call of this congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment, which shall be terminated only by the pastor's death or, following consultation with the synod bishop, for any of the following reasons:
  - 4) ~~inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in view of~~physical disability or ~~mental~~ incapacity of the pastor;

...

- b. When allegations of ~~physical~~ disability or ~~mental~~ incapacity of the pastor under paragraph a.4) above, or ineffective conduct of the pastoral office under paragraph a.3) above, have come to the attention of the bishop of this synod,

- 
- 1) the bishop, ~~in his or her who has~~ sole discretion, may investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson, or  
...
- c. In case of alleged ~~physical~~ disability or ~~mental~~ incapacity under paragraph a.4) above, the bishop's committee shall obtain and document competent medical opinion concerning the pastor's condition. When a disability or incapacity is evident to the committee, the bishop of this synod may declare the pastorate vacant. When the pastorate is declared vacant, the Synod Council shall list the pastor on the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament with disability status. Upon ~~removal-resumption~~ of the ~~disability and the restoration of the pastor to health~~, ability to conduct the office effectively the bishop shall take steps to enable the pastor to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another appropriate call.
- \*C9.12. The pastor of this congregation:  
a. shall keep accurate ~~parochial~~ records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from this congregation;
- \*C9.13. The pastor(s) shall submit a report of ~~his or her~~ ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.
- \*C9.14. The ~~parochial~~ records of this congregation shall be maintained by the pastor and shall remain the property of this congregation. The secretary of this congregation shall attest in writing to the bishop of this synod that such records have been placed in ~~his or her~~ the secretary's hands in good order by a departing pastor before the installation of that pastor in another call or approval of a request for change in roster status.
- \*C9.25. The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between a minister of Word and Service and this congregation shall be as follows:  
a. The call of this congregation, when accepted by a deacon, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment, which shall be terminated only by the deacon's death or, following consultation with the synod bishop, for any of the following reasons:  
4) inability to conduct the office effectively in view of ~~physical~~ disability or ~~mental~~ incapacity of the deacon;  
...
- b. When allegations of ~~physical~~ disability or ~~mental~~ incapacity of the deacon under paragraph a.4) above, or ineffective conduct of the office of minister of Word and Service under paragraph a.3) above, have come to the attention of the bishop of this synod,  
1) the bishop, ~~in his or her who has~~ sole discretion, may investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson, or  
...
- c. In case of alleged ~~physical~~ disability or ~~mental~~ incapacity under paragraph a.4) above, the bishop's committee shall obtain and document competent medical opinion concerning the deacon's condition. When a disability or incapacity is evident to the committee, the bishop of this synod may declare the position vacant. When the position is declared vacant, the Synod Council shall list the deacon on the roster of Ministers of Word and Service with disability status. Upon ~~removal-resumption~~ of the ~~disability and the restoration of the deacon to health~~, ability to conduct the office effectively, the bishop shall take steps to enable the deacon to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another appropriate call.

### **Chapter 10: Congregation Meeting**

*[New footnote]*

- C10.02.** A special Congregation Meeting may be called by the [senior] pastor, the Congregation Council, or the president<sup>1</sup> of this congregation, and shall be called by the president of this congregation upon the written request of \_\_\_[number][percent] of the voting members. The president of the Congregation Council shall call a special meeting upon request of the synod bishop. The call for each special meeting shall specify the purpose for which it is to be held, and no other business shall be transacted.

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<sup>1</sup> If the pastor is the president of the congregation, the congregation may consider giving the vice president the authority to call a special meeting.

**C10.08.** This congregation may hold meetings by remote communication, including electronically and by telephone conference, as long as there is an opportunity for simultaneous aural communication or its equivalent. To the extent permitted by state law, notice of all meetings may be provided electronically.

**C10.09.** “Ex officio” as used herein means membership with full rights of voice and vote unless otherwise expressly limited.

**Chapter 12: Congregation Council**

**C12.05.** The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the financial and property matters of this congregation.

- e. The Congregation Council shall ascertain that the financial affairs of this congregation are being conducted efficiently, giving particular attention to the prompt payment of all obligations and to the regular forwarding of mission support monies to the synod ~~treasurer~~.

[New footnote]

**C12.11.** The Congregation Council shall normally meet once a month. Special meetings may be called by the pastor or the president<sup>2</sup>, and shall be called by the president at the request of at least one-half of its members. Notice of each special meeting shall be given to all who are entitled to be present.

**C12.13.** The Congregation Council and its committees may hold meetings by remote communication, including electronically and by telephone conference, as long as there is an opportunity for simultaneous aural communication or its equivalent, and, ~~to~~ to the extent permitted by state law, notice of all meetings may be provided electronically.

**Chapter 13: Congregation Committees**

[New footnote]

**C13.08.** The [senior] pastor of this congregation shall be *ex officio* a member of all committees and boards of this congregation. [The president<sup>4</sup> vice president of this congregation shall be *ex officio* a member of all committees and boards of this congregation, except the Nominating Committee.]

**Chapter 15: Discipline of Members and Adjudication**

**\*C15.02.** The process for discipline of a member of this congregation shall be governed as prescribed by the chapter on discipline in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. If the counseling, censure, and admonitions pursuant to \*C15.01. do not result in repentance and amendment of life, charges against the accused member(s) that are specific and in writing may be prepared by the Congregation Council, signed, and submitted to the vice president of the synod. The vice president shall select from the synod’s Consultation Committee a panel of five members (three laypersons and two rostered ministers of Word and Sacrament). A copy of the written charges shall be provided to the consultation panel and the accused member(s). The consultation panel, after requesting a written reply to the charges from the accused member(s), shall consider the matter and seek a resolution by means of investigation, consultation, mediation, or whatever other means may seem appropriate. The panel’s efforts to reach a mutually agreeable resolution shall continue for no more than 45 days after the matter is submitted to it.

**\*C15.11.** When there is disagreement between or among factions within this congregation on a substantive issue which cannot be resolved by the parties, members of this congregation may petition the synod bishop for consultation after informing the president vice president of this congregation of their intent to do so. The synod bishop shall seek a timely resolution of the dispute. If the issue relates directly to the pastor, the bishop may begin the process in †S14.18.d. In all other matters, if the bishop’s consultation fails to resolve the issue, the bishop shall refer the matter to the Consultation Committee of the synod, which shall undertake efforts to find an appropriate solution. If the Consultation Committee’s efforts fail to resolve the dispute, the entire matter shall be referred to the Synod Council for adjudication by whatever process the Council deems necessary. The Synod Council’s decision shall be final.

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<sup>2</sup> If the pastor is the president of the congregation, the congregation may consider giving the vice president the authority to call a special meeting.

<sup>4</sup> If the pastor is the president of the congregation, the congregation may consider selecting the vice president.

**Chapter 16: Amendments**

- \*C16.02. An amendment to this constitution, proposed under \*C16.01., shall:
- be approved at any legally called meeting of this congregation by a majority vote of those voting members present and voting; and
  - be ratified without change at the next regular meeting of this congregation ~~held pursuant to C10.01.~~ by a two-thirds vote of those voting members present and voting; and.
  - ~~have the effective date included in the resolution<sup>5</sup> and noted in the constitution.~~
- \*C16.04. This constitution may be amended to bring any section into conformity with a section or sections, either required or not required, of the *Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* as most recently amended by the Churchwide Assembly. Such amendments may be approved by a majority vote of those voting members present and voting at any legally called meeting of this congregation without presentation at a prior meeting of this congregation, provided that the Congregation Council has submitted by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law, notice to this congregation of such an amendment or amendments, together with the council's recommendations, at least 30 days prior to the meeting. Upon the request of at least two (2) voting members of this congregation, the Congregation Council shall submit such notice. Following the adoption of an amendment, the secretary of this congregation shall submit a copy thereof to the synod. Such provisions shall become effective immediately following the congregation's a vote of approval.

**Chapter 20: Parish Authorization**

- \*C20.02. One congregation of a parish shall issue a call on behalf of the member congregations to a minister of Word and Sacrament or a candidate for the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament who has been recommended by the synod bishop to serve the congregations of the parish. Such a call shall be approved prior to issuance by a two-thirds vote at a congregational~~a~~ meeting of each congregation forming the parish. If any congregation of the parish should fail to approve the call, the other congregations of the parish shall have the right to terminate the parish agreement.
- \*C20.03. One congregation of a parish may issue a call on behalf of the member congregations to a minister of Word and Service or a candidate for the roster of Ministers of Word and Service who has been recommended by the synod bishop to serve the congregations of the parish. Such a call shall be approved prior to issuance by a two-thirds vote at a congregational~~a~~ meeting of each congregation forming the parish. If any congregation of the parish should fail to approve the call, the other congregations of the parish shall have the right to terminate the parish agreement.

**K. Proposed Amendments to the Mission Investment Fund Bylaws**

In October 2021, the Mission Investment Fund considered amendments to its bylaws. The proposed amendments are submitted for approval by the Church Council in accordance with ELCA bylaw 17.30.03.

VOTED: *EN BLOC*  
CC21.11.25k **To approve the amended bylaws of the Mission Investment Fund.**

**L. Corporate Social Responsibility Documents**

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

VOTED: *EN BLOC*  
CC21.11.25l **To approve the amendments to the following corporate social responsibility documents to serve as the basis for ongoing corporate social responsibility work in this church:**

- **Private Prison Social Criteria Investment Screen**
- **Environmental Topics Issue Paper**
- **Climate Change Issue Paper**
- **Health Issue Paper; and**

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

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<sup>5</sup> Such an effective date must be stated in relation to the requirements of \*C16.03. to allow time for the synod's review of the amendment.

**M. Assessment and Feasibility of Social Message Processes**

In Spring 2021, the Church Council postponed the question of developing a social message on U.S. National Drug Policy, aging, gender identity, or gun policy until Fall 2021. [CC21.04.06] There is also another pending request for a social message on climate change. [EC20.02.12] The capacity for social teaching writing projects during any given year is one social statement, one social message, and one study resource.

VOTED: *EN BLOC*

CC21.11.25m1       **To thank the Southwestern Minnesota Synod for encouraging the ELCA Church Council to authorize the use of existing resources to create a message on climate change;**  
                          **To authorize the development of a social message on climate change, in light of existing social teaching and in accordance with “Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns” (2018), with council action to be taken at the November 2022 Church Council meeting; and**  
                          **To request that the secretary of this church inform the synod of this action.**

VOTED: *EN BLOC*

CC21.11.25m2       **To receive the assessment from the Theological Discernment Team in the Office of the Presiding Bishop on the feasibility of developing a social message on U.S. national drug policy and to decline to initiate the development of a social message on that topic.**

VOTED: *EN BLOC*

CC21.11.25m3       **To thank the Virginia Synod for drawing attention to this social issue with its request that the ELCA “bring the 1978 statement, ‘Aging and the Older Adult,’ out of retirement and revise it as appropriate to make it a living document;”**  
                          **To release the request for the development of a social message on aging, with the understanding that an ELCA study on aging should be developed when possible as a means to foster discernment, especially in congregations; and**  
                          **To request that the secretary of this church inform the synod of this action.**

VOTED: *EN BLOC*

CC21.11.25m4       **To release the request to develop a social message on gender identity and gender expression in light of the various actions already underway to address the topic, with the understanding that the ELCA will continue its ongoing efforts to address the concerns expressed in the “Gender Identity” memorial [CA19.02.09].**

VOTED: *EN BLOC*

CC21.11.25m5       **To maintain the request for consideration of developing a social message on U.S. national gun policy as pending and to be assessed by the Theological Discernment Team in the Office of the Presiding Bishop for possible recommendation to the Church Council at its November 2022 meeting.**

**N. Aspirational Document**

At the November 2020 Church Council meeting, the council deferred “the question of developing an aspirational document until after Spring 2021 when *Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline* is further redeveloped.” [CC20.11.33j]

VOTED: *EN BLOC*

CC21.11.25n       **To receive with gratitude the response and recommendation from the Christian Community and Leadership unit regarding the question of developing an aspirational document; and**  
                          **To suspend the consideration of developing an aspirational document until a need arises.**

**O. Approval of the Minutes**

The minutes of the Apr. 15–17, 2021 and Sept. 27, 2021, meetings of the Church Council and the minutes of the council’s Executive Committee meetings on Apr. 15, 2021, May 11, 2021, June 29, 2021, Aug. 24, 2021, Sept. 21, 2021, and Oct. 26, 2021, have been provided to council members electronically via Microsoft Teams.



**VOTED:** *EN BLOC*  
CC21.11.25o **To approve the minutes of the Apr. 15–17, 2021, and Sept. 27, 2021, meetings of the Church Council; and  
To ratify actions of the council’s Executive Committee as indicated in the minutes of the Apr. 15, 2021, May 11, 2021, June 29, 2021, Aug. 24, 2021, Sept. 21, 2021, and Oct. 26, 2021, meetings.**

**P. Church Council Nominations and Elections**

The Church Council has responsibility for 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. Pursuant to 14.22. of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, the Church Council is also to elect nominees to a vacancy on a board or committee of the churchwide organization.

**VOTED:** *EN BLOC*  
CC21.11.25p1 **To elect to the advisory board of Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary to a term expiring in June 2024: The Rev. Jessica Obrecht.**

**VOTED:** *EN BLOC*  
CC21.11.25p2 **To elect to the board of directors of Trinity Lutheran Seminary at Capital University to a term expiring June 30, 2024: The Rev. Niklaus C. Schillack.**

**VOTED:** *EN BLOC*  
CC21.11.25p3 **To re-elect to the board of directors of Mosaic, Inc. to a three-year term expiring in 2024: Ms. Megan M. Gustafson.**

**VOTED:** *EN BLOC*  
CC21.11.25p4 **To elect to the board of trustees of the Board of Pensions of the ELCA—Portico Benefit Services—to fill a vacancy with the term expiring in August 2022: Mr. Todd J. Maloy.**

**VOTED:** *EN BLOC*  
CC21.11.25p5 **To authorize the Executive Committee of the Church Council to fill vacancies on the board of trustees to the Endowment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America—ELCA Foundation between now and the next meeting of the Church Council.**

**VOTED:** *EN BLOC*  
CC21.11.25p6 **To approve the classification of board of trustees to the Endowment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America—ELCA Foundation:**  
**Class 1 (term limit ends in 2022):**  
**Kristy Albrecht, Liza Canino, Pr. Kelly France, and John Quello**  
**Class 2 (term limit ends in 2025):**  
**Karen Bohn, Eric Brudos, Keith Christensen, and Eric Golberg**  
**Class 3 (term limit ends in 2028):**  
**Bruce George, Naomi Horsager, Kori Reed, and Chuck Self**

**RESPONSES TO CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY ACTIONS**

**Q. Earth Charter**

*Churchwide Assembly action [CA19.02.06c]*

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

To endorse the Earth Charter;

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

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

*Executive Committee action [EC19.09.28.a2]*

To refer the 2019 Churchwide Assembly action on the “Earth Charter” to the Domestic Mission unit for a report

or for a timeline on when this will receive further attention; and

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

*Response from the Domestic Mission unit (November 2019)*

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

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

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

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

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

*Church Council action [CC19.11.47m]*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Pillar 3—Social and Economic Justice:** Produce resource series on intersectionality of racism and sexism for a just society supporting global health, racial equity, hunger eradication, environment, and housing; advance intra-ELCA and social efforts for equitable compensation; foster ongoing dialogical and theological engagement across this church towards gender and racial justice; address the disproportionate impact environmental injustice and climate change have on people of color and poor communities globally; utilize a racial justice lens to end the impacts of racism

and develop models of equitable sustainability for all communities; assist migrants not covered by stimulus packages as well as support state and local advocacy through the AMMPARO network, congregations and synods.

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

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

*Church Council action [CC20.11.33r]*

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

*Response from Service and Justice (Nov. 2021)*

The [Earth Charter](#)’s (Charter) pillars and 16 principles address equitable sustainability and sufficiency for all communities, and it aligns with ELCA social teachings. The ELCA’s Sustainability Table (Table) supports and other ELCA ministries carry out the implementation work to fulfill the Charter endorsement. Listed below is ongoing implementation work.

**Pillar 1—Respect and Care for the Community of Life:** Equip congregations for advocating in their communities’ interest; support #ELCAvotes initiative; advocate for child nutrition programs and housing reform; support federal disaster aid resources and equitable access programs that assist communities impacted by natural disasters; advocate for support for international antipoverty, humanitarian, and global health funding; advocate for migrant rights and immigration reform both domestically and globally through AMMPARO and our international companions; advance immigration reform; and train Creation Care Ambassadors (242 trained and 48 have signed to become Ambassadors).

**Pillar 2—Ecological Integrity:** Implement through leadership of the [Delaware-Maryland Synod](#) energy conservation and waste reduction; pilot efforts in Pennsylvania’s synods for significant carbon footprint reduction; promote policies to protect all from the impacts of environmental degradation; and received Stewardship of Life Institute (SOLI) grant for training leaders in four synods with skills identified by the ELCA Organized for Mission Network for local and state level stewardship of creation.

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

**Pillar 4—Democracy, Nonviolence, and Peace:** Advocate for support of international funding for conflict prevention and peace-building programs; support and encourage global cooperation, such as the Paris Agreement, to protect the environment; protect human rights to defend democratic values, reject all forms of discrimination, encourage nonviolence, and work for peace with the aim of creating a rich and varied space to enable sustainable development; promote election integrity and voter protection; and participate in the Lutheran World Federation’s Season of Creation and climate change initiatives.

The Earth Charter implementation work is ongoing within the ELCA. This document serves as the final report on the Earth Charter endorsement implementation. The project initiated by the SOLI grant will be sustained into the future through a new program called “Community Organizing for Climate Justice as Faith Active in Love,” offered by Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary’s Center for Climate Justice and Faith in collaboration with the ELCA’s Organizing for Mission Network. This new program begins in Feb. 2022 and will give priority to teams coming from synods and congregations. To apply or for more information, see:

[https://www.plts.edu/programs/continuingeducation/community\\_organizing\\_climate\\_justice.html](https://www.plts.edu/programs/continuingeducation/community_organizing_climate_justice.html).

VOTED:

*EN BLOC*

CC21.11.25q      **To receive with gratitude the final report on the implementation of the “Earth Charter” memorial from the Service and Justice unit; and  
To request that the secretary of this church inform the synods of this action.**

**R. “Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action” (2019) Social Statement**

*Churchwide Assembly Action [CA19.05.20]*

1. To urge members, congregations, synods, churchwide ministries, social ministry organizations, church-related institutions, ecumenical partners, and all people of good will to be guided by this statement’s convictions and commitments to resist and dismantle patriarchy and sexism, and to transform life in the church and in society;
2. To call upon members of this church to pray, work, and advocate for justice for all those affected by sexism and patriarchy and to draw upon this statement in forming their judgments and actions in daily life;
3. To encourage members to be guided by the ELCA social message on “Gender-based Violence” (2015) in taking action, such as urging their congregations to implement policies and to become intentional sites of advocacy and support for local efforts that serve those affected by such violence;
4. To call upon all members of this church to reflect on how mass media (films, video games, etc.) and social media distort sex, gender, and sexuality and to address this problem in their own actions (especially their care for children);
5. To call upon congregational leaders, rostered and lay, to encourage women and girls to pursue leadership roles within congregations and in discernment toward rostered ministry;
6. To encourage ELCA congregations to present positive gender roles in their educational activities, preschools, and day care, and to urge youth-related ministries within this church to adopt positive modeling of gender equity in all leadership, programs, and educational events;
7. To urge congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization (CWO) to address inequities (in pay, senior 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;
8. To call upon the Conference of Bishops, synods, and the churchwide organization to use gender-inclusive and expansive language for God, and to direct the ELCA worship team
  - a) to use such language whenever it commissions, curates, or develops new liturgical and related educational resources;
  - b) to supplement existing resources toward that end; and
  - c) to explore the development of an inclusive language lectionary similar to the Psalter in Evangelical Lutheran Worship.
9. To direct the Mission Advancement unit of the CWO to collaborate with the Office of the Presiding Bishop in creating a single page at ELCA.org where readers can access the existing resources of the ELCA and the Lutheran World Federation related to the concerns of this statement and to work to make those resources available in languages other than English;
10. To call upon this church’s advocacy and related ministries, such as ELCA Advocacy and ELCA World Hunger, to support and advocate for measures, policies, and laws consistent with this social statement and to give sustained attention to its convictions and commitments in the creation of programs and projects;
11. To recognize past and present CWO efforts to address institutional sexism and foster gender justice in this church, and to urge sustained devotion of resources, such as support for the CWO’s Justice for Women program;
12. To encourage the ministries of Women of the ELCA and Lutheran Men in Mission to continue and expand their work to address the issues identified in this social statement and to commend greater participation in these efforts;
13. To call upon those engaged in publishing activities throughout the ELCA to continue and extend their support for gender equity in ELCA resources and communications through such dimensions as language, images, stories, Bible studies, themes, and representation of contributors;
14. To urge faculty, staff, and administrators of ELCA-related colleges, universities, and seminaries to renew their efforts to develop syllabi and best practices that affirm and promote the gifts of women from varied identities and backgrounds;
15. To call upon rostered and lay congregational leaders, synod and CWO staff, social ministry organizations, and faculty and staff at ELCA colleges, seminaries, and universities to renew their efforts to welcome, care for, and support the lives and gifts of LGBTQIA persons and to oppose discrimination against these persons so that they may live into the promise of gender justice envisioned in this social statement;
16. To call on the church in all its expressions and related agencies, organizations, and institutions to embed and incorporate anti-sexism training and protocols in their ongoing work, including appropriate adaptations to boundaries training for

- rostered ministers, and to create institutional resources to support rostered ministers who experience sexual misconduct or gender-based harassment, as well as pastoral care resources for all affected by sexism;
17. To direct the ELCA Church Council to establish a process for public repentance regarding the sins of patriarchy and sexism and establish a churchwide day of confession and repentance no later than the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly; and
  18. To call upon the Office of the Presiding Bishop, in collaboration with appropriate units in the CWO, to establish and oversee processes for implementation of and accountability for these resolutions and to report to the fall meeting of ELCA Church Council in 2021.

*Response from Office of the Presiding Bishop (Nov. 2021)*

The 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly adopted “Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action” (FSJ) as this church’s thirteenth social statement. (Social statements are theological-ethical teaching and policy documents that guide this church’s public witness and faith formation. They are rooted in the Scriptures and Lutheran theology. All but one are available in English and Spanish.)

Implementing resolutions associated with ELCA social statements are voted upon separately from them. The 2019 Churchwide Assembly voted in favor of 18 resolutions, which includes the request for a report from the Office of the Presiding Bishop on progress made on the implementing resolutions. (English, pp. 81–83; Spanish pp. 90–93)

This report includes known activities and is not intended to be exclusive. Across the ELCA, many individuals, congregations, synods, agencies, and institutions, including schools, live out the implementing resolutions in a variety of ways, even while opportunities for serving neighbors with gender justice continue to abound. Not every resolution requires action from the churchwide organization, as noted at the end of the chart.

<b>WORK: What has been or is being done?</b>	<b>WHO</b>	<b>RELATED IMPLEMENTING RESOLUTION/S</b>	<b>TIMELINE</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
study guide to FSJ	Justice for Women, Theological Ethics, and Ecumenical and Inter-religious Relations, Communications	1, 2	November 2021	six digital sessions, in-person or online
online engagement with FSJ	Justice for Women	1, 2		
50 40 10 ordination anniversary initiatives	Office of the Presiding Bishop (OPB), including Justice for Women, Communications, Research and Evaluation, Archives	5, 7, 11	March 2019 to fall 2021	
50th anniversary of the ordination of women survey and report	Research and Evaluation, Office of the Secretary (OS), Justice for Women, (former) Domestic Mission	1, 5, 7	final report posted by end of November 2021	
ELCA Quality of Call initiative	OPB (including Justice for Women), Christian Community (CCL) and Leadership, OS, Conference of Bishops, synods, rostered ministers	1, 2, 5, 7, 15, 16	ongoing	three foci to Quality of Call initiative: pastors who are women, BIPOC, LGBTQIA+.  focus on women underway  other two foci in planning stages  donor-funded

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Report on ELCA family leave policies	ELCA Quality of Call initiative (OPB, CCL)	7		
ELCA Womanist Theology Initiative	Justice for Women, Quality of Call, Trinity Lutheran Seminary, Luther Seminary, Thrivent (in part). All seminaries are working in conversation on this initiative.	1, 2, 5, 14, (15), (16)	begun fall 2020 and ongoing	proposed pan-seminary courses and certification (courses January and June 2021; January 2022)  lecture series  online reading groups  young women and girls of African Descent participated in cohorts organized by the Rev. Dr. Beverly Wallace in an online womanist conference
online sessions on language and images for God	Justice for Women	8	ongoing	
book publication by Fortress Press, <i>Language for God: A Lutheran Perspective</i>	Mary J. Streufert, director for Justice for Women	8	anticipated publication, June 2022	written for rostered leaders and lay members
consultation with NCC partners on possible ecumenical collaboration on an inclusive lectionary supplement	Ecumenical and Inter-religious Relations and Justice for Women	8	open	
legislation that affects and effects gender justice	Witness in Society, with occasional consultation with Justice for Women	10	ongoing	
online database of Lutheran Women's Works in Religion	Justice for Women	14	ongoing	allows searches by race and ethnicity, subject, and Lutheran World Federation regions  national and global database  includes broad theological work—sermons, lessons, articles, books, etc.
gender justice orientation	People First, Justice for Women	16	ongoing	
ELCA Candidacy Summit, workshop on sexism in candidacy process	CCL, Quality of Call	16	March 2021	led by former social statement task force member and ELCA deaconess

boundary education	CCL, Quality of Call, Region 9 synods, unknown others	16	ongoing	some boundary educators incorporate anti-sexism into education; required boundary education for persons in candidacy process
finance and gender-based violence	Justice for Women	3	fall 2020 and 2021	early stages of collaboration with Criterion Institute, which works with financial entities to invest in ways that prevent and mitigate the effects of gender-based violence
Lutheran World Federation collaboration on 2017 assembly resolutions related to gender justice	Justice for Women, Service and Justice, Ecumenical and Inter-religious Relations	1, 2, 3, 7, 16	ongoing	
relational influence	ELCA Church Council	12, 13, 14, 15	ongoing	
governance influence	ELCA Church Council	11	ongoing	
process of public repentance and day of confession and repentance for Churchwide Assembly 2022	ELCA Church Council in collaboration with Justice for Women	17	Nov. 16, 2021, meeting planned with key staff and council members  Spring 2022 Church Council meeting	
	Various spheres of the church	4,6		

**VOTED:** *EN BLOC*  
**CC21.11.25r**      **To receive the report from the Office of the Presiding Bishop in response to the 2019 Churchwide Assembly action related to the implementing resolutions for the social statement, “Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action.”**

**RESPONSES TO PREVIOUS CHURCH COUNCIL ACTIONS**

**S. Deacons Unified Cross Design**

*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.

*Church Council action [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.

*Response from Christian Community and Leadership (Nov. 2021)*

The process to commission a unified cross design for ministers of Word and Service was delayed in 2021 as churchwide staff continued to reprioritize ongoing work, key projects and new tasks identified as a result of staffing reorganization and a lingering pandemic. Although work on this project is resuming, a proposed design could not be completed in time to bring to Church Council for the Fall 2021 meeting. The Worship team respectfully asks that this be delayed to 2022.

An updated timeline is already in process to identify a final design and solidify a sustainable manufacturing and distribution plan. Barring any delays outside the control of churchwide staff, the timeline anticipates a design to be presented to the Church Council at the Spring 2022 meeting.



An earlier report to Church Council noted a considerable variety of opinions among deacons about potential design concepts, or in some cases, an apparent lack of interest in a common cross design for ministers of Word and Service. One possible path forward may be to propose not adopting a unified cross design.

While it is anticipated that start-up and prototype costs may be funded from existing sources, some one-time funding may need to be proposed in the FY2022 budget. It is anticipated that ongoing manufacturing and distribution will be financially self-sustaining.

Appropriate guidance about the use of the symbols of the ministry of Word and Service will be drafted in collaboration with the Office of the Secretary and the Candidacy and Leadership Manager—Word and Service.

**VOTED:** *EN BLOC*  
**CC21.11.25s**      **To receive the update from the Christian Community and Leadership unit on a unified cross design for ministers of Word and Service; and**  
                          **To postpone a final design recommendation to the Spring 2022 Church Council meeting.**

**T. Climate Change Action**

At its November 2019 meeting, Church Council referred a recommendation on climate change from the Conference of Bishops [CB19.09.26] to the Domestic Mission unit for a timeline on when the resolution would receive further attention [CC19.11.41].

*Response from the Domestic Mission unit (March 2020)*

The ELCA response to climate change is not unified but is conducted across all three churchwide expressions. Programmatic responsibility includes Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR), Advocacy, Global Mission, World Hunger, Stewardship, and Congregational Vitality. In addition, Lutherans Restoring Creation (LRC) as a grassroots Lutheran entity is instrumental in education and resourcing congregations and synods. These and other stakeholders met in January 2020 to propose a holistic and integrated approach and coordination on the impacts of climate change as a matter of sustainability.

The first phase in addressing climate change is the formation of a Sustainability Table that brings together the different churchwide programs and ministries to address not only climate change, but other environmental and energy matters that recognizes the intersectionality and impact of climate on every fiber of life; and to move with resolve to implement actions. (Please see below) The convener initially will be the Advocacy Program Director, Environment and Corporate Social Responsibility.

	<b>Sustainability Table Description</b>
<b>Purpose</b>	To explore and pull together holistically ELCA churchwide and congregational strategies and activities that care for and protect all of creation into a coordinated effort for being more effective stewards of God’s good creation.
<b>Goal</b>	To build capacity at all levels for equipping the Church to actively utilize our many gifts in witness and service in response to human need in our communities, countries and the world.
<b>Design</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Develop specific goals and measurements</b></li> <li><b>2. Establish Steering Committee members:</b> Advocacy; Young Adult, Domestic Mission, Global Mission, Mission Advancement, Synods/Congregations, Lutherans Restoring Creation (LRC)</li> <li><b>3. Create Smaller Working Issue Groups:</b> Communication, Education, Advocacy, Energy/Building Grounds, Worship, Justice (racial, ethnic, economic, environmental) and Funding.</li> </ol>
<b>Membership</b>	Advocacy, LDR, Campus Ministries, Global Missions, Universities and Colleges, Young Adult Ministry, Multi-Cultural/Ethnic Ministry Associations, Synods Rep., Deacons, Lay people, Church Council, Outdoor Ministry, Bishop Rep., Facilities/Operations (CW), Investment staff, Strategic Communications, Coaches, Ecumenical Partners, Science/Tech & Faith; and Worship/Music, Stewardship, and Mission Advancement.

<b>Meeting Timeline</b>	Initial Introductory Call-----December 16, 2019
	Organizing Meeting-----January 27, 2020
	Steering Committee Call-----On or before March 2, 2020
	Full Table Meeting-----On or before March 31, 2020
	Scheduled Meetings-----Once per quarter

*Church Council action [CC20.03.03g]*

- To receive the response on climate change from the Domestic Mission unit;
- To affirm the coordinated approach and proposed timeline for this church’s response to climate change; and
- To anticipate progress reports at future Church Council meetings with a final report by the April 2022 Church Council meeting.

*Response from Domestic Mission unit (Oct. 2020)*

Addressing climate change in a more unified manner across ELCA began with the 2019 fourth quarter launching of the Sustainability Table (Table). The Table seeks to build capacity and brings together the different churchwide programs and ministries. It embodies our responsibility as stewards of God’s creation through climate action seeking justice and equity for all. Below is a synopsis of the climate change work.

Sustainability Table: The Table operates with Funding, Faith Formation, Capacity Building, Organizational and Operational, Communication, and Advocacy workgroups; and a Steering Committee. The work includes seeking sources of funding for resiliency projects; building up ELCA congregations’ and ministries’ capacities for adapting to climate change; piloting a Rainwater Harvesting project to teach and share learnings about water conservation; developing plan to address the impact of racism on sustainability; and formulating strategies to address the interconnectivity of climate change and disasters. Areas being evaluated include notification to potential buyers of areas prone to flooding and subject to wildfires, how to build back better, assist Lutheran Disaster Response in preparing for January 2021 consultation; identifying role for ELCA in greenhouse gases mitigation measures, and devising climate migration action plan.

Advocacy: Promoting policies to equitably transition to resilient societies without leaving anyone behind. ELCA leadership and interfaith colleagues organized two (2019 and 2020) innovative interfaith events to galvanize experiences, relationships, and resources toward addressing the climate crisis infused with conviction and hope at this watershed moment each held during United Nations Climate Change Week. Through collaboration with ecoAmerica’s Blessed Tomorrow, the ELCA co-branded an ELCA-specific video and researched resources for talking about climate change with congregations and members (available at [Resources](#)). ELCA votes initiatives and advocacy tools equip members with facts and tips to express their creation care concerns in policy consideration and the ballot. Awareness of intersection of environmental racism and health is raised in resources produced by ELCA advocacy staff. Arranged for diverse ELCA group to participate in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP) as an accredited party.

Corporate Social Responsibility: Review and update issues sheets and screens for social purpose funds investing guidance. Participate in the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility (ICCR) committees addressing justice and climate change issues; and serve on ICCR’s Board.

Stewardship: ELCA Caring for Creation Coaching has 16 Level II coaches prepared to work with congregations. We are currently preparing guidelines and orientation for some of these coaches to accompany congregations on their Earth Charter Implementation Plans. A new cohort of coaches will start in October. Also introducing 10 Questions to Manage Your Energy Footprint to congregations and synods.

The next update will be issued in the Spring of 2021.

*There was not significant progress to report to the Spring 2021 meeting of the Church Council, so the progress report was postponed to the Fall 2021 meeting.*

*Response from Service and Justice (Nov. 2021)*

The Sustainability Table (Table) established in 2019 assists ELCA in addressing climate change. Below is a synopsis of the ongoing climate change work.

The Sustainability Table (including Building Resilient Communities (BRC) and Witness In Society (WIS)): The Table's work includes preparing ELCA congregations' and ministries' capacities for building resilient communities in the face of climate change and other environmental matters.

The Table's Capacity Building working group from December 2020 to February 2021 conducted an online survey in the Delaware-Maryland Synod on Care for Creation. The survey helped develop a baseline understanding of environmental issues. Most respondents believed climate change is happening now but see a gap between what they perceive can be done and what is being done. The follow-up work assisted by ELCA Creation Care Coaches (now numbering 22) includes holding eight focus group sessions. The Capacity Building working group submitted a question on creation care in the Form C questionnaire for the ELCA Congregation Annual Report for inclusion in the 2021 report. The responses will help inform the current thinking and capacities of the church and its ministries. Listening sessions were held with Central States and Arkansas-Oklahoma synods. The sessions helped identify needed resources for synods. The Table, working with the Member Communications Strategy working group, will develop a sustainability website to provide a centralized churchwide space for resources. The Table's Organizational and Operational working group will assist in procuring the resources.

WIS led a coalition of partners in holding a side event during President Biden's April 2021 Summit on Climate Change. The consultation called for the inclusion of the expertise of Indigenous and faith communities alongside career politicians and others to implement climate solutions. The ELCA will send a diverse delegation to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change's Conference of the Parties (COP 26) from October 31 to November 12, 2021. COP 26 will be the most significant COP since 2015 for addressing the climate crisis, "seen as the summit to both address what has and hasn't been achieved since 2015, while also setting concrete plans to reach the Paris Agreement targets" ([Euronews](#) Sept. 30), and the US also having rejoined the Paris Agreement." The ELCA met with high level Treasury Department officials on ways multilateral financial institutions can align with climate change goals.

BRC and WIS are partnering to initiate a Net-Zero by 2050 Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions pilot project with the Pennsylvania synods to accompany communities on the journey to a livable future where no one is left behind, starting with support for ministries in reducing their GHG emissions. Interested facilities will receive a baseline assessment of their emissions and site-specific long-term evergreen climate action plan proposals informed by their ministry priorities. Depending upon the ministry site, the recommendations may cover energy efficiency, water use, waste reduction, transportation, and land use/farming.

The Corporate Social Responsibility staff updates documents for social purpose funds investing guidance and is a member of the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility (ICCR) committees addressing justice and climate change issues and serves on ICCR's Board.

The final update will be issued in the Spring of 2022.

**VOTED:**

*EN BLOC*

**CC21.11.25t To receive the progress report on climate change from the Service and Justice unit; and  
To request the final report at the April 2022 Church Council meeting.**

**U. Declaration of the ELCA to the People of African Descent**

At the 2016 Churchwide Assembly, the assembly received the African Descent Lutherans memorial from 10 synods calling for a number of actions related to the ELCA's observance of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation and the commemoration of the United Nation's International Decade of People of African Descent. In response, the assembly requested in part that the Domestic Mission unit staff create a "Declaration to the African Descent Community." [CA16.05.17]

At its special meeting in June 2019, the Church Council adopted "A Declaration to the People of African Descent" and directed additional action steps to be taken. [CC19.06.23]

*Church Council action [CC19.06.23]*

...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...

*Response from Christian Community and Leadership (Nov. 2021)*

Due to the transition of related research staff, the progress report will be delayed, and the Christian Community and Leadership (CCL) home area will not be ready to report by the Nov. 2021 meeting. However, this work is expected to be included as part of the Quality of Call project, which is considering barriers faced by women, people of color, and LGBTQIA+ pastors in the ELCA.

Additionally, Portico Benefit Services has reported that they do not have ethnic background in its systems and therefore would not have any data to segment rostered ministers of color. The terms of Portico's privacy policy by which Portico gathers compensation information from membership precludes using that data for purposes other than providing benefits.

An update on this work is anticipated for the Spring 2022 meeting with a full report in Fall 2022

**VOTED:**

*EN BLOC*

**CC21.11.25u To receive the update from the Christian Community and Leadership unit and Portico Benefit Services on the research work related to the discriminatory treatment within the call process and the inequitable compensation of rostered ministers of color; and  
To request a progress report be presented at the Spring 2022 Church Council meeting with a final report at the Fall 2022 Church Council meeting.**

**RESPONSES TO SYNOD ACTIONS**

**V. Guidance on Retired or Retiring Ministers from the Roster of the ELCA**

*Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod (8B) [2021]*

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 roster of the church whose status is in question or uncertain. Specifically, the synod council is asking 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 the whole church.

*Church Council action [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.

*Response from Office of the Secretary (Nov. 2021)*

Following the referral to the Office of the Secretary of the resolution from the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod Council, Secretary Sue Rothmeyer conferred with Bishop Kurt Kusserow, whose letter had prompted the request. Bishop Kusserow has offered to serve on an *ad hoc* task force to consider guidelines for synods to use in conducting the status review of retired rostered ministers called for in the roster manual. He requested that a member of the Roster Committee of the Conference of Bishops also serve on the task force, and Bishop Shelley Wickstrom of the Alaska Synod has agreed. The task force will submit a proposal to the Roster Committee and the Conference of Bishops for possible guidelines to be inserted in the roster manual. A final draft would then be submitted to the Church Council to approve for inclusion in the roster manual.

**VOTED:**

*EN BLOC*

**CC21.11.25v To receive the response on "Guidance on Retired or Retiring Ministers for the Roster of the ELCA" from the Office of the Secretary;  
To anticipate a progress report at the Spring 2022 Church Council meeting with possible updates to the roster manual; and  
To request that the secretary of this church inform the synod of this action.**

**W. 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.

*Church Council action [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.

*Southeastern Iowa Synod (5D) [2021]*

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 statements, *Caring for Creation* (1993) and *Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All* (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, this church 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 the nation’s leading economists across the political spectrum, including 28 Nobel Laureates and 4 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;<sup>3</sup> and

WHEREAS, the 2019 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;”<sup>4</sup> 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 “can move us toward the pressing goal of reduced GHG emissions and just application of that [carbon] pricing or policy”;<sup>5</sup> and

WHEREAS, the “Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act of 2019”<sup>6</sup> has received bipartisan support in the last two sessions in Congress and is broadly consistent with the following principles outlined in ELCA Advocacy’s “Carbon Pricing Basics” primer:

- Any carbon tax must be structured to respect the jeopardy of vulnerable populations and those living in poverty.
- Any carbon pricing mechanism must not be fiscally regressive but rather must respect vulnerable populations and those living in poverty.
- Emissions targets should be consistent with credible science and with the IPCC special report’s directive that global warming be kept at 1.5 degrees Celsius or less.
- An adjustment mechanism should be included in case the emissions targets are not being met.
- Federal agencies should not be prohibited from proposing new regulations on GHGs if such regulations are needed.
- An effective carbon tax must be applied to as many sectors as possible. Because of the global nature of the problem, border issues and trade policies must also be considered in designing the tax, so that problems are not remedied through workarounds.
- The process for identifying problems and implementing solutions in a carbon tax should be participatory and transparent for all stakeholders.
- The pricing mechanism itself should be transparent and accountable to government authority to ensure that goals are being met.
- Portions of the revenue collected should be used to invest in worker transition, community resilience and renewable energy, with priority given to helping all communities adapt and become more resilient.
- Transparency and accountability should be built into the pricing mechanism.
- The mechanism for awarding rebates to individuals/households should reach the most vulnerable, regardless of income or citizenship.
- Existing environmental and climate change protections should not be rolled back.

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 Southeastern 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 Southeastern Iowa Synod thanks the ELCA Church Council for receiving this resolution at its next meeting, and requests the Council or its Executive Committee to forward this resolution to ELCA Advocacy with encouragement to advocate for the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act or similar legislation; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Iowa Synod encourages congregations in our synod to utilize “Carbon Pricing Basics” in adult education offerings; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Synod rededicates itself to care for creation and to advocate for social and environmental justice, using the resources of Lutherans Restoring Creation ([lutheransrestoringcreation.org](http://lutheransrestoringcreation.org)) and other organizations.

*Executive Committee action [EC21.08.15b]*

To refer the “ELCA Advocacy Support for the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act” resolution from the Southeastern 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.

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<sup>3</sup> Climate Leadership Council, “[Economists Statement on Carbon Dividends.](#)” January 17, 2019.

<sup>4</sup> [Report of Actions of the Church Council \(November 12-14, 2020\).](#)

<sup>5</sup> ELCA Advocacy, “[Carbon Pricing Basics.](#)” October 2019.

<sup>6</sup> [H.R. 763, Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act of 2019.](#)

*Response from Service and Justice (Nov. 2021)*

Reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions into the atmosphere requires multiple approaches, including carbon pricing, setting emissions performance standards, and GHG mitigation technologies. Economists generally believe carbon pricing to be the best tool for having the most significant impact in the near term to spur GHG emission reduction mitigation efforts. Carbon pricing can take many forms, most familiar being an emissions trading system (ETS) or a carbon fee or tax. This resolution's focus is on an Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act (Act).

**Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act of 2021 Status:** H.R.2307—The act of 2021 was introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives (House) on April 1, 2021. The House of Representatives bill history record shows that the legislation was referred to the House Committees on Ways and Means, Energy and Commerce, and Foreign Affairs. On April 2, 2021, the Committee on Energy and Commerce referred the legislation to the Subcommittee on Energy, where it remains.

**Overview of Carbon Tax Legislation:** The probability of a stand-alone carbon tax legislation such as the Act coming to either the House or Senate floor for a vote is very slim. Despite the economics of the act put forth by economists, or the lobbying efforts of such groups as the [Citizen Climate Lobby](#) (CCL) or the bipartisan [Climate Leadership Council](#), none of which proves to be sufficient to bridge the political divide existing in the current partisan environment.

The carbon tax impasse is not new. [CCL](#) has been advocating for carbon fee and dividend legislation since 2010. Over ten different carbon pricing bills were introduced in Congress over the past few years. A [New York Times](#) article (dated 10/13/2021) gives an overview of how the political dynamics hinder bringing forth bills like the Act. The Times states, “[a] tax on carbon dioxide pollution could be the single most effective policy to tackle climate change. But, unfortunately, it could also be politically explosive.” There is a fear that even with the dividends used as rebates to citizens, higher prices for electricity, and some goods would be too much for people to handle. There have been rumors of including some type of carbon tax in the Build Back Better Act, which would if enacted, be the most significant climate legislation ever for the U.S., but the White House did not support this tax.

**WIS Advocacy:** In 2019, the Domestic Mission Unit (Advocacy) developed a primer covering [carbon pricing basics](#) and a [carbon pricing questions document](#) to analyze any carbon fee legislation.

Witnessing In Society (WIS, aka Advocacy) advocates for climate change legislation and collaborates with ecumenical, interfaith, and civil society working for climate justice and equity. WIS maintains leadership roles in organizations such as [America Is All In](#), and spearheads efforts to take our message to the highest levels of government, such as creating the opportunity for the presiding bishop to participate in a high-level White House meeting on the Build Back Better Act.

**VOTED:**

*EN BLOC*

**CC21.11.25w**      **To receive the response on “ELCA Advocacy Support for the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act” from Service and Justice;**  
**To commend the ELCA Advocacy staff for their overarching support of carbon tax legislation given the current impasse on such legislation, and their continued advocacy for climate justice and equity; and**  
**To request that the secretary of this church inform the synods of this action.**

**X. Gender Representation and Inclusion**

*Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod (7E) [2021] (2021 memorial reclassified as a resolution)*

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod memorialize the 2022 Churchwide Assembly of the ELCA to expand gender/sex language beyond using binary terms for church members representing groups, congregations, conferences and other subunits within synods, and synods at gatherings in any of the three expressions of the church by changing section 5.01. in order to expand the gender quota requirement therein, and explicitly grant access and inclusion of nonbinary and gender fluid individuals in full participation of church life and to expand the ELCA's commitment to inclusiveness in Chapter 5 of the ELCA constitution to include a specifically stated commitment to inclusion of nonbinary and gender fluid persons in the business of the church, including as voting members.

*Response from Office of the Secretary (Nov. 2021)*

The Church Council will consider at this meeting a proposed continuing resolution, 5.01.H21., which specifies that, for the purposes of the representational principles, the percentage of laypersons that is not allocated to women or men by 5.01.e. and f. may be allocated to persons who identify as gender non-binary, gender fluid, women, men, or other genders.

**VOTED:**

*EN BLOC*

**CC21.11.25x**      **To receive the response on “Gender Representation and Inclusion” from the Office of the Secretary;**

**To acknowledge the action taken on proposed continuing resolution 5.01.H21 as the response of the Church Council to this resolution from the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod; and  
To request that the secretary of this church inform the synod of this action.**

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### **REPORT OF THE TEMPORARY SELECT COMMITTEE ON COMMITTEES**

(Agenda III.G.)

Mr. Kevin Anderson, chair of the Temporary Select Committee on Committees, described the work leading to the recommended action. If adopted, the Church Council would move from four standing committees to five standing committees. While the Budget and Finance and Legal and Constitutional Review committees would remain, the Program and Services and the Planning and Evaluation committees would be disbanded and replaced with three new committees. Two of the proposed committees would relate to two home areas of the churchwide organization: the Service and Justice Committee and the Christian Community and Leadership Committee. The third committee—Faith, Society, and Innovation—would review social teaching documents and also relate to the Innovation home area. The new committee structure would take effect following the 2022 Churchwide Assembly. The proposed Church Council action directs the Board Development Committee to assign individuals to committees and requests that the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee construct new continuing resolutions for the new committees.

Mr. Anderson commented that, traditionally, the four chairs of the standing committees served as members of the Executive Committee. With the expansion to five standing committees, the Executive Committee had recommended that the size of that committee be expanded from seven to eight members.

There being no further discussion, Vice President Peña called for the vote.

#### **VOTED:**

**CC21.11.26**

**To approve the proposed Church Council committee restructure as detailed in “Proposed CC Committee Restructure” for full implementation immediately following the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly;**

**To direct the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee to prepare and forward to the Church Council the revisions to the continuing resolutions under constitutional provision 14.41. to establish each of the new standing committees, to remove provisions for committees that will be discontinued and to present the continuing resolution amendments to the Spring 2022 Church Council meeting;**

**To direct the Board Development Committee to plan for the size and composition of the new standing committees and to forward preliminary committee assignments to the Executive Committee;**

**To direct the Executive Committee to review the proposed committee assignments and to forward to the Church Council for ratification;**

**To direct all new standing committees of the Church Council to prepare committee charters for alignment with the proposed restructure; and**

**To express appreciation to the members of the Temporary Select Committee on Committees for their diligent and thoughtful work.**

#### **CONSIDERATION OF ITEMS REMOVED FROM *EN BLOC* (CONTINUED)**

Discussion continued on 14.41.01. which had been pulled from *en bloc* consideration and deferred to follow the report of the Temporary Select Committees on Committees.

#### **Moved;**

#### **Seconded:**

*To recommend the following for adoption by the 2022 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:*

*To adopt the following amendment to the Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:*



- 14.41.01. Executive Committee.** The Church Council shall have an Executive Committee composed of the churchwide officers, the chair of the Conference of Bishops, and ~~seven-eight~~ members of the Church Council elected by the council. The vice president of this church shall chair this committee. The Executive Committee shall:
- f. demonstrate concern for the spiritual, emotional, and physical well-being of the ~~full-time-salaried~~ officers of this church; and

Following discussion, Vice President Peña called for the vote.

**VOTED:**

**CC21.11.27** *To recommend the following for adoption by the 2022 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:*

*To adopt the following amendment to the Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:*

- 14.41.01. Executive Committee.** The Church Council shall have an Executive Committee composed of the churchwide officers, the chair of the Conference of Bishops, and ~~seven-eight~~ members of the Church Council elected by the council. The vice president of this church shall chair this committee. The Executive Committee shall:
- f. demonstrate concern for the spiritual, emotional, and physical well-being of the ~~full-time-salaried~~ officers of this church; and

**PERSONAL REFLECTION ON FAITH**

Mr. Gary Pederson provided a personal reflection on his faith.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Vice President Peña announced that there was no unfinished business.

**EVALUATION AND DEBRIEFING**

Vice President Peña asked members to complete the meeting evaluation form. A council member gave thanks for the opportunity to gather in person.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS AND SENDING WORD AND PRAYER**

Secretary Rothmeyer encouraged members to share joys, concerns, and prayers on Microsoft Teams between council meetings. She asked members to return expense forms by the end of the month.

Ms. Tracey A. Beasley led closing worship.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The 109th meeting of the Church Council adjourned at 11:32 a.m. on Saturday, Nov. 13, 2021.

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