EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
CHURCH COUNCIL
April 20, 2023
Online Meeting

AGENDA

Participants
Voting Members
Pr. Lisa Ahlness
Mr. Kevin Anderson
Bp. Tracie Bartholomew
Ms. Tracey Beasley
Pr. Marcus Bigott
Pr. Nick Billardello
Ms. Susan Boxberger (excused)
Pr. Heather Brown
Ms. Jamie Brueschoff
Pr. Bill Callister
Pr. Leroy Cannon
Pr. Karn Carroll
Ms. Divine
Bp. Elizabeth Eaton, Presiding Bishop
Pr. Joanne Engquist
Ms. Lori Fedyk, Treasurer
Ms. Kerry Fehman
Ms. Sheena Foster
Mr. Hans Giller
Pr. Emily Hartner
Ms. Kristy Henriksen
Pr. Pamela Hoh

Liaison Bishops
Bp. Shelley Wickstrom
Bp. Brenda Bos
Bp. Patricia Lull
Bp. Sue Briner
Bp. Yehiel Curry

Advisory Members
Mr. Roberto Lara Aranda, Latino Ministries Association, president
Pr. Joan Conroy, American Indian and Alaska Native Lutheran Association, president
Pr. Khader El-Yateem, Association of Lutherans of Arab and Middle Eastern Heritage, president
Ms. Shari Seifert, European Descent Lutheran Association for Racial Justice, president
Pr. Moses Penumaka, Association of Asian and Pacific Islanders, president
Ms. Aubrey Thonvold, ReconcilingWorks, executive director
Pr. Lamont Wells, African Descent Lutheran Association, president

Resource People
Operations: Office of the Presiding Bishop
Ms. Jennifer DeLeon, Director, Racial Justice
Ms. Victoria Flood, Senior Director, Mission Support
Ms. Jocelyn Fuller, Senior Director, Strategic Communications
Pr. Louise Johnson, Executive, Administration  
Ms. Rhondean Johnson, Executive, People and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion  
Ms. Kathryn Lohre, Executive, Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations and Theological Discernment  
Ms. Judith Roberts, Senior Director, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion  
Deacon John Weit, Executive, Worship (excused)  
Pr. Roger Willer, Director, Theological Ethics  
Ms. Rachel Wind, Executive, Development  

**Operations: Office of the Secretary**  
Mr. Thomas Cumniff, General Counsel  
Mr. Dan Eppley, Manager, Official Documentation  
Pr. Keith Fry, Executive, Office of the Secretary Administration  
Mr. Paul Irwin, Associate General Counsel  

**Christian Community and Leadership (CCL)**  
Pr. Philip Hirsch, Executive Director (excused)  
Pr. Sara Cutter, Senior Director, Operational Effectiveness  
Ms. Evelyn Soto, Senior Director, Resources and Relationships  

**Service and Justice (SJ)**  
Ms. Tammy Jackson, Interim Executive Director  
Pr. Barbara Lund, Senior Director, Operations and Innovation  

**Innovation (INO)**  
Mr. Iain Chester, Executive Director  

**Press**  
Ms. Candice Hill Buchbinder, Public Relations Manager  

**Separately Incorporated Ministries**  
Mr. Tim Blevins, President and CEO, 1517 Media  
Pr. Jeff Thiemann, President and CEO, Portico Benefit Services  
Ms. Linda Post Bushkofsky, Executive Director, Women of the ELCA  
Ms. Eva Roby, President and CEO, Mission Investment Fund  
Ms. Annette Shoemaker, interim President and CEO, ELCA Foundation  

**Ecumenical Guests**  
Pr. Dale Buettner, The Reformed Church in America  
Pr. Mark Goodman, The Episcopal Church  
Pr. Kennetha Bigham-Tsai, The United Methodist Church  
Ms. Elona Street Stewart, Presbyterian Church in America
I.A Call to Order and Adoption of the Agenda
   Agenda items have been distributed electronically. The times noted in the agenda are estimates and are
   provided for information only.

   CC ACTION
   Recommended:
   To adopt the agenda and to permit the chair to call for consideration of agenda items in the
   order the chair deems most appropriate.

I.B Adoption of the Standing Rules
   The Church Council will conduct its business in this online meeting using standing rules. The
   document highlights deadlines for removal from en bloc and new business, instructions for Church
   Council members on how to ask a question or make a comment during the meeting, and the process for
   voting. The standing rules can be found here.

   CC ACTION
   Recommended:
   To adopt the standing rules for the April 2023 Church Council meeting.

I.C Report from the Presiding Bishop
   The presiding bishop will provide a 10-minute verbal update and an additional 5 minutes will be
   available for questions. The written report from the presiding bishop can be found here.

I.D Report of the Executive Committee
   I.D.1 Appointments to the Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church
   At its November 2022 meeting, the Church Council established parameters for the nomination
   process of the Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church (CRLC) and authorized the Executive
   Committee of the Church Council to initiate the process of forming the commission. [CC22.11.38]

   The Executive Committee launched a two-month nomination process beginning Jan. 9 and ending
   March 9, 2023. A total of 402 nominations were received through both the synod nomination process and
   the open nomination process. The Executive Committee was supported by the Office of the Secretary
   staff in the committee’s nominating role to initiate the nomination process and determine the slate of
   nominees to present to Church Council for this April 20 online meeting. In addition, a web page within
   ELCA.org (www.ELCA.org/CRLC) provides background information about the commission and the
   timeline for the work, and it will be updated as the commission’s work progresses.

   The first in-person CRLC meeting is scheduled for July 13-15, 2023, with an anticipation of 14-15
   additional meetings in total. Generally, there will be two in-person meetings per year and the other
   meetings will be held online. CRLC will be responsible for determining the actual dates for its future
   meetings. The Office of the Secretary will cover travel expenses for members of the CRLC to attend all
   in-person meetings.
The Executive Committee is presenting a slate of nominees for the council’s consideration. All nominees have been contacted to discern their willingness to serve if appointed. The Office of the Secretary will notify the nominees of their appointment. If a vacancy occurs on the commission, the Executive Committee is prepared to fill those vacancies as deemed appropriate and necessary for the commission’s work.

CC ACTION
Recommended:
To appoint the following members to the Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church:
Mr. Roberto Lara Aranda, the Rev. Sean Avery, Ms. Felecia Boone, Mr. Michael J. Chan, the Rev. Tiffany Chaney, Mr. Don Corson, Mr. Antoine Cummins, the Rev. Elizabeth Friedman, the Rev. Charlene Guiliani, the Rev. Gail Hagerty, Bishop Regina Hassanally (at-large), the Rev. Douglas A. Hill, Mx. Ruth Ellen Howard, Ms. Thelma Pruitt Jacks, Mr. Ryan Johnson (at-large), Ms. Stacy D. Kitahata, the Rev. Kristin Johnston Largen, Mr. David M. Lenz (at-large), Ms. Alexandra Mack, Mr. Thomas Madden (at-large), Ms. Susan Wilds McArver, Ms. Candy McCorkle, Mr. Evan Moilan (at-large), Ms. Sarah E. Morris, Ms. Laurel Muhly-Alexander, Mr. Anthony Ormsbee-Hale, Bishop Matthew Riegel (at-large), Mr. Leon Schwartz, Deacon Dallas Shealy (at-large), the Rev. Adam Sornchai, Ms. Melody Stachour, Ms. Cheryl Stuart, Ms. Loni Taylor (at-large), Ms. Linda M. Timmons, and the Rev. Carla Christopher Wilson; and
To authorize the Executive Committee to appoint members as necessary if a vacancy occurs.

I.D.2 Proposal for Exchangeability of the Diaconate: The Episcopal Church and the ELCA
At its March 2023 meeting, the ELCA Conference of Bishops voted to commend to the ELCA Church Council a “Proposal for Exchangeability of the Diaconate” between the ELCA and The Episcopal Church (TEC) as an interpretation of the full communion agreement, “Called to Common Mission.”

Long-awaited, the exchangeability of deacons between the two churches became possible following the action of the 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly confirming ordination as the entrance rite for rostered ministers of Word and Service. The proposal mutually recognizes each church’s order of deacons as authentic and provides for the possibility of interchangeability for occasional ministry or extended service. The proposal affirms the possibility for exchange. Exchangeability itself is subject to the approval of the respective bishops and guided by the “orderly exchange.”

As an ecumenical text, this proposal can only be acted upon, and not altered. TEC is undertaking a similar process to implement this proposal as the ELCA.

What is the process?
The proposal was developed over 18 months by an implementation team of the Lutheran Episcopal Coordinating Committee (LECC), which is the body entrusted to oversee both churches’ reception (living out) of the full communion agreement, “Called to Common Mission.” LECC endorsed the proposal on January 11, 2023.

In February, a consultation was convened by the ecumenical staff and implementation team chair with the ELCA Deaconess Community and ELCA churchwide candidacy staff. The importance of the proposal was affirmed. A parallel consultation is underway in the TEC.

In March, the ELCA Conference of Bishops voted to commend the proposal to the ELCA Church Council for reception. Again, TEC will undertake a similar process.

In the meantime, work on the “orderly exchange” document, which provides guidelines for the exchangeability of ministers of Word and Sacrament, will be expanded to include guidelines for the exchangeability of deacons. Specific realities, such as the asymmetry in the compensation of ELCA and TEC deacons, will be carefully and clearly addressed. This work on the “orderly exchange” will also
serve areas for mutual growth and accompaniment, including best practices in formation, compensation, and the role and responsibilities of deacons.

Bishop Don Kreiss, chair of the Conference of Bishops Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations Committee and co-chair of the LECC, and Kathryn Lohre, executive for Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations and Theological Discernment, will be online address any questions about the proposal.

The proposal can be found [here](#).

**CC ACTION**

Recommended:

To receive a proposal for exchangeability of the diaconate between The Episcopal Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

**I.D.3 Report and Recommendations of the Task Force on the ELCA Discipline Process for Rostered Ministers of Color**

At the spring 2022 Church Council meeting, the Church Council authorized the creation of a task force “charged with reviewing the current process for discipline and its impact on persons of color and other historically marginalized groups, considering recommendations for staffing, community healing and restoration, and learning best practices from full communion partners” and requested a report with possible recommendations be provided by the Spring 2023 meeting. [CC22.04.04]

At its April 20 meeting, the Executive Committee will discuss the report and recommendations from the task force. The report and recommendations can be found in the Public Current Meeting channel under the Executive Committee folder.

**CC ACTION**

Recommended:

To receive the report and recommendations from the Task Force on the ELCA Discipline Process for Rostered Ministers of Color and thank the members of the task force for their care and due diligence to the work;

To refer the recommendations regarding the current discipline process to the Office of the Secretary, in consultation with the Conference of Bishops, with a report to be made to the Church Council at its November 2023 meeting;

To refer the recommendations regarding the creation of an ombudsperson position/office to the Administrative Team, in consultation with the Conference of Bishops, with a report to be made to the Church Council at its November 2023 meeting; and

To refer the recommendations regarding revisions to the *Manual of Policies and Procedures for Management of the Rosters of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* to the Task Force on Specialized Ministry and On-Leave-From-Call Status.

10-Minute Break

**I.E Report from the Treasurer**

The treasurer will provide a 10-minute verbal update. The written report from the treasurer can be found [here](#).

**I.F Report of the Budget and Finance Committee**

The following report is provided by the Budget and Finance Committee. Any *en bloc* items will be acted upon later in the meeting. Background information can be located in the Budget and Finance Committee folder of Church Council Microsoft Teams.
I.F.1 Revisions to FY23 Spending Authorizations

**CC ACTION**
Recommended:

To increase the FY23 spending authorization in ELCA World Hunger by $1,520,000, from $25,250,000 to $26,770,000.

I.G Report of the Faith, Society, and Innovation Committee

The following report is provided by the Faith, Society, and Innovation Committee. *En bloc* items will be acted upon later in the meeting. Background information can be located in the Faith, Society, and Innovation Committee (FSIC) folder of Church Council Microsoft Teams.

I.G.1 Social Message on Earth’s Climate Crisis

In November 2021, the ELCA Church Council acted 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)...” (Social message development typically happens within a year; this process was delayed due to staff capacity factors.)

A revised draft text was shared in February with the Conference of Bishops. The Conference of Bishops Theological and Ethical Concerns Committee gave the text a final close review. In early April, the Faith, Society, and Innovation Committee (FSIC) reviewed the Final Proposed text. This Recommended Social Message represents the result of these careful efforts to hear public comment and work with reviewers, bishops, and FSIC to craft the final text for Church Council consideration.

The **Recommended Proposed Social Message on Earth's Climate Change** can be located in the Faith, Society, and Innovation Committee folder. In addition, there is a [FAQ](#) available in the folder.

**CC ACTION**  *[Two-thirds approval required]*
Recommended:

To adopt “Earth’s Climate Crisis” as a social message of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

I.H Consideration of Items Removed from En Bloc

I.I En Bloc Approval of Certain Items

The following *en bloc* resolution includes agenda items that will be considered near the end of the Church Council meeting. Inclusion of these items in the *en bloc* action reflects a judgment that these items are relatively non-controversial in nature and may not require plenary discussion and a separate vote.

Each of the items is noted as [En Bloc] in *En Bloc Items, Response to Churchwide Assembly Actions, Response to Previous Church Council Action, and Responses to Synod Actions.*

The chair will not call for a discussion or separate vote on those items that are not removed from the *en bloc* resolution. The items remaining in the *en bloc* resolution normally will be considered as one of the last items of council business.

**CC ACTION**
Recommended:

To take action *En Bloc* on the items listed in En Bloc Items, Response to Previous Church Council Action, Responses to Synod Actions, and Responses to Churchwide Assembly Actions.
I.J  New Business

I.K  Legal Briefing (executive session for Church Council, liaison bishops, Administrative Team, legal team, and minutes team only)

I.L  Adjournment