

Revised April 20, 2023

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

AGENDA

Participants

Voting Members

Pr. Lisa Ahlness	Ms. Cherrish Holland
Mr. Kevin Anderson	Mr. Rindra Josoa
Bp. Tracie Bartholomew	Pr. Gwendolyn King
Ms. Tracey Beasley	Mr. David Lenz
Pr. Marcus Bigott	Pr. Tara Lynn
Pr. Nick Billardello	Ms. Olivia Martin-Call
Ms. Susan Boxberger (<i>excused</i>)	Mr. Mitch McCartney
Pr. Heather Brown	Mr. Joel Miller
Ms. Jamie Brueschhoff	Mr. Ethan Miller-Perez
Pr. Bill Callister	Mr. Keoni Newman
Pr. Leroy Cannon	Deacon Kari Olsen
Pr. Karn Carroll	Mr. Iván Perez
Ms. Divine	Ms. Linda Rivera
Bp. Elizabeth Eaton, Presiding Bishop	Deacon Sue Rothmeyer, Secretary
Pr. Joanne Engquist	Mr. Noah Roux
Ms. Lori Fedyk, Treasurer	Ms. Valerie Shaw
Ms. Kerry Fehrman	Mr. Imran Siddiqui, Vice President
Ms. Sheena Foster	Ms. Andraine Sinaga
Mr. Hans Giller	Mr. Loren Solberg
Pr. Emily Hartner	Pr. Kjersten Sullivan
Ms. Kristy Henriksen	Ms. Loni Taylor
Pr. Pamela Hoh	Ms. Jennifer Trom

Liaison Bishops

Bp. Shelley Wickstrom	Bp. Donald Kreiss
Bp. Brenda Bos	Bp. Christopher deForest
Bp. Patricia Lull	Bp. Paula Schmitt
Bp. Sue Briner	Bp. Kevin Strickland (<i>in lieu of Bp. Pedro Suárez</i>)
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 Cunniff, 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

5:30 p.m. CDT

Deadline for Removal of Items from *En Bloc* (send request to Sue.Rothmeyer@elca.org)

Deadline for New Business (send request to Sue.Rothmeyer@elca.org)

PLENARY SESSION ONE

[Microsoft Teams Meeting Link](#)

April 20, 2023

5-8 p.m. CDT

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](#), [Responses 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**