



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

The Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) met at the Lutheran Center, Chicago, Illinois, November 12-15, 2015. The council centered its work around daily worship, frequent prayer and personal reflections on faith. It lived into its commitment to be a “Book of Faith” council by participating in a Bible study led by the Rev. Kwame Pitts, pastor at Redeemer Lutheran in South Holland, Illinois.

Among the items on which the Church Council took action were the following:

- adopted the document titled “Gender-Based Violence” as a social message of the ELCA and its accompanying foundational document
- recommended action to the Churchwide Assembly which would unify the three existing official rosters of laypersons (Associates in Ministry, Deaconesses of the ELCA and Diaconal Ministers) into a roster of Ministry of Word and Service
- recommended action to the Churchwide Assembly to amend the Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA
- adopted a continuing resolution to address the election process of the Vice President
- affirmed Bishop Eaton’s Future Directions and Priorities of the ELCA process design and authorized the appointment of a Future Directions Table
- accepted the 32 Statements of Agreement from *Declaration on the Way* and forwarded them to the Churchwide Assembly for reception
- received the report and referred the recommendations of the Ministry to and with Same-Gender Couples and Their Families Working Group to the appropriate churchwide organization units for implementation
- affirmed the extensive efforts by the Presiding Bishop to call the entire church to confront racism and to include those efforts in a broader, comprehensive strategy towards becoming a racially and ethnically diverse church
- received the Theological Education Advisory Council (TEAC) report, created a comment period to provide feedback on this report, and appointed a working group to craft implementing strategies
- adopted the revised Candidacy Manual
- approved amendments to documents and a succession plan related to Corporate Social Responsibility
- approved a resolution regarding investment in specific Palestinian economic endeavors
- received the report in response to the 2013 Churchwide Assembly action related to reviewing the ELCA’s guiding documents on communion practices
- approved a revised 2016 fiscal year fund spending authorization of \$66,514,340 and a revised 2016 fiscal year World Hunger spending authorization of \$21,000,000
- approved resolutions regarding authority to act in financial matters
- appointed members to the Memorials and Reference and Counsel Committees for the 2016 Churchwide Assembly

- elected members to the ELCA Church Council Executive Committee; the ELCA Audit Committee, the Committee on Appeals; the board of directors of Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, and Luther Seminary; and approved the designation of members to the board of directors of The Evangelical Lutheran Good Samaritan Society

The Church Council received the following:

- reports from the officers, executive for administration, churchwide units, its committees and the Conference of Bishops
- updates on the Campaign for the ELCA, Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities (AMMPARO) initiative, the new church in South Sudan, mission support strategy, the new flagship publication, Portico Benefit Services and Augsburg Fortress
- greetings from ecumenical partners
- primer on forming leaders in the ELCA led by the Rev. Sarah Stumme