



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

April 13, 2016

TO: Bishops of synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
 Vice Presidents of synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
 Secretaries of synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
 Members of the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
 Administrative Team of the churchwide organization
 Chief executive officers of separately incorporated ministries
 Seminary presidents
 Regional coordinators

FROM: The Rev. Wm Chris Boerger, secretary *WCB*

SUBJECT: Report of Actions of the Church Council (April 7-10, 2016)

The Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) met at the Lutheran Center, Chicago, Ill., April 7-10, 2016. Here is a summary of particular actions along with background information.

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1. THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL (TEAC) WORKING GROUP

Background:

At its April 2013 meeting, the Church Council created [CC13.04.11] the Theological Education Advisory Council (TEAC) and authorized it “to consult as appropriate with other leaders both within and beyond the ELCA in order to consider how our interdependent network of theological education providers can best serve the church as it seeks to address in a holistic manner issues in leadership development, theological education, candidacy and call, and the rosters of this church.”

Representatives of the advisory council provided an update and a presentation of its report and recommendations to the Conference of Bishops and to the Church Council’s Executive Committee in October 2015.

The Church Council also began receiving responses from ELCA seminary boards in which they conveyed their readiness to work with each other and all expressions of this church in “enacting all necessary reforms to preserve and advance a strong ecology of theological education and confessional formation for the sake of the Church.”

At its November 2015 meeting, the Church Council voted [CC15.11.46]:

To receive the Theological Education Advisory Council (TEAC) report and express our appreciation for the work of the Theological Education Advisory Council;

To recognize and embrace this Spirit-led convergence of new possibilities for theological education for this church;

To affirm the innovation and collaboration already underway by the seminaries which recognize the changing climate of theological education;

To make available the TEAC report to synods, congregations, agencies, institutions and ecumenical partners;

To create a comment period inviting all the expressions of this church to provide feedback and engage in ongoing conversation about the future of the theological education enterprise in the life of this church;

To appoint a working group of Church Council members, TEAC members and appropriate churchwide staff to receive feedback from around this church, to craft possible specific implementing strategies that operationalize the recommendations in the TEAC report, and to make a report to the Church Council prior to the April 2016 meeting; and

To direct the Church Council's Budget and Finance Committee to give preliminary thought to funding implications of the recommendations contained in the TEAC report.

The TEAC working group consisted of the Rev. M. Wyvetta Bullock, Presiding Bishop Elizabeth A. Eaton, Mr. Randall S. Foster, the Rev. Stephen R. Herr, Ms. Maren Hulten, Mr. Paul C. Pribbenow, the Rev. Robin J. Steinke, the Rev. Jonathan P. Strandjord and the Rev. Herman R. Yoos III, bishop of the South Carolina Synod.

Church Council actions:

To claim and name the abundant gifts of our church to create and sustain a network of theological education that serves the mission of the gospel.

To approve TEAC Recommendation 1A and accompanying implementing strategies.

TEAC Recommendation 1A: To create a new advisory committee to the Church Council (hereafter the Advisory Committee) whose charge it is to sustain a robust network of theological education for the ELCA and to prioritize and oversee the implementation of the TEAC recommendations.

Implementing Strategies:

- To establish an Advisory Committee as a committee of the Church Council, consisting of nine members. Representational principles of this church ELCA Constitution 5.01.f. are to be used in determining the membership of this committee. Committee members shall be appointed by the Executive Committee of the Church Council.

Committee members shall include:

- 2 members of the Church Council, one of whom shall be named as convener by the presiding bishop
- 1 member of the Conference of Bishops
- 1 member identified by the seminary presidents and chief administrative officers
- 1 member from lay schools of this church
- 1 member from the synod vice presidents
- 3 at-large members

Staff support shall include:

- 1 person from the Office of the Presiding Bishop
 - 1 person from the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit
 - Additional staff as necessary
- Committee members shall serve a term of three-years with no term limits. The initial appointment of members shall stagger terms so that three members would be appointed or reappointed each year.
 - To identify the responsibilities of the Advisory Committee as such:
 - Identify clear goals, outcomes and metrics of assessment to fulfill the TEAC recommendations.
 - Advise the Church Council on the mission, shape and scope of theological education in this church.

- o Monitor and report to the council on the implementation of the TEAC recommendations.
- o With the Office of the Presiding Bishop, the Conference of Bishops and the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit, monitor and encourage the maintenance of a robust network of theological education in the ELCA.
- o Monitor and report to the Church Council the work of the seminaries in developing “a common theological education enterprise” and the work of developing a common learning platform.
- o Report to the Church Council with recommended actions needed to sustain theological education and the theological education networks in this church.
- o With existing seminaries and the other partners in our theological education network, report areas or resources that need to be developed to meet the current and emerging needs of this church.
- o With the Office of the Presiding Bishop, the Conference of Bishops and the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit, identify changes needed for theologically trained leaders for the future of this church.
- o Work with the churchwide organization, the Conference of Bishops, seminaries and lay schools to review and recommend appropriate modification to the funding formula used by the churchwide organization and synods.
- o Work with the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Conference of Bishops on issues of lifelong learning and rostered leader continuing education.
- o Cooperate with the Executive Committee of the Church Council in an annual review of the committee’s responsibilities, with an assessment after two years whether this Advisory Committee should continue.

To approve the remaining recommendations and refer them to the Advisory Committee and the Office of the Presiding Bishop for analysis and implementation.

TEAC Recommendation 1B: To direct the Office of the Presiding Bishop to call on synods and congregations to join the churchwide organization in staffing and resourcing the ELCA theological education network in ways that recognize its centrality to the church’s mission and future vitality.

Implementing Strategies:

- To direct the Office of the Presiding Bishop to organize an integrated communication plan that aligns all expressions of this church (churchwide, synodical and congregational) in a clear and compelling campaign to lift up how our teaching and learning ministry is central to the life of faith in the world. This campaign would involve all vehicles available, including print media, social media and personal testimonies by church leaders – rostered and lay – to express the clear message that the baptized are called to hear the Word, ask “What does this mean?” and live as God’s faithful people in the world – the organizing themes of our tradition and the heart of theological education.
- To direct the presiding bishop to work with the Conference of Bishops and the Church Council to develop clear criteria for prioritizing resource alignment within the churchwide and synodical organizations (and by extension, congregations) aimed at enhancing and extending the network of theological education across this church.
- To direct the Advisory Committee to monitor the impact of these alignment efforts for communications and resources, looking for opportunities to enhance these efforts.

TEAC Recommendation 1C: To strongly encourage the seminaries in leading the development of a common learning platform that can serve to integrate and make widely accessible resources for theological education.

Implementing Strategies:

- To commend the work already underway in crafting a learning exchange and securing funding to operate the learning exchange for at least the first three-year start-up period.
- To request that the seminaries provide a progress report to the fall 2016 meeting of the ELCA Church Council.
- To request that the seminaries share an update on the learning exchange at the 2016 ELCA Churchwide Assembly.

TEAC Recommendation 1D: To direct the ELCA Research and Evaluation team to support the development of an ongoing robust asset-mapping process that identifies all theological education activity across this church, catalogs it, explores synergies and opportunities for scaling good practices and undoing redundancies, and makes possible an interactive and widely accessible web-based depository of theological education resources across this church.

Implementing Strategies:

- To direct the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit, in consultation with the Office of the Treasurer, Information Technology, to identify potential web-based, interactive models for creating interactive asset maps of program offerings. The requirements of these models will guide information gathering as the maps are developed.
- To direct the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit to work with the Global Mission unit for resources related to Latino theological education and with the Global Mission unit, the Network of ELCA Colleges and Universities, seminaries and synods for resources related to young adult faith formation to identify relevant resources for including in asset maps aimed at each audience.
- To request that the relevant churchwide, synodical and congregational entities use the asset maps for Hispanic and Young Adult theological education resources to engage constituents in the efficacy of such maps for meeting the needs of their communities.
- Based on the results of these “pilot” asset maps, to direct the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit to explore similar maps for other key constituencies for theological education, with the aim of expanding the asset-mapping to include a comprehensive roster of theological education resources for this church and an interactive web-based model for use across this church to identify and use those resources.
- To direct the Office of the Treasurer to work with the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit to explore the resources required to create and sustain the asset maps.

TEAC Recommendation 2: To link vocational discernment and theological education for specific target audiences within and beyond this church, with a focus on those whose leadership will strengthen the missional future of the ELCA.

TEAC Recommendation 2A: To direct the churchwide organization to call on synods, congregations and ELCA theological education network to join it in encouraging young adults in vocational discernment by expanding model programs such as Project Connect and Youth Theology Institutes at the synodical level to serve as pathways for future leaders in the church.

Implementing Strategies:

- To direct the Office of the Presiding Bishop through Research and Evaluation to, in conjunction with the asset-mapping pilot, take stock of the churchwide resources directed to leadership and discernment and assess their respective impact on calls to church leadership. Among other things, this effort should consider the impact of this church’s investment in Young Adults in Global Mission, Campus Ministry, Outdoor Ministry and other young-adult focused programs.

- To direct the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit to work with the Conference of Bishops to explore and develop a proposal to fund and coordinate experiential, immersive church leadership opportunities for young adults across this church. To request that the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit provide a proposal to the fall 2017 meeting of the ELCA Church Council.
- To direct the Advisory Committee, in conjunction with seminaries, synods and the Office of the Presiding Bishop through Research and Evaluation, to identify congregations across this church that regularly and effectively invite and encourage young people to consider church leadership and develop resources and tools that synodical bishops and staff can use to support congregations and rostered leaders to better invite and encourage young people to consider church leadership. The Advisory Committee should consider how sharing or receiving these resources could fit into the pilot project for continuing education requirements.
- To ask synods to designate a staff member or volunteer to serve as a coordinator for young adult discernment and leadership work in the synod, collaborating with partners to explore and regularly offer vocational discernment retreats for young people.
- To ask each of the seminaries to designate one seminary staff member to serve as a regional coordinator and connector for the young adult discernment and leadership work in a given region. This person would, informed by the asset mapping pilot project, seek to connect the various church and extra-church groups doing discernment and leadership for young people, including synods, congregations, ELCA colleges, ELCA seminaries, the Youth Ministry Network, Campus Ministry, Outdoor Ministries, Lutheran Volunteer Corps and intentional young adult living communities.
- To direct the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit to convene a leadership and discernment convocation, inviting those across this church identified through the asset-mapping project to come together to explore, vision and plan how this church in all its expressions can more intentionally invite young people into leadership in the church.
- To direct the Advisory Committee to investigate the factors potential candidates consider with regard to the practical realities of church leadership, such as finances, assignment and placement, in order to consider what changes could be made to make church leadership a more welcoming calling.

TEAC Recommendation 2B: To call upon the seminaries, in collaboration with the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit, the Global Mission unit, The Lutheran World Federation and ecumenical partners, to develop networked theological education programs, resources and opportunities for ethnic-specific communities (for example, a Latino theological education network with the capacity to reach a wide range of geographic locations with growing Latino populations).

Implementing Strategies:

- To direct the Global Mission unit to convene the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit, The Lutheran World Federation and the seminaries to develop a common global theological education strategy and report back to the fall 2016 meeting of the ELCA Church Council.
- To direct the Global Mission unit to convene the Conference of Bishops' representatives and the seminary leadership to develop a strategy to deploy some companion synod funds in service to theological education with our global partners and report back to the fall 2016 meeting of the ELCA Church Council.
- To direct the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit to convene the Conference of Bishops' representatives and seminary leadership to create a strategy on coordinating ethnic-specific leadership training with measurable and realistic goals and report back to the fall 2016 meeting of the ELCA Church Council.

TEAC Recommendation 2C: To call upon the theological education network to organize and make available a variety of opportunities for education, training and certification of lay leaders for missional service in congregations and communities.

Implementing Strategies:

- To direct the Office of the Presiding Bishop to convene key providers of Life Long Learning opportunities to share, re-imagine and coordinate the learning outcomes of their programs so that they can better advance the mission of the gospel by creating integrated curricular paths for lay leaders. This will serve both individual growth needs and help to link communities of learning.
- To direct the Office of the Presiding Bishop to work with the Conference of Bishops to design appropriate ways to recognize and credential lay leaders who complete a curricular program in theological education so that the various gifts of these leaders – gifts of teaching, preaching, service and so on – might be lifted up and put to work in ways that honor the leaders, build up the church in service to the world and serve the gospel mission.
- To direct the Office of the Presiding Bishop through Research and Evaluation to explore the creation of a social media tool (a la “Linked-In”) that would enable lay leaders to create virtual communities of practice in their work on behalf of the church and the world. Such a tool would allow these lay leaders to communicate with each other; to share good practices, helpful resources and common experiences; and to invite others committed to this work to become part of the community of practice.

TEAC Recommendation 2D: To authorize the Advisory Committee, in collaboration with the Conference of Bishops and the leaders of theological education network partners, to develop recommendations for how continuing education for rostered leaders can become the norm, widely recognized as essential if rostered leaders are to lead and exercise their teaching office faithfully and effectively in a changing church in a rapidly changing culture.

Implementing Strategies:

- To direct the Office of the Presiding Bishop to work with the Conference of Bishops, in consultation with the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit, to develop consistent requirements for all rostered leaders of this church for continuing theological education – requirements that are communicated as part of the call process, supported by both synods and congregations, and enforced through an annual reporting process monitored by synod bishops and councils (through the appropriate synodical committees).
- To direct the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit to work with the Advisory Committee, the Network of ELCA Colleges and Universities, seminaries and related organizations – with the assistance of Research and Evaluation – to develop a web-based catalog of theological education opportunities – delivered in person, online and in hybrid formats – that are available to meet the continuing theological education requirements for rostered leaders.
- To ask the Conference of Bishops to implement the continuing theological education requirement for rostered leaders on a three-year trial basis across the church, at the conclusion of which the experience of the trial period will be evaluated by the Advisory Committee and revised as appropriate.
- To direct the Office of the Treasurer to determine the human and financial resources needed – through churchwide, synodical and congregational sources – to undertake this recommendation.

TEAC Recommendation 3: To ensure the mission vibrancy and financial stability of the seminaries of the ELCA as they serve their crucial roles in our theological education network.

TEAC Recommendation 3A: To call upon the seminaries of the ELCA in the next three years to form a common theological education enterprise that has the necessary planning structures and appropriate decision-making authority to (1) enable regular strategic sharing of the faculty resources of the seminaries along with other qualified teachers; (2) organize common recruitment and a common application process; (3) generate a common research agenda that serves the flourishing of the church; and (4) enable operational efficiencies that free up the resources needed for expanded work and new experiments in theological education.

TEAC Recommendation 3B: To encourage the seminaries, as they pursue the development of a common online learning platform (as stated in Recommendation 1C) that could bring together the theological education resources of seminaries, lay schools, colleges, universities and other partners, to include an experimental online portfolio that could support lifelong learning for all the baptized and a continuing education requirement for rostered leaders.

TEAC Recommendation 3C: To support the efforts of the seminaries to balance their budgets and increase reserves while also reducing seminarian student debt by exploring alternative organizational models, exploiting underutilized property assets, sharing administrative infrastructure, testing alternative degree models and expanding coordinated scholarships and degree-accelerating arrangements that can make theological education more affordable for more people.

TEAC Recommendation 3D: To develop a process for making available synodical and churchwide funds for innovation in both academic and administrative practices as incentives to strengthen the work and financial condition of seminaries.

Implementing Strategies:

- To commend to the presiding bishop the convening of seminary presidents, board chairs and representation from the bishops on seminary boards on a regular basis to seek common ground in implementing specific strategies that lead to a more integrated, strategic, faithful and effective theological education system across the eight seminaries of this church. Regular reports on these conversations should be made to the Advisory Committee and concrete plans for collaboration and integration should be documented and supported. Among the key themes for these consultations are:
 - How the concept of an integrated system of theological education can be implemented and governed among the seminaries.
 - Ways in which curricular reform can be integrated and supported across the system.
 - Ways in which student registration (common registrar) can be centrally coordinated/integrated among the schools.
 - Ways in which a common application for all ELCA seminaries might streamline the enrollment process.
 - How enrollment in online educational offerings can be maximized through expanded offerings made available to other campuses.
 - How to establish a cross-bridge between the TEEM certificate and the M.Div. degree through a common program for assessment of demonstrated competencies.
 - How to create and sustain a system-wide research agenda for theological education.
 - How to prioritize faculty sharing (dually appointed), common back office management, distributed-learning and other forms of seminary/seminary and seminary/college collaboration that serves intentional movement toward system-wide coordination.
 - How to establish common accounting and general ledger modules for use by all seminaries.

- To ask seminary leadership, as they develop the shared learning exchange, to include creation of a personal portfolio that can be developed and accessed by each rostered leader in support of his or her lifelong learning goals, and encourage the continuation of rostered leader learning cohorts and the formation of cohorts which may emerge out of using the portfolio.
- To call on each of the seminaries to share with the Advisory Committee by September 2016 (a) a progress report on its efforts to move toward meeting the fiscal benchmarks identified in the TEAC report; and (b) a plan of action to advance this work in the next two years, including measures to:
 - Improve liquidity and operating results (Net Income, Net Operating Revenue, Viability and Composite Ratios, student enrollment and student debt)
 - Maximize use of property assets (achieving efficiencies from rental/lease agreements and/or sale of unused property).
 - Coordinate and integrate systems across the seminaries with proposed Common Platform (identify level of involvement, investment and short- and long-term benefits)
 - Establish educational partnerships to reduce costs and improve efficiencies while anticipating increased affordability for students.
- To request that the Advisory Committee bring the following proposals to the fall 2016 meeting of the Church Council (a) a proposal for developing a new pattern of establishing benchmarks for synodical support to seminaries, including the designation of some portion of this support for innovative work that the seminaries and their supporting synods together identify as ways to strengthen their partnership in theological education; and (b) a proposed revision of the ELCA churchwide funding formula for seminaries which would be effective at the beginning of the 2017-2018 academic year, designating a portion (10-15 percent) of the total grant to be directed to promote and facilitate measures undertaken by the seminaries to move toward a common theological enterprise that enables operational efficiencies and innovation that free up resources needed for expanded work and new experiments.

2. AMMPARO STRATEGY

Background:

At its November 2015 meeting, the Church Council received a first draft of the proposed Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities (AMMPARO) strategy. AMMPARO is a commitment by the ELCA to accompany vulnerable children today and in the future. This strategy is a response to the situation in Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala that has led to the migration of children and their families through Mexico into the United States. It is meant to help to bring people together in new ways to walk with hundreds of migrant children and families on each step of their journey. It will involve companion churches and organizations in the countries of origin and in transit as well as ELCA synods, congregations, social ministry organizations, agencies, institutions and other ecumenical partners in the United States.

Church Council action:

To recommend the following action to the 2016 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:

To express gratitude to this church's members, congregations, synods and churchwide organization as well as to our companion churches and partners for the work to accompany migrant children and families fleeing the humanitarian crisis in Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala;

To approve the Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities (AMMPARO) strategy as a whole church response to the migration of children and their families around protection, advocacy, representation and opportunities; and

To encourage this church's members, congregations, synods and churchwide organization to continue their work in advocating for migrant children and their families.

3. 2015 CHURCHWIDE ORGANIZATION OPERATIONAL PLAN REPORT

Background:

Under the direction of the Rev. M. Wyvetta Bullock, assistant to the presiding bishop and executive for administration, the churchwide organization first produced an operational plan for 2011-2013 that the Planning and Evaluation Committee of the Church Council used periodically to review the work of the churchwide organization in achieving specific goals and commitments.

At its November 2013 meeting, the Church Council affirmed [CC13.11.59] the strategic intent of the 2014–2016 Churchwide Organization Operational Plan. The three-year plan was used to develop annual plans, and the Planning and Evaluation Committee analyzed the 2015 plan to review the work of the churchwide organization for the past year.

Church Council action:

**To receive the ELCA Churchwide Organization Operational Plan Report for 2015; and
To thank the staff of the churchwide organization for their ongoing work, with particular thanks to those staff members who actively participated in the review of the report.**

4. THE SELF-UNDERSTANDING OF THE LUTHERAN COMMUNION

Background:

The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) Council invited the ELCA to study “the significance of the Lutheran communion for LWF member churches” by discussing a study document, *Self-Understanding of the Lutheran Communion*, which it made available on the LWF website (<http://www.lutheranworld.org>). The objective of the study is to reach “a deepened understanding of the Lutheran communion and increased ownership of this understanding in order to foster meaningful relationships among the members of the LWF.”

Church Council action:

To acknowledge with gratitude the long standing and deep connection the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and its predecessor bodies have with The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) and its member churches;

To look forward to the 2016 Churchwide Assembly when the assembly will act on the Church Council recommendation to amend the ELCA constitution to emphasize this church’s participation in the “LWF as a global communion of churches, engaging in faithful witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ and in service for the sake of God’s mission in the world”;

To receive with appreciation The Lutheran World Federation’s invitation to study the significance of the Lutheran communion for the LWF member churches; and

To invite and encourage the ELCA in its three expressions to explore what it means to be an ecclesial communion from a Lutheran perspective using the document *The Self-Understanding of the Lutheran Communion - A Study Document* as a guide for such conversations.

5. PROPOSED CHURCHWIDE BUDGETS FOR 2017-2019

Background:

ELCA bylaw 14.21.05. states:

The Church Council, upon recommendation of the presiding bishop, shall submit budget proposals for approval by the Churchwide Assembly and authorize expenditures within the parameters of approved budgets.

The Office of the Treasurer provided the Church Council with income estimates for the next three years and a churchwide organization spending proposal for 2017. The balanced current fund budget proposal for 2017 was 2 percent less than the 2016 budget.

The Church Council proposed that the 2016 Churchwide Assembly approve a current fund spending authorization for 2017 and income projections for 2018 and 2019. The recommended action of the assembly would authorize the

council to revise the spending authorization of the churchwide organization as needed. ELCA World Hunger income and expenses were expected to be \$25 million in 2018 and 2019.

Church Council actions:

To recommend the following for adoption by the 2016 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:

2017 Budget Proposal

To approve a 2017 current fund spending authorization of \$65,296,005;

To approve a 2017 ELCA World Hunger income proposal of \$24,800,000; and

To authorize the Church Council to revise the spending authorizations after periodic review of revised income estimates.

2018 Budget Proposal

To approve a 2018 current fund income proposal of \$64,057,220;

To approve a 2018 ELCA World Hunger income proposal of \$25,000,000; and

To authorize the Church Council to establish a spending authorization after periodic review of revised income estimates.

2019 Budget Proposal

To approve a 2019 current fund income proposal of \$64,151,175;

To approve a 2019 ELCA World Hunger income proposal of \$25,000,000; and

To authorize the Church Council to establish a spending authorization after periodic review of revised income estimates.

6. REVISED SPENDING AUTHORIZATIONS FOR ELCA WORLD HUNGER IN 2016

Background:

In November 2015, the Church Council approved a revised 2016 fiscal year current fund spending authorization of \$66,514,340 and a revised 2016 fiscal year ELCA World Hunger spending authorization of \$21,000,000.

At its April 2016 meeting, the council decided to maintain the current fund spending authorization and to increase the ELCA World Hunger spending authorization by \$1 million.

Church Council action:

To approve a revised 2016 fiscal year ELCA World Hunger spending authorization of \$22,000,000.

7. REPORT OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE AND OTHER FINANCIAL MATTERS

Background:

In November 2015, the Church Council adopted [CC15.11.45] resolutions regarding authority to act in financial matters. Revisions were recommended to replace a signatory who had left the organization and to clarify that gift annuities are not trusts. Other elements of the resolutions were unchanged.

Church Council actions:

To approve the report of the ELCA Audit Committee describing the review of the audited financial statements, management letter, and response of management for the Endowment Fund Pooled Trust's year ending December 31, 2015.

APPOINTMENT OF ASSISTANT OFFICERS

RESOLVED, that for the sole purpose of executing, when necessary, documents approved and authorized in accordance with actions of the Church Council, the following are hereby appointed as assistant vice presidents of this corporation: M. Wyvetta Bullock, Walter S. May, Marcus R. Kunz, and Jodi L. Slattery, to serve until replaced or removed by subsequent appointments, with such subsequent appointments to be based upon the nomination and recommendation of the Presiding Bishop;

RESOLVED, that for the sole purpose of executing, when necessary, documents approved and authorized in accordance with actions of the Church Council, the following are hereby appointed as assistant treasurers of this corporation: Robert J. Benson, Cecilia Favela, Christina Jackson-Skelton, Christopher Carpenter-Majors, and Annette Roman, to serve until replaced or removed by subsequent appointments, with such subsequent appointments to be based upon the nomination and recommendation of the Treasurer;

RESOLVED, that for the sole purpose of executing or attesting, when necessary, documents approved and authorized in accordance with actions of the Church Council, the following are hereby appointed as assistant secretaries of this corporation: Phillip H. Harris, Laura L. Knitt, Sue E. Rothmeyer, and Thomas A. Cunniff, to serve until replaced or removed by subsequent appointments, with such subsequent appointments to be based upon the nomination and recommendation of the Secretary;

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

AUTHORIZATION TO ACT FOR THE ELCA AS A TRUSTEE

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

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

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

RESOLVED, that the Mission Advancement unit keep and maintain appropriate records of all transactions so authorized and, upon request, report such transactions to the Budget and Finance Committee of the Church Council;

RESOLVED, that prior resolutions adopted by this Council, including CC02.11.89 and CC12.04.19i, addressing the matters specified above are hereby rescinded and replaced by this action.

8. DESIGNATED CHURCHWIDE REPRESENTATIVES TO SYNOD ASSEMBLIES

Background:

Provision S7.23. of the Constitution for Synods states:

The presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and such other official representatives of this church as may be designated from time to time by the Church Council shall have voice but not vote in the meetings of the Synod Assembly. Like privileges shall be accorded to those additional persons whom the Synod Assembly or the Synod Council shall from time to time designate.

Presiding Bishop Elizabeth A. Eaton provided the names of specific representatives to respective synod assemblies.

Church Council action:

To designate the persons identified in the “2016 Synod Assembly Churchwide Representatives” grid with voice but not vote in the meetings of the assigned Synod Assembly, including like privileges accorded to those additional persons whom the Synod Assembly or the Synod Council has designated.

9. RULES OF ORGANIZATION AND PROCEDURE FOR THE 2016 CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY

Background:

One of the first actions of a churchwide assembly is to adopt rules for the specific organization and procedure of that assembly. The Church Council proposed the Rules of Organization and Procedure for the 2016 Churchwide Assembly, based on the experience of predecessor church bodies and on such rules adopted by the previous thirteen ELCA assemblies. A two-thirds vote of the assembly is required for adoption of the rules.

Church Council action:

To recommend adoption of the following proposed action by the voting members of the 2016 Churchwide Assembly:

To adopt the “Rules of Organization and Procedure” for the 2016 Churchwide Assembly (exclusive of quoted and highlighted constitutional provisions and bylaws that are already in force).

Church Council action:

To authorize the presiding bishop and secretary of this church to prepare further editing and scheduling revisions that may be found necessary for the Rules prior to their publication in the Pre-Assembly Report; and

To report any changes to the Church Council at its August 2016 meeting.

10. PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT REGARDING COLLEGE CORPORATION MEETINGS

Background:

Since the ELCA was formed in 1988, several colleges have related to this church through its Churchwide Assembly. Through college corporation meetings held while the assembly is in recess, governance decisions of the colleges are approved or ratified. With the transition from biennial to triennial assemblies and the need for greater flexibility in governance, at least one of the colleges had requested that it relate to the ELCA through its Church Council instead of through the Churchwide Assembly. Such a change would require the assembly to amend ELCA bylaw 8.32.02. to include that option.

Church Council action:

To recommend the following for adoption by the 2016 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:

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

- 8.32.02. Colleges and universities of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may relate to this church in various ways, including relationship with the Churchwide Assembly, **the Church Council**, a synodical assembly, or a corporation whose voting members are, or have been elected by, synodical assemblies, other organizational units (conferences, clusters, etc.), or congregations. Subject to approval by the appropriate synods, a college or university may be owned by a not-for-profit corporation (1) that has voting members, at least **90 percent 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 for the purpose of **electing or ratifying members of the governing board and** 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.** At least **60 percent majority** of the members of the governing boards of ~~the a~~ corporations 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.**

11. CONGREGATIONAL AND SYNODICAL MISSION UNIT BECOMES DOMESTIC MISSION UNIT

Background:

The units of the churchwide organization are identified by name only in continuing resolutions of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. The Congregational and Synodical Mission unit requested that its name be changed to the Domestic Mission unit, in conjunction with the Global Mission and Mission Advancement units. The name “Congregational and Synodical Mission” appears in ELCA continuing resolutions 16.11.A11., 16.12.A13. and 17.30.A15.

ELCA provision 22.31. states:

Continuing resolutions not in conflict with the constitution or bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may be adopted or amended by a majority vote of the Churchwide Assembly or by a two-thirds vote of the Church Council. Such continuing resolutions become effective immediately upon adoption. Matters related to the administrative functions of the churchwide organization shall be set forth in the continuing resolutions.

The Church Council amended the above continuing resolutions by a two-thirds vote. The following action is provided as an example.

Church Council action:

To adopt *en bloc* the following amendments to continuing resolutions of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*:

16.12.A1316. ~~Congregational and Synodical Domestic~~ Mission Unit

The ~~Congregational and Synodical Domestic~~ Mission unit shall foster and facilitate the work of synods, congregations, and partners in making congregations vital centers for mission and in creating coalitions and networks to promote justice and peace. Its work includes creating and revitalizing congregations; leadership development; providing worship and liturgical resources; enhancing discipleship; supporting multicultural ministries and the commitment of this church to inclusivity; fostering relationships with educational partners; facilitating the engagement of this church in advocacy; and related activities that serve the evangelical mission of synods and congregations. The ~~Congregational and Synodical Domestic~~ Mission unit shall relate to the Deaconess Community, Lutheran Men in Mission, National Lutheran

Campus Ministry, Inc., Educational and Institutional Insurance Administrators, Inc., and the Evangelical Lutheran Education Association.

12. THE AMENDED POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR REVIEW OF LITURGICAL MATERIAL

Background:

ELCA bylaw 14.21.02. states:

The Church Council shall review the procedures and programs of the churchwide units to assure that churchwide purposes, policies, and objectives are being fulfilled.

The Rev. Kevin L. Strickland, assistant to the presiding bishop for worship, convened a team to update the “Policy and Procedures for Review of Liturgical Material.”

The purpose of the policy is stated in its introduction:

For the well-being of this church’s members, and for responsible development and administration of material prepared by this church for public worship, the following statement of policy and procedures of the Office of the Presiding Bishop was developed. It guides the process for review of liturgical material prepared within and on behalf of churchwide units and related organizations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Church Council action:

To approve the amended Policy and Procedures for Review of Liturgical Material.

13. ELECTIONS TO CERTAIN COMMITTEES AND BOARDS

Background:

The Church Council has governance relationships with the seminaries and ministries of this church. As stated in ELCA bylaw 20.21.13., it elects members of the churchwide Committee of Hearing Officers.

Church Council actions:

To elect to the board of directors of Luther Seminary for a term coterminous with her service as president of Luther Seminary: The Rev. Robin J. Steinke;

To re-elect to the board of directors of Luther Seminary for a four-year term expiring in 2020: Ms. Bonnie Raquet;

To re-elect to the board of directors of The Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago for a three-year term expiring in 2019: Mr. Clarence J. Atwood Jr. and the Rev. Gordon A. Braatz;

To nominate to the advisory council of Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary as part of Lenoir-Rhyne University for a three-year term expiring in 2019: Ms. Miriam L. David and the Rev. Kathryn A. Tiede;

To elect to the advisory board of Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary for a six-year term expiring in 2022: The Rev. Richard W. Rouse;

To re-elect to the board of directors of Trinity Lutheran Seminary for a three-year term expiring in 2019: Mr. Aaron Schmalzle; and

To elect to the board of directors of Trinity Lutheran Seminary for a three-year term expiring in 2019: Mr. James A. McCoy.

To elect to the board of trustees of the Endowment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for a six-year term expiring in November 2021: Ms. Liza Canino and Mr. Eric Goldberg.

To elect as members of the Committee of Hearing Officers to one six-year term expiring in 2022: Ms. Stephanie Ertel, Mr. F. Thomas Kull Jr., and the Rev. Raymond A. Miller.