



Nov. 11, 2019

**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 leaders

**FROM:** Deacon Sue E. Rothmeyer, secretary

**SUBJECT:** Report of Actions of the Church Council (Nov. 7–10, 2019)

The Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) met at the Lutheran Center in Chicago, Illinois, Nov. 7–10, 2019. Here is a summary of particular actions along with background information.

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## **1. THANKSGIVING FOR THE REV. M. WYVETTA BULLOCK**

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton, presiding bishop of the ELCA, presented the Church Council with a resolution of thanks for the Rev. M. Wyvetta Bullock's many years of service.

### *Church Council action:*

**To thank the Rev. M. Wyvetta Bullock for her faithful service as the executive for administration from 2007–2020 and for her many years of service to this church since its beginning; and  
To extend appreciation for her wisdom and insights which have assisted the Church Council in its work.**

## **2. RATIFICATION OF COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS**

At its August 2019 meeting, the Church Council ratified provisional membership for the four standing committees of the Church Council: Budget and Finance, Legal and Constitutional Review, Planning and Evaluation, and Program and Services [CC19.08.29c].

Following the elections at the 2019 Churchwide Assembly, newly elected Church Council members indicated their committee preferences. At its September 2019 meeting, the Executive Committee completed its review of the requests and recommended ratification by the Church Council during the first plenary session of its November 2019 meeting [EC19.09.29].

New members of the Board Development Committee for the 2019–2022 triennium were appointed by the Executive Committee [CC19.10.33]. Appointments for the Audit Committee came through the Budget and Finance Committee.

### *Church Council action:*

**To ratify the appointments to the Church Council standing committees for the 2019–2022 triennium.**

## **3. SYNOD VISITS BY CHURCH COUNCIL MEMBERS**

Since its November 2005 meeting, the Church Council has committed itself to building relationships between the churchwide organization and synods, congregations, and institutions and agencies.

At its November 2007 meeting, the Church Council voted [CC07.11.65]:

To recall that, concerning changes in governance of this church, the 2005 Churchwide Assembly voted [CA05.06.21]: “To encourage greater interaction of members of the Church Council with synodical councils and synodical assemblies in their respective areas”;

To urge members of the Church Council to accept this responsibility and interact with their own synods and their partner synods in various ways, including attending at least one Synod Council meeting per year and participating in Synod Assemblies, especially in years when a synod is considering nominations to the Church Council; and

To note that expenses for attending Synod Council meetings and Synod Assemblies will be reimbursed by the churchwide organization in accordance with the ELCA travel policy.

### *Church Council action:*

**To acknowledge the commitment of the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to have “greater interaction of members of the Church Council with synodical councils and synodical assemblies in their respective areas”;**

**To urge members of the Church Council to accept this responsibility and interact with their own synods and their partner synods in various ways, including attending at least one synod council meeting per year and participating in synod assemblies, especially in years when a synod is considering nominations to the Church Council; and**

**To note that expenses for attending synod council meetings and synod assemblies will be reimbursed by the churchwide organization in accordance with the ELCA travel policy.**

## **4. TASK FORCE TO CONSIDER A FUTURE CAMPAIGN AND INCOME STRATEGIES UPDATE**

At the April 2019 meeting, the Church Council affirmed the continuation of the Task Force to Consider a Future Campaign and Income Strategies to consider how to grow resources to support the priorities of the churchwide organization [CC19.04.07].

### *Church Council action:*

**To receive with gratitude the update from the Task Force to Consider a Future Campaign and Income Strategies;**

**To thank the members of the task force for their service; and  
To authorize the creation of a Resource Development Committee to continue developing strategies related to funding initiatives and future churchwide appeals, and to request the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee consider a continuing resolution to that effect.**

## **5. RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

The Task Force to Consider a Future Campaign and Income Strategies recommended a new Resource Development Committee be created to continue developing strategies related to funding initiatives and future churchwide appeals.

The process for continuing resolutions is specified in Chapter 22 of the ELCA Constitution.

*Church Council actions:*

*TWO-THIRDS VOTE*

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

**14.41.G19. Resource Development Committee** *A Resource Development Committee—composed of eight to ten members, at least one of whom shall be a member of the Budget and Finance Committee, and appointed by the Executive Committee—shall assist the Budget and Finance Committee and the Church Council in developing strategies related to funding initiatives and churchwide appeals. This committee shall oversee how to grow resources to support the ministries and priorities of the churchwide organization. The treasurer and executive director of the Mission Advancement unit shall serve as ex officio members of the committee. Church Council members shall be appointed for three-year terms, renewable for so long as they are on Church Council. Non-Church Council members, who shall be members of an ELCA congregation, shall be appointed for three-year terms with the possibility of two consecutive re-appointments. No member shall serve more than nine consecutive years. This committee shall have staff services provided by the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Mission Advancement unit and shall relate to the work of the Office of the Treasurer.*

## **6. CONCLUSION OF THE THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND TRANSITION PLAN**

The Theological Education Advisory Committee (TEAC) has met as an advisory committee of the Church Council since its establishment in 2016. This work came from a need to address current challenges and opportunities in theological education [CC13.04.12.].

*Church Council action:*

**To thank the members of the Theological Education Advisory Committee for their faithful service;  
To receive the final Theological Education Advisory Committee report;  
To approve the transition plan as submitted; and  
To approve the completion of the Advisory Committee's work as of Nov. 8, 2019.**

## **7. 2020 CURRENT FUND AND WORLD HUNGER SPENDING AUTHORIZATIONS**

The Budget and Finance Committee presented the following actions to the full council.

*Church Council action:*

**To approve a 2020 fiscal year current fund spending authorization of \$67,666,652.**

*Church Council action:*

**To approve a 2020 ELCA World Hunger spending authorization of \$21,596,595.**

## **8. ELECTIONS OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

At the first meeting after a Churchwide Assembly, the Church Council elects a new Executive Committee. Three new members in the following categories needed to be elected:

- Lay woman, person of color or whose first language is other than English
- Lay man
- Rostered man

***Church Council actions:***

**To elect Ms. Loni Taylor, Mr. Joseph T. Nolte, and the Rev. Marcus Bigott to a term ending in 2022 on the Executive Committee of the Church Council.**

**9. CLIMATE CHANGE RECOMMENDATION**

At the fall 2019 Conference of Bishops meeting, the conference recommended that the Church Council “work in new and concrete ways to give priority to this church’s response to the global crisis of climate change” [CB19.09.26].

***Church Council action:***

**To refer the Conference of Bishops recommendation on “Climate Change” to the Domestic Mission unit, in consultation with appropriate churchwide units, for a report or for a timeline on when this will receive further attention.**

**10. ADVISORY TEAM FOR THE “STRATEGY TOWARD AUTHENTIC DIVERSITY”**

The “Strategy Toward Authentic Diversity in the ELCA” was adopted at the 2019 Churchwide Assembly [CA19.05.21]. The Office of the Presiding Bishop, in collaboration with other appropriate units in the churchwide organization, was tasked with establishing and overseeing processes and to provide a timeline on when the strategy will receive further attention [EC19.09.28.a10.]. The Office of the Presiding Bishop worked most closely with the Domestic Mission unit on the strategy. A matrix was developed to help organize the work.

***Church Council action:***

**To receive the matrix report on "Strategy Toward Authentic Diversity" from the Domestic Mission unit and the Office of the Presiding Bishop;**

**To affirm the approach identified in the matrix chart;**

**To create an advisory team to receive updates, track progress, and provide periodic reports to the Church Council on the “Strategy Toward Authentic Diversity” recommendations; and**

**To request the Domestic Mission unit, in consultation with the Office of the Presiding Bishop, to identify possible individuals (including previous members on the Strategy Toward Authentic Diversity Task Force, a bishop, and a Church Council member), and to provide those names to the Executive Committee; and**

**To authorize the Executive Committee to appoint members to the advisory team.**

**11. “MEMORANDUM OF MUTUAL RECOGNITION”**

The “Memorandum of Mutual Recognition of Relations of Full Communion Between the Churches of *Called to Common Mission* (The Episcopal Church and the ELCA) and the Churches of *Called to Full Communion: The Waterloo Declaration* (The Anglican Church of Canada and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada)” proposed to reach across a national border to strengthen ties between the two U.S. churches and the two Canadian churches. Already each church is in communion with two of the other three: with its full communion partner in its own country—for the ELCA, this is The Episcopal Church (TEC)—and with the church of its own tradition in the other country. For the ELCA, this is the ELCIC. Already the four churches recognize bonds among them: for example, the four presiding/national bishops meet annually and collaborate in seasonal devotions. Yet each church lacks a formal relationship with one of the four; for the ELCA, this is with the Anglican Church of Canada (ACC). This Memorandum relies on the theological and ecclesiological agreements already established on this continent and the experiences of bilateral full communion relationships in order to bridge this gap.

Both Canadian churches approved the memorandum at their national gatherings this summer. The Episcopal Church will consider this at their 2021 meeting.

The way forward for this church is distinctive. At the 2019 Churchwide Assembly, the ELCA approved a constitutional change (bylaw 8.19.02), which provided that the “ecumenical availability of ministers of Word and Sacrament under relations of full communion” shall apply to “churches who have established a full communion relationship with a member church of The Lutheran World Federation provided that church is a member of a Christian World Communion that has a member church that is in full communion with this church”—churches like the ACC, which is linked on the one side to the ELCIC and on the other to TEC. Adopting the memorandum both applies this provision explicitly to the ACC and also affirms the supporting ecumenical agreement which all four churches joined in proposing.

The background, rationale and actions that comprise the memorandum was included in the November 2019 Church Council materials. The Conference of Bishops received a report on the memorandum and commended it for Church Council's adoption [CB19.09.20].

***Church Council action:***

**To adopt the “Memorandum of Mutual Recognition of Relations of Full Communion” (Niagara Falls Ontario, 2018) between the churches of *Called to Common Mission* (The Episcopal Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) and the churches of *Called to Full Communion: The Waterloo Declaration* (The Anglican Church of Canada and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada);**

**To acknowledge with gratitude the affirmations of this memorandum by the Anglican Church of Canada and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada; and**

**To recognize that the relations of this church with the Anglican Church of Canada serve as full communion as established in ELCA bylaw 8.19.02.**

## **12. APPROVAL OF COMMITTEE CHARTERS**

Committee charters must be reviewed after a Churchwide Assembly. The charters for the Executive Committee, Budget and Finance Committee, Planning and Evaluation Committee, Legal and Constitutional Review Committee, and Program and Services Committee were reviewed and updated.

***Church Council action:***

**To approve the revised Executive Committee Charter.**

***Church Council action:***

**To approve the revised committee charters.**

## **13. AUDIT COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP AND REPORT**

ELCA continuing resolution 14.41.E 15. states:

*An Audit Committee—composed of five to seven members appointed by the Budget and Finance Committee and approved by the Church Council for two-year, renewable terms—shall assist the Budget and Finance Committee and the Church Council in fulfilling oversight of the churchwide organization’s accounting and financial reporting, internal control systems, and audit functions, consistent with its responsibilities as specified in the charter recommended by the Audit Committee, reviewed by the Budget and Finance Committee, and approved by the Church Council. A minimum of two members of the Audit Committee shall be members of the Budget and Finance Committee. The chair of the Audit Committee shall be a member of the Budget and Finance Committee and shall be appointed by the chair of the Budget and Finance Committee. In consultation with the executive for administration, the Audit Committee approves the appointment and dismissal of the director for internal auditing.*

***Church Council action:***

**To approve the appointment of Mr. Kevin Anderson, Ms. Tracey Beasley, and Mr. Keoni Newman as members to the ELCA Audit Committee for a two-year, renewable term beginning November 2019.**

***Church Council action:***

**To approve the report of the ELCA Audit Committee describing their review of the audited financial statements, management letter, and response of management for the churchwide organization’s fiscal year ended January 31, 2019.**

***Church Council action:***

**To approve the engagement of Crowe LLP and Capin Crouse LLP to perform the audit service plan for the churchwide organization’s year ending January 31, 2020.**

#### **14. CHANGES TO INVESTMENT POLICY**

The Church Council voted on this item *en bloc*.

*Church Council actions:*

- To approve the revisions to the Cash Management Policy;**
- To approve the revisions to the Operating Investment Policy; and**
- To approve the revisions to the Core Investment Policy.**

#### **15. LUTHERAN SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY AT CHICAGO BYLAWS AND CONSTITUTION**

Bylaw 8.21.02 states: “Amendments to the governing documents of each separately incorporated seminary and each seminary cluster shall be submitted, upon recommendation of the appropriate unit of the churchwide organization, to the Church Council for approval...”

The Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago submitted proposed amendments to its bylaws and Articles of Incorporation through the Domestic Mission unit in consultation with the Office of the Secretary.

*Church Council actions:*

**To approve the revised Bylaws and Constitution of the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, Chicago, Illinois.**

#### **16. AMENDMENTS TO ELCA RETIREMENT PLAN AND ELCA SURVIVOR BENEFITS PLAN**

In accordance with bylaw 17.20.02., the Church Council “shall review policy established by the board and take action on any policy that would change significantly the documents establishing and governing the Pension and Other Benefits Program.”

Portico Benefit Services proposed changes to the ELCA Survivor Benefits Plan and the ELCA Retirement Plan, which received the approval of Portico Benefit Services Board of Trustees in August 2019.

*Church Council action:*

**To approve the amendments to the ELCA Survivor Benefits Plan effective Jan. 1, 2020.**

*Church Council action:*

**To approve the amendments to the ELCA Retirement Plan effective Jan. 1, 2020.**

#### **17. CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY DOCUMENTS**

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 two social criteria investment screens. These were also reviewed by the Theological and Ethical Concerns Committee of the Conference of Bishops.

*Church Council action:*

**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:**

- **Non-Discrimination in Business Issue Paper**
- **Violence in Our World Issue Paper**
- **Human Rights Issue Paper**
- **Tobacco Social Criteria Investment Screen**
- **Alcohol Social Criteria Investment Screen; and**

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

#### **18. UPDATE TO ORDINATION AND INSTALLATION RITES**

The actions of the 2019 Churchwide Assembly, specifically constitutional changes identifying ordination as the entrance rite for ministers of Word and Service, necessitated updates to the existing ministry rites for pastors and deacons. Feedback was received by the Conference of Bishops at its Fall 2019 meeting on the proposed changes.

*Church Council action:*

To authorize the following services as the appropriate forms to be used in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, effective January 1, 2020: Ordination to the Ministry of Word and Service; Ordination to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament; Installation of a Deacon; Installation of a Pastor.

**19. CHURCH COUNCIL JUSTICE FOR WOMEN LIAISON**

In accordance with bylaw 14.22.01, the Church Council appoints individuals to fill a vacancy on a committee such as the Justice for Women Consulting Committee.

*Church Council action:*

To appoint Ms. Tracey Beasley as Church Council liaison to the Justice for Women Consulting Committee for a term ending in August 2025.

**20. ELECTIONS, NOMINATIONS AND VACANCIES**

The Church Council has the responsibility of electing people to fill terms on boards of separately incorporated ministries, social ministry organizations, and seminaries. Bylaw 8.21.03. outlines 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 churchwide boards or committees.

*Church Council actions:*

To elect to the board of trustees of the Board of Pensions of the ELCA—Portico Benefit Services—to fill a vacancy with a term ending in 2022: The Rev. Thomas P. Schlotterback.

*Church Council actions:*

To elect to the board of directors of National Lutheran Campus Ministry, Inc. to an initial four-year term on the board, beginning in March 2020 and concluding in March 2024: The Rev. Carol L. Schneider.

*Church Council actions:*

To reelect to the board of directors of Wartburg Theological Seminary to a six-year term expiring in 2025: Mr. David L. Horstmann.

To elect to the board of directors of Wartburg Theological Seminary to a six-year term expiring in 2025: Ms. Stacy L. Martin.

*Church Council actions:*

To elect to the advisory council of Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary of Lenoir-Rhyne University to a four-year term expiring in 2024: the Rev. Angela Ford Nelson.

*Church Council actions:*

To elect to the board of directors of Trinity Lutheran Seminary at Capital University to a three-year term expiring in 2022: Ms. Melissa Sims.

*Church Council actions:*

To elect to the Committee of Hearing Officers for a six-year term expiring in 2025: the Rev. Jessica Crist, Ms. Linda Marousek, Ms. Lori Brown, Mr. John Emery, and Mr. Carl J. Turnquist.

*Church Council actions:*

To elect to the Committee on Appeals for a term expiring in 2022: Mr. Murray G. Sagsveen.