



Office of the Secretary
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

April 18, 2012

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
 Regional Coordinators

FROM: Secretary David D. Swartling

SUBJECT: Report of Actions of the Church Council (April 13–15, 2012)

The Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) met at the Lutheran Center, Chicago, Illinois, on April 13–15, 2012. A variety of matters received attention. Here is a summary of particular actions along with background and explanatory information.

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1. TASK FORCE ON MISSION SUPPORT

Background:

The Church Council transmitted to the 2011 Churchwide Assembly a number of recommendations based on report of the task force on Living Into the Future Together: Renewing the Ecology of the ELCA (LIFT). The Churchwide Assembly took several actions related to these recommendations, one of which [CA11.03.07] read in part as follows:

To invite members, congregations, synods, regions, the churchwide organization, colleges and universities, institutions and agencies, networks, and global, ecumenical, and other partners into deep conversation, prayer, and discernment, as, together, this church commits itself to the following actions to implement the report and recommendations:

- ...
3. To request the Conference of Bishops, in consultation with synod leaders and the churchwide organization, to prepare a report and recommendations for the November 2012 meeting of the Church Council for consideration by the 2013 Churchwide Assembly that:
 - describes patterns of synodical life in the ELCA that effectively support vital congregations, mission growth and outreach;
 - proposes a pattern or a set of patterns that will allow synods to receive and distribute financial resources to support the whole ministry of this church;

- builds on the Blue Ribbon Committee report of 2007 and includes recommendations for renewed, sustainable financial support for the mission and ministries of this church, including funding for theological education;
- includes strategies for increased mission vitality that may include consideration of redrawing synod boundaries; and
- recommends revision of the constitutional responsibilities of bishops and synods to emphasize synods as catalysts for mission in the changing context and culture.

The Conference of Bishops delegated responsibility for studying and making recommendations on the above matters to a Group of Nine. The Group of Nine presented its final report and recommendations to the March 2012 meeting of the Conference of Bishops. At that meeting, after discussion among the members of the Conference of Bishops, the Executive Committee of the Conference of Bishops decided that the chair of the Conference of Bishops and Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson would propose to the Church Council a configuration of people to address the funding issue. The Executive Committee also made provisions for the other matters listed in the Churchwide Assembly action to be addressed.

Church Council Action:

To thank the Conference of Bishops and its Group of Nine for the work it has accomplished in response to the 2011 Churchwide Assembly action [CA11.03.07] related to the report and recommendations of the task force on *Living Into the Future Together: Renewing the Ecology of the ELCA*;

To appoint the Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson and Vice President Carlos E. Pena to a task force on funding the mission of the ELCA;

To authorize Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson, in consultation with Bishop Jessica R. Crist, chair of the Conference of Bishops, to appoint the following people to the task force: a synodical bishop, a synodical vice president, a parish pastor, a Church Council member, and a churchwide organization Administrative Team member;

To affirm the assembly's request that the

task force address the following issues:

- **propose a pattern or a set of patterns that will allow synods to receive and share financial resources to support the whole ministry of this church;**
- **build on the Blue Ribbon Committee report of 2007 and include recommendations for renewed, sustainable financial support for the mission and ministries of this church, including funding for theological education; and**

To request that a report and recommendations be brought to the October 2012 meeting of the Conference of Bishops to facilitate the conference's fulfilling of the request of the 2011 Churchwide Assembly to bring a report and recommendations to the November 2012 meeting of the ELCA Church Council.

2. TASK FORCE ON OFFICER ELECTION PROCESS

Background:

At the 2013 Churchwide Assembly, elections will be held for presiding bishop and secretary of the ELCA. The procedures for these elections are established in the ELCA constitution, specifically in bylaw 19.31.01. and continuing resolutions 19.31.A09. and 19.61.A94. Other relevant information is contained in Chapter 13. In addition to these constitutional procedures, the Rules of Organization and Procedure for the Churchwide Assembly usually provide opportunities during the balloting process for voting members to hear nominees' views on matters relevant to this church and the office for which they have been nominated.

For previous elections of officers, the Executive Committee of the Church Council has played a role in helping shape the election process. In 2001, the Executive Committee determined the format of the forum for nominees for presiding bishop (seven nominees) and the format for the question-and-answer session with nominees for presiding bishop (three nominees). In 2007, it determined the process for a forum for nominees for secretary. In 2001, the Executive Committee edited questions submitted by Churchwide Assembly voting members for the nominees for presiding bishop, and in 2007, the committee drafted the questions for nominees for both presiding bishop and secretary. The processes recommended by the Executive Committee became part of the Rules of Organization and Procedure for the Churchwide Assembly.

For the 2013 elections, it is proposed that the Church Council delegate to the Executive Committee (with Presiding Bishop Hanson and Secretary Swartling excused), along with the chair of the Conference of Bishops, the authority to review previous practices and propose a process that would provide opportunities for discernment by this whole church and particularly Churchwide Assembly voting members in anticipation of the elections of officers at the 2013 Churchwide Assembly. The proposals could include recommendations for Part 16 of the Rules of Organization and Procedure for the 2013 Churchwide Assembly.

Church Council Action:

To delegate to the Executive Committee of the Church Council (excluding the presiding bishop and secretary), together with the chair of the Conference of Bishops, responsibility for (1) review and evaluation of and recommendations for Part 16 of the draft Rules of Organization and Procedure for the 2013 Churchwide Assembly, particularly the assembly discernment process, and (2) consideration of a potential pre-assembly process to facilitate discernment throughout this church in anticipation of officer elections at the assembly; and

To bring to the Church Council recommendations for Part 16 of the Rules of Organization and Procedure for the 2013 Churchwide Assembly and for a potential pre-assembly discernment process no later than the November 2012 meeting.

3. CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY WORK

Background:

The Plan for Mission of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) includes a call for this church to be a voice in the public square, advocating for justice and peace consistent with its teachings and social policies. One aspect of this advocacy work involves corporate social responsibility (CSR).

Prior to the redesign of the churchwide organization in 2010-11, responsibility for CSR was embedded in the continuing resolution for the Church in Society program unit [former 16.12.D06]. It provided:

[The Church in Society unit] shall:

- i. give expression to this church's concern for corporate social responsibility, both in its internal affairs and its interaction in the broader society. To do so, this program*

unit will:

- 1) exercise, at the direction of the Church Council, the rights of this church as a corporate shareholder on issues of social concern on stocks held by the churchwide units that are not separately incorporated. In addition, the Church Council may make recommendations to the churchwide units that are separately incorporated concerning the filing of shareholder resolutions and the casting of proxy ballots on stocks held by those units;*
- 2) facilitate the formation of an Advisory Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility that will include representatives from the Board of Pensions, the Church Council, and other units of this church and that will give counsel and advice to all appropriate units of this church on corporate social responsibility; and*
- 3) work with national ecumenical groups on issues of corporate responsibility.*

Implementing these provisions of the governing documents involved the following work:

- Review of ELCA social policies and drafting of CSR Issue Papers;
- Vetting of CSR Issue Papers through the Advisory Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility (ACCSR) and providing for their submission to and approval by the Church Council;
- Creation of Social Criteria Investment Screens and guidelines for funds, in consultation with the Board of Pensions and others, based upon the Social Issue Papers, which served as points of reference also for other Lutheran entities (colleges, seminaries, inter-Lutheran groups, etc.) beyond the churchwide organization;
- Engaging in shareholder advocacy, including providing advice regarding shareholder resolutions, engaging in dialogues, considering sign-on letters, and providing advice regarding proxy voting to the Board of Pensions;
- Service on the Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility (ICCR), including its governing board and committees, and with other groups that engage in corporate social responsibility;
- Providing staff support to the ACCSR;
- Addressing CSR issues on behalf of the churchwide organization in correspondence, consulting with staff, and providing advice as required.

The redesign of the churchwide organization deleted continuing resolution 16.12.D06 and eliminated the Church in Society program unit. The functions of this unit were either incorporated into other units or eliminated. The ACCSR and the staff responsible for CSR were eliminated.

After the redesign, CSR oversight was allocated to the Church Council. Bylaw 14.21.14, adopted by the Churchwide Assembly in 2011, provided as follows:

14.21.14 The Church Council may direct the churchwide organization to exercise the corporate social responsibility of this church by filing shareholder resolutions, casting proxy ballots, and taking other actions as it deems appropriate.

Initially, the hope had been that advocacy staff in the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit (CSM) could absorb the work of CSR. However, it soon became apparent that important CSR work, including providing input to the Board of Pensions regarding social screens and social purpose investing, was distinct from the portfolio of the advocacy team and required staff with expertise. The churchwide organization recognized that while not all CSR work could be accomplished as it had been previously, a new approach needed to be developed.

In April 2011, the Rev. Stephen P. Bouman, executive director of CSM, and David D. Swartling, ELCA secretary, submitted a plan to the Administrative Team for an interim approach to address CSR work. It encompassed the following:

- Hiring Pat Zerega, the staff person who had worked in the Church in Society unit on CSR, under a part-time contract as a consultant on corporate social responsibility with duties as described in a revised position description;
- Approaching the Board of Pensions to share the cost of this contract position;
- Convening a table, including CSM, Office of the Treasurer, and Board of Pensions staff, to address the intermediate and long-range ways that corporate social responsibility functions could be accomplished. Specifically, recommendations should be made about ways that corporate social responsibility work can be shared among ecumenical partners;
- Identifying a committee of the Conference of Bishops to make recommendations on Social Issue Papers and other corporate social responsibility issues and developing a process for submission of these documents to the Church Council.

This proposal was approved by the Administrative

Team and reviewed by the Conference of Bishops. As a result, a CSR Review Table was established in the churchwide organization, and Pat Zerega was hired on a part-time basis (with her salary shared between Portico Benefit Services and the churchwide organization). The CSR Review Team, consisting of representatives from CSM, the Office of the Treasurer, the Office of the Secretary, Portico Benefit Services, and the Theological and Ethical Discernment team, has worked with Pat Zerega to develop an interim plan to address CSR issues. In addition, the team also has conducted a review of existing CSR documents to propose revisions that address the redesign of the churchwide organization and elimination of ACCSR. Following review by the Conference of Bishops, the revised CSR-related documents are ready for Church Council review and consideration.

These documents are as follows:

- Corporate Social Responsibility Program. (This document provides background information; it does not require approval)
- Corporate Social Responsibility Roles and Responsibilities. (This chart describes the post-redesign process for development and review of CSR documents. It has been approved by the Administrative Team and reviewed by the Conference of Bishops. It comes to the Church Council for review and consideration.)
- Social Criteria Investment Screens Policy and Procedures. (This document describes the process for development of social criteria investment screens. The original process began in 1989 with the Church Council approving screens through 1993. The next process was approved by ACCSR in April 2006 and by the Church Council in November 2006. There are currently seven approved screens. The revised document is substantively similar to that approved by the Church Council in 2006, except for incorporation of the redesign and editorial revisions. It comes to the Church Council for review and consideration.)
- Issue Paper Policy and Procedures. (This document describes the process for development and review of issue papers. These papers are prepared to interpret the social teachings of this church for use in the context of corporate social responsibility. There are currently eleven such issue papers, and a new issue paper on genetics is proposed. This document was approved by ACCSR in 2007, and now has been updated to reflect the redesign and to provide a revised schedule for issue paper review. It comes to the Church Council for review and consideration.)
- Boycott Policy and Procedures. (This document was originally approved by the Church Council in

November 1989 and was revised by the Church Council on the recommendation of ACCSR in 2005 and 2008. The revised document now incorporates the redesign of the churchwide organization; otherwise, it is substantially identical to the previous version. It should be pointed out that the Church Council has never endorsed a boycott under this policy, but the policy stands ready to inform this church how to move forward on such requests. The document comes to the Church Council for review and consideration.)

- Genetics Issue Paper. (This is a new issue paper prepared by the writing team for the genetics issue paper and members of the CSR Review Team. It was reviewed by Portico's Corporate Social Responsibility Committee and the Conference of Bishops, which recommended an amendment that has been incorporated into the document that is now brought to the Church Council for review and consideration.)

Approval of these documents would provide an interim plan for addressing CSR work. This church has been blessed by the dedication and expertise of Pat Zerega, who has steadfastly represented the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America at various tables addressing corporate social responsibility, including the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility (ICCR), the Portico Corporate Social Responsibility Committee, and various corporate board rooms. The churchwide organization and Portico have agreed to extend her contract through the end of fiscal year 2012 (January 31, 2013). Before that time, the CSR Review Team, in collaboration with the churchwide organization and Portico, will develop a proposal for addressing CSR work in the longer term.

Church Council Action:

To express thanks and appreciation to the Corporate Social Responsibility Review Team, and especially to Patricia Zerega, for their commitment to advocacy and representing this church in a socially responsible way in the corporate arena;

To adopt the process described in the Corporate Social Responsibility Roles and Responsibilities chart as an interim process for addressing functions and issues involving corporate social responsibility until a long-term recommendation is adopted;

To approve the following documents to serve as the basis for ongoing corporate social responsibility work in this church:

- **Social Criteria Investment Screens Criteria, as revised;**
- **Corporate Social Responsibility Issue Paper Policy and Procedures, as revised;**
- **Boycott Policy and Procedures, as revised; and**
- **Genetics Issue Paper; and**

To encourage the churchwide organization, synods, congregations, members, and affiliated and related institutions and agencies to study documents and information provided by this church concerning issues of corporate social responsibility, to make investment decisions recognizing these principles, and to advocate for socially responsible decision-making in the corporate arena, consistent with the social policies of this church.

4. 2012 CURRENT FUND AND WORLD HUNGER SPENDING AUTHORIZATIONS

Background:

The 2011 year-end results in Mission Support income received from congregations through synods, plus the 2012 and early 2013 synods plans, allow for an increase in Mission Support income of \$750,000 to \$48,750,000. This is below the actual amount received in 2011 by \$1.7 million, but is equal to 95 percent of synod plans, the same percentage received in 2011.

Other income changes are in Vision for Mission (decrease of \$100,000), investment income (increase of \$100,000), Missionary Sponsorship (decrease of \$550,000), and unit-designated gifts (increase of \$50,000). These adjustments reflect trends experienced in 2011 and changes in funding strategies.

The revised income and expense proposals also reflect changes in the distribution of telephone and floor copier expenses. These expenses no longer will be allocated to units but will be funded through the Office of the Treasurer. Unit budgets correspondingly have been reduced by the 2011 spending levels, with offset to the budget for Office of the Treasurer.

No adjustment in the income estimate of \$18,500,000 for 2012 World Hunger is anticipated. The year-end balance in excess of required reserves allows for an increase in the 2012 World Hunger expense allocation of \$1.4 million to \$19,900,000.

Church Council Action:

To approve a revised current fund spending authorization for fiscal year 2012 of \$65,498,135; and

To approve a revised total World Hunger spending authorization for fiscal year 2012 of \$19,900,000.

5. 2012 SYNODICAL MISSION SUPPORT PLANS AND INITIAL 2013 MISSION SUPPORT PLANS

Background:

The ELCA Church Council has responsibility for reviewing and taking action on synod mission support plans as an interdependent partner with congregations and synods in implementing and strengthening the financial support for the work of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA Constitution, 8.15 and 10.71).

2012 Synod Mission Support Plans

Since the November 2011 Church Council meeting, revisions for 2012 mission support plans have been received from 26 synods. Six synods have increased their percentage share and three synods have decreased their percentage share. The other 17 synods remained at their previous percentage sharing plans.

Church Council Action:

To acknowledge with sadness that circumstances in the following synods have led to decisions to seek a decrease in the percentage of sharing of 2012 mission support contributions by congregations for synodical and churchwide ministries; to encourage each synod to continue to work to grow mission support in the synod; and to request that each synod develop a plan, in consultation with the churchwide organization, to restore or surpass the previous level of mission support sharing: Nebraska; Upstate New York; and Northeastern Pennsylvania synods;

To acknowledge with thanksgiving the decision of the following synods to increase the percentage of sharing of 2012 mission support contributions by congregations for synodical and churchwide ministries: Western North Dakota; South Dakota; Southern Ohio; New England; Metropolitan New York; and Caribbean synods;

To acknowledge with thanksgiving the decision of the following synods to maintain the percentage of sharing of 2012 mission support

contributions by congregations for synodical and churchwide ministries but estimating an adjustment in the estimated amount to be shared: Northwest Washington; Rocky Mountain; Northeastern Minnesota; Minneapolis Area; Southeastern Minnesota; Central States; Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana; Southeastern Iowa; Western Iowa; Northwest Synod of Wisconsin; La Crosse Area; Indiana-Kentucky; Northwestern Ohio; Northeastern Ohio; Virginia; South Carolina; and, Florida-Bahamas synods; and

To thank the bishops and synod leaders of every synod as they strive to be faithful to shared commitments within the ELCA, and to direct synod and churchwide staff, including the directors for evangelical mission, to deepen their partnership in efforts to strengthen financial support for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

2013 Synod Mission Support Plans

Many synods are still in the process of preparing their 2013 mission support plans for presentation to their synod assemblies this spring and summer. To date, plans from 56 synods have been received. Seventeen synods are showing increased percentages, three plan decreases, and the remaining thirty-six remain constant.

Church Council Action:

To acknowledge with sadness that circumstances in the following synods have led to decisions to seek a decrease from prior levels in the percentage of sharing of 2013 mission support contributions by congregations for synodical and churchwide ministries; to encourage each synod to continue to work to grow mission support in the synod; and to request that each synod develop a plan, in consultation with the churchwide organization, to restore or surpass the previous level of mission support sharing: Arkansas-Oklahoma; Southwestern Pennsylvania; and North Carolina synods;

To acknowledge with thanksgiving the decision of the following synods to increase the percentage of sharing of 2013 mission support contributions by congregations for synodical and churchwide ministries: Northwest Washington;

Southwestern Washington; Oregon; Montana; Sierra Pacific; Southwest California; Western North Dakota; Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana; Southwestern Texas; Western Iowa; Northern Great Lakes; Southeast Michigan; New England; Slovak Zion; Delaware-Maryland; Virginia and South Carolina synods;

To acknowledge with thanksgiving the decision of the following synods to maintain the percentage of sharing of 2013 mission support contributions by congregations for synodical and churchwide ministries: Alaska; Eastern Washington-Idaho; Pacifica; Grand Canyon; Rocky Mountain; South Dakota; Southwestern Minnesota; Minneapolis Area; Southeastern Minnesota; Nebraska; Central States; Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast; Central/Southern Illinois; Southeastern Iowa; Northeastern Iowa; Northwest Synod of Wisconsin; East-Central Synod of Wisconsin; Greater Milwaukee; South-Central Synod of Wisconsin; La Crosse Area; North/West Lower Michigan; Indiana-Kentucky; Northwestern Ohio; Northeastern Ohio; Southern Ohio; New Jersey; Upstate New York; Northeastern Pennsylvania; Northwestern Pennsylvania; Allegheny; Lower Susquehanna; Metropolitan Washington, D.C.; Southeastern; Florida-Bahamas and Caribbean synods;

To thank the bishops and synod leaders of every synod as they strive to be faithful to shared commitments within the ELCA, and to direct synod and churchwide staff, including the directors for evangelical mission, to deepen their partnership in efforts to strengthen financial support for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and

To request that all synods submit their 2013 mission support plans prior to their 2012 synod assemblies.

6. MISSION SUPPORT RESOURCES

In their role as ambassadors and advocates for the ministries and programs of the churchwide organization, Church Council members are called upon to meet with Synod Councils, Synod Assemblies, congregations, and members. They also share the ways in which mission support sustains the activities of the wider church. It is felt that this work would be facilitated by the provision to

Church Council members of resources to use in explaining and lifting up the ministries of the churchwide organization, celebrating the ways in which gifts are used by this church to advance the kingdom, as well as showing the consequences of reduced capacity, especially since the economic downturn and reaction to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly.

The Budget and Finance Committee feels that it would be useful for the Mission Advancement unit to prepare and provide resources to Church Council members to use in their sharing with mission support partners in explaining the importance of mission support to the churchwide organization and the ways in which it is utilized. The sharing of resources would provide a consistent, integrated narrative and would make the process of engaging other expressions easier.

Church Council Action:

To request that the Mission Advancement unit provide resources to be used by members of the ELCA Church Council in their role as advocates to sustain and increase mission support.

7. NEW DIRECTIONS IN YOUTH MINISTRY

Background:

Prior to the reorganization of the churchwide organization in 2010, the Lutheran Youth Organization (LYO) related to the Vocation and Education unit, and its constitution was approved by the Church Council in accordance with former constitutional continuing resolution 16.12.C06.b.2. After the reorganization, LYO related to the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit (CSM).

The 2011 Churchwide Assembly considered the matter of youth ministry and voted, as part of a larger action [CA11.05.36], the following:

RESOLVED, that the 2011 ELCA Churchwide Assembly call upon the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit to maintain and strengthen a youth-led faith formation and leadership development organization based at the churchwide expression.

On January 27-28, 2012, the Executive Committee of the Board of the Lutheran Youth Organization met in Chicago, IL with CSM staff to formulate a plan of action regarding the restructuring of the LYO at the churchwide expression. The Committee, guided by previous recommendations of the LYO Restructuring Committee and work done with CSM staff in February 2011, agreed upon the following plan:

Mission

Firmly believing in the distinct and powerful role of youth within the Church and in the world, the churchwide organization is called to connect youth across the ELCA to explore their vocations together, develop leadership skills and abilities, share ministry ideas and strive toward the greater inclusion of youth in all the work of this church for the service of Christ and help the ELCA live out its mission and vision today and tomorrow.

Vision

Strive for an ELCA where youth are fully included; where their unique spiritual gifts are freely shared, nurtured, and applied; and where concerns relevant to each new generation of youth are intentionally addressed.

Guiding Principles

- Youth are people in grades nine (9) through twelve (12).
- Youth engagement will be fully integrated and broadly inclusive of race/ethnicity, gender, and ability.
- Youth engagement will focus on leadership development and faith formation.
- Youth in governance shall be rooted in the work of the Churchwide Assembly and the ELCA Church Council. This is in line with the new commitment to have at least 10% of youth and young adults represented in all expressions of church governance.
- All youth engagement needs to be sustainable (operate within current budget and staff realities).

Organizational Structure

1. The Lutheran Youth Organization (LYO) will cease to exist in its current form at the churchwide expression; thus, the Constitution of the LYO will be considered null and void.
2. A Core Leadership Team will replace the current Board of the LYO.
 - a. The team will serve as a resource for the staff of the churchwide organization.
 - b. The team will be composed of not less than nine (9) nor more than twelve (12) youth, each serving two-year staggered terms.
 - c. The selection process for these youth will be attentive to inclusivity and diversity. The team will also include one Synodical Youth Ministry Band of Leaders (SYMBOL) representative and not less than one staff member from CSM.
 - d. The selection process for this Core Leadership Team will be application-based. Paper copies of the application will be made available at the annual event, and copies will also be available

electronically. At the conclusion of the event, the Core Leadership Team will inform the event attendees of the following things:

- i. The application shall be due not less than one (1) nor more than two (2) months immediately following the conclusion of the event.
 - ii. Outgoing youth members of the core leadership team, along with the two adult members of the team acting in an advisory capacity, will screen applications and select new members.
- e. No less than four (4) nor more than six (6) members will be admitted to the team in any given year. This is to ensure that the team's members serve staggered terms.
 - f. The team will meet at least once a year.
 - g. The team will plan an annual youth leadership event.
3. The current Council of Synod Lutheran Youth Organization Presidents (CSLYOPs) and LYO Convention events will be replaced by one event, which will:
 - a. Be called "Lutheran Youth Formation Event," and also referred to as "The Event."
 - b. Include worship, music, leadership development, networking and service learning opportunities, educational experiences, and faith formation.
 - c. Empower attendees with faith-based leadership skills to be put to use in their home congregations and synods.
 - d. Be composed of ninth through twelfth (9th-12th) graders.
 - e. Have a scripture-based theme selected on a yearly basis by the Core Leadership Team.
 - f. Be held in early November at a site to be selected by the Core Leadership Team.
 - g. All synods will be invited to participate by sending one adult and at least one youth.

Church Council Action:

To recognize, in accordance with the action of the 2011 Churchwide Assembly [CA11.05.36], the rich history of the Lutheran Youth Organization (LYO) and affirm the work that it has accomplished since 1987;

To acknowledge the dissolution of the Lutheran Youth Organization in its current form at the churchwide expression; and

To receive with gratitude the plan for new directions in youth ministry in the ELCA.

8. AMENDMENTS TO GOVERNING DOCUMENTS

Amendments to Seminary Governing Documents

Bylaws 8.31.01. and 8.31.02. provide both for the independent incorporation of ELCA seminaries and for a churchwide role in the approval of their governing documents:

Each seminary of this church shall be separately incorporated or, if unincorporated, shall be a school, department, or unit of a college or university of this church. Whether separately incorporated or not, seminaries of this church shall be governed consistent with policies established by the Church Council upon recommendation of the appropriate unit of the churchwide organization. Seminaries may be organized into groupings, known as clusters, for the purposes of cooperation, interaction, and support.

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. Amendments to the governing documents of a college or university of this church that affect the authority or integrity of an unincorporated seminary of this church associated with that college or university shall be submitted, upon recommendation of the appropriate unit of the churchwide organization, to the Church Council for approval.

This process of approval is accomplished by the following steps:

1. The appropriate seminary president notifies the director for theological education that the seminary board has taken action to amend its governing documents.
2. The director for theological education consults with the president on the content and intent of the amendment(s).
3. The director for theological education consults with the executive director of Congregational and Synodical Mission and ELCA legal counsel.
4. The executive director of Congregational and Synodical Mission and the director for theological education recommend appropriate amendments to the Church Council at its next meeting.
5. The Office of the Secretary notifies the seminary president and the executive director of Congregational and Synodical Mission of the action taken by the Church Council on the

recommendation.

6. The amendment(s) become(s) effective upon approval of the Church Council.

The Board of Directors of Wartburg Theological Seminary met March 23, 2012, and approved amendments to Wartburg Theological Seminary's articles of incorporation.

The Board of Directors of the Eastern Cluster of Lutheran Seminaries (ECLS) met March 8, 2012, and approved amendments to the Eastern Cluster of Lutheran Seminaries bylaws and continuing resolutions. The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, Pa., the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, Pa., and the Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary in Columbia, S.C., form the ECLS to provide a full range of theological education for the eastern United States. The 1993 Churchwide Assembly adopted a recommendation from the Task Force on the Study of Theological Education for Ministry, calling the eight seminaries of the ELCA to form from three to five clusters for leadership education. Each cluster was asked to provide a full range of theological education for mission on its territory.

Church Council Action:

To approve the amended and restated articles of incorporation and bylaws of Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa; and

To approve the amended bylaws and continuing resolutions of the Eastern Cluster of Lutheran Seminaries.

Lenoir-Rhyne University and Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary Merger

Background:

Over the past several years the ELCA's seminaries have been working with each other and with other partners to find new ways to organize their educational and administrative work in ways that advance a strong, wide-reaching, and sustainable theological education network that meets the leadership needs of a church in mission. In this work, ELCA colleges and universities have emerged as particularly important partners. In previous conversations, the Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary (LTSS) and Lenoir-Rhyne University (LRU) came to the conviction, in consultation with synod bishops, the ELCA seminary presidents, and churchwide leaders, that the two schools can best serve the ELCA's work of theological education by moving toward merger, with LTSS becoming part of LRU.

Amendments to Chapter 8 of the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical*

Lutheran Church in America were recommended by the Church Council for adoption by the Churchwide Assembly in August 2011 to facilitate the merger of Lenoir-Rhyne University and Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary [CC11.08.48 and CA11.04.24].

At the March 24, 2012, meeting of the Board of Trustees of Lenoir-Rhyne University, action was taken by unanimous consent to accept the merger of Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary into Lenoir-Rhyne University effective July 1, 2012. Following that action in March, the Board of Lenoir-Rhyne approved amendments to its bylaws to address this new structure. These amendments had previously been reviewed and approved by official representatives of the ELCA.

Church Council Action:

To approve the revised charter and bylaws of Lenoir-Rhyne University, Hickory, North Carolina.

9. ELECTION TO THE CHURCH COUNCIL

Background:

In accordance with constitutional provision 14.15., the Church Council has the constitutional responsibility for filling vacancies on the council or on a board or committee of the churchwide organization once a vacancy is declared by the secretary. The Southwestern Minnesota Synod (3F) has nominated the Rev. Joyce M. Graue, Raymond, Minnesota, to replace the Rev. Dean Elton Johnson, Willmar, Minnesota, for a term ending in 2013.

Church Council Action:

To elect the Rev. Joyce M. Graue, Raymond, Minn. (3F), to the Church Council for a term ending in 2013.

10. OTHER ELECTIONS

The Church Council has the responsibility of electing people to fill terms on boards of separately incorporated ministries, social ministry organizations, and seminaries. The relationship of the ELCA to certain affiliated social ministry organizations is expressed through the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit. The Congregational and Synodical Mission unit forwards nominations for social ministry organizations to the Church Council. Bylaw 8.31.03. outlines basic parameters for the election of members to the boards of ELCA seminaries.

Church Council Action:

To elect to the Portico Benefit Services board of trustees to a term expiring in 2013: Ms. Diana Goudelock Haywood;

To elect to the Lutheran Medical Center board of trustees to terms expiring in 2015: Ms. Brenda Grandell, Dr. Genevieve Go, Ms. Miriam Katowitz, Mr. Darin McAtee, Mr. George Renert, Mr. Vincent Rohan, and Mr. Danny Tsoi, and Ms. Kathryn Wylde;

To elect to the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg board of directors to a term expiring in 2016: Mr. Steve Gunderson;

To elect to the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago board of directors to terms expiring in 2015: Ms. Kathryn M. Hasselblad-Pascale and Mr. Marvin J. Lofquist;

To elect to the Trinity Lutheran Seminary board of directors to terms expiring in 2016: Mr. Gerald (Gary) H. Philpy, Ms. Elizabeth Baer and Pr. Frederick D. Fritz; and

To elect to the Wartburg Theological Seminary board of directors: Pr. Stephen J. Cornils (term expiring 2018), Pr. Nelson C. Meyer (term expiring 2019) and Mr. Joel Streng (term expiring 2017).