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Report of the Presiding Bishop

“Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:4-7 NRSV).

More than ever, that word of promise has been part of our life together. With you, I continue to find it an amazingly holy thing to be prayed for and to pray for others. I’m very aware that, in recent weeks and months, we have been a praying church.

In the text about the peace that passes all understanding, there is a sense that such peace is a peace that the world cannot give, it only comes to us through Christ. Yet it fulfills itself in a peace that moves us out into the world to be proclaimers of the gospel. I continue to give thanks for the privilege of leading a church that is increasingly clear about who we are.

We are a church that is deeply rooted—and always being made new.

That became so evident to me a few weeks ago when I joined Bishop Kevin Kanouse, Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod, and churchwide colleagues as we visited Iglesia Santa Maria de Guadalupe in Irving, Texas. We were invited to participate in their weekly Friday evening Healing Service, which by the end of the service included upward of 1,000 people. There were five baptisms that night in the healing service.

I began my visit with the youth by saying, “Tell me. Is God in this place? How do you know?”

A little eight-year-old girl jumped up in the front row and leaned into the microphone that was on my stole and said, “I know God is here. I have had heart disease all my life, but I was prayed for here. My doctor told me that I don't have heart disease anymore.” The people started clapping and praising Jesus, waving their arms.

Then another young girl stood up, probably about 13, and she said, “I know God is in this place because I feel peace when I'm here. My parents are not documented, but we know when we are here together, we are safe.” In the front row of the sanctuary was the sheriff of Irving, the police chief of Irving and city council members, who had come to give thanks to that congregation for its serving the larger Irving community. She had the clarity, the courage and the presence of God's peace to bear witness to that in their presence.

In the question and answer period, I was asked, “Bishop Hanson, what is the ELCA doing about immigration reform?” Spirit-led coincidence, that morning I had received a very thoughtful letter from President Obama, thanking the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for actions at the 2011 Churchwide Assembly, calling for adoption of the Dream Act and for the work Lutherans have been doing to resettle refugees and work for immigration reform. Again, the cheers went up along with the praising of God and the waving of hands.

Friends, Santa Maria Guadalupe would not happen if we were not a church engaged together in ministry and mission. This is a community so deeply rooted in Christ and grounded in the soil of word and sacrament. They now worship over 2,500 people in five liturgies a weekend. When they had outgrown their worship space at two host ELCA congregations, three families in the congregation personally loaned up to \$60,000 to buy the land. That was until the Mission Investment Fund (MIF) could provide the financing to build the first unit. They are now in need of more space. Santa Maria would not happen without those individual ELCA members’ investing in MIF, without the synod and churchwide organization combining their resources and without the passion of a mission developer. This is what it means to be a church together, deeply rooted but always being made new.

We are in a marvelous time to bear witness to the gospel as we Lutheran Christians have come to hear it, to believe it and to proclaim it anew. Pastor Bob Davis is pastor at Holy Cross in Libertyville, Illinois. Bob is chairing the Macedonia Project leadership team. At a recent meeting, he led devotions. He talked about a man in a previous parish who was born blind and had come to him and said, "Pastor, will you teach me what colors are?" He was taken off guard. He said, "How do you teach someone something that is so a part of your life that you never have to even think about it, yet is so completely foreign to that person's life? How do you teach about it in a way that is imaginative and creative, and brings that which is so familiar to you, to life in another?"

Isn't that the opportunity and challenge we have as the ELCA? To take that which is so familiar to us in the Biblical narrative, those words that are just part of our daily lexicon that we hardly ponder their meaning? Words like gospel, grace, salvation, freedom in Christ and justification. And now the challenge and opportunity is how we open up that which is so familiar to us so it might bear witness and become the gospel, the gift of faith and life for another.

We live in a culture where religion and the rhetoric of religious leaders and members is becoming so toxic that it's associated only with divisive, partisan politics and harsh judgments of one another. In that context, we have a particular moment not to yield to partisanship, but to hold steadfastly to the proclamation that God is faithful, and God's mercy is extended to all in Jesus. We will tenaciously proclaim and embody that mercy, particularly as it unfolds with those who live in poverty and are the recipients of the harsh judgments of others.

I think this is a time to embody and proclaim how Luther describes faith in the preface to his commentary on the Book of Romans, "Faith is a living daring confidence in God's grace, so sure and certain that believers would stake their lives on it a thousand times. Because of it [faith], without compulsion, a person is ready and glad to receive everyone, to serve everyone, to suffer everything, out of love and praise to God."¹ Think how countercultural that is in its description of faith, to receive everyone.

We need to commit ourselves to look inwardly and introspectively at all of the practices, power and privilege that we possess that preclude everyone from feeling welcome in Jesus' name amongst us, and we serve and lead in a church that receives its unity as God's gift in Christ through word and bread, water and wine. We are committed to making visible that unity that is God's gift in us. As I say over and over again, we define ourselves first on the basis of our relatedness to others, not on the basis of what sets us apart.

We are a church that is a catalyst, convener and bridge builder.

That's what we've been doing in recent weeks, tending to the relatedness we have to others by virtue of God's gift of grace in Christ, even in those relationships that are strained and seem to be almost at the point of being severed.

The first of these conversations took place February 6-7, 2012. They were with four leaders of the North American Lutheran Church. Our participants in those conversations were Bishop Marcus Lohrmann from the Northwestern Ohio Synod, Pastor Kathryn Tiede from the ELCA Church Council, and Pastors Don McCoid and Marcus Kunz from the Office of the Presiding Bishop.

The next day we gathered at the Lutheran Center with the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod leadership, with President Matt Harrison and others. The Committee on Lutheran Cooperation (CLC) has been the table where we've met twice a year for many years. Regrettably, we didn't meet last fall because of a conflict in schedules, but we did meet February 8, 2012. In the opening devotions, I read from Mark 8 and Jesus' prediction of his passion, and then Peter rebuked Jesus, and Jesus rebuked Peter. I opened the meeting by saying I'm afraid the Lutheran witness in this culture and our relationship with each other has become much more one of being mutually rebuking of each other than together proclaiming the death and

¹ Martin Luther, *Luther's Works Volume 35, Word and Sacrament I*, E. Theodore Bachman and Helmut T. Lehmann eds. (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1960) 370-371.

resurrection of Christ. I believe that strongly. We must find a way to get beyond a relationship of mutual rebuking to a shared proclaiming of the crucified and risen Christ.

Then, later in the conversation, President Harrison said, “Our work with this building is over.” We asked him to clarify what “work with this building” meant. It’s clear that for the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (LCMS), our cooperative efforts in ministries in Lutheran World Relief, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service and Lutheran Services in America, Lutheran Disaster Response, our work with HIV and AIDS, military chaplaincies and other chaplaincies is over as church-to-church relationships of witness in the world. I expressed my deep, deep disappointment that our God-given, spirit-filled capacity to respond to the suffering of our neighbors should now be diminished because of our theological differences. I said that we as the ELCA will work tenaciously to seek ways to work with other Lutheran, ecumenical and inter-faith partners for the sake of what God is calling us, if not with LCMS. As in that statement from Luther, faith frees us to serve everyone, to suffer everything, for love and praise of God.

Over the years, we’ve talked about our theological differences, our shared ministry, our stories, challenges and resources. We will continue that table in some form. Two colleagues from each of our church bodies will write a new charter for CLC. President Harrison acknowledged that there will be ways in local communities where LCMS congregations and individuals would work together with ELCA congregations and individuals, but the formal relationships through our shared ministries have come to an end. That is a cause for deep lament.

For us as the ELCA, we’ve committed in our statement of ecumenism that we will be in theological conversations until we can reach that point of being together at the table of the Eucharist. We will work and we will pray for a day of greater healing. I am thankful that while we knew these tensions were at that point of potential dissolution of shared ministries together, we have been in conversation with those partners. I’m pleased that we signed a “memorandum of relationship” with Lutheran World Relief, so that we have clarity about how we will continue to work with them in their new independent state. Our memorandum of agreement with Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service is underway. We’re making good progress. They’ve reconstituted their board in some exciting ways with many more immigrant, refugee, and first-generation immigrants on their board of directors. Lutheran Services in America (LSA) is in a search process for a new president/CEO – LSA is a strong partner with us in serving our neighbors. Also, we’re not losing a beat in our capacity as Lutheran Disaster Response to be on the ground.

We’ve got to find a way to navigate and articulate a Lutheran witness to the gospel as the ELCA that is not over against another, but in relationship to the Christ who joins us through his death and resurrection. This is our work. This is who we are as a church. It is inseparable for us to be the ELCA and not to be at those tables, in those conversations and together in the world, responding especially to those in poverty.

On February 9, 2012, Bishop Stacy Sauls and Pastor Sam McDonald, from the national staff of The Episcopal Church, came to Chicago to follow up on earlier meetings a year ago. Well, it was a different tone. The spirit of the meeting was so hopeful asking, “How can we be more concrete, making the fruits of full communion visible in our shared ministries of planting new congregations, our campus ministry, our advocacy and in how we do our global mission?” It’s clear that we’re ready to move more concretely in multiple areas. And for that, we give thanks.

It was good to go from that week to Santa Maria in Irving, and then the next day to be with 600 youth directors and youth staff at the Lutheran Youth Ministry Network in New Orleans, and then fly to the Vatican.

We went to the Vatican to affirm and build upon relationships that have been longstanding and deep. One of the important things to remember is that these relationships are built over time. They are not just personal relationships; they are substantive relationships out of the context of our theological convictions and commitments.

While at the Vatican, we met with Cardinal Koch. In no more than ten minutes, we were already in deep conversations about the results of the tenth round of U.S. Lutheran-Roman Catholic dialogues. We then turned toward the current dialogue, “How we engage in moral decision-making and our structures of authority.” Finally, we were into issues left yet for us to discuss. We were talking about the Eucharist and ministry. Could we ever imagine a declaration on ministry, church and Eucharist, like the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification, built upon the premises of differentiated consensus?

This is who we are as a church. It's not just bilateral relationships; it's conciliar relationships. In January 2012, Cardinal Keeler convened a high-level summit of 24 religious leaders in the United States: Orthodox, Catholic, Episcopal, Lutheran, Pentecostal, Evangelical, including some of our full-communion partners, to ask the question, “What does the changing landscape of ecumenism and religious life in America mean for us?” The National Council of Churches (NCC), with Pastor Kathryn Lohre as president, is going through a time of great introspection: “What does it mean to be a National Council of Churches in this changing landscape?” The NCC is seeking a transitional general secretary to lead that process for the next 18 months. Bishop Claire Burkat, Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod, is growing leadership with Christian Churches Together (CCT) at this wider table of ecumenism. It's an exciting time to be part of the richly diverse and united body of Christ.

Never underestimate the powerful witness of unity within diversity in a culture that equates unity with imposed uniformity and fears diversity because it seems to devolve into differences that divide. We are a church that understands that unity is within diversity as God's gift to us. Because we're a church that takes so seriously our relatedness, we have the capacity to serve as catalyst, convener and bridge-builder.

In March, I also met with Israeli Ambassador Mansour. He is in the Israeli Foreign Ministry and has been the Director of the Foreign Ministry's Inter-Religious Affairs Division for the past four years. Why did he come with the Israeli Consul General from Chicago to meet with us?

- Because we are seen as a bridge-builder as we accompany the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL) in their relationship with the Israeli government;
- Because we have a relationship over time with Ambassador Mansour;
- Because Ambassador Mansour has been working with Bishop Younan to find ways to lead effectively since the Israeli government has not fulfilled the promise it made three years ago to formally recognize ELCJHL;
- Because the city of Jerusalem has not yet granted the permits for the Mount of Olive Housing Project.

We needed to have a very tough, hard and sometimes confrontational conversation. We could have that conversation, and it didn't become adversarial to the point of breaking down, because we have that kind of relationship and integrity as we accompany the ELCJHL. We could talk about the Arab Spring and what it's doing to relationships between Israel and its neighbors. We could talk about our mutual concern, that in that environment, religious extremism is winning the day. We could talk about our commitment to the persecution of Christians in Syria. We shared with them the letter that I wrote to the three Orthodox patriarchs in Syria that has been so appreciated as a lifeline of prayer and solidarity to those who this very day could be facing death for their professed faith.

That's who we are. We accompany. We convene. We're bridge builders. You know that many predicted we would lose our global companions because of our actions at the 2009 Churchwide Assembly. We have not lost one relationship, save for one companion synod relationship.

We are a church that rolls up our sleeves and gets to work.

We have the capacity to stay long after the cameras and news stories have ended when there's been a natural disaster. I hear over and over, “Oh, you're Lutherans, you stay 'til the work is done. You come, roll up your sleeves and get to work, and you don't stop working 'til the work is done.”

On March 11, we observed the one year anniversary of one of the strongest earthquakes ever recorded. It triggered tsunami warnings across the Pacific Ocean and devastated Japan's coastal areas with

30-foot waves. As news of the disaster spread, Lutherans prayed for the people of Japan and offered financial support through ELCA Disaster Response, sending more than \$2.9 million to the Pacific Earthquake and Tsunami fund. In partnership with our global companion the Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church (JELC) and along with our church's ongoing relationships, both Lutheran and ecumenical, we have responded effectively to the communities in need. We will continue to walk alongside our brothers and sisters there for as long as we are needed.

The strong relationships we have with each other and the people of Japan will continue, yet they are not just about rebuilding from the tsunami. The ELCA has accompanied the people of Japan for over 100 years and we have built strong relationships of trust and mutuality. In our conversations with the JELC, we have talked about how the JELC can send pastors to the ELCA as evangelists to plant Japanese-speaking congregations in our midst. That's the capacity we have when we are a church together in mission with our partners all over the world.

In February, several ELCA members, including ELCA World Hunger coordinators from your synods went to Haiti for the groundbreaking of the housing project into which \$3.5 million in hunger funds have flowed. A housing project with 200 units, in a country where a half a million people are still in tents and temporary housing, is now being built. The hunger coordinators stopped and saw the progress on the vocational school that was just a frame of an abandoned sugar company and now is becoming a school built by the first class of students that will soon celebrate their graduation along with the school's dedication. Part of why that's being built is because a connection was made with Northwest Iowa Community College, which is sending faculty that has the knowledge to construct the school that is building up Haitian society.

From that groundbreaking, some of those World Hunger leaders came to Fort Myers, Florida to join other World Hunger leaders to renew their commitment to the ELCA World Hunger as a proper vehicle for both advocacy and education, and to respond to those who are hungry all over the world. Over \$19 million was given by ELCA members last year to ELCA World Hunger. That shows both commitment and capacity for involvement. That's who we are. We have the capacity to support missionaries who respond to hunger and disaster all over the world while simultaneously raising \$15 million for the ELCA Malaria Campaign. It's going to take leadership throughout the church and the passion of congregations.

We are a church that believes God is calling us into the world – together.

What's particularly exciting for me is to see the leadership of young adults with passionate engagement in the world. We can't keep up with the number of young adults that want to be Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM). We're adding a new country program this fall in Madagascar. There are many reasons why that makes so much sense. What's also exciting is when these young adults come back: what happens in their lives, how they emerge in society, how they work in community development and agencies, and in how some go to seminary and several are working for us.

Now young adults are creating a viral network called the 99 Collective. Many who joined the 99 Collective are young adults who have not necessarily been that close to the church, but they get what we're trying to do in accompaniment. They get our theology.

In Boston, 35 of the 99 Collective got together for prayer and conversation because of the glocal event, bringing people together out of the commitment to global and local mission, revitalizing their passion for the gospel, giving skills in advocacy, interpreting immigration patterns and talking about what it means to be a church that sees global and local mission as inseparable. And that glocal event in Boston was organized in partnership with The Episcopal Church.

That's who we are together. That's what we'll experience when 35,000 young people come to New Orleans this summer around discipleship, justice and peace in synod clusters. The goal is to renew lives in discipleship and through young people to renew congregations.

We are a church whose unity is in Jesus, who gathers us around word and water, wine and bread.

I know it from my own experiences that there are congregations in this church who are asking serious questions about their own future such as can we keep the doors open? Will there be someone this Sunday to proclaim the good news of Jesus? Will there be a congregation from which I can be buried when I've given my life to this church?

I believe a church body that has many of its congregations asking such questions can still turn them into questions about evangelical witness and mission. That's what we're doing in these convened mission tables. That's what we're doing when we say we believe that out of a process of listening and discerning can bring new life. If every congregation sent a cohort of people to join other congregations within synods and spend a year listening to God speaking to us in Scripture, and listening to the spirit-filled gifts of congregations, and listening to the voices of the community, then new life can emerge in the form of evangelical witness that engages the world. That's who we are together. That's who we are stewarding new possibilities for ministry.

We can be an even more dynamic church in mission if we can come together around stewardship as a faith practice, coming together around telling the story of this church in mission and interpreting it, and if we can come together in challenging one another to fund the mission that is ours together. Last year, \$1.8 billion was given in offering plates in ELCA congregations. We're not a poor church.

Think about it—4.2 million baptized believers, arising every morning with the mark of Jesus' death on their forehead and the promise and power of Christ's resurrection on their lips. That's who we are. That's a reason for hope. That's the reason for thanksgiving. That's the reason why I'm delighted to be with you in leadership in this church.

Thank you.

Report of the Vice President

So make yourself an ark of cypress wood; make rooms in it and coat it with pitch inside and out. This is how you are to build it: The ark is to be 450 feet long, 75 feet wide and 45 feet high. Make a roof for it and finish the ark to within 18 of the top. Put a door in the side of the ark and make lower, middle, and upper decks. Genesis 6: 14-16

No, I'm not building an ark, even though I'm sure you've heard Texas has gone from last summer's most severe drought in modern history to record breaking rain in 2012. It has rained almost everyday in the past 40 days. Okay, maybe the 40 days is stretching it.

Actually, this reading came to mind because I wanted to remodel a portion of my building. In my mind, I envisioned an open area with more display space. I could see some walls taken down so that the two major showrooms would no longer be divided, that both could be seen from each side. A refurbished warehouse look would be nice, with exposed brick and high ceilings that would give a feeling of openness.

Since Hurricane Ike, a good portion of this half of the building sits in darkness, unutilized. The previous owner had a series of offices partitioned off in this section of the building, a feature that really does me no good. It seemed like a good time to knock down those walls and create a unified showroom that would hold a new venture for my business – swimming pool equipment and supplies, a growing new extension of our business, but still part of it.

I had grand ideas. It seemed so easy. After all, we just did a major clean-up after a hurricane. How hard could it be without all the mud, wet sheetrock, and mess in the way?

So, first step: Hire an architect. Get a plan, draw up some blueprints. Have plans approved, pay the fees, adhere to all the codes, get estimates from contractors, pick out paint colors, flooring, lighting, window treatments.... I know it will be work, but I think I'm prepared for it.

If you've done any construction or remodeling of a building in a central downtown area, I'm sure you know what I mean. I'm sure that's why Noah chose to build the ark out in the country, away from all the inspectors and their permits.

The end result belies all the complexities of the steps required to get there. I saw walls that needed tearing down. I envisioned an open, clean, light-filled showroom that unified both parts of my business. I did not see engineers and load-bearing beams and electrical, plumbing, and air conditioning work. I did not see the nay-sayers telling me what I could not do or how I should modify the plans to suit their ideas or to make it easier.

Needless to say, six months later I am still wrapped up in the process that comes before construction can ever start. What I thought would be a slam dunk is actually a meticulous process that must start with the very basics or the whole thing will collapse in a failure.

Why should I be surprised? So much in life is like that. *How firm a foundation* Ground work. Always lots of preliminary ground work.

The building of that foundation is what I see happening in our church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. What many "people in the pews" see is the end result – the new and improved (hopefully!), the remodeled. We know how hard at work this church is. It is the coordinated efforts of congregations, synods and the churchwide organization working together that carry out the mission of this church.

The "construction work" of our church is much bigger than a remodeled office. It is the breaking down of walls and the opening up of spaces to let light shine on what God calls us to be to help make the world a better place. It is assessing the current situation to see if all resources are being fully used.

For example, the churchwide expression, working on our behalf, is constantly working with people and organizations around the globe to lay the foundations on which a stronger world can be built. Although we have our differences, our church is working to keep in conversation with other Lutheran bodies, such as the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod and the North American Lutheran Church, in an attempt to continue our ministries that serve so many when resources are open to each other.

Our leaders are around the globe laying firm foundations with other church organizations and governments to construct a more secure world for others whose foundations have been rocked to the core. The ELCA Disaster Response, working with the Lutheran Church of Haiti and Lutheran World Federation, is funding the rebuilding of a resettlement village outside of Port-au-Prince. A small remodeling job would not work here. Not only are these organizations concerned with building housing for 1,200 people displaced by the 2010 earthquake, but they also must construct a sound infrastructure, including a community center and playground, to support the village. An association to manage the village's common assets is being set up. Efforts to address the mind, body and soul of the villagers are a major part of the rebuilding of this community, but first, you see, the groundwork of relationships between the entities working together on this project must be firmly developed.

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton recognized the work of the Lutheran social ministry organizations in welcoming refugees to the United States during an address at the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugee's ministerial conference in Geneva. In particular, the work of Lutheran Social Services of Minnesota was highlighted for efforts to help immigrants assimilate to life in a new country. Again, on the surface, we see Lutherans reaching out to help people in need – and doing a good job at it, too, I might add! But if we look deeper than the work of supplying immigrants and refugees with the essentials of food, shelter, jobs and often education, we see the groundwork of countless years in building the relationships that make this possible. It is the work of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services, which works on behalf of the ELCA, the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, and the Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. This foundation is possible because of the understanding of the three church bodies that agree to work together, making a larger impact on the construction of the body of helpers in the LIRS and smaller groups like the LSS of Minnesota.

The ELCA, through its three expressions, is constantly working to build and keep a firm foundation, one that is rooted in the Word and works under its construction company motto of *marked with the cross of Christ forever, we are claimed, gathered, and sent for the sake of the world*. Because we are marked as God's people, we are on a mission to construct a better world. Our tool chest might have this logo on it: *God's work, our hands*. Get out there and build!

In the meantime, while all that is going on, I am preparing for synod assemblies from the east coast to the west coast. This year, I look forward to continuing the building of relationships with assemblies in the Alaska, Montana, and Florida-Bahamas synods. These visits give us a chance to strengthen our foundation. They remind us of our interdependent relationships that help to build stronger ministries in congregations, communities and synods. I am especially happy to go to such diverse environments. I love getting a chance to see how the people of the ELCA use the gifts of nature God has given them to make their part of the kingdom a better place. Okay, and I also enjoy seeing some sights along the way and getting away from work...

Speaking of which – I guess I'd better get back to the work at hand. I wonder if Noah had to deal with architects and engineers. Maybe it would be easier to build a Kleen Supply Company *Ark*. Where's that cubit measuring tape?

Report of the Secretary

A. Freed in Christ to Serve

Although the 2011 Churchwide Assembly concluded almost eight months ago, many memories linger. Inevitably, these memories include the large banner hanging in the lobby of the Marriott World Center, “Freed in Christ to Serve.” This banner provided a powerful reminder that wherever we go, whatever we do, we are liberated to proclaim the Gospel and serve our neighbor, with no strings attached.

One of my more poignant reflective moments occurred in December, when I received an electronic Christmas card. When opened, the card wished me a “joyous holiday season and a new year filled with peace and happiness.” The bottom of the card contained a further message, however. It advised me that, in accordance with IRS Circular 230, any tax advice contained in my holiday greeting was not intended and could not be used to avoid tax-related penalties or for promoting to any party any tax related matter. Further, the next paragraph told me that my e-card may contain highly confidential, privileged information. Finally, I was notified that “any recipient other than the intended recipient is advised that any dissemination, distribution, copying or other use of this message is strictly prohibited.” Oh, my! Good news with disclaimers and distribution limitations! Don’t we in the ELCA sometimes, in fact, act like our Good News can only be shared on a limited basis with disclaimers? Our Churchwide Assembly banner proclaims otherwise! We are “Freed in Christ to Serve!”



In the eight months since the Churchwide Assembly, there has been substantial activity in the churchwide organization and in the Office of the Secretary. At this meeting, you will hear important information about implementing the actions of the Churchwide Assembly, the development of an operational plan for the churchwide organization, and other significant progress in the work of this church. In this report and in my oral comments, I want to focus on a number of important matters that relate to the Office of the Secretary. Thus, I will address issues related to Synod Assemblies, upcoming synodical bishop elections, preparation for the 2013 Churchwide Assembly, electronic meeting protocols, work on issues of corporate social responsibility in the restructured churchwide organization, an update on congregations voting to disaffiliate, congregational changes in status in 2011, and several other issues. With all these topics (and more) on the plate of the Office of the Secretary, we’re relieved that it’s not a Churchwide Assembly year!

B. Upcoming Synod Assemblies

Synod Assembly season will soon be upon us! (In Minneapolis, it’s already come and gone!) As is always the case, being present in synods, representing the churchwide organization and sharing ministry stories represent visible evidence of interdependence and doing God’s work with our hands! In anticipation of upcoming Synod Assemblies, I want to raise a number of issues for your radar screens.

As in past years, pre-Synod Assembly conference calls with synod bishops and vice presidents are planned. The purpose of these calls is to share information and suggestions about best practices among bishops and vice presidents.

In early February, the Office of the Secretary sent to synods and others the updated memorandum on memorials and resolutions. It is attached to this report for your ready reference. One aspect of improving governance in the ELCA and the way that legislation is processed is to educate congregations and Synod

Assembly voting members on the ways that the Churchwide Assembly and Church Council are requested to take action. Using a proactive Reference and Counsel or Resolutions Committee, empowered to act with a carefully crafted rule of organization and procedure, can enhance this process. In particular, if your synod receives a memorial or resolution that appears to be a standardized version, please let us know. In the past several years, we have worked effectively with synods editing problematical memorials and developing alternative templates, as appropriate.

Important elections take place at all Synod Assemblies. Preparing for these elections and the work of synod nominating committees are always important. Elections are particularly important when voting members will be elected for the 2013 Churchwide Assembly. Preparing for and holding elections provides the opportunity to emphasize this church's commitment to its representational principles and our commitments to diversity – in terms of persons of color, youth, and young adults. As we approach elections of synod leaders and voting members to the 2013 Churchwide Assembly, please recall the commitment of this church in its Plan for Mission to raise up and support faithful, wise, and courageous leaders! Experience at a Churchwide Assembly can be an important component of leadership development for the next generations of leaders in this church.

In comments to the Conference of Bishops, we specifically asked them to recognize Church Council members and to use them during their assemblies. Similarly, in briefings of churchwide representatives, we indicated that Church Council members will be present in their synods and in their companion synods, as well. We encouraged the churchwide representatives to make contact with you and to think about using Church Council members in question-and-answer sessions or forums. Attached to this report is a list of churchwide representatives to Synod Assemblies.

C. Synod Bishop Elections

Given the number of bishop elections in 2012 and 2013, the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Office of the Secretary have been attentive to assisting synods in preparing for their nomination and election processes. Attached to this report is a list of synods having bishop elections in 2012 and 2013.

As in past years, the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Office of the Secretary have collaborated in updating *Guidelines for Synod Bishop Elections*. It is a comprehensive document and addresses many issues that have arisen in synodical nomination and election processes. Also as in past years, we have held telephone conferences with key participants in the bishop election process in synods. Based on our perspective and feedback from synods, these have been productive and helpful conferences.

We also have revised one additional document: *Synod Transition Checklist*. (It is available on the ELCA website, as are the *Guidelines for Synod Bishop Elections*.)

Last fall the Conference of Bishops discussed synod bishop elections and possible best practices. I thought that it would be important to provide you a synthesized list:

- Review and evaluate the synod constitution and process for nomination and election of a bishop (S9.04). Review past synod practices.
- Review websites of synods that are holding elections in 2012 to see how they have addressed issues. Confer with leaders in other synods.
- Appoint a Bishop Election Committee and chairperson.
- Evaluate whether a ministry audit and synod profile will be prepared. Liase with Office of the Presiding Bishop staff for Synodical Relations and Research and Evaluation.
- Determine what, if any, process will be used to engage the synod in conversation about its ministry and leadership and how the names of potential nominees will be surfaced in advance of the Synod Assembly, if provided for in the synod's governing documents or processes. Have the Synod Assembly or Synod Council approve the process, if it is not already in the governing documents.

- Disseminate information about the nomination and election process and outline the anticipated timeline. Be sure to advise Synodical Relations of the date of the assembly as soon as possible.
- Begin to work on a draft agenda and identify important issues to be addressed.

Experience has shown that different nomination and election processes can be Spirit-filled events and that communal discernment is not limited to a particular process or timetable. However, it is extremely important to begin the process early. (We've already encountered some synods that desired to amend their governing documents and discovered they could not do so in a timely way because of Chapter 18 in the *Constitution for Synods*.) It also is extremely important to effectively disseminate information regarding a synod's process early. This means that it is important for synods to update their websites to reflect information regarding the bishop nomination and election process. And, if a sitting bishop has discerned that she or he is willing to serve again, that is important information to post, along with information regarding the nomination and election process.

Synods are increasingly doing a good job on bishop nomination and election issues. If your synod is anticipating an election in 2013, take a look at the video produced by the New England Synod and posted on its Website. (This is an important piece, considering that this synod uses an ecclesiastical ballot without a pre-assembly process.) Even in the absence of a pre-assembly nominating process, congregations and voting members can be inspired to reflect on the ministries of a synod. As indicated in the *Guidelines for Synod Bishop Elections*, the Rocky Mountain Synod has conducted a ministry audit, developed a synod profile, and posted informative and reflective information on the synod's web pages. Its work illustrates the creative ways that a bishop election, particularly if it will be an election without an incumbent, can be used to reflect on the future directions of the synod's ministry and focus on personal attributes desired in a bishop.

Because of the number of bishop elections in 2013 and the need to prepare for the 2013 Churchwide Assembly, Walter May, executive for the Conference of Bishops, and I anticipate holding conference calls with synods holding bishop elections in 2013 in the fall of 2012. Before then, we anticipate working with Research and Evaluation to develop a template and process for synods anticipating bishop elections in 2013 to inventory and assess synodical work and needs.

D. 2013 Churchwide Assembly

It won't surprise you to know that planning is already underway for the 2013 Churchwide Assembly in Pittsburgh from August 12-18, 2013. At the fall meeting of the Church Council, the allocation of voting members was approved, and synods have been advised regarding their number of voting members.

A Request for Proposal (RFP) has been sent out and responses are coming to create a platform for the "paperless project." The Information Technology Team under Jonathan Beyer is working diligently to translate the "paperless project" to one where the *Pre-Assembly Report* and related documents will be available only in electronic format (maybe on iPads!) absent a specific request for paper. Not only will more members have access to electronic documents in 2013, improvements will be made in the process of updating them and the capacity to make and store notes on them. In addition, we hope that other features will be introduced, such as an electronic bulletin board, online nominations, and electronic submission of motions. The plan is very ambitious, but we are excited to be moving ahead in the use of technology to facilitate the work of the Churchwide Assembly.

You also should be aware that the sequencing of meetings between now and August 2013 means that preparation already is moving forward on procedural and substantive issues. The fall meetings of the Conference of Bishops and the Church Council must address certain possible legislative actions, in part because the Churchwide Assembly asked for reports at that time and in part because amendments to the governing documents and proposed Rules of Organization and Procedure must be reviewed so that they

can be provided to voting members in a timely manner in early 2013. (ELCA constitutional provision 22.11 requires notice of constitutional amendments be provided to synods six months before the assembly.) These timetable constraints translate into the need to begin to discuss certain issues now. Let me provide you examples of areas under consideration for possible amendments to the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions* of this church.

The implications of moving to a triennial cycle for the Churchwide Assembly will need to be addressed in a number of ways. Although we anticipate a number of recommendations following up on the implementing resolutions adopted in response to the LIFT Task Force and from the work of the Conference of Bishops concerning the role of synods and bishops, a number of other issues also must be considered. One subject that should be addressed is the desired size of the Churchwide Assembly. Currently, it is based on a formula provided in ELCA bylaw 12.41.11 (one voting member for every 5800 baptized members plus an additional voting member for every 50 congregations.). Historically, the Church Council has exercised its discretion and provided for a few more voting members, principally to meet representational principles in smaller synods. The original plan underlying bylaw 12.41.11 was to maintain assembly membership at approximately 1000 voting members, which the LIFT task force determined to be a reasonable number. Because of decreases in the size of baptized membership in the ELCA, the voting membership at the 2013 Churchwide Assembly will be approximately 950. (This will be the first time that voting membership has been less than 1000.) Going to a three-year assembly cycle means that fewer individuals will serve over time as voting members, and the new cycle provides the opportunity to revisit the formula prescribed in the bylaw and to re-evaluate the desired size of the assembly. At this Conference of Bishops meeting, a discussion was held regarding the optimum size of the Churchwide Assembly when it takes place on a three-year cycle. As a result, a number of options will be explored to see how increasing the number of voting members will affect allocations to synods of voting members, as well as the cost implications. It is likely that an amendment will be proposed to bylaw 12.41.11 to change the formula for determining the size and allocation of voting members to the 2016 Churchwide Assembly.

Another issue (more accurately a group of issues) involves elections. At the 2011 Churchwide Assembly, continuing resolution 12.31.A11 was adopted. It charged the Church Council with making recommendations regarding elections to the Churchwide Assembly in 2013. This analysis necessarily encompasses the Church Council and the boards of separately incorporated ministries elected by the Churchwide Assembly. Currently, the Church Council and the boards of Portico, Augsburg Fortress, and the Mission Investment Fund are elected by the Churchwide Assembly for one non-renewable six-year term. Each of these organizations is evaluating the impact of a triennial assembly cycle, which involves considerations of term length, possibility of re-election, the electing body and other related issues. The results of these analyses will begin to surface in the not-too-distant future and will need to be examined and assessed by the Conference of Bishops, stakeholders and others before being formulated into recommendations by the Church Council to the Churchwide Assembly. Because they involve governing document amendments, these recommendations must be acted upon at the November 2012 Church Council meeting.

The Office of the Secretary has begun its review of other possible amendments to the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions* of this church. In addition to technical amendments, a number of substantive areas are under review. These will be reviewed and discussed preliminarily with the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee. Before the next Church Council meeting, it is likely that the Legal and Constitutional Review Committee will hold interim telephonic meetings to address possible amendments to the governing documents. If you have suggestions or concerns about particular provisions, please contact the Office of the Secretary so that we can address them.

In addition to governing document amendments, the Rules of Organization and Procedure will need to be approved for recommendation to the Churchwide Assembly at the fall 2012 Church Council

meeting. As you know, these rules address many issues that will require review for 2013; they also contain procedures for the election processes for presiding bishop and secretary. These will need to be reviewed in anticipation of the fall Conference of Bishops and Church Council meetings. A proposal to address review of these provisions will be made at this meeting.

One final point warrants mention. Consistent with the Plan for Mission, this church is always seeking to raise up and support faithful, wise, and courageous leaders. Even if you don't have a specific position in mind, please consider identifying future leaders so they can be in our database. This can be accomplished by providing the name on the nominations' website at www.elca.org/nominations.

E. Other governance issues

Both the work of the LIFT Task Force and the recently adopted Operational Plan of the churchwide organization have identified additional governance-related issues for further evaluation and possible action. These are being addressed in various forums (such as the Conference of Bishops and the LIFT Advisory Committee), and discussion of some of them is integrated into the agenda for this meeting.

Other key governance-related issues need to be addressed before the 2013 Churchwide Assembly. These include the following:

- Criteria for nominations to Church Council by entities other than synods;
- Possible non-legislative forums and gatherings to be held between meetings of the Churchwide Assembly;
- Strengthening relationships between the Conference of Bishops, the Church Council and other leaders in the churchwide organization;
- Study of ways that input can be obtained from grassroots constituents and disseminated from the churchwide organization to them;
- Evaluation of the frequency of Synod Assemblies.

Some of these issues necessarily have spill-over implications to Synod Assemblies and warrant evaluation and conversation. For example, should the way that memorials are processed be amended to allow for more grassroots input before they are addressed by a Churchwide Assembly? Should synods consider not having a legislative assembly every year when the Churchwide Assembly goes to a triennial cycle? I hope that this meeting spurs imaginative thinking on governance-related issues, so that further discussion and evaluation can occur in a timely way!

F. Electronic meetings

Issues relating to electronic meetings have surfaced in the last few months. Some of these questions reflect serious misunderstandings regarding using technology consistent with the governing documents of this church and applicable state law. In addition, the new version of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* (11th edition) for the first time contains a section on electronic meetings (see pp. 97-99).

In response to these issues, the Office of the Secretary is working on a memorandum on electronic meetings, which contains a protocol for holding them. This has been a more complex topic than we originally imagined. Nonetheless, here is a bullet-point synthesis of what will be in the final memorandum:

- S10.07.01, adopted at the 2011 Churchwide Assembly, provides: "To the extent permitted by state law, meetings of the Synod Council and its committees may be held electronically or by telephone conference and notice of all meetings may be provided electronically." State laws authorize such electronic meetings, but details of the enabling statutes differ from state-to-state and should be

reviewed. We suggest consulting with synod attorneys on this issue. (Feel free to provide her or him this report and the memorandum on electronic meetings.)

- Notice of meetings must be provided in accordance with state law. If electronic notice will be used, members must consent to receiving notice electronically. This consent should be obtained in written form and maintained in the synod's records.
- A "meeting" presupposes the opportunity for "simultaneous aural communication" which is "essential to the deliberative character of the meeting" [*Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* (11th edition), p.98]. Thus, by definition, a meeting is a single event at which participants listen and have the opportunity to speak. A conversation in a chat room or an exchange of emails is *not* a legal meeting.
- Parliamentary procedures apply in an electronic meeting as if the meeting were held in person. For action to be taken, there must be a quorum, and there must be an opportunity to discuss and debate motions, to bring appropriate secondary motions and to vote.
- Voting must take place *during the meeting*, whether it is in person or electronic. Only authorized persons participating in the meeting may vote. Because proxy and absentee voting are prohibited in the transaction of any synod business by +S7.31, voting subsequent to a meeting, voting by mail or voting through another person are not permitted. Similarly, polling members individually outside a meeting and asking how they will vote is not a permissible mechanism by which to transact business.
- Protocols should be developed for electronic meetings. These should address both legal and practical issues, such as the following: notice; determination of participants; arrangements, if appropriate, for visitors; dial-in instructions, including what to do if a problem arises; method for taking a roll-call and determining if a quorum exists; protocol for seeking recognition and obtaining the floor; procedure for raising a point of order; method for taking and verifying votes; provisions for executive session.

Advancements in technology and budget constraints mean that electronic communications provide an important tool, both in terms of governance and communal discernment in this church. However, the availability of technology must be used for governance purposes consistent with important legal and parliamentary principles. If you have questions about synodical (or congregational) uses of technology for holding meetings, please let us know!

G. Corporate social responsibility in the restructured ELCA

One aspect of the work of the churchwide organization that changed as the result of restructuring and the elimination of the Church in Society unit has been work in the area of corporate social responsibility (CSR). This work encompasses exercising the rights of a corporate shareholder through the screening of stock ownership, filing of shareholder resolutions and dialogues with corporations. CSR work is grounded in the social policy documents adopted by the Churchwide Assembly and the Church Council. It is done in close cooperation with Portico Benefit Services, and information regarding the CSR work of this church is provided to other ELCA-related organizations and individuals.

Restructuring dramatically impacted the infrastructure for CSR work, and new approaches had to be developed. Pat Zerega, who formerly managed the CSR program as a full-time employee but lost her position in the restructuring, was hired back on a half-time contract basis to serve as a CSR consultant. (This contract is funded equally by the churchwide expression and Portico.) With Pat's assistance and diligent work by staff at the churchwide organization and Portico, new protocols have been developed and documents previously approved by the Church Council have been updated to reflect the proposed new infrastructure. The plan had been to bring proposals to the April 2012 Church Council meeting, along with a recommendation for how to address CSR work in the long term, but that timetable proved overly ambitious. Both the churchwide organization and Portico have committed to fund the CSR consultant's

position through ELCA fiscal year 2012. By that time, a recommendation for the longer term will be developed.

For present purposes, two discrete issues need to be addressed by the Church Council at this meeting. The first issue is structural. In the former Church in Society unit, procedures existed to develop and review CSR documents and to engage in various CSR activities. Much of this work was done under the auspices of the Advisory Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility (ACCSR), which was appointed by the Church Council and met periodically to review documents and make recommendations. Staff in the Church in Society unit facilitated ACCSR work. Restructuring and downsizing eliminated ACCSR, and the staff providing program support was let go. In the redesigned churchwide organization, responsibility for CSR work was allocated to the Church Council. New bylaw 14.21.14 provides as follows:

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 it deems appropriate.

Because this church continues to operate under the Plan for Mission, engaging in CSR work is an important aspect of “stepping forward as a public church.” Further, Portico (and others) rely on the work of the CSR program to inform their socially responsible investing.

A staff CSR Review Team was created to address and coordinate CSR issues. This team is convened by the advocacy team in the CSM unit, but also contains members from the Office of the Secretary, Office of the Treasurer, Portico, MIF, the ELCA Foundation and others. However, this group concluded that it cannot function alone; other aspects of work performed previously by ACCSR need to be fulfilled. The CSR Review Team concluded that an important review and advisory role can be accomplished by the Conference of Bishops. Originally, the plan was to involve the Theological and Ethical Concerns Committee, and CSR issues were discussed at its meeting in fall 2011. Based on conversations at the recent Conference of Bishops meeting, we anticipate that an *ad hoc* committee of bishops will provide advice to the CSR Review Team and to the Church Council.

This meeting of the Church Council also will address a number of CSR documents. (All of these documents are available on the Net Community website.) With the exception of the Genetics Issue Paper, these documents had been approved previously by the council, but they needed to be updated and edited in light of the restructuring of the churchwide organization. These documents include the following: CSR Roles and Responsibilities (chart); CSR Program; CSR Issue Paper Policy and Procedures; Social Criteria Investment Screens Policy and Procedures; Genetics Issue Paper; and Boycott Policy and Procedures. Pat Zerega, along with representatives of the CSR Review Team, will discuss these documents and the ELCA’s CSR work at this meeting.

H. Disaffiliating Congregations

At this meeting, I again will report on numbers of congregations taking votes to disaffiliate from the ELCA. With input from colleagues in Research and Evaluation, I will analyze data relating to these congregations and the capacity of congregations remaining in the ELCA.

As of January 31, 2012, 904 congregations have taken first votes. These 904 congregations have taken a total of 974 first votes. (As you know, a number of congregations have taken multiple first votes.) Of the congregations taking a first vote, 672 passed and 232 failed (26 percent). 624 congregations have passed second votes; 22 congregations have taken second votes that failed. Of those congregations in which second disaffiliation votes have passed, 613 have completed the termination process and are no longer on the ELCA roster of congregations.

I will provide updated numbers in my oral report at the meeting.

I. Congregational Changes in 2011

Each spring, the Office of the Secretary reports to the Conference of Bishops congregational changes that have occurred in the ELCA during the preceding year. This includes listings of congregations received, congregations withdrawing, congregations removed, and congregations that have disbanded, merged, or consolidated. That information will be posted on Net Community for the Church Council.

J. This and that

1. Congregational reports

A year ago at the Conference of Bishops meeting, I reflected on the provocative report of Church Council member and professor of church history Susan McArver about the importance of congregational reports in evaluating the history of this church. In her presentation to assistants in January 2011, Professor McArver evaluated reports from 1859 (South Carolina Synod), 1967 (ALC), and 2009 (ELCA). Using these reports, she pointed out that the context of the church is always changing, and that the context raises, not answers, questions. Then (to the delight of representatives of the Office of the Secretary), she pointed out that the parochial reports can be viewed as incarnational documents, pointing us to the future rather than only reflecting on the past.

Professor McArver's comments underscore the importance of the parochial reports in creating a blueprint for and information needed to move this church forward. It also reminded those of us in the Office of the Secretary that the level of reporting is distressingly slow this year. We speculate that turmoil and other demands have adversely affected the rate of responses. However, if we are to obtain adequate information to support Research and Evaluation and the future needs of synods and the churchwide organization, we need to encourage congregations to submit their annual reports as soon as possible.

We are currently in the process of receiving congregational reports for 2011. Only 73.9 percent of congregations reported for 2010. This is substantially below the high water mark of 89.8 percent in 2002. One of the goals of the Office of the Secretary is to bring the level of participation back over 80 percent. As we reminded bishops, required provision +S8.12.i.12 in the *Constitution for Synods* includes in the responsibilities of the bishop appointment of a statistician "who shall secure the parochial reports of the congregations and make the reports available to the secretary of this church for collation, analysis, and distribution of the statistical summaries to this synod and the other synods of this church." Especially in years with so many bishop elections, it is indispensable to obtain as accurate information as possible through congregational reports.

2. Implementation of the operational plan

Along with other offices and units, the Office of the Secretary is committed to implementing the ELCA Churchwide Organization Operational Plan. While many of the goals and objectives do not directly involve the Office of the Secretary, we are committed to working towards their fulfillment. In the area of governance, the Office of the Secretary and the Office of the Presiding Bishop have lead responsibility. The overarching goal states: "Governance of the ELCA is strengthened in ways that support the future vitality, sustainability and effectiveness of this church and the churchwide organization." A number of objectives under this goal relate, directly or indirectly, to the Conference of Bishops and the Church Council. In particular, the plan – consistent with the action of the Churchwide Assembly – looks for conversations and recommendations on how to enhance the input of the Conference of Bishops to the Church Council and the referral by the Church Council of matters to the Conference of

Bishops. I hope that discussions will continue at this meeting on strategies to implement this salutary objective.

3. Portico Benefit Services

The secretary and treasurer of the ELCA sit as advisory members on the board of trustees of Portico Benefit Services (formerly the Board of Pensions). It has been exciting to watch Pr. Jeff Thiemann step into the role of president and chief executive officer. He has brought vitality and vision to Portico, and a number of important initiatives are on the horizon. First, as in past years, Portico remains committed to health and wellness. It has been a leader in the transition from a disease model of health care to a wellness model, and that emphasis will continue. In addition, beginning in 2012, Portico will expand financial coaching services through a contract with Ernst & Young. The goal is to make financial wellness as strong a part of the Portico message as health and wellness. These expanded services also will have a positive impact on equipping rostered leaders to speak about and model stewardship.

The coming of health care reform portends substantial change in health care insurance and the delivery of health care services. Portico continues to monitor developments on this front and to work with partners in the community of providers of church benefits. One aspect of anticipated changes in health care is the need to re-examine the health care products available through Portico to its various stakeholders. This involves a review of the Portico Philosophy of Benefits. In response to comments from President Thiemann, two Church Council members (Marjorie Ellis and John Emery) volunteered to serve on an *ad hoc* task force to review possible revisions to Portico's Philosophy of Benefits. That work will begin soon.

4. Insurance issues

Risk management and insurance issues are priorities in the Office of the Secretary in 2012. ELCA Risk Manager Rob Thoma continues to address these issues. He is available for consultation; given the number of natural disasters (not to mention man-made ones!), it is important that congregations and synods are aware of his services, especially when it comes time to renew insurance programs.

For your information, here is the data on participation in the ELCA-endorsed insurance plan.

- Synods participating as of 1/1/12: 48
- Congregations in national program as of 1/1/12: 728 (This does not represent all the congregations insured by the endorsed insurer, Church Mutual Insurance Company. They number approximately 3,500.)
- Written premium in national program as of 1/1/12: \$5,373,794

5. A word about goals of the Office of the Secretary

As in past years, I spent time over the holidays reflecting on my personal goals for the past year and developing goals for the new one. As you know from prior reports, 2011 was a challenging year in light of the restructuring of the churchwide organization and planning for the 2011 Churchwide Assembly. These factors caused me to be circumspect in terms of goals for 2011. Now, in a non-Churchwide Assembly year, in addition to issues that have been on the "back burner" for some time, I am interested in addressing a number of other priorities. In consultation with the management team in the Office of the Secretary, here is a synthesized list of objectives (both personal and for OS as a whole) for 2012:

- Continue to set a positive tone for the Office of the Secretary and provide timely and accurate assistance to stakeholders; engender attitudes of enthusiasm, energy and excellence in OS staff.
- Prepare for the 2013 Churchwide Assembly, including work with the Churchwide Assembly Planning Team and development of recommended constitutional amendments that implement the LIFT recommendations and prepare this church for a triennial cycle of Churchwide Assemblies. Improve

the orientation of voting members and the quantity and quality of pre-assembly materials and communications.

- Facilitate implementation of the churchwide organization's operational plan, especially the goal relating to governance.
- Work on improving materials and information available to synod secretaries and others.
- Improve records management procedures and protocols.
- Work on risk management issues, including consideration of an enterprise risk management (ERM) approach.
- Facilitate and participate in the development of a new plan for addressing issues of corporate social responsibility (CSR)

K. Conclusion

It remains an honor to serve this church as its secretary and to participate in the Church Council and Conference of Bishops. I remain convinced that this church is blessed with exceptional leadership and that we can accomplish ministry more effectively together than we can as a confederation of synods and a collection of congregations. Working to facilitate that collaborative ministry remains the cornerstone of the work of the Office of the Secretary!



Office of the Secretary
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

MEMORANDUM

To: Synod Bishops, Vice Presidents, and Secretaries
From: Secretary David Swartling
Date: February 7, 2012
Subject: Memorials and Resolutions

Epiphany season greetings!

Synod Assembly season once again is on the horizon. Just as in past years, it is important to process synodical resolutions and memorials carefully and in a timely manner. This memorandum provides background information regarding memorials and resolutions to facilitate these processes. Please share its contents with your Synod Council and your synod's Reference and Counsel Committee or Resolutions Committee.

Please note that there are two significant revisions that were incorporated into this memorandum in recent years. More than ever, practical and financial issues are important stewardship considerations, both in synods and in the churchwide organization. For these reasons, the churchwide organization asks that your Synod Council consider and evaluate memorials or resolutions that contain funding mandates for the churchwide organization *before* their submission to the Synod Assembly. In addition, sometimes proposed resolutions and memorials ask for actions that are not consistent with the governing documents of this church. As explained in more detail below, such proposed actions are out-of-order and, if adopted, are null and void. As a matter of stewardship of time and resources and to avoid future disputes, please work proactively with those submitting resolutions and memorials so that proposed actions pass constitutional muster.

Enclosed at the conclusion of this memorandum as Exhibit A is the form for reporting the actions taken at your Synod Assembly.

I. What is the Difference between a Memorial and a Resolution?

In 1988, the Church Council voted that communications from synods to the churchwide organization and the Churchwide Assembly would be made pursuant to ELCA constitutional and bylaw provisions. Essentially, this action affirmed three avenues for communication: (1) Synod Assemblies address the Churchwide Assembly through memorials; (2) Synod Councils address the ELCA Church Council through resolutions; and (3) Synod Councils address churchwide units or offices through the ELCA Church Council's Executive Committee (including forwarding resolutions adopted by Synod Assemblies).

Although both memorials and resolutions are requests by a synod for action, they are intended to address different issues and are processed differently.

Memorials address broad policy issues and are passed by Synod Assemblies for consideration by the Churchwide Assembly. Synod Councils are not authorized to adopt memorials for submission to the Churchwide Assembly. One of the responsibilities of the Churchwide Assembly, in accordance with provision 12.21.c., in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, is to “[r]eceive and consider proposals from synod assemblies.” Once received by the churchwide organization, they are referred to the Memorials Committee, which is appointed by the Church Council to review and make recommendations to the Churchwide Assembly, in accordance with bylaw 12.51.21. The Memorials Committee meets after all Synod Assemblies are over, approximately six–eight weeks before the Churchwide Assembly.

Resolutions are requests from synods to the Church Council or units or offices of the churchwide organization. Either Synod Assemblies or Synod Councils may originate resolutions. Frequently, Synod Councils pass resolutions between meetings of the Synod Assemblies and forward them directly to the Church Council for consideration or to the Church Council Executive Committee if the desired action involves referral to a unit or office of the churchwide organization. As a practical matter, resolutions have a more narrow focus than memorials because they are requests for consideration or action by individual units or offices or the Church Council. Thus, for example, a request for the Church Council to recommend a change in a unit would be the subject of a resolution, but a request to change an ELCA policy should be a memorial.

A resolution and a memorial may *not* be combined in one action. In addition, a synod should not address both the Church Council and the Churchwide Assembly on the same subject. The Office of the Secretary, with the concurrence of the Executive Committee of the Church Council, may treat a proposal characterized as a memorial as a resolution or vice versa. In these circumstances, the synod will be notified promptly of the re-classification.

It also is important to point out that resolutions and memorials may *not* direct the churchwide organization to take action. They are proposals requesting the specified action.

Interdependence, as well as stewardship of resources, militates for care to avoid resolutions and memorials that impose unreasonable financial demands on synods and the churchwide organization. If a proposed resolution or memorial will impose an unfunded mandate if adopted, Synod Councils are requested to consider the proposed action *before* submission to the Synod Assemblies. Synods also are requested to advise Synod Councils and Synod Assemblies that the churchwide organization may not be able to support requested resolutions or memorials for budgetary reasons and that, if adopted, such proposed actions may have adverse consequences on existing programs or ministries. As interdependent partners, it is important for synods and the churchwide organization to work collaboratively. If questions exist regarding the potential implications of a proposed resolution or memorial, inquiries to the Office of the Secretary are encouraged.

II. Drafting Memorials and Resolutions

Provision S7.32. in the *Constitution for Synods* states: “*Robert’s Rules of Order*, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of the Synod Assembly, unless otherwise ordered by the assembly.” A comparable provision, 12.31.09., is in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.

Both memorials and resolutions are forms of main motions under *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised* (11th ed.), Section 10. A main motion is simply a motion that brings business before a legislative body. It is the basic mechanism to present a matter to the body for possible action.

Resolutions and memorials frequently contain both “resolved” clauses and “whereas” clauses. “Resolved” clauses state the action to be taken by the assembly; “whereas” clauses constitute a preamble describing the reasons for the proposed action. “Whereas” clauses are *not* required; in fact, *Robert's Rules of Order*, Section 10, page 107, discourages their use:

In general, the use of a preamble should be limited to cases where it provides little-known information without which the point or the merits of a resolution are likely to be poorly understood, where unusual importance is attached to making certain reasons for an action a matter of record or the like.

If “whereas” clauses are used, there should be as few as necessary. They should be succinct and factual. They should not be argumentative.

“Resolved” clauses, if adopted, become the officially worded statement of an action taken by a legislative body and a request for further action by the churchwide organization or the Churchwide Assembly. This means that they should be concise, accurate, and complete. They also should be unambiguous and should state clearly the proposed action. Just as in any main motion, “resolved” clauses should not employ offensive language that would be improper in debate, according to *Robert's Rules of Order*, Section 10, page 104.

Some resolutions and memorials should not be considered. Any resolution or memorial that conflicts with the governing documents of this church is an “improper motion.” As stated in *Robert's Rules of Order*, Section 39, page 343:

Motions that conflict with the corporate charter, constitution or bylaws of a society, or with the procedural rules prescribed by national, state, or local laws, are out of order, and if any motion of this kind is adopted, it is null and void.

Synod Councils are encouraged to work closely with the Reference and Counsel Committee or Resolutions Committee to craft resolutions and memorials that do not conflict with the governing documents and meet the required criteria.

Memorials must include a final “resolved” clause asking the Churchwide Assembly to act (or refrain from acting) in a particular way. Here is a sample final paragraph of a memorial from a Synod Assembly:

RESOLVED, that the _____ Synod Assembly memorialize the 2011 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to . . . [clearly describe proposed course of action].

The final “resolved” clause of **resolutions** will differ depending upon whether they are intended for the attention of the Church Council or a churchwide unit or office. Here are sample final paragraphs for resolutions:

RESOLVED, that the _____ Synod Assembly direct the Synod Council to forward this resolution to the Church Council for consideration and possible action.

Or

RESOLVED, that the _____ Synod Assembly direct the Synod Council to forward this resolution to the Church Council's Executive Committee for referral and disposition to the appropriate unit or office of the churchwide organization in accordance with the bylaws and continuing resolutions of this church.

Or

RESOLVED, that the _____ Synod Council request the Church Council to . . . [clearly describe proposed course of action].

Or

RESOLVED, that the _____ Synod Council request the Church Council's Executive Committee to . . . [clearly describe proposed course of action].

III. Review and Processing of Draft Memorials and Resolutions

Synods generally provide that memorials and resolutions (as well as other main motions) be referred to a Resolutions Committee, which frequently is called a Reference and Counsel Committee. Regardless of its name, a conscientious Reference and Counsel Committee can screen proposed actions and thereby facilitate discussion of important issues and save valuable time at Synod Assemblies.

The scope of authority of the Reference and Counsel Committee varies, depending on the governing documents and rules of organization and procedure of the synod. In the simplest arrangement, the Reference and Counsel Committee only has the power to put resolutions in the proper form, eliminate duplication where similar resolutions are offered, and ensure that all resolutions relating to a specific subject will be offered in logical sequence (see *Robert's Rules of Order*, pp. 633-40). In other cases, the synod's rules may authorize the Reference and Counsel Committee to make substantive edits and alterations in resolutions. In all cases, the committee must report all resolutions referred to it, although the committee can report resolutions without a recommendation.

If a synod so desires, its rules of organization and procedure or a continuing resolution can provide additional authority for the Reference and Counsel Committee. For example, the rules could provide that in reviewing proposed resolutions and main motions, the Reference and Counsel Committee may edit, prepare an alternative resolution or motion, or consolidate into a single proposed action multiple resolutions or main motions on the same or similar subjects. In these circumstances, the Reference and Counsel Committee should confer with the makers of the original memorial or resolution. In addition, whenever the Reference and Counsel Committee recommends an edited or alternative resolution or motion, the report to the assembly should contain the original maker's text.

Here is a sample provision authorizing editing by the Reference and Counsel Committee:

In reviewing proposed memorials, resolutions, and main motions, the Reference and Counsel Committee may edit, prepare an alternative memorial, resolution, or motion, or consolidate into a single proposed action multiple memorials,

resolutions, or main motions on the same or similar subjects. Whenever the Reference and Counsel Committee recommends an edited or alternative memorial, resolution, or motion, the report to the assembly also shall contain the original maker's text.

Regardless of the scope of editorial authority, a Reference and Counsel Committee should consider at least the following factors in evaluating memorials and resolutions: (1) Is the proposed memorial or resolution timely (i.e., was it submitted before the deadline)? (2) Is the proposed memorial or resolution consistent with the governing documents of this church? (3) Is the proposed memorial or resolution germane to issues on the agenda? (4) Does the proposed memorial or resolution address a priority, ministry, or concern of this synod and this church? (5) Does the proposed memorial or resolution have budgetary implications, and, if so, how will they be addressed? (6) Is the proposed memorial or resolution clearly drafted? (7) Do the "resolved" clauses clearly define the proposed course of action? (8) If the proposed memorial or resolution contains "whereas" clauses, do they explain the proposed action and are they accurate and non-argumentative? (9) Are the proposed actions feasible and appropriate for the Synod Assembly, Church Council, Churchwide Assembly, or the unit or office that will be addressed? (10) Are there other memorials or resolutions that address the same or similar issues?¹

The synod's rules of organization and procedure should address how the Reference and Counsel Committee reports to the assembly and the status of its recommendations. Here is a sample of a provision, based on the Rules of Organization and Procedure for the Churchwide Assembly, that addresses the status of recommendations of the Reference and Counsel Committee:

The Reference and Counsel Committee shall report its recommendations on memorials, resolutions, and main motions to the Synod Assembly. Such recommendations do not require a second. When the Reference and Counsel Committee recommends approval, the Committee's recommendation shall be the main motion before the assembly. When the Reference and Counsel Committee recommends the adoption of a substitute or alternative motion, the committee's recommendation shall be the main motion before the assembly. When the Reference and Counsel Committee recommends referral, the committee's recommendation shall become the main motion before the assembly. When the Reference and Counsel Committee recommends that the assembly decline a proposed memorial, resolution, or main motion, the recommendation shall be reported to the assembly. If the author or another voting member wishes to bring the declined proposed memorial, resolution, or main motion to the floor, he or she may move the matter, and it shall become the main motion before the assembly, and the committee's recommendation shall be received for information.

IV. Submission of Resolutions and Memorials to the Churchwide Organization

For proper recording and disposition, synods must submit all resolutions and memorials in a timely manner to the secretary of this church (and not directly to churchwide units or other

¹ When memorials and resolutions or other main motions have financial impact on the synod, care must be taken to review and evaluate the implications in an appropriate and timely manner. For example, when certain motions that call for appropriations come before the Churchwide Assembly, they are referred to the Reference and Counsel Committee, which transmits them to the Budget and Finance Committee of the Church Council. See the Rules of Organization and Procedure for the 2011 Churchwide Assembly at www.elca.org/assembly.

offices). A standard form on which each synod reports memorials and resolutions, as well as the names and contact information for newly elected synod officers, the text of amendments to governing documents, and other important information is attached as Exhibit A. Please respond electronically by sending the completed form and the text of memorials and resolutions to the attention of Frank Imhoff, director for official documentation (Frank.Imhoff@elca.org). An acknowledgment will be sent upon receipt.

The Office of the Secretary is available to respond to questions regarding memorials and resolutions and to assist in addressing parliamentary and other issues that may arise at Synod Assemblies. Let us know how we can help!

Exhibit A

Checklist: 2012 Synod Assembly

Date: _____

Synod: _____

From: _____

A. Memorials for the Churchwide Assembly

1. Subject: _____
2. Subject: _____

B. Resolutions referred through the Synod Council to the Church Council

1. Subject: _____
2. Subject: _____
3. Subject: _____
4. Subject: _____

C. Resolutions submitted through the Synod Council for referral to a churchwide unit or office through the Church Council's Executive Committee

1. Subject: _____
2. Subject: _____
3. Subject: _____
4. Subject: _____

D. Names, addresses (home and office as well as email) and telephone numbers (home and office) of newly elected synodical officers, along with the effective date they take office. (Please attach a list.)

E. Text of constitutional amendments adopted in accord with †S18.12. and †S18.13. (Please identify under which provision each amendment was adopted.)

F. Text of bylaw amendments adopted in accord with †S18.21.

G. Text of continuing resolutions adopted in accord with †SS18.31.

H. Other significant actions.

Submit electronically to Frank.Imhoff@elca.org

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2012 Synod Assemblies

R/S	SYNOD NAME	START	END	ELECTION	2012 CHURCHWIDE REPRESENTATIVE
1A	Alaska	4/26/2012	4/28/2012	YES	Carlos Pena
1B	Northwest Washington	5/18/2012	5/19/2012		Mark Wilhelm
1C	Southwestern Washington	5/18/2012	5/19/2012		David Swartling
1D	Eastern Washington-Idaho	4/27/2012	4/29/2012		Stephen Bouman
1E	Oregon	4/27/2012	4/29/2012		Albert Starr
1F	Montana	6/1/2012	6/3/2012		Carlos Pena
2A	Sierra Pacific	5/18/2012	5/20/2012		Craig Settlage
2B	Southwest California	5/31/2012	6/2/2012		Walter May
2C	Pacifica	5/18/2012	5/19/2012		Wyvetta Bullock
2D	Grand Canyon	5/30/2012	6/1/2012	YES	Sherman Hicks
2E	Rocky Mountain	4/26/2012	4/28/2012	YES	Bishop Hanson
3A	Western North Dakota	6/1/2012	6/2/2012		Stephen Bouman
3B	Eastern North Dakota	4/21/2012	4/22/2012		Christina Jackson-Skelton
3C	South Dakota	6/8/2012	6/9/2012		Linda Norman
3D	Northwestern Minnesota	5/11/2012	5/12/2012		Ruben Duran
3E	Northeastern Minnesota	4/27/2012	4/29/2012		David Swartling
3F	Southwestern Minnesota	6/8/2012	6/9/2012		Stephen Bouman
3G	Minneapolis Area	2/17/2012	2/18/2012	YES	Bishop Hanson
3H	Saint Paul Area	5/18/2012	5/19/2012		Jessica Crist
3I	Southeastern Minnesota	5/4/2012	5/5/2012		Dan Rift
4A	Nebraska	6/1/2012	6/2/2012	YES	Bishop Hanson
4B	Central States	6/7/2012	6/9/2012		Greg Villalon
4C	Arkansas-Oklahoma	4/13/2012	4/15/2012		Stephen Bouman
4D	N.Texas - N. Louisiana	4/27/2012	4/29/2012	YES	Rafael Malpica Padilla
4E	Southwestern Texas	5/19/2012	5/20/2012	YES	Bishop Hanson
4F	Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast	5/11/2012	5/12/2012		Peter Perella
5A	Metropolitan Chicago	6/1/2012	6/2/2012		Albert Starr
5B	Northern Illinois	6/15/2012	6/16/2012		Wyvetta Bullock
5C	Central/Southern Illinois	6/7/2012	6/9/2012		Jodi Sattery
5D	Southeastern Iowa	6/1/2012	6/2/2012		Linda Norman
5E	Western Iowa	4/27/2012	4/28/2012		Ruben Duran
5F	Northeastern Iowa	6/8/2012	6/10/2012		Mary Frances
5G	Northern Great Lakes	5/20/2012	5/21/2012		Daniel Lehman
5H	Northwest Synod of Wisc	6/2/2012	6/3/2012		Kenn Inskeep
5I	East-Central Synod of Wisc	6/1/2012	6/2/2012	YES	David Swartling
5J	Greater Milwaukee	5/31/2012	6/2/2012		Peter Rogness
5K	South-Central Synod of Wisc	5/5/2012	5/5/2012		Kathryn Lohre
5L	La Crosse Area	6/8/2012	6/10/2012		Stephen Bouman
6A	Southeast Michigan	5/17/2012	5/19/2012		Linda Norman
6B	North/West Lower Michigan	5/17/2012	5/19/2012		Linda Norman
6C	Indiana-Kentucky	6/7/2012	6/9/2012		Dan Rift
6D	Northwestern Ohio	5/18/2012	5/19/2012		Kenn Inskeep
6E	Northeastern Ohio	6/1/2012	6/2/2012		Craig Settlage
6F	Southern Ohio	6/9/2012	6/9/2012		Kenn Inskeep
7A	New Jersey	6/1/2012	6/2/2012		Beth Lewis
7B	New England	6/8/2012	6/10/2012	YES	Bishop Hanson
7C	Metropolitan New York	5/17/2012	5/19/2012		Ruben Duran

2012 Synod Assemblies

R/S	SYNOD NAME	START	END	ELECTION	2012 CHURCHWIDE REPRESENTATIVE
7D	Upstate New York	6/7/2012	6/9/2012		Tammy Jackson
7E	Northeastern Pennsylvania	6/15/2012	6/16/2012		Jodi Slattery
7F	Southeastern Pennsylvania	5/4/2012	5/5/2012	YES	Sherman Hicks
7G	Slovak Zion	TBD	TBD		
8A	Northwestern Pennsylvania	6/7/2012	6/9/2012		David Swartling
8B	Southwestern Pennsylvania	6/14/2012	6/16/2012		Kenn Inskeep
8C	Allegheny	6/7/2012	6/9/2012		Christina Jackson-Skelton
8D	Lower Susquehanna	5/31/2012	6/2/2012		Else Thompson
8E	Upper Susquehanna	6/15/2012	6/16/2012		Don McCoid
8F	Delaware-Maryland	5/31/2012	6/1/2012		Ruben Duran
8G	Metropolitan Washington, DC	4/27/2012	4/28/2012		Jessica Crist
8H	West Virginia-Western MD	6/1/2012	6/2/2012		Rafael Malpica Padilla
9A	Virginia	6/8/2012	6/10/2012		Lita Johnson
9B	North Carolina	6/1/2012	6/3/2012		Don McCoid
9C	South Carolina	5/31/2012	6/2/2012		Brenda Smith
9D	Southeastern	6/1/2012	6/3/2012		Mary Frances
9E	Florida-Bahamas	5/4/2012	5/6/2012		Carlos Pena
9F	Caribbean				NO ASSEMBLY THIS YEAR

2012 Synod Bishop Elections

- Alaska
- East-Central Wisconsin
- Grand Canyon
- Minneapolis
- Nebraska
- New England
- Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana
- Rocky Mountain
- Southeastern Pennsylvania
- Southwestern Texas

2013 Synod Bishop Elections

- Caribbean
- Central States
- Florida-Bahamas
- Lower Susquehanna
- Metropolitan Chicago
- Metropolitan Washington D.C.
- Montana
- New Jersey
- North/West Lower Michigan
- Northeastern Ohio
- Northwestern Minnesota
- Northwestern Pennsylvania
- Northwest Washington
- Northwest Wisconsin
- Oregon
- South-Central Wisconsin
- South Dakota
- Southeastern
- Southeastern Minnesota
- Southwest California
- Southwestern Pennsylvania
- Southwestern Washington
- Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast
- Upper Susquehanna
- Western Iowa

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Report of the Treasurer

The Office of the Treasurer manages the financial, business, information technology, and building management affairs of the churchwide organization. This Office serves to support the mission of ELCA congregations, synods and the churchwide organization. The governing description of this office appears in constitutional provision 15.14 and continuing resolutions 15.14.A10, 15.14.B10.

Unit Priorities

In January, the Office of the Treasurer completed our 2012 unit planning process. Utilizing the ELCA Churchwide Organization Operational Plan 2011-2013, we identified priorities for our work in support of churchwide goals. We also established additional unit priorities that are not specifically anticipated in the Operational Plan. Identified priorities include the following:

- updating comprehensive unit policies and procedures documentation;
- convening the newly constituted ELCA Churchwide Organization Policy Review Committee;
- working with the Mission Advancement Unit to enhance the receipts processing function and donors' giving experiences;
- leading the Technology Advancement Team;
- completing report development related to 2011 system implementations and enhancements;
- building capacity to manage growing information security needs;
- reducing energy consumption;
- enhancing financial and performance reporting tools; and
- investing in staff training/development, customer service and priority projects/initiatives.

Lutheran Center Operations

During 2011, we made several updates to the building security system. Enhancements include key card entry to both sides of each floor, elimination of "red-button" requirement for exiting locked floors, issuance of new identification badges for employees and guests, and additional integration with security systems of other O'Hare Plaza buildings. Tenant improvements on the 6th floor were completed for the Seabury Western Theological Seminary of The Episcopal Church. They completed their move in early January 2012. We began improvements to the parking garage, including building a new sidewalk along the northern end and completed several energy saving projects.

The emphasis during 2012 will be to replace desk chairs for the Lutheran Center staff and begin the elevator modernization project in fall 2012.

Accounting

During 2011, we completed Phase I of the implementation of a new Endowment Administration System (Trust Processor) and new Deferred Gift Administration System (GiftWrap). Working closely with the Accounts Payable team, fourth quarter endowment distributions and deferred gift payments were issued using the new systems. Parallel testing periods concluded as of December 31, 2011. Work is beginning on Phase II of both projects to provide system enhancements and greater flexibility in reporting. A plan for a new, enhanced web-based access system for our endowment constituents is underway for 2013.

In an effort to increase productivity and gain efficiencies with the new ECIS system, General Accounting has been working closely with Information Technology and Constituent Care to resolve implementation and reporting issues arising from the conversion from Raiser's Edge.

The ELCA entered into a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with National Lutheran Campus Ministry, Inc. to provide accounting services. This involved transitioning their accounting to the ELCA general ledger system during 2011.

The Receipts Processing team successfully completed year-end gift processing, utilizing the new ECIS System. In coordination with the Treasury Management, we are working with Harris Bank to maintain PCI compliance standards and gain further efficiencies by utilizing bank services to process ELCA credit card transactions and receipts to the ELCA Disaster Response lockbox.

Investment Management

In February 2012, the Investments Director began convening the Endowments and Deferred Gifts Inter-Unit Team. Staff from the Office of the Treasurer, Office of the Secretary and the Mission Advancement Unit are now meeting at least monthly as an inter-unit team to coordinate the work of these two programs. During 2012, we will continue to refine policies and processes relative to the Charitable Gift Annuities and Charitable Remainder Trusts programs, including performance monitoring and reporting, the evaluation of fee levels and asset allocation analysis. We will also address customer service needs and evaluate the possibility for additional endowment investment options.

Data Management Strategy

The ELCA churchwide organization currently maintains a vast amount of information—both paper and electronic. Paper documentation lives across all units of the organization: at the Lutheran Center, the archives, synods and other locations. Electronic documentation exists in a number of locations, including, but not limited to ECIS, www.elca.org, shared drives, laptops, email accounts, NetCommunity and smartphones.

In aggregate, this information is difficult to search and we need to ensure compliance with the Records Management Manuals and the Records Retention Schedules for the programmatic and business records of the churchwide organization. We are working to create a multi-year strategy towards more efficient and effective churchwide organization data management. Upon completion of the strategy, work will begin to implement process change and technologies to reduce risk, create efficiencies and deliver on opportunities outlined in the strategy.

Human Resources Information System Conversion

Information Technology and Human Resources have collaborated over the past several months to migrate the existing Time and Attendance system to the Time Management module within the Ultimate Software UltiPro solution. This is the same solution to which we migrated our payroll system in 2011. The implementation of the Time Management module moves the organization one step closer to having a single system of records for each employee's human resource activities. The module provides for accrual of employee sick and vacation time and management of staff requests for time off with approval by their supervisor. It also allows for accurate time tracking of non-exempt staff feeding directly into the payroll system to pay for actual time worked.

Future enhancements for the remainder of 2012 include performance management, recruitment management and employee self-service.

2013 Churchwide Assembly

Information Technology has already begun to prepare for the 2013 Churchwide Assembly (CWA). A request for proposals from qualified solution providers in the area of mobile application development has been issued to provide a mobile-based solution to voting members for a variety of functions during the 2013 ELCA Churchwide Assembly. This includes not only expanding the electronic binder pilot to additional voting members, but also adding functionality to the binders compared to the 2011 Churchwide Assembly.

Contract Management

A contract management module is being implemented with the ELCA general ledger system to streamline the process of initiating, authorizing, procuring and disbursing approved contract funding within accounts payable. The module provides staff with the capability of electronically storing, managing and reporting on past, future, and upcoming contracts and commitments. The module was implemented and is partially used to track and report on approved ELCA contracts. A new fully integrated pilot for managing Information Technology contracts is scheduled for the end of April 2012 and will be rolled out to all churchwide units in June 2012.

ELCA Constituent Information System (ECIS)

In 2012, we will continue to migrate systems and information to ECIS, including, but not limited to, event management and mobility. We also will continue to develop reports and other data outputs that will deliver critical information to all portions of the churchwide organization.

Data clean-up, data de-duplication, streamlining business processes and organizational change continue. Cross-unit communication and work efficiencies in managing this information are continually being pursued to fully leverage this system as an integrated database and also realize the benefits of the redesigned organization. A Constituent Relationship Management Policy has been created to govern the use of the system and the data contained within. Additional operational policies and procedures are being developed to ensure continued data cleanliness and efficient use of the system.

ECIS is currently being piloted with multiple synods for validation of rostered leaders and congregational data in an effort to find efficiencies and improved ways of working beyond the churchwide organization.

Information Security

Information Technology continues to improve the digital security it provides for ELCA information assets and its constituents. Mobile device management software is currently being piloted to allow for the secure utilization of mobile devices of all types to connect to ELCA email and other networked systems.

Microsoft Email Transition

Information Technology has completed its initiative to transition away from Novell technology to Microsoft technology. The most visible component, moving to the Outlook email client, was rolled-out to the entire organization at the end of 2011. Staff will be receiving new desktops over the next several months to replace previous equipment that is over four years old. Laptops will be replaced later in 2012 and into 2013.

Mission Investment Fund (MIF) Technology Updates

Information Technology is an active partner in the evaluation of a replacement core banking system. The new system is expected to deliver substantial improvements in business intelligence, reporting to assist the MIF senior management team and integration to other systems bringing operational efficiency and customer knowledge to the organization. Contract negotiations for the new system are in progress with an anticipated system rollout in January 2013.

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Report of the Executive for Administration

ELCA Churchwide Organization Strategic Priorities:

The churchwide organization, working collaboratively with congregations, synods, agencies and institutions and other partners, will give priority to:

- 1. accompanying congregations as growing centers for evangelical mission; and*
- 2. building capacity for evangelical witness and service in the world to alleviate poverty and to work for justice and peace.*

Strategic Planning: Churchwide Organization Operational Plan

The churchwide organization is implementing the 2011-2013 operational plan. The plan sets goals and objectives for the churchwide organization that move us toward fulfilling the two strategic priorities named above. Units have been assigned lead responsibilities for various goals and objectives. Cross-unit teams have been convened to manage work in the following key areas of the plan: multicultural ministry; international development planning, monitoring and evaluation; networks and gatherings; and leadership development. The Administrative Team (Presiding Bishop, Secretary, Treasurer, unit executive directors, and the executive for administration) is responsible for the overall implementation and review of the plan. The Planning and Evaluation Committee of the Church Council will receive regular reports on the implementation of the plan and conduct its review of units based on the plan goals, objectives and commitments. The plan contains six major goals and six cross-cutting commitments.

Our Goals:

1. The ELCA is an evangelizing, multicultural, multigenerational church growing in faith, and witnessing to God's mission locally and globally, with more people worshipping in new and renewed congregations and living out their faith in the world.
2. The ELCA is contributing to the alleviation of poverty and hunger globally and within the United States, and to achieving just, peaceful and sustainable livelihoods for impoverished and vulnerable people and communities.
3. The churchwide organization is connecting with ELCA members through coordinated messaging and engaging communication that increases their understanding and involvement with God's mission through this church.
4. The churchwide organization is achieving a growing and sustainable revenue base through strengthening mission funding and planned giving.
5. Governance of the ELCA is strengthened in ways that ensure the future vitality, sustainability and effectiveness of this church and the churchwide organization.
6. The churchwide organization is characterized by strong and inclusive leadership, a competent and well-supported staff team, efficient and effective systems and processes and culture of continuous improvement and learning.

Our Commitments:

1. **Theological discernment and formation** – ensuring our evolving identity and self-understanding, our worship and our practice of mission continue to be grounded in Lutheran theology
2. **Poverty and wealth** – keeping alleviation of poverty and hunger at the center of our efforts locally and globally and challenging policies and systems that increase the wealth of some while failing to address the root causes of poverty and injustice

3. **Leadership development** – forming and developing healthy, skilled leaders, both lay and clergy, in the churchwide organization, in congregations, synods, other institutions of the ELCA and in our companion churches
4. **Gender justice** – embedding gender analysis in all aspects of the churchwide organization’s work and making gender equity a commitment in our work within the ELCA and through the programs we manage
5. **Racial justice and ethnic diversity** – living out the commitment to being a multicultural church, in the churchwide organization and throughout this church, and working against racial discrimination within the church and society
6. **Young adults** – embracing youth and young adults as vital to worship life, mission and future sustainability of this church, and raising them up as leaders in all its expressions

At its April 2-3, 2012 retreat, the Administrative Team explored outcomes for this biennium for the cross-cutting commitments. This information will be shared in units and further shaped by staff.

The operational plan has 56 Key Result Indicators (KRIs). The KRIs provide the basis for monitoring progress and assessing performance. The Administrative Team receives quarterly reports on progress of all of the KRIs. The team tracks results on eight KRIs at each regular meeting. These are the following:

- A growing church – 150-200 renewing congregations funded per year and 70 new starts per year, involving at least 40 synods and 9 regions;
- Leadership support and development – 150-200 new leaders per year participating in Missional Leadership Centers;
- Ecumenical relationships and other partnerships – 20 synods involved in cooperative missional planning with full communion partners;
- Expanding global engagement of this church - Increase the number of new contacts through *glocal* events, especially young adults and young persons of color;
- International development – Full implementation of effective malaria intervention programs by five companion churches in Southern Africa and expansion of malaria programming in West Africa;
- Improving communication methods and systems – 15 percent increase in visits to the ELCA homepage (elca.org) and underlying page links. By the end of 2012, utilizing the ELCA Constituent Information System (ECIS) as the only database of constituent records;
- ELCA World Hunger - \$10 million in commitments to the ELCA Malaria Campaign by the end of 2013. Increase the percentage of ELCA congregations participating in World Hunger; and
- Planned Giving, Major Gifts & Appeals – five percent increase in the number of (non-disaster) gifts over \$5,000.

The Office of the Presiding Bishop has lead unit responsibilities in the following areas:

- Ecumenical relationships and other partnerships
- Leadership development
- Human resources and staff development

The Office of the Presiding Bishop shares lead unit responsibilities in the following areas:

- Common messaging

- Engaging and listening to members, the three ELCA expressions, institutions and partners
- Mission support income
- Governance development
- Systems and process improvement

Planning and Evaluation Committee

The Planning and Evaluation Committee has the responsibility to assist the Office of the Presiding Bishop in strategic planning and the ongoing evaluation of churchwide units. At this meeting, the committee will begin review of the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit (CSM). All unit reviews will be based upon the unit's responsibilities in the churchwide organization's operational plan. See [Exhibit K](#) for the CSM report to this meeting. Additional information will be shared with the committee during its meeting.

The Planning and Evaluation Committee will review the work of the Global Mission unit at its November 2012 meeting and the Mission Advancement unit at the April 2013 meeting. In addition, the committee will receive updates on the operational plan from the executive for administration.

Budget

As we closed the 2011 fiscal year, we experienced underspending to budget in the organization. This was a result of good stewardship across the organization. We did our best to estimate income and expenses for the organization's new design during a time of significant transition. Given the underspending to budget, we were able to release funds for synod grants for Directors for Evangelical Mission, provide additional funding for new starts and renewals, companion churches and other operational priorities. Our final spending to budget for 2011 is at 99.57 percent. This represents a \$269,551 positive variance to budget. I offer great appreciation to units for their good stewardship of the 2011 spending allocation.

For 2011, the overall income exceeded budget. We are grateful for the generosity of the members of this church. As a result of income over budget for 2011, we have made slight revisions to our income and expense proposals for 2012. For details of these revisions, please see Exhibit F.

Living Into the Future Together: Renewing the Ecology of the ELCA Advisory Committee

At the November 2011 meeting, Church Council appointed an advisory committee to assist the Office of the Presiding Bishop in carrying out the 2011 Churchwide Assembly action to continue the work of the Living into the Future Together (LIFT): Renewing the Ecology of the ELCA Task Force. The committee began its work in December 2011. An interim report is printed in Exhibit I.

In addition, activities related to the LIFT recommendations can be found at www.elca.org/LIFT. A PowerPoint presentation will be posted there to assist synods and congregations in implementing the LIFT recommendations. The first section of the presentation will provide background on the actions. The second half provides suggestions for congregations and synods. The presentation is not designed to give specific program activities. Through the work of the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit and the Directors for Evangelical Mission and synods, synod mission tables are being convened to assist congregations in actual missional planning. For information regarding resources for missional planning, contact Amy.Walter-Peterson@elca.org.

Day-to-Day Functioning and the Ongoing Work of the Churchwide Units

The Administrative Team meets quarterly with the executives of the following Separately Incorporated Ministries: Augsburg Fortress, Mission Investment Fund, Portico Benefit Services and Women of the ELCA. The primary intentions include communication, cooperation, coordination and collaboration. The group discusses not only key issues and places of synergy and intersection, but also looks forward to future opportunities and challenges.

The *Mission One* management team is a meeting among the executives of this church's financial services: Endowment Fund, Mission Investment Fund, and Portico Benefit Services. The ELCA Treasurer and the executive for administration are part of this team. This team explores opportunities for deeper collaboration to improve overall financial services in this church. A joint-staff meeting is planned for September 2012.

In February 2012, the churchwide organization signed a one-year Memorandum of Relationship with Lutheran World Relief. The agreement states our common commitment to deepen and extend our respective work in relief and development. The ELCA will have an advisor, appointed by the Office of the Presiding Bishop, to the LWR Board of Directors.

Also in early February, the Rev. Donald McCoid, Assistant to the Presiding Bishop and Executive for Ecumenical and Inter-religious Relations, and I met with my counterpart in The Episcopal Church, the Rt. Rev. Stacy Sauls along with Mr. Samuel McDonald, Deputy COO and Director for Mission. We discussed partnership opportunities and shared insights from both church bodies. Bishop Sauls and Mr. McDonald met with program staff to explore sharing missional opportunities related to new starts, emergent ministries, and global mission personnel.

Once again, I am thankful to work with dedicated staff in the churchwide organization. We are more than one year into the new design and just beginning implementation of our 2011-2013 operational plan. While there have been challenges, as we have upgraded and changed several major systems in the organization, staff have persevered. I am especially thankful for the staff with whom I work most closely, Sonia Hayden, Executive Administrative Assistant; Kenn Inskeep, Executive for Research and Evaluation; Else Thompson, Executive for Human Resources; and Karl Reko, LIFT Project Coordinator. I am equally grateful for the leadership of the churchwide organization's Administrative Team and the Assistants to the Presiding Bishop. These staff members give countless hours to serve with and on behalf of this church. For detailed information about their work and updates on specific unit activities, see reports in [Exhibit K](#).

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) is a vibrant community living by the power of Christ's death and resurrection. Our unity is in Jesus, who calls us by name and gathers us around word and water, wine and bread. With a living, daring confidence in God's grace we rejoice in the Spirit's gifts that diverse people and cultures bring to one body in Christ. Together we serve God's mission in the world, proclaiming God's reconciliation in Christ and restoring community. (ELCA Churchwide Organization Operational Plan 2011-2013)

Report of the Conference of Bishops

The 63rd meeting of the Conference of Bishops (COB) took place March 1-6, 2012, at the Eaglewood Resort in Itasca, Illinois. Each day we prayed and sang and listened to the Word of God together.

The meeting involved, as is customary, a series of reports from officers, staff and bishops, and conversations among the participants on various topics affecting the church. We were able to welcome Bishop-Elect Ann Svennungsen of the Minneapolis Area Synod and meet Pr. Eric Wester, Interim Director for Federal Chaplaincies. We welcomed the opportunity to meet with many churchwide staff.

The Conference spent significant time listening to and responding to a report from the group of nine bishops who, along with staff, were tasked with responding to the LIFT recommendations. The proposals brought to the entire Conference for discussion were in four areas: 1) identification, selection and formation of synod bishops; 2) capacity for synod ministry; 3) possible reconfiguration of synods; 4) funding. Not surprisingly, there were a wide range of opinions on all of the topics and many fruitful discussions. The COB Executive Committee will take on the next steps, and communicate with the Church Council.

The Conference also heard from the Task Force on Addressing Social Concerns Review, discussing our hopes and concerns about the process of choosing, developing, staffing and transmitting social statements and messages. We discussed Corporate Social Responsibility implications coming out of the Genetics statement. We had a preview of the Criminal Justice statement, with encouragement to schedule hearings. In addition, we heard preliminary plans for the statement on Justice for Women.

With new leadership in the Conference of Bishops, and a serious realignment of the structures of the churchwide organization, the Conference is looking at its own committee structure, with the hope of greater effectiveness and communication across the church. Each committee and ready bench has been asked to reflect on its role in the new structure, in an effort to identify both gaps and redundancy.

The Conference heard reports on finances and projections. We heard about possible constitutional amendments and some issues related to the upcoming 2013 Churchwide Assembly. We heard ecumenical updates, including conversations with LCMS, NALC and the Vatican. We heard about insurance; we heard about misconduct. We heard from Portico. Also, we had regular feedback from our process observers.

Tornadoes were touching down in a number of states as we met, and we heard regular disaster updates.

We heard about various plans to commemorate the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation.

We are grateful to you, the Church Council, for your time and dedication to the Church. We appreciate the partnership that we are privileged to share.

In Christ,
Bishop Jessica Crist, Chair
Conference of Bishops

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Proposed Responses to Synodical Resolutions
Previously referred to units by Church Council or Executive Committee

**1. Human Rights Violations Against the Oromo People
Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod (8G)**

WHEREAS, we are called to follow Jesus Christ “to bring good news to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives, recovery of sight to the blind, and to let the oppressed go free” (Luke 4:18); and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) has repeatedly called upon its congregations to intercede for those around the world who are being subjected to systematic violation of human rights; and

WHEREAS, the Constitution of the Oromo Evangelical Church in Washington, D.C., like the constitutions of many ELCA congregations, calls on members to “serve in response to God’s love to meet human needs, caring for the sick and the aged, advocating dignity and justice for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, and standing with the poor and powerless...” (*C4.02.d.); and

WHEREAS, the Oromo people, who number 30 million within the territory of Ethiopia, have known more than a century of persecution at the hands of successive governments; and

WHEREAS, the people of the Oromia region of Ethiopia are presently being subjected to a massive campaign to deny their human and civil rights, including arbitrary detention, the torture of detainees, and extrajudicial executions; and

WHEREAS, Human Rights Watch, in a report released on April 6, 2011, called on the Ethiopian government to immediately release those detained without charge during “several waves of apparently politically motivated mass arrests of more than 200 ethnic Oromo Ethiopians;” and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Department of State, in its annual Human Rights report on Ethiopia (April 2011), has documented “unlawful killings, torture, beating, and abuse and mistreatment of detainees and opposition supporters by security forces... poor prison conditions; arbitrary arrest and detention, particularly of suspected sympathizers or members of opposition or insurgent groups” and has called on the Government of Ethiopia to comply with its commitments under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, to cease its practice of jamming Voice of America broadcasts that seek to report on the present situation and its denial of access to federal prisons by the International Committee of the Red Cross; and

WHEREAS, the Oromo Evangelical Church of Washington, D.C., as well as other Oromo congregations, stand ready to provide documentation and study materials on the present situation in Ethiopia through the synod office; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the ELCA Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod Assembly encourage congregations of the synod to pray regularly for those in prison in Ethiopia and to devote time to studying the situation of the Oromo people; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod Assembly direct the bishop of the synod to send a letter to the U.S. Secretary of State expressing the synod’s concern for the well-being of the Oromo people and requesting that all developmental and military aid to the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia be tied to that government’s compliance with internationally-recognized human rights agreements; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod Assembly memorialize the 2011 Churchwide Assembly meeting in Orlando, Florida, to undertake programs of education and advocacy on behalf of the human rights of the Oromo people.

Background

As baptized Christians, we are called by our baptismal covenant to stand in solidarity with people most affected by injustice and repression. To that end, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America continually has affirmed its commitment to the promotion, preservation and protection of universal human rights.

The global engagement and awareness present in every expression of this church is formed through the practices of accompaniment, the mission theology of the ELCA. The blend of solidarity and accompaniment motivates ELCA members toward effective advocacy.

One of the commitments intrinsic to the practice of accompaniment is consultation with global companion churches prior to ELCA action outside the territories of the ELCA. In many areas, including governmental advocacy, operating without prior consultation can lead to unintended consequences, both for the ELCA and for our companion churches.

Church Council Action (CC.11.07.46b)

To thank the Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod for its resolution related to human rights violations against the Oromo people;

To refer the resolution to the Congregational and Synodical Mission and Global Mission units for consultation with the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY) with the request that a report and possible recommendations be brought to the November 2011 meeting of the Church Council; and

To request the secretary of this church to inform the synod of this action.

Response from the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit (November 2011 Church Council)

Since the action by the Church Council on July 28, staff of the Congregational and Synodical Mission and Global Mission units have consulted with a variety of people, including staff of The Lutheran World Federation, with more detailed knowledge of the human rights situation in Ethiopia. These consultations have been undertaken to enable the ELCA to both gather additional information about the situation in Ethiopia and to avoid possible unintended consequences as noted in the background. A number of options are being considered which would address the matter in an effective way while also giving due attention to the ELCA's practice of accompaniment with global companion churches. It is anticipated that another report will be prepared for the April 2012 meeting of the Church Council.

Church Council Action (CC.11.11.83b)

To receive the background information provided by the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit in response to the resolution of the Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod related to "Human Rights Violations Against the Oromo People";

To authorize a delay in further response until the April 2012 meeting of the Church Council; and

To request that the secretary of this church inform the synod of this action.

Response from the Congregational and Synodical Mission and Global Mission units

Staff from the Congregational and Synodical Mission (CSM) and Global Mission (GM) units have conferred extensively on this resolution and considered several options to address this ongoing situation. They note this church's ongoing and longstanding concern for human rights and the theology and practice of accompaniment of global companion church bodies, as mentioned in the previous response. They recommend no further action by the churchwide organization at this time.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To receive the report and recommendation of the Congregational and Synodical Mission (CSM) and Global Mission (GM) units;

To acknowledge with gratitude the church's ongoing work and consultation with global companion church bodies in addressing the longstanding concern for human rights violations against the Oromo people; and

To request that the secretary of this church inform the synod of this action.

**2. Close the School of the Americas
Now Renamed Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation [SOA/WHINSEC]
Southwest California Synod (2B)**

WHEREAS, this resolution was reintroduced because on September 18, 2010, the Synod Council moved to object to consideration of Resolution 10-09 referred by the 2010 Synod Assembly; and

WHEREAS, according to "School of Americas (SOA) Watch" (www.soaw.org), SOA/WHINSEC, based at Fort Benning, Georgia, has gained international notoriety for its training of Latin American death squad leaders and military dictators; and

WHEREAS, in 1996, the Pentagon released School of the Americas Training Manuals, used at the school for at least a decade, that advocated the use of torture, execution and blackmail; and

WHEREAS, the Southwest California Synod passed an anti-torture resolution in 2009; and

WHEREAS, the 111th Congress, with HR 2567, introduced legislation to close the SOA; and

WHEREAS, the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights states, "It is essential, if humankind is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law;" therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southwest California Synod of the ELCA communicate to U.S. President Barack Obama to immediately close the School of the Americas (SOA/WHINSEC) by executive order and/or to support any legislative efforts to close the School of the Americas (SOA/WHINSEC), such as the bipartisan Latin America Military Training Review Act which would suspend operations at the SOA/WHINSEC, investigate the use of torture manuals and human rights abuses associated with the school, and provide an overall assessment of foreign military training; and be it further

RESOLVED, that ELCA Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson be encouraged to speak truth to power and to boldly advocate these 'grassroots' justice concerns.

Executive Committee Action (EC.11.07.08)

To receive the resolution of the Southwest California Synod related to the School of the Americas (SOA/WHINSEC);

To refer the resolution to the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit with a request that a report and possible recommendations be brought to the April 2012 meeting of the ELCA Church Council; and

To request the secretary of this church to inform the synod of this action.

Response from the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit)

Operation of the SOA/WHINSEC is the subject of long-standing, faith-based activism, most notably large annual vigils at the gates of Fort Benning. The Congregational and Synodical Mission (CSM) unit appreciates the commitment of the Southwest California Synod to human rights and their concern for the actions of the U.S. government referred to in the resolution. To the extent the resolution addresses the churchwide organization and the Presiding Bishop, the CSM Unit notes the importance of the issue and supports the request for positive action as based on the related Social Policy Resolution passed by the 1995 Churchwide Assembly. The CSM Unit recommends forwarding the request in the second "Resolved" clause to the Presiding Bishop's Public Policy Procedures Group (PPPG) for their deliberations and decisions about the Presiding Bishop's statements addressing public policy and public issues.

CC ACTION [*EN BLOC*]

Recommended:

To receive the report and recommendation from the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit;

To request the Public Policy Procedures Group convened by the Office of the Bishop to recommend to the Presiding Bishop an appropriate response which supports the request for positive action as based on the related Social Policy Resolution passed by the 1995 Churchwide Assembly; and

To request that the secretary of this church inform the synod of this action.

Churchwide Assembly Actions
Responses from units to Church Council

**1. Social Statement *Human Sexuality, Gift and Trust* Implementing Resolutions
(CA09.04.17) YES-695; NO-285**

1. To embrace as a church our legacy of a rich theological tradition that proclaims God's gracious love expressed in Jesus Christ as the basis of our salvation, hope, and unity, and to call upon members of this church on this basis to commit themselves to finding ways to live together faithfully in the midst of disagreements;
2. To call upon this church to affirm the various studies created for the "Journey Together Faithfully" series as resources for ongoing deliberation and discernment, and to direct the program unit for Church in Society to maintain their availability as long as demand continues;
3. To request the Office of the Presiding Bishop to explore the feasibility of developing liturgical resources for use by rostered leaders, individuals, and families at the time of divorce;
4. To encourage Augsburg Fortress, Publishers, to consider developing education curricula with particular attention to the needs of children, middle school, high school youth, and their parents for understanding Christian values and making responsible choices;
5. To recognize that organizations like Women of the ELCA, Lutheran Men in Mission, Lutheran Youth Organization, and campus ministries foster and support friendships; to encourage them to lift up and celebrate the value of strong friendships and to support the formation of voluntary associations for nurturing them;
6. To call upon all congregations, pastors, and other rostered leaders to reach out in welcome to all in accord with previous Churchwide Assembly actions as reaffirmed by the 2005 Churchwide Assembly [CA05.05.18], and to assist members to understand what it means to be hospitable to all in the name of Christ regardless of sexual orientation;
7. To call upon the ELCA to amend the eligibility provisions of the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program, consistent with the policies of this church;
8. To call upon this church to encourage the availability and funding of comprehensive sex education programs in public schools, as well as in Lutheran private schools;
9. To affirm the 2001 ELCA Message "Commercial Sexual Exploitation" and its continuing value for the mission and ministry of the ELCA;
10. To call upon this church's advocacy and corporate social responsibility ministries to support and advocate measures consistent with this social statement;
11. To express appreciation for the work being done by the churchwide organization, synods, institutions, and congregations to prevent sexual harassment and misconduct; to encourage strengthening these efforts by all expressions and ministries of this church; and to ensure the availability of effective resources for dealing with sexual misconduct and sexual harassment within this church;
12. To call upon teaching theologians, bishops, pastors, diaconal ministers, associates in ministry, deaconesses, educators, and others to continue to extend theological and biblical reflection as well as theoretical and practical understanding of human sexuality through intellectual discourse, moral deliberation, continued research, discussion, and writing;
13. To recognize that the ELCA has adopted a strategy that will guide its response to the HIV and AIDS epidemic, and to call upon all units and expressions of this church to support that strategy;
14. To call upon all congregations, synods, early childhood education centers, elementary and secondary schools, colleges and universities, seminaries, campus ministries, outdoor ministries,

social ministry organizations, public policy advocacy ministries, and all churchwide units to carry out the substance and spirit of this statement; and

15. To call upon Church in Society and other appropriate churchwide units to oversee a process of implementation and accountability for this social statement and to report on implementation to the Church Council in early 2012.

Responses from the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit

The Congregational and Synodical Mission (CSM) unit, in consultation with many of the following units and organizations, provide the following responses to the implementing resolutions.

Mission Development

Training for the prevention of sexual misconduct is provided during Mission Developer Training for new developers entering the field. It is an expectation that all developers attend. Mission Developer Training is offered twice a year.

Worship

Currently, there are prayer resources for families and individuals facing divorce included in *Evangelical Lutheran Worship: Pastoral Care*. A larger conversation about whether or not this church ritualizes divorce would need to take place before the development of such liturgical resources.

Advocacy

ELCA Advocacy Ministries and the Corporate Social Responsibility Consultant have addressed policy issues consistent with this statement including hate crime, workplace and partner benefits legislation. Commercial Sexual Exploitation (ref. item 9), including its economic and cultural aspects, is a continuing advocacy priority addressed by international, domestic, UN and corporate responsibility portfolios.

ELCA Advocacy Ministries and the Corporate Social Responsibility Consultant have written issue briefs raising the profile of the HIV and AIDS Strategy and addressing its policy implications. The Corporate Social Responsibility Consultant and International Policy Director take leadership positions in coalitions addressing funding for education and access to medical treatment, drugs and long-term care. The Assistant to the Director of the UN Office is leading an ELCA Inter-Unit Planning Team related to the 2012 International AIDS Conference in Washington, D.C.

Response regarding the HIV and AIDS Strategy

A team was formed to fully engage the strategy. The team is composed of churchwide staff from Mission Advancement, Congregational and Synodical Mission, Global Mission and staff from the Women of the ELCA. We continue to focus on the three goals and have joined with our partners domestically and globally in creating our response to halting the spread of HIV through effective prevention, treatment and care; eliminating stigma and discrimination; and reducing the conditions of poverty and marginalization that contribute to the spread of HIV. In a ten-year period, we have committed to spend 10 million dollars as part of our overall response to this continuing crisis.

Response Campus Ministry

Campus ministries across the country continue to foster and support strong friendships among undergraduate and graduate students. They also continue to carry out the substance and spirit of the social statement on Human Sexuality. One regional coordinator shared the story that at a recent quadrennial review at the University of Michigan, students who have faced the pain of being rejected

by other faith communities because of their sexual identity dared to "darken the door" at Lutheran Campus Ministry/Lord of Light because they advertise themselves as a Reconciling in Christ community. She reports that "they couldn't say enough good things about the welcome they have received" from that campus ministry community.

Response Schools

Elementary schools and preschools operated by ELCA congregations continue to offer quality education in sexuality as part of instruction in health.

Response from Augsburg Fortress Publishers

General Guidelines

At [Augsburg Fortress](#) and our ecumenical division, [sparkhouse](#), we are committed to creating resources to assist with conversation and learning around Christian values and making responsible choices through age-appropriate language, images, questions, and activities. We use different development and editorial filters/criteria based on our expertise with each end-user age/stage group. For children and youth, our filter includes respecting and honoring diversity so that each child feels they (and their family) are included and loved members of God's family.

[Spark Sunday School](#) and [Spark Family](#)

We do not address issues surrounding human sexuality in an explicit way in the Spark curriculum or Spark Family. We do reflect respectful, healthy and diverse family relationships when we are depicting families in text and in pictures.

[Herewestandconfirmation.org](#)

Exploring the Commandments: Part 2 references the sixth commandment and healthy attitudes toward sexuality and relationships. There are no topics on the News Feed that specifically reference this.

[re:form](#) confirmation and youth resources

Three sessions relate directly to sexuality/decisions: Is it a sin to think about sex? How do I stop doing things I know I shouldn't do? Is divorce a sin?

Future

We are open to developing a curriculum in the future that focuses specifically on issues of Christian values and responsible choices.

Response from Lutheran Men in Mission (LMM)

For LMM, assisting men to build strong, healthy friendships is at the heart of our work. A part of our mission is to provide safe spaces for men to develop meaningful relationships. Of the many things we do to promote this, two stand out:

- 1) We have developed the I-Go model for older and middle-aged men to develop friendships, especially with younger men. Identify, Invite and Invest. Identify a younger man in your life, invite (a cup of coffee, a beer... to spend some time together) into friendship and invest time in him.
- 2) Our One Year to Live retreat creates the safest of places for men to honestly open up and begin to develop life changing relationships.

Response from Portico Benefit Services

In 2010, Portico Benefit Services (formerly called the ELCA Board of Pensions) amended plans contained within the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program to treat eligible same gender partners the same as a spouse to the extent possible under each plan and as permitted by federal law.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To receive the report from the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit in consultation with Mission Advancement, Global Mission, Women of the ELCA, Lutheran Men in Mission, Augsburg Fortress and Portico Benefit Services in response to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly action related to the implementing resolutions for the social statement, *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*; and

To express with appreciation the ongoing work of the churchwide organization, synods, institutions, agencies and congregations in implementing the substance and spirit of this statement as the response of the Church Council to the Churchwide Assembly action.

**2. International Year for People of African Descent
Memorials Category A3 (CA11.03.12)**

To receive with gratitude the memorials of the Central/Southern Illinois, Northeastern Ohio, Southeastern Pennsylvania, and Virginia synods related to the International Year for People of African Descent;

To affirm these memorials and request that the presiding bishop of this church issue a statement acknowledging the International Year for People of African Descent and encouraging congregations to participate through prayer, ministry, forums, and presentations, as well as artistic, cultural, and worship expressions that affirm the gifts of people of African Descent;

To ask that the director for racial justice collaborate with the ELCA Church Council, congregations, synod anti-racism teams, strategy teams, ethnic associations, ELCA colleges and universities, and ELCA seminaries to deepen efforts to eradicate racism by examining the factors that inhibit people of color and/or whose primary language is other than English from experiencing the fullness of leadership and inclusion in this church;

To request the Global Mission and Congregational and Synodical Mission units to recognize this International Year in upcoming events; and

To anticipate that the director for racial justice and the staff of the Lutheran Office for World Community at the United Nations will monitor the events of the International Year for People of African Descent and provide current information for the ELCA website.

Church Council Action (CC.11.11.83c)

To request that the director for racial justice, in consultation with the Congregational and Synodical Mission and Global Mission units bring to the April 2012 meeting of the Church Council a report on the ELCA activities associated with the International Year for People of African Descent.

Response from the Director for Racial Justice Ministries

In response to the Churchwide Assembly action recognizing the UN International Year for People of African Descent, the Director for Racial Justice Ministries in consultation with the CSM Lutheran Office for World Community:

- Utilized the ELCA website to post news and information regarding the International Year.

- Assisted the presiding bishop of this church in issuing a statement acknowledging the International Year for People of African Descent and encouraging congregations to participate through prayer, ministry, forums, and presentations, as well as artistic, cultural and worship expressions that affirm the gifts of people of African Descent.

The CSM Director for African Descent ministries in consultation with the National Council of Churches Black Ministerium drafted a letter requesting the National Council of Churches in Christ (NCCC) Governing Board approve the UN Year. On November 9, 2011 the NCCC letter called on member communions to do the following:

- To embrace, honor, and celebrate "the rich histories, diverse cultures, vast contributions, and gifts for ministry of people of African descent" around the world;
- To work even more diligently "to eradicate racial injustice, discrimination, and xenophobia" so often directed at persons of African descent;
- To ask the member communions to advance the rights of such persons through prayer, advocacy, and action; to make an annual report to the NCCC on steps taken to promote the elimination of racism and to raise awareness of the contributions of people of color; and
- To call for an Ecumenical Decade to Celebrate Persons of African Descent and their contributions to society.

The Director for Racial Justice Ministries, in partnership with the Office of the Presiding Bishop–Human Resources Churchwide Office, Director for Multicultural Ministries, Directors for Ethnic Specific Ministries, Women of the ELCA Director for Justice, ELCA Director for Justice for Women, African Descent Lutheran Association’s Biennial Gathering, Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, the Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta, the Carter Center in Atlanta at Emory University and Assistant to the Bishop/Director of Evangelical Mission in the Southeastern Synod hosted screening events of the United Nations Educational and Scientific Organization (UNESCO) documentary “Slave Routes: a Global Vision.” The documentary film, aimed at a general audience, provides an overview of the massive deportation of African populations to different parts of the world including the Americas, Europe, islands in the Indian Ocean, the Middle East and Asia.

The DVD highlights the African presence across continents, the significant contributions of the African Diaspora to the host societies in various fields (arts, religion, knowledge, gastronomy, agriculture, behavior, linguistics, etc.), and the racism and discrimination inherited from this tragic past. Its scope moves beyond the trauma of slavery and emphasizes slave resistance and resilience in surviving such a dehumanizing system.

Through the compilation of images, historical narration and interviews with experts from all continents, the film shows how African slaves and their descendants, in contrast to incorrect "racial" theories, helped shape the modern world.

The film’s main objective is to give a global vision of the different dimensions of this tragedy and raise crucial questions regarding its consequences in modern societies in order to come to terms with this collective memory.

In response to the community screening of the film at the Carter Center in the Southeastern Synod, Atlanta, Ga., Dr. Rosetta E. Ross, Associate Professor of Religious Studies, wrote, “I want to express my deep gratitude to you (Judith Roberts) and Dr. Everett Flanigan for sponsoring the screening and discussion of the documentary “Slave Routes” at the Carter Center in Atlanta. As creative director Dr. Sheila Walker indicated, the ELCA should be commended for providing a forum to begin discussing the history of enslavement and the legacy of Africans’ contributions to global development.”

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

**To receive with gratitude the report from the Director for Racial Justice Ministries;
To recognize with deep appreciation the collaborative work of the Director for Racial Justice Ministries and the Director for African Descent Ministries in recognizing the International Year for People of African Descent; and
To acknowledge the many ways the church has lifted up the International Year for People of African Descent and encouraged participation in prayer, ministry, forums and presentations, as well as artistic, cultural and worship expressions that affirm the gifts of people of African Descent as the response of the Church Council to the Churchwide Assembly action.**

**3. Confronting Injustice in State Immigration Initiatives
Motion C (CA11.05.31)**

RESOLVED, that the 2011 Churchwide Assembly declare its support of and encouragement for all efforts to prevent the enactment of punitive and unjust federal and state laws that target immigrants; and be it further

RESOLVED, that all congregations and institutions of this church are called to welcome and serve persons regardless of their documented status; and be it further

RESOLVED, that congregations, seminaries, camps, colleges, universities, synods, and all expressions of the ELCA are hereby called upon to deepen their understanding of the current issues related to immigration and their calling to stand for welcome, including the widespread study and use of the ELCA social policy resolution titled "Toward Compassionate, Just and Wise Immigration Reform," adopted by the Church Council in 2009; and be it further

RESOLVED, that all members of this church, including its leaders, be encouraged to protest laws and proposed laws that ignore the Bible's witness to care for the stranger among us and to serve all people and strive for justice and peace in all the earth, by communicating with legislators, governors, and the media; participating in public gatherings opposing unjust immigration policies; and taking all actions that demonstrate welcome and live out accompaniment of immigrants; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Churchwide Assembly affirm the church's cooperation with and support for the ministry and advocacy of LIRS; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Church Council be asked to consider the designation of one day each year for "Stand for Welcome Sunday," a moment to bring particular attention in congregations and communities to the presence and gifts of refugees and migrants, and the opportunities for mission and ministry with newcomers; and be it

RESOLVED, that the presiding bishop and synodical bishops be called upon to communicate this resolution and the commitment of the ELCA to stand with and advocate for immigrants to the U.S. administration, Congress, all governors and state legislatures, and the media.

Church Council Action (CC11.11.83k)

To refer Motion C: Confronting Injustice in State Immigration Initiatives to the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit in consultation with the Theological Discernment team in the Office of the Presiding Bishop; and

To request that a report and possible recommendations, particularly about the designation of "Stand for Welcome Sunday," be presented to the Church Council at its April 2012 meeting.

Response from the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit

The ELCA is deeply engaged with and committed to this issue. We have a valued partner, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS) that has developed resources, provided training and advocated on our behalf regarding unjust federal and state laws that target immigrants. With our support the resource, **Be Not Afraid: Resource for Congregations and Immigrant Families Fractured by Fear**, was developed, and training sessions were held. The resource is still available to congregations for additional training. It is in two languages, English and Spanish. We continue to provide support and funding to LIRS as they engage the ecology of the ELCA in various ways in the creation of our response to a broken immigration system. During 2011 and 2012, we have focused our Glocal Mission Gatherings upon educating our members on immigration issues. We are currently working with LIRS to identify congregations and local nonprofits to get more people visiting immigrants in detention centers. CSM is currently developing a work plan with LIRS that will guide and direct our joint priorities for 2012 and beyond. This work plan will also explore and consider the designation of one day each year for 'Stand for Welcome Sunday'.

Our partnership with LIRS is an important ministry that is mutually beneficial, a win-win situation. Our commitment to being a church of hospitality and welcome is also reflected in our new starts; where for the past three years over 50% have been ministries to and with immigrants. One area which has received sustained focus is along our southern border with Mexico, where La Frontera Ministry works to strengthen congregations and community groups to serve immigrants and economic migrants on both sides of the border.

Additionally, this motion called on the presiding bishop and synodical bishops to communicate to the nation's leaders and media the ELCA's support and commitment to immigration reform.

On November 1, 2011, the presiding bishop sent a letter to President Barack Obama and members of the U.S. Congress with such a statement. A response from President Obama was received by the Office of the Presiding Bishop, acknowledging the receipt of the letter.

In a separate response, 58 of the synod bishops sent a letter on November 2, 2011, to President Obama and members of Congress calling for immigration reform. The bishops wrote, "We, the undersigned ELCA bishops, stand with other religious, community, and business leaders in opposing misguided and punitive state immigration laws and working for the passage of much-needed federal immigration reform."

Members of the ELCA Conference of Bishops' Immigration Ready Bench also met with congressional leaders in November 2011 to communicate the commitment of the ELCA to stand with and advocate for immigrants.

Since August 2011, five ELCA news stories on immigration were released to the media and can be read at www.elca.org/news.

CC ACTION *[EN BLOC]*

Recommended:

To receive the report from the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit in consultation with the Theological Discernment team in the Office of the Presiding Bishop related to state immigration initiatives;

To acknowledge with gratitude the communication of this motion to the U.S. President and Congress by the presiding bishop and they synod bishops and the subsequent news releases to the media;

To approve information regarding the deep engagement and commitment to this issue with the Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS) as the Church Council's response to the Churchwide Assembly action; and

To anticipate a possible designation of one day each year for "Stand for Welcome Sunday" by the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit.

Revised April 9, 2012

**4. Tree for Luthergarten
Motion K (CA11.04.19)**

WHEREAS, the 500th anniversary of the protestant reformation will happen in 2017,
WHEREAS, Lutheran World Federation in Wittenberg/Lutherstadt, under the work of Rev. Hans Kasch, is recognizing this Quincentennial anniversary by creating a park with 500 native fruit and deciduous trees,
WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is a partner with Lutheran World Federation,
WHEREAS, the cost for a mature tree in the Luthergarten is 500 Euros (approx. \$750),
WHEREAS, the Luthergarten project encourages benefactors to plant a “sister” tree in their location with an accompanying plaque stating its significance,
WHEREAS, the total cost of the project is no more than \$1000,
WHEREAS, we encourage Bishop Hanson, or a person of his choosing to be present in Wittenberg/Lutherstadt on the day of the tree planting,
THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the 12th Churchwide Assembly of the ELCA direct the ELCA Church Council to purchase a tree in the Luthergarten and determine a location, and oversee the planting, of its sister tree and adjacent plaque.

Churchwide Assembly Action (CA11.04.19)

To refer Motion K to the Office of the Presiding Bishop for consideration.

Church Council Action (CC.11.11.83q)

To request that the Office of the Presiding Bishop present a report and possible recommendations on Motion K: Tree for Luthergarten to the April 2012 meeting of the Church Council.

Response from the Office of the Presiding Bishop

In response to the 12th Churchwide Assembly of the ELCA, a tree was planted in Wittenberg, Germany by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, in observance of the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation, 2017.

The contribution of the Northeastern Ohio Synod provided the funding for this tree, which was planted in October, 2011. It was planted on behalf of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

The request was for the planting of a Horse Chestnut tree. This is similar to a Buckeye tree. Ohio is the Buckeye state.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To acknowledge the value of planting a “sister” tree in the Luthergarten to recognize the quincentenary of the Protestant Reformation;

To receive the report and response from the Office of the Presiding Bishop; and

To acknowledge with gratitude the financial contribution from the Northeastern Ohio Synod to plant the Horse Chestnut tree in the Luthergarten.

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**This Exhibit included
personal information
provided solely to the
Church Council for its
deliberations.**

En Bloc Items

- 1. Board Development Committee**
- 2. Executive Committee**
- 3. Legal and Constitutional Review Committee**

3A. 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.

The amendments are detailed in [Exhibit H](#).

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

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

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

3B. Lenoir-Rhyne University and Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary Merger

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 that would 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.

The charter and bylaws of Lenoir-Rhyne University are in [Exhibit H](#).

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

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

3C. Approval of Signatories Related to the ELCA Foundation

As noted in the *Restated Articles of Incorporation of Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, the ELCA as a corporation is subject to the laws of the State of Minnesota. The Minnesota nonprofit corporation act authorizes the board of directors of a corporation organized under the Minnesota act to designate one or more individuals to form a committee that shall have authority to act for and on behalf of the board of directors.

In 2002, the Church Council authorized the Treasurer of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and the Executive Director of the ELCA Foundation to act as a

Revised April 10, 2012

committee representing the Church Council with regard to trusts for which the ELCA acts as trustee. (CC02.11.89)

The business and fiscal affairs of individual charitable gift annuity agreements for which ELCA is the guarantor involve gift planning transactions with individual donors coordinated by the ELCA Foundation. However, under the redesign of the churchwide organization, the ELCA Foundation is no longer a separate unit and responsibilities for gift planning reside in the unit for Mission Advancement. Therefore, the resolution needs to be updated.

The resolution language below revises the 2002 action so that the ELCA treasurer and the executive director of the Mission Advancement unit form that committee. In addition, the resolution incorporates the churchwide organization's long-standing practice of having individual gift annuity agreements signed by the treasurer and the executive director of the ELCA Foundation (now the executive director of the Mission Advancement unit). These actions will enable the churchwide organization to carry out its day-to-day activities relative to both trusts and gift annuity agreements.

CC ACTION [EN BLOC]

Recommended:

To appoint the Treasurer of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and the Executive Director of the Mission Advancement unit 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 ELCA is acting as trustee to authorize and approve, on behalf of this corporation as trustee, transactions to which such trust is a party;

To appoint the Treasurer of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and the Executive Director of the Mission Advancement unit as a committee having the authority of the Church Council to authorize and approve establishment of any gift annuity agreement for which ELCA is guarantor, on behalf of this corporation as guarantor; and

To request that said committee annually report transactions so authorized as information to the Budget and Finance Committee of the Church Council.

4. Planning and Evaluation

5. Program and Services

5A. Public Ministry Consultations Planning Team (Lay Roster Task Force)

In January 2007, a consultation on the ministries of deaconesses, diaconal ministers, and associates in ministry was convened by the Vocation and Education unit with funding from the ELCA Deaconess Community. From that gathering grew a Public Ministry Consultations planning team that worked for three years, fostered similar gatherings in eight regions of the ELCA, and developed a DVD resource. The team submitted a report early in 2010 to the executive director of Vocation and Education, the secretary of the ELCA, the regional coordinators, and the leadership teams of the diaconal ministry community and the Deaconess Community. The report included the nine recommendations detailed below.

The first six recommendations were specifically related to the rosters for deaconesses, diaconal ministers, and associates in ministry:

1. Address the ELCA Constitution and other governing documents to remove the word "lay" to describe all three of these rosters in public ministry.

2. Articulate a common theological foundation for ministry, reclaiming “diakonia” as the foundation for all three rosters.
3. While recognizing and valuing the differences in tradition and history of these three rosters, we recommend that they become one roster with three expressions.
4. Require basic theological preparation for all three rosters while maintaining flexibility toward goals of effective and diverse mission and ministry.
5. For the sake of good order, examine the titles, symbols and visible signs of each of the three rosters.
6. Vigorously encourage synods, bishops, and churchwide staff to communicate more effectively the value of and variety of gifts of these three rosters (e.g., advocate with congregations and agencies as they consider staffing).

The final recommendations related to all four of the current rosters, including those ordained to Word and Sacrament ministry:

7. Develop standards that are fair and consistent for procedures for call, salary guidelines and related issues.
8. Develop unified ongoing formation and discernment tools and events.
9. Continue the momentum of the work of this consultation so that dialogue may continue among rosters. The next step in this dialogue needs to include all four rosters.

Church Council Action (CC10.11.64)

To express the appreciation for the work of the Public Ministry Consultations planning team, acknowledging that their work has assisted the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to deepen its understanding both of the diaconal work shared by all members and of the public ministries of Word and service;

To call upon this church to name these Word and service ministries, to affirm their vital roles, to recruit individuals to explore these callings, and to assist people in preparing for and being called to specific ministries in the ELCA and in the world we serve;

To request that the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit, with the appropriate committee of the Conference of Bishops, constitute a small task force on ministries of service (diakonia), including at least one teaching theologian, one bishop, and one member from each of the four rosters, with this mandate:

1. To suggest ways that the leaders and expressions of the ELCA can continue to undergird the ministries of members of the three Word and service rosters and their communities and to facilitate the use of their gifts and called service in ELCA congregations and other ministries, including non-profit, government, and public entities;
2. To articulate for the ELCA a fuller theology of Word and service ministry that builds upon:
 - a. This church’s diaconal tradition and its complementarity to the theology of Word and Sacrament ministry, grounding both in the baptismal call to all God’s people to serve within the institutional church and in the world;
 - b. The ELCA’s “Together for Ministry” report (1993), the Lutheran World Federation report “Diakonia in Context” (2009), the report and recommendations of Public Ministry Consultations planning team (2010) and other Lutheran and ecumenical studies;
3. To consider whether this Word and service ministry would be better expressed and the present ELCA mission and ecumenical mission better served by the formation of one new

Revised April 11, 2012

ELCA Word and service roster that incorporates the members and heritage of the three present rosters into a diversified whole with a common entrance rite; and
To request that a report and possible recommendations be brought to the April 2012 meeting of the ELCA Church Council.

CC ACTION *[EN BLOC]*

Recommended:

To acknowledge and affirm the ongoing work of the Public Ministry Consultations Planning Team; and

~~To delay response~~ To anticipate a report and possible recommendations to the November 2012 meeting of the ELCA Church Council.

6. Budget and Finance

7. Other Items

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Draft Report
Communal Discernment Task Force
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
November 4, 2010

Preface

This Task Force has been on a walk—a journey of our own communal discernment. During our walk together we experienced frustrations, tensions, uncertainties, joys, and surprises, and we believe our learning resulted in discoveries that will serve as a model to help others begin to understand communal discernment. As we came together to do our work, our reading, praying, and dialogue surprised us with the gifts of both expected learning and unexpected discovery. It is our hope that this report will capture both experiences, and, perhaps, inspire others to embark on their own communal discernment journey.

As we came together to do our work, our reading, praying, and dialogue surprised us with the gifts of both expected learning and unexpected discovery

The Walk

We came together at our first meeting with our own individual ideas about communal discernment. Reading had been done in preparation, and there was a “get the job done” attitude in the room. We were a goal-oriented group with a desire for a clear outcome. If one considers the four phases of team building: *forming*, *storming*, *norming* and *performing*—we moved very quickly from *forming* right into *storming*. (Bruce Tuckman, 1965)

For many of us, communal discernment had been pre-defined as communal ***decision-making***. So, naturally, we were led into identifying various alternative methods of making decisions. Blessedly, some members of the task force challenged that set of assumptions, and a time of storming began. This was a “tipping point,” a defining moment in the life of the task force, a moment that we would return to again and again if we felt we were falling into the “easy answer” trap. The storming brought us face to face with the complexities of the very questions we had been charged to answer, and led the group into its own period of intense communal discernment, of listening for the Holy Spirit’s movement among us. We had become a microcosm of the whole, and the laboratory for this “experiment.”

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For the Task Force, community-building became of critical importance to our ability to remain committed to doing this work together, even when it became frustrating and confusing. The scripture-based practice of “Dwelling in the Word” was adopted. Each session of the Task Force’s work opened with a reading of Philippians 1:27; 2:5-11, followed by meditation and conversation. The richness of the different experiences each of us brought to the text deepened our communal understanding, and provided a grounding framework for abiding with Christ in this task. It also provided an “ah-ha! moment”—that our listening, respecting, and sharing different understandings of the same text had enriched our individual interpretations with common, communal understanding.

At the same time that we sought greater definition and focus about communal discernment, we also began to look at the way other communities make decisions; alternative models were reviewed for their relative strengths and weaknesses, and their potential viability for use in various expressions of the church. We continued to ask ourselves, “Is a decision-making model going to deepen communal discernment?” Then, another paradigm shift occurred: the task force shifted our goal away from finding an alternative model and toward imagining and addressing a change in the culture—away from being outcome-oriented and toward being relationship-focused—and finally, away from having to “fix it” and toward trusting the Holy Spirit to guide us.

This shift brought us to new learning. By Dwelling in the Word we were reminded that the Holy Spirit reveals God to us through scripture, and that this revelation is an ongoing inspiration. Through our relationship-building in the group, we saw firsthand the restlessness in us as a reflection of what is being felt throughout the larger church—a desire to fix it, and to do so quickly and independently. And, we saw firsthand that God works in conflict, in the very midst of profound differences, and that God would still allow us to experience, “see how they love one another.”

Initial Findings

The Task Force has found joy in this journey together, and we are happy to be able to share with you some of the discoveries we have made:

community-building became of critical importance to our ability to remain committed to doing this work together, even when it became frustrating and confusing

the task force shifted our goal away from finding an alternative model and toward imagining and addressing a change in the culture—away from being outcome-oriented and toward being relationship-focused—and finally, away from having to “fix it” and toward trusting the Holy Spirit to guide us

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Communal Discernment is not the same as making decisions.

This kind of discernment is ongoing: it precedes, happens during and continues to unfold even after a decision is made.

Decision-making can either deepen or damage trust.

Knowing when a group is prepared to move to a decision is a matter of discernment.

Communal discernment is not the same as individual discernment.

Communal discernment is rarely experienced.

It is more than individually sorting it out and voting in community.

It respects the individual gifts of the communal body.

It happens in the fabric of the community over time.

It involves both the formal and informal processes.

It is impacted by time boundaries.

It frequently brings surprise and discovery.

It is a Spirit-led process.

Discovering communal discernment may force us back one question from where we imagine we might be. We might have to ask again, in a new way:

What is the question we are discerning?

How do we discern God's will for this community?

How do we form and deepen Christian community?

In the words of Robert B. Parker's Boston P.I. character, Spenser, "things get real messy when you're up close." Sometimes, we need to step back to see what the Holy Spirit has been calling us to see, and gaining some perspective might come only when you look through the eyes of another.

Common Life without Communal Discernment: A Cautionary Tale

In a moment such as this, when the ELCA is deeply challenged by multiple pressures and an unknown future, it is tempting to seek some deeper clarity and a measure of control. One casualty in fulfilling this temptation could be the gift of communal discernment. What would our church body look like without it?

What would our church body look like without communal discernment?

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In a complex organization like the Church, any sort of Spirit-infused communal discernment is sacrificed in order to develop a well-run bureaucratic system that can efficiently deliver goods and services. In such a system, professional staff is hired based entirely on educational credentials and proven performance. The hierarchy is so well-organized that input from stakeholders, or church members, is sought only in regard to administrative matters—but not the mission and vision of the Church. Members are able to be affiliated with an organization that meets their religious needs but demands very little of them. Contemporary business models enable professional church staff to calculate the impact of initiatives through cost/benefit analyses. Such efficiency is enhanced by an over-reliance on technology. Members need not go to meetings to deliberate corporate decisions, but electronically send in their votes from the privacy of their home or office. The church bureaucracy can closely monitor changes in members' beliefs, opinions and preferences and adjust program delivery accordingly.

In a church without Communal Discernment, the messiness of human experience is minimized, conflict can be managed by those in power, and there is little or no room for a Spirit who “blows where it wills.” The *product* is more important than the *process*, *predictability* takes priority over *disruptions* of human experience.

Is this the Church we are called to be?

Is There a Better Future?

God is calling us toward a better future. When we know things are not working, we struggle with temptations of various kinds. One temptation is to fall into the fear that we cannot fix our problems. When we despair, we might accept, “that’s just the way things are.” Or, we are tempted to look to someone who will claim, “I can fix it.” But, we know better, as we watch one “leader” after another fail. God can fix this, but it will involve all of us talking together and hearing God’s call in Christian community.

God plants in us all a deep longing to bring our gifts, experiences and abilities together to build a better Church for the sake of the world that God loves. God stirs us up and keeps calling us to reform and improve our shared life in Christ.

God plants in us all a deep longing
to bring our gifts, experiences and
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that God loves

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God calls to us work on how we discern where God is leading us. God calls us to wonder, “Can we improve the way we engage issues and make decisions so that trust is deepened and respect grows, even if we should disagree?”

We trust that God is calling us to find ways to improve our communal *discernment* around difficult issues, and our communal *deciding* as we seek to be faithful in our time. While we will never find perfection in this broken world and in our own brokenness, God will still be leading us toward new and greater life, even when we think we have failed.

Discerning the Times for Discernment

Discernment is at the heart of what it means to live a life of faith, what it means to be a part of the community of the baptized, and it is both an individual and a communal practice.

We are not born with a facility for communal discernment. Rather, we learn it from one another. We experience it, we develop it, nourish it, and learn it through practice. We have times when it goes well, and times when it does not go well at all. Communal discernment is not a town meeting. It is not democracy by referendum. It is not solo brilliance, and it is not groupthink. Communal discernment takes patience, prayer, forbearance, and non-anxious leadership.

Communal discernment is evidence of “the whole being greater than the sum of the parts.” But those parts must be working parts to make it happen. And those working parts need regular care and maintenance and upgrading. That is the faith journey of the Christian, in prayer and scripture reading and worship and other faith practices, individual and communal. People of faith seek God’s will in all that they do. They pray, meditate, study, read scripture, fast, sing, share-all as a part of seeking God’s will.

When Christians come together to seek God’s will communally, we don’t expect to start with a blank slate. We are not gathering a jury from among those who know none of the facts and have no opinions on the issues. Rather, we gather interested parties, who have a stake in the outcome, who have a deep loyalty to God and neighbor, and who

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have some understanding and practice in prayer, deep listening, confession and forgiveness, and seeking the greater good.

Discernment is not, fundamentally, about “me.” It is about God, and it is about neighbor. Communal discernment is, at its best, conversation with God and neighbor, with a lot of time dedicated to listening. Discernment is not snap decision making. There are times when decisions need to be made quickly. And there are issues that simply need to be decided, without engaging the spiritual resources of the community.

But there are times in the life of a family, a committee, a congregation, a synod, an institution, the wider church, when an issue cannot and should not be resolved quickly and decisively, with winners and losers. We, as Christians, need to become comfortable in identifying such situations and stating clearly, “We need a time of discernment here,” or “this is an issue for which we need a time of discernment.” In a parliamentary system a person can call for a vote, with the intention of settling the matter quickly and decisively. This is exactly the opposite. It prohibits the quick, decisive settling of the matter. And it opens the door to communal discernment, and a deep time spent listening for the Holy Spirit.

We have many people in our church who are skilled at conflict resolution, at problem-solving, at cultural competency, at listening, at non-anxious presence, at holding paradox in tension, at dwelling in the word, at group dynamics, at consensus building, at facilitating groups. We have people who can compile resources, who are fluent in a variety of traditions. We have all these gifts, and many more in this church. Each can play a vital part in communal discernment.

Therefore, it is not practical to attempt to produce a template for communal discernment. That would only set people up for failure. Rather, we can help people to identify when communal discernment might be appropriate, and show them ways to set the table so that it is possible.

The Churchwide Assembly is probably the most difficult place in the ELCA to expect communal discernment to be effective. Over a thousand people come together for a relatively short time together. They are one in Christ, but they have different backgrounds, different preparation for the assembly, possibly different value systems, and not

Discernment is not, fundamentally, about “me.” It is about God, and it is about neighbor. Communal discernment is, at its best, conversation with God and neighbor, with a lot of time dedicated to listening

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enough time to build the kind of trust that is needed in the gathered community for effective communal discernment to take place.

A better place to start is locally, in congregations and in synods—in smaller groups where there is already enough trust in one another for those gathered to become vulnerable enough to risk deep listening. Advice from one congregational group who tested this practice was to “Check your emotional baggage at the door. Bring an open mind and a welcoming heart.”

Understanding Christian Discernment

Discernment is a key discipline and feature of Christian life. Undertaken individually and communally, it is among the most important spiritual exercises, and when done effectively and faithfully it will nurture the church’s health and vitality, and lead to fulfillment of vocation and mission in the world.

Yet, the word itself is a loaded word. There is little consensus on common usage, and a great deal of confusion about what the word actually means. In brief, then, discernment, as we in the task force have been using it, has to do with seeking and listening for God’s will, centering on questions such as “What would God have me/us do?”

Word studies and an exploration of origins can shed some light for us. *Discern* comes from the Latin, *discernere*: *dis* (apart) + *cernere* (to separate). *Discernment* also has origins in Greek: *diakrisis*, from the root, *krino*, to judge. *Discernment* relates also to: *krisis* (judgment, cf. crisis); *krima* (decision); *kriterion* (means of judgment, cf. criterion); *kritikos* (able to judge, cf. critic, critical, criticism); *synkrino* (to interpret); *krinein* (decide). Informally and loosely, emerging more playfully from these word origins, discernment can be viewed as a coming to decision or judgment through crisis, and the interpretation and analysis of what is needed for the process of making critical judgments.

emerging more playfully from these word origins, discernment can be viewed as a coming to decision or judgment through crisis

When we engage with scripture as “the norm of life and faith” we are making a decision about how we might use and understand the relationship between scripture and discernment. Thus, there is a connection in our biblical studies and explorations of, for example, the stories that describe occasions of discernment and decision making in

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the early church communities. Some of the key New Testament passages that might be helpful for further reflection are:

- ▶ **Acts 1:12-26** Choosing Matthias to replace Judas as an apostle by casting lots. While the decision for Matthias may seem arbitrary and the result of a gamble, the full passage suggests that a discernment process preceded this decision-making mechanism, resulting in two candidates being presented when others may well have been considered, too. The followers had devoted themselves to prayer (vs. 14), and the Lord's will was explicitly sought via prayer (vs. 24) to guide the decision for Matthias or Barsabbas. Given the background of such prayerful discernment, the choice of either candidate would have served the emerging church's leadership needs. And as is always the case, the early community lived within any limitations and constraints of decisions made, as we always "have this treasure in earthen vessels."
- ▶ **Acts 15:1-35** The Council at Jerusalem and the decision to extend the Gospel mission to the Gentiles. This passage reveals a discernment and decision-making process undertaken among the earliest of Jesus' followers.
- ▶ **Romans 12:1-2** "I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God -- what is good and acceptable and perfect." This passage suggests that discerning God's will emerges from our transformation in Christ, and results in our whole-hearted offering of ourselves in Christian life in the power of the Spirit.
- ▶ **1 Corinthians 1:18ff.** especially, "For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written, 'I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.'" Lest we rely too fully on our own powers of discernment, this passage suggests that faithful Christian discernment is undertaken in light of the cross and its logic.

While the decision for Matthias may seem arbitrary . . . a discernment process preceded this decision-making

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- ▶ **1 Corinthians 2:1-5** “When I came to you, brothers and sisters, I did not come proclaiming the mystery of God to you in lofty words or wisdom. For I decided (cf. *krinein*) to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and him crucified.” This suggests that the focus for all discernment and decision-making is the crucified Christ.

- ▶ **1 Corinthians 2:14-16** “Those who are unspiritual do not receive the gifts of God’s Spirit, for they are foolishness to them, and they are unable to understand them because they are spiritually discerned (*anakrinetai*). Those who are spiritual discern (*anakrinei*) all things, and they are themselves subject to no one else’s scrutiny (*anakrinetai*). ‘For who has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?’ But we have the mind of Christ.” According to this passage, discernment is faithfully undertaken with the mind of Christ revealed by the power of the Spirit.

Discernment in Our Culture

We have already mentioned that communal discernment does not come naturally for those of us in the 21st century American culture. We have reduced the discernment process into *decision-making* in two general categories: individual choices about personal matters and public decisions, made through the electoral process.

The rich heritage of the Enlightenment—which enabled societies to consider the independence, dignity, freedom and human rights of each person—has devolved into what is, too often, a hyper-individualism. Such a mentality lifts up the individual at the expense of the whole. We feel entitled to make personal decisions without reference to the common good, such that “my” decisions are a private matter over which I have complete control and responsibility. As long as I do not directly hurt others, *I am free to choose* to live, work, worship, speak, shop and think however I want. The incorporation of others’ input or concerns in my decision-making process is interpreted as an unwelcome limitation on my individual rights and personal privilege.

Thus, we have a society which funds highways for individual car owners more readily than funding public transportation. We protect our rights to own as many guns as we want, and accept the 30,000

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fellow citizens killed each year by gun violence as an un-avoidable cost for our freedom. We resist efforts to provide health care to the uninsured, and are more concerned about protecting the “right” to choose individual providers by those who are already insured. As we choose a career path we are more likely to consider “what I like doing,” rather than what is needed to be done.

Individualistic decision-making is ingrained in us as a sign of personal growth and independence, “discernment” is what we call our private processes for making those decisions. Too often we have allowed our Christian faith to be adapted to a privatized understanding of God’s presence in our lives. Prayer becomes highly personal, and we experience the Spirit leading us on individual paths which sometimes intersect those of others. Such individualism is a distortion of the Gospel itself, which calls us out of self-absorption and into community. The parts of the Body of Christ can only function when they are in relationship to one another.

The individualism rampant in our culture and even in our churches has become so much a part of our habit that we do not notice it. It is just the way we are, even though many in our society, or within the Christian community, do not share the privilege of such decision-making capability. Personal choices about vocation, employment, purchases and housing, for example, are beyond the reach of many. The range of personal choices available and the freedom to choose among them is limited by social class, economic conditions, race, ethnicity, age, gender, and physical capacities. Still, we in the dominant culture hold onto the ideal of individual freedom of choice, even in the Church, and are blind to those who cannot enjoy it. And when one part of the body is limited in its ability, the whole body suffers.

But we have not just relegated our understanding of discernment to personal decision-making: there are public decisions that need to be made and we have public processes for making them. Our public “discernment” process is identified with watching carefully scripted debates by well-funded candidates engaged in public performances meant to influence our private decision in the voting booth. There is a level of cynicism and distrust in the process that we have come to accommodate and even expect. Americans are increasingly suspicious of attempts by media and government to manipulate them. We revere the public “discernment” process even as we hold doubts and distrust its integrity.

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Research shows that as our social trust continues to decline, so too our interaction with each other decreases. In fact, the two are mutually reinforcing: without interacting with each other, we lose the opportunity to build trust. And so even our “public discernment” becomes individualized and our capacity for the kind of honest and robust public conversation that is needed for communal discernment becomes severely limited. With only a thin layer of public trust, we put yellow tape around important questions, issues and sentiments in our public conversation. Taboos around the “impertinent questions” limit the honesty and depth of our dialogue.

How then can we really understand criminal justice, for example, without deeply engaging how poverty and racial understandings are active variables in the equation? How can we wrestle with the meaning of leadership in Church and society without having difficult conversations about gender? The integrity of discernment is handicapped by the demise in social trust and open and honest dialogue.

Further, by collapsing our collective decision-making (public discernment) into electoral politics, another dynamic is reinforced: a majority “wins,” and the losing minority needs to adapt. This “Too bad!” attitude toward the minority contributes to alienating large segments of society, who lost, perhaps, because they did not have access to power and influence. This breeds a widespread cynicism about our life together, that reinforces once again, the difficulty in developing social trust. By seeing society divided into winners and losers or insiders and outsiders, our capacity for empathy is eroded. The reality of the human vulnerability we all share is ignored.

With such distortions, it becomes all the more imperative to recover a sense of discernment which values both individual conscience and the common good. Such a reframing of our understanding of discernment runs against social understandings and what our culture tells us is simply “common sense.”

A new approach to discernment needs to identify, consider and challenge our points of distrust: To what extent should the concerns of others impact my personal decisions? How can we engage questions facing Church and society without being overly influenced by powerful interest groups and the media? How can we develop vehicles for communal dialogue which facilitate honest dialogue across “taboo topics,” and honors the experience and views of all? How can we

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A new approach to discernment needs to identify, consider and challenge our points of distrust

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struggle together about where God is leading us as a people in ways that do not divide us by social and political privilege but instead reinforce our shared humanity and common longings?

A new framework for discernment has to provide portals into seeing our own self-interest and experience—as well as that of others—so that we might more deeply appreciate the diversity, complexity and nuances of our society. Only then can we seek ways to move forward that do not alienate large segments of our community. Such a process is the vision of a democratic society, it also reflects the intentions of the Creator of the human community. As the Church comes to understand more deeply how we are to discern as Christ's Body where the Spirit is leading us, we can offer to the wider culture new models of public engagement, dialogue and decision making.

Discernment and Human Sin

Undertaking discernment casually, without fully understanding its dynamics, is fraught with danger and the potential for abuse, confusing human whim for God's will. Discernment is well-served when we take seriously the effects of human sin, the human capacity for self-delusion, denial, maintaining blind spots, resistance, the need to dominate and control, abusing power and authority, maintaining injustices, pride, greed, and selfishness. Our propensity to rebel against God and to demonize others with whom we disagree, all of these can interfere with discernment processes.

Many of the classic understandings of sin speak to sin's interference with faithful discernment of God's will: misplaced trust, missing the mark, being curved in on ourselves. Sin has the power and capacity to distort or even destroy our best efforts at faithful discernment that leads to decisions about our sharing in God's mission in the world.

Discernment is most effective when we can recognize and set aside our own agendas. Even after the most careful, studied discernment, we still see in a mirror dimly (cf. 1 Cor. 13:12) and discernment may/will lead to quite varied decisions/outcomes. Thus, we pray always: "O God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your

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love supporting us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.” We are called in discernment, decision-making and living out our faith to “sin boldly, but to believe more boldly still” (attributed to Martin Luther).

Discernment and the Holy Spirit

Discernment is undertaken in the power and through the guidance and leading of the Holy Spirit. It is one of the “means” through which the Spirit guides us into all the truth (John 16:13a) and is best grounded in a robust pneumatology, or doctrine of the Holy Spirit, in a Lutheran key. Alas, Lutherans have historically shied away from considerations of the third person of the Trinity and major aspects of the third article of the creed.

The historical and cultural circumstances out of which Lutheranism was born contribute to a mistrust of the unbridled emotional and enthusiastic expressions which have often been associated with the Spirit’s coming. These factors can contribute to a kind of spiritual poverty in our Lutheran communities. Still, we have a great deal to offer about the work of the Holy Spirit, principally that the Holy Spirit works through means, particularly the means of grace, the voice and energy of God operative in and emanating from Word and Sacrament. In fact, the church exists, communally, where the Holy Spirit gathers God’s people around that very Word and those sacraments. Discernment is undertaken in close proximity to and with deep engagement in the means of grace in the church as a primary location and focus of the Spirit’s activity and energies.

Cultivating Practices and Habits

The primary question the ELCA is considering through the work of the LIFT task force is “*What is God calling the ELCA to be and do in the future?*” When it comes to decision-making and communal spiritual discernment, **who we are in Christ** leads to how we discern and decide. We are called to be a part of God’s mission in the world. Put in other words: the community of the Body of Christ is more important than the outcome of the decision-making; the journey is as important as the destination; it is better to be caught being Christian than being right. Discerning together what God is doing in our shared life and discerning God’s preferred and promised future for our church

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is one way of trying to understand God. We believe that discernment processes seeks truth while deepening community.

It is important to recognize that the historical methods of decision-making have served us well in many circumstances, and that we should appreciate those efforts. But local churches and indeed, the denomination have habits of decision-making that don't always make space or time for prayer, discernment, and deep listening, so they do not have the chance to try to understand God's will. However, as methods have evolved, new insights have led to new approaches. We believe this is one of those moments because the issues have become more volatile and previous methods do not adequately integrate our faith and our emotions.

Ideally, the culture for decision-making would be one which is open to all, which reflects tradition, contemporary context, and the sources of Lutheran identity. If the discernment is deep, wide, and sincere, the formal ratification of decisions will be more likely to build up the body of Christ.

Our Task Force feels it ought to be the church's ongoing task to cultivate a culture of discernment in our church in all its expressions. Such a culture develops habits and practices such as Dwelling in the Word, lectio divina, and other personal and communal prayer and meditation processes. Such a culture also develops the habit of deep listening to the other with respect and love. Deep listening, (to God and to the other,) cultivates dispositions and attitudes that reveal the fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5) as well as creating comfort in embracing silence and letting go of time sensitivity.

Here are some questions that we have reflected upon, which are illustrative of the discernment process:

Does the cultivation of such habits disregard reason and rationality? No. Indeed, deep dwelling in the Word requires a critical interpretation of scripture, and critical and intentional listening to one another. Reason completes meditation, discernment completes understanding.

Is voting or some other decision-making method appropriate?
Yes, when specifically called for through the church's processes and policies.

How will we know when we are ready and ripe for such a vote?
We will know when we have prayed and listened deeply long enough to know that everyone is ready.

Will there be times when we ripen at different paces? Yes. And then it is even more important to have communal discernment practices learned and functioning as habits, so that the community itself articulates that they are either ready or not yet ready to decide a matter by voting. If discernment goes deep, formal decision is the simple ratification of what has been discerned.

What is the status of communal discernment practices in the various expressions of the ELCA? Our Task Force asked for and recorded stories of congregations, parishes, and clusters engaged in communal spiritual discernment at the 2009 Churchwide Assembly, but they were few, and not many involved engagement with Scriptures, traditions and practices of the church. Several who told stories likened spiritual discernment to a moment when things fell into place serendipitously, “as if by magic.” Almost all those who were interviewed only had examples of discernment as an individual, rather than a communal, practice.

At the Churchwide level, the ELCA Church Council and Conference of Bishops already employ practices of communal spiritual discernment such as Dwelling in the Word, prayer before voting, small group Bible study, accountability documents, small group conversation and sharing, process observation, and communication and discernment exercises from www.TheWorldCafe.com.

Synodical activities may connect with and support communal spiritual discernment, such as participation in the Book of Faith initiative, which may help people encounter scripture in their search for discerning and understanding God truly; the “Bound Conscience” conversation following the 2009 Churchwide assembly, which may help us listen better and more deeply to one another; and the LIFT Task Force/ecology study that will create a wider understanding of the entire denomination and its various inter-relationships.

Faithful innovations recognize the complexity of the contemporary church body. As our structural relationships are fragile, experiments must serve to advance the process of discernment while strengthening our commitment to serve Christ and one another. Since

Some metaphors have been identified as useful in the process of communal discernment.

Holy Stewing. A good stew needs time to blend its ingredients. Even though it takes some time and some heat, the ingredients never lose their individual character. For a good stew, you need a good recipe. And, we need to be ready for neighbors who come to us who might not seem to “fit in” to the original recipe for stew.

Listening for God’s Call. One of the most puzzling stories of the Hebrew Bible is 1 Kings 19.

Immediately after demonstrating the power of the God of Israel and the near elimination of the official cult of Baal—in what should have been a moment of glory for the God of Israel and the prophet Elijah—Queen Jezebel, acting in conformity with her Phoenician ideals about royal privilege, causes the prophet to flee and hide in a cave.

Elijah, who had been so confident in God’s will and readiness to act, now struggled to discern the voice of God.

The Masks of God.
Reformation era Christians used this metaphor to explain

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risk is inherent in change, implementation of new methods must begin with trust-building and mutual respect. To that end, experimentation must happen at all levels of the church (congregational councils, synod councils, churchwide committees and council) as well as at the Churchwide Assembly.

It is our hope to learn from other church bodies how to more effectively participate in the processes of communal spiritual discernment as we are creating a culture that gives space and time to the work of understanding God's will. While there seems to be no silver bullet or panacea out there, we believe we can learn certain things from the way resolution language is changing, from the Consensus Model used by the World Council of Churches, and even by tweaking Robert's Rules of Order, as other church bodies have done, (percentage adjustments made by the LCMS.) The Task force would also like to continue learning how our full communion partners and global partners allow time and space for discernment, and how other Christian traditions seek to understand God as they deliberate the issues facing them.

Discernment may be impeded by decision-making methods that make trust building difficult and may reduce the clarity of the common vision by placing expediency before thorough understanding and agreement. There are some current practices that we believe could be eliminated or changed and some new methods that we think would be more consistent with discernment objectives.

The thrust of these recommendations is to enable the process of deliberation to be (a) supportive of those who have not yet arrived at a decision, (b) fair in representing multiple perspectives and (c) open to the influence of the Holy Spirit. These recommendations are identified in Appendix C.

These recommendations will be made in a timely fashion to the appropriate ELCA expressions.

Wider Communal Dimensions of Discernment

Individual discernment is taken up communally. And communal discernment respects the charisms, the gifts, of individual members of the body. Discernment is for all of God's people and all groupings and sub-groupings in Christian community (not just those, for example,

how exactly where we expect to encounter the numinous, it is not perceptible. A mighty wind, an earthquake, and a raging fire in succession passed before the prophet, but God was not in them. After this cacophony of natural disasters, or "acts of God" as most of our insurance policies call them, came the sound of absolute silence. In this inexplicable and untranslatable negative space, the authors choose to tell us that the Creator of All Things is present.

Organic Ripening.

Discernment can look like the ripening of organic plant life.

When a complicated or controversial subject arises, and it is clear that agreement cannot be reached, the issue is often said to be "not yet ripe."

What is interesting is the assumption that the technology will mature, and that people of good will eventually find ways to work it out. Like the natural growth of a human or an animal, or the ripening of fruits and vegetables in the garden, the process takes place over time, and with proper nutrients provided.

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considering public, rostered ministry.) All expressions of Christian community should make room for, provide occasion and processes for discernment among all of God's people. Specifically in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, it is the intention of the Communal Discernment Task Force that practices of discernment would be leaven in the whole loaf that is our church in all of its expressions: congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization. Discernment at its best is done interdependently among the expressions of our church, nurturing our interdependent ecclesiology, emerging from hoped for ever growing and deepening levels of trust among the expressions of the church.

Communal discernment in the ELCA is not limited to the constituent expressions of our church. Our interdependence extends beyond our structures to member churches of the Lutheran World Federation and to our full communion and other ecumenical partners. Moreover, interfaith dialog is crucial for discernment practices in our current mission and global, multicultural context. Furthermore theological reflection undertaken in the light of human experience, with knowledge of human and other sciences, philosophy and other academic disciplines enriches the practice of discernment. In short, full and rich discernment involves a multiplicity of conversation partners. Faithful discernment practice embraces the African concept of *ubuntu*, that we have no existence apart from others. And in a global village, the "other" extends to the far reaches of the planet.

Building a culture for communal spiritual discernment will take real time and energy. It is not yet something Christians expect to do together. Recently 10 perceptive believers of truly good will watched 8 persons telling stories of both personal and congregational spiritual transformation. At the end, they could repeat the personal transformative moments they had heard but hadn't even noticed there were any stories of congregational, communal spiritual growth. As long as our vision of spirituality and discernment appears in personal terms, we will miss seeing its effects on our communities of faith. But with time, good practices and habits, and the action of the Holy Spirit, a culture of communal discernment can be created and nurtured.

Walking into a Better Future

Imagine a member of Trinity Lutheran choir's tenor section mowing his lawn on a Saturday afternoon. His neighbor, Ann, a single

Faithful discernment practice embraces the African concept of *ubuntu*, that we have no existence apart from others

And in a global village, the "other" extends to the far reaches of the planet

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mom living with her children and her gay brother and his partner, leans over the fence and calls to him. He stops mowing and goes to her, listening carefully to her problem, and then texts two friends. They arrive to help Ann make an emergency repair to the bathroom, providing support and respect for the dignity of this unconventional family.

The family invites the neighbor and his family and the two friends to their house for a barbeque on the deck, and even though those two friends have always opposed gay marriage, they come and eat together. The smell of the grill and the sound of laughter and jazz wafts out over the neighborhood.

Imagine a synod assembly considering a change to an existing practice regarding administration of a sacrament. The room seems divided among at least three options. The large assembly “dwells” in a Bible story, and each person listens to a stranger speaking freely about where their imagination was caught by the text, or about a question they’d like to ask a Bible scholar. Some of these pieces of conversation are reported back to the large group, allowing the time of dwelling to shape the next part of the work.

Individual discernment is taken up communally. And communal discernment respects the charisms (the gifts) of individual members of the body

Then the large group breaks into table groups of strangers who walk through a familiar ritual, answering the question “*What might God be up to in this issue for us?*” They act and speak as though they expect the Holy Spirit to show up and be a part of the conversation. They bring cultural values and their own *communal* and *personal* experience into brainstorming possible answers to the question. They take time to converse deeply, letting go of their agenda anxiety and simply relax with one another in the exchange of ideas and questions. Their posture is engaged but comfortable. Their tone is respectful. Their actions demonstrate concern not only for their tablemates but also for those not present in the conversation. When the conversation time is coming to a close, a skillful table leader gathers the key themes that have emerged. The table group thanks God for being there, for leading them.

The large group returns to plenary session and themes are shared, and a remarkable number of them are similar. There is (not yet) a single direction discernable, but some unity has come out of the previously diverse perspectives. Someone proposes that the assembly is not yet ready to decide a direction, but all celebrate the presence of the Holy Spirit in their midst and rejoice that they are one in this Spirit.

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Plans are made to continue discernment conversation on the emerging themes, so that, at a later meeting, the group might be able to share one clear vision of the direction towards which God is calling them.

Imagine a church council meeting to resolve a tough budget shortfall. (Many council members thought the purpose of a council was to make businesslike decisions for the good of the church and to have budget questions answered before the annual meeting.) Yet this year, there is not enough money or information to meet that goal or that deadline.

Instead of a perfunctory prayer before the meeting, the whole council listens to the lectionary text for that week, hearing the story and talking about it together. Then the Chair asks, "*What is God up to in this financial dilemma for us?*" Silence unfolds (and is welcomed). One member recalls a similar experience on a different issue which was beautifully resolved by employing prayer and deep listening to those most affected by the decision. It was considered by many in the congregation a true moment of spiritual discernment for that church.

Invitations are made to persons who will be affected by the lack of funds, and those persons are listened to, their comments made part of the record, and their worth appreciated. When the council meets again, those comments and subsequent learnings are brought into the conversation, and the council members take turns saying the difficult things they know must be said, knowing their fellow members will have a hard time with them, and yet, will accept them graciously.

Some keep testing the possible decision alongside the mission of the congregation, which they all know well. Prayer, silence, more speaking and prayer ensue, then a vote is taken. The council determines to share the process, the journey, and the outcome with the congregation immediately, even though it is now past the budget deadline. The congregation responds with words of gratitude for the council's living out the Gospel as it discerned God's continued call to the congregation. They celebrate the council's faithful and effective work.

Imagine a Churchwide Assembly considering some aspect of consecrating persons called into service in the church. Among the hundreds of delegates attending are candidates who seek this consecration. They are spread out into a great many of the tables in the room. Each table has someone who can lead different styles of

It is our hope to learn from other church bodies how to more effectively participate in the processes of communal discernment as we are creating a culture that gives space and time to the work of understanding God's will

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discernment conversation. Participants to whom these methods are new still contribute, and even people who are very familiar treat their fellow discerners with humility. No one makes fun of the process as weird or spooky, although some of the press covering the event report it so. When the group reconvenes in plenary, there is a sense in the room that something holy has happened, and yet there are many who are not yet convinced about the emerging direction the assembly might take. They are allowed to vote in such a way as to say, "I disagree but will not stand in the way of passage," or "I agree but urge a delay in implementation."

The assembly rejoices that it has been able to move forward and yet honor those who disagree, and they celebrate the work that has happened and the Spirit that has enabled it. The press cover the story including both (to them) the oddness of the process and the joy of the oneness, even in the remaining difference. As they interview a key leader, she tells them that this communal spiritual discernment is part of church life in every expression of the church, and that it is a mark of our identity as Christians, no matter the level of tension in the issue or division over possible outcomes. It is the way we are who we are as the Body of Christ.

The assembly rejoices that it has been able to move forward and yet honor those who disagree, and they celebrate the work that has happened and the Spirit that has enabled it

Discernment and the Stewardship of Mission

Communal discernment will help us in the church to become better stewards of our decision-making in assemblies and other arenas where decisions are made concerning our participation in God's mission in the world. There is no guarantee that our decisions will be better in any absolute sense, but a culture of communal discernment will encourage us to take better care of the community making the decisions.

Communal discernment may make us better stewards of time in that faithful discernment processes, while taking time, may lead to the kinds of decisions that may save time in the long term.

Communal discernment may help us be better stewards of our future. That is, faithful discernment processes may open us more fully to God's intended future and to live into that future more courageously. We are likewise called to be good stewards of communication in all its dimensions. Effective, full, forthright and loving communication makes for good and faithful discernment.

When it is all said and done, effective and faithful communal discernment will nurture our stewardship of the Gospel and our calling to live it and proclaim it to the world in mission

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Discernment helps us, in the power of the Spirit, to know our vocation in the world. When it is all said and done, effective and faithful communal discernment will nurture our stewardship of the Gospel and our calling to live it and proclaim it to the world in mission.

“The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world’s deep hunger meet.” (Frederick Buechner)

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Communal Discernment Task Force Members

Bishop Jon Anderson has learned about communal discernment as a farmer's son living in a small town, as an athlete playing team sports, serving on Bible Camp staffs, in the joy and complexity of marriage to artist, from aerospace and petroleum engineers in Houston Texas, in the experience of parenting three children who now are young adults, from many faithful and puzzling congregations, and most recently while serving as Bishop in Southwestern Minnesota Synod, ELCA.

Bishop Jessica Crist serves as Bishop of the Montana Synod, ELCA.

Dr. Katie Day is ordained in the Presbyterian Church USA and serves as the Charles A. Schieren Professor of Church and Society at Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia.

Dr. Pat Taylor Ellison believes that communal spiritual discernment is the way missional churches keep The Main Thing the main thing. She serves as Managing Director of Research for Church Innovations Institute in St. Paul, Minnesota.

Rev. Marcus Kunz serves as Executive for Discernment of Contextual and Theological Issues in the Office of the Presiding Bishop, ELCA.

Rev. Susan Langhauser serves as pastor of Advent Lutheran Church in Olathe, Kansas, and as Chair of Planning and Evaluation Committee for the ELCA Church Council.

Dr. Jonathan Linman is Bishop's Assistant for Formation in the Metropolitan New York Synod, ELCA. This position involves him in educational ministries and the candidacy process for discernment of those who will lead the church in public ministry. Pastor Linman's academic background is in Christian spiritual practices, and serves as an adjunct faculty member at The General Theological Seminary in New York City. He is the author of *Holy Conversation: Spirituality for Worship*.

Ms. Kathryn Lohre is the assistant director of the Pluralism Project at Harvard University and president-elect of the National Council of Churches USA.

Dr. Joel McKean writes, "To me, the evolution of this work in progress is more important than the product itself." He is President Emeritus of Bethany College, Lindsborg, Kansas, and a member of Epiphany Lutheran Church, Richmond, Virginia.

Dr. Peter T. Nash serves on the faculty of Wartburg College, Waverly, Iowa.

Prof. Hank Tkachuk serves on the faculty of Concordia College, Moorhead, Minnesota.

Ms. Suzanne Gibson Wise (Task Force Chair) has seen what the Holy Spirit can do through communal discernment in her work and in helping other social ministry organizations do strategic planning. She serves as Executive Director of Lutheran Family Services of the Carolinas.

APPENDIX A: One Congregation's Experience

A summary of discussions and lessons learned

Each session began with Dwelling in the Word using the above scripture. Small groups of two or three persons discussed their reaction to the reading. Because of the time limitation of meeting between worship services (45 min), we did not spend the desired amount of time in this practice, but it still was a productive experience.

After introducing the background of our task force and some of our recommendations for the last Churchwide Assembly, people felt free to express their thoughts. This first phase was typical, I think, where one brings personal emotions, agenda and biases forward. The trick here is to listen to all without interjecting rebuttals or objections. The idea of listening in an attempt to respect the speaker and comprehend the message was used throughout and served us well.

Subsequent discussions were lively and interesting as we followed, without direction or prompting, much of the path that our task force has taken. Although much of the early discussion centered on communications, the emphasis shifted to how God speaks to us through scripture, the importance of prayer, ways to invite and welcome the Holy Spirit, and the importance of making a distinction between discerning the will of God and decision making. The phrase, "...renewing your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God..." Romans 12:2 was helpful in focusing on the prerequisite (my word) for discernment rather the act itself.

There was general agreement that it is difficult to label a vote taken by a Churchwide Assembly as discerning the will of God by the majority, thus implying that the minority did not. This led to a discussion of validation (similar to the Presbyterian model), where failure to validate the decision would have the issue sent back to the body (Church Council or Council of Bishops) that submitted it to the assembly.

There is interest in continuing this discussion as an adult (not restricted to adults) forum during the rest of the year. The suggested study guide, mentioned in our conference call, would provide a needed foundation for discussion in our congregations and would be well received.

Purpose

To consider communal discernment in expressions of the Church

Place

*Epiphany Lutheran Church
Richmond, Virginia*

Participants

Invited members of the congregation (varied attendance 6-10)

Materials

Bibles

Scripture passages

*Philippians 1:27;
Philippians 2:5-11;
Acts 15:1-25;
Romans 12:2*

Sessions: 5

APPENDIX B: Dwelling in the Word

Here are the steps for dwelling in the Word:

1. Start with Philippians 1:27, 2:5-11, knowing that at some point, you may want to select your own passage, a story that is related to the story of your group's work. But start with Philippians 1:27, 2:5-11. It is a good piece for discernment together.
2. Have Bibles available at every meeting so that the story can be read by different people each time you meet. Or make copies of the passage for everyone.
3. When your group assembles, be sure you set aside at least 20 minutes for this activity. Begin your meeting with one person reading this passage aloud to the group. Then allow some silence to unfold as people let the words have their impact.
4. Next, instruct folks in this way:

Find a person in the group you know least well (we call this person a "reasonably friendly-looking stranger").

Listen to that person as he or she tells you what they heard in the passage. They may mention something they'd never heard before, something odd or something comforting, or something about which they'd like to ask a Bible scholar.

Listen well, because your job will be to report to the rest of the group what your partner has said, not what you yourself said. Some people even take notes to help them focus and remember.

5. Then, turn folks loose with their partners for 6-10 minutes. Notice how they are paying attention. When you draw them back together to report what they have heard, ask for what they learned from their partners.

Now, wrestle together as a group with what God might be up to in the passage for your group on that day.

Philippians 1:27, 2:5-11

1:27 "Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel.

2:5-11 "Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness.

And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death — even death on a cross.

Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

APPENDIX C: Preliminary Recommendations for the Churchwide Assembly

These recommendations are in no particular order or priority, as the use of some of them might preclude others. They are submitted to enable the process of deliberation and follow the guidelines previously mentioned to be:

- a. supportive of those who have not yet arrived at a decision;
- b. fair in representing multiple perspectives; and
- c. open to the influence of the Holy Spirit.

First, we would like to affirm the discernment practices that were adopted for the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly and sharpen some of those practices as we move toward future churchwide assemblies. Specifically, we affirm the use of prayer partners, Bible study, and table discussions.

The use of general prayers for discernment that are open to all outcomes are important enough for us to recommend that there be no “free” prayers during deliberations. We suggest that a group be appointed to write prayers to be used throughout the deliberations without a specific order of use. These prayers might also come from *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*. This would allow the random assignment of prayers to avoid any “position” on items on the table. Some have felt that “free” prayer has meant an opportunity for a veiled form of speech to influence responses to the issue on the floor. This method of prayer use should eliminate that concern.

Another prayer option divides the room into sections. These sections could stand and gather for “local” prayer. Again, prayers should be provided for the groups to avoid the partisan concerns noted above. One possibility suggests that the small group prayers are used in a rotation, so that all are praying the same set of prayers but at different times. This might reinforce the idea of diversified unity.

We recommend the retention of Robert’s Rules at this time, but further request a consideration of methods for percentage approval voting on an experimental basis; perhaps using “test cases” on issues NOT being decided at this assembly or as a method of rapid evaluation.

Examples of these methods are:

1. Give voting members a number of votes—five, for example—which they can use all on one side, portioned out among the choices, or not at all, to indicate dissatisfaction with all alternatives.
2. Provide voting members with a range of colored cards from red to green so that they might indicate their relative “warmth” or “coolness” to the point being discussed.

Technology should be employed wherever possible to increase engagement, with appropriate concern for the non-technical participants. For example:

1. We recommend consideration of utilizing text messages to a dedicated number for questions during deliberation; perhaps even projected so the assembly can see them and provide feedback on which, if any, they would like to see answered.

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2. Or, explore the option of using a projection format like those used in webinars where questions are streamed next to the projected images of the speaker.

Likewise, we propose that some pre-assembly polling of the delegates be attempted to see where questions or potential bottlenecks might exist. This might be done on a blog or a FAQ page so that questions could be identified before the assembly. If subject areas where people are not clear about the facts or consequences of a resolution could be addressed in advance, it would increase voting member understanding as well as reducing the time of deliberation.

Since Robert's Rules often provoke anxiety among those who are less familiar with its intricacies, we propose some modifications and cautions in regard to the use of parliamentary procedure. We do, however, commend the continuing work of educating people concerning the benefits of Robert's Rules and the rules proposed for the assembly.

We believe that the assembly should limit the use of "calling the question on all matters" to assure that there is always debate on at least the main motion of all controversial issues. Trust can be reduced when voices are left unheard, especially when there is a perception that the process has been manipulated by those with the most parliamentary expertise.

We suggest that use of the "committee of the whole" be carefully considered in regard to controversial issues. Some have seen this as a tool which serves special interests, especially those related to changing a policy. If this approach is to be used, we suggest that people on all sides of the issue should be included in a discussion preceding the use of the parliamentary tool of "committee of the whole." Such work in advance of table conversation would serve to increase a variety of perspectives and build trust. In these conversations especially, a third microphone for people who are neither for or against the motion, but seeking information or clarification, might be used to give voice to those who have not decided their position on an issue.

When to postpone a decision indefinitely is a critical question. We need criteria to help leaders ascertain when this tool is appropriate. Certainly some kind of training about process and the difference between necessary and optional decisions is important.

To conclude these recommendations, we request that whether these methods are employed at the upcoming 2011 Churchwide Assembly or subsequently, we encourage a rapid evaluation of newly implemented methods so there is opportunity for an adjustment by the conveners. Perhaps there could be a show of cards and/or a place for short written comments (possibly at the tables,) as a way to make adjustments even during the assembly.

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The Vision of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

I. Sources

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) seeks in its faith and life "to manifest the unity given to the people of God by living together in the love of Christ and by joining with other Christians in prayer and action to express and preserve the unity which the Spirit gives" (ELCA Constitution 4.02.f.). What follows first surveys authoritative sources as a basis for the ecumenism of "joining with other Christians," then sketches a history of Lutheran ecumenical experience to suggest continuity with predecessor churches.

A. Scriptural, Confessional and Constitutional Foundations

For its participation in the ecumenical movement, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is dependent on its understanding of Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions as set forth in its constitution.

Scriptural Witnesses

The Church draws upon the rich, diverse language of Scripture for its understanding of ecumenism. One major theme is the unity of all peoples. The announcement of unity begins with the narrative of one God creating and ruling the whole universe and all peoples (Genesis 1-11). The building of the tower of Babel led to the fragmentation of humankind. In response God's promise to Abraham that "in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed" (Genesis 12:3) stressed the gracious will of God for all people. God intended Israel to carry out his will. The servant sings: "the Lord says, who formed me in the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob back to him, and that Israel might be gathered to him...he says, 'It is a too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the survivors of Israel; I will give you as a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach the end of the earth'" (Isaiah 49:5-6; cf., Isaiah 42:6). Therefore, Israel's psalmists and prophets call the whole earth and all nations to unite in worshiping, praising, and proclaiming the God of glory, righteousness, salvation, and blessing (Psalms 96-100, Isaiah 45:22-23, 55:1-5, 60:1-3).

The unity of God is the starting point and the ending point of significant New Testament passages, which speak about the unity of the church. In Ephesians 4, Paul's list "One Lord, one faith, one baptism" (v.5) culminates in a doxological celebration of the "one God and Father of us all, who is above all and through all and in all" (v. 6; cf., Philippians 2:10-11). The purpose of ministry in all its variety (vv. 11-12) is to bring the church to unity of faith and knowledge of the Son of God (v. 13). It is, therefore, a ministry, which must attend to issues of truth (vv. 14-15a), for growing in the unity in Christ (vv. 15b-16).

The prayer of Jesus for his disciples in John 17, on the eve of his death on the cross, clearly links with truth and mission. "Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth" (v. 17) leads into "as you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world" (v. 18). Then Jesus prays "that they all may be one; even as you, Father, are in me, and I in you" (v. 21a). The unity of the disciples depends on unity with God, as Jesus says to the father, "that they may also be in us." And unity has its goal in mission "that the world may know that you have sent me" (v. 21b). As understood in Christ's prayer, unity is given to the church, not for the sake of the church, but that the church might give itself in mission to the world for the sake of the Gospel. The church realizes its unity in its actions, not simply via theological discussion.

Other references in John show that the disciples, one with Christ and one with each other, are branches on the vine [Christ], which are to "bear much fruit" (15:5). There shall be "one flock" (10:16), when Jesus brings the "other sheep," because there is "one shepherd" who died "to gather into one" the scattered children of God (11:50-52). Paul speaks of the church as "one body in Christ" (Romans 12:5) or "the body of Christ" (1 Corinthians 12:27) to stress the variety of gifts present in the members of the church for the good of all. Colossians 1:18 and Ephesians 1:22-23 stress the lordship of Jesus over the church, his body. Thus the church gets its unity from the "one Lord" (Ephesians 4:5) under whom it lives. When the writings in the New Testament are compared, a variety of expressions of unity and structures emerges. There is no single pattern of ministry or structure. The New Testament reminds us, too, that disputes and divisions were to be found in the earliest period of the church's existence (e.g., Acts 6:1, 15:1-29; Galatians 2:1-16; 1 Corinthians 1:10-17, 3:1-4). Indeed on several occasions divisive teachings and false teachers were condemned (e.g., Romans 16:17; Philippians 3:2-20; 1 John 2:18-20, 4:1-4; 2 John; Jude).

Those who disrupt the unity of the church are held to be culpable as wrong-doers (Galatians 2:11-20), who are "not acting consistently with the truth of the Gospel" (v.14; cf., 2:5), need to return to the truth of the Gospel and faith in Christ as the essentials for Christian fellowship. The Gospel raises truth-claims that demand true and faithful

proclamation and action that corresponds to the Gospel. Thus, only in the Gospel can genuine unity be achieved. The Scriptures use other significant language to describe the church. Paul speaks of "community" (or "partnership," "sharing," "fellowship") with the Philippians in the proclamation of the Gospel (Philippians 1:5, 7; 4:14, 15). The community in the Gospel, created by the Gospel, impelled the Philippians to support Paul financially as he preached the Gospel. "Sharing" ("fellowship") in the blood and the body of Christ produced the one body (1 Corinthians 10:16-17), while not recognizing the Lord's body in the church causes divisions (1 Corinthians 11:17-33). Paul's concluding benediction in 2 Corinthians 13:13 makes clear that community of the Holy Spirit is based on grace in Christ Jesus and the love of God.

Christians believe that Jesus both announced and brought the kingdom of God (Mark 1:13-14). Yet they pray "Your (the Father's) kingdom come" in the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:10; Luke 11:2). The New Testament constantly moves between the gift given with the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus and the reality that the church at any given time looks to the return of Jesus for the achievement of justice, unity of the people of God, and the full and perfect realization of communion with God. This hope compels the church to strive to manifest this unity and communion in the here and now.

The Scriptures present a realistic picture of both the human proclivity toward disunity and the unity that is possible through oneness in Christ. The Bible tells us what God wills, and warns us of the ever present threats to a mutually accepting Christian fellowship. Then, as now, it is necessary to pray "May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with Jesus Christ, so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Romans 15:5-6) and to be reminded, "welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God" (Romans 15:7).

Lutheran Confessions

The concern for the unity of the church articulated in Scripture enjoyed considerable prominence in the first centuries of the history of the church. It was expressed in the Apostles' Creed and especially in the Nicene Constantinopolitan Creed of A.D. 381. These ecumenical symbols, along with the Athanasian Creed, were included in the Book of Concord in 1580. Their inclusion, as well as the first articles of the Augsburg Confession, shows the desire of the Lutheran Reformers to identify with the biblical and patristic tradition.

The Lutheran Confessions were the products of an effort at evangelical reform, which, contrary to its intention, resulted in divisions within the Western church. As evangelical writings, they stress justification by grace through faith alone as the criterion for judging all church doctrine and life. As catholic writings, they assert that the Gospel is essential to the church for being one, holy, catholic, and apostolic. Their evangelical and catholic aspects are complementary, not contradictory. When a particular misinterpretation of the catholic tradition conflicts with the Gospel, the classic Lutheran confessional choice was and remains for the Gospel. They are concerned for the oneness of Christ's church under the Gospel, the preservation of the true catholic heritage, and the renewal of the church as a whole. That the Confessions have such concerns can be seen from the following:

1. They always point to Scripture, with its stress on teaching the truth of the Gospel—which they see as the only sufficient basis for Christian unity—as normative. Because of this evangelical stress they also point to Scripture's confession of one Lord and one church as basic for understanding Christian unity.
2. They begin with the ancient ecumenical creeds—Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian—as "the three chief symbols." Lutherans always have a common basis with those who share these creeds and the Bible.
3. They draw upon the theological reflection of the early church leaders in East and West, and thus share a resource with those who also know and honor the theologians of the patristic era.
4. While many of the Lutheran Confessions were hammered out in the struggles of the sixteenth century and dwell on the differences with the Roman Catholics, the Reformed, the Anabaptists, and even some Lutherans, they also contained, whether specifically noted or not, many points of basic agreement with such groups.
5. The primary Lutheran confessional document, the Augsburg Confession of 1530, claims to be a fully catholic as well as an evangelical expression of Christian faith. Part I, which lists the chief articles of faith, states that the Confession is grounded clearly in Scripture and does not depart from the universal Christian [that is, catholic] church. The confessors at Augsburg asked only for freedom to preach and worship in accordance with the Gospel. They were willing, upon recognition of the legitimacy of these reforms, to remain in fellowship with those who did not share every theological formulation or reforming practice [Augsburg Confession, Preface, Article XV, Article XXVIII and Conclusion]. It is in this historical context that Article VII is to be understood: "for the true unity of the church it is enough (*satis est*) to agree concerning the teaching of the Gospel and the administration of the sacraments." The confessors allowed for diversity of opinion and discussion of many other matters (see Smalcald Articles, Part III, introduction).

The historical situation is now different. Today the western church is divided into hundreds of denominations; moreover, in the nineteenth century the urgency of missionary proclamation underscored the scandal of a divided church. Such developments challenge the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to strive toward fuller expressions of unity with as many denominations as possible.

Lutherans may differ in evaluating the difference between the sixteenth century and the present. Some Lutherans in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America hold that unity was already broken when the confessors presented the Augsburg Confession in 1530; others hold that the confessors were attempting to maintain a unity that still existed. But all agree that the "satis est" of Augsburg Confession VII established an ecumenical principle as valid today as it was in 1530. Augsburg Confession VII continues to be ecumenically liberating because of its claim that the truth of the Gospel is the catholic faith and is sufficient for the true unity of the church.

In today's denominationalism the satis est provides an ecumenical resource and basis to move to growing levels of fellowship [i.e., communion] among divided churches. Article VII remains fundamental for Lutheran ecumenical activity; its primary meaning is that only those things that convey salvation, justification by grace through faith, are allowed to be signs and constitutive elements of the church. Yet, for all its cohesiveness and precision, Article VII does not present a complete doctrine of the church. It is not in the first instance an expression of a falsely understood ecumenical openness and freedom from church order, customs, and usages in the church. What it says is essential for understanding the unity of the church, but does not exhaust what must be said. The primary meaning of Article VII is that only those things that convey salvation, justification by grace through faith, are allowed to be signs and constitutive elements of the church. It is also necessary to recognize the evangelical and ecclesiological implications of the missionary situation of the global church in our time, which did not exist in the 16th century.

Article VII of the Augsburg Confession continues to be ecumenically freeing because of its insistence that agreement in the Gospel suffices for Christian unity. As Lutherans seek to enter into fellowship without insisting on doctrinal or ecclesiastical uniformity, they place an ecumenical emphasis on common formulation and expression of theological consensus on the Gospel. There is room for recognizing, living and experiencing fellowship within the context of seeking together larger theological agreement, of constantly searching critically for the theological truth of the Gospel to be proclaimed together in the present critical time of our world.

6. Other Lutheran confessional documents, though differing in nature and purpose from each other, are consistent with the Augsburg Confession on church unity. For example:
 - a. The Small Catechism teaches in a simple form the evangelical and catholic faith, so that this faith may be known by all the people of God.
 - b. The Formula of Concord of 1577 reflects, in detail, inner Lutheran theological debate and disagreement, and suggests, in spite of its emphasis on rejection and condemnation of errors and contrary doctrine, the possibility of resolving and reconciling differences "under the guidance of the Word of God."

Rooted in this biblical and confessional understanding as stated in its Confession of Faith (ELCA Constitution, Chapter 2), the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America identifies itself with this vision of a greater wholeness of Christ's people.

Chapter 4 of the constitution, "Statement of Purpose," declares that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is committed both to Lutheran unity and to Christian unity (4.03.d. and 4.03.f.). The understanding of ecumenism in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America embraces more than Lutheran denominations. This church rejoices in the movement toward agreement in the Gospel with other churches of differing historical and theological heritages. The degree of openness on the part of others and our own confessional commitment have a bearing upon the developing relations and growth in unity with "all those who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours" (1 Corinthians 1:2).

B. Ecumenical Heritage

The twentieth century has brought continuous, active, and official involvement of churches, including predecessors of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, in the quest to overcome Christian division and, by God's Spirit, to express the visible unity of Christ's people. The ecumenical movement needs to be seen as the stirring of Christians under the Spirit's prompting to disclose to those around them God's call for the church to be one. This movement is, therefore, much more than conferences and meetings of councils of churches, although such events serve as landmarks for the ecumenical movement.

Prior to World War II, Lutherans from the churches of northern Europe and some from North America were present at World Missionary Conferences, a major impetus to the modern ecumenical movement, as well as Faith and Order Conferences and Life and Work Conferences. It is true that American Lutherans were initially hesitant and cautious, with some remaining more guarded, because of their concern for confessional truth, while others with the same concern for confessional truth were becoming more open to ecumenical participation. The conferences eventually became part of a more continuous and unified organization, the World Council of Churches.

Council of Churches

By 1948, North American Lutherans took a prominent place in the formation of the World Council of Churches and successfully insisted that the representation from churches be determined in a major way according to confessional families. Within a decade, almost all of the antecedents to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America held membership in the council. At that time Lutherans made up the largest confessional group in the council. The council has given significant attention to issues of Christian unity, mission, and service.

In varying degrees the uniting churches and their members have participated in state and local councils of churches, and in the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. Such involvement brought greater understanding of the opportunities and challenges of ecumenical activity.

Ecumenical Dialogues

By 1950, many North American Lutherans were fully committed to ecumenical partnership around the world and in this country. In the next decade, they were involved actively in the development of ecumenical dialogues. After 1965, these dialogues received new stimulus from the entry of the Roman Catholic Church into the ecumenical movement, an event marked and ratified by the Second Vatican Council. Other dialogues were continued or initiated with Reformed and Presbyterians, Episcopalians, United Methodists, Orthodox, Baptists, and conservative evangelicals. Participation in the dialogues by the predecessor bodies of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America was unified through the National Lutheran Council, later the Lutheran Council in the U.S.A., and the Lutheran World Federation. Lutheran unity and Christian unity were progressing together.

By 1982, when official approval was given for a commission to plan the union that produced the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, ecumenical developments were expanding rapidly

Lutheran World Federation

The membership and active role of the uniting churches in the Lutheran World Federation produced new ecumenical perceptions. At the assembly in 1984, the member churches of the federation declared themselves to be in altar and pulpit fellowship. The churches of the federation declared themselves to be a communion of churches. This declaration may have profound effects on the nature of the federation itself and on the churches' understandings of their relationships to one another and to nonmember churches. The 1984 assembly also adopted the following understanding of unity, which is compatible with the vision set forth in the accompanying document statement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:

The true unity of the church, which is the unity of the body of Christ and participates in the unity of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, is given in and through proclamation of the Gospel in Word and Sacrament. This unity is expressed as a communion in the common and at the same time, multiform confession of one and the same apostolic faith. It is a communion in Holy Baptism and in the eucharistic meal, a communion in which the ministries exercised are recognized by all as expressions of the ministry instituted by Christ in his church. It is a communion where diversities contribute to fullness and are no longer barriers to unity. It is a committed fellowship, able to make common decisions and to act in common.

The diversity present in this communion rises out of the differing cultural and ethnic contexts in which the one church of Christ lives out its mission and out of the number of church traditions in which the apostolic faith has been maintained, transmitted, and lived throughout the centuries. In recognizing these diversities as expressions of the one apostolic faith and the one catholic church, traditions are changed, antagonisms overcome, and mutual condemnations lifted. The diversities are reconciled and transformed into a legitimate and indispensable multiformity within the one body of Christ.

This communion lives out its unity in confessing the one apostolic faith. It assembles in worship and in intercession for all people. It is active in common witness to Jesus Christ; in advocacy for the weak, poor, and oppressed; and in striving for peace, justice, and freedom. It is ordered in all its components in conciliar structures and actions. It is in

need of constant renewal and is at the same time, a foretaste of that communion, which the Lord will at the end of time bring about in his kingdom.

American Lutherans were encouraged by the ecumenical participation in the celebration of the 450th anniversary of the Augsburg Confession in 1980 and the 500th anniversary of the birth of Martin Luther in 1983.

Positions of the Uniting Churches

In 1978, The American Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church in America approved "A Statement on Communion Practices." Section II, Recommendations for Practice, adopted by both churches in convention, included a subsection on intercommunion. This sub-section provided guidance for eucharistic sharing in Lutheran settings and ecumenical gatherings.

At its eleventh biennial convention in 1982, the Lutheran Church in America approved as its official position the document, "Ecumenism: A Lutheran Commitment." This statement became a charter for a deliberate program of ecumenical study and activity. Three years later, the Church Council of The American Lutheran Church approved a similar document for the church entitled, "Ecumenical Perspective and Guidelines." Thus, two of the uniting churches had recent and strong statements expressing their rationale for ecumenical involvement.

In 1982, all three predecessor churches entered into the "Lutheran-Episcopal Agreement" with the Episcopal Church in the United States. After years of bilateral dialogues, these churches were able to enter into a new level of fellowship that provided for mutual recognition of churches, joint prayer and study, joint commitment to evangelism and mission, interim sharing of the Eucharist, future dialogue, and a commitment to work for full communion. In 1988, this agreement entered into the life of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

When the third series of Lutheran-Reformed dialogues reported to the churches in 1984, its recommendations confronted the uniting churches with critical questions. Acceptance of this dialogue report, An Invitation to Action, was uneven. All three uniting churches did recognize the Reformed Church in America and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as churches in which the Gospel is preached, and committed themselves to joint projects and at least limited common worship. The Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches and The American Lutheran Church in 1986 entered into a new relationship with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the Reformed Church in America. The Lutheran Church in America in 1986 took action in conformity with, but not exceeding, a "Statement on Common Practices" of 1987. With the formation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the relationships established in 1986 ended. The commitments to fuller relationships with the Reformed Church in America and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), made in 1986 by the three uniting churches, were left as a challenge to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

All these events indicate that official reception of the results from dialogues has become a major concern as reports from the dialogues ask the sponsoring churches to take specific actions. Such requests highlight the need for the churches to take seriously the reception of the work of the dialogues into their life and faith.

During the Formation of the ELCA

Between 1982 and the constituting of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the three bishops of the uniting churches, and other leaders, formed relationships with major church leaders throughout the world. These associations had antecedents in earlier years, but the deliberateness and intensity of the contacts in the 1980s formed new levels of trust, commitment to the unity of the church, and potential for new ecumenical advances. In 1983, the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches transmitted to the churches for their response and reception the document, Baptism, Eucharist, and Ministry. Two of the churches forming the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America made official responses to this text of convergences. Responses from churches around the world have demonstrated an overwhelming interest in what has become a major ecumenical process that will continue.

The years prior to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America represent a period of rich ecumenical growth that was given to the merged church as it began its life.

II. A Declaration of Ecumenical Commitment: A Policy Statement of the ELCA

A. The Basis: A Confessional Church that is Evangelical, Catholic and Ecumenical

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is a confessional church, as Chapter 2 of its constitution ("The

Confession of Faith") makes clear. Its confessions teach that community in Christ, proclaimed in the Gospel and the sacraments, is the basis for unity in the Church. The Augsburg Confession, Article VII, stresses this when it says that "For the true unity of the Church it is enough to agree concerning the teaching of the Gospel and the administration of the sacraments."

The unity of the church, as it is proclaimed in the Scriptures, is a gift and goal of God in Christ Jesus. Ecumenism is the joyous experience of the unity of Christ's people and the serious task of expressing that unity visibly and structurally to advance the proclamation of the Gospel for the blessing of humankind. Through participation in ecumenical activity, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America seeks to be open in faith to the work of the Spirit, so as to manifest more fully oneness in Christ.

In relation to other churches, because of its confession, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, under the Lordship of Jesus Christ, understands itself and engages in God's mission as a church that is evangelical, that is catholic, and that is ecumenical. Its confessional character is not opposed to its ecumenical commitment, but necessitates it as a consequence of the Gospel.

Such a description is intended to aid this church in its ecumenical self-understanding. It is not to be seen as a replacement of the traditional marks of the Church as "one, holy, catholic, and apostolic" to which this church is committed by its confessional subscription. Nor is it a list of characteristics required of other churches, prior to this church entering into ecumenical relations with them.

To be evangelical means to be committed to the Gospel of Jesus Christ (Romans 1:16; Mark 1:1). The Church is created by the Gospel. The Gospel is more than human recollection of, or our confession about, what God has done in the past, in Israel, and uniquely in Jesus of Nazareth (2 Corinthians 5:19a). It is proclamation with the power of God's deed in Christ and in his resurrection (2 Corinthians 5:19b-21), an event that opens to us the future of God's eternal love, who through the crucified and risen Christ justifies us, reconciles us, and makes us new creatures (2 Corinthians 5:17-18). This Gospel is unconditional in that it announces the sure and certain promise of God who in Christ justifies the ungodly by grace through faith apart from works, and without partiality intends this for all people. This Gospel is eschatological, as it announces the destruction of the last enemy, death, when Christ hands over the kingdom to God, the Father, and when God will be all in all (1 Corinthians 15:24-28). This announcement provides a vision to the Church that informs and guides its ecumenical activity.

To be catholic means to be committed to the fullness of the apostolic faith and its credal, doctrinal articulation for the entire world (Romans 10:8b-15, 18b; Mark 13:10; Matthew 28:19-20). This word, "catholic," declares that the Church is a community, rooted in the Christ event, that extends through all places and time. It acknowledges that God has gathered a people, and continues to do so, into a community made holy in the Gospel, which it receives and proclaims. This community, a people under Christ, shares the catholic faith in the Triune God, honors and relies upon the Holy Scriptures as authoritative source and norm of the Church's proclamation, receives Holy Baptism and celebrates the Lord's Supper, includes an ordained ministry, and professes one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church.

To be ecumenical means to be committed to the oneness to which God calls the world in the saving gift of Jesus Christ. It also means to recognize the brokenness of the Church in history and the call of God, especially in this century, to heal this disunity of Christ's people. By the Holy Spirit, God enlivens the Church to this ministry. In striving to be ecumenical, this church:

1. seeks to manifest the unity that God wills for the Church in a future that is open to God's guidance;
2. seeks to understand and value its past, its history, and its traditions in all their varied richness as gracious gifts of God, which are incomplete themselves as it finally moves toward unity in Christ;
3. contributes and learns, not by attempting to reconstitute the past, but by moving toward the manifestation of unity in Christ and thus toward other Christians;
4. commits itself to share with others in the worship of the Triune God, to the task of proclaiming the Gospel to all, and to share with others in lifting up its voice and its hands to promote justice, relieve misery, and reconcile the estranged in a suffering world;
5. calls upon its members to repent of ways in which they have contributed to disunity among Christ's people by omission and commission;
6. urges each of its members to pray, both within their own church and with members of other churches, for the unity of the Church to be concerned with new attitudes, to be ready to sacrifice nonessentials, and to take action, including the reception, where possible, of ecumenical agreements, all for the unity of the Church;

7. recognizes that the burden of proof rests with the resistance to unity in spite of agreement in the Gospel;
- and 8. seeks to express oneness in Christ in diverse models of unity, consistent with the Gospel and mission of the Church.

B. The Stance of the ELCA

The Confession of Faith of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (Constitution, Chapter 2), may be described as evangelical, catholic, and ecumenical. The Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, is confessed, with special reference to the redeeming work of the Second Person. The canonical Scriptures are accepted as the inspired Word of God and the norm for the Church's proclamation and life. The three ecumenical creeds are accepted as true declarations of the faith. The Augsburg Confession is accepted as a true witness to the Gospel and as a basis for unity, while the other Lutheran Confessions are accepted as valid interpretations of the faith. The language in this chapter deliberately reflects an ancient, catholic, and ecumenical ordering of authorities. The particularly Lutheran writings are regarded as true witnesses and valid interpretations of earlier statements that possess higher authority. The chapter closes with a confession of the Gospel as the power of God to create and sustain the Church's mission. Thus the Gospel, "Christ alone," is the key to understanding Scripture, creeds, and confessions.

These evangelical, catholic, and ecumenical characteristics of this church's confession of faith find further expression in those chapters of the constitution that deal with "Nature of the Church" (Chapter 3), "Statement of Purpose" (Chapter 4), and "Principles of Organization" (Chapter 5).

This church is bold to reach out in several directions simultaneously to all those with whom it may find agreement in the Gospel. It gives priority to no Christian denomination or group. Therefore, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, as a member of the worldwide Lutheran communion, does not commit itself only to pan-Lutheranism, or to pan-Protestantism, or to Roman Catholic rapprochement, or to developing relationships with the Orthodox.

Even more boldly, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America takes its Lutheran theological heritage so seriously that it believes God's word of justification excludes the patterns of ecclesiastical self-justification, which have resulted from the polemical heritage of the sixteenth century. The first word, which the Church speaks ecumenically, may well be a word of self-criticism, a word against itself, because we are called to be seekers of a truth that is larger than all of us and that condemns our parochialism, imperialism, and self-preoccupation. If it can speak such a word of self-criticism, the Church will be free to reject a triumphalist and magisterial understanding of itself and cultivate instead an understanding of itself as a community of mission and witness that seeks to be serviceable to the in-breaking of the reign of God. In this way the ecumenical vision of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America will not be dominated by attention to our past theological controversies and divisions. It will focus rather on present and future theological reflection and missiological action.

C. Forms of Ecumenism

Ecumenism must permeate, inform, and vitalize every aspect of this church's faith and life, because it is bound to the Gospel and mission in our world. It demonstrates the necessity for the Church to be interdependent and inclusive. The interdependence among the entities within this church and the inclusiveness practiced by this church in the midst of divisions in society are significant manifestations of the unity of the Church. Therefore, this church is committed to the participation of women and men in its ordained ministry and organizational structures. This should be evident to those within the Church as well as those outside as the Church pursues its mission. An extremely close relationship exists between the unity of the Church and its mission (John 17:20-23).

From its evangelical, catholic, and ecumenical stance, with an obviously close relationship with mission, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is free to seek such forms of structure, ministry, and common action as will provide true witness to Christian faith and effective expression to God's love in Christ. Such ecumenism will characterize this church in all manifestations of its life. As congregations and synods take initiative in ecumenical activities, the whole church may learn from them. At the same time as this whole church provides policy guidance to congregations, it becomes the channel through which each congregation may minister worldwide in the whole household of faith.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America engages in local, regional, national, and world councils of churches and other ecumenical agencies. In these relationships the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is guided by the evangelical and the representative principles.

The evangelical principle means that official membership will be established only with such ecumenical organizations as are composed exclusively of churches, which confess Jesus Christ as divine Lord and Savior.

The representative principle means that in ecumenical organizations the official representatives of churches should never be seated on a parity with individuals who represent only themselves or who represent organizations which are less than churches.

Exceptions to the practice of these principles, because of local conditions, may be made by a synod in consultation with the Office for Ecumenical Affairs of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is an active participant in bilateral and multilateral dialogues, which it does not view as competitive, but as mutually re-enforcing means for ecumenical advance. At the same time it seeks other means, such as joint efforts at mission, religious instruction, and use of the mass media to grow in understanding and agreement with other churches.

These efforts, including joint study, prayer, and worship, must be found in the various organizational expressions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and other churches. All these activities need to be encouraged and to inform each other. Local ecumenism, with its synodical and regional forms, provides a rich area of progress and challenge for the unity of the Church. It has much to teach and much to learn from the national and international ecumenical movement. The primary experience of ecumenism for most Christians is through their congregations, local gatherings of believers that relate to other local gatherings of other traditions, which share the same Lord, the same Baptism, the same mission.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is part of a larger Lutheran community. It lives in altar and pulpit fellowship with the other member churches in a communion expressed in the Lutheran World Federation. While its ecumenical action must be its own, it has responsibility to those churches with which it enjoys close relations to inform them of its ecumenical actions and to consider their comments and responses.

Ecumenism has as its focus and goal clarity of understanding among Christians and a greater realization of unity among Christ's people. As such it is closely related to the mission of the Gospel to all the world. It should not be confused with the important but distinct responsibility for the Church to enter into conversations and reach greater understanding with people of other faiths. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America does engage, in a variety of ways, in this inter-faith work and needs in the future a separate, official statement to describe its commitments and aspirations in this area. When that statement is prepared, special attention must be given to the distinctiveness of Judaism.

D. Goal and Stages of Relationships

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is an active participant in the ecumenical movement, because of its desire for Christian unity. It seeks full communion as its goal, i.e., the fullest or most complete actualization of unity possible before the parousia with all those churches that confess the Triune God. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, both as a church and as a member of the wider communion of churches in the Lutheran World Federation, seeks to reach this goal, in order to express the unity of the Church and to carry out better the mission of the Church in proclamation and action.

Full communion, a gift from God, is founded on faith in Jesus Christ. It is a commitment to truth in love and a witness to God's liberation and reconciliation. Full communion is visible and sacramental. It includes all that Lutherans have meant by "pulpit and altar fellowship," but goes beyond that historical formulation because of the obligatory mission given by the Gospel. Full communion is obviously a goal toward which divided churches, under God's Spirit, are striving, but which has not been reached. It points to the complete communion and unity of all Christians that will come with the arrival of the Kingdom of God at the parousia of Christ, the Lord. It is also a goal in need of continuing definition. It is rooted in agreement on essentials and allows diversity in nonessentials.

In most cases, however, the churches will not be able to move directly from their disunity to a full expression of their God-given unity, but can expect to experience a movement from disunity to unity that may include one or more of the following stages of relationships.

1. **Ecumenical Cooperation.** Here the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America enters into ecumenical relations with church bodies, councils of churches, or other ecumenical agencies based on the evangelical and representative principles. Since these principles relate specifically to ecclesiastical or ecumenical groups, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America must state its principles for relationships with people of other faiths (e.g., interfaith dialogues, cooperative, caritative efforts or advocacy, etc.) in a separate document.
2. **Bilateral and Multilateral Dialogues.** Here the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America enters into dialogues, with varying mandates, with those who agree with the evangelical and representative principles, confess the

Triune God, and share a commitment to "ecumenical conversion." This conversion or repentance includes openness to new possibilities under the guidance of God's Spirit.

3. Preliminary Recognition. Here the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America can be involved on a church-to-church basis in eucharistic sharing and cooperation, without exchangeability of ministers.
 - a. One stage requires 1., and 2., above, plus partial, mutual recognition of church and sacraments with partial agreement in doctrine.
 - b. A second stage requires 1., 2., 3.a., partial and mutual recognition of ordained ministers and of churches, fuller agreement in doctrine, commitments to work for full communion, and preliminary agreement on lifting of any mutual condemnations. This might find expression in what Lutherans have often understood as pulpit and altar fellowship.
4. Full Communion. At this stage the goal of the involvement of this church in the ecumenical movement is fully attained. Here the question of the shape and form of full communion needs to be addressed and answered practically in terms of what will best further the mission of the Church in individual cases, consistent with the Lutheran understanding of the basis of the unity of the Church in Article VII of the Augsburg Confession.

For the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the characteristics of full communion are theological and missiological implications of the Gospel that allow variety and flexibility. These characteristics stress that the Church act ecumenically for the sake of the world, not for itself alone. They will include at least the following, some of which exist at earlier stages:

1. a common confessing of the Christian faith;
2. a mutual recognition of Baptism and a sharing of the Lord's Supper, allowing for joint worship and an exchangeability of members;
3. a mutual recognition and availability of ordained ministers to the service of all members of churches in full communion, subject only but always to the disciplinary regulations of the other churches;
4. a common commitment to evangelism, witness, and service;
5. a means of common decision making on critical common issues of faith and life;
6. a mutual lifting of any condemnations that exist between churches.

We hold this definition and description of full communion to be consistent with Article VII of the Augsburg Confession, which says, "for the true unity of the church it is enough to agree concerning the teaching of the Gospel and the administration of the sacraments." Agreement in the Gospel can be reached and stated without adopting Lutheran confessional formulations as such. It allows for flexible, situation-oriented decisions about order and decision making structures. It does not demand organic union, though it does not rule it out. This definition is also in agreement with the understanding of unity adopted by the Seventh Assembly of the Lutheran World Federation in 1984, "The Unity We Seek" (quoted under the Lutheran World Federation section of this statement).

Conclusion

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America seeks to be faithful to its scriptural and confessional foundations. As a confessional church that is evangelical, catholic, and ecumenical, this church will pursue the goal of full communion and will rejoice in all movement toward that goal.

¹ The text of "A Declaration of Ecumenical Commitment," adopted by the second Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, begins on page 21 of this publication. That text is preceded in this edition by an introductory section (Part I: Sources), which originally was presented in "Ecumenism: The Vision of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America," adopted as a "working document" by the first Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America on August 25, 1989, in Chicago, Illinois. The introductory section of that document subsequently was revised for submission to the second Churchwide Assembly on August 31, 1991, was: "To adopt, as amended, 'A Declaration of Ecumenical Commitment: A Policy Statement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America' as the policy of this church." In favor—919; opposed—67; abstaining—4.

² The actual text of the document adopted by the second Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America on August 31, 1991, as "A Declaration of Ecumenical Commitment: A Policy Statement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America" begins here.

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2011 OPERATING RESULTS SUMMARY

The churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America had income in excess of expense of \$4.2 million in current operating funds for the fiscal year ended January 31, 2012, a favorable variance of \$1.7 million from the fiscal year 2010.

Receipts totaled \$67.1 million for the year compared with \$66.8 million the previous year, an increase of \$0.4 million or 0.5%. Expenses related to the current operating fund amounted to \$62.3 million, a decrease of \$1.9 million or 3.0% from fiscal 2010. Revenue was favorable to the budget by \$4.5 million or 7.2%. Direct expenses were below the authorized unit spending plans by \$.3 million or 0.4%.

Income from congregations through synods in the form of mission support income for fiscal 2011 decreased to \$50.4 million, a decrease of \$2.2 million or 4.2%, but was favorable to the budget by \$2.4 million or 5.1%. Ten synods remitted mission support in excess of the previous year as compared to both 2010 and 2009, when only one synod remitted in excess of the previous year. The lower rate of decline in the rolling 12-month total of mission support experienced throughout the fiscal year was in sharp contrast to the rate of decline in the previous two fiscal years. This favorable trend is indication that income is stabilizing and the dramatic decreases in income and expenses experienced in the last biennium will not be repeated.

Other income received for the budgeted operations of the church amounted to \$16.7 million compared with \$14.1 million in fiscal 2010. A major favorable variance was investment income of \$2.1 million, an increase of \$1.3 million from 2010. This variance was due to the receipt of mineral rights income realized from rights inherited from predecessor church bodies. Another major favorable variance was for bequest and trust income of \$3.3 million, an increase of \$1.8 million from 2010 and a \$0.8 million positive budget variance. According to policy previously approved by the Church Council, the amount of unrestricted bequests and trusts in excess of budget in years with income exceeding expenses, was transferred to the Mission Development Fund. For 2011, this amounted to \$0.5 million. Other major sources of income in these categories included: Missionary Sponsorship, \$3.1 million; endowment income, \$2.4 million; support from the Mission Investment Fund and Thrivent Financial for Lutherans for support of new congregational development, \$2.5 million; Vision for Mission, \$1.4 million; and other income of \$1.9 million.

Total contributions to the ELCA World Hunger Appeal in fiscal 2011 were \$19.2 million. The regular annual appeal was favorable to fiscal 2010 by \$1.5 million and favorable to budget by \$0.7 million. Expenses for the year were \$18.5 million, just slightly lower than 2010 and favorable to budget by \$0.5 million. ELCA Malaria campaign receipts for the year were \$1.7 million, with expenses of \$1.0 million in the first year of the 5-year campaign.

ELCA members contributed \$10.1 million for the ELCA disaster response. This compares to a total of \$12.4 million in revenue in fiscal 2010. The largest single-disaster receipts were for the Japan Disaster of \$2.9 million, the U.S. Severe Spring Storms of \$1.9 million, and \$1.0 million for the Horn of Africa Drought relief.

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
CURRENT OPERATING FUNDS
SUMMARY OF REVENUE AND EXPENSES
 (In Thousands)
 For the Fiscal Year Ending January 31, 2012

	2011 ACTUAL	2011 BUDGET	2010 ACTUAL	Year-to-Date Variance	
				ACTUAL vs BUDGET Favorable/(Unfav)	CURRENT YEAR vs PRIOR YEAR Favorable/(Unfav)
REVENUE					
UNRESTRICTED					
Mission Support	\$ 50,423	\$ 48,000	\$ 52,646	\$ 2,423	\$ (2,223)
Other	7,477	5,088	5,901	\$ 2,389	1,576
Total Unrestricted	<u>57,900</u>	<u>53,088</u>	<u>58,547</u>	<u>\$ 4,812</u>	<u>(647)</u>
TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED					
Designated Gifts	4,926	5,500	5,502	\$ (574)	(576)
Other	4,301	4,027	2,726	\$ 274	1,575
Total Restricted	<u>9,227</u>	<u>9,527</u>	<u>8,228</u>	<u>\$ (300)</u>	<u>999</u>
TOTAL REVENUE	\$ 67,127	\$ 62,615	\$ 66,775	\$ 4,512	\$ 352
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 62,345	\$ 62,615	\$ 64,264	\$ 270	\$ 1,919
TOTAL REVENUE LESS TOTAL EXPENSES	4,782	-	2,511	4,782	2,271
LESS:					
MISSION DEVELOPMENT FUND TRANSFER	<u>\$ (541)</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(541)</u>	<u>(541)</u>
NET	<u><u>\$ 4,241</u></u>	<u><u>\$ -</u></u>	<u><u>\$ 2,511</u></u>	<u><u>\$ 4,241</u></u>	<u><u>\$ 1,730</u></u>

**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
 CURRENT OPERATING FUNDS
 REVENUE SUMMARY
 For the Fiscal Year Ending January 31, 2012**

	2011 ACTUAL	2011 BUDGET	2010 ACTUAL	Year-To-Date Variance	
				ACTUAL vs. BUDGET ACTUAL vs.	CURRENT YEAR vs. PRIOR YEAR CURRENT YEAR
UNRESTRICTED					
Mission Support	\$ 50,423,160	\$ 48,000,000	\$ 52,645,915	\$ 2,423,160	\$ (2,222,755)
Vision for Mission	1,381,131	1,300,000	1,483,844	81,131	(102,713)
Investment Income	2,140,318	600,000	837,631	1,540,318	1,302,687
Bequests and Trusts	1,641,161	1,100,000	1,075,785	541,161	565,376
Endowment	732,329	748,000	751,233	(15,671)	(18,904)
Rent	1,062,285	1,000,000	919,797	62,285	142,488
Other	519,967	339,500	832,246	180,467	(312,279)
Total Unrestricted	<u>57,900,351</u>	<u>53,087,500</u>	<u>58,546,451</u>	<u>4,812,851</u>	<u>(646,100)</u>
TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED					
Missionary Sponsorship	3,066,305	3,700,000	3,578,763	(633,695)	(512,458)
Bequests and Trusts	1,649,286	1,400,000	391,208	249,286	1,258,078
Endowment	1,650,565	1,627,000	1,334,875	23,565	315,690
Unit-Designated Gifts	359,996	300,000	423,623	59,996	(63,627)
Mission Investment Fund	1,500,000	1,500,000	1,500,000	-	-
Grants	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	-	-
Total Restricted	<u>9,226,152</u>	<u>9,527,000</u>	<u>8,228,469</u>	<u>(300,848)</u>	<u>997,683</u>
TOTAL REVENUE	<u>\$ 67,126,503</u>	<u>\$ 62,614,500</u>	<u>\$ 66,774,920</u>	<u>\$ 4,512,003</u>	<u>\$ 351,583</u>

PRELIMINARY AND UNAUDITED

**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
 CURRENT OPERATING FUNDS
 ACTUAL EXPENSES VS. SPENDING AUTHORIZATION
 For the Fiscal Year Ending January 31, 2012**

	2011 ACTUAL EXPENSES	2011 SPENDING AUTHORIZATION	Variance Favorable (Unfavorable)	Percent of Actual to Budget
UNITS				
Congregational and Synodical Mission	26,560,868	26,765,250	204,382	99.24%
Global Mission	12,986,805	12,325,000	(661,805)	105.37%
Mission Advancement	3,603,765	4,377,600	773,835	82.32%
OFFICES				
Presiding Bishop	5,005,774	4,742,000	(263,774)	105.56%
Treasurer	5,816,689	5,862,250	45,561	99.22%
Secretary	3,614,905	3,788,500	173,595	95.42%
OTHER				
General Treasury	150,988	151,200	212	99.86%
Retiree Minimum Health Obligation	2,500,000	2,500,000	-	100.00%
Depreciation	2,104,728	2,037,900	(66,828)	103.28%
Strategic Initiatives	427	64,800	64,373	0.66%
TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>\$ 62,344,949</u>	<u>\$ 62,614,500</u>	<u>\$ 269,551</u>	<u>99.57%</u>

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
SYNOCDICAL REMITTANCES
 for the period ending
 January 31, 2012

	MISSION SUPPORT									OTHER REMITTANCES THROUGH SYNOD				
	2010	2011 MS PLAN		CURRENT MONTH		YEAR-TO-DATE			\$ VARIANCE		World	Missionary		
	MS%	AMOUNT	MS%	2011	2010	2011	2010	% Vary	Monthly	Y-T-D	Hunger	Sponsorship	Other	
Alaska	1A	39.00%	\$ 167,283	39.50%	\$ 20,811	\$ 29,190	\$ 163,377	\$ 163,080	0.2%	(8,379)	297	\$ 16,315	\$ 547	\$ 16,069
N.W. Wash	1B	45.50%	611,713	45.50%	86,510	76,571	578,855	602,267	(3.9%)	9,939	(23,412)	176,243	7,965	83,599
S.W. Wash	1C	38.50%	356,070	39.00%	37,042	32,059	339,873	347,497	(2.2%)	4,983	(7,624)	89,781	8,098	40,462
E. Wash / Id	1D	30.00%	240,250	31.00%	30,481	27,562	247,053	236,844	4.3%	2,919	10,209	31,226	7,724	10,080
Oregon	1E	42.00%	436,900	39.00%	67,997	47,734	361,817	385,750	(6.2%)	20,263	(23,933)	91,008	13,260	63,281
Montana	1F	39.50%	369,325	39.50%	42,113	51,192	373,578	368,598	1.4%	(9,078)	4,980	116,539	23,859	37,771
Total Region 1		39.89%	2,181,541	39.58%	284,954	264,308	2,064,553	2,104,035	(1.9%)	20,646	(39,483)	521,112	61,453	251,261
Sierra Pacific	2A	51.50%	901,250	51.50%	146,428	125,906	921,487	891,951	3.3%	20,522	29,536	126,547	27,129	757,351
SW California	2B	49.00%	514,165	49.00%	30,750	35,056	495,474	529,878	(6.5%)	(4,306)	(34,405)	127,069	29,061	132,665
Pacifica	2C	52.00%	752,250	51.00%	77,808	70,769	720,189	765,311	(5.9%)	7,039	(45,122)	122,121	21,529	140,803
Grand Canyon	2D	50.00%	875,000	50.00%	79,148	77,108	876,501	901,857	(2.8%)	2,040	(25,356)	118,227	29,971	63,001
Rocky Mtn.	2E	50.00%	1,258,750	50.00%	120,622	105,557	1,240,827	1,262,965	(1.8%)	15,065	(22,138)	430,951	26,925	259,108
Total Region 2		50.52%	4,301,415	50.36%	454,755	414,395	4,254,477	4,351,962	(2.2%)	40,360	(97,484)	924,914	134,616	1,352,928
W. No. Dak	3A	42.50%	384,420	43.00%	45,255	63,428	384,420	379,950	1.2%	(18,173)	4,470	52,971	49,081	12,972
E. No. Dak	3B	40.00%	420,000	40.00%	53,203	64,834	393,228	407,064	(3.4%)	(11,631)	(13,835)	76,410	38,318	36,543
South Dak	3C	43.00%	723,822	44.00%	50,044	44,443	679,481	692,431	(1.9%)	5,602	(12,950)	122,082	53,367	87,765
N.W. Minn	3D	51.00%	653,106	51.00%	70,181	66,779	677,897	628,582	7.8%	3,402	49,315	84,074	65,254	102,764
N.E. Minn	3E	49.00%	588,000	49.00%	73,335	83,689	583,253	594,952	(2.0%)	(10,354)	(11,699)	162,603	38,179	27,749
S.W. Minn	3F	52.50%	1,054,029	52.50%	127,621	150,074	1,054,345	1,075,108	(1.9%)	(22,452)	(20,763)	227,743	195,092	53,990
Mpls Area	3G	55.00%	1,870,000	55.00%	342,057	417,702	1,722,647	1,790,191	(3.8%)	(75,646)	(67,544)	192,181	85,652	377,117
St. Paul Area	3H	50.00%	1,050,000	50.00%	96,009	126,918	982,489	1,024,721	(4.1%)	(30,908)	(42,233)	82,078	51,796	64,611
S.E. Minn	3I	52.50%	994,875	52.50%	105,338	141,400	977,919	991,427	(1.4%)	(36,062)	(13,508)	130,172	58,799	33,110
Total Region 3		49.87%	7,738,252	50.01%	963,044	1,159,266	7,455,678	7,584,426	(1.7%)	(196,222)	(128,748)	1,130,314	635,537	796,621

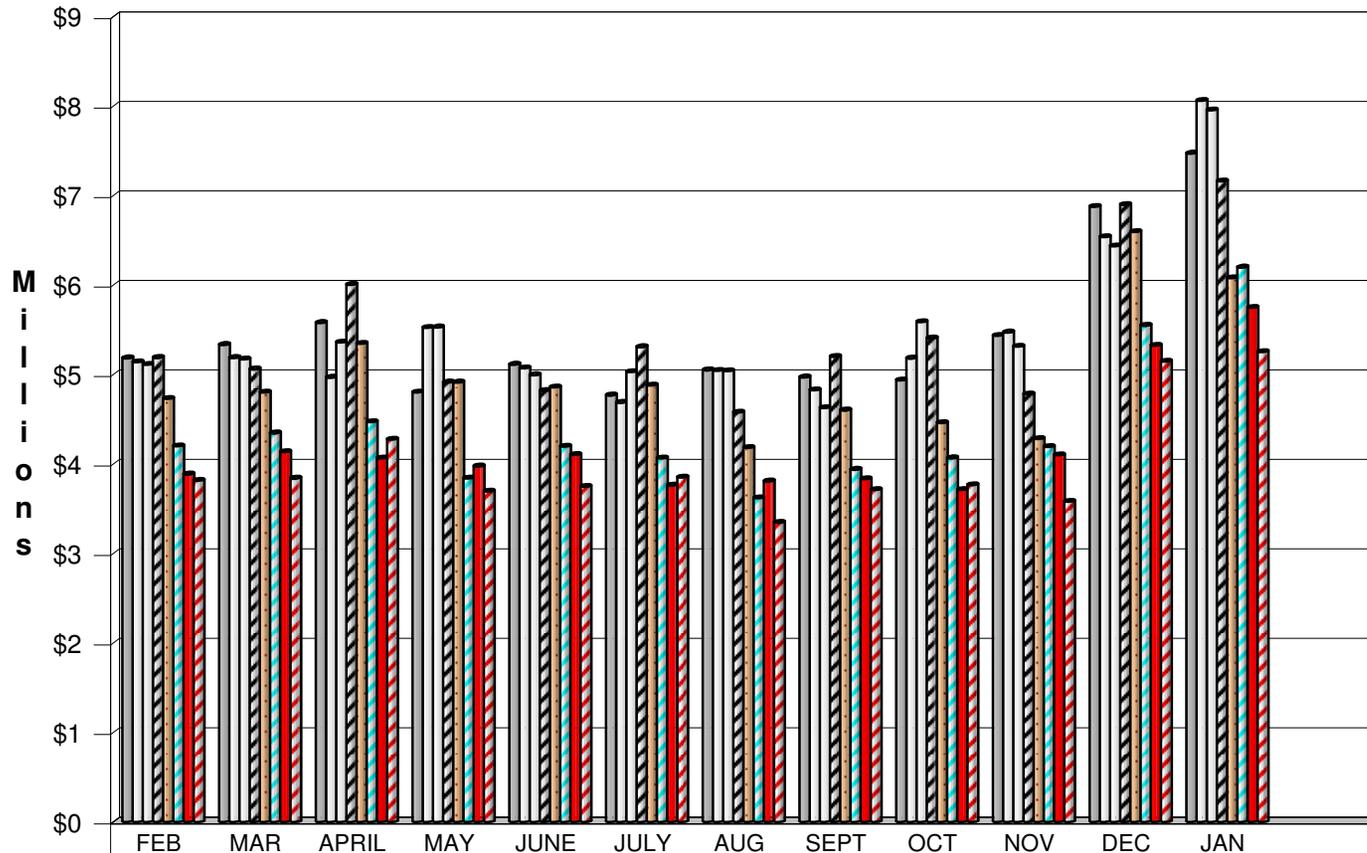
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
SYNODICAL REMITTANCES
 for the period ending
 January 31, 2012

		MISSION SUPPORT								OTHER REMITTANCES THROUGH SYNOD				
	2010 MS%	2011 MS PLAN		CURRENT MONTH		YEAR-TO-DATE			\$ VARIANCE		World Hunger	Missionary Sponsorship	Other	
		AMOUNT	MS%	2011	2010	2011	2010	% Vary	Monthly	Y-T-D				
Nebraska	4A	57.00%	1,995,000	57.00%	201,343	222,309	1,988,922	2,013,879	(1.2%)	(20,966)	(24,957)	189,113	21,719	108,932
Central States	4B	51.00%	912,567	50.00%	66,827	81,563	886,407	950,714	(6.8%)	(14,736)	(64,307)	76,872	19,671	55,483
Ark/Ok	4C	40.20%	207,360	40.50%	18,392	20,986	190,173	224,010	(15.1%)	(2,594)	(33,836)	22,961	3,593	4,795
N Tx / N La	4D	47.00%	568,700	47.00%	70,958	87,172	560,320	579,102	(3.2%)	(16,214)	(18,782)	62,197	9,888	86,756
S.W. Tex	4E	50.00%	800,000	50.00%	39,853	69,714	665,787	763,323	(12.8%)	(29,861)	(97,537)	97,855	2,721	262,569
Tx.-La. Gulf Coast	4F	50.00%	737,000	50.00%	54,541	51,587	623,397	678,177	(8.1%)	2,954	(54,781)	111,503	21,548	120,888
Total Region 4		51.59%	5,220,627	51.58%	451,914	533,331	4,915,005	5,209,205	(5.6%)	(81,417)	(294,201)	560,501	79,141	639,424
Metro Chicago	5A	55.00%	1,730,431	54.00%	207,207	205,846	1,698,450	1,762,476	(3.6%)	1,361	(64,026)	295,874	56,258	75,771
No. Illinois	5B	55.00%	1,296,159	55.00%	141,081	133,876	1,269,984	1,281,869	(0.9%)	7,205	(11,885)	266,965	23,848	79,840
Gen. So. Ill	5C	56.00%	817,600	56.00%	67,172	73,251	794,453	862,538	(7.9%)	(6,079)	(68,085)	108,950	26,823	47,797
S.E. Iowa	5D	53.50%	1,597,809	53.50%	171,506	170,430	1,385,061	1,415,853	(2.2%)	1,077	(30,792)	181,171	27,328	83,954
West Iowa	5E	35.10%	344,033	36.10%	110,909	104,234	335,909	329,234	2.0%	6,675	6,675	112,540	33,618	52,698
N.E. Iowa	5F	42.50%	570,000	40.00%	187,986	318,770	544,081	597,813	(9.0%)	(130,784)	(53,732)	186,086	61,329	152,598
N. Great Lakes	5G	50.00%	410,000	50.00%	30,017	31,087	407,663	441,259	(7.6%)	(1,070)	(33,596)	111,448	10,971	58,006
NW of Wisc	5H	55.00%	770,000	55.00%	119,317	115,163	731,749	748,382	(2.2%)	4,154	(16,633)	118,019	54,883	34,240
E.C. Wisc	5I	55.00%	907,500	55.00%	91,839	108,488	867,380	874,508	(0.8%)	(16,649)	(7,128)	204,887	75,855	102,221
Grtr Milwaukee	5J	60.10%	1,237,500	55.00%	187,859	151,404	1,250,348	1,351,367	(7.5%)	36,455	(101,019)	142,530	37,979	78,167
SC of Wisc	5K	55.00%	893,200	55.00%	52,266	41,533	815,917	796,253	2.5%	10,733	19,664	193,806	22,520	67,022
LaCrosse (W)	5L	55.00%	461,944	55.00%	4,618	5,429	424,808	425,130	(0.1%)	(811)	(323)	75,492	4,100	23,536
Total Region 5		53.34%	11,036,176	52.63%	1,371,776	1,459,510	10,525,801	10,886,682	(3.3%)	(87,734)	(360,881)	1,997,768	435,512	855,850
SE Mich	6A	45.00%	559,000	43.00%	65,826	50,629	532,973	557,360	(4.4%)	15,197	(24,386)	100,180	11,285	28,139
NW Lower Mich	6B	50.00%	700,000	50.00%	69,268	85,212	702,935	748,816	(6.1%)	(15,944)	(45,882)	133,845	18,520	18,920
Ind / Ky	6C	51.50%	978,500	51.50%	128,139	134,432	919,126	1,030,028	(10.8%)	(6,293)	(110,902)	318,479	18,297	63,884
N.W. Ohio	6D	51.00%	1,010,820	51.00%	123,857	125,290	911,314	1,000,513	(8.9%)	(1,433)	(89,199)	121,475	76,082	81,769
N.E. Ohio	6E	49.00%	869,750	49.00%	82,120	85,709	811,692	870,902	(6.8%)	(3,589)	(59,209)	91,101	4,500	79,768
S. Ohio	6F	40.00%	754,290	39.27%	103,695	80,868	723,067	753,594	(4.1%)	22,827	(30,527)	80,857	9,481	60,028
Total Region 6		47.86%	4,872,360	47.41%	572,905	562,139	4,601,107	4,961,212	(7.3%)	10,765	(360,105)	845,937	138,164	332,509

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
SYNODICAL REMITTANCES
for the period ending
January 31, 2012

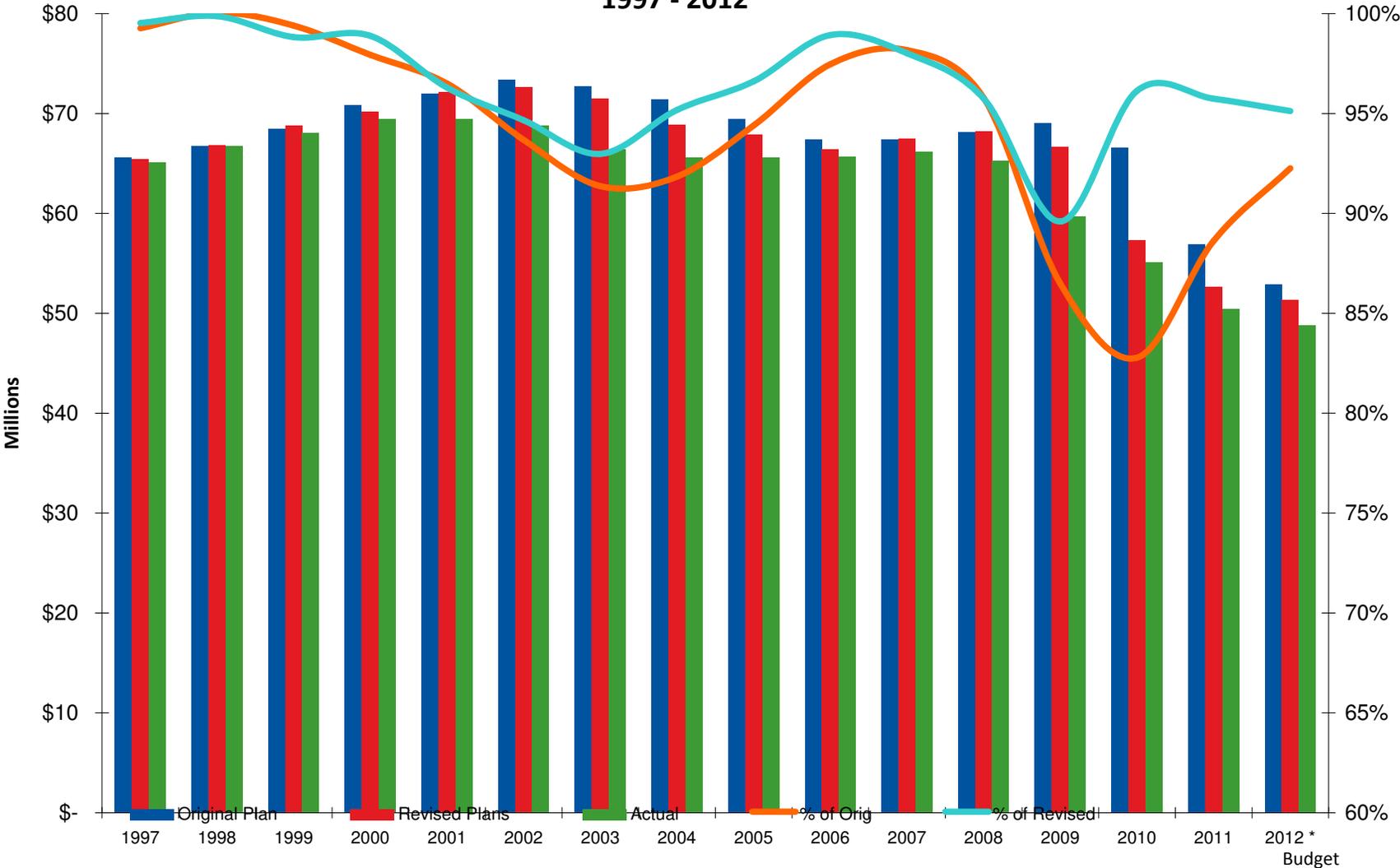
	MISSION SUPPORT									OTHER REMITTANCES THROUGH SYNOD				
	2010	2011 MS PLAN		CURRENT MONTH		YEAR-TO-DATE			\$ VARIANCE		World	Missionary	Other	
	MS%	AMOUNT	MS%	2011	2010	2011	2010	% Vary	Monthly	Y-T-D	Hunger	Sponsorship		
New Jersey	7A	50.00%	1,180,000	50.00%	195,463	199,979	1,109,027	1,087,023	2.0%	(4,516)	22,003	146,793	6,148	179,424
New England	7B	54.00%	1,078,896	54.00%	113,779	128,336	1,059,528	1,081,086	(2.0%)	(14,558)	(21,558)	43,037	5,335	89,781
Metro NY	7C	48.00%	606,250	48.50%	76,835	66,752	572,404	546,335	4.8%	10,083	26,069	47,930	5,256	30,703
Upstate NY	7D	47.10%	634,840	47.20%	60,276	74,647	567,461	627,751	(9.6%)	(14,371)	(60,291)	48,779	5,966	45,512
N.E. Penn	7E	52.00%	1,431,000	53.00%	171,509	131,784	1,341,235	1,384,677	(3.1%)	39,724	(43,443)	351,048	33,336	82,215
S.E. Penn	7F	53.50%	1,246,550	53.50%	152,145	105,528	1,236,550	1,253,383	(1.3%)	46,617	(16,833)	134,448	13,122	104,842
Slovak Zion	7G	30.00%	33,600	30.00%	3,029	6,026	18,324	24,591	(25.5%)	(2,997)	(6,267)	6,144	875	3,790
Total Region 7		51.04%	6,211,136	51.35%	773,036	713,053	5,904,529	6,004,847	(1.7%)	59,983	(100,319)	778,180	70,038	536,267
N.W. Penn	8A	50.00%	438,000	50.00%	48,581	40,610	429,488	436,041	(1.5%)	7,972	(6,554)	84,630	8,883	48,821
S.W. Penn	8B	55.00%	987,500	50.00%	75,731	150,531	836,575	1,018,795	(17.9%)	(74,800)	(182,220)	123,788	45,667	97,694
Allegheny	8C	50.00%	450,000	50.00%	33,270	62,510	371,172	394,474	(5.9%)	(29,240)	(23,302)	71,495	36,920	49,604
Lower Susq	8D	46.00%	1,368,500	46.00%	40,661	42,316	1,407,389	1,502,495	(6.3%)	(1,655)	(95,106)	400,037	101,736	155,723
Upper Susq	8E	50.00%	516,619	50.00%	22,867	61,544	521,590	536,659	(2.8%)	(38,677)	(15,069)	84,558	22,284	36,255
Del / Md	8F	53.00%	1,113,000	53.00%	126,943	130,307	1,122,860	1,139,880	(1.5%)	(3,365)	(17,020)	129,726	11,650	41,102
Metro DC	8G	55.00%	1,000,000	50.00%	91,225	125,047	889,428	999,108	(11.0%)	(33,822)	(109,681)	69,080	6,575	98,263
W Virg-W Mlyd	8H	45.00%	255,683	45.00%	12,744	21,300	209,380	256,420	(18.3%)	(8,556)	(47,039)	26,437	2,844	23,070
Total Region 8		50.73%	6,129,302	49.32%	452,022	634,165	5,787,882	6,283,873	(7.9%)	(182,143)	(495,991)	989,751	236,559	550,533
Virginia	9A	35.10%	640,617	37.34%	53,617	59,254	600,866	658,965	(8.8%)	(5,637)	(58,099)	129,092	6,755	36,143
N. Carolina	9B	39.26%	1,219,750	42.06%	101,534	155,192	1,218,582	1,262,714	(3.5%)	(53,658)	(44,133)	145,838	13,112	21,985
S. Carolina	9C	45.00%	1,127,500	41.00%	76,943	80,953	1,049,898	1,268,389	(17.2%)	(4,010)	(218,491)	159,074	62,096	102,479
Southeastern	9D	50.00%	1,050,000	50.00%	112,041	104,265	1,066,767	1,086,077	(1.8%)	7,775	(19,310)	121,655	29,547	67,427
Florida-Bahamas	9E	51.13%	908,696	44.00%	75,077	53,179	948,015	949,728	(0.2%)	21,898	(1,712)	119,360	21,646	189,597
Caribbean	9F	12.50%	30,000	12.79%	2,500	2,500	30,000	33,799	(11.2%)	-	(3,799)	2,184		
Total Region 9		43.00%	4,976,563	42.30%	421,712	455,343	4,914,128	5,259,672	(6.6%)	(33,631)	(345,544)	677,202	133,157	417,631
Total		49.39%	\$ 52,667,372	49.14%	\$ 5,746,117	\$ 6,195,510	\$ 50,423,160	\$ 52,645,915	(4.2%)	(\$449,393)	\$ (2,222,755)	\$ 8,425,679	\$ 1,924,177	\$ 5,733,023

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Synodical Mission Support By Month 2005 - 2011

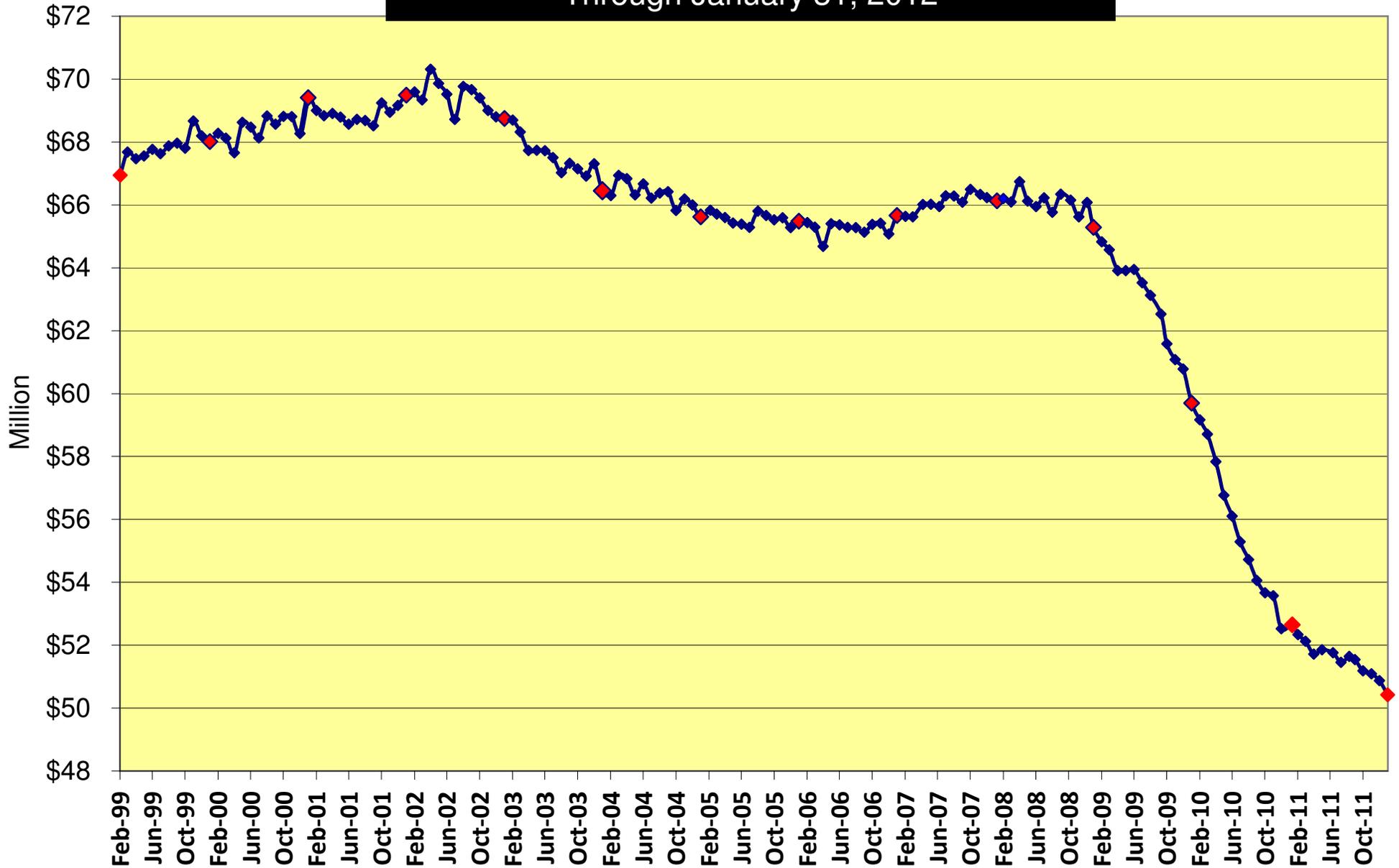


	FEB	MAR	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN
■ 2005	\$5.18	\$5.33	\$5.58	\$4.80	\$5.11	\$4.77	\$5.05	\$4.97	\$4.93	\$5.43	\$6.87	\$7.47
□ 2006	\$5.14	\$5.18	\$4.96	\$5.52	\$5.07	\$4.68	\$5.04	\$4.82	\$5.18	\$5.47	\$6.53	\$8.06
□ 2007	\$5.11	\$5.17	\$5.36	\$5.53	\$4.99	\$5.03	\$5.04	\$4.62	\$5.59	\$5.31	\$6.43	\$7.95
▨ 2008	\$5.19	\$5.06	\$6.00	\$4.91	\$4.82	\$5.31	\$4.58	\$5.20	\$5.40	\$4.78	\$6.89	\$7.16
■ 2009	\$4.73	\$4.80	\$5.34	\$4.91	\$4.86	\$4.88	\$4.18	\$4.60	\$4.46	\$4.28	\$6.59	\$6.08
▨ 2010	\$4.20	\$4.34	\$4.47	\$3.84	\$4.19	\$4.06	\$3.62	\$3.94	\$4.06	\$4.19	\$5.54	\$6.20
■ 2011	\$3.88	\$4.13	\$4.06	\$3.97	\$4.10	\$3.76	\$3.80	\$3.83	\$3.71	\$4.10	\$5.32	\$5.75
▨ 2011 Budget Revised	\$3.81	\$3.84	\$4.27	\$3.69	\$3.75	\$3.85	\$3.34	\$3.71	\$3.76	\$3.58	\$5.14	\$5.25

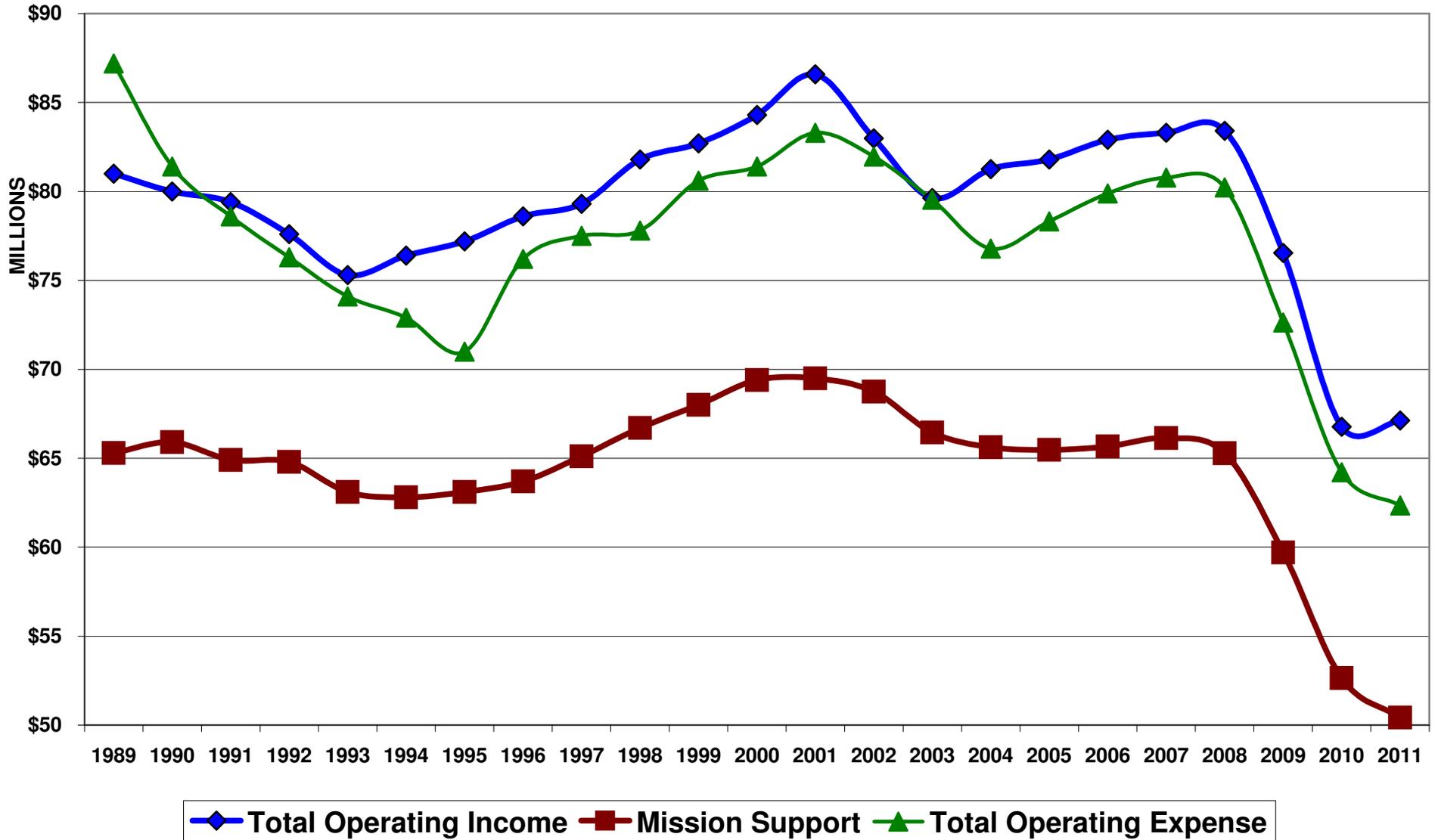
**Mission Support Income:
 Original and Revised Plans vs. Actual
 1997 - 2012***



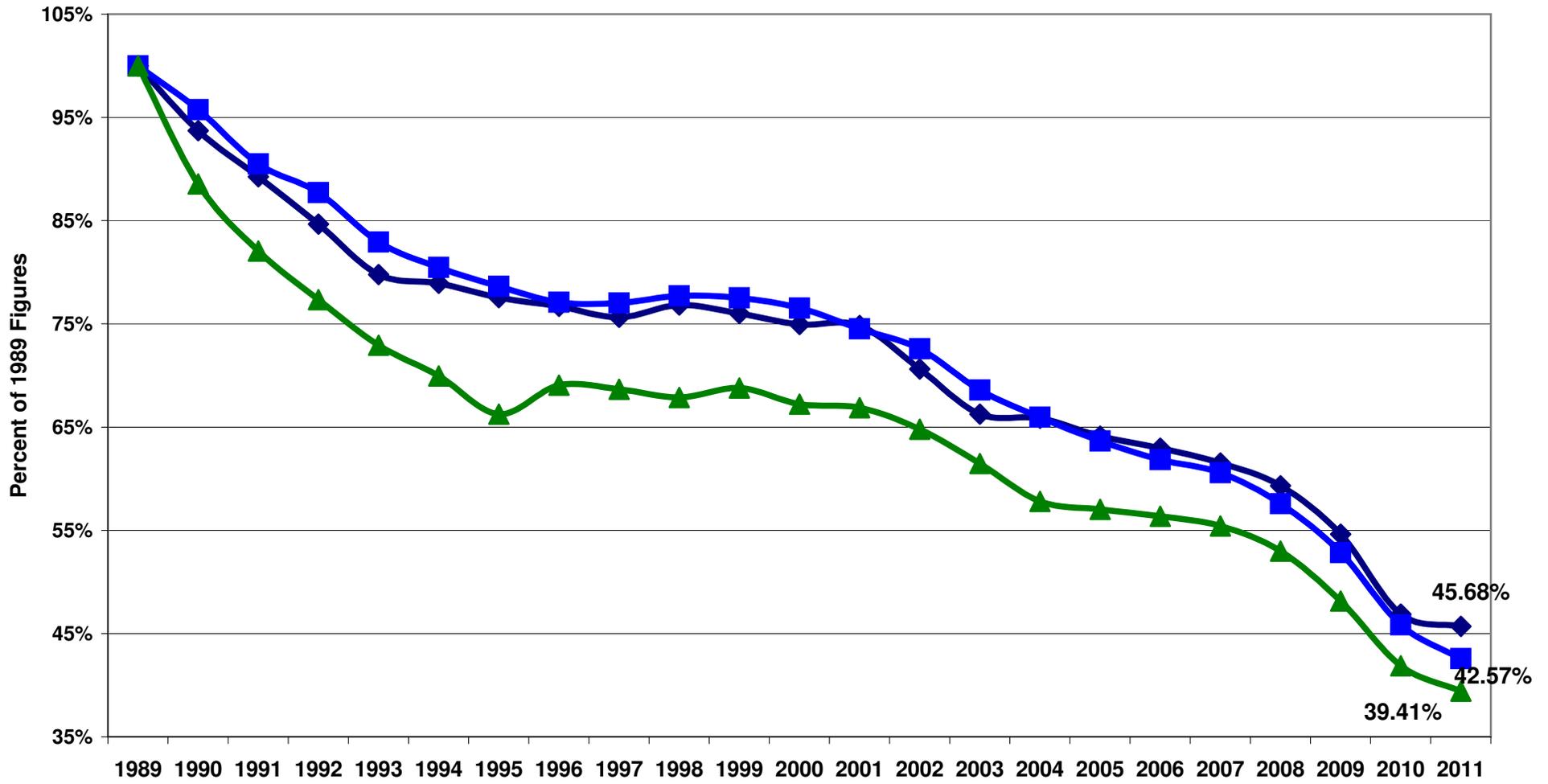
Mission Support Received In Preceding 12 Months
Through January 31, 2012



Operating Income Versus Operating Expense 1989-2011



Operating Income Versus Operating Expense 1989 - 2011
 Using Inflation Adjusted Figures With 1989 as the Base



EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
Consolidating Statement of Financial Position

	Churchwide Operations	*Endowment Funds	*Deferred Gift Funds	Total January 31 2012	Total January 31 2011
ASSETS					
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 26,905,384	\$ 2,806,046	\$ 6,345,827	\$ 36,057,257	\$ 19,850,488
Cash and Securities Held as Collateral For Securites Loaned	-	-	19,813,061	19,813,061	37,326,460
Payable Under Securities Loan Agreements	-	-	(19,813,061)	(19,813,061)	(37,326,460)
Investments	37,845,574	386,386,138	169,817,202	594,048,914	605,678,933
Accounts Receivable	8,777,462	-	363,394	9,140,856	10,982,503
Notes Receivable	4,392,033	-	1,108,468	5,500,501	5,813,499
Due from Affiliates	498,523	-	-	498,523	213,714
Interest Receivable	236,691	-	848,018	1,084,709	1,298,003
Prepaid Expenses, Advances and Other Assets	3,678,496	3,609,222	-	7,287,718	8,045,466
Real Estate Investments	74,961	-	-	74,961	899,211
Beneficial Interest in Outside Trusts	-	14,507,152	1,203,376	15,710,528	16,653,121
Cash Surrender Value of Life Insurance	1,454,764	-	-	1,454,764	1,474,445
Property, Plant & Equipment	51,535,909	-	-	51,535,909	68,164,407
Accumulated Depreciation/ Amortization	(21,450,378)	-	-	(21,450,378)	(38,673,292)
Other Non-Current Assets	869,886	-	-	869,886	914,327
Reinsurance Contracts	-	-	-	-	-
Total Assets	\$ 114,819,305	\$ 407,308,558	\$ 179,686,285	\$ 701,814,148	\$ 701,314,825
LIABILITIES					
Accounts Payable	\$ 4,738,038	\$ 206,638	\$ 50,856	\$ 4,995,532	\$ 3,614,564
Notes Payable	213,062	-	-	213,062	2,385,929
Accrued Liabilities	2,707,556	-	100	2,707,656	930,309
Deferred Revenue	7,984,598	300,261	992,821	9,277,680	1,448,769
Due to Affiliates	-	1,130,808	147,242	1,278,050	1,288,385
Annuities Payable	-	-	98,186,486	98,186,486	103,938,652
Funds Held for Others	78,129	159,629,771	51,296,931	211,004,831	208,114,583
Funds Held for Others In Perpetuity	-	45,321,990	-	45,321,990	47,514,958
Total Liabilities	\$ 15,721,383	\$ 206,589,468	\$ 150,674,436	\$ 372,985,287	\$ 369,236,149
NET ASSETS					
Unrestricted/Undesignated	\$ 47,411,147	\$ 11,882,693	\$ 864,794	\$ 60,158,634	\$ 60,605,744
Designated	11,874,469	-	-	11,874,469	13,572,619
Temporarily Restricted	39,812,306	50,021,961	14,713,040	104,547,307	109,384,693
Permanently Restricted	-	138,814,436	13,434,015	152,248,451	148,515,620
Total Net Assets	\$ 99,097,922	\$ 200,719,090	\$ 29,011,849	\$ 328,828,861	\$ 332,078,676
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$ 114,819,305	\$ 407,308,558	\$ 179,686,285	\$ 701,814,148	\$ 701,314,825

*As of December 31, 2011

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
Statement of Financial Position
Churchwide Operations

	January 2012	January 2011
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
ASSETS		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	26,905,384	13,424,375
Investments	37,845,574	35,662,070
Accounts Receivable	8,777,462	10,642,614
Interest/Dividend Receivable	236,691	260,174
Notes Receivable	4,392,033	4,686,456
Due from Related Organizations	498,523	163,468
Advances and Other Assets	3,678,496	3,208,817
Real Estate Investments	74,961	899,211
Cash Surrender Value of Life Insurance	1,454,764	1,474,445
Property, Plant & Equipment	51,535,909	68,000,024
Accumulated Depreciation/Amortization	(21,450,378)	(38,673,292)
Other Non-Current Assets	869,886	914,327
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>\$ 114,819,305</u>	<u>\$ 100,662,689</u>
LIABILITIES		
Accounts Payable	4,738,038	2,982,186
Deferred Revenue	7,984,598	74,085
Funds Held For Others	78,129	24,732
Mortgage and Notes Payable	213,062	2,385,929
Other Liabilities	2,707,556	930,089
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Total Liabilities	<u>15,721,383</u>	<u>6,397,021</u>
NET ASSETS		
Unrestricted/Undesignated	47,411,147	42,922,689
Designated	11,874,469	13,572,619
Restricted	39,812,306	37,770,360
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Total Net Assets	<u>99,097,922</u>	<u>94,265,668</u>
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	<u>\$ 114,819,305</u>	<u>\$ 100,662,689</u>

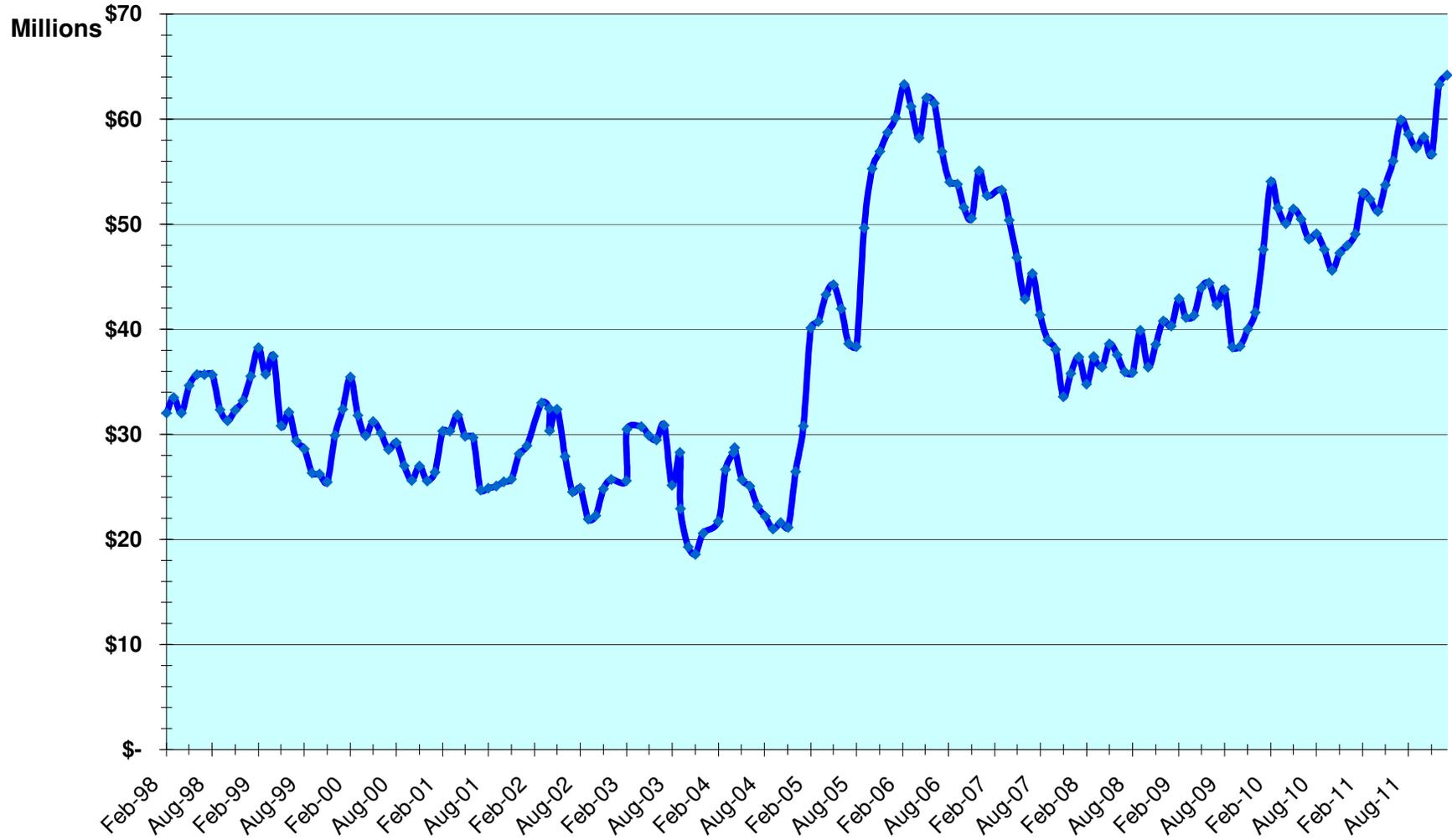
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
Statement of Financial Position
Endowment Funds

	<u>December 31</u> 2011	<u>December 31</u> 2010
ASSETS		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 2,806,046	\$ 1,756,655
Investments	386,386,138	397,960,193
Prepaid Expenses & Other Assets	3,609,222	3,648,398
Beneficial Interest in Outside Trusts	<u>14,507,152</u>	<u>15,435,526</u>
Total Assets	<u>\$ 407,308,558</u>	<u>\$ 418,800,772</u>
LIABILITIES		
Accounts Payable	\$ 206,638	\$ 56,409
Deferred Revenue	300,261	232,015
Due from (to) Related Organizations	1,130,808	1,288,385
Funds Held for Others	159,629,771	159,397,558
Funds Held for Others In Perpetuity	<u>45,321,990</u>	<u>47,514,958</u>
Total Liabilities	<u>\$ 206,589,468</u>	<u>\$ 208,489,325</u>
NET ASSETS		
Unrestricted	\$ 11,882,693	\$ 16,707,838
Temporarily Restricted	50,021,961	58,269,133
Permanently Restricted	<u>138,814,436</u>	<u>135,334,476</u>
Total Net Assets	<u>\$ 200,719,090</u>	<u>\$ 210,311,447</u>
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	<u>\$ 407,308,558</u>	<u>\$ 418,800,772</u>

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
Statement of Financial Position
Deferred Gift Funds

	December 31 2011	December 31 2010
ASSETS		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 6,345,827	\$ 4,669,458
Cash and Securities Held as Collateral for Securities Loaned	19,813,061	37,326,460
Payable Under Securities Loan Agreements	(19,813,061)	(37,326,460)
Accounts Receivable	363,394	339,889
Due from Affiliates	-	50,246
Interest Receivable	848,018	1,037,829
Investments	169,817,202	172,056,670
Prepaid Expenses & Other Assets	-	1,188,251
Notes Receivable	1,108,468	1,127,043
Property, Plant & Equipment Accumulated Depreciation	-	164,383 -
Beneficial Interest in Outside Trusts	1,203,376	1,217,595
Reinsurance Contracts	-	-
Total Assets	\$ 179,686,285	\$ 181,851,364
LIABILITIES		
Accounts Payable	\$ 50,856	\$ 575,969
Payable Under Securities Loan Agreements	-	-
Due to Related Organizations	147,242	-
Deferred Revenue	992,821	1,142,669
Annuities Payable	98,186,486	103,938,652
Funds Held for Others	51,296,931	48,692,293
Other Liabilities	100	220
Total Liabilities	\$ 150,674,436	\$ 154,349,803
NET ASSETS		
Unrestricted	\$ 864,794	\$ 975,217
Temporarily Restricted	14,713,040	13,345,200
Permanently Restricted	13,434,015	13,181,144
Total Net Assets	\$ 29,011,849	\$ 27,501,561
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$ 179,686,285	\$ 181,851,364

Cash and Short Term Investments 1998 - 2011



EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA REVISED 4-13-12 am
WORLD HUNGER APPEAL
SUMMARY OF REVENUE AND EXPENSE
For the Fiscal Year Ending January 31, 2012

	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Income and Expense Variances</u> <u>Favorable (Unfavorable)</u>	
			<u>Actual Vs.</u> <u>Budget</u>	<u>Current Vs.</u> <u>Previous Year</u>
Beginning Balance	\$ 2,020,037			
Income:				
Through Synods	\$ 8,668,592	\$ 9,050,000	\$ (381,408)	\$ 24,871
Direct Giving	9,055,325	8,275,000	780,325	1,117,976
Endowments	607,886	575,000	32,886	30,566
Bequests, Miscellaneous	897,009	600,000	297,009	341,278
Total Income	19,228,812	18,500,000	728,812	1,514,691
Expense:				
Global Mission	13,213,148	13,418,200	205,052	(351,528)
Congregational and Synodical Mission	3,082,064	2,987,175	(94,889)	724,340
Mission Advancement	2,218,922	2,594,625	375,703	(661,346)
Total Expense	18,514,134	19,000,000	485,866	(288,534)
Net	\$ 714,678	\$ (500,000)	\$ 1,214,678	\$ 1,226,157
Add: Transfer From previous HIV/AIDS	\$ 598,919			
Ending Balance	\$ 3,333,634			

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
ELCA MALARIA CAMPAIGN
SUMMARY OF REVENUE AND EXPENSE
For the Fiscal Year Ending January 31, 2012

	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Variance</u> <u>Favorable (Unfavorable)</u>
Beginning Balance	\$ 1,170,260		
Income			
Endowment Distributions	25,000		25,000
Through Synods	843,747	900,000	(56,253)
Direct Giving	853,604	1,100,000	(246,396)
Other	9,047	-	9,047
Total Income	<u>\$ 1,731,398</u>	<u>\$ 2,000,000</u>	<u>\$ (268,602)</u>
Expense			
Global Mission	686,901	929,300	242,399
Mission Advancement			
Interpretation/Coordination	112,435	112,600	165
Fundraising	233,117	267,780	34,663
Total Expense	<u>\$ 1,032,453</u>	<u>\$ 1,309,680</u>	<u>\$ 277,227</u>
Net	<u>\$ 698,945</u>	<u>\$ 690,320</u>	<u>\$ 8,625</u>
Ending Balance	<u>\$ 1,869,205</u>		

**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
 DISASTER RELIEF FUNDS
 For the Fiscal Year Ending January 31, 2012**

INTERNATIONAL DISASTER RESPONSE

Disaster Programs	Beginning Balance	Revenue	Transfers In (Out)	Expenses	YTD 1/31/2012
General Undesignated Fund	3,120,027	649,125	932,689	516,509	4,185,332
Central America Flood Relief	-	23,179		-	23,179
Guatemala Flood Relief	-	13,022		15,000	(1,978)
El Salvador Flood Relief	-	13,044		130,000	(116,956)
Honduras Flood Relief	-	150		20,000	(19,850)
Nicaragua Flood Relief	2,116	10,296		20,000	(7,588)
Haiti Earthquake Relief	8,537,644	235,056		3,206,796	5,565,904
Horn of Africa Drought Relief	-	995,984	-	838,811	157,173
Egypt Disaster Relief		2,033	3,467	5,500	-
South Asia Tsunami	4,723,878	44,459	(164,237)	478,858	4,125,242
Pakistan Relief	25,402	15,204		-	40,606
South Asia Floods	-	10	49,990	50,000	-
China Disaster Relief	(114,300)	53	114,247	-	-
Japan Disaster Relief	-	2,938,916		1,540,000	1,398,916
New Zealand Disaster Support		5,760			5,760
World Food Crisis	11,109	472	-	-	11,581
Total International Disaster Response	16,305,876	4,946,763	936,156	6,821,474	15,367,321

DOMESTIC DISASTER RESPONSE*

Disaster Programs	Beginning Balance	Revenue	Transfers In (Out)	Expenses	YTD 1/31/2012
General Undesignated Fund:					
Program Management and Preparedness	361,845			705,272	(343,427)
Direct Response	1,658,276	1,368,760	616,501	678,021	2,965,516
US Severe Spring Storms		1,888,432		757,103	1,131,329
US Summer Floods	(4,302)	89,863		10,000	75,561
Hurricane Response 2005	17,453	7,885		-	25,338
Tornadoes	5,100	223,684	-	-	228,784
Camp Noah	628	-	-	-	628
Southern California Fires	-	340		-	340
Hurricane Response USA	47,066	70,920		86,194	31,792
Total Disaster Programs	2,086,066	3,649,884	616,501	2,236,590	4,115,861
Total Domestic Disaster Response	2,086,066	3,649,884	616,501	2,236,590	4,115,861

GENERAL DISASTER FUND	65,166	1,505,747	(1,552,657)	14,969	3,287
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Total Disaster Funds:					
Year-To-Date Total January 2012	18,457,108	10,102,394	-	9,073,033	19,486,469
Year-To-Date Total January 2011	12,337,808	12,418,212	(92,559)	6,206,352	18,457,108

*This includes Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR), a cooperative ministry of the ELCA and Lutheran Church Missouri Synod (LCMS).

ELCA Capital Projects
January 31, 2012

<i>Type</i>	<i>PROJECT DESCRIPTION</i>	<i>JOB KEY</i>	<i>Original Budget</i>	<i>Projects Approved</i>	<i>Expenses YTD</i>	<i>Project Balance</i>	<i>Percent Expensed</i>	<i>Unallocated Category Budget</i>
Computer Software and Systems (Non PC) 001		Annual Budget	\$100,000					100,000
	Vulnerability and Malware Detection	01-11001-001		27,475	19,231	8,244	70.00%	72,525
	MIF test Lab Storage (Paid for by MIF)	01-11008-001		\$0				
Unit Cubicle Configurations 002		Annual Budget						-
Equipment Purchases 003		Annual Budget	-					-
Building/Complex Maintenance 004		Annual Budget	400,000					400,000
	Garage cleaning and repair	01-11003-004		208,744		208,744	0.00%	191,256
	Garage eastside entrance concrete repair	01-11004-004		23,107	23,107	-	100.00%	168,149
	Keycard Access System	01-11006-004		138,295	120,906	17,389	87.43%	29,854
	Garage Sidewalk and Lighting	01-11007-004		26,710	25,425	1,285	95.19%	3,144
Tenant Lease Allowances 005		Annual Budget	1,000,000					1,000,000
	NBOME Buildout	01-11002-005		442,625	442,625	-	100.00%	557,375
	Place low-voltage cable into conduit	01-11005-005		27,500		27,500	0.00%	529,875
	Seabury-Western	01-11009-005		318,350	318,350	-	100.00%	211,525
New Building Purchases 006		Annual Budget	-					-
Contingency		Annual Budget	-					-
Total Available			\$1,500,000	\$1,212,806	\$949,644	\$263,162	78.30%	287,194

Previously Approved Projects Not Yet Completed

		Original Amount	Unspent Balance	Expenses 2011	Project Balance	Percent Expensed
Conference Room Audio/Visual	01-09006-004	47,695	11,905	8,345	3,560	92.54%
Variable Frequency Drives	01-10007-004	57,915	57,915	47,373	10,542	81.80%
Computer Room HVAC Replacement	01-10011-004	273,165	49,430	31,859	17,571	93.57%
Lutheran Center Roof	01-10015-004	750,000	750,000	628,732	121,268	83.83%
Communications/Collaboration Suite Upgrade	01-10001-001	216,770	39,757	20,931	18,826	91.32%
IT Service Management System	01-10004-001	79,500	5,200	-	5,200	93.46%
"Living Lutheran" Online Member Destination	01-10006-001	59,500	5,000	-	5,000	91.60%
Deferred Gift System	01-10012-001	43,000	39,600	63,462	(23,862)	155.49%
Commvault License Conversion	01-10016-001	49,500	4,227	-	4,227	91.46%
ECIS Phase II	01-10017-001	495,000	377,965	361,392	16,573	96.65%
HRIS System and Migration	01-10018-001	109,000	34,520	28,172	6,348	94.18%
LDR.org re-development	01-10019-001	18,000	12,000	12,070	(70)	100.39%
Data Network Update	01-10021-001	244,775	204,554	203,474	1,080	99.56%
IFAS Contract Management Module	01-10023-001	22,000	22,000	17,961	4,039	81.64%
MIF Funded-BOP Disaster Recovery Equip	01-10024-001	90,000	90,000	-	90,000	0.00%
Total Previous Year Projects		<u>2,555,820</u>	<u>1,704,073</u>	<u>1,423,770</u>	<u>280,302</u>	
Total 2011 Expenses				<u><u>2,373,415</u></u>		

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Revised April 12, 2012
2012 Income Proposal
Revised

	2012		
	Current Proposal	Proposed Changes	Revised Estimate
CURRENT FUNDS			
UNRESTRICTED			
Mission Support	\$ 48,000,000	\$ 750,000	\$ 48,750,000
Vision for Mission	1,400,000	(100,000)	1,300,000
Investment Income	1,850,835	100,000	1,950,835
Bequests & Trusts	1,100,000		1,100,000
Endowment	716,130		716,130
Rent	1,318,785	325,145	1,643,930
Other	350,000	749,990	1,099,990
Total Unrestricted	\$ 54,735,750	\$ 1,825,135	\$ 56,560,885
TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED			
Missionary Support	3,700,000	(550,000)	3,150,000
Bequests and Trusts	1,400,000		1,400,000
Endowment	1,537,250		1,537,250
Unit Designated	300,000	50,000	350,000
Mission Investment Fund	1,500,000		1,500,000
Grants	1,000,000		1,000,000
Total Restricted	9,437,250	(500,000)	8,937,250
Total Current Funds	\$ 64,173,000	\$ 1,325,135	\$ 65,498,135
WORLD HUNGER			
Gifts:			
Through Synods	9,025,000	25,000	9,050,000
Direct Giving-Congregations		2,000,000	2,000,000
Direct Giving- Individuals & Other	8,300,000	(2,025,000)	6,275,000
Endowment	575,000		575,000
Bequests and Misc.	600,000		600,000
Total World Hunger	\$18,500,000	\$0	\$18,500,000
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 82,673,000	\$ 1,325,135	\$ 83,998,135

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
2012 Expense Proposal
Revised

	<u>Current Fund</u>			<u>World Hunger</u>			<i>Total</i>
	Current		Revised	Current		Revised	
	Authorization	Revisions *	Authorization	Authorization	Revisions	Authorization	
Congregational and Synodical Mission	\$25,728,335	(\$116,565)	\$25,611,770	\$2,830,715	\$230,000	\$3,060,715	\$28,672,485
Global Mission	12,125,310	(50,785)	12,074,525	13,038,445	1,110,000	14,148,445	26,222,970
Mission Advancement	5,282,695	(58,350)	5,224,345	2,630,840	60,000	2,690,840	7,915,185
Office of the Presiding Bishop	5,339,385	(53,730)	5,285,655				5,285,655
Office of the Secretary	3,877,975	(24,975)	3,853,000				3,853,000
Office of the Treasurer	6,166,225	1,361,645	7,527,870				7,527,870
General Treasury	151,200		151,200				151,200
Retiree Minimum Health Obligation	2,500,000		2,500,000				2,500,000
Depreciation	2,342,135		2,342,135				2,342,135
Strategic Initiative Fund	659,740	267,895	927,635				927,635
Total	\$64,173,000	\$1,325,135	\$65,498,135	\$18,500,000	\$1,400,000	\$19,900,000	\$85,398,135

* Accounting adjustments reflecting impact of Service Level Agreements and changes in expenses charged back to units.

**The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
 Church Council Designated Funds Functioning as Endowment
 As of January 31, 2012**

Name of Endowment Fund		Date Fund Was Established	Market Value as of		Current Recipient of Endowment Income
			January 31, 2012	January 31, 2011	
ALC Foundation Fund	13640	January 27, 1986	\$1,860,313	\$1,940,873	Foundation of the ELCA
Henry C. Boraas Legacy	24596	August 10, 1955	68,183	71,135	Global Mission / CSM
Caribbean Ministry Fund	30250	October 10, 1979	293,204	305,901	Global Mission
Herbert G. Carlson Memorial Fund	30220	December 1, 1978	1,542,081	1,608,860	Global Mission /CSM
DPL Scholarship Fund	44800	Pre-1963	62,278	64,975	CSM
DGM General Endowment	270144	November 6, 1997	46,474	48,487	Global Mission
DGM Missions	46900	July 8, 1926	221,725	231,327	Global Mission
Engagement of Persons with Other Faiths	54100	July 22, 1992	47,616	49,678	Global Mission
ELCA Educational Grant Program	53325	January 1, 1996	106,572	111,187	CSM
ELCA General Memorial Fund	270137	September 19, 1997	200,234	208,855	ELCA Current Fund
Foundation of the ELCA Operating Reserve Fund to Supplement Overseas Retirement Benefits	271608 & 271615	January 3, 2010	2,855,209	2,851,286	Foundation of the ELCA
Carrie Hatleberg Estate	196500	May 18, 1987	189,131	188,872	Global Mission
In The City for Good (and income account)	80498	November 25, 1974	65,475	68,311	Global Mission
Long Scholarship Fund	270253 & 270688	April 27,1998	1,380,629	1,370,570	CSM
Lutheran Magazine Development Fund	124540	Pre-1963	23,676	24,701	CSM
Mission Builders Support Fund		June 30, 2009	467,068	466,426	The Lutheran Magazine
Mission Development Fund	270044	July 15, 1997	110,585	118,634	CSM
Parish Education Fund		February 1, 2007	5,513,348	5,834,355	OPB
Schickler Family Memorial Fund	160200	Pre-1963	49,193	51,323	CSM
South East Asia Ministry Fund	190998	January 21, 1983	1,291,682	1,347,617	ELCA Current Fund
Special Needs Retirement Endowment Fund	194680	May 23, 1996	2,347,388	2,344,163	Global Mission
Vision for Mission Income Fund	194800	October 1, 1995	478,878	499,616	OPB
Youth and Young Adult Min Ch Council	270169	April 1, 1998	678,175	707,543	ELCA Current Fund
	271739	October 29, 2011	442,817	-	Youth Ministry
Total Market Value of All Funds			\$20,341,934	\$20,514,695	

**MISSION DEVELOPMENT FUND
 HISTORY AND CURRENT ALLOCATIONS**
Fiscal 2007 through January 31, 2012

ADDITIONS

Church Council Designations	2,041,196	
Deferred Gift Fund Excess	4,900,000	
Other:		
Synod Additions	280,000	
Net Earnings and Appreciation	<u>819,809</u>	\$8,041,005

ALLOCATIONS

Blue Ribbon Committee	200,000	
New Bishop Orientations	51,800	
Middle East Strategy	192,600	
Middle East Advocacy Position	124,500	
ELCA Brand Campaign	125,000	
Campaign Feasibility Study	210,000	
Book of Faith	250,000	
Vision for Mission Appeal	84,000	
Global Mission Support	13,000	
Macedonia Project	285,000	
Report Writer	150,000	
Leadership Grants	100,000	
Data Management	120,000	
Staff Development	150,000	
World Hunger Review (charged directly)	105,000	
Luther's Works	<u>500,000</u>	<u>2,660,900</u>

BALANCE AVAILABLE

\$5,380,105

Summary of Church Council Designated Funds
1999 - 2009 (1)
January 31, 2012

Designation	Year	Amount	Expended	Balance
Second Mile Ministry Fund	1999	\$ 12,000,000	\$ 11,985,482	\$ 14,518
Culture-Specific Resources	2001	400,000	178,084	221,916
Leadership Development Initiative	2005	2,587,622	2,435,394	152,228
Total		<u>\$ 14,987,622</u>	<u>\$ 14,598,960</u>	<u>\$ 388,662</u>

(1) Does not include Church Council Designated Funds Functioning as Endowment.

Church Council Designated Fund Report for:
Year Designated by Church Council:
Estimated Period of Designation:
Reporting Date:

SECOND MILE MINISTRY FUNDS
1999
1999 - 2012
September 30, 2011

Activity	Allocation	Expended	Balance
Ministry Among People in Poverty			
Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission	\$900,000	\$900,000	\$0
Global Mission	900,000	900,000	-
Church in Society	1,200,000	1,200,000	-
Sub-Total	<u>\$3,000,000</u>	<u>\$3,000,000</u>	<u>\$0</u>
Supporting Ministry That Needs Special Attention			
Special Needs Retirement Fd Functioning as Enc	500,000	500,000	-
In the City for Good Funds Function as Endow	600,000	600,000	-
Leadership Development	500,000	500,000	-
Anti-Racism projects with Ecumenical Partners	300,000	285,482	14,518
World Hunger Appeal Anniversary	100,000	100,000	-
Identity Project	2,000,000	2,000,000	-
Sub-Total	<u>\$4,000,000</u>	<u>\$3,985,482</u>	<u>\$14,518</u>
Total Expense to Operating/Designated Fund	<u>\$7,000,000</u>	<u>\$6,985,482</u>	<u>\$14,518</u>
Lutheran Center Mortgage Relief	<u>\$5,000,000</u>	<u>\$5,000,000</u>	<u>\$0</u>
Grand Total	<u><u>\$12,000,000</u></u>	<u><u>\$11,985,482</u></u>	<u><u>\$14,518</u></u>

Church Council Designated Fund Report for:
Year Designated by Church Council:
Estimated Period of Designation:
Reporting Date:

CULTURE-SPECIFIC RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
2001
On-going
January 31st, 2012

<u>Activity Name</u>	<u>Time Line</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Inception - To Date</u>	<u>Balance</u>
Chinese / Mandarin Worship Resource	2001-2011	\$130,800.00	\$64,367	\$66,433
Pan Asian Songbook	2012	\$10,000.00	\$2,397	\$7,603
Alaska Native Worship Resource	2001-2011	\$67,860.00	\$28,808	\$39,052
Multicultural Catalog	Completed	\$27,018.00	\$27,018	(\$0)
Asian / Evangelism Language Resources	Completed	\$9,510.00	\$9,510	(\$0)
Spanish Interpretation Statement	Completed	\$18,637.63	\$18,638	(\$0)
Abundant Harvest	2010-2012	\$30,000.00	\$16,650	\$13,350
Proclaiming His Story	2010-2012	\$20,000	\$4,446	\$15,554
First Communion(English/Spanish)	new	\$26,000	\$6,250	\$19,750
Planned Projects		\$339,826	\$178,084	\$161,742
Unallocated to date:		\$60,174		\$60,174
Total Church Council Funds		<u>\$400,000</u>	<u>\$178,084</u>	<u>\$221,916</u>

Church Council Designated Fund Report for:
Year Designated by Church Council:
Estimated Period of Designation:
Reporting Date:

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE
2005
2005 - 2012
January 31, 2012

<u>Expense Type</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Inception-To-Date</u>	<u>Balance</u>
Leadership Development			
Grants - other	\$0	\$6,000	(\$6,000)
Salaries and Benefits	463,422	405,997	57,425
Travel	19,800	26,339	(6,539)
Contracts	16,500	1,500	15,000
Accommodations	16,500	1,245	15,255
Event Travel	13,200	1,142	12,058
Meals	3,800	3,211	589
Speakers	2,200	-	2,200
Office Expenses	(0)	4,454	(4,454)
Catering	2,200	3,386	(1,186)
<i>Multicultural Ministries:</i>			
Arab/Middle Eastern Ministries	-	30,000	(30,000)
<i>Pacific Lutheran University</i>			
Thrivent Leadership Development Initiative	-	10,000	(10,000)
Seminarian & Student debt Consultation	-	11,696	(11,696)
<i>Center for Creative Leadership</i>			
Leadership at the Peak	-	10,600	(10,600)
<i>US Congregational Life Survey</i>	-	22,052	(22,052)
Total Leadership Development	\$537,622	\$537,622	(\$0)

<u>Expense Type</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Inception-To-Date</u>	<u>Balance</u>
Leadership Development Initiative Grants			
<i>Vocation and Education:</i>			
Next Generation of PhDs	150,000	150,000	\$0
Making the Connections	400,000	400,000	\$0
Lutheran Center at Atlanta	133,000	133,000	\$0
Developing Leaders	100,000	100,000	\$0
Candidacy Committee Training	10,000	820	\$9,180
Developing Mission Leaders (25%)	789	789	\$0
Missionologists/Leadership Consultation	4,844	4,844	\$0
<i>Multicultural Ministries:</i>			
Come, See, Discover	108,000	105,759	\$2,241
African Descent Horizon	105,000	105,000	\$0
Asian Leadership Development	60,000	60,000	\$0
American Indian/AK Native Community Center	15,000	15,000	\$0
Asian American Young Adult Network	10,000	9,885	\$115
Leaders of Color Gathering	25,000	25,000	\$0
American Indian/AK Native Youth Gathering	32,000	32,000	\$0
American Indian/AK Native Leadership	30,000	30,000	\$0
<i>Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission:</i>			
Emerging Leaders Network	63,000	33,848	\$29,152
Evangelical Horizon Internships	100,000	100,000	\$0

Church Council Designated Fund Report for:
Year Designated by Church Council:
Estimated Period of Designation:
Reporting Date:

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE
2005
2005 - 2012
January 31, 2012

Congregational Latino/Hispanic	300,000	188,460	\$111,540
Coaching Trainers Network	15,000	15,000	\$0
<i>Church in Society:</i>			
A Call to Public Justice	100,000	100,000	\$0
<i>Global Mission:</i>			
Young Adult Program	100,000	100,000	\$0
<i>Gettysburg Seminary:</i>			
Intersections Institute	26,000	26,000	\$0
<i>Metropolitan New York Synod:</i>			
Urban Leaders Institute	20,000	20,000	\$0
<i>Region 1:</i>			
American Indian/Alaska Native Ministry	20,000	20,000	\$0
<i>Lutheran School of Theology-Chicago</i>			
Leadership Development Grant	7,000	7,000	\$0
<i>Non-Staff Travel</i>			
Transforming Leaders Event ('07)	6,115	6,115	\$0
Leadership Grant Strategy Committee Meeting ('05)	1,862	1,862	\$0
<i>Lighthouse Partnership</i>			
Support for Developing Leaders	9,500	9,500	\$0
<i>Alaska Synod-ELCA</i>			
Multicultural Leadership Development Grant	20,000	20,000	\$0
<i>Lutheran Church of the Redeemer</i>			
Transforming Leaders Initiative	60,000	60,000	\$0
<i>Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary</i>			
Support for TEEM Students	15,000	15,000	\$0
<i>Center for creative Leadership</i>			
Leadership at the Peak	1,365	1,365	\$0
<i>US Congregational Life Survey</i>	1,525	1,525	\$0
	<u>\$2,050,000</u>	<u>\$1,897,772</u>	<u>\$152,228</u>
Total Available	<u><u>\$2,587,622</u></u>	<u><u>\$2,435,394</u></u>	<u><u>\$152,228</u></u>

Report of the Director for Mission Support

A Word of Thanks

I often begin a synodical-churchwide mission support consultation with the familiar opening verses of Paul's letter to the Philippians (1:3-11), beginning with these words, "I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now." In these consultations with synod leaders – bishops, vice presidents, members of synod councils, synod staff – we share stories of what we do together as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. As we continue to be the church that is being made new, it is important to give thanks for the faithful work of so many in stewarding the resources needed to carry out the mission given us.

2011-2012 Mission Support

Exhibit F, Part 5B shows churchwide mission support for 2011 in dollars and percentages, and 2012 synod plans. In 2011, 14 synods increased the percentage of sharing, 8 synods decreased the percentage of sharing, and 43 synods maintained the percentage of sharing. It is encouraging to note that in 2012 the numbers have changed, with 20 synods increasing the percentage of sharing, 7 synods decreasing the percentage, and 38 synods maintaining the percentage. While many synods continue to deal with a decrease in mission support from congregations, synod leaders are working diligently to either maintain or increase the sharing for churchwide ministries.

The challenge before us continues to be both the decrease in mission support from congregations, as well as the overall decrease in sharing of mission support between synods and the churchwide organization. While many synods are increasing the percentage, the average sharing in 2012 is now at 48.83%, significantly below the 55% sharing that was affirmed in the 2007 Blue Ribbon Report on Mission Funding.

As the Macedonia Project continues in 20 synods (with more to be added in 2012), the work of the directors for evangelical mission and synod stewardship staff, in building mission support from congregations, will be essential if we are to maintain and increase our capacity for doing what is needed as the ELCA.

Synodical-Churchwide Mission Support Consultation

Synodical-Churchwide mission support consultations remain a central and important component of mission funding. In 2011 there were consultations with 27 synod councils, including meeting with synod leaders in two regional gatherings. These consultations are an important link between the synods and the churchwide organization and they will continue in 2012.

A Word of Hope

The past three years have shown that providing for the needs of synodical and churchwide ministries continues to be a challenge. The loss of members and the impact of the economy have affected our congregations, and for many, their giving of mission support has decreased. Yet in my time with synod councils,

- No one has said the ELCA shouldn't continue to be with our global partners in ministry;
- No one has said the ELCA shouldn't be starting new ministries and renewing existing congregations;
- No one has said the ELCA shouldn't be with the people in Haiti, helping them rebuild their lives, or responding to disasters within our country and around the globe;
- No one has said the ELCA shouldn't be engaged in church-to-church ecumenical relations;
- No one has said the ELCA shouldn't invest in leaders for the future or in sustaining ELCA seminaries and our network of theological education;
- No one has said the ELCA shouldn't be a voice and a hand for the immigrant, the homeless, the poor, the hungry.

What they do say is that God's mission through the ELCA is needed, and that we are all part of that mission. I continue to believe that the members of this church, if given the story of who we are as the ELCA and what we are doing in living in response to God's freely given grace, will find a way to give more generously for our shared mission. This is my hope and my prayer.

Rev. A. Craig Settlage

2013 Synod Mission Support Plans
With 2011 Actual and 2012 Plans

SYNOD NAME	#	2011		2012		2013	
		ACTUAL	MS %	SYNOD PLANS		SYNOD PLANS	
				AMOUNT	MS %		
ALASKA	1A	163,377	39.50%	178,000	40.00%	168,000	40.00%
N.W. WASH	1B	578,855	45.50%	568,750	45.50%	598,000	46.00%
S.W. WASH	1C	339,873	39.00%	359,450	39.50%	376,000	40.00%
E.WASH/ID	1D	247,053	31.00%	265,650	33.00%	267,960	33.00%
OREGON	1E	361,817	39.00%	355,875	36.50%	385,200	40.00%
MONTANA	1F	373,578	39.50%	382,000	40.00%	389,205	40.50%
SIERRA-PACIFI	2A	921,487	51.50%	910,000	52.00%	984,373	52.50%
SW CALIFORNI.	2B	495,474	49.00%	526,750	49.00%	530,519	50.00%
PACIFICA	2C	720,189	51.00%	765,000	51.00%	747,150	51.00%
GRAND CANYO	2D	876,501	50.00%	875,000	50.00%	875,000	50.00%
ROCKY MTN	2E	1,240,827	50.00%	1,237,500	50.00%	1,250,000	50.00%
W. NO.DAK	3A	384,420	43.00%	393,240	43.50%	400,400	44.00%
E. NO.DAK	3B	393,228	40.00%	428,000	40.00%		
SO. DAK.	3C	679,481	44.00%	731,114	44.50%	731,114	44.50%
NW. MINN.	3D	677,897	51.00%	655,350	51.00%		
NE. MINN.	3E	583,253	49.00%	590,450	49.00%	617,400	49.00%
SW. MINN.	3F	1,054,345	52.50%	1,064,569	52.50%	1,075,215	52.50%
MINPLS. AREA	3G	1,722,647	55.00%	1,732,500	55.00%	1,787,500	55.00%
ST PAUL (M)	3H	982,489	50.00%	1,050,000	50.00%		
SE. MINN.	3I	977,919	52.50%	979,650	52.50%	1,010,625	52.50%
NEBRASKA	4A	1,988,922	57.00%	1,907,500	54.50%	1,907,500	54.50%
CENTRAL STAT	4B	886,407	50.00%	902,567	50.00%	912,567	50.00%
ARK/OK	4C	190,173	40.50%	220,170	41.00%	207,872	40.60%
N.TEX/N.LOU	4D	560,320	47.00%	576,777	47.50%	602,298	48.00%
S.W.TEXAS	4E	665,787	50.00%	792,000	50.00%	714,000	51.00%
GULF COAST	4F	623,397	50.00%	667,500	50.00%	600,000	50.00%
METRO CHGO	5A	1,698,450	54.00%	1,732,358	53.00%		
NO. ILL	5B	1,269,984	55.00%	1,315,600	55.00%		
CEN.SO. ILL	5C	794,453	56.00%	823,200	56.00%	784,000	56.00%
SE IOWA	5D	1,385,061	53.50%	1,385,062	53.50%	1,385,062	53.50%
WEST IOWA	5E	335,909	36.10%	326,747	37.10%	338,910	38.10%
NE IOWA	5F	544,081	40.00%	570,000	40.00%	560,000	40.00%
N GRT LKES	5G	407,663	50.00%	425,000	50.00%	426,725	50.50%
NW.SYN (W)	5H	731,749	55.00%	775,500	55.00%	775,500	55.00%
EC WISC	5I	867,380	55.00%	907,500	55.00%	907,500	55.00%
GRTR MILWKEI	5J	1,250,348	55.00%	1,237,500	55.00%	1,155,000	55.00%
SO.-CENT (W)	5K	815,917	55.00%	839,731	55.00%	858,000	55.00%
LACROSSE (W)	5L	424,808	55.00%	441,900	55.00%	451,000	55.00%
SE. MICH	6A	532,973	43.00%	546,000	42.00%	559,000	43.00%
N/W LOWER MI	6B	702,935	50.00%	718,400	50.00%	718,400	50.00%
IND/KY	6C	919,126	51.50%	962,000	52.00%	988,000	52.00%
NW OHIO	6D	911,314	51.00%	875,262	51.00%	888,012	51.00%
NE OHIO	6E	811,692	49.00%	827,812	49.00%	768,000	45.46%
S. OHIO	6F	723,067	39.27%	726,000	40.00%	737,000	40.00%
NEW JERSEY	7A	1,109,027	50.00%	1,100,000	50.00%	1,100,000	50.00%
NEW ENGLAND	7B	1,059,528	54.00%	1,068,268	54.20%	1,096,425	54.40%
METRO NY	7C	572,404	48.50%	612,500	49.00%		
UPSTATE NY	7D	567,461	47.20%	519,239	40.00%	490,000	40.00%
NE PENN	7E	1,341,235	53.00%	1,097,500	46.00%	1,104,000	46.00%
SE PENN	7F	1,236,550	53.50%	1,230,500	53.50%		
SLOVAK ZION	7G	18,324	30.00%	21,000	30.00%	20,000	30.25%

Shaded areas reflect notification of plan changes received since the November 2011 Church Council meeting.

2013 Synod Mission Support Plans
With 2011 Actual and 2012 Plans

SYNOD NAME	#	2011		2012		2013	
		ACTUAL	MS %	AMOUNT	MS %	AMOUNT	MS %
NW PENN	8A	429,488	50.00%	418,473	50.00%	411,615	50.00%
SW PENN	8B	836,575	50.00%	800,000	50.00%	785,650	47.50%
ALLEGHENY	8C	371,172	50.00%	405,000	50.00%	405,000	50.00%
LOW SUSQ	8D	1,407,389	46.00%	1,627,500	46.50%	1,534,500	46.50%
UPP SUSQ	8E	521,590	50.00%	525,000	50.00%		
DEL-MRYLND	8F	1,122,860	53.00%	1,150,250	53.50%	1,188,000	54.00%
METRO DC	8G	889,428	50.00%	1,000,000	50.00%	850,000	50.00%
W. VA/W.MYLD	8H	209,380	45.00%	229,500	45.00%		
VIRGINIA	9A	600,866	37.34%	660,910	38.00%	682,500	39.00%
NO. CAROLINA	9B	1,218,582	42.06%	1,123,423	39.00%	1,123,423	37.60%
SO. CAROLINA	9C	1,049,898	41.00%	1,050,780	41.50%	1,085,500	41.75%
SOUTHEASTER	9D	1,066,767	50.00%	1,076,250	50.00%	1,103,150	50.00%
FLORIDA-BAHA	9E	948,015	44.00%	995,583	46.00%	1,019,900	46.00%
CARIBBEAN	9F	30,000	12.79%	40,000	17.22%	40,000	17.22%
TOTAL REMITTANCES		\$50,423,160	49.02%	\$51,302,609	48.83%	\$43,477,670	49.21%

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**Mission Advancement Report to the
ELCA Church Council Budget and Finance Committee
April 2012**

The Mission Advancement unit is responsible for coordinating this church's communication, marketing, public relations, mission funding, major gifts, planned gifts and constituent data management. While mission funding continues to show some instability, particularly in the category of income from congregations, 2011 income goals were met in most categories. A summary and analysis of major churchwide funding initiatives is detailed below.

Mission Support

Mission Support for churchwide ministries totaled \$50.4 million in 2011, which was \$2.4 million positive to the churchwide budget, but below 2010 results by \$2.2 million. Ten of 65 synods experienced an increase in Mission Support from congregations over the previous year – a positive direction compared to both 2009 and 2010 when only one synod realized an increase.

In addition to the changes in dollars, we look closely at the percentage sharing of Mission Support from congregations. In 2011, 14 synods increased the percentage of mission support shared for churchwide ministries, eight synods decreased the percentage of sharing, and 43 synods maintained the percentage of sharing. In 2012 the numbers have improved, with 20 synods committed to increasing the percentage of sharing, seven synods decreasing the percentage, and 38 synods maintaining the percentage – as of this writing.

The challenge before us continues to be both the decrease in the amount of mission support from congregations as well as the overall decrease in the percentage sharing of mission support between synods and the churchwide organization. While many synods are increasing the percentage, the average sharing in 2012 is now at 48.8%, significantly below the 55% sharing that was affirmed in the 2007 Blue Ribbon Report on Mission Funding. The four difficult financial years since 2007 made it extremely challenging for synods to move upward or hold their percentage sharing. We hope that some of those factors are now improving. The Macedonia Project continues in 20 synods (with more to be added in 2012) and the efforts of directors for evangelical mission and synod stewardship staff will be essential to maintain and increase our capacity for doing what is needed as the ELCA.

ELCA Fund for Leaders

Despite a year of transition, the ELCA Fund for Leaders received more than \$1.5 million in new gifts and \$400,000 in realized bequests for 2011, bringing the total value of the Fund for Leaders Endowment Fund to just shy of \$25.0 million. Established by the 1997 Churchwide Assembly, the goal of the ELCA Fund for Leaders is to grow an endowment of more than \$200 million through a combination of churchwide, synodical, congregational, and individual named endowment accounts.

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
CHURCH COUNCIL

April 13-15, 2012

Exhibit F, Part 6

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In the 2011-2012 academic year, 184 seminarians are receiving scholarship support totaling more than \$1.1 million from the ELCA Fund for Leaders. This includes 16 new full tuition scholarships, 16 new partial tuition scholarships, scholarships for mission developer candidates, and a large number of synod scholarships, as distributed by the 34 synods with ELCA Fund for Leaders endowment funds.

Vision for Mission

Vision for Mission income for fiscal year 2011 was strong for the second consecutive year at \$1.4 million, surpassing the budget goal of \$1.3 million. In 2012 we plan to sharpen the focus of the appeal and reduce the frequency of mailings from six to four. Because of these changes, the estimate for fiscal year 2012 is to hold at \$1.3 million.

ELCA New Congregations

The Mission Partners and Mission Founders programs have been reviewed and a plan developed for updating them to be in alignment with the new structure for developing congregations. The proposal was affirmed by the Synodical-Churchwide Relations Committee of the Conference of Bishops. The refreshed campaign will include a name change from Mission Partners and Mission Founders to one campaign for new start congregations that includes an option for designating to a specific ministry start or giving to the program broadly. Collateral will be developed to assist directors for evangelical mission in telling the story and lifting up opportunities to participate financially. A program goal was set for starting 70 new congregations in 2012.

Missionary Sponsorship

Missionary Sponsorship income in 2011 was \$3.0 million, approximately 80 percent of the income goal and a decrease of 19 percent compared to the prior year. These results were disappointing in comparison to fiscal year 2010 when income was 97 percent of goal. Missionary Sponsorship continues to be primarily a congregational program and the number of sponsoring congregations has dropped by 319 from the year 2007 to 2011.

The Missionary Sponsorship team is currently researching several causes exacerbating this trend: sponsoring congregations that have left the ELCA, a reduction in the number of missionaries in the sponsorship program, competing appeals, financial struggles in congregations, and an increase in the number of missionaries deployed by synods. Wedgeworth Communications has been secured to assist with integrating the findings of this research into a strategic plan, as well as evaluating the effectiveness of current communication efforts. Strategic considerations will include the following possibilities: building the international scholarship program into the Missionary Sponsorship appeal, an intentional focus using the companion synod program to strengthen Missionary Sponsorship and leveraging the very popular Young Adults in Global Mission program to broaden the donor database for Missionary Sponsorship.

World Hunger

Giving to ELCA World Hunger ended the fiscal year 2011 strong with a total of \$19.1 million in gifts and income; up almost \$1.4 million from 2010, of which about \$1.0 million was in direct gifts and gifts through synods. The balance of \$0.4 million was primarily in increased giving through bequests and trusts. Over the course of 2011 there has been some fall off in giving through direct mail. This has been more than made up for by increased giving online, especially through Good Gifts and God's Global Barnyard. A special online challenge campaign for the final week of the calendar year yielded approximately \$450 thousand in gifts in addition to the \$100 thousand that came with meeting the challenge.

A consultant, Chris Grumm, has been secured through an RFP process to assess the comparative strengths and opportunities of ELCA World Hunger with similar organizations and to recommend ways to strengthen the positioning of ELCA World Hunger. The process will take into account potential adjustments to its program, appeal, education, advocacy and networking components, as well as staffing structure. A final report from the consultant is expected in mid-May 2012.

Disaster Response

Disaster response in 2011 realized significant giving to undesignated and broadly designated accounts. This is nearly \$3.5 million of the total gifts, reflecting high trust and a strong desire that the church direct gifts where needed most. Making the case for selecting undesignated or broadly designated disaster giving has been a high priority over the past 18 months. Extensive giving was also directed for the Japan earthquake (nearly \$3.0 million), U.S. storms, floods, tornadoes (about \$2.3 million) and Horn of Africa relief (about \$1.0 million).

By the second anniversary of the Haiti earthquake, about 65% of the gifts received had been mobilized to projects in the field. Most of the remaining fund balance is dedicated for a neighborhood rebuilding of between 250 and 300 houses (which broke ground in January) and the completion of the trade school and ministry complex of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Haiti.

ELCA Malaria Campaign

At the end of FY 2011, the ELCA Malaria Campaign had received \$1.7 million or 86.5% towards the 2011 annual goal of \$2.0 million. Including pre-campaign receipts from the two years prior, the campaign has received total cash of \$2.4 million and an additional \$0.5 million in commitments for a combined total of \$2.9 million. This is 19.0% towards the final campaign goal that is to be completed by 2015.

The ELCA Malaria Campaign National Leadership Team will meet for the first time on April 11-12 to provide strategic leadership for the campaign in the area of major giving. Synod Malaria Coordinators have also now been identified in nearly every synod and a Regional Volunteer Corps, who will speak on behalf of the campaign at synod and regional events, is being established.

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Exhibit F, Part 6

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Fiscal year 2012 will be the first full year in which the ELCA Malaria Campaign is an authorized public campaign and an ELCA churchwide priority. It is expected that marketing efforts and new collateral materials produced at the end of 2011 will bear much fruit in 2012, and will be joined by new congregational and major gift materials that will be available soon.

ELCA Foundation

The ELCA Foundation supports the work of the churchwide organization and other expressions and institutions of the church in the area of gift planning and major gifts, as well as providing a vehicle for investing through the ELCA Endowment Fund A. The ELCA Foundation held more than \$173 million in its deferred gifts pool and \$385 million in endowment funds at the end of 2011.

In 2011, through the efforts of 13 regional gift planners and churchwide staff, 139 gift annuities representing \$5.3 million in new contracts and four new unitrusts totaling \$2.1 million were established. Deposits to the Endowment Fund Pooled Trust, a broadly diversified balanced fund designed for endowments and other long-term investments, totaled \$19.2 million for the year. This included approximately \$14.2 million in endowment contribution revenue and \$10.1 million through growth in participants' investments. While endowment gifts were down a bit from the prior year, there was an increase of 23 investor participants. Total distributions to planned gift beneficiaries totaled \$22.5 million in 2011. Membership in Kalos, the ELCA Legacy Program, surpassed its original goal of 300 charter members and continues to grow.

Summary of ELCA Cash and Investments

	As of	Asset Value	Policy Approved	Approving Body	Date Approved	Compliance with Policy	1 yr. Fund Performance as of 12/31/11	1 Year Benchmark Performance as of 12/31/11	Asset Allocation
Churchwide Organization									
Checking Accounts	1/31/2012	\$20,497,888 ¹	Y	⁴ CC	March 24, 2009	N	1.00%	1.00%	Deposit, checking and sweep accounts
Operating Investments (short-term)	1/31/2012	\$717,007 ¹	Y	CC	November 10, 2006	Y	0.83%	0.62%	32% Gov'ts and agencies/56% corp's/12% MBS
Investments (medium-term)	1/31/2012	\$36,565,367 ¹	Y	CC	November 10, 2006	Y	2.99%	3.10%	50% Gov'ts and agencies/39% corp's/11% MBS
EDCS - LWM	1/31/2012	\$926,488 ²	N		-	-	-	-	
Miscellaneous Cash and Investments	1/31/2012	\$5,944,633 ³	N	N/A	-	-	-	-	
Endowment Fund Pooled Trust Fund "A"									
Pooled Trust Checking Accounts	12/31/2011	\$2,722,770 ⁷	Y	BOT-EF	October 21, 2010	Y	1%	1%	Checking/sweep account
Pooled Trust Investments	12/31/2011	\$383,410,860 ⁴	Y	BOT-EF	Various	Y	-1.75%	-0.78%	50% U.S. Equity, 15% Non U.S. Equity, 20% Inv. Grade Bond, 5% Global Real Estate, 10% High Yield
Portion that benefits ELCA at 4.25% annual distribution rate	12/31/2011	\$149,656,309	Y	BOT-EF	Various	Y	-1.75%	-0.78%	50% U.S. Equity, 15% Non U.S. Equity, 20% Inv. Grade Bond, 5% Global Real Estate, 10% High Yield
Endowments Outside Pooled Trust (MIF Certificates)	12/31/2011	\$1,247,712	Y	BOT-EF	October 1, 2011	Y	N/A	-	
Endowments Outside Pooled Trust (real estate, mineral rights and other)	12/31/2011	\$1,727,566	Y	BOT-EF	October 1, 2011	Y	N/A	-	
Deferred Gift Funds									
Deferred Gift Checking Accounts	12/31/2011	\$3,484,406 ⁷	Y	CC	November 12, 2010	Y	1%	1%	Checking/sweep account
Charitable Gift Annuities-Required Reserve	12/31/2011	\$62,581,020 ⁴	Y	CC	November 14, 2009	Y	11.71%		⁸ Fixed Income securities-55% Gov'ts, 32% Corp's, 13% MBS 30% Dow Jones U.S. Total Stock Market Index, 10% MSCI All Country World (Ex-U.S.), 30% ELCA Custom Bond Index, 10% Citigroup High-Yield Cash-Pay Capped, 10% (60% Wilshire U.S. Real Estate Securities Index/40% Wilshire Ex-U.S. Real Estate Securities Index), 10% Citigroup U.S. Inflation-Linked Securities Index.
Charitable Gift Annuities-Excess Reserve	12/31/2011	\$14,446,712 ⁴	Y	CC	November 14, 2009	Y	2.24%	3.39%	
Charitable Remainder Trusts and Pooled Income Funds	12/31/2011	\$78,756,667 ⁵	Y	CC	November 12, 2010	Y	-1.3%	2.1%	⁹ Equity and Fixed Income mutual funds

¹ Funds Held at Harris Bank

² World Hunger Funds Investment Authorized by ALC/LCA in Ecumenical Development Cooperative Society-Microfinance investment carried forward from predecessor bodies. No investment guidelines.

³ Checking accounts and investments of regions, short-term unit event accounts

⁴ Funds Held at Portico Benefit Services

⁵ Funds Held at Thrivent, Wells Fargo, Merrill Lynch, Dreyfus, Nuveen, Northeast Investors, T. Rowe Price and real estate holdings

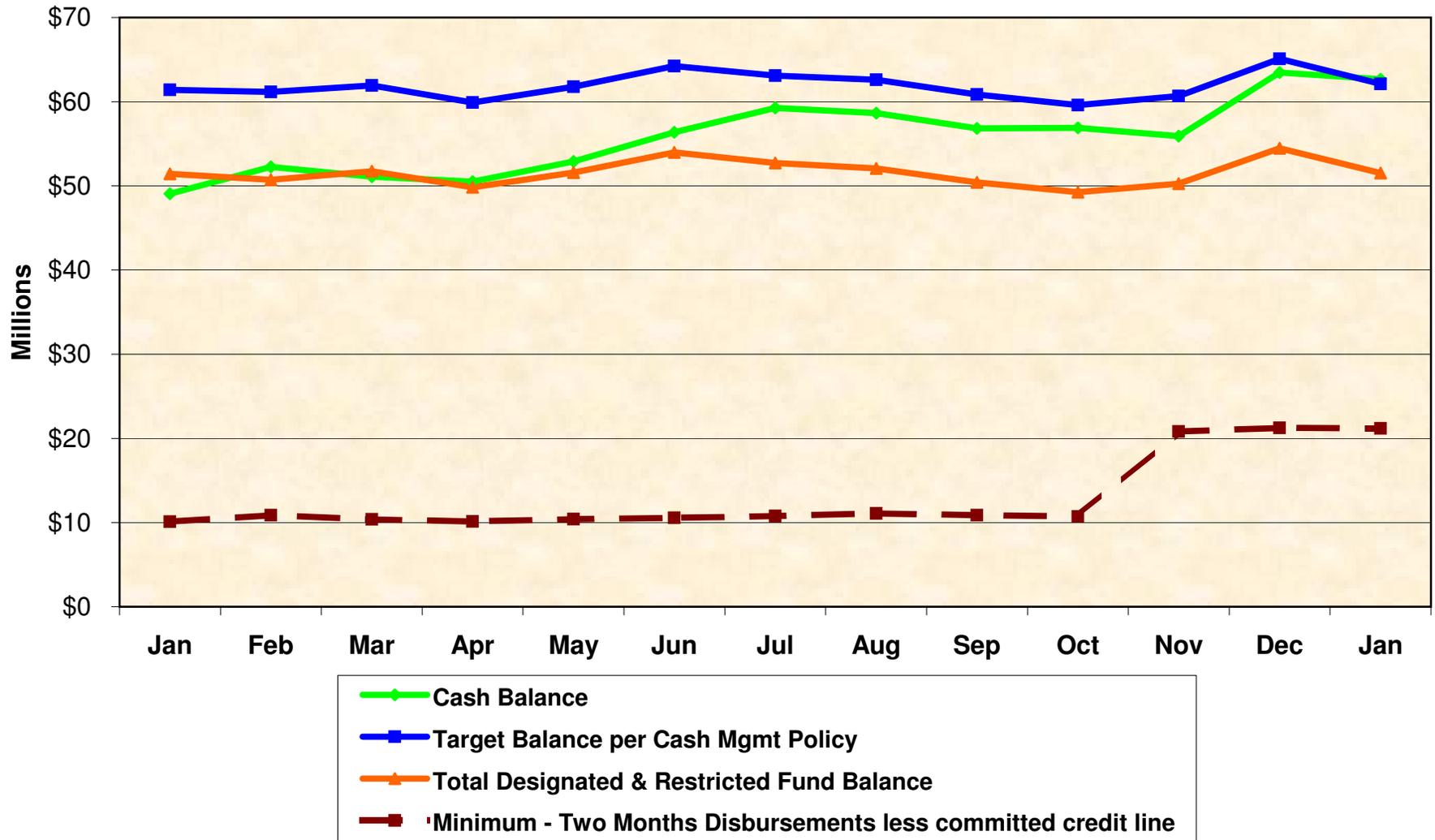
⁶ Funds held in private debenture

⁷ Funds Held at Harris Bank and Northern Trust

⁸ Benchmark for the required reserves are the liabilities

⁹ 60% equity/40% bond allocation

Cash Management Policy Comparison vs. Actual Actual through January 2012



ELCA ENDOWMENT FUND POOLED TRUST
as of January 31, 2012, with comparative totals for 2011
 (unaudited)

	2012		Market Value	2011 Market Value
	Number of Participants	Accounts		
Funds Held for Others:				
ELCA Congregation	516	662	\$ 95,893,933	92,934,047
Synod	43	88	38,501,601	36,597,234
Women of the ELCA	1	48	5,625,987	5,858,881
Campus Ministry Organizations	74	91	3,797,245	3,947,392
Related Organizations	30	31	6,429,494	6,407,412
Other Lutheran Church Body	1	2	897,866	956,349
Outdoor Ministry	15	27	5,919,314	5,122,474
Social Ministry Organization	8	10	2,600,816	2,652,719
ELCA Church Organization	4	5	3,168,078	3,064,718
College or University	2	2	34,419	35,909
Miscellaneous	4	4	228,114	226,935
Region	1	1	64,503	64,414
	<u>699</u>	<u>971</u>	<u>163,161,370</u>	<u>157,868,484</u>
Unrestricted-Board Designated:				
Benefiting ELCA Churchwide Organization		<u>26</u>	<u>20,341,934</u>	<u>20,514,695</u>
Temporarily Restricted Funds:				
		<u>209</u>	<u>36,243,754</u>	<u>36,945,889</u>
Permanently Restricted Funds:				
		<u>672</u>	<u>180,670,862</u>	<u>183,094,441</u>
Total Unrestricted-Board Designated, Temporarily Restricted and Permanently Restricted		<u>907</u>	<u>237,256,550</u>	<u>240,555,025</u>
GRAND TOTAL - ALL ACCOUNTS		<u>1,878</u>	<u>\$ 400,417,920</u>	<u>398,423,509</u>

Proposed Youth-Led Leadership Development Structure to replace the Lutheran Youth Organization at the Churchwide Expression

PREFACE

A resolution passed by the 2011 Churchwide Assembly called upon the Congregational and Synodical Mission (CSM) unit to “maintain and strengthen a youth-led faith formation and leadership development organization based at the churchwide expression” (CA.11.05.36). The Executive Committee of the Board of the Lutheran Youth Organization (LYO) recognized that faith formation occurs at all levels of the church and should not be limited to a specific event or group. This proposal is informed by the resolution passed at the Churchwide Assembly, the work of the LYO Restructuring Committee and conversations emerging from the restructuring of the churchwide organization.

On January 27 and 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 was aware that the term “organization,” as used in the resolution passed at the Assembly, holds legal implications, but the Committee recognized “organization” as it is defined in the New Oxford English Dictionary as “an organized group of people with a particular purpose.” The Committee, guided by previous recommendations of the LYO Restructuring Committee and work done with CSM staff in February 2011, agreed upon this plan, which it now shares with the Conference of Bishops and the Church Council as background information.

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 Jesus 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

1. Youth are people in grades nine (9) through twelve (12).
2. Youth engagement will be fully integrated and broadly inclusive of race/ethnicity, gender and ability.
3. Youth engagement will focus on leadership development and faith formation.
4. 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 percent of youth and young adults represented in all expressions of church governance.
5. 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.

Submitted by the Executive Committee of the Board of the Lutheran Youth Organization
Peter Aldrich, Amanda Briggs, Jacob Halsor, Hannah Knauss, Maya Mineoi, Artem Nikitin,
Kelly Wallace, Matt Wertman, and the staff of the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit,
Mark Burkhardt, Sue Rothmeyer, and Kristen Glass Perez.

LENOIR-RHYNE UNIVERSITY

March 27, 2011

Rev. Stephen Bouman
Executive Director
Congregational and Synodical Mission
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
8765 W. Higgins Road
Chicago, Illinois 60631

Dear Rev. Bouman:

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 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.

Consistent with ELCA bylaw 8.31.02 we request that you submit these bylaw revisions on behalf of the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit to the Church Council for approval. These amendments are represented by the highlighted portions of the attached document.

Thank you for your support and advice during this process.

Sincerely,



Wayne B. Powell, Ph.D.
President, Lenoir-Rhyne University

attachment

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LENOIR-RHYNE UNIVERSITY

Board of Trustees



Charter and Bylaws

Spring 2012

Charter and Bylaws Lenoir-Rhyne University

Charter

Acts to Incorporate Lenoir-Rhyne University

Situated at Hickory, Catawba County, North Carolina

As revised by the Board of Trustees of Lenoir-Rhyne College on May 23, 2008, approved by the Synod Council of the North Carolina Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America on June 5, 2008, and certified by the State of North Carolina Department of The Secretary of State on June 20, 2008.

The General Assembly of North Carolina do enact:

Section 1. That W.P. Cline, J.C. Moretz, R.L. Fritz, S.E. Killian, J.S. Propst, P.C. Setzer, McCoy Moretz and B.A. Whitener of Hickory, N.C.; J.C. Hall, Lenoir, N.C.; J.M. Rhodes, Rhodhiss, N.C.; J.B. Stirewalt, New Market, Va.; W.J. Boger, Mt. Holly, N.C.; R.E. Cline, Henry, N.C.; Lee Hoover, Lincolnton, N.C.; G.W. Rabb and C.E. Smyre, Newton, N.C.; John M. Arndt, Claremont, N.C.; J.F. Deal, Concord, N.C.; J.S. Lipe, Landis, N.C.; and J.H.C. Huitt, Catawba, N.C.; and their successors in office, be and they hereby are created a corporation under the name of "Lenoir-Rhyne University."

Section 2. That the purpose for which this corporation is formed is the promotion of religion, morality and learning through the establishment, maintenance and operation of an institution of higher education.

Section 3. In order to properly prosecute said purpose, this corporation shall have the following powers and authority:

a. To confer such degrees and other marks of literary distinction as are usually conferred by colleges and universities;

b. To elect a President of said university, other officers, and such professors as they deem proper, and to remove them for sufficient cause;

c. To possess all the powers authorized and allowed to non-profit corporations under Chapter 55A of the General Statutes of North Carolina.

Section 4. This corporation shall have no capital stock. It is organized and is to be operated exclusively for the educational purposes heretofore set forth. No part of the net earnings of this corporation shall inure to the benefit of any private shareholder, or individual, and no part of the activities of the corporation shall be the carrying on of propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and notwithstanding anything to the contrary herein contained, the said corporation shall have no power to receive or hold property of any kind for any purpose other than religious, charitable, scientific, literary and educational purposes, all for the public welfare.

Section 5. It shall not be lawful for any person, or persons to manufacture or sell any wines, or spirituous, or malt liquors to any person within two miles of said Lenoir-Rhyne University, except for medical purposes, and any person, or persons, violating any of the provisions of this act shall be considered guilty of a misdemeanor, and shall be fined not exceeding fifty dollars or imprisoned not more than thirty days for each and every offense: Provided that this Section shall not apply to the incorporate limits of the City of Hickory.

Charter & Bylaws, p.2

Section 6. The Board of Trustees of Lenoir-Rhyne University, and/or said corporation, shall be the successors of and shall succeed to any and all rights, powers, privileges, advantages, title and property heretofore conferred upon, or which may hereafter be acquired by the Board of Trustees for Educational Institutions of the United Evangelical Lutheran Synod of North Carolina, the Board of Trustees of Lenoir College and/or Lenoir College; the Board of Trustees of Daniel Rhyne College and/or Daniel Rhyne College; the Board of Trustees of Lenoir-Rhyne College and/or Lenoir-Rhyne College; the Board of Trustees of the North Carolina College and/or the North Carolina College; the Board of Trustees of Mount Amoena Seminary and/or Mount Amoena Seminary: Provided, that nothing contained herein shall alter, change or modify any existing contract, or contracts, agreement or agreements heretofore made by Lenoir-Rhyne University.

Section 7. This corporation shall have no members. It shall be governed by a Board of Trustees. The members of the Board of Trustees shall be ratified by the synod assembly of the North Carolina Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Any vacancies on the Board of Trustees shall be filled by the Synod Council or synod assembly of the North Carolina Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, election being for the unexpired term. The number of members of the Board of Trustees, their terms of office, and the method of their election shall be provided for in the bylaws of Lenoir-Rhyne University.

Section 8. The Board of Trustees shall meet annually in the City of Hickory, N.C., and may meet at such other times and places as may be deemed expedient for the good of the University. The Board of Trustees shall elect the officers and shall elect the members of the committees specified in the bylaws.

Section 9. The power to make bylaws shall be vested in the members of the Board of Trustees. Bylaws may be enacted, amended or repealed by a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the members of the Board of Trustees present: Provided, all members of the Board of Trustees have been notified in writing of the proposed changes at least thirty days prior to the meeting. Bylaws may be suspended by an affirmative vote of at least four-fifths (4/5) of the members of the Board of Trustees present.

Section 10. In the event that this corporation ceases to exist or in the event that it ceases to operate in accordance with the purposes for which it is created, then all of the assets and property of said corporation shall be vested in the North Carolina Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Section 11. This Charter may be amended only by a vote of the majority of the members of the Board of Trustees of said corporation: Provided that such amendment shall not become effective until it has been approved by the Synod Council or synod assembly of the North Carolina Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Charter & Bylaws, p.3

Lenoir-Rhyne University Bylaws

**Adopted by the Board of Trustees, August 23, 2008.
Amended on August 27, 2011 and March 24, 2012.**

Article I Authority

Pursuant to authority granted in the Charter of Lenoir-Rhyne University, Section 9, the Board of Trustees of Lenoir-Rhyne University adopts the following Bylaws for the government of itself and the University.

Article II Purpose

Section 1. In pursuit of the development of the whole person, Lenoir-Rhyne University seeks to liberate mind and spirit, clarify personal faith, foster physical wholeness, build a sense of community, and promote responsible leadership for service in the world.

As an institution of the North Carolina Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the University holds the conviction that wholeness of personality, true vocation, and the most useful service to God and the world are best discerned from the perspective of Christian faith.

As a community of learning, the University provides programs of undergraduate, graduate, and continuing study committed to the liberal arts and sciences as a foundation for a wide variety of careers and as guidance for a meaningful life.

Section 2. There shall be such colleges and divisions of instruction as are consistent with the purpose of the institution and approved by the Board of Trustees. **Among these is a School of Theology which includes a seminary of the ELCA known as Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary (LTSS).**

Section 3. These Bylaws shall not preclude compliance with compatible standards and requirements of the accrediting agencies having jurisdiction for such standards.

Article III Seal

Section 1. The official seal of the University shall be:



Section 2. The official seal of the University shall be the official seal of the Corporation.

Charter & Bylaws, p.4

Section 3. The official seal of the University shall be affixed to all degrees and certificates which shall also bear the signatures of the President of the University, the Secretary of the Faculty Assembly, the Chairperson of the Board, and the Secretary of the Board.

**Article IV
Board of Trustees**

Section 1. Functions

a. Lenoir-Rhyne University is a corporation of the State of North Carolina and the Board of Trustees is its governing body. In the Board resides the ultimate authority to make decisions affecting the University as a whole or any of its parts. The Board's decisions are normally policy-related rather than administrative.

b. The Board is responsible for the immediate and long-range welfare of the institution including, but not limited to, providing for its financial needs, its academic program and standards, and faculty and student status and governance. It encourages reasonable student and faculty voice in matters affecting their welfare and is the final arbiter of internal disputes involving the administration, the faculty and the students.

c. The Board serves as the intermediary between society and the University and between the Church and the University, interpreting its mission, advocating support of its welfare, protecting the administration as much as possible from undue pressure from political, religious and other sources, and acting as an agent of constructive change.

Section 2. Powers

a. The Board of Trustees shall have the power to manage the property and business of the Corporation, referred to in these Bylaws as Lenoir-Rhyne University or the "University," and to carry out any other functions which are granted or permitted by the State of North Carolina under the provisions of Chapter 55A of the North Carolina Non-profit Corporation Act and the Charter of Lenoir-Rhyne University or by these Bylaws, except insofar as such powers may be limited by law.

b. These powers shall include but not be limited to the following:

(1) Elect or remove the Officers of the Board and the President and other administrative officers of the University in accordance with these Bylaws; however, the power to appoint or remove administrative officers, but not Officers of the Board, should normally, in the discretion of the Board, be delegated to the President of the University;

(2) Confer degrees upon such persons as have satisfactorily completed the requirements for the degree upon recommendation of the President and the Faculty Assembly and confer honorary degrees and awards upon the recommendations of the Committee on Honors and Awards;

(3) Establish and review the educational programs of the University;

(4) Establish annually the budget of the University which shall be submitted to it upon recommendation of the Committee on Finance and Investment;

(5) Authorize the construction of new buildings and major renovations of existing buildings;

(6) Authorize the sale and purchase of land, buildings or major equipment for the use of the University;

(7) Institute and promote major fund-raising efforts of the University;

(8) Authorize any changes in tuition and fees within the University;

(9) Authorize Officers or agents of the University to accept gifts for the University;

(10) Authorize the incurring of debts by the University and securing thereof by mortgage and pledge of real and personal property, tangible and intangible.

**Article V
Membership of Board of Trustees**

Charter & Bylaws, p.5

Section 1. The Board of Trustees consists of the persons ratified by the North Carolina Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as provided in this article.

Section 2. Elections

a. The Board of Trustees shall be comprised of at least 27 members elected to three-year rotating terms, plus the President of the University, **the Chair of the Advisory Council of Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary**, and the Bishop of the North Carolina Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

b. The Board of Trustees shall submit for Synod ratification each year a list of names of all nominees for membership, a list which is sufficient to maintain the minimum size of the Board. Included among the persons submitted for Synod ratification shall be at least two members of the clergy of congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, each of whom has served in the North Carolina Synod in the past or present or who is a graduate of Lenoir-Rhyne. A majority of the members of the Board of Trustees shall be members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

c. Any vacancy on the Board of Trustees shall be ratified by the Synod Council or the assembly of the North Carolina Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America upon the recommendation of the Board of Trustees, election being for the unexpired term.

Section 3. The Trustees shall have the privilege of succeeding themselves not more than two times for a total of three consecutive terms. A person who has completed three consecutive terms as a Trustee may be elected again after that person has been off the Board for at least one year.

Section 4. The terms of the Trustees begin at the close of the Synod assembly at which they are elected.

Section 5. A member of the Board of Trustees may be removed from the Board before the end of the member's term only for cause, including failure to meet the requirements of election, failure to fulfill the duties of the appointment, and/or behavior that brings discredit to the university. A proposal to remove a member shall be brought to the Executive Committee which, if a majority of the Committee finds cause, shall bring the matter to the full Board for a vote at its next meeting. A majority vote of the Board shall be necessary to remove a member.

Article VI

Officers of the Board and Administrative Officers of the University

Section 1. Officers of the Board

a. The Officers of the Board are the Officers of the Corporation. They shall be a Chair, a Vice Chair, a Secretary, an Assistant Secretary, and a Treasurer.

b. The Chair of the Board of Trustees shall be elected for a term of three years. All other officers shall be elected annually for terms of one year. Election shall be by ballot if there is more than one nominee for the office and shall be held at the first regular meeting of the Board after the annual assembly of the Synod except that interim vacancies may be filled by the Executive Committee.

c. The Officers of the Board shall function as the legal representatives of the Board and the University.

Section 2. Administrative Officers of the University

a. The administrative officers of the University shall be the President, the Provost **of the University, the Provost of the School of Theology**, the Vice President for Administration and Finance and Treasurer, the Vice President for Institutional Advancement, the Dean of Student Life, the Vice President for Enrollment Management, and such other officers as the Board may deem necessary. Upon the recommendation of the President, and upon the approval of the Board, the role of Treasurer of the University may be designated to another position than the Vice President for

Charter & Bylaws, p.6

Administration and Finance. Duties and responsibilities of the position as set forth in these Bylaws shall remain unchanged and as stated, whether there be two positions or a combination.

b. The President of the University shall be elected by the Board of Trustees from the active membership of the Lutheran church on nomination of a special committee appointed by the Chair. The initial term of office shall be six years subject to renewal for succeeding terms none of which shall exceed six years.

c. At the inauguration, the President of the University shall make the following declaration: "I do solemnly promise that I will endeavor to elevate the Christian character and academic quality of this Institution, and at all times to be faithful to the fundamental principles of the Lutheran church as taught in its Confessions."

d. The performance of the President shall be evaluated under the direction of the Chair of the Board on an annual basis. Additional evaluations of the President's performance may be conducted at other times upon the request of either the Board of Trustees or the President.

e. In the absence of specific instructions from the President or the Board to the contrary, the Provost shall be regarded as the University's chief administrator when the President is not available to exercise the usual responsibilities. Should the President be incapacitated by illness or otherwise rendered incapable of exercising the administrative role, the Provost shall immediately contact the Chair of the Board and assume necessary presidential prerogatives until the Chair or Executive Committee of the Board authorizes some other arrangement.

f. All other administrative officers and regular teaching faculty of the University shall be elected by the Board upon nomination of the President for such terms as it may determine.

g. The duties of the several administrative officers shall be those assigned by these Bylaws, resolutions of the Board, and by the President of the University. These duties shall be described in the Faculty Handbook and other appropriate documents. The President shall have full authority in unusual circumstances to amend or change any assignment of duty when the President considers such a change to be in the best interest of the University. Any such change shall be reported by the President promptly to the Board of Trustees.

h. The Faculty Handbook is a compilation of official policy for administrators and members of the faculty. Should there appear to be a conflict between materials in the Handbook and the Bylaws of the University or resolutions of the Board of Trustees, the Bylaws and Board resolutions shall take precedence. Responsibilities of the faculty and administrative officers shall be set forth in the Faculty Handbook which shall also include official actions of the faculty, administration, and Board of Trustees which have continuing significance.

i. The administrative officers shall be under the supervision of the President.

Article VII

Powers and Duties of the Chair and Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees

The Chair of the Board is the Chair of the Corporation. The Chair shall preside at all meetings of the Board of Trustees, shall have a right to vote on all questions, shall appoint to all committees the members whose elections are not otherwise provided for, and shall have such other powers and duties as the Board from time to time may prescribe. The Chair shall be a member and chair of the Executive Committee, a member of the Committee on Finance and Investment, a member of the Subcommittee on Investments, and a member of the Committee on Promotion and Development; and the Chair shall be ex officio member of all the other committees of the Board with voice but without power to vote. In the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair shall perform the duties of the office of the Chair.

Charter & Bylaws, p.7

**Article VIII
Powers and Duties of the President of the University**

Section 1. The President of the University is a member of the Board of Trustees. The President is the chief executive officer of the University and the official adviser to and agent of the Board of Trustees and its Executive Committee. The President shall, as educational and administrative head of the University, exercise a general superintendence over all the affairs of the institution, and bring such matters to the attention of the Board as are appropriate to keep the Board fully informed to meet its policy-making responsibilities. The President shall have the power on behalf of the Board to perform acts to make effective the actions of the Board or its Executive Committee. The President shall be the primary medium of communication between the Board and the Administration, the Board and the Faculty, and the Board and the Students. The President shall be a member of the Executive Committee, of the Committee on Finance and Investment, of the Subcommittee on Investments, of the Committee on Honors and Awards and shall be ex officio member of all other committees of the Board with voice but without power to vote.

Section 2. Should any administrative officer (other than the President) or member of the faculty be incapacitated or otherwise prevented from fulfilling official responsibilities, the President is authorized to arrange for the temporary filling of the position, provided the President shall report such interim appointments to the Board or its Executive Committee.

Section 3. The Chairs of the academic Schools and the Deans of the Colleges shall be appointed by the Provost in consultation with the President and appropriate constituencies.

**Article IX
Powers and Duties of the Secretary**

Section 1. The Secretary of the Board is the Secretary of the Corporation. The Secretary shall give proper notice of all meetings of the Board of Trustees and shall keep or cause to be kept an accurate record of all meetings of the Board, including in such minutes all reports of committees, treasurer's reports, audit reports and all other official communications. The Secretary shall furnish each member of the Board with a copy of all Board minutes. The Secretary shall be a member and the secretary of the Executive Committee. Any of the duties or powers of the Secretary may be performed by an Assistant Secretary who shall be responsible to and report to the Secretary.

Section 2. The Secretary shall attest to and affix the University seal to such documents as required in the business of the University, including but not limited to deeds, bonds, mortgages, agreements, contracts, diplomas, evidences of the award of degrees, transcripts, abstracts of resolutions, certificates, minutes and bylaws issued pursuant to the authority of the University.

Section 3. The Secretary and all Standing Committees shall keep minutes of all meetings and such minutes shall be filed with the Secretary of the Board and placed in suitable permanent binders or books as shall be provided by the Board.

**Article X
Powers and Duties of the Treasurers**

Section 1. The Treasurer of the Board shall be the custodian of all trust and endowment funds of the University and of the Board; however, the Board, upon recommendation of the Committee on Finance and Investment, may contract for the custody and investment of such funds, as are designated by contract, by a duly chartered bank or trust company or an investment management organization licensed and authorized by law to carry on such business. The Treasurer of the Board

Charter & Bylaws, p.8

shall be bonded. The Treasurer of the Board shall be responsible for an accurate record of all endowment or trust funds in his/her custody or control. The Treasurer of the Board shall be a member of the Executive Committee, the Committee on Finance and Investment and of the Subcommittee on Investments.

Section 2. The Treasurer of the University shall be the custodian of the current funds, the building funds, and all other funds not in the custody of the Treasurer of the Board. The Treasurer of the University shall be bonded. The Treasurer of the University shall keep or cause to be kept full and accurate accounts of all receipts and disbursements and obey all lawful orders of the Trustees,

the President of the University, the Committee on Finance and Investment, and the Subcommittee on Audit respecting funds, property, and accounts of the University. The Treasurer of the University shall be responsible for the preparation of any corporate financial reports as may be required by departments of government, including but not limited to the State of North Carolina. The Treasurer of the University shall, in the name of the University, give receipts for monies or property as shall be required, deposit funds in accordance with resolution and direction of the Committee on Finance and Investment or the Board of Trustees, and safeguard the money of the University. The Treasurer of the University shall not pay out any money unless by order of the Board of Trustees or under such regulations or with such approval as the Committee on Finance and Investment may prescribe. The Treasurer of the University shall cooperate with any independent auditors or certified public accountant retained by the Board of Trustees for the purpose of conducting audits of the accounts of the University.

Section 3. All Treasurers shall make a full report on all securities, funds, and properties in their custody or control at each annual meeting of the Board and at such other times as required by the Board.

**Article XI
Meetings**

Section 1. Three regular meetings of the Board of Trustees shall be held annually in the City of Hickory, North Carolina, or at such other place deemed expedient for the good of the University. The time and place of these meetings shall be decided by the Board and written notice shall be given each trustee at least two weeks in advance of each regular meeting.

Section 2. The regular meeting of the Board of Trustees in November shall be the annual meeting of the Board.

Section 3. Special meetings may be called by the Chair of the Board, and shall be called by the Chair upon written request of at least five members of the Board. A written notice shall be given each trustee at least five days in advance of a special meeting and only the matters included in this notice shall be considered at the meeting.

Section 4. Any action required or permitted to be taken by the Board of Trustees or by any committee thereof may be taken without a formal meeting. Meetings may be conducted by mail, telegram, cable, or in any other way the Trustees shall decide. However, a written consent setting forth the action so taken and signed by all members of the Board or of a committee, as the case may be, must be filed with the minutes of the proceedings of the Board or the Committee.

Section 5. Meetings of the Board of Trustees, except for executive sessions, may be attended by the Chair of the Faculty Assembly, the President of the Student Government Association, the President of the Alumni Association, the Chair of the Board of Visitors, the President of the Piedmont Educational Foundation, and the Chair of the Business Council. Their attendance shall be with voice but without vote. They shall report regularly to their respective organizations on actions taken at the Board of Trustees meetings.

Charter & Bylaws, p.9

Section 6. Any employee of the University shall attend a meeting of the Board when requested by the President or the Chair of the Board.

Section 7. A majority of the Trustees shall be necessary and sufficient to constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, and the act of a majority of the Trustees present and voting at a duly called meeting of the Board shall be the act of the Board of Trustees, except as may be provided by statute or by the articles of incorporation, or by these Bylaws.

**Article XII
Rules of Order and Order of Business**

Section 1. Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, as modified by these Bylaws, shall be observed in conducting the business of the Board and the Corporation. In all matters of parliamentary procedure not covered by these Bylaws, Robert's Rules of Order shall govern.

Section 2. The Board may adopt a stated Order of Business to be used at all its regular meetings.

Section 3. Should an Order of Business be adopted under Section 2 of this article, said Order of Business shall be subject to change by a majority of the Trustees at any meeting at which there is a quorum.

**Article XIII
Committees**

Section 1. The Chair of the Board shall annually recommend to the Board the Trustee members and chairs of all committees except the Executive Committee; the Board shall elect the members of the committees specified in the bylaws. **The Chair will also present to the Board for the purpose of election the names of individuals proposed for the Advisory Council of LTSS.**

Section 2. The terms of all committees except the Executive Committee shall be one year.

Section 3. Executive Committee

a. The Executive Committee shall consist of the following members of the Board of Trustees: the Chair, who shall be Chair of the Committee; the Vice Chair; the Secretary, who shall be the Secretary of the Committee; the Assistant Secretary; the Treasurer of the Board; the President; and three other members, elected by the Board for terms of three years, so that one term expires each year. Should an elective member of the Committee be chosen as an officer of the Board, another shall be elected to fill out the unexpired term on the Executive Committee.

b. The Executive Committee shall act for and on behalf of the Board in the interim between meetings and shall have the authority and responsibility authorized by the laws of North Carolina for the Executive Committee of a corporation. It shall execute the orders of the Board and perform all matters referred to it and have charge of the welfare of the University. It shall keep formal minutes of all meetings. The Secretary shall furnish all members of the Board with a copy of all its minutes and file a copy in the permanent minute record of the Board. At each and every regular meeting of the Board of Trustees, the proceedings and actions taken by the Executive Committee since the last meeting of the Board shall be reported to the Board.

Section 4. Committee on Finance and Investment

a. The Committee on Finance and Investment shall consist of the Chair of the Board, the Treasurer of the Board, the President of the University, two faculty members elected by the Faculty Assembly, and four to six trustees. The Chair of the Board shall appoint the Chair of the Committee.

b. The Committee on Finance and Investment shall have supervision of budget preparation, the investments of the Board and of the University, and the annual audit. It shall formulate rules and

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regulations for the approval of the Board to guide the Treasurer and the Subcommittee on Investments in the management of the investments of the Board and the University. The committee shall keep formal records of all its meetings and file a copy with the Secretary of the Board.

c. The Committee on Finance & Investment shall select one or more investment managers to manage the University's endowment. The committee shall review the performance of managers at least annually and make changes in managers as the committee deems necessary.

d. In order to exercise closer supervision of its areas of responsibilities, the Committee on Finance and Investment may appoint subcommittees on investment, budget, and audit to serve under its supervision and direction. Chairs of subcommittees shall be Trustees. A Subcommittee on Investments shall include the Chair of the Committee on Finance and Investment, the Treasurer of the Board, and the President of the University.

e. A Subcommittee on Investments shall have authority and power to buy, sell and exchange investments and to approve or disapprove investments or sales of investments in hands of managing agents, within the types and limits of investments approved by the Board. All actions of the Subcommittee shall have the affirmative vote of at least four of its members. Action of the Subcommittee shall be final but shall be reported to the Board through the Committee on Finance and Investment, giving a detailed list of all purchases or sales of investments.

f. A Subcommittee on Budget shall study the program of the University, the sources of revenue, and, in cooperation with the President of the University, present through the Committee on Finance and Investment an annual current operating budget to the Board for approval. All items necessary for the efficient operation of the University shall be included in the budget. This Subcommittee shall review annually the requirements of the University for debt service and the adequacy of the provisions to meet such requirements, and shall report through the Committee on Finance and Investment to the Board any recommendations for adjustments.

g. A Subcommittee on Audit shall have supervision of all systems of accounting and statistical and financial records of the Board, of the University and of all Committees of the Board or the University. It shall approve the method of handling all funds for the best interest of the University. The Subcommittee, in consultation with the President of the University, shall annually propose a Certified Public Accountant as the official auditor. Upon recommendation of the Committee on Finance and Investment, the Board shall employ the Auditor.

Section 5. Committee on Promotion and Development

a. The Committee on Promotion and Development shall be composed of two faculty members elected by the Faculty Assembly, four members of the Board of Visitors appointed by the Chair of the Board of Visitors in consultation with the Chair of the Committee on Promotion and Development, the Chair of the Business Council Board of Directors, and at least eight trustees including the Chair of the Board of Trustees.

b. The Committee, in consultation with the President, shall formulate and adopt policies and review operations which have to do with the general development and expansion of the University, long-range planning and public relations, and cultivating prospective givers and benefactors of the University. The Committee may create subcommittees relating to its area of responsibility. The Committee shall provide liaison between the Board of Trustees and the Board of Visitors.

Section 6. Committee on Instruction and Student Life

a. The Committee on Instruction and Student Life shall be composed of two faculty members elected by the Faculty Assembly, two students appointed by the President of the Student Government Association, two members of the Board of Visitors appointed by the Chair of the Board of Visitors, and at least seven Trustees.

b. The Committee on Instruction and Student Life shall confer at least annually with the Administration concerning matters dealing with the instructional staff, curriculum, admissions, and other items pertaining to the educational function of the University. The Committee shall confer at

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least annually with the Administration concerning matters related to the intercollegiate program. The Committee shall also have supervision of the physical, social, and spiritual welfare of the student body. Disciplinary matters which are referred to the Board shall be submitted to this Committee for investigation and report. The Committee shall conduct special studies in these areas as need arises and report to the Board with recommendations.

c. The Committee is also responsible for keeping the Board informed concerning the quality of the faculty, the educational program, the library, and other learning resources and facilities. Changes resulting in the addition or elimination of a major, department, or school of instruction shall be reported by it to the Board for action.

d. The Committee may, at the discretion of the Chair of the Board, be divided into subcommittees with appointed chairs. The subcommittees may make reports and recommendations back to the Committee on Instruction and Student Life for its consideration and action.

Section 7. Committee on Buildings and Grounds

a. The Committee on Buildings and Grounds shall be composed of two faculty members elected by the Faculty Assembly, two members of the Board of Visitors appointed by the Chair of the Board of Visitors, and at least five trustees.

b. The Committee shall exercise general supervision over the care and control of all buildings, the grounds and equipment of the University. It shall make periodic inspections of all buildings, grounds, and equipment and report to the Board the condition thereof together with recommendations for improvements thereto.

c. The Committee, in consultation with the Chair of the Board, the President of the University, and the Vice President for Administration and Finance shall see that all buildings, equipment and hazards are adequately covered by insurance.

d. The Committee, in consultation with the Administration and the Chair of the Board, shall investigate and determine the need for new buildings, facilities, and equipment, and the need for renovation and modernization of all buildings for other uses, and report to the Board. Its recommendation of capital budgets relating to buildings and grounds shall be forwarded to the Committee on Finance and Investment.

e. Upon authorization of a new or renovated building, facility, or equipment, this Committee may:

(1) Act as Agent of the Board in the preliminary preparation of plans and specifications and submit same to the Board along with estimated costs;

(2) Proceed, upon approval of the preliminary plans by the Board, to have final plans and specifications prepared and arrange for same to be submitted to qualified contractors for bids;

(3) Receive all such bids, review same and make recommendations to the Board on the award of the contracts. All building contracts shall be awarded by the Board;

(4) Serve, upon the award of a contract, as the representative of the Board with authority to decide all matters and see that construction is in conformity with the plans and specifications. Final payment on any contract shall not be made except upon the approval of this Committee.

Section 8. Committee on Nominations

a. The Committee on Nominations shall be composed of four trustees.

b. The Committee on Nominations shall submit a list of nominees for all positions within the Board to be filled by Board election. The Committee shall also submit nominees for Board membership to be proposed to the Synod. Such nominations shall be given to all members of the Board in advance of the meeting when practical.

Section 9. Committee on Honors and Awards

a. The Committee on Honors and Awards shall be composed of seven members of the Board of Trustees (including the Bishop of the North Carolina Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America), seven faculty members elected by the Faculty Assembly, and the President of the University.

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b. Honorary degrees and other awards may be conferred upon such persons as shall be nominated by a three-fifths majority vote of the Committee on Honors and Awards, and approved by the affirmative vote, by ballot, of three-fourths of the members of the Board of Trustees present at a regular meeting of the Board.

Section 10. Advisory Council of Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary (LTSS).

The Advisory Council of LTSS shall be an advisory committee to the Board of Trustees with guidelines and operating procedures approved by the Board of Trustees. The function of the LTSS Advisory Council will be to provide advice and guidance to the Board regarding the operations of the seminary, as well as to serve as a liaison between Lenoir-Rhyne and the church. The members of the Advisory Council will be elected by the Board of Trustees. The membership of the Advisory Council shall meet the following requirements:

- a.** At least one-fifth will be nominated by the Church Council of the ELCA upon consultation with the Advisory Council in coordination with the Board of Trustees.
- b.** The President of LRU and the Provost of the School of Theology will be nominated by the Church Council of the ELCA as ex officio members of the Advisory Council with full voting privileges.
- c.** Two members will be nominated by the Bishops of Region 9 from among their number.
- d.** One member, who will serve as chair of the Advisory Council and voting member of the Board of Trustees, will be nominated by the Church Council of the ELCA upon consultation with the Advisory Council.
- e.** Additional members will be nominated by the Advisory Council in coordination with the Board of Trustees and in consultation with the Synods of Region 9 to represent these Synods.

Section 11. Special committees appointed by the Chair shall serve for terms designated in the appointment.

Section 12. Where the interests of the University might be better served, non-Board members may be appointed to committees or subcommittees of the Board at the discretion of the Chair of the Board, provided that a majority of the committee or subcommittee shall be Board members, one of whom shall serve as Chair.

Section 13. The minutes of each committee meeting (with the exception of the minutes of the Executive Committee and the Committee on Honors and Awards which require confidentiality) shall be sent to all trustees. Minutes shall always be distributed within two weeks time following a meeting.

**Article XIV
Conflicts of Interest**

A Trustee shall be considered to have a conflict of interest if (a) such Trustee has existing or potential financial or other interests which impair or might reasonably appear to impair such member's independent, unbiased judgment in the discharge of his/her responsibilities to the University, or (b) such Trustee is aware that a member of his/her family (which for purposes of this paragraph shall be a spouse, parents, siblings, children, and any other relative if the latter resides in the same household as the Trustee), or any organization in which such partner, trustee, or controlling stockholder, has such existing or potential financial or other interests. All Trustees shall disclose to the Board any possible conflict of interest at the earliest practicable time. No Trustee shall vote on any matter, under consideration at a Board or committee meeting, in which such Trustee has a conflict of interest. The minutes of that meeting shall reflect that a disclosure was made and that the Trustee having a conflict of interest abstained from voting. Any Trustee who is uncertain whether he / she has a conflict of interest in any matter may request the Board or committee to determine

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whether a conflict of interest exists, and the Board or committee shall resolve the question by a majority vote.

**Article XV
Faculty**

Section 1. The duties of the Faculty shall be those prescribed in these Bylaws, resolutions of the Board, notices of appointment, the Faculty Constitution, and the Faculty Handbook.

Section 2. The Faculty shall be under the supervision of the President.

Section 3. The Board of Trustees by approving the Constitution of the Faculty Assembly recognizes it as the official representative body of the instructional staff of the University. Substantive changes in the Constitution must be approved by the Board.

Section 4. The Faculty Assembly shall consist of the President of the University, the Provost and such other persons as shall be named in the Constitution of the Faculty Assembly.

Section 5. The Faculty Assembly shall develop, implement, coordinate, and evaluate the educational programs of the institution according to the provisions of these Bylaws and the regulations of the Board of Trustees.

Section 6. The University recognizes academic freedom as a right and responsibility of its faculty. No restrictions are imposed upon responsible investigation and discussion in the pursuit of truth in and outside of the classroom. The University encourages freedom and dedication in the search for truth.

Section 7. The Board awards tenure to professors, associate professors, and assistant professors on the basis of Board-approved guidelines published in the Faculty Handbook. The Board may terminate faculty appointments on the basis of Board-approved guidelines in the same document.

Section 8. Members of the Faculty Assembly shall adhere to the pension and retirement plans as provided by the University.

Section 9. No member of the faculty shall be dismissed from the faculty without written notice by registered mail, return receipt requested. Such notice shall, in the case of the tenured faculty members, set forth the reason or reasons for the dismissal. All such notices shall notify the recipient of his/her right to a hearing by the Faculty Hearing Committee, as described in the Faculty Handbook, thence to a hearing by the Trustees' Committee on Instruction and Student Life, and finally a hearing before a Board of Review if so requested. A Faculty member wishing to request a hearing before a board of review regarding a negative decision on tenure must file a written appeal to the Chair of the Committee on Instruction & Student Life within thirty (30) days of notification of the negative decision.

Section 10. Board of Review

a. The Board of Review shall consist of three members of the Board of Trustees, elected by its Executive Committee, and two members (with voting privileges) of the Faculty Assembly elected by its Executive Committee. The five members of the Board of Review thus elected shall select by majority vote a presiding officer from among the Trustee representatives. The Board of Review shall work with the University attorney on all processes of the review. No member of the Board of Review shall be (1) a principal involved in the dispute, (2) a member of the Board of Trustees' Committee on Instruction and Student Life, or (3) a member of the Faculty Assembly's Development and Status Committee. Any faculty member or administrative officer who is a principal or witness in the dispute must be present and offer testimony at the hearing(s) if so requested by the Board of Review. The five elected members of the Board of Review shall make every effort to be objective and review only facts of the case.

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b. At the hearing the parties to the dispute shall have the right to be present and to be heard, to be represented by counsel, at their expense, and to produce through witnesses any competent testimony or documentary evidence relevant to the issue of whether grounds for dismissal exist.

c. The presiding officer shall have the right to vote and rule on the admissibility of evidence in communication with the University's attorney following the Rules of Evidence prevailing in the State of North Carolina.

d. A copy of the transcript of the hearing shall be furnished to the respective parties.

e. The Board of Review may defer its decisions on the merits of the dismissal, but shall notify in writing the dismissed faculty member and the Administration of its decision and the reasons therefore.

**Article XVI
Students**

Section 1. The Board of Trustees, by approving the Constitution of the Student Government Association, recognizes it as the official representative body of students of the University.

Section 2. This Institution shall be open to both men and women students who meet the entrance requirements. They shall submit to the regulations of the Institution, the Faculty Assembly, and the Board.

**Article XVII
Discipline**

The constitutions of the Faculty Assembly and the Student Government Association shall provide the normal channels for the disciplining of the faculty members and students, respectively. Nevertheless, the Board retains the power to remove or depose any individual as the welfare of the Institution may demand. Should the Board contemplate such action, the defendant shall have the right to be heard in his/her own behalf. The responsibility for discipline cases may be delegated by the Board to one of its standing committees. An affirmative vote of three-fourths of the members present shall be necessary to convict in a case of discipline.

**Article XVIII
Property**

Section 1. The Corporation shall have power to take, hold, use, improve, lease, buy or sell, and mortgage real and personal property without limitation in value or quantity, within the State of North Carolina or elsewhere, and shall enjoy all the rights and powers authorized and allowed to non-profit corporations under the laws of the State of North Carolina, as may be necessary to accomplish the objectives of the Corporation.

Section 2. The funds of the Board and the University shall be accounted for by those procedures and methods used by accounting agencies and promulgated by the National Association of College and University Business Officers.

Section 3. A trust fund in any of these groupings shall be held for the purpose specified in the trust instrument, subject to the laws of North Carolina and the regulations of the Board.

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Section 4. The Board shall exercise supervision over the investment of all trust and endowment funds and shall have control of all other funds of the University. No investment of any fund shall be made until after the type of investment has been approved by the Board.

Section 5. The Board shall designate approved types of investments and the percentage of each type permitted for the guidance of the Treasurer, the Committee on Finance and Investment, and the bank or trust company that may have custody of funds of the University. This designation shall be reviewed annually by the Board.

Section 6. Securities held by a managing agent may be purchased, sold, transferred or exchanged by the said bank or trust company within the limits set forth in the contract between the University and the managing agent; provided, all such purchases, sales or exchanges shall be within percentage and type of investments approved by the Board.

Section 7. Endowment or Trust Funds

a. Endowment or trust funds shall not be expended or hypothecated for current expenses or for any purposes other than those of the endowment or the trust.

b. Capital gains (appreciation in value) may be considered income to the extent of the spending rule, provided the investment producing the capital gains shall have been actually sold prior to the transfer of such gains to the income account. No anticipated capital gains shall be considered income.

Section 8. No trust or endowment funds shall be loaned to anyone officially connected with the University or to a member of the Board of Trustees.

Section 9. All securities not in the custody of a bank or trust company shall be kept in a safety deposit vault approved by the Board.

Section 10. Securities owned by the University, the certificates for which are in the safety deposit vault of the University, shall be removed from the safety deposit vault only upon the joint signatures of two of the following: Chair of the Board, Treasurer of the Board, President of the University, and Treasurer of the University. When securities are withdrawn or deposited, all of these four officials who are not present shall immediately receive a written notice of such withdrawal or deposit signed by the officers who were present.

Section 11. All depositories shall be designated annually by the Board.

Section 12. All custodians of properties, trust funds, endowment funds, or current funds shall be bonded in a stock surety company admitted to do business in North Carolina, provided, however, that the Board may waive this requirement for surety bond when a duly chartered bank or trust company is contractual custodian of such funds. The premiums on said bonds shall be paid by the University.

Section 13. All funds of the Board and the University shall be audited at least annually by a Certified Public Accountant selected by the Board. Such audits shall include an actual check of all securities in all trust, endowment, and other funds in custody of the Board or its managing agent.

Section 14. The physical properties of the University shall be in the custody of the President and the Vice President for Administration and Finance who shall be responsible for their proper care and maintenance. Major additions to existing buildings, or major structural alterations thereto, shall be made only upon the approval of the Board and when adequate funds are available for that purpose.

**Article XIX
Indemnification**

Each Trustee and Officer of the University shall be indemnified by it against all expenses actually and necessarily incurred by such Trustee or Officer in connection with the defense of any action, suit,

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or proceeding to which the Trustee or Officer has been made a party by reason of being or having been such Trustee or Officer except in relation to matters as to which such Trustee or Officer shall be adjudicated in such action, suit, or proceeding to be liable for gross negligence or willful misconduct in the performance of duty.

**Article XX
Discrimination Prohibited**

Section 1. In administering its affairs, the University shall not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin or gender.

Section 2. Employment will not be denied to administrators or faculty solely on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin or gender. The primary test of employment shall be professional competence and support of the purpose and goals of the University. Before acceptance of employment, each person shall acknowledge full understanding and acceptance of the obligations engendered by the relationship of the University to the Lutheran confessional traditions of Christianity, and agree that neither his/her religious integrity and academic prerogatives nor the integrity of the University in this Church relationship and Christian commitment will be compromised by his/her employment.

**Article XXI
Amendment and Review of Bylaws**

Section 1. These Bylaws may be amended at any meeting of the Board of Trustees by a two-thirds vote of those present, provided that written notice of the substance of the proposed amendment shall have been given to all the Trustees at least thirty (30) days prior to the date the vote is taken. Any amendment which affects the authority or integrity of the School of Theology's seminary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall not become effective until the amendment has been approved by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Section 2. At least once every two years the Executive Committee shall review these Bylaws and suggest any necessary or desirable changes to the Board of Trustees.

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AMENDED AND RESTATED
ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION
OF
WARTBURG THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
Amended 2012 (red-lined version)

TO THE SECRETARY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

Pursuant to the provisions of the Iowa Nonprofit Corporation Act, Iowa Code Chapter 504A (1987), the undersigned nonprofit corporation adopts the following Amended and Restated Articles of Incorporation:

Article I

The name of the Corporation is Wartburg Theological Seminary.

Article II

The period of its duration is perpetual.

Article III

The sole member of the corporation shall be The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or its successor which shall have voting rights.

Article IV

The corporation is organized and shall be operated for charitable, religious and educational purposes within the meaning of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, as amended, and will carry on the following activities in furtherance thereof:

- (a) The primary purpose of the Seminary is to train committed and competent persons for the ministry of the Church of Jesus Christ, especially in Lutheran church bodies, so that such persons will be enabled to relate the Gospel faithfully with clarity, power, and sensitivity to people, social structures, and situations in God's world.
- (b) The Seminary may also provide resources for and programs of continuing education and in consultation with the appropriate unit of the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may offer advanced graduate level theological education.
- (c) The faith, teachings and life of the Seminary shall be in harmony with the confession of faith of The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

No part of the net earnings of the corporation shall inure to the benefit of or be distributable to its members, directors, officers or other private persons, except that the corporation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payment and distribution in furtherance of the purposes set forth in this Article.

No substantial part of the activities of the organization shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the corporation shall not participate in, intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office. Notwithstanding any other provisions of these Articles, the corporation shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by a corporation except from Federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law); or (b) by a corporation, contributions to which are deductible under Section

170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law).

Upon the dissolution of the corporation, the Board of Directors shall, after paying or making provisions for payment of all liabilities of the corporation, dispose of all of the assets of the corporation exclusively for the purposes of the corporation in such manner or to such organization or organizations organized and operated exclusively for charitable, educational, religious or scientific purposes as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization or organizations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law), as The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall determine. Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by the Iowa District Court of the Country in which the principal office of the corporation is then located.

Article V

~~The business of the corporation shall be conducted by a Board of Directors consisting of not more than twenty-six (26) and not less than twenty (20) members, each director having one vote.~~
The business of the corporation shall be conducted by a Board of Directors consisting of not more than thirty (30) and not less than twenty (20) members, each director having one vote.-The terms of office, powers, authorities and duties of the directors of this corporation, the time and place of their meetings, and such other regulations with respect to them as are not inconsistent with the express provisions of these Articles of Incorporation shall be as specified from time to time in the Bylaws of this corporation.

Article VI

The corporation shall have a corporate seal.

Article VII

This corporation shall have no capital stock and shall issue no capital stock.

Article VIII

These Articles of Incorporation may be amended from time to time in the manner provided by Iowa law.

Article IX

The Bylaws may be altered, amended or repealed and new Bylaws may be adopted at any meeting of the Board of Directors of the corporation at which a quorum is present, by a two-thirds vote of the directors present at the meetings, subject, however, to subsequent approval of the membership. Notice of such amendment shall be mailed to each member of the Board of Directors, together with a copy of the proposed changes, within the same time and in the same manner as notices of meetings are required to be given. Amendments to the governing documents shall be submitted, upon recommendation of the appropriate unit of the churchwide organization, to the Church Council for approval.

Article X

Unless otherwise provided in the Iowa Nonprofit Corporation Act, Iowa Code Chapter 504A (1987), and as it may be amended from time to time, a director, officer, employee, or member of the corporation is not liable on the corporation's debts nor obligations and director, officer, member, or other volunteer is not personally liable in that capacity, for a claim based upon an act or omission of the person performed in the discharge of the person's duties, except for a breach of the duty of loyalty to the corporation, for acts or omissions not in good faith or which involve intentional misconduct or a knowing violation of the law or for a transaction from which the person derives an improper personal benefit.

These Amended and Restated Articles of Incorporation: (1) correctly set forth the provisions of the Articles of Incorporation of the corporation as heretofore and hereby amended; (2) have been duly adopted as required by law; and (3) supersede the original Articles of Incorporation of the corporation and all amendments thereto.



BYLAWS
OF
WARTBURG THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
Amended 2012 (red-lined version)

ARTICLE I
OFFICES

The principal office of the corporation in the State of Iowa shall be located in the City of Dubuque of Dubuque County. The corporation may have such other offices, within or without the State of Iowa, as the business of the corporation from time to time.

The registered offices of the corporation required by the Iowa Nonprofit Corporation Act to be continuously maintained in Iowa shall be initially as provided in the Articles of Incorporation, subject to change from time to time by resolution by the Board of Directors and filing of statement of said changes as required by the Iowa Nonprofit Corporation Act.

ARTICLE II

MEMBERS

SECTION 1. MEMBERS. The sole member of the corporation shall be The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

SECTION 2. GOVERNANCE. The corporation shall be affiliated with The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or its successor and all acts of the corporation shall be consistent with policies defined by The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or its successor.

ARTICLE III

DIRECTORS

SECTION 1. GENERAL POWERS. The business and affairs of the corporation shall be managed by its Board of Directors.

The business and affairs of the corporation shall include the employment of faculty and administrative officers, approval of educational policies and programs for persons preparing for public ministry in the seminary. The Board of Directors shall exercise all other normal governance functions, including the granting of degrees, holding title to and managing all seminary property and assets, receiving gifts and bequests, establishing salaries for faculty and administrative officers, providing for the financial resources and fiscal contracts required to operate the seminary, and shall have the authority to recruit students globally in addition to having all other powers and rights conferred by the Iowa Nonprofit Corporation Act.

SECTION 2. NUMBER AND ELECTION OF DIRECTORS.

The number of directors shall be not more than ~~twenty-six (26)~~ thirty (30) and not less than twenty (20), the exact number to be determined from time to time by the Board of Directors. The

directors shall be elected as follows: (a) at least one-fifth (1/5) shall be nominated by the appropriate churchwide unit in consultation with the seminary and elected by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; (b) two directors shall be elected by the bishops of the supporting synods of the Seminary from among their number; and (c) the remaining directors shall be elected by the supporting synods of the Seminary in consultation with the Seminary.

Up to four (4) of the above Directors shall be elected from the membership of the Wartburg Seminary Foundation Board of Trustees. The Wartburg Seminary Foundation Trustees, in consultation with the Chairperson of the Board of Directors, the Chair of the Board Development Committee, and the President, and shall make recommendations for election of these persons by one of the three means for electing members.

SECTION 3. LENGTH OF TERM. The term of a director shall be for six (6) years and no director may serve more than two (2) consecutive terms; provided, however, that the electing body shall arrange the terms to provide for the election of approximately one-third (1/3) of the directors each two (2) years. Appointment or election to one-half (1/2) or more of an unexpired term shall be construed as one full term.

SECTION 4. START OF TERM. The term of a director shall begin with the first regular meeting of the Board of Directors following his/her election. The term of a director shall conclude when his/her successor takes office.

SECTION 5. VACANCY. If a director dies, resigns, or is absent without cause from three (3) consecutive regular meetings, the office shall be declared vacant. Vacancies shall be filled in the manner prescribed by The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or its successor.

SECTION 6. MEETINGS. The Board of Directors shall hold at least two (2) regular meetings each year, one of which shall be the annual meeting. The annual meeting shall be the first regular meeting following July 1. Special meetings of the Board of Directors may be called by the chairperson of the Board of Directors and shall be called by the chairperson upon written request of any four (4) directors. *Robert's Rules of Order*, latest edition, shall be used in the conduct of business.

SECTION. 7. ADVISORY MEMBERS. A representative of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the President, and Academic Dean of the Seminary, and the President of the Wartburg Association of Students shall serve as advisory members. The Board of Directors may

appoint others as advisory members as appropriate from time to time. Advisory members shall have voice but not vote.

SECTION 8. NOTICE. Notice of any special or regular meeting shall be given at least ten (10) days previous thereto by written notice delivered personally or mailed to each director at his/her business address, or electronic mail (email). If mailed, such notice shall be deemed to be delivered when deposited in the United States mail so addressed and postage prepaid. If notice is given by email, such notice shall be deemed to be delivered when electronically registered as sent and delivered. The attendance of a director at any meeting shall constitute a waiver of notice of such meetings, except where such director attends a meeting for the express purpose of objecting to the transaction of any business because the meeting is not lawfully called or convened. Neither the business to be transacted at, nor the purpose of, any regular or special meeting of the Board of Directors need be specified in the notice or waiver of notice of such meeting. Any director may make written waiver of notice before, at, or after the meeting, by filing the waiver with the person designated as secretary of the meeting.

SECTION 9. PLACE OF MEETING. The Board of Directors may designate a place either within or without the State of Iowa, as a place of meetings for any annual meeting or for any regular or special meeting. If no designation is made, or if a special meeting be otherwise called, the place of meeting shall be the registered office of the corporation in the State of Iowa.

SECTION 10. QUORUM. A majority of the directors currently serving shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

SECTION 11. MANNER OF ACTING. The act of the majority of the directors present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the Board of Directors except to the extent otherwise provided in these Bylaws.

SECTION 12. OFFICERS. The officers of the Board of Directors shall be a Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson, a Secretary and a Treasurer. All officers, with the exception of the Treasurer, and all Chairpersons of the committee must be members of the Board of Directors. All officers shall be elected by the Board of Directors at a meeting prior to the annual meeting for a term of two years; the Chair and the Secretary to be elected in even numbered years and the Vice-Chair and Treasurer in odd numbered years.

SECTION 13. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

The Executive Committee shall be composed of the officers elected pursuant to Section 12 hereof, the chairpersons of all standing committees, the chairperson of the Foundation Board of Trustees, , and the President of the seminary, *ex officio*. The immediate past chair of the Board of Directors may also be appointed for a one year term to the Executive Committee. If the Treasurer or the immediate Past Chair are not elected members of the Board of Directors, the

Treasurer or immediate Past Chair will have voice but not vote at meetings of the Executive Committee and Board of Directors. Meetings of the Executive Committee may be called by either the Chairperson of the Board or by the President of the Seminary. To the extent permitted by law, the Executive Committee shall have the power to act on behalf of the Board of Directors between meetings. All actions of the Executive Committee are subject to the review and ratification of the Board of Directors.

SECTION 14. COMMITTEES.

Such committees of the Board of Directors as are needed may be authorized at any meeting of the Board of Directors.

The Chairperson of the Board in consultation with the Executive Committee and the President of the Seminary, shall appoint the members of the committees and their chairpersons, subject to the review and approval of the Board. ~~Each committee shall select its own chairperson annually at the fall meeting (89.11.1).~~

SECTION 15. ADVISORY BOARD. The Board of Directors shall have the power to appoint an advisory board and/or advisors to the Board of Directors who shall have voice but not vote.

SECTION 16. PRESUMPTION OF ASSENT. A director of the corporation who is present at a meeting of its Board of Directors at which action on any corporate matter is taken shall be presumed to have assented to the action taken unless:

- (1) his or her dissent is entered in the minutes of the meeting; or,
- (2) he or she shall file his or her written dissent to such action with the person acting as secretary of the meeting before the adjournment thereof; or,
- (3) he or she forwards such dissent by registered or certified mail to the secretary of the corporation immediately after the adjournment of the meeting.

Such right to dissent shall not apply to a director who voted in favor of such action.

SECTION 17. INFORMAL ACTION BY DIRECTORS. Any action required by the Iowa Nonprofit Corporation Act to be taken at a meeting of directors of the corporation, or any action which may be taken at a meeting of the directors or of a committee of directors, may be taken without a meeting if a consent in writing setting for the action so taken, shall be signed by all of the directors or all of the members of the committee of directors, as the case may be. Such consent shall have the same form and effect as a unanimous vote and may be stated as such in any article or document filed with the Secretary of State. This provision shall be applicable whether or not the Iowa Nonprofit Corporation Act requires that an action be taken by resolution.

SECTION 18. RESIGNATION. Any director may resign at any time by giving written notice of his or her resignation to the Chairperson or the Secretary. Any such resignation shall take effect at the time specified therein, or if the time when it shall become effective shall not be specified therein, it shall take effect immediately upon its receipt. Except as specified therein, the acceptance of such resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective.

SECTION 19. CONFERENCE TELEPHONE MEETINGS AND OTHERWISE ELECTRONICALLY MEDIATED MEETINGS. Subject to other applicable provisions of this Article and to ARTICLE VIII, any action required by the Iowa Nonprofit Corporation Act to be taken at a meeting of the directors or a committee of directors, may be taken by means of conference telephone or by other electronic media by means of which all persons participating in the meeting can communicate synchronously with each other and the participation in a meeting pursuant to this provision shall constitute presence in person at such meeting.

ARTICLE IV

ADMINISTRATION

SECTION 1. PRESIDENT. There shall be a president of the Seminary who is the chief executive officer of the Seminary. The president shall be or become a member in good standing of a congregation of The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or its successor and, if an ordained minister, shall be in good standing in The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or its successor. The president shall have faculty status, and shall be eligible for retirement according to policies established by the Board of Directors.

The Board of Directors shall elect the president of the corporation in consultation with the Bishop of The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the appropriate unit of the churchwide organization.

SECTION 2. VICE-PRESIDENTS. The vice-presidents of the Seminary shall be appointed by the president subject to subsequent approval by the Board of Directors. (01.5.80)

SECTION 3. SECRETARY. The secretary of the Board of Directors shall be the secretary of the corporation as elected by the Board of Directors pursuant to ARTICLE III, Section 12 thereof.

SECTION 4. TREASURER. The treasurer of the Board of Directors shall be the treasurer of the corporation as elected by the Board of Directors pursuant to ARTICLE III, Section 12 thereof.

SECTION 5. ASSISTANT CORPORATE SECRETARY. The Board of Directors may also appoint an Assistant Corporate Secretary, when and for as long as the Board deems appropriate. This person will not be an officer nor a member of the Board of Directors. This person is authorized to perform the Corporate Secretary's duties at the direction of or in the absence of the Corporate Secretary. (01.11.123)

ARTICLE V

CONTRACTS, LOANS, CHECKS AND DEPOSITS

SECTION 1. CONTRACTS. The Board of Directors may authorize any officer of the Board or Seminary administrator, agent or agents, to enter into any contract or execute and deliver any instrument in the name of and on behalf of the corporation, and such authority may be general or confined to specific instances.

SECTION 2. LOANS. No loans shall be contracted on behalf of the corporation and no evidence of indebtedness shall be issued in its name unless authorized by a resolution of the Board of Directors. Such authority may be general or confined to specific instances.

SECTION 3. CHECKS, DRAFTS, ETC. All checks, drafts, or other orders for the payment of money, notes or other evidence of indebtedness issued in the name of the corporation, shall be signed by such officer or officers, agent or agents of the corporation and in such manner as shall from time to time be determined by resolution of the Board of Directors.

SECTION 4. DEPOSITS. All funds of the corporation not otherwise employed shall be deposited from time to time to the credit of the corporation in such banks, trust companies or other depositories as the Board of Directors may select.

ARTICLE VI

FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of the corporation shall begin the first day of July in each year and shall end on the last day of June in each year.

ARTICLE VII

SEAL

The corporation shall have a corporate seal.

ARTICLE VIII

WAIVER OF NOTICE

Whenever any notice is required to be given to any director of the corporation under the provisions of the Iowa Nonprofit Corporation Act or under the provisions of the Articles of Incorporation or Bylaws of the corporation, a waiver thereof in writing signed by the person or persons entitled to such notice, whether before or after the time stated therein, shall be equivalent to the giving of such notice.

ARTICLE IX

INDEMNIFICATION

Any person who is or was an officer, director, member, employee or agent of this corporation, or is or was serving at the request of this corporation as an officer, director, member, employee or agent of another corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust or enterprise, shall be entitled to indemnification by this corporation to the extent the same is permitted or required pursuant to the provisions of the Iowa Nonprofit Corporation Act.

ARTICLE X

AMENDMENT

These Bylaws may be altered, amended or repealed as provided in the Article of Incorporation.



AMENDED AND RESTATED
ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION
OF
WARTBURG THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
Amended 2012

TO THE SECRETARY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

Pursuant to the provisions of the Iowa Nonprofit Corporation Act, Iowa Code Chapter 504A (1987), the undersigned nonprofit corporation adopts the following Amended and Restated Articles of Incorporation:

Article I

The name of the Corporation is Wartburg Theological Seminary.

Article II

The period of its duration is perpetual.

Article III

The sole member of the corporation shall be The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or its successor which shall have voting rights.

Article IV

The corporation is organized and shall be operated for charitable, religious and educational purposes within the meaning of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, as amended, and will carry on the following activities in furtherance thereof:

- (a) The primary purpose of the Seminary is to train committed and competent persons for the ministry of the Church of Jesus Christ, especially in Lutheran church bodies, so that such persons will be enabled to relate the Gospel faithfully with clarity, power, and sensitivity to people, social structures, and situations in God's world.
- (b) The Seminary may also provide resources for and programs of continuing education and in consultation with the appropriate unit of the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may offer advanced graduate level theological education.
- (c) The faith, teachings and life of the Seminary shall be in harmony with the confession of faith of The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

No part of the net earnings of the corporation shall inure to the benefit of or be distributable to its members, directors, officers or other private persons, except that the corporation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payment and distribution in furtherance of the purposes set forth in this Article.

No substantial part of the activities of the organization shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the corporation shall not participate in, intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office. Notwithstanding any other provisions of these Articles, the corporation shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by a corporation except from Federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law); or (b) by a corporation, contributions to which are deductible under Section

170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law).

Upon the dissolution of the corporation, the Board of Directors shall, after paying or making provisions for payment of all liabilities of the corporation, dispose of all of the assets of the corporation exclusively for the purposes of the corporation in such manner or to such organization or organizations organized and operated exclusively for charitable, educational, religious or scientific purposes as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization or organizations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law), as The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall determine. Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by the Iowa District Court of the Country in which the principal office of the corporation is then located.

Article V

“The business of the corporation shall be conducted by a Board of Directors consisting of not more than thirty (30) and not less than twenty (20) members, each director having one vote. The terms of office, powers, authorities and duties of the directors of this corporation, the time and place of their meetings, and such other regulations with respect to them as are not inconsistent with the express provisions of these Articles of Incorporation shall be as specified from time to time in the Bylaws of this corporation.”

Article VI

The corporation shall have a corporate seal.

Article VII

This corporation shall have no capital stock and shall issue no capital stock.

Article VIII

These Articles of Incorporation may be amended from time to time in the manner provided by Iowa law.

Article IX

The Bylaws may be altered, amended or repealed and new Bylaws may be adopted at any meeting of the Board of Directors of the corporation at which a quorum is present, by a two-thirds vote of the directors present at the meetings, subject, however, to subsequent approval of the membership. Notice of such amendment shall be mailed to each member of the Board of Directors, together with a copy of the proposed changes, within the same time and in the same manner as notices of meetings are required to be given. Amendments to the governing documents shall be submitted, upon recommendation of the appropriate unit of the churchwide organization, to the Church Council for approval.

Article X

Unless otherwise provided in the Iowa Nonprofit Corporation Act, Iowa Code Chapter 504A (1987), and as it may be amended from time to time, a director, officer, employee, or member of the corporation is not liable on the corporation's debts nor obligations and director, officer, member, or other volunteer is not personally liable in that capacity, for a claim based upon an act or omission of the person performed in the discharge of the person's duties, except for a breach of the duty of loyalty to the corporation, for acts or omissions not in good faith or which involve intentional misconduct or a knowing violation of the law or for a transaction from which the person derives an improper personal benefit.

These Amended and Restated Articles of Incorporation: (1) correctly set forth the provisions of the Articles of Incorporation of the corporation as heretofore and hereby amended; (2) have been duly adopted as required by law; and (3) supersede the original Articles of Incorporation of the corporation and all amendments thereto.



BYLAWS
OF
WARTBURG THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
Amended 2012

ARTICLE I
OFFICES

The principal office of the corporation in the State of Iowa shall be located in the City of Dubuque of Dubuque County. The corporation may have such other offices, within or without the State of Iowa, as the business of the corporation from time to time.

The registered offices of the corporation required by the Iowa Nonprofit Corporation Act to be continuously maintained in Iowa shall be initially as provided in the Articles of

Incorporation, subject to change from time to time by resolution by the Board of Directors and filing of statement of said changes as required by the Iowa Nonprofit Corporation Act.

ARTICLE II

MEMBERS

SECTION 1. MEMBERS. The sole member of the corporation shall be The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

SECTION 2. GOVERNANCE. The corporation shall be affiliated with The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or its successor and all acts of the corporation shall be consistent with policies defined by The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or its successor.

ARTICLE III

DIRECTORS

SECTION 1. GENERAL POWERS. The business and affairs of the corporation shall be managed by its Board of Directors.

The business and affairs of the corporation shall include the employment of faculty and administrative officers, approval of educational policies and programs for persons preparing for public ministry in the seminary. The Board of Directors shall exercise all other normal governance functions, including the granting of degrees, holding title to and managing all seminary property and assets, receiving gifts and bequests, establishing salaries for faculty and administrative officers, providing for the financial resources and fiscal contracts required to operate the seminary, and shall have the authority to recruit students globally in addition to having all other powers and rights conferred by the Iowa Nonprofit Corporation Act.

SECTION 2. NUMBER AND ELECTION OF DIRECTORS.

The number of directors shall be not more than thirty (30) and not less than twenty (20), the exact number to be determined from time to time by the Board of Directors. The directors shall be elected as follows: (a) at least one-fifth (1/5) shall be nominated by the appropriate churchwide unit in consultation with the seminary and elected by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; (b) two directors shall be elected by the bishops of the supporting synods of the Seminary from among their number; and (c) the remaining directors shall be elected by the supporting synods, in consultation with the Seminary.

Up to four (4) of the above directors shall be elected from the membership of the Wartburg Seminary Foundation Board of Trustees. The Wartburg Seminary Foundation Trustees, in consultation with the Chairperson of the Board of Directors, the Chair of the Board Development Committee, and the President, shall make recommendations for election of these persons by one of the three means for electing members.

SECTION 3. LENGTH OF TERM. The term of a director shall be for six (6) years and no director may serve more than two (2) consecutive terms; provided, however, that the electing body shall arrange the terms to provide for the election of approximately one-third (1/3) of the directors each two (2) years. Appointment or election to one-half (1/2) or more of an unexpired term shall be construed as one full term.

SECTION 4. START OF TERM. The term of a director shall begin with the first regular meeting of the Board of Directors following his/her election. The term of a director shall conclude when his/her successor takes office.

SECTION 5. VACANCY. If a director dies, resigns, or is absent without cause from three (3) consecutive regular meetings, the office shall be declared vacant. Vacancies shall be filled in the manner prescribed by The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or its successor.

SECTION 6. MEETINGS. The Board of Directors shall hold at least two (2) regular meetings each year, one of which shall be the annual meeting. The annual meeting shall be the first regular meeting following July 1. Special meetings of the Board of Directors may be called by the chairperson of the Board of Directors and shall be called by the chairperson upon written request of any four (4) directors. *Robert's Rules of Order*, latest edition, shall be used in the conduct of business.

SECTION. 7. ADVISORY MEMBERS. A representative of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the President, and Academic Dean of the Seminary, and the President of the Wartburg Association of Students shall serve as advisory members. The Board of Directors may appoint others as advisory members as appropriate from time to time. Advisory members shall have voice but not vote.

SECTION 8. NOTICE. Notice of any special or regular meeting shall be given at least ten (10) days previous thereto by written notice delivered personally or mailed to each director at his/her business address, or electronic mail (email). If mailed, such notice shall be deemed to be delivered when deposited in the United States mail so addressed and postage prepaid. If notice is given by email, such notice shall be deemed to be delivered when electronically registered as

sent and delivered. The attendance of a director at any meeting shall constitute a waiver of notice of such meetings, except where such director attends a meeting for the express purpose of objecting to the transaction of any business because the meeting is not lawfully called or convened. Neither the business to be transacted at, nor the purpose of, any regular or special meeting of the Board of Directors need be specified in the notice or waiver of notice of such meeting. Any director may make written waiver of notice before, at, or after the meeting, by filing the waiver with the person designated as secretary of the meeting.

SECTION 9. PLACE OF MEETING. The Board of Directors may designate a place either within or without the State of Iowa, as a place of meetings for any annual meeting or for any regular or special meeting. If no designation is made, or if a special meeting be otherwise called, the place of meeting shall be the registered office of the corporation in the State of Iowa.

SECTION 10. QUORUM. A majority of the directors currently serving shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

SECTION 11. MANNER OF ACTING. The act of the majority of the directors present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the Board of Directors except to the extent otherwise provided in these Bylaws.

SECTION 12. OFFICERS. The officers of the Board of Directors shall be a Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson, a Secretary and a Treasurer. All officers, with the exception of the Treasurer, and all Chairpersons of the committee must be members of the Board of Directors. All officers shall be elected by the Board of Directors at a meeting prior to the annual meeting for a term of two years; the Chair and the Secretary to be elected in even numbered years and the Vice-Chair and Treasurer in odd numbered years.

SECTION 13. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

The Executive Committee shall be composed of the officers elected pursuant to Section 12 hereof, the chairpersons of all standing committees, the chairperson of the Foundation Board of Trustees, and the President of the seminary, *ex officio*. The immediate past chair of the Board of Directors may also be appointed for a one year term to the Executive Committee. If the Treasurer or the immediate Past Chair are not elected members of the Board of Directors, the Treasurer or immediate Past Chair will have voice but not vote at meetings of the Executive Committee and Board of Directors. Meetings of the Executive Committee may be called by either the Chairperson of the Board or by the President of the Seminary. To the extent permitted by law, the Executive Committee shall have the power to act on behalf of the Board of Directors between meetings. All actions of the Executive Committee are subject to the review and ratification of the Board of Directors.

SECTION 14. COMMITTEES.

Such committees of the Board of Directors as are needed may be authorized at any meeting of the Board of Directors.

The Chairperson of the Board in consultation with the Executive Committee and the President of the Seminary, shall appoint the members of the committees and their chairpersons, subject to the review and approval of the Board.

SECTION 15. ADVISORY BOARD. The Board of Directors shall have the power to appoint an advisory board and/or advisors to the Board of Directors who shall have voice but not vote.

SECTION 16. PRESUMPTION OF ASSENT. A director of the corporation who is present at a meeting of its Board of Directors at which action on any corporate matter is taken shall be presumed to have assented to the action taken unless:

- (1) his or her dissent is entered in the minutes of the meeting; or,
- (2) he or she shall file his or her written dissent to such action with the person acting as secretary of the meeting before the adjournment thereof; or,
- (3) he or she forwards such dissent by registered or certified mail to the secretary of the corporation immediately after the adjournment of the meeting.

Such right to dissent shall not apply to a director who voted in favor of such action.

SECTION 17. INFORMAL ACTION BY DIRECTORS. Any action required by the Iowa Nonprofit Corporation Act to be taken at a meeting of directors of the corporation, or any action which may be taken at a meeting of the directors or of a committee of directors, may be taken without a meeting if a consent in writing setting for the action so taken, shall be signed by all of the directors or all of the members of the committee of directors, as the case may be. Such consent shall have the same form and effect as a unanimous vote and may be stated as such in any article or document filed with the Secretary of State. This provision shall be applicable whether or not the Iowa Nonprofit Corporation Act requires that an action be taken by resolution.

SECTION 18. RESIGNATION. Any director may resign at any time by giving written notice of his or her resignation to the Chairperson or the Secretary. Any such resignation shall take effect at the time specified therein, or if the time when it shall become effective shall not be specified therein, it shall take effect immediately upon its receipt. Except as specified therein, the acceptance of such resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective.

SECTION 19. CONFERENCE TELEPHONE MEETINGS AND OTHERWISE ELECTRONICALLY MEDIATED MEETINGS. Subject to other applicable

provisions of this Article and to ARTICLE VIII, any action required by the Iowa Nonprofit Corporation Act to be taken at a meeting of the directors or a committee of directors, may be taken by means of conference telephone or by other electronic media by means of which all persons participating in the meeting can communicate synchronously with each other and the participation in a meeting pursuant to this provision shall constitute presence in person at such meeting.

ARTICLE IV

ADMINISTRATION

SECTION 1. PRESIDENT. There shall be a president of the Seminary who is the chief executive officer of the Seminary. The president shall be or become a member in good standing of a congregation of The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or its successor and, if an ordained minister, shall be in good standing in The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or its successor. The president shall have faculty status, and shall be eligible for retirement according to policies established by the Board of Directors.

The Board of Directors shall elect the president of the corporation in consultation with the Bishop of The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the appropriate unit of the churchwide organization.

SECTION 2. VICE-PRESIDENTS. The vice-presidents of the Seminary shall be appointed by the president subject to subsequent approval by the Board of Directors. (01.5.80)

SECTION 3. SECRETARY. The secretary of the Board of Directors shall be the secretary of the corporation as elected by the Board of Directors pursuant to ARTICLE III, Section 12 thereof.

SECTION 4. TREASURER. The treasurer of the Board of Directors shall be the treasurer of the corporation as elected by the Board of Directors pursuant to ARTICLE III, Section 12 thereof.

SECTION 5. ASSISTANT CORPORATE SECRETARY. The Board of Directors may also appoint an Assistant Corporate Secretary, when and for as long as the Board deems appropriate. This person will not be an officer nor a member of the Board of Directors. This person is authorized to perform the Corporate Secretary's duties at the direction of or in the absence of the Corporate Secretary. (01.11.123)

ARTICLE V

CONTRACTS, LOANS, CHECKS AND DEPOSITS

SECTION 1. CONTRACTS. The Board of Directors may authorize any officer of the Board or Seminary administrator, agent or agents, to enter into any contract or execute and deliver any instrument in the name of and on behalf of the corporation, and such authority may be general or confined to specific instances.

SECTION 2. LOANS. No loans shall be contracted on behalf of the corporation and no evidence of indebtedness shall be issued in its name unless authorized by a resolution of the Board of Directors. Such authority may be general or confined to specific instances.

SECTION 3. CHECKS, DRAFTS, ETC. All checks, drafts, or other orders for the payment of money, notes or other evidence of indebtedness issued in the name of the corporation, shall be signed by such officer or officers, agent or agents of the corporation and in such manner as shall from time to time be determined by resolution of the Board of Directors.

SECTION 4. DEPOSITS. All funds of the corporation not otherwise employed shall be deposited from time to time to the credit of the corporation in such banks, trust companies or other depositories as the Board of Directors may select.

ARTICLE VI

FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of the corporation shall begin the first day of July in each year and shall end on the last day of June in each year.

ARTICLE VII

SEAL

The corporation shall have a corporate seal.

ARTICLE VIII

WAIVER OF NOTICE

Whenever any notice is required to be given to any director of the corporation under the provisions of the Iowa Nonprofit Corporation Act or under the provisions of the Articles of Incorporation or Bylaws of the corporation, a waiver thereof in writing signed by the person or persons entitled to such notice, whether before or after the time stated therein, shall be equivalent to the giving of such notice.

ARTICLE IX

INDEMNIFICATION

Any person who is or was an officer, director, member, employee or agent of this corporation, or is or was serving at the request of this corporation as an officer, director, member, employee or agent of another corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust or enterprise, shall be entitled to indemnification by this corporation to the extent the same is permitted or required pursuant to the provisions of the Iowa Nonprofit Corporation Act.

ARTICLE X

AMENDMENT

These Bylaws may be altered, amended or repealed as provided in the Article of Incorporation.

BYLAWS AND CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS EASTERN CLUSTER OF LUTHERAN SEMINARIES

(Revisions approved by ECLS board, March 8, 2012)

Preamble

The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, Pa., the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, Pa., and the Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, located in Columbia, S.C., form this Eastern Cluster of Lutheran Seminaries to provide a full range of theological education for the Eastern United States, in particular, and for the church at large, and establish this corporation to assist them through a consolidated governance structure for decision-making and for planning and implementing a comprehensive program of theological education.*

The Eastern Cluster of Lutheran Seminaries, upon the approval by a majority vote of the governing boards of each of the three seminaries, adopted these bylaws.

Chapter 1. Name, Seal, and Location

- 1.01. The name of this corporation, which is a Pennsylvania nonprofit corporation, is Eastern Cluster of Lutheran Seminaries.
- 1.02. The seal of the corporation contains the name and the year of incorporation. The name of the corporation forms the circular outer edge of the seal.
- 1.03. The official address of the corporation shall be 61 Seminary Ridge, Gettysburg, Pa. 17325. The location of the administrative office of the corporation shall be determined by the Board of Directors.
- 1.03. A09. The administrative office of the corporation shall be located at 61 Seminary Ridge, Gettysburg, Pa. 17325.

Chapter 2. Mission Statement

- 2.01. Centered in the Word of God made flesh in Jesus Christ, the Eastern Cluster of Lutheran Seminaries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America exists to support the integrity and the fullness of the theological endeavor: as faith seeking understanding; understanding seeking expression; and expression fulfilling mission.
- 2.02. We are an interdependent body formed to meet the challenging needs of rostered leaders and all the baptized for their ministry in daily life, by providing theological leadership and offering programs to augment the curricula of the member seminaries.
- 2.03. We commit ourselves to the best stewardship of our talents and resources and the rich theological heritage entrusted to us, offering our particular gifts to the church. We rely upon the wisdom and power given to the Church by the Holy Spirit to guide our endeavors.

*The Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in 1993 adopted a recommendation emanating 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. See Appendix A for the 11 *Imperatives for Theological Education* also adopted as part of the Study.

Chapter 3. Powers

- 3.01. This corporation shall have those powers provided by the Pennsylvania Nonprofit Corporation Law that are not inconsistent with these Bylaws. In addition, it shall have the power to develop a comprehensive plan for leadership education on behalf of the Cluster, for approval by the boards of the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia and the Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary. Further, it shall have the power
- a. to adopt a budget for the Cluster and to develop and implement formulae for allocation to the Cluster and among the three seminaries of unrestricted funds received by the Cluster;
 - b. to receive and administer restricted funds given to the Cluster for the support of Cluster programs and activities; and
 - c. to solicit funds on behalf of the Cluster to support the operation of the Cluster and for the support of Cluster programs and activities.
- 3.02. The Cluster shall have such additional powers as the three seminary boards from time to time mutually shall agree to delegate to it.
- 3.03. Prior to the establishment of major, new initiatives by a seminary within this Cluster, there shall be consultation between the Board of Directors of the Cluster and with the respective boards of each seminary or, in the interim between the regular meetings of such boards, with the executive committee of each board. A “major new initiative” shall be defined as any new academic offering, building project, or fund-raising initiative. A consultation shall be defined as forthright conversation. A consultation may be held between board meetings with the Executive Committee of the Board or the three Presidents. Each seminary does not have veto power but shall have the ability and responsibility to respond within this Cluster agreement.
- 3.04. The Cluster shall seek to enhance the ability of each seminary to function in accord with the eleven “Imperatives for Theological Education,” as adopted by the 1993 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Moreover the Cluster shall operate in keeping with the current edition of the “Memorandum of Understanding” for the Cluster, insofar as the memorandum is consistent with the Cluster’s bylaws.

Chapter 4. Board of Directors

- 4.01. The Board of Directors shall consist of twelve Directors, which shall include the president, the dean or provost, the board/advisory council chairperson, and a senior faculty member of each seminary, known as a Cluster Fellow. A member of the staff of the appropriate churchwide unit as designated by the Church Council of the ELCA shall serve as a consultant to the Board of Directors, with voice but without vote.
- 4.02. The term of each Director who is the president, provost, dean, or chairperson of the board/advisory council of a seminary and faculty member shall be unlimited, except that it shall terminate when the Director leaves his or her office. The term of a seminary president, provost, dean, or board chairperson shall commence automatically upon that person’s election as president, provost, dean, or chairperson. The term of the faculty member shall commence upon that person’s appointment to the position of Cluster Fellow by the president or provost of each seminary and ratification of the Cluster Board.

- 4.03. The Board of Directors shall meet at least twice each year. Special meetings may be called by the Chairperson of the Board of Directors in consultation with the Executive Director, or upon the written petition, addressed to the Executive Director, of at least four Directors. At least fourteen days' written notice of a special meeting shall be given to each Director.
- 4.03.A09. One of the meetings of the Board of Directors during each year shall be in person. The other meeting or meetings may be conducted by electronic means as determined by the Board of Directors.
- 4.04. The affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of all of the Directors (regardless of the number of Directors present and voting) shall be required for the adoption of any of the following actions (provided that at least one Director from each of the three seminaries shall have voted in the affirmative):
- a. To permit the withdrawal of any seminary from the Cluster or from participation or continuing participation in any program or activity of the Cluster;
 - b. To reduce or increase the number of member seminaries that shall be permitted to participate in or continue to participate in any program or activity of the Cluster; or
 - c. To approve a proposal for the distribution of unrestricted funds received by the Cluster to or for the use by any of the three seminaries.
- Further, actions under a. or b. above affecting the tenure of any seminary as a member of the Cluster shall not become effective until approved by the Church Council of the ELCA upon recommendation by the appropriate churchwide unit.
- 4.05. A majority of the Directors then in office shall constitute a quorum for any meeting of the Board of Directors, provided that at least one Director from each of the three seminaries shall be in attendance.
- 4.06. Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, shall establish the procedural rules for all meetings of the Board of Directors and its committees or work groups.
- 4.07. The Cluster Board may carry out discussion and decisions via e-mail as long as the Board follows the rules stated above for an affirmative vote. The record of the action shall be forwarded to the secretary of the Board to be included the meeting minutes of the subsequent regular minutes of the Board.

Chapter 5. Officers

- 5.01. The officers shall be a Chairperson, a Vice Chairperson, a Secretary, and a Treasurer. At the discretion of the Board of Directors, the offices of Secretary and Treasurer may be combined. Officers shall be elected by the board for three-year, renewable terms.
- 5.02. If no person is available to serve as Secretary or Treasurer, a non-voting officer may be identified to serve in this capacity. The election of said officer will follow the above rules for election and term of office.
- 5.03. The Chairperson shall preside at meetings of the Board of Directors and of the Executive Committee. The Vice Chairperson shall have the authority to act in the place of the Chairperson in the event of the death, resignation, or disability of the Chairperson.

- 5.04. The Secretary shall keep minutes of the meetings of the Board of Directors and of the Executive Committee, and shall furnish copies of the minutes of the meetings of the Board of Directors and of the Executive Committee to each Director and to those persons designated to receive copies of the minutes. The Secretary shall be the custodian of the Seal of the Corporation.
- 5.05. The Treasurer shall have custody of the corporate funds and all assets of the corporation and shall keep full and complete records of all receipts and disbursements in the books of the corporation, and shall deposit all monies of the corporation in such depositories as may be designated by the Board of Directors. The Treasurer shall render to the Executive Director and the Board of Directors, whenever they may so require, but at least annually, an account of all transactions conducted by the Treasurer and of the financial condition of the corporation.
- 5.06. An officer may resign at any time upon written notice to the Executive Director or to the Board of Directors. The resignation shall be effective upon receipt or upon the date, if any, set forth in the notice, whichever is later.
- 5.07. An officer may be removed by the Board of Directors whenever in its judgment the best interest of the corporation will be served thereby. A majority vote shall prevail, provided that at least one Director from each of the three seminaries shall have voted in the affirmative.
- 5.08. A vacancy in any office shall be filled by the Board of Directors for the remaining balance of the term.

Chapter 6. Executive Director and Cluster Fellows

- 6.01. There shall be an Executive Director who shall serve as the president and chief executive officer of the corporation. The Executive Director as president of the corporation shall have the authority to execute documents on behalf of the corporation and shall be accountable to the Board of Directors.
- 6.01. A09.
The Executive Director shall be ~~one of the three seminary presidents~~ either a seminary president or provost. In the event the ~~president person~~ president person serving as Executive Director shall ~~cease being president~~ resign from office, one of the other two ~~presidents~~ presidents eligible shall assume the office of Executive Director and terms shall be rearranged so that the effect is that no seminary shall have its president or ~~presidents~~ provost serve as Executive Director for ~~a total of no more than three years out of any given six-year period~~.
- 6.02. A10.
A Cluster Fellow, chosen from among the senior faculty, shall be nominated by the president of each seminary, and ratified by the Cluster Board for appointment to a three-year, renewable term. Each Cluster Fellow shall carry out the responsibilities of that position to facilitate the work of the Cluster in the manner specified in the description of the position as approved by the Board of Directors. Each Cluster Fellow shall report to the dean or provost of the respective seminary and shall be accountable to the Executive Director of the Cluster.

Chapter 7. Committees

- 7.01.1. There shall be an Executive Committee, consisting of the ~~presidents and chairpersons of the boards of each seminary~~ president or provost and board chair of each seminary board/advisory council. The Executive Committee shall have full power and authority to act on behalf of the Board of Directors, except that the Committee shall not have the power to revoke or rescind any prior action of the Board nor shall it have authority to take any action referred to in Section 4.04 of the Bylaws. Actions of the Executive Committee shall be subject to review by the Board of Directors.
- 7.01.2. Coordinating committees and project-specific work groups with membership on the basis of need may be identified and appointed by the Board of Directors. The duration of the work of such committees and work groups shall be determined by the Board of Directors. A member of the Board of Directors shall serve as a member of a committee or work group established by the board. Meetings of such committees and work groups shall be conducted by conference call or online consultation whenever possible. All committees and work groups shall report regularly to the Board of Directors.
- 7.03. Non-directors may serve as members of committees or work groups. Their nomination and appointment shall be approved by the Board Chair in consultation with the Executive Director.
- 7.04. In consultation with the Executive Director and the Treasurer, the Executive Committee of the Cluster Board shall develop the annual budget of the Cluster. It also shall develop proposals for allocation to the Cluster and among the three seminaries of unrestricted funds received by the Cluster. It shall serve as the investment committee for the Cluster.

Chapter 8. Funding

- 8.01. The Eastern Cluster of Lutheran Seminaries, in accordance with guidelines approved by the Board and the boards of the three seminaries, shall develop resources to fund its operations and its programs.

Chapter 9. Indemnification

- 9.01. To the full extent permitted by law, each person who was or is a party or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending or completed civil, criminal, administrative, arbitration or investigative proceeding, including a proceeding by or in the right of this corporation, by reason of the fact that such person is or was a Director, officer, employee, agent or member of any Board Committee shall be indemnified against judgments, penalties, fines, settlements and reasonable expenses, including attorney's fees and costs, incurred by the person in connection with the proceeding. Such indemnification shall continue as to a person who has ceased to be a Director, officer, employee, agent or member of a Board Committee.

- 9.02. This corporation may purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of a person who is or was a Director, officer, employee, agent or member of a Board Committee against any liability asserted against and incurred by the person in or arising from that capacity.

Chapter 10. Miscellaneous Provisions

- 10.01. The Board of Directors, or any committee thereof, shall have the authority to conduct any meeting by telephone or other means of communication which allows all persons participating in the meeting to communicate with each other, provided that all provisions of these Bylaws and continuing resolutions pertaining to the calling of meetings, notice, and quorum shall have been complied with fully.
- 10.02. No member of the Board of Directors, or of any committee thereof, shall receive compensation for such service. However, this shall not be construed to prohibit payment by the Cluster of the costs necessary to purchase insurance coverage to fund the indemnification provided under Chapter 10 hereof.

Chapter 11. Amendments

- 11.01. Amendments to these Bylaws may be made by a two-thirds vote of the Directors present at any regular or special meeting of the Board, provided that any proposed amendments shall have been transmitted in writing by the Secretary to all Directors at least thirty days prior to the date of the meeting, and the notice of the meeting shall have included the announcement of the consideration of the proposed amendment and set forth the text of the proposed amendment. No amendment to the Bylaws shall become effective until it has been approved by the boards of each of the seminaries, and by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- 11.02. The Board of Directors may adopt continuing resolutions for the purpose of interpreting or implementing the Bylaws. Such resolutions shall be adopted or amended by an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of the Directors present and voting at any regular meeting of the Board or at any special meeting of the Board providing that notice of the proposed resolution is submitted to the directors in writing together with the notice announcing the special meeting. Such resolutions, upon their adoption, shall be published together with the Bylaws.

NOTE: Codification Explanation

Bylaws provide the primary governing principles. Continuing resolutions, which are intentionally more easily amendable, provide additional detail setting forth how the bylaws to which each is attached shall be carried out.

Bylaws are intended to be more permanent in nature and can be amended only upon the approval of the governing boards of each of the seminaries. Continuing resolutions may be amended at any time that the Board of Directors determines that there is a better or more effective way to fulfill the purpose of the bylaw.

Bylaws are codified with two sets of numbers, separated by a period. The first digit(s), preceding the period, represents the number of the chapter of which the bylaw is a part. The second set of numbers is a chronological listing of the bylaws contained in each chapter.

Continuing resolutions begin with the two sets of numbers contained in the bylaw to which they pertain, followed by a period, a capital letter, and two digits representing the year of adoption. Thus, "4.01.A97" is the designation for the first resolution appended to Bylaw 4.01 and shows that it was adopted in 1997. If a second resolution is appended, it would contain the letter "B" plus two digits indicating the year of adoption. If 4.01.A97 is amended, it would retain the designation 4.01.A, but would be followed by two digits referring to the year in which the amendment was adopted and the reference to 1997 would be deleted.

APPENDIX A

Imperatives for Theological Education

These 11 imperatives for theological education were approved by the 1993 ELCA Churchwide Assembly as the planning and guiding focus for preparation of leaders for this church into the twenty-first century.

1. Depth in the Faith

This church needs pastors and lay leaders whose various ministries are rooted in the Bible, history and theology, and shaped by the Lutheran confessional heritage. We seek men and women whose personal faith in Jesus Christ is nourished and renewed through a disciplined devotional life. No longer can we depend on a Christian culture to transmit basic Christian knowledge and values. Leaders must be competent to teach and preach the truth of the faith with accuracy and clarity. Secular ideologies, spiritual movements and world religions offer competing faith claims to which Christians must be prepared to respond out of the depths of their tradition. People look to their lay and ordained ministers for theological and spiritual leadership that is based on an intimate knowledge of scripture, a distinctively Lutheran theological understanding, and contemporary methods of theological reflection.

2. Mission Outreach

God's mission requires leaders in all the ministries of the church who are prepared and committed to proclaim the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ. Evangelical outreach by faithful and articulate leaders is obedient to Christ's Great Commission and essential to the identity, vitality, and continuity of this church. Approaches in theological education are needed which help pastors and other leaders recognize and respond to the spiritual hunger of people in their congregations and in the communities beyond their congregations. Pastors must themselves be equipped so that they can equip others to join with them in sharing their faith with those who have never heard, those who have not believed, and those who are out of touch with the means of grace within the community of faith. They must learn to lead congregations which serve as mission outposts for the faith.

3. Practical Congregational Needs

Congregations are asking for leaders with a high level of competence in the practice of ministry. Practical competence includes not only specific skills of ministry, but also the integration of practice with spiritual and theological depth, sensitivity to interpersonal relationships, and beyond that an overall capacity for leadership. If congregations are going to become mission outposts for the renewal of the faith in our secular context, they need pastors who inspire through their teaching, preaching and leadership at worship who empower members for their ministry, and who provide vision and direction for the ministry team. They need associates in ministry and other lay leaders who provide expert leadership in specific areas such as education, evangelism, music, and youth ministry. In order to meet the demands of congregational ministry today, leaders need both the gifts that come from the Spirit and practical competencies that must be learned. Seminary education provides an introduction to basic ministry skills and the art of theological and practical integration. These must be refined and expanded through continuing education, practice, supervision, and reflection. Most seminary graduates need to develop competence in a variety of practical areas, including evangelism, stewardship, and administration.

4. Cultures and Contexts

With the growing diversity and interdependence of cultures that increasingly mark contemporary American society, we need lay and ordained ministers who are sensitive to and knowledgeable about the cultures of those they serve and who are able to adapt their ministry to different contexts. Global economic, political, and cultural realities shape the overall setting of contemporary ministry. At the same time, ministry is always carried out in a particular culture and a local context. The practical demands of ministry are more complex and difficult to meet when one is ministering in cultures and contexts other than one's own. This church needs leaders who can minister effectively with people from a diverse range of life situations including ethnic origins, vocational and educational experience, family situations, regional variations, types of community, and political value systems. Awareness of cultures and contexts should also lead Christian leaders to speak out against trends in society that are contrary to the faith they hold.

5. Africa American, Asian, Hispanic, and Native America Candidates

This church needs to invite Christian leaders from the African America, Asian, Hispanic, and Native America communities to consider service in the church as pastors or associates in ministry. It also must provide these candidates with theological education that is congruent with their varied cultural perspectives and that prepares them for rostered ministry throughout the ELCA. Mission in North America requires that the ELCA learn how to relate the Gospel to the growing number of African America, Asian, Hispanic, and Native American persons who live here. These communities are often better served by pastors and associates in ministry from these communities. Furthermore, people from all communities will be nurtured in the faith more effectively within the ELCA if this church body recognizes the particularity of each community and becomes more inclusive of a variety of cultural values and styles. This second task belongs to this whole church, but it will not happen without the leadership of a growing number of pastors and associates in ministry who are themselves Asian, African-America, Native American, and Hispanic.

6. Indigenous Lay Leaders

This church needs to find appropriate ways to provide indigenous lay leaders identified by their communities with the basic theological education they need for ministry in their settings. Many of those with potential for being effective ministers in their communities are not able to leave their communities for extended periods of time for training. Furthermore, there may be ways in which their effectiveness for certain ministries is enhanced by their continuity in their community. Some indigenous leaders are already being licensed for local service by their bishops. Various training programs are being developed locally and synodically to serve them. If the ELCA authorizes a wider range of ministries, such as lay catechists and evangelists, the demand will increase for approaches to theological education that are highly accessible, adaptable, and portable.

7. Life-Long Learning

Because of the changing, diverse context of our mission, it is necessary that leaders continually grow in faith, expand their skills and increase their knowledge through continuing education. Even at their very best, seminary degree programs cannot teach all one needs to know for the practice of ministry. While continuing education is expected of all pastors and associates in ministry, it is certainly needed during the early, formative years of ministry in a specific context. Continuing education is critically important at other points of personal and professional transition which call for fresh theological reflection, refinement of skills, response to changing society issues, or orientation to new ministry contexts. This church must encourage and provide resources for its lay and ordained leaders to continually develop and renew their gifts for ministry through disciplined patterns of life-long learning.

8. Ministry in Daily Life

The education of ordained pastors and other leaders in the church should prepare them to assist the people of the church to integrate their life and faith. In addition, an increasing number of Christians who are not pursuing a church occupation seek intellectual exploration of their faith and theological reflection on their ministries in the world. Many have the time and interest to study theology with the same academic thoroughness that they apply to secular and professional fields of study. These lay members live on the cutting edge of mission. They engage structures of society and are in regular contact with people of other faiths and with people scarcely related to organized religion. Their faith and ministry could be enhanced if, in addition to congregationally based adult education, they had access to programs of theological education at an advanced level. Such programs would have to relate to their ministries in the world and be adaptable to the demands of their primary commitments to family or work.

9. Scholarly Discourse and Reflection

How the church engages its mission is constantly challenged, focused, and refined by lively and critical theological reflection. Since their origin in a sixteenth century university context, Lutherans have been committed to preparing pastors, teachers and other leaders to engage in theological reflection in congregations, colleges, and seminaries. The seminaries of the Lutheran church have had a special responsibility for transmitting the Lutheran theological tradition to successive generations of leaders. For the sake of the integrity and vitality of the Lutheran theological tradition and the contribution it makes to the ecumenical church, it is essential that all Lutheran theological faculties not only prepare leaders, but also serve as communities of theological discourse, which are a resource to this church in the development and review of theological positions. Furthermore, to ensure the continuation of a strong Lutheran theological tradition, this church needs to encourage and support some centers where theological education at the doctoral level can be pursued: major divinity schools where a strong Lutheran presence is consciously developed and maintained, ecumenical consortia in which a Lutheran institution collaborates with institutions of other denominations, seminary-based academic doctoral studies which may draw in scholars and expertise from neighboring academic institutions.

10. Life Circumstances of Candidates

Just as the context of the ELCA's mission is diverse, so also are those who come to be prepared to serve that mission: candidates young and old; candidates just out of college and candidates with a variety of work and life experience; single candidates and candidates with families; candidates who carry high debt loads and work to support themselves and their families while they prepare for ministry; candidates with advanced degrees and candidates who lack academic preparation for theological study; candidates steeped in the Christian tradition and Lutheran ethos and new Christians with little experience of the church; candidates who are mobile and candidates who are bound to particular places and communities; candidates who bring a variety of perspectives as women and men, as members of the dominant culture, and as members of various racial and ethnic communities. Some within this diversity have experience systemic discrimination. This church needs to provide options in theological education that are responsive to the varied circumstances in the lives of ministry candidates.

11. Ecumenical Interdependence

Since a diversity of religions and Christian communions is part of our context for mission, people preparing for leadership in the ELCA need to learn how to work and study together with people of other traditions. It is vital that theological education in the ELCA build ecumenical understanding and model patterns of dialogue and cooperation among Christians and adherents of other faiths. Wherever possible, cooperative relationships and scholarly exchange programs should be fostered between Lutheran seminaries and those of other traditions and among Lutheran seminaries around the world. Major ecumenical seminaries which prepare some leaders for service in the Lutheran church play a role in fostering ecumenical interdependence.

APPENDIX B

Excerpts from **Pennsylvania Nonprofit Corporation: Powers, Duties, Safeguards**

5502. General Powers

General rule. – Subject to the limitations and restrictions imposed by statute and, except as otherwise provided in paragraph (4), subject to the limitations and restrictions contained in its articles, every nonprofit corporation shall have power:

1. To have perpetual succession by its corporate name unless a limited period of duration is specified in its articles, subject to the power of the Attorney General under section 503 (relating to actions to revoke corporate franchises) and to the power of the General Assembly under the Constitution of Pennsylvania.
2. To sue and be sued, complain and defend and participate as a party or otherwise in any judicial, administrative, arbitral or other proceeding in its corporate name.
3. To have a corporate seal, which may be altered at pleasure, and to use the seal by causing it to be impressed or affixed or in any manner reproduced.
4. To acquire, own and utilize any real or personal property, or any interest therein, wherever situated, regardless of any limitation set forth in its articles prior to January 1, 1972 as to the quantity or value of real or personal property which it may hold, or as to the amount of income derived there from.
5. To sell, convey, mortgage, pledge, lease, exchange or otherwise dispose of all or any part of its property and assets, or any interest therein, wherever situated.
6. To guarantee, become surety for, acquire, own and dispose of obligations, capital stock and other securities.
7. To borrow money, issue or incur its obligations and secure any of its obligations by mortgage on or pledge of or security interest in all or any part of its property and assets, wherever situated, franchises or income, or any interest therein.
8. To invest its funds, lend money and take and hold real and personal property as security for the repayment of funds so invested or loaned.
9. To make contributions and donations.
10. To use abbreviations, words, logos or symbols upon the records of the corporation, and in connection with the registration of, and inscription of ownership or entitlement on, certificates evidencing membership in or securities or obligations of the corporation To be a promoter, partner, member, associate or manager of any partnership,
11. enterprise or venture or in any transaction, undertaking or arrangement that the corporation would have power to conduct itself, whether or not its participation involves sharing or delegation of control with or to others.
12. To transact any lawful business that the board of directors or other body finds will aid governmental policy.
13. To continue the salaries of such of its employees as may be serving in the active or reserve armed forces of the United States, or in the national guard or in any other organization established for the protection of the lives and property of citizens of the Commonwealth or the United States, during the term of that service or during such part thereof as the employees, by reason of that service, may be unable to perform their duties as employees of the corporation.
14. To pay pensions and establish pension plans, pension trusts, profit sharing plans, share bonus plans, share option plans, incentive and deferred compensation plans and other plans or trusts for any or all of its present or former representatives and, after their death, to grant allowances or pensions to their dependents or beneficiaries, whether or not the grant was made during their lifetime.
15. To conduct its business, carry on its operations, have offices and exercise the powers granted by this article or any other provision of law in any jurisdiction within or without the United States.
16. To elect or appoint and remove officers, employees and agents of the corporation define their duties, fix their reasonable compensation and reasonable compensation of directors, to lend any of the foregoing money and credit and to pay bonuses or other additional compensation to any of the foregoing for past services.
17. To enter into any obligation appropriate for the transaction of its affairs, including contracts or other agreements with its members.
18. To have and exercise all of the powers and means appropriate to effect the purpose or purposes for which the corporation is incorporated.
19. To have and exercise all other powers enumerated elsewhere in this subpart or otherwise vested by law in the corporation.
20. **Enumeration unnecessary.** – It shall not be necessary to set forth in the articles of the corporation the powers enumerated in subsection (a).

BYLAWS AND CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS EASTERN CLUSTER OF LUTHERAN SEMINARIES

(Revisions approved by ECLS board, March 8, 2012)

Preamble

The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, Pa., the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, Pa., and the Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, located in Columbia, S.C., form this Eastern Cluster of Lutheran Seminaries to provide a full range of theological education for the Eastern United States, in particular, and for the church at large, and establish this corporation to assist them through a consolidated governance structure for decision-making and for planning and implementing a comprehensive program of theological education.*

The Eastern Cluster of Lutheran Seminaries, upon the approval by a majority vote of the governing boards of each of the three seminaries, adopted these bylaws.

Chapter 1. Name, Seal, and Location

- 1.01. The name of this corporation, which is a Pennsylvania nonprofit corporation, is Eastern Cluster of Lutheran Seminaries.
- 1.02. The seal of the corporation contains the name and the year of incorporation. The name of the corporation forms the circular outer edge of the seal.
- 1.03. The official address of the corporation shall be 61 Seminary Ridge, Gettysburg, Pa. 17325. The location of the administrative office of the corporation shall be determined by the Board of Directors.
- 1.03. A09. The administrative office of the corporation shall be located at 61 Seminary Ridge, Gettysburg, Pa. 17325.

Chapter 2. Mission Statement

- 2.01. Centered in the Word of God made flesh in Jesus Christ, the Eastern Cluster of Lutheran Seminaries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America exists to support the integrity and the fullness of the theological endeavor: as faith seeking understanding; understanding seeking expression; and expression fulfilling mission.
- 2.02. We are an interdependent body formed to meet the challenging needs of rostered leaders and all the baptized for their ministry in daily life, by providing theological leadership and offering programs to augment the curricula of the member seminaries.
- 2.03. We commit ourselves to the best stewardship of our talents and resources and the rich theological heritage entrusted to us, offering our particular gifts to the church. We rely upon the wisdom and power given to the Church by the Holy Spirit to guide our endeavors.

*The Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in 1993 adopted a recommendation emanating 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. See Appendix A for the 11 *Imperatives for Theological Education* also adopted as part of the Study.

Chapter 3. Powers

- 3.01. This corporation shall have those powers provided by the Pennsylvania Nonprofit Corporation Law that are not inconsistent with these Bylaws. In addition, it shall have the power to develop a comprehensive plan for leadership education on behalf of the Cluster, for approval by the boards of the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia and the Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary. Further, it shall have the power
- a. to adopt a budget for the Cluster and to develop and implement formulae for allocation to the Cluster and among the three seminaries of unrestricted funds received by the Cluster;
 - b. to receive and administer restricted funds given to the Cluster for the support of Cluster programs and activities; and
 - c. to solicit funds on behalf of the Cluster to support the operation of the Cluster and for the support of Cluster programs and activities.
- 3.02. The Cluster shall have such additional powers as the three seminary boards from time to time mutually shall agree to delegate to it.
- 3.03. Prior to the establishment of major, new initiatives by a seminary within this Cluster, there shall be consultation between the Board of Directors of the Cluster and with the respective boards of each seminary or, in the interim between the regular meetings of such boards, with the executive committee of each board. A “major new initiative” shall be defined as any new academic offering, building project, or fund-raising initiative. A consultation shall be defined as forthright conversation. A consultation may be held between board meetings with the Executive Committee of the Board or the three Presidents. Each seminary does not have veto power but shall have the ability and responsibility to respond within this Cluster agreement.
- 3.04. The Cluster shall seek to enhance the ability of each seminary to function in accord with the eleven “Imperatives for Theological Education,” as adopted by the 1993 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Moreover the Cluster shall operate in keeping with the current edition of the “Memorandum of Understanding” for the Cluster, insofar as the memorandum is consistent with the Cluster’s bylaws.

Chapter 4. Board of Directors

- 4.01. The Board of Directors shall consist of twelve Directors, which shall include the president, the dean or provost, the board/advisory council chairperson, and a senior faculty member of each seminary, known as a Cluster Fellow. A member of the staff of the appropriate churchwide unit as designated by the Church Council of the ELCA shall serve as a consultant to the Board of Directors, with voice but without vote.
- 4.02. The term of each Director who is the president, provost, dean, or chairperson of the board/advisory council of a seminary and faculty member shall be unlimited, except that it shall terminate when the Director leaves his or her office. The term of a seminary president, provost, dean, or board chairperson shall commence automatically upon that person’s election as president, provost, dean, or chairperson. The term of the faculty member shall commence upon that person’s appointment to the position of Cluster Fellow by the president or provost of each seminary and ratification of the Cluster Board.

- 4.03. The Board of Directors shall meet at least twice each year. Special meetings may be called by the Chairperson of the Board of Directors in consultation with the Executive Director, or upon the written petition, addressed to the Executive Director, of at least four Directors. At least fourteen days' written notice of a special meeting shall be given to each Director.
- 4.03.A09. One of the meetings of the Board of Directors during each year shall be in person. The other meeting or meetings may be conducted by electronic means as determined by the Board of Directors.
- 4.04. The affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of all of the Directors (regardless of the number of Directors present and voting) shall be required for the adoption of any of the following actions (provided that at least one Director from each of the three seminaries shall have voted in the affirmative):
- a. To permit the withdrawal of any seminary from the Cluster or from participation or continuing participation in any program or activity of the Cluster;
 - b. To reduce or increase the number of member seminaries that shall be permitted to participate in or continue to participate in any program or activity of the Cluster; or
 - c. To approve a proposal for the distribution of unrestricted funds received by the Cluster to or for the use by any of the three seminaries.
- Further, actions under a. or b. above affecting the tenure of any seminary as a member of the Cluster shall not become effective until approved by the Church Council of the ELCA upon recommendation by the appropriate churchwide unit.
- 4.05. A majority of the Directors then in office shall constitute a quorum for any meeting of the Board of Directors, provided that at least one Director from each of the three seminaries shall be in attendance.
- 4.06. Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, shall establish the procedural rules for all meetings of the Board of Directors and its committees or work groups.
- 4.07. The Cluster Board may carry out discussion and decisions via e-mail as long as the Board follows the rules stated above for an affirmative vote. The record of the action shall be forwarded to the secretary of the Board to be included the meeting minutes of the subsequent regular minutes of the Board.

Chapter 5. Officers

- 5.01. The officers shall be a Chairperson, a Vice Chairperson, a Secretary, and a Treasurer. At the discretion of the Board of Directors, the offices of Secretary and Treasurer may be combined. Officers shall be elected by the board for three-year, renewable terms.
- 5.02. If no person is available to serve as Secretary or Treasurer, a non-voting officer may be identified to serve in this capacity. The election of said officer will follow the above rules for election and term of office.
- 5.03. The Chairperson shall preside at meetings of the Board of Directors and of the Executive Committee. The Vice Chairperson shall have the authority to act in the place of the Chairperson in the event of the death, resignation, or disability of the Chairperson.

- 5.04. The Secretary shall keep minutes of the meetings of the Board of Directors and of the Executive Committee, and shall furnish copies of the minutes of the meetings of the Board of Directors and of the Executive Committee to each Director and to those persons designated to receive copies of the minutes. The Secretary shall be the custodian of the Seal of the Corporation.
- 5.05. The Treasurer shall have custody of the corporate funds and all assets of the corporation and shall keep full and complete records of all receipts and disbursements in the books of the corporation, and shall deposit all monies of the corporation in such depositories as may be designated by the Board of Directors. The Treasurer shall render to the Executive Director and the Board of Directors, whenever they may so require, but at least annually, an account of all transactions conducted by the Treasurer and of the financial condition of the corporation.
- 5.06. An officer may resign at any time upon written notice to the Executive Director or to the Board of Directors. The resignation shall be effective upon receipt or upon the date, if any, set forth in the notice, whichever is later.
- 5.07. An officer may be removed by the Board of Directors whenever in its judgment the best interest of the corporation will be served thereby. A majority vote shall prevail, provided that at least one Director from each of the three seminaries shall have voted in the affirmative.
- 5.08. A vacancy in any office shall be filled by the Board of Directors for the remaining balance of the term.

Chapter 6. Executive Director and Cluster Fellows

- 6.01. There shall be an Executive Director who shall serve as the president and chief executive officer of the corporation. The Executive Director as president of the corporation shall have the authority to execute documents on behalf of the corporation and shall be accountable to the Board of Directors.
- 6.01. A09.
The Executive Director shall be either a seminary president or provost. In the event the person serving as Executive Director shall resign from office, one of the other two eligible shall assume the office of Executive Director and terms shall be rearranged so that the effect is that no seminary shall have its president or provost serve as Executive Director for more than three years out of any given six-year period.
- 6.02. A10.
A Cluster Fellow, chosen from among the senior faculty, shall be nominated by the president of each seminary, and ratified by the Cluster Board for appointment to a three-year, renewable term. Each Cluster Fellow shall carry out the responsibilities of that position to facilitate the work of the Cluster in the manner specified in the description of the position as approved by the Board of Directors. Each Cluster Fellow shall report to the dean or provost of the respective seminary and shall be accountable to the Executive Director of the Cluster.

Chapter 7. Committees

- 7.01.1. There shall be an Executive Committee, consisting of the president or provost and board chair of each seminary board/advisory council. The Executive Committee shall have full power and authority to act on behalf of the Board of Directors, except that the Committee shall not have the power to revoke or rescind any prior action of the Board nor shall it have authority to take any action referred to in Section 4.04 of the Bylaws. Actions of the Executive Committee shall be subject to review by the Board of Directors.
- 7.01.2. Coordinating committees and project-specific work groups with membership on the basis of need may be identified and appointed by the Board of Directors. The duration of the work of such committees and work groups shall be determined by the Board of Directors. A member of the Board of Directors shall serve as a member of a committee or work group established by the board. Meetings of such committees and work groups shall be conducted by conference call or online consultation whenever possible. All committees and work groups shall report regularly to the Board of Directors.
- 7.03. Non-directors may serve as members of committees or work groups. Their nomination and appointment shall be approved by the Board Chair in consultation with the Executive Director.
- 7.04. In consultation with the Executive Director and the Treasurer, the Executive Committee of the Cluster Board shall develop the annual budget of the Cluster. It also shall develop proposals for allocation to the Cluster and among the three seminaries of unrestricted funds received by the Cluster. It shall serve as the investment committee for the Cluster.

Chapter 8. Funding

- 8.01. The Eastern Cluster of Lutheran Seminaries, in accordance with guidelines approved by the Board and the boards of the three seminaries, shall develop resources to fund its operations and its programs.

Chapter 9. Indemnification

- 9.01. To the full extent permitted by law, each person who was or is a party or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending or completed civil, criminal, administrative, arbitration or investigative proceeding, including a proceeding by or in the right of this corporation, by reason of the fact that such person is or was a Director, officer, employee, agent or member of any Board Committee shall be indemnified against judgments, penalties, fines, settlements and reasonable expenses, including attorney's fees and costs, incurred by the person in connection with the proceeding. Such indemnification shall continue as to a person who has ceased to be a Director, officer, employee, agent or member of a Board Committee.
- 9.02. This corporation may purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of a person who is or was a Director, officer, employee, agent or member of a Board Committee against any liability asserted against and incurred by the person in or arising from that capacity.

Chapter 10. Miscellaneous Provisions

- 10.01. The Board of Directors, or any committee thereof, shall have the authority to conduct any meeting by telephone or other means of communication which allows all persons participating in the meeting to communicate with each other, provided that all provisions of these Bylaws and continuing resolutions pertaining to the calling of meetings, notice, and quorum shall have been complied with fully.
- 10.02. No member of the Board of Directors, or of any committee thereof, shall receive compensation for such service. However, this shall not be construed to prohibit payment by the Cluster of the costs necessary to purchase insurance coverage to fund the indemnification provided under Chapter 10 hereof.

Chapter 11. Amendments

- 11.01. Amendments to these Bylaws may be made by a two-thirds vote of the Directors present at any regular or special meeting of the Board, provided that any proposed amendments shall have been transmitted in writing by the Secretary to all Directors at least thirty days prior to the date of the meeting, and the notice of the meeting shall have included the announcement of the consideration of the proposed amendment and set forth the text of the proposed amendment. No amendment to the Bylaws shall become effective until it has been approved by the boards of each of the seminaries, and by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- 11.02. The Board of Directors may adopt continuing resolutions for the purpose of interpreting or implementing the Bylaws. Such resolutions shall be adopted or amended by an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of the Directors present and voting at any regular meeting of the Board or at any special meeting of the Board providing that notice of the proposed resolution is submitted to the directors in writing together with the notice announcing the special meeting. Such resolutions, upon their adoption, shall be published together with the Bylaws.

NOTE: Codification Explanation

Bylaws provide the primary governing principles. Continuing resolutions, which are intentionally more easily amendable, provide additional detail setting forth how the bylaws to which each is attached shall be carried out.

Bylaws are intended to be more permanent in nature and can be amended only upon the approval of the governing boards of each of the seminaries. Continuing resolutions may be amended at any time that the Board of Directors determines that there is a better or more effective way to fulfill the purpose of the bylaw.

Bylaws are codified with two sets of numbers, separated by a period. The first digit(s), preceding the period, represents the number of the chapter of which the bylaw is a part. The second set of numbers is a chronological listing of the bylaws contained in each chapter.

Continuing resolutions begin with the two sets of numbers contained in the bylaw to which they pertain, followed by a period, a capital letter, and two digits representing the year of adoption. Thus, "4.01.A97" is the designation for the first resolution appended to Bylaw 4.01 and shows that it was adopted in 1997. If a second resolution is appended, it would contain the letter "B" plus two digits indicating the year of adoption. If

4.01.A97 is amended, it would retain the designation 4.01.A, but would be followed by two digits referring to the year in which the amendment was adopted and the reference to 1997 would be deleted.

APPENDIX A

Imperatives for Theological Education

These 11 imperatives for theological education were approved by the 1993 ELCA Churchwide Assembly as the planning and guiding focus for preparation of leaders for this church into the twenty-first century.

1. Depth in the Faith

This church needs pastors and lay leaders whose various ministries are rooted in the Bible, history and theology, and shaped by the Lutheran confessional heritage. We seek men and women whose personal faith in Jesus Christ is nourished and renewed through a disciplined devotional life. No longer can we depend on a Christian culture to transmit basic Christian knowledge and values. Leaders must be competent to teach and preach the truth of the faith with accuracy and clarity. Secular ideologies, spiritual movements and world religions offer competing faith claims to which Christians must be prepared to respond out of the depths of their tradition. People look to their lay and ordained ministers for theological and spiritual leadership that is based on an intimate knowledge of scripture, a distinctively Lutheran theological understanding, and contemporary methods of theological reflection.

2. Mission Outreach

God's mission requires leaders in all the ministries of the church who are prepared and committed to proclaim the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ. Evangelical outreach by faithful and articulate leaders is obedient to Christ's Great Commission and essential to the identity, vitality, and continuity of this church. Approaches in theological education are needed which help pastors and other leaders recognize and respond to the spiritual hunger of people in their congregations and in the communities beyond their congregations. Pastors must themselves be equipped so that they can equip others to join with them in sharing their faith with those who have never heard, those who have not believed, and those who are out of touch with the means of grace within the community of faith. They must learn to lead congregations which serve as mission outposts for the faith.

3. Practical Congregational Needs

Congregations are asking for leaders with a high level of competence in the practice of ministry. Practical competence includes not only specific skills of ministry, but also the integration of practice with spiritual and theological depth, sensitivity to interpersonal relationships, and beyond that an overall capacity for leadership. If congregations are going to become mission outposts for the renewal of the faith in our secular context, they need pastors who inspire through their teaching, preaching and leadership at worship who empower members for their ministry, and who provide vision and direction for the ministry team. They need associates in ministry and other lay leaders who provide expert leadership in specific areas such as education, evangelism, music, and youth ministry. In order to meet the demands of congregational ministry today, leaders need both the gifts that come from the Spirit and practical competencies that must be learned. Seminary education provides an introduction to basic ministry skills and the art of theological and practical integration. These must be refined and expanded through continuing education, practice, supervision, and reflection. Most seminary graduates need to develop competence in a variety of practical areas, including evangelism, stewardship, and administration.

4. Cultures and Contexts

With the growing diversity and interdependence of cultures that increasingly mark contemporary American society, we need lay and ordained ministers who are sensitive to and knowledgeable about the cultures of those they serve and who are able to adapt their ministry to different contexts. Global economic, political, and cultural realities shape the overall setting of contemporary ministry. At the same time, ministry is always carried out in a particular culture and a local context. The practical demands of ministry are more complex and difficult to meet when one is ministering in cultures and contexts other than one's own. This church needs leaders who can minister effectively with people from a diverse range of life situations including ethnic origins, vocational and educational experience, family situations, regional variations, types of community, and political value systems. Awareness of cultures and contexts should also lead Christian leaders to speak out against trends in society that are contrary to the faith they hold.

5. Africa American, Asian, Hispanic, and Native America Candidates

This church needs to invite Christian leaders from the African America, Asian, Hispanic, and Native America communities to consider service in the church as pastors or associates in ministry. It also must provide these candidates with theological education that is congruent with their varied cultural perspectives and that prepares them for rostered ministry throughout the ELCA. Mission in North America requires that the ELCA learn how to relate the Gospel to the growing number of African America, Asian, Hispanic, and Native American persons who live here. These communities are often better served by pastors and associates in ministry from these communities. Furthermore, people from all communities will be nurtured in the faith more effectively within the ELCA if this church body recognizes the particularity of each community and becomes more inclusive of a variety of cultural values and styles. This second task belongs to this whole church, but it will not happen without the leadership of a growing number of pastors and associates in ministry who are themselves Asian, African-America, Native American, and Hispanic.

6. Indigenous Lay Leaders

This church needs to find appropriate ways to provide indigenous lay leaders identified by their communities with the basic theological education they need for ministry in their settings. Many of those with potential for being effective ministers in their communities are not able to leave their communities for extended periods of time for training. Furthermore, there may be ways in which their effectiveness for certain ministries is enhanced by their continuity in their community. Some indigenous leaders are already being licensed for local service by their bishops. Various training programs are being developed locally and synodically to serve them. If the ELCA authorizes a wider range of ministries, such as lay catechists and evangelists, the demand will increase for approaches to theological education that are highly accessible, adaptable, and portable.

7. Life-Long Learning

Because of the changing, diverse context of our mission, it is necessary that leaders continually grow in faith, expand their skills and increase their knowledge through continuing education. Even at their very best, seminary degree programs cannot teach all one needs to know for the practice of ministry. While continuing education is expected of all pastors and associates in ministry, it is certainly needed during the early, formative years of ministry in a specific context. Continuing education is critically important at other points of personal and professional transition which call for fresh theological reflection, refinement of skills, response to changing society issues, or orientation to new ministry contexts. This church must encourage and provide resources for its lay and ordained leaders to continually develop and renew their gifts for ministry through disciplined patterns of life-long learning.

8. Ministry in Daily Life

The education of ordained pastors and other leaders in the church should prepare them to assist the people of the church to integrate their life and faith. In addition, an increasing number of Christians who are not pursuing a church occupation seek intellectual exploration of their faith and theological reflection on their ministries in the world. Many have the time and interest to study theology with the same academic thoroughness that they apply to secular and professional fields of study. These lay members live on the cutting edge of mission. They engage structures of society and are in regular contact with people of other faiths and with people scarcely related to organized religion. Their faith and ministry could be enhanced if, in addition to congregationally based adult education, they had access to programs of theological education at an advanced level. Such programs would have to relate to their ministries in the world and be adaptable to the demands of their primary commitments to family or work.

9. Scholarly Discourse and Reflection

How the church engages its mission is constantly challenged, focused, and refined by lively and critical theological reflection. Since their origin in a sixteenth century university context, Lutherans have been committed to preparing pastors, teachers and other leaders to engage in theological reflection in congregations, colleges, and seminaries. The seminaries of the Lutheran church have had a special responsibility for transmitting the Lutheran theological tradition to successive generations of leaders. For the sake of the integrity and vitality of the Lutheran theological tradition and the contribution it makes to the ecumenical church, it is essential that all Lutheran theological faculties not only prepare leaders, but also serve as communities of theological discourse, which are a resource to this church in the development and review of theological positions. Furthermore, to ensure the continuation of a strong Lutheran theological tradition, this church needs to encourage and support some centers where theological education at the doctoral level can be pursued: major divinity schools where a strong Lutheran presence is consciously developed and maintained, ecumenical consortia in which a Lutheran institution collaborates with institutions of other denominations, seminary-based academic doctoral studies which may draw in scholars and expertise from neighboring academic institutions.

10. Life Circumstances of Candidates

Just as the context of the ELCA's mission is diverse, so also are those who come to be prepared to serve that mission: candidates young and old; candidates just out of college and candidates with a variety of work and life experience; single candidates and candidates with families; candidates who carry high debt loads and work to support themselves and their families while they prepare for ministry; candidates with advanced degrees and candidates who lack academic preparation for theological study; candidates steeped in the Christian tradition and Lutheran ethos and new Christians with little experience of the church; candidates who are mobile and candidates who are bound to particular places and communities; candidates who bring a variety of perspectives as women and men, as members of the dominant culture, and as members of various racial and ethnic communities. Some within this diversity have experience systemic discrimination. This church needs to provide options in theological education that are responsive to the varied circumstances in the lives of ministry candidates.

11. Ecumenical Interdependence

Since a diversity of religions and Christian communions is part of our context for mission, people preparing for leadership in the ELCA need to learn how to work and study together with people of other traditions. It is vital that theological education in the ELCA build ecumenical understanding and model patterns of dialogue and cooperation among Christians and adherent of other faiths. Wherever possible, cooperative relationships and scholarly exchange programs should be fostered between Lutheran seminaries and those of other traditions and among Lutheran seminaries around the world. Major ecumenical seminaries which prepare some leaders for service in the Lutheran church play a role in fostering ecumenical interdependence.

APPENDIX B

Excerpts from **Pennsylvania Nonprofit Corporation: Powers, Duties, Safeguards**

5502. General Powers

General rule. – Subject to the limitations and restrictions imposed by statute and, except as otherwise provided in paragraph (4), subject to the limitations and restrictions contained in its articles, every nonprofit corporation shall have power:

1. To have perpetual succession by its corporate name unless a limited period of duration is specified in its articles, subject to the power of the Attorney General under section 503 (relating to actions to revoke corporate franchises) and to the power of the General Assembly under the Constitution of Pennsylvania.
2. To sue and be sued, complain and defend and participate as a party or otherwise in any judicial, administrative, arbitral or other proceeding in its corporate name.
3. To have a corporate seal, which may be altered at pleasure, and to use the seal by causing it to be impressed or affixed or in any manner reproduced.
4. To acquire, own and utilize any real or personal property, or any interest therein, wherever situated, regardless of any limitation set forth in its articles prior to January 1, 1972 as to the quantity or value of real or personal property which it may hold, or as to the amount of income derived there from.
5. To sell, convey, mortgage, pledge, lease, exchange or otherwise dispose of all or any part of its property and assets, or any interest therein, wherever situated.
6. To guarantee, become surety for, acquire, own and dispose of obligations, capital stock and other securities.
7. To borrow money, issue or incur its obligations and secure any of its obligations by mortgage on or pledge of or security interest in all or any part of its property and assets, wherever situated, franchises or income, or any interest therein.
8. To invest its funds, lend money and take and hold real and personal property as security for the repayment of funds so invested or loaned.
9. To make contributions and donations.
10. To use abbreviations, words, logos or symbols upon the records of the corporation, and in connection with the registration of, and inscription of ownership or entitlement on, certificates evidencing membership in or securities or obligations of the corporation To be a promoter, partner, member, associate or manager of any partnership,
11. enterprise or venture or in any transaction, undertaking or arrangement that the corporation would have power to conduct itself, whether or not its participation involves sharing or delegation of control with or to others.
12. To transact any lawful business that the board of directors or other body finds will aid governmental policy.
13. To continue the salaries of such of its employees as may be serving in the active or reserve armed forces of the United States, or in the national guard or in any other organization established for the protection of the lives and property of citizens of the Commonwealth or the United States, during the term of that service or during such part thereof as the employees, by reason of that service, may be unable to perform their duties as employees of the corporation.
14. To pay pensions and establish pension plans, pension trusts, profit sharing plans, share bonus plans, share option plans, incentive and deferred compensation plans and other plans or trusts for any or all of its present or former representatives and, after their death, to grant allowances or pensions to their dependents or beneficiaries, whether or not the grant was made during their lifetime.
15. To conduct its business, carry on its operations, have offices and exercise the powers granted by this article or any other provision of law in any jurisdiction within or without the United States.
16. To elect or appoint and remove officers, employees and agents of the corporation define their duties, fix their reasonable compensation and reasonable compensation of directors, to lend any of the foregoing money and credit and to pay bonuses or other additional compensation to any of the foregoing for past services.
17. To enter into any obligation appropriate for the transaction of its affairs, including contracts or other agreements with its members.
18. To have and exercise all of the powers and means appropriate to effect the purpose or purposes for which the corporation is incorporated.
19. To have and exercise all other powers enumerated elsewhere in this subpart or otherwise vested by law in the corporation.
20. **Enumeration unnecessary.** – It shall not be necessary to set forth in the articles of the corporation the powers enumerated in subsection (a).

**Living into the Future Together (LIFT) Advisory Committee
Progress Report**

At the August 2011 Churchwide Assembly in Orlando, Florida, this church referred seven items from the Living into the Future Together (LIFT): Renewing the Ecology of the ELCA report to the Office of the Presiding Bishop for implementation.

To provide a means to continue the work assigned to the task force on Living into the Future Together: Renewing the Ecology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (LIFT), the 2011 Churchwide Assembly directs that the Office of the Presiding Bishop, in collaboration with the Church Council and the Conference of Bishops, do the following:

- 1. Facilitate review of the constitutional responsibilities of synods in order that synods continue and increase their roles as catalysts for missional planning.*
- 2. Facilitate a broad-based process addressing legislative decision-making in this church.*
- 3. Initiate a process to expand the consultative role of the Conference of Bishops that allows the Church Council to refer issues to it and the Conference of Bishops to make recommendations to the Church Council.*
- 4. Explore the use of social media and technology in order to allow greater participation of ELCA members in meetings of the Church Council and the Churchwide Assembly.*
- 5. Initiate collaborative work by congregations, synods, the Churchwide organization, institutions of this church, and other to create and support diverse non-legislative forums and events that bring together leaders of this church to address missional issues, participate in theological study and reflection, foster leadership development, and enhance the interdependence of this church.*
- 6. Request units of the Churchwide organization to propose to the Church Council ways of receiving grassroots input on the disseminating information about their work through the use of emerging forms of communication, taking care to include those engaged in multicultural, ethnic-specific, justice for women ministries, youth and young adult networks, and various ministry partners.*
- 7. Request that annual reports related to this work be presented to the Church Council through 2013.*

A LIFT Advisory Committee (L.A.C.) was appointed to assist the Office of the Presiding Bishop in carrying out the Churchwide Assembly's (CWA) referred recommendations. The ELCA Church Council asked that the advising committee submit progress reports on the implementation of the seven recommendations to the Church Council's April and November 2012 meetings. This is the progress report for the April meeting, detailing the actions that have been taken since the CWA.

1. Facilitate review of the constitutional responsibilities of synods in order that synods continue and increase their roles as catalysts for missional planning.

Initial work on this recommendation has been undertaken by the Conference of Bishops and the Congregational and Synodical Mission (CSM) unit. The Conference of Bishops delegated responsibility to evaluate and make recommendations regarding the role of synods to a group of nine bishops. The group consisted of one bishop from each region. This group undertook a study

of the history and ecclesiology of synods. A report was presented to the Conference of Bishops meeting in March 2012. Continuation of the work has been assigned to the Executive Committee of the Conference of Bishops. The continuation includes proposals in four areas: 1) identification, selection and formation of synod bishops; 2) capacity for synod ministry; 3) possible reconfiguration of synods; 4) funding.

It is not clear at this time whether the work of the Conference of Bishops regarding responsibilities of synods will result in recommendations to amend the governing documents of this church. However, it is anticipated that the recommendations will include suggestions for pilot projects in synods to explore innovative ways that they can serve as catalysts for mission.

The Congregational and Synodical Mission unit has been working with congregations and synods to facilitate the creation of tables to address missional planning. One of the LIFT actions of the 2011 Churchwide Assembly called upon congregations to prepare mission plans. The LIFT report and CSM have encouraged congregations to work collaboratively with other congregations, ELCA-related organizations and the synods in order to develop such plans. Local mission tables in many places have been convened to move this process forward. In addition, the Operational Plan of the churchwide organization includes objectives to facilitate congregational missional planning. CSM has established a congregational mission plan implementation table to coordinate this work, consisting of synod bishops, directors for evangelical mission, and staff of the churchwide organization. Taken together, this work enhances the opportunity for synods to increase their roles as catalysts for mission planning, consistent with the LIFT mandate.

2. Facilitate a broad-based process addressing legislative decision-making in this church.

At its January 17, 2012 meeting, the LIFT Advisory Committee met with staff from the Office of the Secretary and Office of the Presiding Bishop to discuss changes that could facilitate a more broad-based process for legislative decision-making.

Items discussed included:

- Establishing processes preceding a Churchwide Assembly which would allow greater opportunity for input via technology.
- Advising the Memorials Committee to establish priorities in asking for information from synods.
- Exploring joint meetings of the Conference of Bishops and Church Council.
- Engaging the learnings from the Communal Discernment Task Force regarding legislative processes.

3. Initiate a process to expand the consultative role of the Conference of Bishops that allows the Church Council to refer issues to it and the Conference of Bishops to make recommendations to the Church Council.

The process called for in this recommendation was initiated by discussion at the March 2012 Conference of Bishops meeting. It is anticipated that recommendations and protocols will be drafted based on that discussion to facilitate the cross-referral processes called for by the Churchwide Assembly. In the meantime, having the chair of the Conference of Bishops as a voting member on the Church Council, as well as the ongoing presence of liaison bishops, will facilitate a greater exchange of information and advice. In addition, the Executive Committee of the Conference of Bishops has begun meeting with the Administrative Team of the churchwide organization. The purpose of these meetings is to facilitate better communication, build trust and address issues of common concern. It is anticipated that these meetings will continue, and that joint meetings of the Executive Committees of the Conference of Bishops and the Church

Council with the Administrative Team will be held as well. These joint meetings also will facilitate improved communication between the Conference of Bishops and the Church Council.

4. Explore the use of social media and technology in order to allow greater participation of ELCA members in meetings of the Church Council and the Churchwide Assembly.

At the February 7, 2012 LIFT Advisory Committee meeting, the Executive for Information Technology, the Director for Marketing and Communications, the Assistant to the Presiding Bishop for Governance and the Secretary of the ELCA reported on current practices that allow greater participation in meetings of the Church Council and the Churchwide Assembly. The discussion included the use of interactive communication to build agendas, the use of technology in discernment processes and live streaming of meetings.

5. Initiate collaborative work by congregations, synods, the Churchwide organization, institutions of this church, and others to create and support diverse non-legislative forums and events that bring together leaders of this church to address missional issues, participate in theological study and reflection, foster leadership development, and enhance the interdependence of this church.

The Administrative Team of the churchwide organization will meet with the LIFT Advisory Committee on April 12, 2012, just prior to the Church Council meeting, to discuss this recommendation.

6. Request units of the Churchwide organization to propose to the Church Council ways of receiving grassroots input on and disseminating information about their work through the use of emerging forms of communication, taking care to include those engaged in multicultural, ethnic-specific, justice for women ministries, youth and young adult networks, and various ministry partners.

Conversations have taken place with each of the churchwide units as an initial step toward inventorying and mapping ways that the work of the churchwide organization is disseminated and input obtained from the grassroots. These conversations will be followed by an inventory of the multiple existing methods of communication to and from grassroots constituencies and members, discussion of other possible methods, development of recommendations to facilitate communication from the churchwide organization and receipt of grassroots input. Recommendations, as appropriate, will be brought to the Church Council in November 2012.

7. Request that annual reports related to this work be presented to the Church Council through 2013.

The Coordinator for the LIFT Advisory Committee prepares reports on its progress for the meetings of the Church Council.

Next Steps

The LIFT Advisory Committee will continue to track the progress of the seven recommendations above, make suggestions and ask for summaries on progress. It will submit its next report at the November 2012 Church Council meeting.

LIFT Advisory Committee

The Rev. Bob Bacher, PhD
Former ELCA Executive for Administration
Bluffton, SC

The Rev. Dr. Wyvetta Bullock
ELCA Executive for Administration
Chicago, IL

Ms. Deb/Debby Chenoweth (Chair)
ELCA Church Council
Hood River, OR

Ms. Karin Graddy
ELCA Church Council
De Kalb, IL

Bishop Richard Graham
Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod
Washington, D.C.

Mr. William B. Horne II
ELCA Church Council
Clearwater, FL

The Rev. Dr. Dee Pederson
Lead Pastor, Bethlehem Lutheran Church
St. Cloud, MN

The Rev. Dr. Karl Reko (Project Coordinator)
Office of the Presiding Bishop
Chicago, IL

Mr. Kenneth Inskeep, PhD
Director, ELCA Research & Evaluation

**Addressing Social Concerns Review Task Force
Interim Report to the Church Council**

The Task Force met for the first time January 19-21, 2012 at the Lutheran Center. At its first meeting, the Task Force:

- Reviewed pertinent data from the LIFT survey with Kenneth Inskeep, Executive for Research and Evaluation
- Reviewed the 1995-96 work of the Social Statement Review Committee, which led to the adoption in 1997 of “Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns”
- Authorized the development of a survey for use with the Conference of Bishops
- Requested a news story about the Task Force, in order to demonstrate transparency about the process and to help frame the vision of our work for ELCA members

Two significant understandings emerged from our initial conversations:

1. The Task Force takes seriously the broad scope of its charge to review the ways in which the ELCA addresses *social concerns*, not simply to review the process for the development, adoption and implementation of social statements. We are eager to communicate a holistic understanding of this church’s role in society, in the face of a perceived separation (or even antagonism) between ministries of service and ministries of advocacy.
2. The Task Force understands the review process to be focused toward the future life and mission of this church rather than a reactionary response to past decisions.

The second meeting of the Task Force was held March 6-8, 2012 at the Lutheran Center. At this meeting, the Task Force:

- Discussed input received from the Conference of Bishops, who met March 1-6, 2012
- Met with Scott Hendrickson and Melissa Ramirez Cooper from ELCA Mission Advancement to discuss communications strategies
- Established four working groups
 - Communications and Data Gathering
 - Theological Framing
 - Churchwide and Synod
 - Congregations and Members
- Discussed the importance of *vocation* as a lens for understanding how and why the church and its members address social concerns

The Task Force made several important observations that helped us shape aspects of our future work:

Social statements are received differently in different parts of the church. While some members are critical of individual social statements and/or the process of developing social statements, other members welcome the church’s engagement at this level. This prompts us to ask:

1. What can we learn from the areas where the ELCA’s engagement with social issues is most successful?
2. How can we respond to disagreements and critiques in ways that build community?

The task of addressing a particular social concern does not end once a social statement has been adopted. Existing social statements are underutilized. There is a need for companion resources to make social statements more accessible for non-experts and more useful for parish pastors.

1. What kinds of resources might a social concerns “tool kit” include?
2. What additional human resources (e.g., teaching theologians) are available to participate in such work, given the reality of limited churchwide staff?
3. How can the current social statement processes (Criminal Justice and Justice for Women) be used as opportunities to experiment with new models of resources and new communications strategies?

The Task Force continues to struggle with the question of what it means for the ELCA to be a community of moral discernment. Recommendations either to change or to affirm our current policies and procedures will not be effective unless we are able to address fundamental issues of trust and mistrust. Because we understand the issue of process and the issue of community to be so interwoven, it is possible that the Task Force will request an extension of its timeline. We will do our best to fulfill our task in the time specified, but that may not be possible if we are to fulfill our charge to complete “a review of the process for addressing social concerns based on a spirit of communal discernment.”

Working groups are proceeding with their tasks. The Task Force plans several virtual meetings before gathering for its next in-person meeting at the Lutheran Center August 25-26, 2012.

On behalf of the Addressing Social Concerns Review Task Force,
Yours in Christ,



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Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Corporate Social Responsibility Program

Background

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) gives expression to this church's concern for corporate social responsibility – both in its internal activities and in its interaction in the broader society – through exercising its rights as a corporate shareholder. This is accomplished through screening of stock ownership, filing of shareholder resolutions, and dialogue with corporations to address these issues. Individual Lutherans and other organizations are encouraged to apply these recommendations within their own portfolios.

In determining precise actions to take or recommend, the ELCA draws on the foundation of its social policy. This policy consists of social statements, messages, and Churchwide Assembly and Church Council social policy resolutions and reflects an understanding of this church's social responsibility that includes theological, social, and ethical considerations.

The Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) program has been the vehicle for this work of the ELCA since the inception of this church. This program includes the three-pronged approach of providing investment screens, encouraging investment in community development, and engaging in stakeholder corporate dialogues. This program has functioned not only with staff from the ELCA but also in close cooperation with Portico Benefit Services (formerly known as the Board of Pensions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America), ELCA-related organizations, as well as with the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility (ICCR).

CSR work is based in the mandates of the *ELCA Constitutions, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions* and the ELCA social policy outlined above. The enabling bylaw, as revised at the 2011 Churchwide Assembly, reads 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.

CSR Program Going Forward

This proposal seeks to further outline the responsibilities and to identify and prioritize issues to be taken up in the corporate social responsibility work of this church. It describes and delimits the policy framework within which these issues will be addressed. It assures that the existing program of ELCA Social Criteria Investment Screens and Issue Papers will be reviewed and updated on a regular basis. It gives to the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit of the churchwide organization the responsibility to determine the focus and wording of individual resolutions within the scope of the framework and to approve them for filing. It ensures that the Church Council, Conference of Bishops, and other appropriate organizations will be kept up-to-date on all issues surrounding the CSR program through regular reporting. The CSR program will work with Portico Benefit Services so that it will be informed of the broader policy framework of the ELCA within which resolutions may be filed and so that the ELCA will

continue to be agile in responding to filing opportunities and timelines. The existing Portico approval process and filing procedures for shareholder resolutions will not be affected.

Staffing

The Congregational and Synodical Mission unit of the churchwide organization has contracted with a CSR consultant to provide the following services:

1. Inventory, evaluate, and revise existing social issue papers, social investment screens, and other CSR documents for consideration by the Church Council.
2. Evaluate the status of stakeholder work including resolutions, dialogues, sign-on letters, and other CSR advocacy tools for the CSR review team to prioritize work for the year. The work will be developed and implemented by the consultant.
3. Liaise on behalf of the churchwide organization with investment staff at Portico, investment staff of ELCA-related and other organizations, ICCR, ecumenical partners, and international partners.
4. Evaluate and revise existing CSR processes and policies, including boycott policy, sign-on letter policy, and other CSR advocacy tools.
5. Inventory, evaluate, and revise CSR web presence.
6. Respond to requests from the Church Council concerning CSR activities.

The CSR program and the work of the CSR consultant will be reviewed by the Congregation and Synodical Mission unit on an annual basis and reported to the Church Council.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Church Council adopt the following revised documents to implement and carry out the CSR program:

1. Social Criteria Investment Screens Policy and Procedures (last revised November 2006)
2. Issue Paper Policy and Procedures (last revised May 2007)
3. Corporate Social Responsibility Roles and Responsibilities (chart) (last revised September 2010)
4. Boycott Policy and Procedures (last revised April 2008)

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES							
TASK	CSR Consultant	CSR Review Team*	CSM Exec Dir.	Conf. of Bishops	Church Council	ELCA-related Organizations**	Review Frequency
Social Screen/ Criteria for investment screening activities	Develop with Portico input (Staff/CSRC)	Recommend	Authorize for consideration	Advise	Approve	Receive and/or implement within fiduciary responsibility	1 per year
Issue papers with boundaries for voting proxies and filing resolutions	Develop with Portico input (Staff/CSRC)	Recommend	Authorize for consideration	Advise	Approve	Receive and/or implement within fiduciary responsibility	3 per year
Shareholder Resolutions	Develop within boundaries adopted by Church Council	Recommend to file	Approve	Receive report annually	Receive report annually	Endorse as appropriate for implementation within fiduciary responsibility	Annual
Dialogues	Develop within boundaries adopted by Church Council	Prioritize and develop work	Receive report annually	Receive report annually	Receive report annually	Receive report annually	Annual
Boycotts	Develop within boundaries adopted by Church Council	Inter-unit review group research & recommend***	Receive report annually & authorize any potential boycott for consideration	Receive report annually and advise	Receive report annually and approve any boycott	Receive report annually	Annual

*The CSR review team consists of the director for advocacy, director of the Lutheran Office for World Community, CSR consultant, director for studies, other staff of the churchwide organization, and staff of Portico Benefit Services (formerly known as the Board of Pensions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America). The latter will review screens, issue papers, and proposed resolutions but not make recommendations for these ELCA churchwide responsibilities.

** ELCA-related organizations include, but are not limited to, separately incorporated ministries (Portico, the Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA, the Publishing House of the ELCA [Augsburg Fortress, Publishers], Women of the ELCA, the Endowment Fund of the ELCA), and other related organizations and agencies (e.g., ELCA seminaries, ELCA colleges and universities, Lutheran Services in America, and Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service).

*** CSR review team with addition of expert staff from issue areas of concern.

Approved by Church Council xxxx





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Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Social Criteria Investment Screens Policy and Procedures

Background

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) gives expression to this church's concern for corporate social responsibility – both in its internal activities and in its interaction in the broader society – through exercising its rights as a corporate shareholder on issues of social concern. This is accomplished through screening of stock ownership, casting of shareholder ballots, filing of shareholder resolutions, and dialogue with corporations to address these issues. For the churchwide organization and ELCA-related organizations,¹ the ELCA makes recommendations regarding shareholder action. Individual Lutherans are encouraged to apply these recommendations within their own portfolios.

In determining precise actions to take or recommend, the ELCA draws on the foundation of its social policy. This policy, consisting of social statements, messages, and Churchwide Assembly and Church Council social policy resolutions, reflects an understanding of this church's social responsibility that includes theological, social, and ethical considerations.

Within this context, the issues that are brought to the ELCA regarding corporate social responsibility are complex and actions are multi-dimensional. This church is assisted in its decision-making through the development of social criteria investment screens that guide this church in evaluating the types of investments it wishes to hold. The original policy concerning these screens was developed in 1989 and revised in 2006.

Social criteria investment screens provide a guide for this church with regard to corporate social responsibility. They delineate areas in which the ELCA would like to invest or refrain from investing and provide criteria to evaluate the scope of the work. The objective of social criteria investment screens is to identify the dimensions of a given problem area, and within those dimensions to focus on egregious problems that are most critical to address. All social criteria investment screens have the overall objective of addressing the ELCA's concern for the social, environmental, and economic sustainability of corporations.²

Social criteria investment screens do not constitute binding mandates or provide, for example, specific lists of corporations. It is the responsibility of the ELCA and each ELCA-related organization and individual Lutherans to develop and manage a prudent and responsible investment portfolio. The ELCA social criteria investment screens offer a context for decision-making about socially responsible investments.

¹ For purposes of this policy, ELCA-related organizations include, but are not limited to, separately incorporated ministries (Portico Benefit Services [formerly known as the Board of Pensions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America], the Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA, the Publishing House of the ELCA [Augsburg Fortress, Publishers], Women of the ELCA, the Endowment Fund of the ELCA) and other related organizations and agencies (e.g., ELCA seminaries, ELCA colleges and universities, Lutheran Services in America, and Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service).

²Sustainability is not just financial sustainability but includes social and environmental sustainability. See <http://www.iccr.org/publications/2011SSRG.pdf> and <http://www.unpri.org/principles/>

Development and Review of Social Criteria Investment Screens

The following process applies to the development and review of social criteria investment screens:

1. When a major issue in society exists that involves the business community, it may be appropriate for the ELCA to develop a social criteria investment screen on the issue. An initial review of the issue will be explored by the corporate social responsibility review team. If the CSR review team deems it appropriate to move forward in the development of a screen, it will develop and oversee a *study process*. In order to ensure appropriate input, the following steps will be taken:
 - a. assessing the social policy basis to support a screen;
 - b. listening to the voices of those most vulnerable and negatively affected by the issue;
 - c. receiving comments from all offices and units of the churchwide office that relate to this issue in their ongoing work;
 - d. encouraging participation by synods;
 - e. receiving comments from experts on the issue;
 - f. ensuring that minorities have opportunity to express their concerns;
 - g. receiving input from Portico Benefit Services (formerly known as the Board of Pensions of the ELCA), the Endowment Fund of the ELCA, the Conference of Bishops, and other appropriate organizations concerning specific fiduciary responsibility that might impact this social criteria investment screen;
 - h. hearing the concerns of other churches from around the world on the issue;
 - i. ensuring that the voices of those most affected by the issue are present at the table.
2. The results of this *study process* will be received by the executive director of the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit of the churchwide organization (CSM) for review and discussion. If the results indicate a need for this church to develop a social criteria investment screen on this issue, the CSR review team will develop a *writing process* to ensure the social criteria investment screen is consistent with the social policy of this church and can be implemented by fiduciaries within this church and the offices and units of the churchwide organization. In order to ensure that appropriate input at this level occurs, the following steps will be taken:
 - a. assessing the social policy basis to support a screen;
 - b. listening to the voices of those most vulnerable and negatively affected by the issue;
 - c. receiving comments from all offices and units of the churchwide office that relate to this issue in their ongoing work;
 - d. encouraging participation by synods;
 - e. receiving comments from experts on the issue;
 - f. ensuring that minorities have opportunity to express their concerns;
 - g. receiving input from Portico, the Endowment Fund of the ELCA, the Conference of Bishops, and other appropriate organizations concerning specific fiduciary responsibility that might impact this social criteria investment screen;
 - h. hearing the concerns of other churches from around the world on the issue;
 - i. ensuring that the voices of those most affected by the issue are present at the table.
3. A proposed social criteria investment screen will include the following:
 - a. Authority: a section that relates the issue to ELCA social policy;
 - b. Wording: a clear, succinct statement of the position of this church on the issue;
 - c. Definition: a section that places the issue in relation to the broader society, and indicates the scope, extent, or depth that this church deems it necessary to implement the criteria.

4. Additional documents may be developed, including an implementation plan for informing this church of the screen, and suggestions about how to implement it. These would not be part of the actual social criteria investment screen document.
5. The proposed social criteria investment screen will be considered by the CSR review team for review and recommendation to the executive director of CSM unit. Upon authorization by the executive director of the CSM unit, the proposed social criteria investment screen will be recommended to the Conference of Bishops for advice and the ELCA Church Council for approval. The Church Council's action may include recommendations concerning implementation. Any approved screen with accompanying recommendations will be posted on the ELCA web site and hard copies will be circulated to the following: presiding bishop, synodical bishops, Portico, Endowment Fund of the ELCA, Mission Investment Fund, seminaries, colleges and universities, social ministry organizations, and separately incorporated ministries, and may be provided to others.
6. Annually, at least one social criteria investment screen will be reviewed by the CSR review team. This cycle will ensure that the language is timely and the issues inclusive. Should the review process lead to a recommendation for a total revision of the social criteria investment screen, a more abbreviated form of the *writing process* would proceed. The CSR review team will report on the review process, whether or not a revision is recommended in an annual report submitted to the executive director of CSM unit, the Conference of Bishops and the ELCA Church Council. The report will be distributed to the following: Portico, staff of the churchwide organization working with the issue, and others as appropriate.
7. The CSR review team also may initiate an earlier review of a social criteria investment screen in consultation with the executive director of the CSM unit, utilizing the abbreviated *writing process*.

Approved by Advisory Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility – April 2006
Approved by Church Council – November 2006
Approved by Church Council -----



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Corporate Social Responsibility Issue Paper Policy and Procedures

Background

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) gives expression to this church's concern for corporate social responsibility – both in its internal activities and in its interaction in the broader society – through exercising its rights as a corporate shareholder on issues of social concern. This is accomplished through screening of stock ownership, casting of shareholder ballots, filing of shareholder resolutions, and dialogue with corporations to address these issues. For the churchwide organization and for separately incorporated ministries, the ELCA makes recommendations regarding shareholder action. Individual Lutherans and other organizations are encouraged to apply these recommendations within their own portfolios.

In determining precise actions to take or recommend, the ELCA draws on the foundation of its social policy. This policy consists of social statements, messages, and Churchwide Assembly and Church Council social policy resolutions and reflects an understanding of this church's social responsibility that includes theological, social, and ethical considerations.

The issues brought to the ELCA regarding corporate social responsibility are complex, and the possible responses are multi-dimensional. In November 2003, the ELCA Church Council put in place a process for writing and approving an issue paper that addresses a concern within society that may require action by the ELCA Corporate Social Responsibility program (CSR). Issue papers interpret the social teaching of this church as they relate to investments.

A standard format for an issue paper includes:

1. Overview of the problem/issue in society;
2. Review of ELCA social policy surrounding the issue;
3. Proposals outlining how corporations might play a role in the solution to the issue (including a sample list of specific companies or sectors of industry that might be approached about the issue);
4. Identification of any screens the ELCA would implement; and
5. The boundaries of resolved clauses that the ELCA would endorse.

Advocacy staff, through the use of the CSR consultant, will coordinate the writing and revision process for development of issue papers.

New Issue Papers

From time to time, the ELCA may wish to develop a new CSR issue paper. Sometimes a complex issue arises that cannot be covered by an existing paper or a revision of one. This situation would trigger development of a new paper. In addition, when each new ELCA social statement is approved, a review of all issue papers will be made to see if revisions to current issue papers are needed or if a new issue paper needs to be developed in light of the new social statement.

New issue papers will be drafted with input from staff of Portico Benefit Services (formerly known as the Board of Pensions of the ELCA), the Portico Corporate Social Responsibility Committee, the director for studies, and other appropriate ELCA staff. Depending on the topic, others may be consulted for input and advice. When a new issue paper is refined and authorized by the executive director of the Congregational

and Synodical Mission unit of the churchwide organization, it will be taken to the Conference of Bishops for advice and forwarded to the Church Council for consideration and approval.

Review and Revision of Existing Issue Papers

In order to assure timely review and revision of approved issue papers, the following guidelines will apply:

1. Issue papers will be reviewed every four (4) years. The review will include research on the background materials and current ELCA social policy and will confirm or modify all web links in the document. Approval for these revisions will be treated in the same way as a new issue paper and therefore will be forwarded to the executive director of the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit for authorization, for advice from the Conference of Bishops, and for approval by the Church Council;
2. Non-substantive revisions of issue papers may be approved at any time by the executive director of the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit and revisions will be included in the annual CSR report. (Examples may include such items as grammar, Web link substitutions, name changes, etc.);
3. When additional resolution guidelines to support an issue are needed, they may be made at the recommendation of the CSR review team to the executive director of the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit for approval, provided that they are consistent with the original issue papers approved by the ELCA Church Council; and
4. If substantive changes to an issue paper need to be made, the matter will be treated as a new paper and forwarded to the executive director of Congregational and Synodical Mission unit for authorization, for advice from the Conference of Bishops, and for approval by the Church Council.

Annual reports, including all resolutions that have been approved and/or filed, as well as information regarding ongoing dialogues, will be prepared by the CSR consultant and shared with the ELCA Church Council, the Conference of Bishops, and Portico, and may be shared with any ELCA-related organization and others.

*Approved by the Advisory Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility – May 24, 2007
Approved by Church Council- xxxx*



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

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Boycott Policy and Procedures

Introduction

This document sets forth the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) policy and procedures for consideration, adoption, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and termination of boycotts¹. These reflect the mission of this church, expressed in the *ELCA Constitutions, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions* (CBCR); they also are consistent with the ELCA's churchwide advocacy procedures.

This document begins with reference to the theological foundation of this church's commitment to justice. It addresses the nature and history of boycotts. It concludes by identifying: (1) the key issues and criteria to be addressed in assessing the merits of ELCA support for any boycott, and (2) the appropriate procedures for churchwide decisions in relation to such support.

Theological Foundation: Our Commitment to Justice

The mission of this church is grounded in the Scriptures, the ecumenical creeds, and the Lutheran Confessions. We confess God as Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier of all, and Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. We believe in salvation by grace alone, through faith. We respond to God's grace by practicing justice and working for peace and reconciliation in the care of all creation. Through the social policy² and teaching of this church, we attempt to understand the meaning of our faith for life together in the present age. Any decision by the ELCA to participate in a boycott on any level must be consistent with this church's confession of faith and must be based upon principles articulated in its social policy.

The commitment to pursue justice and to be faithful stewards in all of life was reflected in the social statements of predecessor churches³.

The ELCA constitution makes clear this church's commitment to work for justice and peace – committing the ELCA to participate in God's mission in the following ways:

4.02.c. Serve in response to God's love to meet human needs, caring for the sick and the aged, advocating dignity and justice for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, and standing with the poor and the powerless and committing itself to their needs.

¹ As defined later in this document, boycotts may be undertaken in response to the actions of private or public sector entities.

² ELCA social policy is understood as the collected policy actions by the churchwide organization, e.g., social statements, messages, Churchwide Assembly resolutions, and Church Council resolutions.

³ For example, in 1976, the American Lutheran Church declared, in *Manifesto for Our Nation's Third Century*, "We require that all social institutions—economic, governmental, educational, scientific, technological—be shaped to serve human needs." "And so . . . the . . . church pledges itself . . . to involvement in the social systems and structures, so that these become more responsive to God's will for the world." In 1980, the Lutheran Church in America adopted *Economic Justice: Stewardship In Human Community*, which stated: "It is in obedient gratitude for all gifts of God that we . . . commit ourselves in faithful love to struggle for economic justice as an integral part of the witness and work of God's people in the world."

4.03.g. Lift its voice in concord and work in concert with forces for good, to serve humanity, cooperating with church and other groups participating in activities that promote justice, relieve misery, and reconcile the estranged.

4.03.l. Study social issues and trends, work to discover the causes of oppression and injustice, and develop programs of ministry and advocacy to further human dignity, freedom, justice and peace in the world.

Our Mission of Advocacy

The commitment of justice by this church is translated into action by advocacy. The CBCR assigns to the Congregational and Synodical Mission Unit of the churchwide organization (CSM) a lead role in this mission of advocacy:

16.12.A.10. The Congregational and Synodical 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 . . . facilitating the engagement of this church in advocacy

The ELCA employs various means in its ministry of advocacy. In the public sector, it works through its members with elected and appointed officials to influence policy and legislation in ways that are compatible with the beliefs and values articulated in its Confession of Faith and in its social statements. In the private sector, the ELCA has developed corporate social responsibility criteria to be considered for the investment of ELCA funds and as guidelines for ELCA-related and other organizations and individuals. The ELCA also engages in dialogues with leaders of corporations to change corporate policies, files shareholder resolutions, casts proxy ballots, and takes other actions as it deems appropriate (ELCA bylaw14.21.14). The ELCA and its members also may engage in selective purchasing and investing. A boycott would be the final step in the continuum of private sector advocacy by the ELCA, taken after other steps are exhausted and careful deliberation has been concluded.

Boycott: A Definition

In general terms, a “boycott” may be defined as follows:

A collective effort to abstain from the purchase or use of products or services provided by a targeted firm, government, or other agency. The purpose of a boycott is to persuade the targeted entity to cease certain practices judged to be unjust, and/or to perform certain practices deemed to be just.

Historically, Lutherans have been involved in social movements that used boycotts as a means of witness and reform in a wide range of areas, including the consumption of liquor and tobacco, business establishments open on Sunday, objectionable entertainment, goods produced with child or slave labor, gambling, and racial discrimination.⁴ Martin Luther himself called for a boycott of the Fuggers, a merchant banking company.⁵

⁴ See, e.g., Klein, Christa R. with Christian D. von Dehsen, *Politics and Policy: The Genesis and Theology of Social Statements in the Lutheran Church in America*, Minneapolis: Fortress Press, ©1989, for discussion of Lutheran involvement in the temperance movement of the 19th and 20th centuries. (See the preface and Chapter 1.)

⁵ Martin Luther, *On Trade and Usury*. Vol. 45: Luther’s Works.

Although predecessor bodies adopted boycott criteria and considered participation in churchwide boycotts, they did not endorse any.

Ethical, Procedural, and Pastoral Considerations: Questions To Be Addressed

In order to ensure thorough study and consideration prior to an ELCA commitment to any boycott, certain ethical questions must be addressed:

1. Does the boycott clearly address a significant issue of justice? That is, would the cause the boycott advances be one that promotes human dignity, protects innocent life, and preserves conditions necessary for decent human existence?
2. Is the need for redress urgent? If the practices at issue are continued, are the human costs likely to be great?
3. Have appropriate prior measures such as negotiations and shareholder resolutions been pursued and proven ineffective? Have these alternatives been given a fair chance to succeed? Is there convincing evidence that the injustices in question cannot be corrected with less disruptive measures?
4. Is failing to address the injustices of the situation likely to result in consequences more undesirable than any injustices that might result from the boycott? Can the boycott be carried out in such a way as to recognize the human dignity of those against whom it is waged?
5. Is a boycott timely? Is it likely to generate broad support in the society?
6. Who organizes the boycott and who do they represent? Do they have a legitimate right to represent the people they claim to help? Is there assurance that the boycott will be carried on with integrity?

A second set of questions is more procedural and institutional in its orientation:

7. Does this church have a clear position in its social policy on the issue to be addressed by the boycott?
8. Is there a significant chance of success if an adequate strategy and implementation plan are employed?
9. Have local and regional church leaders in the area that will be most affected by the boycott been consulted?
10. Within this church, is there a willingness and capability to undertake the educational, interpretive, and organizational efforts required to acquaint ELCA members with the issues and rationale and to organize effective participation?
11. Has a work plan been prepared to show how the boycott will be implemented, monitored, and evaluated?
12. How will the boycott be conducted as part of the strategy for continuing negotiation with the corporation? How does the boycott issue relate to an overall assessment of the corporation?
13. Have measurable goals been articulated so that the ELCA will be able to evaluate the effectiveness of its boycott strategy and to know when the boycott has succeeded or failed? Have the conditions under which the boycott will be suspended or terminated been clearly stated?

Finally, important pastoral questions must be addressed:

14. Can the boycott be carried out in such a way as to reduce as much as possible the suffering of innocent third parties? Has adequate consideration been given to how such people can be

supported pastorally and economically and to the manner in which this church's support of the boycott can be interpreted to them?

15. How will the boycott contribute to the prophetic mission of this church and how is it compatible with its advocacy ministry? Are there approaches that represent a more effective use of the resources available? Will the boycott unduly risk the closing of other appropriate avenues for addressing the issue? Will it distract attention from other more important issues? Will it be conducive to right relationships within and beyond this church?
16. Can and will the boycott be carried out in such a way that there are possibilities for reconciliation once the boycott is terminated?

The purpose of posing and addressing these questions in an open fashion, rather than stating unequivocal requirements, which must all be met, is to assure that the difficult issues inherent in a boycott will be confronted, without imposing an unduly rigid requirement. The hope is that, under the particular circumstances, ELCA consideration of any boycott will integrate prophetic and symbolic roles with concerns for instrumental effectiveness and church credibility. There may be circumstances that would lead the church in its prophetic ministry to endorse a boycott even when some of these questions have ambiguous answers.

Procedures for Consideration and Decision

The executive director of the CSM unit, the Conference of Bishops, or the Administrative Team may raise the question of ELCA support for a given boycott. The ELCA Church Council or its Executive Committee may also refer synod resolutions proposing boycotts to the director for advocacy for consideration. In either case, the director for advocacy then will convene an inter-unit review group to consider the advantages and disadvantages, including consideration of each of the questions set forth above. The consultant for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) will be responsible for conducting or coordinating the necessary research, providing an inter-unit review group with the information required to consider the above questions, and for advising the group regarding implementation.

If the inter-unit review group is convinced that the answers to the above questions merit ELCA endorsement of a boycott, it may recommend such support to the executive director of CSM unit. The executive director will consult the ELCA Administrative Team or the Conference of Bishops for preparation of recommendations to the ELCA Church Council. Endorsement of any boycott requires ELCA Church Council approval.

In the absence of any ELCA position on a specific boycott, designated ELCA representatives to national ecumenical organizations may vote at their individual discretion on the boycott positions of those organizations, without their individual actions implying any corporate position of the ELCA.

Boycott Information

The advocacy team in the CSM unit is responsible for maintaining and providing information regarding boycotts to units and expressions of this church, to members of the ELCA, to ELCA-related organizations, and others. Such information could include the social policy of the church on the issue and plans for the conduct of the boycott.

Annually, the director for advocacy will review boycotts across the nation and the world and will convene, as needed, an inter-unit review group. If a meeting of the group has been convened, a report will be submitted to the ELCA Church Council.

What Does ELCA Boycott Participation Mean?

ELCA endorsement of a boycott may involve a range of possible activities, which could be incorporated in a boycott implementation plan. This plan would address:

- the extent and nature of involvement sought by churchwide offices, synods, congregations, families, and individuals;
- the nature of participation in broader coalition efforts;
- development and dissemination of educational materials;
- the effect on purchasing practices;
- plans for approaching institutional purchasers outside this church; and
- appropriate communications by organizations and members of this church to the corporation in question.

ELCA endorsement of a boycott commits the churchwide organization to participate in the boycott. It also constitutes a recommendation to synods, congregations, members, as well as ELCA-related and other organizations to participate in the boycott.

Whenever the ELCA supports a boycott, it is essential that appropriate measures be taken to ensure that the conduct of the boycott will be sufficiently accountable to the ELCA and to provide for withdrawal of the endorsement when it becomes advisable. If a coalition board is managing the boycott, accountability might be arranged by designating an official representative of the ELCA to serve on that board and report to the director for advocacy, who will report to the Church Council.

Church Council adopted an ELCA Boycott Policy and Procedures, November 1989 (CC89.11.183)
Revision Recommended by Advisory Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility, January 14, 2005
Revision Approved by Executive Committee, March 9, 2005 (EC05.03.09)
Revision Recommended by Advisory Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility, January 11, 2008
Revision Approved by Church Council, April 2008 (CC08.04.XXb)
Revision Approved by Church Council, xxxxxx



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Corporate Social Responsibility Genetics Issue Paper

Background

The dawn of a new millennium has brought advances in scientific knowledge on many fronts, including the field of genetics. In 2003, the Human Genome Project¹ was completed, and the International Declaration on Human Genetic Data² and the Universal Declaration on the Human Genome and Human Rights³ were adopted. These stand as international points of reference in the field.

These advances in science impact the corporate community on issues of bioethics, patents and licensing, appropriate use of genetic data, individual choice, and respect for diversity, to name a few⁴.

ELCA Social Policy

“The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) believes in one God, who created in the beginning, who creates now, and in whom all things, visible and invisible, hold together (Colossians 1:3–20). We confess that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit will redeem all that has been, is, and will be—including human choices involving genetic knowledge and its application⁵.”

These choices create issues regarding the relationships between human power and life on this planet and call for discernment of God's will with respect to genetic developments. The ethic of respecting and promoting the community of life with justice and wisdom in the pursuit of genetic knowledge and its use is essential if the web of life on earth is to flourish. In terms of regulation and best practices, the social statement, *Genetics, Faith and Responsibility* (adopted by the Churchwide Assembly in August 2011), calls for development and implementation of protocols for assessing long-term, ecological, social, and economic impact studies (Section 4.5 and 4.7).

In addition, the twelfth Churchwide Assembly in 2011 reaffirmed the commitment of this church to the social policy resolution, “Genetically Modified Organisms in the Food Supply”⁶ (ELCA Church Council action CC04.11.57). This resolution coheres with the call for using the social

¹ http://www.ornl.gov/sci/techresources/Human_Genome/project/about.shtml

² <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-human-sciences/themes/bioethics/human-genetic-data/>

³ http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=17720&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

⁴ See http://www.who.int/genomics/publications/en/ethical_issues_in_medgenetics%20report.pdf

⁵ See <http://www.elca.org/What-We-Believe/Social-Issues/Social-Statements/Genetics.aspx>

⁶ <http://www.elca.org/What-We-Believe/Social-Issues/Resolutions/2004/CC04,-p-,11,-p-,57-Genetically-Modified-Organisms-in-the-Food-Supply.aspx>

statement's deliberative framework, lifting up justice principles such as sufficiency and sustainability, or themes such as stewardship and livelihood for all as guidance.

Corporate Response

The Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility (ICCR), with participation from the faith and the socially responsible investing communities, has been addressing multinational corporations concerning genetic issues. Groups have sought transparency through reports on the impacts on people in least developed countries where genetic knowledge and technology are used. Good corporate stewardship in this area begins with disclosure that articulates a vision, outlines policies, and provides measurement of impact for efforts in the field of genetics.

Social Criteria Investment Screens

No social criteria investment screens currently apply to this paper. As research institutions and corporations around the world become involved in human reproductive cloning, a new social criteria investment screen will need to be developed.

Issue Specific Resolution Guidelines for ELCA

1. We support reports reviewing a company's policies for food products containing genetically engineered ingredients.
2. We support reports asking a company to identify the risks, financial costs (including opportunity costs) and benefits, as well as environmental impact of the use of genetically engineered food products it sells or manufactures.
3. We support reports on a company's internal controls related to potential adverse impacts associated with genetically engineered organisms, including post-marketing monitoring, removing seed from the ecosystem, and risk management for different geographical environments.
4. We support reports on the adequacy of corporate policy, plans, and strategies to address changes in consumer attitudes toward nutrition, quality, and safety of genetically engineered foods.
5. We support reports providing evidence of independent long-term safety testing that demonstrates genetically engineered crops are safe for humans, animals, and the environment.
6. We support reports on the impact of genetically modified food on least developed economies and their food resources.
7. We support calls to a corporation to discontinue any research into human reproductive cloning.
8. We support reports on personnel policies to ensure that genetic information is not used to discriminate in employment, insurance, and other personnel matters.

General Resolution Guidelines for ELCA

1. We support a company having an independent chair or independent lead director.
2. We support reports on policies and procedures for political contributions and expenditures (both direct and indirect) made with corporate funds.

3. We support reports on any portion of any dues or similar payments made to any tax-exempt organization that is used for an expenditure or contribution that might be deemed political.
4. We support guidelines or policies governing a company's political contributions and expenditures.

Adopted by Church Council xxxx



Draft Social Statement on Criminal Justice

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Summary

*The ELCA Task Force on Criminal Justice has written this draft as one of the steps toward the development of a social statement that may be considered by the 2013 ELCA Churchwide Assembly. **Draft social statements have no official standing as statements of the ELCA.** They are a means to invite participation by all in the process toward the creation of a statement.*

ELCA social statements are theological and teaching documents. They assist the ELCA and its members to reach informed judgments on social issues from a perspective of faith. They are intended to cultivate individual and community deliberation as well as to guide moral formation. They govern this church's institutional policy in terms of its social witness and guide its work as a public church. Social statements are developed through an extensive process of deliberation involving the whole church and are adopted by a two-thirds majority of an ELCA Churchwide Assembly.

In a nutshell the statement says:

The ELCA affirms the fundamental principles of the U.S. criminal justice system but also hears the cries that reflect the system's serious deficiencies. Drawing from the biblical witness to God's wondrously rich forms of love and justice, the ELCA is compelled by a "holy yearning" to address the need for change and improvement. The ELCA through its members and various expressions are called to strengthen or take up responsive ministries. In addition, drawing on evidence and data, the ELCA is compelled to speak publically to commend positive efforts and to identify areas in the criminal justice system that require reform.

The following summarize key ideas from each section:

I Prologue

- It is deeply alarming that the United States of America ranks among the top two or three countries in the world in percentage of individuals under the control of the criminal justice system. (1 out of 31 of all adults, and, for people of color, as high as 1 out of 11.)
- Christians are called to confess that the church, as individuals and through its various organizations, has fallen short in responding to crime — both in terms of its harms and the problems in the justice system. We ask God's aid in opening our hearts to the cries of our neighbors, and pray for guidance to speak and work more prophetically and actively toward earthly justice.

II Justice

- God seeks wholeness for humankind — biblical *shalom* — but God's strategy of governing human life is expressed in Scripture and experienced as a twofold work. On the one hand, human beings experience God's deep care through receiving grace-filled righteousness,

shared in the gospel about Jesus Christ, received in faith and partially seen in the lived reality of the church as a gospel community. At the same time, human beings experience God's deep care through the gifts of law and civil forms of justice. This care is expressed through institutions and systems that, when properly operating, provide for protection, order and the flourishing of society.

- The ELCA affirms the fundamental principles of the U.S. criminal justice system, such as due process of law and the presumption of legal innocence. We honor those in the system who through their service help it to operate with fairness and a measure of human care.
- In assessing the current system, this church also recognizes serious deficiencies. Budgetary constraints and persistent inequalities based on race and class frequently challenge its basic principles and impose significant costs on all involved in the system, and on society as a whole.
- This church gives thanks for and yet also recognizes serious flaws in the exercise of law enforcement, the judicial system, and the correctional system. It commends work being done in responding to systemic racial disparities, the rights of victims and other problems, though it continues to believe that a great deal more must be done.

III Yearning for ever-fuller justice

- Sin and crime are different but related categories. Although both often characterize acts that cause great injury to others and even the self, sin represents an offense against God, while crime represents an offense against the state. Nonetheless, Christians yearn for the day when both will be fully overcome in God's great love.
- In the meantime, drawing from the biblical witness to God's wondrously rich forms of justice the ELCA is compelled by a "holy yearning." That yearning leads toward recommitting itself to wise responses of love as a denomination and speaking publically about paths to greater justice.

IV Wise responses of love

- This section in the Draft primarily addresses people of faith and specifically members of the ELCA, and asks them to respond in ministry creatively and wisely in ways that promote human flourishing.
- God's "yes" to us just as we are is without condition. The Bible imagines at least three ways of responding in faith with a grateful "yes" to the world's needs by: seeking wisdom, welcoming the stranger, and bearing the burdens of others.
- The ministry and compassion of members of this church to those in the criminal justice system should be expressed concretely by four practices: hearing the cries of those affected; accompaniment, hospitality, and advocacy.

V Paths to greater justice

- This section in the Draft addresses all people, seeking to join with other people of good will to affirm positive trends and recommend means of reform in the criminal justice system, as guided by evidence and data.
- Positive trends to affirm include efforts at sentencing reform, reentry programming, restorative justice and victim's rights.
- The most pressing need for reform concerns the very high levels of incarceration in the U.S. Incarceration should be reserved for serious and violent offenders who pose a danger to

society. The system should make greater use of alternative forms of sentencing that have been demonstrated to be successful.

- Research shows that race frequently influences decision-making at numerous points in the criminal justice system in ways that disadvantage people of color and cumulatively contribute to racial disparity in incarceration. Significant actions must be taken to address this continuing problem.
- Any comprehensive assessment of the criminal justice system must attend to national drug policy because that policy has a marked effect on all aspects of the system. The ELCA calls for careful attention to the full costs and consequences of the current policy, and openness to changes where they would enhance the welfare of the community.
- On theological grounds regarding the proper role of government, as well as for humanitarian reasons and questions about true cost effectiveness, the ELCA opposes current trends that would increase privatization of the criminal justice system.
- Other areas for reform include practices regarding juvenile offenders, collateral sanctions, rehabilitation, and encouragement for alternative strategies to enhance public safety and lower crime rates.

VI Conclusion: a new paradigm

- It must be remembered that those involved in the criminal justice system are human beings, created in the image of God and worthy of compassionate response and better alternatives. A transformation of perspective is needed in this society that will challenge a logic that equates more punitive responses to crime with more just ones.
- In God the ELCA places our hope for the fullness of justice promised only by the gospel. And to God we owe our thanks for human reason and its abilities to discern — with prudence and creativity — how our communities might reflect in this time the justice of the law. The ELCA therefore recommits itself to ministry with, for, to and among the many, many people whose voices cry out for justice in our criminal justice system. “For what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?” (Micah 6:8).

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Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

Draft Social Statement on Criminal Justice Frequently Asked Questions

What is the most important thing to know about this draft social statement?

The draft affirms the fundamental principles of the U.S. criminal justice system but also hears the cries that reflect the system's serious deficiencies. Drawing from the biblical witness to God's wondrously rich forms of love and justice, the ELCA is compelled by a "holy yearning" to address the need for change and improvement. The ELCA through its members and various expressions are called to strengthen or take up responsive ministries. In addition, drawing on evidence and data, the ELCA is compelled to speak publically to commend positive efforts but also to identify areas in the criminal justice system that require reform.

What does it mean that this is the *Draft Social Statement on Criminal Justice*?

The ELCA Task Force on Criminal Justice has written the current document as a means to receive input from across this church. Draft social statements have *no official standing* as statements of the ELCA. They are a means to invite participation by all in the process of developing a social statement.

Why is the ELCA studying the topic of criminal justice?

The 2007 Churchwide Assembly authorized the development of a social statement for this church. In accordance with standard ELCA procedures, a task force was created to study the issues, provide resource material, create a draft and offer a proposed social statement that may be considered by the 2013 ELCA Churchwide Assembly.

What is a social statement?

ELCA social statements are teaching documents that assist members in forming judgments on social issues. They are meant to aid in communal and individual moral deliberation and moral formation. Social statements also set policy for this church and guide its advocacy and work as a public church. They result from an extensive process of deliberation, and are adopted by a two-thirds vote of a churchwide assembly.

How are social statements used?

ELCA members are encouraged to use social statements for teaching and moral guidance. Social statements govern church policy and state the official position of this church, but not all members are expected to agree with all parts of a social statement.

I thought the 2011 Churchwide Assembly voted for no more social statements?

The assembly authorized the establishment of a review process of how we address social concerns and the current procedures for the development and adoption of social statements. An ELCA task force is addressing those matters. No proposed social statements will be considered at an assembly until completion of the review. However, according to the 2011 Churchwide Assembly action, the development of a social statement on criminal justice and a separate statement focusing on justice for women (both already in process) were to continue without alteration.

Where can I get a copy of the “Draft Social Statement on Criminal Justice”?

The draft statement is available for download at www.elca.org/criminaljustice. Printed copies may be ordered from the ELCA Resource Catalog online at www.elca.org/resources. The criminal justice website has additional resources for ELCA members and leaders to assist in the discussion and deliberation of the document. These include a summary of main points in the Draft and this list of frequently asked questions.

How has the content of the draft been determined?

The content and range of issues covered in the “Draft Social Statement on Criminal Justice” were developed through the standard ELCA social statement process. The ELCA Task Force on Criminal Justice read, deliberated and consulted with experts on matters from the Bible to crime and punishment to sociology and theology. The task force published the study “Hearing the Cries: Faith and Criminal Justice” in early 2011 to invite deliberation and response throughout the ELCA. Responses to this study have been tabulated and reported to the task force. The task force has written the Draft and it represents its best thinking to date about these issues. This draft has its unanimous support although all task force members may not agree with all aspects of the document.

Who is on the ELCA Task Force on Criminal Justice?

The task force is composed of members of this church who have different perspectives and competencies. It represents a range of opinions held by those in the ELCA. To learn more about who is on the task force please visit www.elca.org/criminaljustice.

How can I express my thoughts about the draft social statement to the task force?

There are several ways to respond to the task force regarding the “Draft Social Statement on Criminal Justice”: 1) filling out the response form in the back of the draft booklet; 2) attending synod-sponsored hearings; 3) accessing the response form online at www.elca.org/criminaljustice; or 4) sharing comments and suggestions by letter or email to the task force. The deadline for all feedback is Oct. 31, 2012. Response forms should be sent to: ELCA Criminal Justice Task Force, 8765 West Higgins Road, Chicago, IL 60631. Email responses should be sent to criminaljustice@elca.org.

What is a synod hearing?

Many synods, although not all, sponsor hearings as a public place to share comments and hear what others are saying about the draft statement. They are not designed for argument and rebuttal but offer participants about an hour and a half to share their comments about the text as it now stands. A task force representative is present at each hearing to listen to all comments; a synod recorder also takes notes. The task force will receive reports from hearings as part of the process for revising the Draft for 2013. To find out when your synod is holding a hearing, please visit www.elca.org/criminaljustice.

I’ve never been to a hearing. What kinds of things can I expect people to say?

Participants are likely to offer a variety of responses and insights. Comments at such hearings generally range from affirmations of particular ideas to suggestions about what should be changed, to concerns about what is missing from the text as it now reads. The point is to share responses of various kinds that will strengthen the document.

How can I prepare for a hearing?

The best way to prepare for a hearing is to read the draft social statement thoroughly and carefully. If there are some points you would like to make, write them down and be prepared to address them at the appropriate time. If you do not have time to say everything you wanted to say, it is also helpful to have written your questions and comments down so that you can give them to the task force representative.

I'm unable to attend my synod's hearing on the "Draft Social Statement on Criminal Justice." How can I have my voice heard?

The best way is to fill out and send in the response form in the draft booklet. However, you may check to see if there is a hearing that you can attend in a neighboring synod. To find out where and when all synod hearings will be, visit www.elca.org/criminaljustice. You may also communicate by sending a letter or email to the task force. Letter responses should be sent to: ELCA Criminal Justice Task Force, 8765 West Higgins Road, Chicago, IL 60631. Email responses should be sent to criminaljustice@elca.org.

What happens after the comment period ends on Oct. 31, 2012?

The task force will review all of the response forms, letters, emails and hearing reports received on the draft statement. They will then use that feedback to review the draft social statement. When the revised social statement is released in early 2013, it will be called the proposed social statement on criminal justice.

What happens after the task force publishes the proposed social statement in February 2013?

Once the proposed statement on criminal justice is approved by the task force, it will be reviewed by the ELCA Church Council. This social statement may come before the 2013 ELCA Churchwide Assembly for adoption. For more information about this process see the timeline at www.elca.org/criminaljustice.

Don't social statements often have "Implementing Resolutions" attached?

Social statements normally are accompanied by implementing resolutions when they are considered at a churchwide assembly. Any implementing resolutions for this social statement will be provided by the task force when the proposed social statement becomes available in February 2013.

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Talking Points for Church Leaders NOT FOR PUBLICATION

**Draft Social Statement on Criminal Justice
ELCA Task Force on Criminal Justice**

As a synodical or local church leader, you may be asked to respond to questions from members and these talking points, along with the FAQs, are intended to assist you. You also may be contacted by news reporters. You are not obligated to speak to them, but, the ideas below provide some key points to convey in any discussion of the *Draft Social Statement on Criminal Justice*.

The primary contact for all press and media-related issues is Melissa Ramirez Cooper, Senior Public Relations Specialist, ELCA News Service. Her office number is (773) 380-2596 and her e-mail is Melissa.RamirezCooper@elca.org. Media calls, inquiries or questions about media inquiries may be directed to her. There is a team available through the churchwide office to respond to media inquiries.

Talking Points

Status of the Draft as a document of the task force intended to generate response:

- The ELCA Task Force on Criminal Justice has released the current document as a means to receive input from across this church. Draft social statements have *no official standing* as statements of the ELCA.
- The Draft was written by the ELCA Task Force on Criminal Justice. It represents the task force's best thinking to date about these issues and has its unanimous support.
- Comment and response to a draft is a distinctive way that the ELCA as a denomination lives out its intention to be a church of lively conversation and a community of moral deliberation. There is room in this church for listening to one another without rushing to judgment and closing off discussion.
- The task force will use the feedback it receives on the draft to revise it. The revised statement will be called *the proposed statement* and should be released in February 2013.

This draft challenges our church and society to:

- *See and hear!* 1 in 31 adults in the United States (and 1 out of 11 African American) are under some form of correctional control, among the very highest percentages in the world. While there is much to affirm in the system, the extent of the failures and flaws are largely ignored or unknown to most people. The Draft hopes all who read it will become more aware of these failures.
- *Recommit ourselves to visit the prisoner.* The Draft calls people of faith to accountability by lifting up the biblical vision of justice and love and challenges us to strengthen or begin ministries to those in the system and to stand for significant correction of the criminal justice system.
- *Take up efforts for reform.* The Draft presents evidence regarding problems and shortcoming. At the same time it is bold in believing there are evidence based and data driven means to reform the failures.
- *Seek a fundamental transformation.* The Draft teaches that the church's ministry and civic institutions are *both* means by which God cares for the world and our hands are required in that work. (That God works through civic institutions and the people in them is not immediately evident but is understood by faith.) God's work also is about moving

hearts toward a fundamental transformation—in short, changing the mindset that more and harsher punishment equals better criminal justice and leads to a better society.

Key Points about the Draft:

- The Draft grows out of the calls of individuals, congregations and organizations across the ELCA who are working in or have expressed concern about the criminal justice system for some time. For example, [insert your own local example] in 2011, 50 congregations of the Montana synod together started a congregation inside the prison at Deer Lodge, Mont. (See www.elca.org beginning Wednesday March 14 for this story) (See also <http://www.elca.org/Growing-In-Faith/Ministry/Chaplaincy/Prison.aspx>)
- It attempts to speak comprehensively about the whole system, a system comprised of law enforcement, judiciary, corrections and a system involving victims, the accused, families, politicians, activist groups and voters.
- It draws upon classic Lutheran themes to help Christians frame a perspective for considering the complex issues of criminal justice. Key themes include God's two ways of governing the world, different forms of justice, the seven marks of the church, vocation, the gift of human reason for constructing good forms of civic systems and the freedom of the Christian for compassion and service to the neighbor.
- At the same time it relies on evidence and data when it speaks about particular aspects of the criminal justice system. This is the case when it assesses the system, commends positive developments and identifies areas that require reform.
- It affirms the fundamental principles of the U.S. criminal justice system and affirms the vocations of those who serve in the system. The Draft spells out the necessity for (the presence of sin in all people) and benefits of a well functioning criminal justice system.
- It points toward the need for significant reform and offers some specific recommendations for modifying certain practices and providing effective alternatives.
- It also calls for significant fundamental reforms of assumptions and perspective that underlie the current system and that have guided decisions that led to overly high incarceration rates and its accompanying inequities and injustices, borne especially by people of color or those living in poverty.
- It calls for collective accountability – engaging the whole church, synods, congregations and individuals in advancing a more reasoned, balanced, less broadly punitive societal response to crime and in ministering to those who have committed crime as well as those harmed.

About social statements in general:

- Social statements are an important means by which the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America addresses social concerns and carries out its active participation in society. Social statements are developed over a five-year period through the leadership of a task force.
- ELCA social statements are theological and teaching documents. They are meant to aid members in communal and individual moral deliberation and to present a moral vision about social issues.
- Social statements set policy for this church as a guide for advocacy and other work as a public church.

Talking Points for Church Leaders NOT FOR PUBLICATION

- The Draft approaches criminal justice as a social issue in the same way other social statements address topics such as the environment, economics and health care. It presents a framework for thinking through related issues and emphasizes responsibility and moral deliberation.

Note: A summary of the draft social statement contains additional information about its specific contents. That summary and a list of frequently asked questions (FAQs) are available at www.elca.org/criminaljustice.

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Draft Social Statement on Criminal Justice

*For Study and Response
Prior to Oct. 31, 2012*

ELCA Task Force on Criminal Justice
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

March 2012

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Information about this Draft

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) is preparing a social statement on criminal justice, which may be considered by the 2013 ELCA Churchwide Assembly. The 2007 ELCA Churchwide Assembly mandated the development of this statement.

This document is the *draft* of that social statement and will be revised following discussion throughout this church. There are several ways to participate in that process:

Study, discuss, comment: You are invited to study, discuss and comment on this draft and thereby contribute to the development of the proposed social statement for 2013.

Participate in a hearing: You are also invited to attend hearings on this draft to be held in various synods.

The deadline for submitting comments is **Oct. 31, 2012**. Information on how to respond and on acquiring additional copies may be found at the back of this booklet.

What is a draft social statement?

This document was prepared by the ELCA Task Force on Criminal Justice. It represents the task force's initial attempt to formulate a social statement. As such, it is intended to encourage deliberation on what this church should say about contemporary issues in criminal justice in the United States.

This draft represents the best thinking of the task force to date and comes with unanimous support, although not all task force members necessarily agree with every aspect of this document.

The response of many people throughout this church is vital to the process of writing the social statement and is important to the life of this church. Responses to the document will inform the task force's work on the proposed social statement for 2013.

What is a social statement?

ELCA social statements are teaching and policy documents that assist members in discernment for action and in forming judgments on social issues. They also set policy for this church, guide its advocacy and aid its life as a public church. Social statements are developed through an extensive process of deliberation involving the whole church, and are adopted by a two-thirds vote of an ELCA Churchwide Assembly.

"Policies and Procedures of the ELCA for Addressing Social Concerns," a statement adopted in 1997 and revised in 2011, describes what a social statement does in this way: "Their focus is most commonly on those ethical guidelines that mediate between very general moral affirmations and the detailed requirements of a particular situation."

Leading a discussion on the draft social statement

The task force encourages thorough discussion of the draft social statement in order to receive the most thoughtful, relevant response possible from members of this church. Leaders may want to plan for a couple of sessions, for example, one to introduce the draft

and focus on the theological sections, (I-III), one on the ministry section (IV) and one to discuss Sections V and VI.

After each section, asking some of the following questions may help direct conversation:

- What are the strengths of this section?
- What are the weaknesses of this section?
- What has been left out that needs to be included?
- What advice do you have for the task force, keeping in mind that they are charged with writing a social statement for the whole church?

Preparing to lead the study discussion

Tips for leading the sessions:

1. Keep in mind that discussing matters related to criminal justice often can touch on sensitive issues and personal experiences.
2. Invite people of all ages and perspectives to join the discussion. Sometimes people need to be invited to feel welcome.
3. Leaders do *not* need to be pastors. Discussion facilitators from within the congregation can be recruited and briefed.
4. Read and become familiar with the content of the entire draft before beginning a study session.
5. Be prepared to take some notes or assign a recorder to capture ideas and thoughts during the discussion. This may be especially helpful when you get to the Response Form found at the end of this booklet.

Draft Social Statement on Criminal Justice

*For Study and Response
Prior to Oct. 31, 2012*

ELCA Task Force on Criminal Justice
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

March 2012



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

Prepared by the ELCA Task Force on Criminal Justice

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ITEM #: ELCAOB1012

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Available online at www.elca.org/criminaljustice

Ordering a copy

A single copy of the draft can be obtained without cost by downloading it from the criminal justice website (www.elca.org/criminaljustice) or by calling 800-638-3522, ext. 2996.

Multiple printed copies may be ordered from the ELCA Online Resource Catalog for a nominal fee at: www.elca.org/resources.

Sending your comments to the task force

You are invited to respond to the draft and send your comments to the ELCA Task Force on Criminal Justice. You may use the response form at the back of this document or write your comments in letter or essay form. Please send them to the task force by Oct. 31, 2012.

You may send your comments to:

ELCA Task Force on Criminal Justice
Office of the Presiding Bishop
8765 W. Higgins Rd.
Chicago, IL 60631-4101

Or email them to criminaljustice@elca.org

Or respond online (www.elca.org/criminaljustice)

Participating in hearings

You are invited to participate in hearings on the draft to be held in many synods. Information and dates for these hearings will be posted on the website. Please visit www.elca.org/criminaljustice.

Draft of a Social Statement on Criminal Justice

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1 **I. Prologue**

2 As members of the body of Christ and as citizens who seek to strengthen our
3 communities, we, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), strive for
4 justice for all and seek to serve the needs of the neighbor. Discerning God’s just will for
5 the world requires continual theological and moral deliberation.¹ The following social
6 statement is the product of such deliberation.

7
8 It is alarming that 1 in 31 adults in the United States
9 are under some form of correctional control.² This
10 church is aware that other countries with similar crime
11 rates incarcerate far fewer people. This church is also
12 aware that people of color and people living in poverty
13 are disproportionately incarcerated, and is disturbed
14 by the harmful effects of current national drug policy.

**“Concerned that so many
cries — of victims, of the
incarcerated, of their families,
of those who work in the
system — have not been
heard...The ELCA speaks in
this statement from and to its
members, to those impacted by
crime, and to those who work
for the public good in various
civil offices.”**

15 Concerned that so many cries — of victims, of the incarcerated, of their families, of those
16 who work in the system — have not been heard, the ELCA:

- 17
- 18 • affirms the goodness of and God’s intention for just, rational and reliable systems
19 of criminal justice;
 - 20 • anticipates a still greater wholeness of justice to which God draws us;
 - 21 • names as *holy yearning* the disquieted, restless longing for the wholeness of
22 person and community in God’s full justice;
 - 23 • invites fellow Christians to renewed ministry within the criminal justice system
24 and on behalf of those whom it affects, including victims of crime and their
25 families, the incarcerated and their families, affected communities, and those who
26 work in the system;
 - 27 • lifts up concrete practices of the church, the church’s “marks,” as particularly
28 relevant for addressing criminal justice issues and as vitally inspiring for
29 renewed ministry;

1 “Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns,” adopted by the 1997 Churchwide Assembly, p. 12.

2 Pew Center on the States, “One in 31: The Long Reach of American Corrections” (Washington, D.C.: The Pew Charitable Trusts, 2009). Correctional control includes prison, jail, probation and parole.

- 30 • calls itself, its members and civil authorities to account for the distortions of
31 justice that cause harm in our world today, inviting all to live up to stated ideals;
32 and
- 33 • challenges the notion that equates more punitive measures with more just ones.

34
35 The ELCA speaks in this statement from and to its members, to those impacted by crime,
36 and to those who work for the public good in various civil offices. Drawing on human
37 reason, this church joins many others seeking to identify areas in the criminal justice
38 system in urgent need of attention and reform. At the same time, drawing from Holy
39 Scripture, we hold up a vision of justice that is wondrously richer than the justice we can
40 expect from human institutions. Both elements of this statement are vital to the integrity
41 of the church’s witness in the world.

42
43 Martin Luther named seven indicators which reliably illustrate the fundamental
44 character and practices of the church: Confession, the Word of God, Holy Baptism,
45 Holy Communion, Worship, Ministry, and Compassionate Suffering.³ The seven “marks
46 of the church” will serve throughout this statement as critical indicators of properly
47 Christian response to the brokenness of today’s criminal justice system and to crime
48 itself. The first mark is confession.

49 50 **A. Confession: mark of the church**

51 Many Christians confess each week that “we have sinned in thought, word and deed,
52 by what we have done and by what we have left undone.”⁴ To confess one’s sins is a
53 central element in the Christian life, one that centers accountability and leads both to
54 the truth being told and justice being done (1 John 1:5-9). In confession God is invoked
55 as the one who brings to human brokenness the fullness of new life.

56
57 In that spirit, we are called to confess that the church itself and its members have fallen
58 short in responding to crime, its harms and the justice system. Often we have been

3 Luther’s original list, including some slight changes of wording, can be found in “On the Councils and the Church,” (1539) and “Concerning Ministry” (1523).

4 “Evangelical Lutheran Worship” (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2006), 95.

59 complacent or allowed fear or hatred
60 for the stranger to dictate responses
61 to crime. We have allowed the cries
62 of the harmed to go unheard. We
63 have allowed the burdens of crime
64 and the criminal justice system to be
65 unfairly borne.

66
67 In confessing its complicity with
68 a system gone awry, this church
69 invokes the judgment and wise
70 guidance of God. We turn to God for
71 counsel on how we might minister
72 better and more mercifully to those
73 harmed by injustice. We ask God’s
74 aid in opening our hearts to the cries
75 of our neighbors, that their faces
76 and voices might show us whom
77 we are to love, if we would love
78 God. We pray for guidance to speak
79 more prophetically and work more
80 lovingly toward earthly justice.

81

82 **II. Justice**

83 **A. God’s distinct ways of relating the world**

84 1. Twofold justice

85 For the benefit of spiritual life, God relates to the world through the gospel’s
86 forgiveness of sins and promise of new and eternal life. For life’s many other needs,
87 God’s providential purposes for the world are mediated through various institutions
88 and communities, including civil government and its criminal justice system.⁵ God uses

(Note: These stories are NOT formal parts of the social statement, but are included because they illustrate real life experiences in the criminal justice system.)

Lutheran congregation offers prison ministry

So, why don’t *you* just do it? Our congregational prison ministry began seven years ago as a personal challenge — aimed directly at *me*. We were in a small group setting at church and the question on the table was, “Has God ever called you to serve in a way that you never followed up on?” I had shared with the group that I’d been attracted to prison ministry early in life but hadn’t ever done anything about it. I expected that the rest of the group would share their similar experiences. But George, one of the group members, wouldn’t let me off the hook that easily. He kept pestering me with the question, “So, why don’t you just do it?”

So I did. I got some entry-level training, worked as a small group volunteer in prison for a while, taught an Alpha Course, and got our congregation involved in a program to purchase Christmas presents for children of incarcerated parents. Eventually, I found a niche. In a prison setting where others had seen only obstacles, we saw an opportunity. We decided that many of them could benefit greatly from a practical and hope-filled handbook for prisoners. Not finding anything like that on the market, I decided to write it myself. With a great amount of collaboration from inmates, prison chaplains, workers in prison ministry and aftercare we’ll be releasing a book titled, “A Spiritual Survival Guide for Prison and Beyond.” A copy will be given to every newly convicted inmate in our state who desires one.

5 “The Church in Society: A Lutheran Perspective.” (Chicago: Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 1991), 4.

89 such institutions and communities to structure human life and, within that structure,
90 to provide food, shelter, safety, education and many other material and social benefits.
91 Although these institutions have a very different purpose than the gospel's, still they are
92 God's gift to us.

93

94 Thus, while there is a fundamental *singularity* of God's intent for human flourishing,
95 God's providence comes in a twofold way. Human experience of justice is likewise
96 twofold. There is a form of justice, or righteousness, for which we yearn and which we
97 hear in the gospel and partially see in the gospel's community, the church. At the same
98 time, there is a form of justice which we seek and can expect to find in the institutions of
99 the world. The one form of justice must not be mistaken for the other.

100

101 Forgiveness of sins and *righteousness* characterize the first; judgment of crime typifies the
102 second. Justice according to the law is administered in civil institutions by the prudential
103 application of human reason. Justice according to the gospel, or righteousness, however,
104 often flies in the face of reason (1 Corinthians 1:21). The application of standards of
105 divine righteousness to situations within the realm of the law's justice is never to be
106 uniformly recommended.

107

108 No matter how different the forms of justice are, however,
109 both emerge from the same root: God's desire for wholeness
110 in humankind — *shalom* — and for communion and
111 fellowship with all that God has created. The two forms of
112 justice must be understood in light of God's final victory
113 (Revelation 21:21; Isaiah 2:2-4). The justice of the law is
114 necessary for the world as we experience it, but will fall away in the world to come. In
115 that new heaven and earth the twofold character of God's relating to the world will have
116 run its course; only the righteousness of the gospel will remain.

117

118 Rightly understood, the distinctions between law and gospel, between the justice of the
119 law and the justice of the gospel, and between temporal and spiritual authority powerfully

**“No matter how different
the forms of justice
are, however, both
emerge from the same
root: God's desire for
wholeness in humankind
— *shalom*...”**

120 motivate Christian responses to injustice. Distinctions between them supply a vision for
121 the possible without succumbing to utopian naïveté. The presence and promise of God’s
122 reign within the brokenness of the world prompts both hope and clear-eyed realism.

123

124 2. Twofold justice of God in Scripture

125 Lutherans do not articulate this twofold way of understanding justice because of loyalty
126 to a historic “Two Kingdoms doctrine.” They recognize the distinction because it is
127 utterly and profoundly biblical, emerging from Scripture as the church receives its
128 witness. The kingdom of God complicated the lives of the earliest Christians. It did not
129 give them a vantage point from which they could see clearly all of God’s purposes for
130 them.

131

132 Its symbol, the cross, tore open their lives to their own suffering and the suffering of
133 others. Roman civil authorities mocked Jesus as King (Mark 15:26). Yet even when the
134 resurrected Christ appeared to his disciples he refused to claim any other identity than the
135 one he had claimed on the cross. The risen Christ will forever be recognized only in his
136 loving but deadly-to-him embrace of humans in their sin and death (1 Corinthians 2:2).

137

138 On the one hand, Christians believe that Christ has put his mark, the sign of the cross, on
139 his ruling power. Yet the power of Christ crucified has no more come in its completeness
140 for us than it had for the earliest Christians. In brief moments, however, the reign of
141 Christ crucified comes in baptism, in the Lord’s Supper, in preaching, in the forgiveness
142 of sin, in mutual consolation and the bearing of each other’s burdens, and in our sharing
143 of the world’s suffering. Unwilling to abandon the crucified King the earliest Christians
144 took up Christ’s cross and followed him, refusing to use coercive power over others
145 (Mark 8:34-38; Luke 22:24-27).

146

147 But they also refused to privatize their faith. When John the Baptist encountered
148 soldiers he did not deny the validity of the force they exerted (Luke 3:14). Other biblical
149 witnesses testify to the goodness and necessity of civil order (Romans 13; 1 Peter 2:13-
150 14). Christians dedicate themselves to live in the tension created by faith in the coming
151 kingdom of Christ. It is a tension between the perfect reconciliation of the world to God

152 in Christ's death and the day-to-day, sometimes incremental and sometimes monumental
153 fixes humans apply to alleviate suffering and to right wrongs. The Bible recognizes this
154 day-to-day work as God's work. So should Christians.

155

156 As this church yearns for the justice of Christ's coming kingdom, we listen to the cries
157 for justice that ring out right now — the cries of offenders and
158 victims, of families and communities, of those who work within
159 the criminal justice system. Those cries cannot wait for our hope
160 in Christ to come in completeness. For the sake of the same
161 world that Christ was willing to die for we must be willing to
162 employ power to preserve life. That power must never be used for self-promotion, self-
163 satisfaction or the advancement of the interests of only some but for the good of all,
164 especially for those who are most vulnerable.

“For the sake of the same world that Christ was willing to die for we must be willing to employ power to preserve life.”

165

166 3. Word of God and Baptism: marks of the church

167 The word of God and its proclamation are the very basis of the church.⁶ The church is a
168 place for discerning the meaning of God's word for individual and communal life. In fact,
169 the church never rests in its quest for greater understanding of and deeper faithfulness
170 to the word of God, both as it declares the desires of God for human life and promises
171 forgiveness and renewal. Therefore, the church persistently commits itself to revisiting
172 the features of the justice it reasonably expects in the world and the deeper justice for
173 which it yearns in hope.

174

175 Holy Baptism brings forgiveness of sins, even for grave sins. This reminds us that no
176 one lies beyond the final grace of God. This fact chastens us to affirm the humanity of
177 all individuals, even those whose deeds are so vile that they are deemed, by some, to
178 be less than human. Holy Baptism also calls the baptized into the fellowship of death
179 and resurrection in Christ's church. That calling is one of mutual love. The places of
180 responsibility where God's people live out their callings, however, are usually far beyond
181 the walls of any church building.

6 “Solid Declaration of the Formula of Concord,” II.50; “Apology of the Augsburg Confession,” XIV.4, Kolb and Wengert, eds. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000).

182

183 Those who serve in civil institutions act as God’s agents in delivering the institution’s
184 benefits. In such roles as law enforcement officers, attorneys, judges, correctional
185 officers, prison chaplains and the like, the work of God is done, whether or not an agent
186 is aware of, or would acknowledge, such a connection. Lutheran tradition has affirmed
187 that Christians may in good conscience serve in such roles.⁷ Without their service civil
188 institutions could not function, and for them and their work this church gives thanks.
189 When their work is done for the benefit of all, God makes concrete the blessings of public
190 order and justice through them (Romans 13:4).

191

192 When the work of any office is understood as fulfilling one’s baptismal vocation, a
193 critique of the work done is necessarily implied. Commitments to serving the neighbor as
194 an expression of Christian life remind those who hold an office that their primary purpose
195 is a ministry of loving service to their neighbors. Their daily work, like anyone’s work, is
196 not for their own honor, and when its concrete form harms rather than serves the neighbor
197 it must be changed.

198

199 Moreover, to call those who exercise offices in the public authority “doers of God’s work”
200 neither baptizes their power in the name of God nor sanctifies their status quo. It is rather to
201 express how crucial the work of justice is and to insist it be done with appropriate dignity.

202

203 **B. Public Life and the Criminal Justice System**

204 1. Institution essential for public life

205 A civil institution of justice is essential to human flourishing. Even if people were reliably
206 unselfish and kind to one another, civil government would still be necessary to organize our
207 common life. But people are not reliably good to one another. Disorder leaves people in
208 fear for their person or property and often without access to basic human goods. Effective
209 civil government reduces such fear by establishing security. Freed from this fear, people and
210 communities can more easily develop and enjoy the full range of human benefits.⁸

7 Kolb and Wengert, Augsburg Confession, XVI.

8 ELCA, “Church in Society,” 4.

211 In its constitution the ELCA pledges itself
212 to “work with civil authorities in areas of
213 mutual endeavor, maintaining institutional
214 separation of church and state in a relation
215 of functional interaction.”⁹ Part of its
216 calling as one institution alongside others
217 is to call the public authority to its own
218 high standards.

219
220 The United States understands its
221 justice system in light of the nation’s
222 constitutional mandate to “establish
223 justice, ensure domestic tranquility,
224 and promote the general welfare.” This
225 church believes that there is significant
226 evidence that the institutions of justice
227 in the United States are in urgent need
228 of reform.

229

230 2. Just ordering

231 Civil government contributes to human flourishing primarily through law, which is a
232 gift from God. A society governed by law avoids the perils of both anarchy and arbitrary
233 rule. When clear rules are fairly and consistently enforced, individuals can conform their
234 conduct to the law and trust that others — including the authorities — will do the same.¹⁰
235 Properly done, law enforcement, just procedures and impartial judges allow individuals
236 to resolve their disputes through official and predictable channels rather than private
237 conflict. They function to protect individuals against injustice and abuse by those who
238 have greater economic, political, social or physical power.

A woman victimized by crime

As usual, I pulled out of the driveway and headed to the subway station to pick up my husband from work. I picked him up at the usual time, around 5:30 p.m., and then we headed home. When we got back and I went to put my key in the door, I realized the door was open. We walked in and I saw that there were some items on the floor. We looked across the kitchen and I saw the stereo was gone and the desk drawers were opened. We were scared, but went on through the house. Upstairs we found that our drawers had all been emptied, the mattresses flipped over and closets ransacked. We lost jewelry, cash, and items that had lots of sentimental value. Apparently, the thieves broke a second floor back window and reached in and tripped the door lock. Once it settled in, I realized that someone had gone through our home, our personal belongings and took things important to us. Then it dawned on me that they knew when I left to go and get my husband and nobody would be home. It was then that I became really frightened as I realized we had been watched — I felt so vulnerable. I became a bit obsessed with who might be watching us or that this could happen again. I know I have to get over it, but I admit that it has been awfully hard. The police never were able to find out who did this to us.

9 ELCA, Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions (Chicago: Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 2009), 4.03.n.

10 One still must be permitted, and may even be mandated, to demur when obeying a given law would cause one to sin. Cf. Augsburg Confession XVI.7, which cites Acts 5:29.

239 Order as such is not the goal of governmental institutions, however. Ordering must be
240 *just*. Reliable patterns of human interactions must be formed with equal regard for the
241 dignity of each person. Such patterns as laws, programs and institutions themselves are
242 just when they foster the well-being of all.

243

244 Just ordering of society is characterized by both pragmatic and principled insights. It
245 is principled in that it seeks to safeguard the individual against arbitrary or otherwise
246 unfair treatment. It is pragmatic in noting that unjust or excessive rule may produce as
247 much disorder as ineffective rule. Just order can also come when a deep sense of justice
248 leads to the unsettling of established patterns of unjustifiably unequal treatment or
249 distribution of goods.

250

251 Not possessing special insight into matters of reason, this church does not presume
252 to instruct the public authority how, concretely, the justice system should be shaped.
253 This church does, however, urge the development, implementation and assessment of
254 criminal justice procedures and criminal law on the basis of human reason and principled,
255 evidence-based practices, and laments the absence of such critical reason in many areas
256 of the system.

257

258 The ELCA's dual task to affirm and to critique is illumined by scripture and depends on
259 the knowledge and experience of its many members in the criminal justice system. It
260 therefore calls special attention to the defense of the vulnerable and those whose voices
261 are not otherwise heard.

262

263 **C. Assessing the criminal justice system**

264 This church recognizes the basic goodness of the U.S.
265 criminal justice system, insofar as all civil government is
266 a gift of God and an effective system of criminal justice is
267 an essential part of any functioning civil government. This
268 church affirms the fundamental principles of civil justice,
269 such as due process of law and the presumption of legal
270 innocence, to which the U.S. system is committed. The

“This church affirms the fundamental principles of civil justice, such as due process of law and the presumption of legal innocence, to which the U.S. system is committed.”

271 ELCA honors those who through their service help the system to operate with fairness
272 and a measure of human care. This church also commends recent positive trends in
273 criminal justice, noting them at length below in Section V.

274

275 At the same time this church joins its voice with the many who recognize serious
276 deficiencies in the system of criminal justice. Conflicting political objectives, budgetary
277 demands and persistent inequalities based on race, ethnicity and class frequently
278 challenge the system’s implementation of — and perhaps even its commitment to —
279 basic principles of justice. The failure to achieve a well-ordered system of criminal justice
280 imposes significant costs on all involved in the system, and on society as a whole.

281

282 1. Law enforcement

283 This church gives thanks for the professional law enforcement departments and officers
284 who serve in our communities. It recognizes that police officers regularly encounter
285 complex and stressful situations, and affirms the many ongoing efforts to train and
286 support officers in peacefully and constructively resolving those situations.

287

288 Although some police departments have adopted robust policies to counter the problem
289 of racial bias, discrimination remains, as does its harmful consequences. Racial, ethnic
290 or religious profiling — whether intentional or unintentional — stigmatizes those
291 who are innocent of any offense. It also alienates members of the public who come to
292 view the justice system as antagonistic toward them, rather than as a safeguard to their
293 person and property.

294

295 2. Judicial system

296 This church gives thanks for a judicial system that strives impartially and accurately to
297 allocate responsibility for alleged offenses, while also protecting those who are accused
298 against errors or overreaching by the state. A just system is appropriately responsive to
299 claimed violations of rights in person or property and treats all victims with equal respect.
300 A system of fair adjudication of disputed questions of fact and law provides transparent
301 processes and appropriate opportunity for review of decisions.

302

303 To achieve these goals, the system provides the accused meaningful access to legal
304 counsel, fair notice of the charges, opportunity to challenge and present evidence,
305 protection of legal rights by an independent judge, adjudication of factual disputes by
306 an impartial judge or jury, and access to appellate review of trial court decisions. The
307 system depends on the good faith and competent performance of all who serve vocations
308 in the criminal justice system, including prosecutors, defense counsel, judges and court
309 personnel. This church affirms the responsibility of citizens to serve on juries.

310

311 Achievement of these goals — impartial adjudication and protection of rights — also
312 depends on adequate resources. But in many places the adjudicative process faces an
313 overwhelming number of cases. This high volume, which has largely resulted from
314 current drug policy as well as zero tolerance policies for certain public order offenses,
315 leaves little opportunity for particularized attention to any case. This means that the vast
316 majority of cases must be resolved by negotiated pleas. While there are significant social
317 and personal benefits from negotiated resolutions, they come at the cost of transparency
318 to the public.

319

320 Over the past generation, the adjudicative process has been significantly affected

321 by recent changes to sentencing policies. Such changes
322 responded to concerns that judicial discretion in sentencing
323 produced unacceptable variation among punishments for
324 the same offenses. This church affirms the importance of
325 equal treatment in sentencing, but expresses concern that
326 sentencing reform has become synonymous with increasingly
327 harsher sentences.

“This church affirms the importance of equal treatment in sentencing, but expresses concern that sentencing reform has become synonymous with increasingly harsher sentences.”

328

329 Moreover, the racial disparities evident in contacts with law enforcement persist
330 throughout the criminal justice system, including the sentencing process. For example,
331 people of color are more likely than Caucasians to be sentenced to prison, even after

332

333 offense severity and the defendant’s criminal record are taken into account.¹¹ Although
334 a variety of reasons have been given to rationalize the disparity, the fact that it persists
335 demands serious response.

336

337 3. Corrections and reintegration

338 Since crime is inevitable, so too is the need for appropriate consequences, which
339 require offenders to reckon with the fact that their crime has caused harm, and must be
340 addressed. Genuine disagreement exists regarding the rationale for the forms punishment
341 should take. Deterrence, rehabilitation, incapacitation and restoration are all plausible
342 justifications for punishment.

343

344 Punishment can have several purposes. Punishing offenders may serve as a deterrent
345 to their re-offending in the future (specific deterrence) or to others who might commit
346 similar crimes (general deterrence). Punishing offenders might serve rehabilitative needs;
347 the offender is equipped to understand the harm they have caused and helped to become
348 a person less likely to offend. Punishment also can be seen as retribution. Retribution
349 speaks to the re-balancing of a ruptured social order. In this way of thinking, if one has
350 inflicted pain or gained an unfair advantage, then he or she should experience similar pain
351 and have the advantage removed.

352

353 Another justification for punishment is incapacitation; when an offender is
354 overwhelmingly likely to re-offend, and the offense would harm society, then the
355 offender must be prevented from harming again. Finally, there is restoration. Advocates
356 of restorative justice suggest that victims, offenders and their families and communities
357 would be better served when, in cases of admitted guilt and when the personal
358 and emotional safety of victims is protected, resolution takes place in a facilitated
359 conversation between these parties. Such practices have been especially useful in juvenile
360 justice and in adult cases not involving violence.

11 Samuel Walker, Cassia Spohn and Miriam DeLone, “The Color of Justice: Race, Ethnicity, and Crime in America” 5th ed. (Belmont, Calif.: Thomson Wadsworth, 2012) and Darrell Steffensmeier and Stephen Demuth, “Ethnicity and Judges’ Sentencing Decisions: Hispanic-Black-White Comparison.” *Criminology* 39 (2001):145-178.

361 Yet no single justification or rationale for punishment is solely commendable.
362 Deterrence strategies may make society safer, but they risk instrumentalizing
363 individuals.¹² Retribution seems to speak to an innate human desire to have the
364 “punishment fit the crime,” but can easily devolve into mere vengeance.¹³ Rehabilitation
365 and restoration show promise to mend ruptured relationships between people and attend
366 to the needs of victims and offenders, but can reach beyond what the state is able, or
367 rightly mandated, to achieve.

368
369 Reliance on one particular form
370 of punishment or another may be
371 appropriate in a given case, and human
372 reason, rightly employed, can discern
373 what is best. No single form, however,
374 is always and everywhere required
375 *of necessity*, including incarceration.
376 Incarceration of nonviolent offenders is
377 simply one strategy among others, one
378 overwhelmingly chosen by this society.
379 This recognition brings freedom to
380 challenge its logic, and enables better
381 alternatives to be envisioned.

382
383 Although justified in principle,
384 practices of punishment deserve serious
385 scrutiny. The U.S. now has the highest incarceration rate in the world.¹⁴ This has led to
386 both overcrowding and very significant expenditures on prisons — dollars that could

An incarcerated man

I suppose that being in prison is different for everyone. For me it is the boredom — the isolation — the disconnection from family and friends. I accept that I broke the law and put myself here. I robbed the bank. Drugs were at the root of it all. I’m addicted and needed a way to get them. It isn’t an excuse — it’s just the way it is. It popped in my head that the easiest way to get money was to take it from the bank. So I did, and I got caught. Now here I am — staring down five years in federal prison, half way across the country from my family and hometown — so no visits. I hate it here. There is lots of hostility — from both the inmates and the staff. There is little to do, and even if there is something worthwhile, there are waiting lists. I just got here a few months ago so I’ve got nothing coming. I have a job as an orderly and make 21 cents an hour — about 30 bucks a month. That’s what I got. I try to keep to myself because you can’t be sure what other people are all about. You don’t trust anybody here and you keep your business to yourself. Letting your guard down makes you weak and an easy target — so I try to do my own thing and stay out of the way. I’ve got a lot of time but I’ve already started counting the days.

12 An important strand of Christian ethical thought insists that human dignity requires that persons be treated as “ends” not “means.” Punishing an offender solely as a means to greater social safety (e.g., “making an example” of someone) can be seen to violate this principle, as can rehabilitative emphases that diminish human freedom.

13 Indeed, retributive punishment has historically functioned as a public proxy for private vengeance. If one family has been wronged by another and wants to retaliate, they will be less likely to do so if they feel the other family has been appropriately punished by the state.

14 Roy Walmsley, *World Prison Population List 9th ed.* (London: International Centre for Prison Studies, 2011). www.idcr.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2010/09/WPPL-9-22.pdf (accessed 2/2/12).

387 justifiably be better spent elsewhere. Overcrowding results in risks to humane treatment
388 of the incarcerated. Dangers to physical safety are real and declining health through
389 poor conditions is likely. Cost-saving measures have caused some governments to
390 consider contracting with private firms to incarcerate offenders, which raises myriad
391 ethical questions.

392

393 Related to exploding populations of prisoners is the troubling emergence of much more
394 punitive attitudes toward the incarcerated; services such as educational and recreational
395 opportunities, as well as access to counseling, education and the care of chaplains
396 have been eliminated not simply for budgetary reasons. As people of reason, we accept
397 differences in correctional philosophies, but as people of faith we reject dehumanization
398 of the incarcerated.

399

400 In particular the ELCA is sensitive to the extent of suffering experienced by those
401 convicted of crimes. While rational people may reasonably disagree about the extent
402 and sources of suffering, this church insists that some of its forms simply must stop.

403 These include:

- 404 • racial profiling;
- 405 • widespread and long-term total isolation in solitary confinement;
- 406 • incarceration practices that sever familial ties;
- 407 • collateral sanctions that make social reintegration extremely difficult; and
- 408 • severely limited access to education, counseling substance abuse treatment and
409 job training.

410

411 4. Confronting racism

412 The criminal justice system encounters citizens in a long sequence. It begins with contact
413 with law enforcement officers and moves through such stages as bail, assignment of
414 counsel, arraignment, adjudication of the offense, sentencing and punishment, including
415 sometimes incarceration, parole or probation. While racial disparities at any one
416 particular point in the sequence may be small, and intentional discrimination may even
417 be absent, the cumulative effects of bias in the system as a whole have led to intolerably
418 harmful effects on minority communities.

419

420 For example, people of color continue to experience statistically higher rates of contact
421 with police, a disproportion that persists even when other factors like age and economic
422 status are taken into account. During traffic stops, African American drivers are more
423 likely than others to have their vehicles searched and to be arrested.¹⁵ Since people of
424 color are more likely than Caucasian people to be poor, they are less likely to be released
425 on bail. Compared to those who are released before trial, those who are detained are more
426 likely to be convicted and to be incarcerated.¹⁶

427

428 Later in the sequence, people of color are thus more likely to have a prior criminal
429 record, which means they will receive harsher punishments for future offenses. The
430 cumulative effects of racial bias thus result in gross over-incarceration and punishment
431 of racial minorities. The ELCA affirms that racism is a sin against God and all that is
432 God's. The full story of race in the criminal justice system is
433 undoubtedly complex and prone to distortion. But one test
434 of the justice of any system is its results. The ELCA believes
435 that present criminal justice practices and legislation have
436 produced unacceptable results with respect to race.

“The ELCA believes that present criminal justice practices and legislation have produced unacceptable results with respect to race.”

437

438 5. Needs of those harmed

439 Victims of crime, whose needs are largely ignored by a depersonalized institution,
440 cry out for help. This church affirms the need for increased attention to the needs and
441 interests of victims in the criminal justice system. Although the government appropriately
442 exercises control over prosecution, those who are harmed by crime deserve consideration
443 and respect throughout the process. Recommendations for practices leading to the just
444 treatment of victims can be found below in Section V.

445

446 6. Other concerns

447 When the justice system releases offenders from its control, significant challenges and

15 Christine Eith and Matthew R. Durose, “Contacts between Police and the Public, 2008” Bureau of Justice Statistics Special Report: October, 2011. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, 2011).

16 Samuel Walker, et al. “The Color of Justice.” This is true even after offense severity and defendant’s prior criminal record are considered.

448 problems continue for those released. Personal obstacles make it more difficult to find
449 and retain employment and to maintain healthy personal and familial relationships. Some
450 of these problems would have been real before incarceration, but many stem from the
451 punishment itself.

452

453 Legal obstacles exacerbate the challenge. “Collateral sanctions” are punishments
454 stemming from legislation against those convicted of crimes, and include limitations to
455 employment, civic participation, housing and
456 educational opportunities. This church recognizes
457 and endorses the important work of aiding those
458 who have been incarcerated to reintegrate into
459 society, and strongly encourages such ministries
460 of accompaniment among the faithful.

“This church recognizes and endorses the important work of aiding those who have been incarcerated to reintegrate into society, and strongly encourages such ministries of accompaniment among the faithful.”

461

462 Incarceration is increasingly used as a primary means of addressing undocumented
463 immigrants.¹⁷ In many cases the only crime these individuals have committed is their
464 very presence without appropriate papers. Due process or access to legal counsel is often
465 withheld from them. This church has repeatedly called for just and wise treatment of
466 immigrants and considers current practices especially objectionable.¹⁸ While immigration
467 is a complex issue, indefinite detention and dehumanizing isolation of undocumented
468 immigrants is an inappropriate response.¹⁹

469

470 This assessment of the criminal justice system shapes the concrete recommendations
471 made in Section V. Our best intentions at addressing injustices in the present system,
472 however, may in some cases simply displace injustice to different sites. Christian faith
473 therefore requires a strong distinction to be made between what forms of justice can
474 be achieved at present and what we must look to God alone to effect. And we must
475 beware the naïveté that assumes the best intentions lead always to the best results. Our

17 In 2010, this practice cost the federal government \$1.5 billion. In the aggregate, state systems spend much more; in California alone the total was \$1 billion.

18 See the 2011 Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services report, “Unlocking Liberty: A Way Forward for U.S. Immigration Detention Policy.”

19 See “Toward Compassionate, Just, and Wise Reform,” (ELCA Social Policy Resolution, November 2009.)

476 understanding of the issues in the criminal justice system confronting Christians is not
477 dependent on human reason alone. We also turn to the gospel for insight, courage and
478 strength in matters of justice.

479

480 **III. Yearning for ever-fuller justice**

481 The justice of the law will never match the fullness of the righteousness of the gospel. No
482 matter how good and just our laws are, they will be interpreted and enforced by fallible
483 human beings. No matter how wise our attorneys and judges are, incomplete evidence
484 will be all that we can rely on in rendering decisions. The facts of any particular criminal
485 case can never be fully known in all their detail, nor be perfectly interpreted, by those
486 asked to render judgment.

487

488 Human finitude thus diminishes the forms earthly justice takes. Human sin also
489 conditions the fullness that can be expected from earthly justice. Fear, wrathfulness,
490 biases and innumerable other vices are present in crime and — often in much smaller and
491 hidden ways — in responses to crime, no matter how measured and reasonable a justice
492 system is.

493

494 As citizens of civil society Christians are commanded and enabled to work for earthly
495 justice. We feel a healthy responsibility to ensure that the systems of justice our
496 governments oversee reflect, to as deep an extent as possible, the key commitments of our
497 faith. And yet, Lutherans do not think that a judge rendering a verdict should regularly
498 cite Jesus' exhortations about forgiveness or judgment (Matthew 5:38-42; Matthew 7:1-
499 5). Victims of crimes should not be counseled to deal with crime privately rather than
500 reporting it to the public authority.²⁰

501

502 Nevertheless, Christians do approach questions of earthly justice from the vantage point
503 of faith. Faith bears with it a certain healthy, relativizing dissatisfaction with earthly
504 justice. Christians see and feel a fissure between the righteousness of the gospel and
505 the justice of the law in our everyday lives. We know that, as much as we long for the

20 1 Corinthians 6:4-8 can be read as an instance where Paul urges the church at Corinth not to participate in “secular” systems of justice but rather to deal on their own with harms done to members of the church.

506 contrary, the world evoked on Sunday morning cannot quite be achieved on Monday. The
507 ELCA names this *yearning* as a holy gift of God, central to our understanding of justice,
508 and thus of the criminal justice system.²¹

509

510 **A. Yearning and the Bible**

511 In the ancient world a distinction was made between love when the beloved was present
512 (“eros”) and love when the beloved was absent (“pothos”). In English “pothos” is
513 “yearning.” “Eros” can mask a desire to control the beloved. In contrast, yearning —
514 a desire in mourning for lost communion with a loved one — has no aims to control
515 another.

516

517 Yearning underlies profound portions of the Bible. Paul, for example, longs for the church
518 at Philippi, and he does so with the “innards of Christ.” (Philippians 1:8). By locating
519 his emotions in Christ himself, Paul implies that Christ also longs for the world. Christ
520 desires complete and free, mutual and loving relatedness in which all that is Christ’s is
521 ours just as Christ bears in his body all that is our own, including our sin and death.

522

523 Christians in their longing for Christ find themselves deeply immersed in the sufferings
524 of the world. Christians are not aloof spectators, watching the world’s troubles. Faith in
525 Christ does not give special knowledge that trumps the reasoning power of those leading
526 civil institutions. What faith does do is to lead us into solidarity with suffering. The
527 groaning of creation is our groaning just as the Spirit of God sighs our sighs (Romans
528 8:18-39). That is why we, by the Spirit and out of faith, eagerly anticipate and await the
529 justice of the gospel (Galatians 5:5). Until Christ’s return, however, the Spirit of God does
530 not let us say “justice has been done.”

531

532 We honor, support and thank those individuals
533 working in the criminal justice system and those
534 who render judgments. Our hope in the coming
535 justice of God makes us especially mindful of
536 victims and the isolation and dehumanization of

“Our hope in the coming justice of God makes us especially mindful of victims and the isolation and dehumanization of individuals convicted of crimes, as well as shortcomings of the system and errors in particular judgments.”

21 “Church in Society” uses the term “restlessness,” 3.

537 individuals convicted of crimes, as well as shortcomings of the system and errors in
538 particular judgments.

539

540 **B. Yearning and Christian witness**

541 Those who have suffered from the effects of crime find peace at the last, for “God himself
542 will be with them; he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more;
543 mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away”
544 (Revelation 21:3b-4). Such words are not just consolation; they also empower us to meet
545 the challenges of a world harmed by crime.

546

547 Faith relies on the promise of God. God promises to redeem our losses (Psalm 34:22;
548 Ephesians 1:7-10), and promises that in Christ he has reconciled us to God himself (2
549 Corinthians 5:18-19). This means that God promises to find a way to right all that has
550 wronged us and the wrong we have done. Victims of crime and their families lose much.
551 They lose belongings. Sometimes they lose their loved ones; sometimes they lose their
552 very lives. The witness of Easter, and the yearning it produces in us, recognizes that none
553 of this pain is lost in God. God bears all the suffering of the world in God’s very being —
554 it is God’s mark — and promises to make right the wrongs human beings do and undergo
555 (John 20:27-28; Revelation 5:6, 12).

556

557 When the vision of the future justice God has in store for the world is perceived more
558 clearly, Christians are better equipped to work for the betterment of our world today. The
559 promise of God gives courage to face injustice; we know we can speak out, because God
560 has spoken out, against the wickedness of the world. The promise of God gives courage
561 to cope with *partial* justice; if incomplete adjudication is all that is possible, we have
562 recourse to the knowledge that, in God’s future reign, all shall be well.

563

564 **C. Worship and Communion: yearning and the marks**

565 The marks of the church that impinge on our yearning for justice are the public worship
566 of God and Holy Communion. The Christian church worships with song, liturgy and
567 prayer. Central to the rhythm of worship in the church is congregational gathering
568 on Sunday, the day of Easter, of the empty tomb. Every Sunday, even in the somber

569 season of Lent, is considered a “little Easter.” In songs of praise, lament, awe, love and
570 thanksgiving the Christian assembly reminds itself of who God is and what God does.

571

572 Easter is central to that witness. The promise of new life for the sinner, and justice for the
573 victim and offender, come to the fore as, in song, in preaching, in sacrament and in prayer
574 for those present and absent, the church tells the world of God’s love in Christ.

575

576 Christian faith is Easter faith. St. Paul teaches that in the resurrection of Christ, Christians
577 experience a future that awaits all those in fellowship with God (Colossians 2:11-12;
578 Romans 8:11). He writes, “But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first
579 fruits of those who have died” (1 Corinthians 15:20). The rest of creation is still on the
580 vine, but the harvest has begun. Our vision of the future that awaits us remains unclear.
581 Yet Christian faith believes that in that future which God holds out for the world, and
582 to which the resurrection of Christ bears witness, *justice* will be done, because God is
583 righteousness itself.

584

585 A community shaped by the habit of telling the Easter story each Sunday will therefore
586 be open to experiencing yearning as central to the church’s commitment to justice. It will
587 “teach people what they need to know about Christ,”²² which is the promise of new life to
588 those who dwell in him. This church endorses the enhancement of worship materials to
589 reach out to those affected by crime, incarceration and the entire criminal justice system.
590 It calls on its members to hold in public prayer those who might otherwise be “invisible”
591 and to proclaim boldly Jesus’ declaration of “release to the captive” as a sign of God’s
592 coming reign (Luke 4:18).

593

594 Holy Communion is a meal of yearning. In communion, we “proclaim the Lord’s death
595 until he comes.” At the Last Supper with his disciples, Jesus says “I will never again
596 drink of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s
597 kingdom,” and thus institutes Communion as a foretaste of the feast to come, a recurring
598 public memorial to the heavenly banquet we await in hope (Matthew 26:29).

22 Augsburg Confession, XXIV.3

599 Although much hymnody and piety surrounding
600 Communion speaks of being filled or satisfied,
601 Communion rightly intensifies the yearning for justice
602 felt by the faithful. Jesus Christ, executed as a criminal,
603 is truly present in the bread and wine of Communion for all who believe. Partaking of
604 this meal enables those who are in communion with him to extend his word of new life to
605 those who most need to hear it.²³

**“Jesus Christ, executed as a
criminal, is truly present in the
bread and wine of Communion
for all who believe.”**

606

607 **D. Yearning, freedom and sin**

608 Holy yearning and the liberation that comes from communion with Christ enable free
609 and loving response to injustice. This response is directed toward those in need who have
610 been harmed by injustice, including victims of crime, those whose family members have
611 been incarcerated, and many others. The gospel empowers those it touches *freely* to reach
612 out in wise, creative, justice-seeking love to those in need.

613

614 Yet many do not hear the cries of those in need. Deaf to Christ’s command to feed the
615 hungry, clothe the naked, care for the sick and visit the prisoner (Matthew 25:35-36), we
616 often attend only to our own needs. This inward curving of attention toward oneself is
617 rightly named sin.

618

619 Sin is a lack of freedom, a kind of captivity. Sin and crime are different but related
620 categories. Sin is that which is against God, whereas crime is defined by the state.
621 Sometimes there is great overlap between the two, and sometimes there is not. Sin is
622 the cause of many crimes, to the harms of which others then must respond. Since those
623 responding also live under the conditions of sin, their response may be ineffective or
624 incomplete. But communion with Christ and the fellowship of the gospel commend our
625 free response to sin, knowing that our future rests in God who overcomes sin in love. We
626 yearn for the day when that overcoming fully arrives.

23 For the connection between Luther’s understanding of the Eucharist and wider social ethics, the “liturgy after the liturgy” see, Carter Lindberg, “Luther’s Struggle with Social-Ethical Issues,” in Donald K. McKim, ed., “The Cambridge Companion to Martin Luther” (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 165-178.

627 Christians viscerally know that a gulf necessarily exists between justice under the law and
628 the righteousness shown in the incarnation, ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus. In
629 our yearning we are therefore made uneasy, dissatisfied and restless in the face of earthly
630 justice, no matter how complete it can seem to be.

631

632 Christians pray that our restiveness and impatience with imperfect justice be transformed
633 not into vengeance, not into complacency in the face of the impossible, and certainly not
634 into an uncritical satisfaction with the kingdom of the law. The church intends, rather, for
635 the transformation of holy yearning into compassion, into a form of love that responds —
636 creatively, freely and prudentially — to the many voices crying out around us.

637

638 **IV. Wise responses of love**

639 An orderly society benefits all who participate in it and is part of God’s intention for
640 creation. Yet “order” is often experienced as threat by those who are harmed by certain
641 forms of it. Order can take healthy forms and thus enhance life or it can take forms that
642 diminish human flourishing.

643

644 No matter how full the justice of the law is, it is still never
645 enough to satisfy the holy yearning that Christians rightly
646 feel for God’s wholeness. Since justice is thus partial at best,
647 and injustice very real, Christian ministry will always be
648 needed. Such ministries must render mercy and advocate for
649 greater, more fitting forms of justice in God’s creation. Embracing fully the vocation of
650 citizenship in the “secular” realm, and working always with one eye on the righteousness
651 of the gospel, Christians are thus able to respond in ministry creatively, wisely, and in
652 ways that promote the wholeness of human flourishing.

**“No matter how full the
justice of the law is, it
is still never enough to
satisfy the holy yearning
that Christians rightly feel
for God’s wholeness.”**

653

654 **A. Responsive love in the Bible**

655 God’s voice calls creation into communion with Christ, into sharing in the inheritance
656 from the Father and in his passionate longing for the world (1 Corinthians 1:9;
657 Philippians 3:10; John 20:21-23). God calls us to love the world just as it is —
658 confused, petty, sometimes beautiful and many times murderous. Our calling surprises

659 us and often offends us, since we are prone to think we do God’s work only when we
660 analyze, remedy and distance ourselves from evil (Luke 18:9-14). In full knowledge
661 of how awful we can be to one another, and indeed have been, we are called by God
662 to say “Yes” to the world and eagerly await its — our — future. “Jesus Christ, whom
663 we proclaimed among you ... was not ‘Yes and No’; but in him it is always ‘Yes’” (2
664 Corinthians 1:19).

665

666 God’s “Yes” to us just as we are is without conditions. For this reason our calling to say
667 “Yes” to the world is impossible to describe fully. In humility we rediscover daily, for
668 example, how we must love in unexpected ways both the people we know deeply and
669 those we have yet to meet. The Bible imagines at least three ways of responding to God’s
670 call to say “Yes” to the world:

671

- 672 • by seeking wisdom;
- 673 • by welcoming the stranger; and
- 674 • by burden bearing.

675

676 To seek wisdom is to care enough to join with others in raising questions about the
677 common good. We probe the nature of things with one another, with those who have
678 gone before us and with those not yet born. What can we learn from the past about
679 criminal justice? What ruinous decisions must not be forgotten? What successes must be
680 acknowledged? How in turn will our descendants evaluate our efforts at reform? Can we
681 imagine defending our action (or inaction) to our great grandchildren? “Test everything,”
682 Paul tells one of the first Christian congregations (1 Thessalonians 5:21).

683

684 Hospitality to the stranger is another way of responding to God’s “Yes” to the world. It is
685 riskier than wisdom. It differs from wisdom in this way. Wisdom searches for dependable,
686 predictable patterns in nature and human experience. But hospitality puts itself under
687 the voice of the stranger, who out of the blue asks for our protection and throws open
688 the door of our expectations. The unknown guest confronts us with something new,
689 something we cannot reduce to our prior experiences, our nature, or what has worked for
690 us in the past.

691

692 From Abraham and Sarah (Genesis 18:1-10) to the later writings of the New Testament
693 (Hebrews 13:2) we read about people honoring a sacred obligation that binds the host to
694 the protection of the guest, though there is something more significant in these stories
695 than the discharging of a duty. Those who welcome others are open to the future, and thus
696 make room for surprises. Risks may come when opening the door to that which is new,
697 but the Bible also emphasizes the creativity that flows from taking the risk (Luke 24:28-
698 32). Where must the church welcome the stranger today?

699

700 The last response to God's infinite "Yes" to the world is burden bearing. Just as
701 hospitality differs from wisdom, so also the bearing of another's burdens, weaknesses,
702 sins, death, even their despair exceeds hospitality. No longer do we only seek better
703 approaches to criminal justice. No longer do we as hosts only open our doors and
704 welcome the new, whether the new comes in the form of creative ideas or individuals, for
705 example, released from prison seeking to re-establish their lives.

706

707 In burden bearing we leave our ideas behind, we travel
708 away from our familiar places, and count as our very own
709 the experience of others. We are Ruth who pledges herself
710 to Naomi (Ruth 1:15-18). We imitate God (Ephesians 5:1)
711 who is not satisfied only to have made us but pledges to
712 carry us as well (Isaiah 46:3-4). When we bear what weighs
713 another down, we fulfill the law of Christ (Galatians 6:2), who himself has carried our
714 sin and death in his body. We say "Yes" to God's "Yes" when we follow Jesus, whose
715 first act of ministry was to say "Yes" in the river Jordan, thus joining himself to us
716 sinners (Mark 1:9).

**"In burden bearing we
leave our ideas behind,
we travel away from
our familiar places,
and count as our very
own the experience of
others."**

717

718 **B. Ministry and compassion: marks of the church**

719 Such burden bearing appears in ministry and compassionate suffering, or as Luther calls
720 it, in the "possession of the sacred cross." To love compassionately requires the ability
721 both to discern the needs of another and to know what gifts lie within oneself that could
722 be well given to the one in need. Jesus' own ministry was characterized by abundance

723 in responsiveness. Though Christians often feel, and sometimes are, diminished and
724 powerless, still the Holy Spirit grants power to respond to those affected by crime and the
725 justice system in ministries of compassion and mercy.

726

727 Ministry is creative, seeking ever new ways of proclaiming the one message of the
728 church (Hebrews 13:8). As our criminal justice system changes, new opportunities and
729 necessities for response will emerge. As the ELCA becomes more aware of injustice and
730 pain, its members grow in creative response. Such creativity must be accompanied by
731 prudence and wisdom.²⁴

732

733 In seeking mercifully to remedy harm, church members, chaplaincies, congregations,
734 synods and the churchwide ministries must not be satisfied merely to react to injustice,
735 but must also work proactively in the promotion of justice for all. Ministry is not
736 optional; loving response is mandated by God's deep compassion and promise.

737

738 The cross is the deepest mark of the Christian church on earth. The gospel gathers a
739 cruciform people. The church believes that Jesus Christ showed steadfast love for us
740 sinners in the face of wicked human systems, and is convinced of the outrageous and
741 scandalous truth that in this act of reckless love, God is most fully revealed.²⁵

742

743 Ministering with such compassion in the face of wickedness may well lead to suffering.
744 When Luther concludes his list of ways one can identify the church on earth, he in
745 effect says, as one theologian puts it, "Look for the cross. Look for people enduring
746 persecution, hardship, danger and death precisely because they will not compromise their
747 faithfulness to God."²⁶

748

749 Christians do not seek out suffering for its own sake. Rather, we seek out those in need,
750 those who are isolated, those who are afraid, and those who yearn in hope. If our seeking

24 "Prudence" refers to the ability to discern an appropriate course of action in the midst of changing circumstances.

25 Revealed *as hidden*. See, among others, Bernhard Lohse, "Martin Luther: An Introduction to His Life and Work" trans. Robert C. Shulz (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986), 169-172.

26 Mary E. Hinkle, "Signs of Belonging: Luther's Marks of the Church and the Christian Life" (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2003), 78.

751 leads to finding, and finding to ministry, then we accept that suffering and ambiguity
752 may well mark our responsive love. Reform of entrenched systems, merciful response to
753 harms caused by crime, and the courage to face injustice will inevitably involve struggle
754 and uncertainty. Discipleship in the way of the crucified Christ willingly risks suffering as
755 it bears the mark of the cross to a broken and crying-out world.

756

757 **C. Responsive love in practice**

758 How, concretely, can Christians bring the love and justice of God into their daily lives in
759 relation to criminal justice? At least four forms of Christian ministry and mission, resting
760 on the same biblical foundation, are especially relevant to the burdens which need to be
761 borne today:

762

- 763 • hearing the cries of those affected;
- 764 • accompaniment;
- 765 • hospitality; and
- 766 • advocacy.

767

768 These practices already are present in some congregations, ministry sites, synods and
769 social ministry organizations. At the same time this church is called today to more widely
770 practice forms of responsive love in all dimensions of its ministry and mission.

771

772 1. Hearing the Cries

773 All crime — violent or nonviolent — does harm. Victims of crime can suffer financial
774 losses from legal fees, medical or psychological care costs, or the inability to work,
775 as well as from the loss of property. Those suffering harm can become paralyzed with
776 fear. Some have deep emotional pain; others feel emotionally numb. Victims suffer
777 individually and uniquely. Their families suffer alongside them and struggle to know how
778 to help when resolution for their loved ones is often impossible.

779

780 Some harmed by crime suffer again at the hands of the criminal justice system, feeling
781 invisible or insignificant, as if their voices do not matter. Some suffer at the hands of
782 their own faith communities, feeling misunderstood or ignored. Like victims, families

783 of victims feel pressured by others to
784 “move on,” leading to an even deeper
785 sense of isolation. The church’s first
786 ministry is one of listening. The
787 temptation to turn away is great. But the
788 love that seeks justice will not let us turn
789 a deaf ear to the cries.

790
791 The families of offenders cry out.
792 Children and incarcerated parents
793 are separated. Relationships become
794 strained and distorted. Visitation is often
795 difficult or even impossible because of
796 expense or distance. Although the system does not willfully harm families of offenders,
797 many describe feeling treated like outcasts or criminals themselves. Families of offenders
798 grieve, worry and struggle.

799
800 Children of incarcerated mothers are especially at risk. Many incarcerated mothers are
801 single parents, so their children go into the care of relatives or into the foster care system.
802 These caregivers can grow weary of their changed role and daily live with the uncertainty
803 of the mother’s future return. Many of those involved experience shame from having a
804 loved one in prison.

805
806 Those convicted of crimes cry out. It is easy to agree that people should be held
807 responsible for their actions. Yet it is easy to forget that those who harm others are still
808 human beings. Some have caused irreparable harm and may never change. Many have
809 been victims of crime themselves. Many regret their crimes and yearn to make amends.
810 Many are people of faith.

811
812 Communities must be protected from those who are dangerous, shirk responsibility and
813 lack regret. Yet incarceration brings its own forms of suffering. Isolation, loneliness,
814 intimidation and violence (sometimes sexual or gang-related) are very real. Terribly

Family member of an incarcerated man

When my brother was arrested, my parents and I stayed in a hotel to avoid the media. When we wouldn’t give them our story, they made up their own, blaming my parents for not teaching us right from wrong. Despite the support of our neighbors and friends at church, it was impossible not to start feeling guilty. Since then, we’re getting used to the frustrations of visiting him in prison: searches, prison guards who treat us no different than prisoners, visiting hours cancelled without notice, and visits denied because guards decided we weren’t “dressed properly.” It’s harder to get used to not having him around as my parents get older. It’s heartbreaking to deal with the fact that he can’t meet my infant son, his nephew. How can I tell my son he has an uncle, but he can’t meet him because he has to be 18 to visit? He may be the one incarcerated, but prison is a part of our life too, a part that most people can’t really understand.

815 negative patterns of socialization emerge Moreover, some people are wrongly convicted
816 of crimes, spending years in prison before their exoneration, release or death.

817

818 While most incarcerated people eventually return to their communities, the longer they are
819 incarcerated the more ties to the community have been lost and the more difficult it is to
820 return. Many return to their communities without education or job training, and thus have
821 little chance of success after release. Many end up back in prison. Some give up, accepting
822 life in prison despite its difficulties. Their cries — even those unvoiced — need to be heard.

823

824 Crime and its impact are not spread evenly across our country. Some communities have
825 more than their share of crime and incarceration, leaving dismal economic prospects and
826 increasingly fragile social networks. Families weakened by unemployment and other
827 social problems are further devastated. In such communities:

828

- 829 • disproportionate numbers of men are incarcerated, leaving women to raise
830 children alone and often causing boys to grow up expecting incarceration to be
831 part of their own futures;
- 832 • public education suffers, with good teachers reluctant to seek jobs in these
833 communities; and
- 834 • higher rates of pregnancy occur in young populations underprepared for
835 parenting.

836

837 The voices of millions who work in the criminal justice
838 system must also be sought out. Many work in challenging
839 circumstances where violence, emotional trauma and threats
840 are common. Most experience intense stress, yet are expected
841 to respond to tension or violence calmly. Their professional
842 challenges are rarely recognized or respected.

**“The voices of millions
who work in the criminal
justice system must also
be sought out.”**

843

- 844 • Police regularly manage the stress of dangerous and unpredictable situations, and
845 are expected to intervene rationally and maintain a professional attitude in trying
846 situations.

- 847 • Those who work in the courts desire to earn public trust and feel responsible to
848 many, including victims and offenders, families and communities. Large caseloads
849 make it difficult to treat people as individuals. Knowing that the potential
850 consequences of actions like rendering a verdict, sentencing or deciding probation
851 can be painful leaves court workers unable to walk away unaffected.
- 852 • Correctional officers face tense and demanding conditions.
- 853 • Those who work in victim services programs daily listen to painful stories and
854 struggle to keep their emotional balance.

855

856 Citizens and taxpayers also cry out. U.S. drug policy has led to massive increases in the
857 budgets of law enforcement agencies and prisons to house those convicted of crimes.
858 An increasingly litigious society has sent legal costs skyrocketing and diminished the
859 system's efficiency. Unequal access to legal representation contributes to a sense of
860 "justice for sale" to those with the means to pay for the fullest imaginable legal defense.
861 Further, some criminal justice procedures seek to promote fairness, but in doing so often
862 overlook relationships involved, erase individuals, and silence their cries to be recognized
863 as unique individuals.

864

865 2. Accompaniment

866 Having heard the cries of those affected, and knowing the love of God that motivates
867 us to work for justice, Christians respond with compassion. Accompaniment names a
868 basic practice of ministry — the work simply of existing with and for those harmed.
869 The basic relationality of life requires that those who suffer from crime and its effects
870 be accompanied through their pain and fear. Jesus Christ enjoins such accompaniment
871 (Matthew 25:31-46). When the victim of crime is helped to speak about her experience,
872 when the inmate is visited simply for the sake of developing a friendship, and when a
873 family is supported in their struggle, the righteousness of the gospel is present.

874

875 This church lifts up its prison ministry as especially needful at present. The prison
876 population has increased so dramatically in recent years that staffing and conditions
877 have not been able to keep pace. The incarcerated are in dire need not just of hearing the

878 gospel, but simply of having ways to relate to other
879 human beings that are not destructive or distorted.²⁷

“The incarcerated are in dire need not just of hearing the gospel, but simply of having ways to relate to other human beings that are not destructive or distorted.”

881 This church is grateful for its prison chaplains who protect
882 inmates’ first amendment rights, serve as counselors and
883 pastors, and walk with the incarcerated in their daily lives. We encourage synods, congregations
884 and individuals to join them in ministry and work to ensure the continued access to prisons
885 chaplaincy provides. Through Bible study, advocacy and — most importantly — relationships,
886 the accompaniment that evokes the righteousness of the gospel can be made real.

887
888 Accompaniment also expresses solidarity with and for victims of crime and for families.
889 Congregations can be effective at responding to these needs. Whether it is providing a
890 safe space for their story to be told, or working to secure safe housing for a victim of
891 abuse, or organizing transportation for someone in need, the congregation is the site
892 where our hands do God’s work. This church commits itself to holding up in prayer those
893 who struggle and suffer after crime has been committed, and will work to discern more
894 ways to actively practice accompaniment in the faith it cherishes.

895

896 3. Hospitality

897 Hospitality is a central feature of the biblical witness, and therefore of Lutheran social
898 teaching. To welcome the stranger is part of the fabric of Christian love. In creative
899 obedience to this biblical mandate, many congregations and social ministry organizations
900 have found ways of extending hospitality to those affected by crime and the criminal
901 justice system. Such ministries include:

902

- 903 • offering to be a place of healing for victims of crime and their families. Support

27 “We constantly discover men and women who have been in various types of prisons for decades without *one single visitor* having signed their record card. We have suggested on other occasions that each institutional church adopt three prisoners purely and simply for purposes of visitation — so that at least once a week every man and woman and child behind bars could have one human being with whom he could have community, to whom the prisoner could tell his story. And the visitor his. We have advocated that because we are convinced that this elementary act of charity alone would provide all the prison reform that society could tolerate.” Will Campbell and James Holloway, “‘And the Criminals with Him ...’ Luke 23:33: A First-Person Book About Prisons” (New York: Paulist, 1973), 148.

904 can come in the form of emotional aid, material assistance, helping them to
905 understand what happened to them and what it means, and helping them to regain
906 a sense of empowerment and autonomy in their lives.²⁸

907

908 • welcoming former offenders at worshiping communities. The welcome must
909 be balanced with caution; offenders convicted of financial crimes should not
910 have access to funds and those convicted of sexual offenses should not have
911 access to the vulnerable.

912

913 • helping provide former offenders access to job training and placement, emergency
914 and educational assistance, counseling, (including substance abuse counseling),
915 legal counsel, and housing.

916

917 • supporting the families of offenders. Congregations can respond in ways that
918 enhance family relationships, such as providing transportation for visits, creating
919 activities for children, and inviting families to church activities that give respite
920 to caregivers and positive

921 interaction for children. In
922 addition to being intrinsically
923 good, ministries that foster
924 relationships for offenders
925 reduce their likelihood for self-
926 harm and suicide.

927

928 • mentoring those involved in
929 the criminal justice system,
930 including providing spiritual
931 guidance, Christian fellowship
932 and support, and personal
933 motivation and challenge.

A Lutheran congregation provides mentoring

A Lutheran congregation in Minnesota has been involved for over five years with the Community Justice Mentoring Project. Several members became active mentors of individuals returning to the community post-incarceration. The mentors reported that, when they entered the adult correctional facility to meet their mentees, it was a very humbling experience to begin to imagine losing all freedom in prison and how difficult the re-entry process was; they caught a glimpse of why at one level incarceration may have felt preferable to trying to navigate the re-entry system. The outcome of mentoring has been threefold for the congregation: 1) members of the congregation who had been silent about a family member's incarceration began to speak; 2) for the last five years the congregation has provided funding for the Community Justice Mentoring Project, space for mentor events, and held forums to address criminal justice issues; and 3) they have begun to recognize that relational ministry is a Christian and beneficial calling.

28 On this and many other related matters, see “Criminal Justice Ministry: A Congregational Handbook for Jail and Prison Ministry” (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 2003), C-7 – C-8.

934

935 • supporting those who work in the criminal justice system in their callings and in
936 their important work on behalf of the wider public.

937

938 • hosting important, and sometimes difficult, conversations on moral topics,
939 particularly issues related to justice and the criminal justice system. Lutheran
940 congregations, as places of moral discernment and communities of moral
941 deliberation, can be attentive to the needs of the vulnerable and active in the
942 promotion of justice and good order.

943

944 4. Advocacy

945 Christ calls his church to speak for those whose voices are not heard. Victims of crime
946 often feel unable or unsafe in expressing their concerns and needs. Many who are
947 incarcerated are not allowed to vote. They are cut off in many ways from communicating
948 with others. Those most likely to be harmed by the criminal justice system are in many
949 cases the ones with the least political and economic power. Advocacy is needed.

950

951 Christians are indeed citizens of the heavenly kingdom, but are also full participants in,
952 and therefore critics of, earthly, temporal jurisdictions. Properly distinguishing between
953 what is promised in God's coming reign of justice and our current criminal justice
954 institutions enhances, and does not thwart, passionate efforts to bring about what is
955 possible in our political reality.

956

957 The Christian calling, for example, to vote for officials who prioritize sensible, rational
958 approaches to criminal justice is important. Support for church-related political advocacy
959 groups is vital. The ELCA urges its members to support broad efforts to re-orient our
960 present criminal justice system away from maximally vindictive retribution and toward
961 preparing individuals for re-entry into our communities. Fear too often drives public
962 response. Disparities according to race and class are especially relevant to our advocacy.

963

964 In particular, this church points to recommendations in the following section as worthy
965 of support, whether requiring legislative reform, budgetary prioritization, volunteer

966 efforts or other forms of enactment. When the voices of those crying out have been heard,
967 accompaniment given, hospitality offered and advocacy undertaken, these ideas offer
968 strategic ways to translate concern into action for mending a broken system.

969

970 **V. Paths to greater justice**

971 When criminal justice policies and practices are adopted, a number of factors exert
972 influence. Often advocates of a given policy will use powerful emotions to help further
973 their cause.²⁹ Frequently well-financed special interest groups wield political power in
974 deciding what measures are taken. Some policies — including some that are extremely
975 difficult to understand — are adopted by popular vote. When dealing with as complex a
976 reality as the criminal justice system, such multiple influences are to be expected.

977

978 Yet the primary factor in making policy decisions
979 related to criminal justice must be principled,
980 evidence-based practices at all levels of the criminal
981 justice system. Many features of the present system
982 seem simply irrational. For example, reliable

**“...the primary factor in making
policy decisions related to criminal
justice must be principled,
evidence-based practices at
all levels of the criminal justice
system.”**

983 sociological data point to a trend of “aging out” of crime.³⁰ Mandatory sentencing laws
984 like “three strikes and you’re out,” requiring life sentences for repeat offenders, seem
985 contradicted by such evidence.

986

987 Likewise, when a persuasive body of evidence can be marshaled that points to decreased
988 recidivism when treatment options, rather than criminal sanctions, are imposed, this church
989 believes policy makers must take note.³¹ Neither the uninformed will of public caprice, nor
990 the deep pockets of influential lobbies, nor the vengeful power of emotion should exercise
991 the greatest influence in criminal justice decisions. Instead human reason, furnished with
992 data and reliant on evidence, should stand at the center of decision-making.

29 Examples include the Brady Bill for firearm waiting periods and “Jessica’s Law” for sex offender registries.

30 Individuals late in life are far less likely to commit crimes, especially violent crimes. This is known as “desistance.”

31 For example, see Edward J. Latessa and Paula Smith, “Corrections in the Community” (Burlington, Mass.: Elsevier, 2011), 43-44.

993 **A. Support for positive trends**

994 Despite deep and abiding problems in the system,
995 it is important to acknowledge that in recent years
996 positive trends have emerged. This church supports
997 trends such as community-based alternatives to
998 incarceration, legislation reducing sentences for
999 certain offenses, emergence of specialized courts, an
1000 emphasis on reentry programming, use of restorative

“This church supports trends such as community-based alternatives to incarceration, legislation reducing sentences for certain offenses, emergence of specialized courts, an emphasis on reentry programming, use of restorative justice approaches, and greater emphasis on victims’ rights and needs.”

1001 justice approaches, and greater emphasis on victims’ rights and needs. Naturally every
1002 policy must be subjected to further rational, evidence-based scrutiny to ensure that it
1003 leads to the fairness desired.

1004

1005 1. Community-based alternatives to incarceration

1006 Such alternatives include intermediate sanctions like electronic monitoring and home
1007 confinement, halfway houses, residential work-release centers, day reporting centers,
1008 intensive probation supervision, and treatment and diversion programs for drug
1009 offenders.³² During the past decade several states have expanded their use of community-
1010 based corrections for offenders who do not pose great danger to society; this includes
1011 especially drug offenders.³³

1012

1013 In recent years community-based alternatives have also been used more extensively
1014 in some states to reduce the number of probation and parole revocations that result in
1015 incarceration. Some parole agencies have developed graduated sanctions as alternatives to
1016 incarceration for parole violations.³⁴

1017

1018 Other changes in parole policies designed to decrease prison populations include efforts
1019 in several states to enhance parole consideration for incarcerated individuals. These

32 Diversion programs designed to enable offenders to avoid criminal charges and a criminal record. Such programs might include restitution, community service hours, treatment or counseling.

33 Judith Greene and Marc Mauer, “Downscaling Prisons: Lessons from Four States” (Washington, D.C.: The Sentencing Project, 2010).

34 In Kansas, for example, changes in community supervision policies and practices resulted in a nearly 50 percent decline in parole revocations for technical violations from 2005 to 2009. Marc Mauer, “Sentencing Reform: Amid Mass Incarcerations — Guarded Optimism” *Criminal Justice* 26 (2011):1.

1020 measures include the increased use of good-time credits that allow earlier release,
1021 increased rates of release for low-risk offenders who are identified through the use of risk
1022 assessment instruments, and consideration of parole eligibility earlier in sentences.³⁵

1023

1024 Community-based alternatives to incarceration have played a significant role in juvenile
1025 justice systems for decades. For example, the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative
1026 recognizes the negative effects of detention on both youth development and public
1027 safety. This initiative advocates the use of appropriate risk assessment tools to determine
1028 who *must* be detained, and the development of non-secure alternatives to detention for
1029 juveniles whose offenses do not warrant institutional confinement.³⁶

1030

1031 2. Specialized courts

1032 In recent decades, specialized “problem-solving” courts such as treatment courts for
1033 veterans, drug courts and mental health courts have developed. With a rehabilitative
1034 emphasis, such courts address underlying causes of crime and provide treatment
1035 alternatives to punishment. Through successful participation in treatment programs,
1036 defendants are able to avoid traditional court sanctions such as jail time.³⁷

1037

1038 In particular “drug courts” have been used with success. They serve adult and juvenile
1039 offenders as well as parents with cases in the child welfare system in which parental
1040 substance abuse contributed to child abuse or neglect.³⁸ Generally, in drug courts, judges,
1041 defense attorneys, prosecutors, treatment services staff and community corrections staff
1042 work together to address cases. Case management typically includes risk and needs
1043 assessment, intensive monitoring, graduated sanctions and incentives, and treatment and
1044 other rehabilitative services. Though the intensive provision of monitoring and services

35 Nicole D. Porter, “The State of Sentencing 2009: Developments in Policy and Practice” (Washington, D.C.: The Sentencing Project, 2010). Judith Greene and Marc Mauer, “Downscaling Prisons: Lessons from Four States” (Washington, D.C.: The Sentencing Project, 2010).

36 The Annie E. Casey Foundation website: www.aecf.org/MajorInitiatives/JuvenileDetentionAlternativesInitiative.aspx (accessed 12/19/11). Data from the initiative’s sites demonstrate the success of the initiative, showing declines in detention populations, racial disparities in the use of secure detention, and juvenile crime.

37 Those who complain that such programs are “soft” on crime ignore that defendants in such courts are often required to complete much more rigorous programming than those whose main consequence is strictly punitive.

38 More than 2,500 drug courts exist throughout the U.S. Department of Justice. “Drug Courts” (Washington, D.C.: Office of Justice Programs, 2011).

1045 is initially costly, in the long run drug courts are cost effective when one considers the
1046 reduced recidivism of drug court participants.³⁹

1047

1048 Mental health courts and veterans' treatment courts are less widely used, but are similar in
1049 their rehabilitative focus.⁴⁰ Given that approximately half of prison inmates have mental
1050 health problems, the potential impact of mental health courts is significant.⁴¹ Outcome
1051 evaluations of mental health courts are limited, but hint at effectiveness in reducing
1052 arrests and jail time.⁴² Veterans' treatment courts focus specifically on mental health and
1053 substance abuse issues for military veterans who have committed criminal offenses.⁴³

1054

1055 3. Areas of sentencing reform

1056 Since 2001, more than 20 states have enacted or proposed legislation to reform sentencing
1057 policies. These legislative changes have focused primarily on increasing sentencing
1058 options that divert drug offenders from incarceration to community-based treatment
1059 alternatives, expanding sentencing alternatives to incarceration for other non-violent
1060 offenders, and increasing use of community supervision and technological innovations to
1061 respond to probation and parole violations. It is important to note that these reforms were
1062 enacted to address harms caused by previous well-intentioned sentencing practices.⁴⁴

1063

1064 Economic concerns have often provided the impetus to reform, at least within the
1065 adult criminal justice system. Such concerns are legitimate, but people of faith must

39 Ibid. Also Deborah Koetzle Shaffer, "Looking Inside the Black Box of Drug Courts: A Meta-Analytic Review" *Justice Quarterly* 28(3):493-521.

40 Mental health courts identify participants through mental health screening and assessments, and provide a court supervised treatment plan developed by a team comprised of mental health professionals and court staff.

41 In 2005, 56 percent of state prisoners, 45 percent of federal prisoners, and 64 percent of jail inmates had a mental health problem, including histories or symptoms of illnesses such as major depression, psychotic disorders and mania. Yet, among inmates with a mental health problem, only 34 percent received treatment after admission in state prison, 24 percent in federal prisons, and 18 percent in local jails. Doris J. James and Lauren E. Glaze, "Mental Health Problems of Prison and Jail Inmates" Bureau of Justice Statistics Special Report (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, 2011). <http://bjs.ojp.usdoj.gov/content/pub/pdf/mhppji.pdf> (accessed 12/20/11).

42 Council of State Governments Justice Center, Criminal Justice/Mental Health Consensus Project, "Mental Health Courts: A Primer for Policymakers and Practitioners" (Washington, D.C.: Bureau of Justice Assistance, 2008).

43 Court specialization is justified only to the extent that it identifies major problems likely to lead to re-offending.

44 Ryan S. King, "Changing Direction? State Sentencing Reforms 2004-2006" (Washington, D.C.: The Sentencing Project, 2007).

1066 also evaluate these practices in terms of moral justification, that is, whether the people
1067 involved are harmed or aided.

1068

1069 4. Reentry programming

1070 Since the late 1990s there has been greater emphasis on the reentry process and
1071 recognition that transitional services are essential to successful reintegration into the
1072 community following incarceration. Community-based reentry programs that help in this
1073 transition are growing.

1074

1075 The 2008 Second Chance Act is indicative of this emphasis. In part, the Act authorizes
1076 federal funding to state and local governments and nonprofit organizations “to provide
1077 employment assistance, substance abuse treatment, housing, family programming,
1078 mentoring, victims support, and
1079 other services that can help reduce
1080 recidivism.”⁴⁵

1081

1082 5. Restorative justice

1083 Since the 1980s the use of restorative
1084 responses to harm, such as victim-
1085 offender mediation, family group
1086 conferencing and community reparative
1087 boards has increased in the U.S.

1088 Restorative practices are used with
1089 adult and juvenile offenders, both as a
1090 diversion strategy for relatively minor
1091 offenders and as a supplement to the
1092 sanctions of the criminal justice system
1093 for more serious offenders. The goal
1094 of restorative approaches is to bring
1095 together the victim, offender and other

From a teacher

Our urban high school was one of the few in our state on the list of “persistently dangerous” schools — because of the fights, riots and other crimes that were common there. But then we were urged to use restorative practices to try to build community and a more positive social culture.

We needed to change the climate of disrespect and to find something other than punishment in responding to students. We needed to listen to the students to understand the issues they face that underlie the conflicts in school and prevent them from getting a good education. And we needed to create an environment where students could speak freely to one another and feel that they were being heard.

We instituted the use of “circles” in the classrooms, where students and teachers could talk respectfully to each other to address issues and misunderstandings before they escalated to violence. This was a turning point, as students realized that they “had a say,” that they would have input and someone would listen. Circles gave them an opportunity to express their emotions and feelings, and work as a team to address the issues that surfaced in the conversations. In the first year that we used them, violent acts and serious incidents dropped dramatically at our school. So far this year, they have dropped even more. We are hopeful that we will soon be off the “persistently dangerous” list.

45 The Reentry Policy Council website: <http://reentrypolicy.org/government-affairs/second-chance-act> (accessed 12/20/11).

1096 members of the community harmed by crime to develop a plan for working toward
1097 repairing that harm. Offender accountability and victim restoration and restitution are
1098 laudable key elements of the process. Restorative practices are also used in schools, to
1099 involve staff and students in efforts to address disciplinary problems and violence, and to
1100 change school culture regarding conflict and discipline.

1101

1102 6. Victims' rights

1103 As a result of the efforts of advocates for reform, all 50 states have legislation
1104 establishing the rights of victims. While more needs to be done to establish actual
1105 practices, these rights typically include:

1106

- 1107 • the right to fair treatment, dignity and respect;
- 1108 • the right to be informed about court proceedings and victim services and rights;
- 1109 • the right to presence at legal proceedings;
- 1110 • the right to a voice at sentencing and at proceedings involving offender release;
- 1111 and
- 1112 • the right to restitution from the offender.

1113

1114 More than 30 states have also passed constitutional amendments dealing with victims'
1115 rights, though circumstances and quality vary widely from state to state. At the federal
1116 level, legislation such as the Victims of Crime Act (1984) and the Justice for All Act
1117 (2004) has established victim rights and services such as victim compensation funds.⁴⁶

1118

1119 The ELCA applauds these positive trends, while recognizing the need for continued
1120 efforts. At the same time, many areas of the criminal justice system are in need of
1121 significant reform.

1122

1123 **B. Needed reforms**

1124 1. Decreasing the incarcerated population

1125 The most pressing need for reform concerns the over-utilization of incarceration in the

46 William G. Doerner and Steven P. Lab, "Victimology" 6th ed. (Burlington, Mass.: Anderson Publishing, 2012).

1126 United States and the imperative to decrease the size
1127 of the incarcerated population. The ELCA believes a
1128 sentence of incarceration should be reserved for serious
1129 and violent offenders who pose a danger to society and
1130 who require incapacitation to achieve public safety.

“The most pressing need for reform concerns the over-utilization of incarceration in the United States and the imperative to decrease the size of the incarcerated population.”

1131

1132 For other offenders, the church favors expansion of reform efforts described above. Data
1133 from states as diverse as New York, New Jersey, Michigan and Kansas have shown that
1134 reforms can reduce the incarcerated population through increased use of intermediate
1135 sanctions and changes in sentencing policies.⁴⁷ The ELCA, therefore, encourages
1136 greater use of community-based alternatives to incarceration for convicted offenders
1137 and for those who violate the conditions of probation or parole, encourages greater use
1138 of alternatives to secure detention for juvenile offenders, and continues to advocate for
1139 eliminating the death penalty.⁴⁸

1140

1141 2. Alternatives to incarceration

1142 The ELCA encourages greater use of pretrial release programs for individuals held in jail
1143 while awaiting trial. At midyear 2010, nearly 749,000 individuals were confined in local
1144 jails, most for relatively minor, non-violent offenses. Of these inmates, 39 percent had
1145 been convicted of offenses and were serving short sentences, and 61 percent had not been
1146 convicted, but were detained awaiting trial or other court proceedings.⁴⁹

1147

1148 This church recognizes that some were denied the opportunity to post bail because
1149 a judge determined that they represented a danger to the community or a flight risk.
1150 However, billions of dollars are wasted annually to incarcerate individuals who have
1151 not yet been convicted of a crime and who pose little threat to society.⁵⁰ Individuals
1152 are harmed, as well, because incarceration while awaiting trial increases the likelihood

47 Greene and Mauer, “Downscaling Prisons.”

48 “The Death Penalty” (Chicago: ELCA, 1991).

49 Todd D. Minton, “Jail Inmates at Midyear 2010 – Statistical Tables” Bureau of Justice Statistics, Statistical Tables (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, 2011). <http://bjs.ojp.usdoj.gov/content/pub/pdf/jim10st.pdf> (accessed 12/20/11).

50 By one estimate, nine billion dollars are spent annually to incarcerate individuals awaiting trial who cannot afford bail. www.npr.org/2010/01/21/122725771/Bail-Burden-Keeps-U-S-Jails-Stuffed-With-Inmates (accessed 2/2/12).

1153 of both conviction and stiffer sentences and can lead to the loss of income for
1154 families.⁵¹ A racial and ethnic component is also evident, given that people of color are
1155 disproportionately likely to live in poverty, and therefore are less likely than Caucasians
1156 to be financially able to post bail.⁵²

1157

1158 Innovative means of pretrial release are needed that do not unduly disrupt lives and do
1159 not punish those who lack financial resources. Pretrial release programs have proven cost
1160 effective, but more importantly, they minimize the negative effects of contact with the
1161 criminal justice system on individuals charged with, but not convicted of, offenses.

1162

1163 The ELCA urges broader use of the kinds of alternatives to incarceration and detention
1164 commended above in its discussion of positive trends. This includes greater use of
1165 community-based alternatives to incarceration for convicted offenders, for those who
1166 violate conditions of probation or parole, for juvenile offenders, and for those detained
1167 because of immigration status. This church also supports more treatment-focused
1168 alternatives to the use of jails and prisons for mentally ill offenders.

1169

1170 3. Sentencing

1171 Numerous sentencing policies have been created since the 1980s, including mandatory
1172 minimum sentences, habitual offender laws, truth-in-sentencing laws, and sentencing
1173 guidelines. Their implementation has led to increases in the use of incarceration and in
1174 the length of sentences, and has limited judicial discretion in the sentencing process.

1175

1176 Habitual offender or “three strikes” laws, for example, impose lengthy sentences on
1177 chronic offenders. Nearly half of the states have them and in some, the law applies even if

51 Studies show that those who are detained pretrial are more likely to be convicted and more likely to be sentenced to incarceration than those who are released prior to trial, even after factors such as the seriousness of the offense and the defendant’s prior criminal record are considered. See Walker, *The Color of Justice*.

52 In 2009, 12 percent of Caucasians, 26 percent of African Americans, 25 percent of Latinos, and 13 percent of Asians and Pacific Islanders in the U.S. lived in poverty. U.S. Census Bureau, www.census.gov/compendia/statab/2012/tables/12s0711.pdf (accessed 2/2/12).

1178 the third felony conviction is for a non-violent offense.⁵³ Mandatory minimum sentences
1179 that impose lengthy fixed punishments on offenders and prohibit judges from considering
1180 mitigating factors, have been used most extensively in response to drug-related offenses.⁵⁴
1181 In addition sentences have been lengthened through truth-in-sentencing laws, which
1182 target serious violent offenders and require those convicted to serve at least 85 percent of
1183 their sentences. Such laws exist at the federal level and in more than half the states.⁵⁵

1184
1185 This church believes review and legislative
1186 reform are needed because these sentencing
1187 policies are problematic for many reasons. First,
1188 their implementation came without evidence of
1189 effectiveness.⁵⁶ Second, deterrence research has shown
1190 that increasing the severity of punishment has little deterrent effect on future offending.⁵⁷
1191 Third, the lengthy sentences produced by these policies mean that offenders are
1192 incarcerated long beyond the point at which they would likely have “aged out” of crime
1193 and ceased to pose a threat to society.

**“This church believes review
and legislative reform are
needed because these
sentencing policies are
problematic for many reasons.”**

1194
1195 In addition these policies work against fair treatment and exact enormous and
1196 unnecessary personal and social costs. For example, research demonstrates that
1197 prosecutors’ charging decisions can lead to inconsistent application of mandatory
1198 minimum sentences.⁵⁸ When discretion is exercised by prosecutors rather than judges,
1199 it is removed from public record.⁵⁹ This lack of transparency invites the potential for
1200 injustice. Such policies have led to exorbitant incarceration costs when tax dollars are

53 In California about 8,000 third-strike inmates are serving sentences of 25 years to life; for almost half of these inmates, their third strike was a conviction for a drug or non-violent property offense. Ryan S. King, “Changing Direction? State Sentencing Reforms 2004-2006” (Washington, D.C.: The Sentencing Project, 2007).

54 G. Larry Mays and Rick Ruddell, “Making Sense of Criminal Justice: Policies and Practices” (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).

55 Ibid.

56 Ibid., 126.

57 King, “Changing Direction? State Sentencing Reforms.”

58 Vanessa Barker, “Deliberating Crime and Punishment: A Way Out of Get Tough Justice?” *Criminology and Public Policy* 5(1):37-44. Nancy Merritt, Terry Fain, and Susan Turner. “Oregon’s Get-Tough Sentencing Reform: A Lesson in Justice System Adaptation” *Criminology and Public Policy* 5(1):5-36.

59 Research suggests that “widespread injustices” follow because of prosecutors’ ability to circumvent mandatory minimum sentences. Michael Tonry, “Criminology, Mandatory Minimums, and Public Policy” *Criminology and Public Policy* 5(1):45-56.

1201 needed desperately elsewhere. Finally, they take a tremendous toll on offenders, families
1202 and neighborhoods.

1203

1204 4. Racial disparities and discrimination

1205 Estimated prison population under state and federal jurisdiction at year-end 2010 was 32
1206 percent Caucasian, 38 percent African American, and 22 percent Latino.⁶⁰ Percentages
1207 were similar for the jail population.⁶¹ Yet non-Latino Caucasians currently make up 65
1208 percent of the U.S. population, African Americans make up 13 percent, and Latinos make
1209 up 16 percent.⁶² Racial disparity appears in juvenile justice systems as well, although the
1210 focus broadens to include not just confinement but also disproportionate minority contact
1211 with juvenile justice systems.

1212

1213 Some argue that these numbers represent the disproportionate involvement of people of
1214 color in crime. African Americans, for example, have high rates of involvement in crimes
1215 such as homicide and robbery which are punished by incarceration. Yet, even when these
1216 high rates are taken into consideration, disparities persist.

1217

1218 Research shows that race influences decision-making at numerous points in the criminal
1219 justice system in ways that disadvantage people of color (e.g., policing decisions
1220 regarding arrest, prosecutorial decisions regarding charging, and judicial decisions
1221 regarding bail and sentencing).⁶³ Clearly, the cumulative effects of these decisions
1222 contribute significantly to racial disparity in incarceration.

60 Paul Guerino, Paige M. Harrison, and William J. Sabol, "Prisoners in 2010" Bureau of Justice Statistics Bulletin December, 2011 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, 2011). <http://bjs.ojp.usdoj.gov/content/pub/pdf/p10.pdf> (accessed 12/20/11).

61 The racial and ethnic composition of the jail population in 2010 was 44 percent Caucasian, 38 percent African American, and 16 percent Latino. Todd D. Minton, "Jail Inmates at Midyear 2010 – Statistical Tables" Bureau of Justice Statistics, April, 2011 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, 2011). <http://bjs.ojp.usdoj.gov/content/pub/pdf/jim10st.pdf> (accessed 12/20/11).

62 U.S. Census Bureau. 2008 (August). "2008 National Population Projections." www.census.gov/population/www/projections/2008projections.html; www.census.gov/compendia/statab/2010/tables/10s0011.pdf (accessed 12/20/11).

63 See, for example, Walker, "The Color of Justice."

1223 U.S. society has a history of, and the continuing
1224 evidence of, racism and economic oppression.⁶⁴ The
1225 ELCA believes actions must be taken to address racial
1226 disparity in practices within the adult and juvenile
1227 criminal judicial system and to address the issue of
1228 racial disparity in incarcerated populations.

“The ELCA believes actions must be taken to address racial disparity in practices within the adult and juvenile criminal judicial system and to address the issue of racial disparity in incarcerated populations.”

1229

1230 5. National drug policy

1231 Any comprehensive assessment of the criminal justice system must attend to national
1232 drug policy because that policy has a marked effect on all aspects of the system. In
1233 particular, the national drug policy bears significant responsibility for the dramatic
1234 increase in the incarcerated population. In 2009, 51 percent of federal inmates and 18
1235 percent of state prison inmates were incarcerated for drug offenses.⁶⁵ As noted above,
1236 mandatory minimum sentences have been used extensively for drug-related crimes and
1237 have led to exceptionally long periods of incarceration.

1238

1239 Regardless of what future directions U.S. national drug policy takes, this church raises
1240 grave concerns about three aspects of the present “war on drugs.” First, the language
1241 of “waging war” tends to dehumanize those who are opposed to the state. People
1242 who use or sell drugs, however, deserve to be treated humanely, as full members of
1243 our community even though they have violated its laws. Moreover, the image of war
1244 reinforces a movement toward more militarized policing. Although special circumstances
1245 of extraordinary threat may justify the use of military-like tactics and equipment, those
1246 circumstances should not be treated as the norm. Such developments run counter to
1247 proven community-based methods.

1248

1249 Second, the national drug policy has directed substantial resources toward one very
1250 specific form of criminal activity. Drug abuse can be devastating for individuals and

64 “Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity and Culture” (Chicago: ELCA, 1993), 4. See also “Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All” (Chicago: ELCA, 1999).

65 Paul Guerino, Paige M. Harrison, and William J. Sabol, “Prisoners in 2010” Bureau of Justice Statistics Bulletin December, 2011 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, 2011). <http://bjs.ojp.usdoj.gov/content/pub/pdf/p10.pdf> (accessed 1/17/12).

1251 communities, and the international trade in illegal drugs continues to cause political
1252 conflict and instability in many countries. The intense focus and expenditure on drug
1253 crimes, however, may come at the expense of other public needs, both within and outside
1254 the criminal justice system. Some of the significant resources spent on law enforcement
1255 efforts could be devoted to drug treatment and drug use prevention efforts. Further,
1256 current law allows law enforcement agencies to seize assets used in or gained from crime.
1257 But this power may create an improper financial incentive for law enforcement, especially
1258 given the relatively sparse judicial oversight of asset forfeitures.

1259

1260 Third, and finally, there is mounting and persuasive evidence that the war on drugs
1261 has had a disproportionate impact on people living in poverty and people of color.
1262 Law enforcement practices regarding drug offenses have often targeted disadvantaged
1263 communities, and sentencing policies regarding drug crimes have had racially disparate
1264 effects. Despite the fact that Caucasians and African Americans engage in drug offenses
1265 (both possession and distribution) at similar rates, African American people have been
1266 far more likely than Caucasians to be arrested for drug offenses.⁶⁶ Policing decisions
1267 about which neighborhoods and types of drugs should be the focus of enforcement efforts
1268 contribute to these disparities. Federal sentencing policy regarding cocaine offenses offers
1269 a stark example of the racially disparate impact of drug policy. Although the tremendous
1270 disparity in sentence length for powder vs. crack cocaine offenses has been diminished in
1271 recent years, it still exists.⁶⁷

1272

1273 Despite broad consensus that national drug policy has been marked by improper use of
1274 war language, very high costs, and disproportionate burdens on vulnerable members

66 “In every year from 1980 to 2007, African American people were arrested nationwide on drug charges at rates relative to population that were 2.8 to 5.5 times higher than Caucasian arrest rates.” Human Rights Watch, “Decades of Disparity: Drug Arrests and Race in the United States” (New York: Human Rights Watch, 2009). Available at: www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/us0309web_1.pdf (accessed 1/17/12).

67 According to the prepared statement of Ricardo H. Hinojosa, Acting Chair, United States Sentencing Commission, before the Senate Judiciary Committee’s Crime and Drugs Subcommittee on April 29, 2009, African American offenders comprised 91.4 percent in 1992 and 80.6 percent in 2008; Caucasian offenders comprised 3.2 percent in 1992 and 10.2 percent in 2008; and Latino offenders 5.3 percent in 1992 and 8.2 percent in 2008. Powder cocaine offenses are more common in Caucasian populations, and crack cocaine offenses in African American populations.

1275 of our community, there are widely divergent views about the proper response.⁶⁸ Some
1276 argue for decriminalization of the use of illegal drugs, and shift toward a public health
1277 model for addressing the negative effects of drug addiction and abuse. Others contend
1278 that some measure of criminal prohibition remains necessary to secure both individual
1279 and social well-being.

1280

1281 This church does not presume to resolve that debate.

“This church does not presume to resolve that debate. But the ELCA does call for careful attention to the full costs and consequences of drug policy.”

1282 But the ELCA does call for careful attention to the
1283 full costs and consequences of drug policy. Those
1284 costs include the resources required to implement the
1285 policy as well as the costs to those who are harmed

1286 by being branded a criminal — and placed under state control — simply because they
1287 have used an unlawful substance. Human decisions have made some substances illegal
1288 while permitting others. The histories behind the construction of drug policies point to
1289 the role of contextual factors, including the race and class of those who use particular
1290 substances. Those histories should be considered when revisiting those policies’ harmful
1291 effects. A responsible society must question whether the policy’s benefits are sufficient to
1292 offset those costs.

1293

1294 6. Prison Privatization

1295 Civil governments may defensibly deputize private companies to act on their behalf.⁶⁹

1296 Such practices, however, must be carefully monitored, especially when private entities
1297 are entrusted with significant coercive power over individuals. Private entities, including
1298 many church-related organizations, have effectively and appropriately participated in
1299 corrections programs, such as halfway houses. But such community facilities differ
1300 significantly from prisons.

68 There is an instructive parallel from the U.S. history with slavery. Thomas Jefferson worried that, while slavery was unjust, releasing slaves was dangerous. “We have the wolf by the ear, and we can neither hold him nor safely let him go. Justice is in one scale, and self-preservation in the other.” Quoted in William J. Stuntz, “The Collapse of American Criminal Justice” (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2011), 41.

69 For example, a government may choose to contract with a private utility company to provide some services to its citizens, or it may choose to provide the services themselves. Roads may be constructed by the government, or by a hired private firm.

1301 As one comes closer to matters of life and death, the more important it is for the state not
1302 to abdicate its responsibilities. When the state makes someone its ward, it brings upon
1303 itself special responsibilities for exercising custodial control. Contracting with private
1304 firms for incarceration invites myriad offenses.⁷⁰ Therefore this church opposes current
1305 trends in privatization in the criminal justice system, especially the use of private, for-
1306 profit prisons.

1307

1308 Arguments in favor of for-profit prisons usually cite their supposed cost-effectiveness,
1309 their ability to reduce overcrowding in public prisons and the introduction of free market
1310 competition to lower incarceration costs overall. Yet the arguments against them seem
1311 much stronger. Cost-saving measures in private prisons have contributed to reduced
1312 services for the incarcerated, including medical care, education, job training and
1313 counseling, and thus to higher recidivism rates for those released from private prisons
1314 compared to public ones.⁷¹ Cost-saving measures in employment have led to limited
1315 training, relatively low pay rates, and high turnover for staff.⁷² Higher levels of violence
1316 in prisons are likely in such an environment.

1317

1318 What is more, a profit motive is introduced *against* successful offender reintegration
1319 into society. Some private prison corporations have even reported to the Securities and
1320 Exchange Commission that they view sentencing reform as a “risk factor.”⁷³ Many benefit
1321 from private prisons in ways that make it very difficult to reverse incarceration trends,
1322 such as companies that supply services to prisons and political leaders who draw lucrative
1323 prison construction projects to rural communities. Lobbies exert enormous influence. The
1324 possibilities for exploitation of prison labor forces also cause concern.

70 The Lutheran understanding of the “orders of creation” indicate that the purpose of the “economy” or market is to provide work and the means to self-sufficiency, whereas one purpose of the government is to restrain sin. Just as it is wrong for the “order” of the government to intrude on what is rightly the order of the family or the market, so too is it wrong for the market to supplant the role of the state.

71 Andrew Coyle, Allison Campbell, and Rodney Neufeld, eds., “Capitalist Punishment: Prison Privatization and Human Rights” (Atlanta, Ga.: Clarity Press, Inc, 2003). Andrew L. Spivak and Susan F. Sharp, “Inmate Recidivism as a Measure of Private Prison Performance” *Crime and Delinquency* 54(3):482-508.

72 Scott D. Camp and Gerald G. Gaes, “Growth and Quality of U.S. Private Prisons: Evidence from a National Survey” *Criminology and Public Policy* 1 (2002):427-450. H. G. Lappin, T. R. Kane, W. G. Saylor, and S. D. Camp, “Evaluation of the Taft Demonstration Project: Performance of a Private-Sector Prison and the BOP” (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Prisons, 2005).

73 Donna Selman and Paul Leighton, “Punishment for Sale: Private Prisons, Big Business, and the Incarceration Binge” (Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2010), xi.

1325

1326 Even if private prisons were more cost effective, they are not finally morally permissible
1327 for Christians. When data show that cost savings are minimal or absent, the ELCA is all
1328 the more compelled to oppose the usage and spread of private, for-profit prisons.⁷⁴

1329

1330 7. Transfer of juvenile offenders

1331 The U.S. juvenile justice system grew out of a social reform movement more than a
1332 century ago based on the principle that youth are different from adults; they are still
1333 developing capacities for judgment, still capable of learning and more amenable to
1334 rehabilitation than adult offenders. Transferring youth offenders to adult criminal court
1335 and incarcerating them in adult prisons runs counter to those fundamental principles that
1336 drove the creation of a separate juvenile system.

1337

1338 Sadly, there will always be troubled youth who have made serious mistakes and who
1339 need correctional supervision. The ELCA encourages responses to juvenile crime that are
1340 based on greater understanding of what works in juvenile corrections and on the premise
1341 that youthful offenders need and deserve a rehabilitation-focused experience that provides
1342 them every opportunity to develop judgment, empathy for others and the skills necessary
1343 for living a responsible, successful life. This church

1344 calls upon its members, congregations, social
1345 ministry organizations and others to take an active
1346 part in building new social momentum for reforming
1347 juvenile corrections practices and treating children
1348 as children.

This church calls upon its members, congregations, social ministry organizations and others to take an active part in building new social momentum for reforming juvenile corrections practices and treating children as children.

1349

1350 This church encourages diminished use of the practice of transferring juvenile offenders
1351 from juvenile to adult criminal courts for prosecution and sentencing. Harsher sentencing

74 See, for example, Brad W. Lundahl, Chelsea Kunz, Cyndi Brownell, Norma Harris, and Russ Van Vleet, "Prison Privatization: A Meta-Analysis of Cost and Quality of Confinement Indicators" Research on Social Work Practice 19(4):383-394, and H. G. Lappin, T. R. Kane, W. G. Saylor, and S. D. Camp "Evaluation of the Taft Demonstration Project: Performance of a Private-Sector Prison and the BOP" (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Prisons, 2005). James Austin and Garry Coventry "Emerging Issues on Privatized Prisons" (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance, 2001).

1352 trends in recent decades with respect to adult crime have been mirrored in the juvenile
1353 system. In response to reports of escalations in violent juvenile crime in the early 1990s,
1354 and a growing suspicion that the juvenile system was not succeeding in rehabilitating
1355 youth, states began reversing the long-held practice of treating juvenile offenders in
1356 special juvenile courts.⁷⁵ The scope of transfer law has been expanded, permitting transfer
1357 at younger ages and for more offenses.⁷⁶

1358

1359 For states in which violent or repeat juvenile offenders are beyond the scope of the
1360 juvenile system to handle, transfer to adult criminal court is seen as an alternative
1361 approach to achieve public safety and hold delinquent youth accountable. Transfer of the
1362 most serious youth offenders has also been justified economically, allowing scarce dollars
1363 in the juvenile system to be directed toward youth who are perceived to be most amenable
1364 to successful rehabilitation.

1365

1366 Yet, most experts agree that transfer laws have little or no deterrent effect. They do not
1367 prevent serious juvenile crime. In fact, there is compelling evidence that transferred
1368 juveniles are *more likely* to offend in the future than their peers in the juvenile system.
1369 Even youth who receive a sentence of probation from adult criminal court reoffend more
1370 often than their peers in the juvenile system. Transferring juveniles to adult criminal court
1371 is not creating safer communities.⁷⁷

1372

1373 Transfer practices also deepen the injustice of racial disparity in our nation's justice
1374 system. While racial disparity in transfer practices may be diminishing, youth of color are
1375 still transferred to adult court at significantly higher rates than Caucasian youth. Some
1376 studies show that while African American youth represent 17 percent of the overall youth

75 Patrick Griffin, Sean Addie, Benjamin Adams and Kathy Firestone, "Trying Juveniles as Adults: An Analysis of State Transfer Laws and Reporting, Juvenile Offenders and Victims" National Report Series Bulletin. U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, September 2011. This report notes, "Despite the steady decline in juvenile crime and violence rates since 1994, there has as yet been no discernible pendulum swing away from transfer."

76 Every state now allows transfer of juveniles to adult criminal court for trial and sentencing. Some estimates suggest 175,000 children are prosecuted in adult criminal court each year. Griffin, "Trying Juveniles as Adults."

77 Richard E. Redding, "Juvenile Transfer Laws: An Effective Deterrent to Delinquency?" Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Juvenile Justice Bulletin (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, 2010). Aaron Kupchik. "Judging Juveniles: Prosecuting Adolescents in Adult and Juvenile Courts" (New York: New York University Press, 2006).

1377 population, they make up 30 percent of those arrested and 62 percent of those tried in
1378 adult court. Further, African American youth are nine times more likely than Caucasian
1379 youth to be sentenced to adult prison. Latino and Native youth are also transferred to the
1380 adult system and incarcerated in adult prisons at higher rates than Caucasian youth.⁷⁸

1381

1382 Juveniles who are prosecuted or sentenced as adults face grave unfairness. They are
1383 ill-prepared for the fundamentally adversarial environment of adult criminal court.

1384 Little allowance is made for a youth's immaturity, lack of experience and little or no
1385 understanding of their rights.

1386

1387 Youth sentenced to adult prison, compared to their peers in the juvenile system, suffer
1388 higher rates of physical and sexual abuse — by other inmates and by staff — as well
1389 as higher rates of suicide. They are treated like criminal adults, with little or no age-
1390 appropriate programming available for them.⁷⁹ Their educational and treatment needs are
1391 frequently unmet. Because there are so few of them, the difficulties faced by female youth
1392 are especially troublesome.

1393

1394 Research shows that brain development in adolescents is not complete by the age
1395 of 18. The rationally articulated benefit of especially harsh sentences, such as life
1396 imprisonment, imposed for impulsive crimes committed by juveniles thus seem
1397 contradicted by available evidence.

1398

1399 This church holds that while in a limited number of situations transfer of youth to adult
1400 court may be necessary, transfer practices are for the most part an expensive, ineffective
1401 substitute for treatment-focused programs that provide interpersonal and practical skills
1402 training, education and job skills training and mental health treatment. Transfer to adult
1403 criminal court should take place only when there is compelling evidence that doing so is
1404 the best option for achieving public safety and holding youth offenders accountable, and

78 Neelum Arya, "State Trends: Legislative Changes from 2005 to 2010 Removing Youth from the Adult Criminal Justice System" (Washington, D.C.: Campaign for Youth Justice, 2011).

79 In 2005 the Supreme Court, in *Roper v. Simmons*, forbade the use of the death penalty for juvenile offenders.

1405 only when doing so does not mean denying youth rehabilitative opportunities or giving up
1406 on a still-developing child.

1407

1408 This church encourages the alternative of blended sentencing systems that allow them
1409 to impose juvenile and adult sentences simultaneously, with the execution of the adult
1410 sentence suspended.⁸⁰ This allows youth who have committed serious crimes but who
1411 are determined to be amenable and appropriate for long-term intensive rehabilitation to
1412 remain in secure residential placement within the juvenile system. Successful blended
1413 systems require thoughtful collaboration between the juvenile and adult systems.

1414

1415 8. Rehabilitation, re-entry and transitional support

1416 Punishment is a means to social order. It is the restoration of social order that
1417 incarceration or other punishment is meant to bring about.⁸¹ If punishment were the only
1418 goal of criminal sanctions (such as incarceration), then it would follow that services
1419 provided to offenders be as minimal as possible, though basic human rights would still
1420 need to be observed. Therefore, a balance must be achieved between the harshness of
1421 punishment itself and offender services that might help bring about greater social order. If
1422 punishment is in some sense retributive, it should also be in some sense rehabilitative.

1423

1424 This church holds that social order and human
1425 flourishing will be enhanced by greater emphasis on
1426 rehabilitative opportunities for prisoners. Many enter
1427 prison with limited life skills, poor job histories, little
1428 education and have untreated drug or alcohol addictions.

“This church holds that social order and human flourishing will be enhanced by greater emphasis on rehabilitative opportunities for prisoners.”

1429

1430 Upon their release from prison, however, they are expected to adjust to life back in
1431 their community (if they have one), find work, support themselves, seek help for mental
1432 illness and substance abuse, and not return to crime. To succeed, re-entry support must
1433 begin long before release from prison. By identifying needs like basic life-skill and job-
1434 skill training, education and treatment needs at sentencing, and then comprehensively

80 Recent policies in Missouri illustrate this approach.

81 This way of understanding punishment is compatible with retributive, deterrent restorative and incapacitative models.

1435 addressing these needs during incarceration, the likelihood of successful transition back
1436 into the community is heightened. The spiritual dimension of life is also important and
1437 deserves to be a major component of rehabilitative programs.

1438

1439 The ELCA also supports improved programming for released prisoners. The difficulties
1440 of finding housing, employment and treatment (both for mental illness and addiction)
1441 make re-entry challenging. Mentoring programs have shown especially encouraging signs
1442 of success in aiding released offenders in re-entry. Congregations and social ministry
1443 organizations have found ways to act as mentors and supporters, and the ELCA applauds
1444 and encourages such efforts. Yet the church also must remind the state of its duty to
1445 increase the possibility of successful re-entry to society. The main responsibility lies,
1446 finally, with the offender, but impediments to successful re-entry need to be removed to
1447 the greatest extent possible.

1448

1449 Especially important in this regard should be the construction of “a statutory framework
1450 that creates incentives for re-entry preparation.”⁸² If inmates successfully complete prison
1451 programs related to post-prison success, sentence reductions may be appropriate. When
1452 connections to community support systems, such as family, employment and housing,
1453 are present, successful re-integration is more likely, and thus both rehabilitative and
1454 retributive rationales for continued incarceration are mitigated. Further, it is important
1455 that a continuity of care be provided for those with mental illness. Finally, collateral
1456 sanctions which greatly inhibit successful re-entry are a cause of particular concern to
1457 this church.

1458

1459 9. Collateral sanctions

1460 When someone is convicted of a crime and a judge imposes the sentence, many
1461 “collateral sanctions” are indirectly, and silently, added. These punishments are defined
1462 through legislation and restrict the rights of individuals who have been convicted of
1463 crimes, even after they have been released from prison. Such restrictions may include
1464 disenfranchisement or denial of the right to vote, restricted access to public housing,

82 Jeremy Travis, “But They All Come Back: Facing the Challenges of Prisoner Reentry” (Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute Press, 2005), 344.

1465 ineligibility for public assistance or educational loans, and barriers to employment due
1466 both to employers' increased access to criminal records and to exclusion from particular
1467 occupations.⁸³ Restrictions from employment follow many released offenders for their
1468 whole lives. This stigmatization harms people personally as much as the restriction harms
1469 them financially.

1470

1471 Beginning in the 1980s state legislatures and the U.S. Congress created legislation
1472 expanding the use of collateral sanctions. Examples include an increase in the number of
1473 states that *permanently* deny convicted felons the right to participate in the democratic
1474 process by voting. It is likely that many U.S. citizens are unaware of the existence of such
1475 legal restrictions. This invisibility follows because, unlike prisons, these sanctions operate
1476 largely beyond public view, and are imposed through law rather than by a judge in a
1477 visible courtroom setting.⁸⁴

1478

1479 Increased use of such significant consequences is consistent with the general shift
1480 toward more retributive responses to offenders and "tough-on-crime" strategies that have
1481 dominated public attitudes and political discourse for decades. Moreover, the increased
1482 use of collateral sanctions has been politically easy to accomplish and, unlike other
1483 forms of sanction, has come at little cost to taxpayers. In that sense, there are political
1484 advantages to the use of invisible punishments.

1485

1486 Such a narrow view ignores the consequences of these very *real* punishments that
1487 significantly impact millions of Americans. There are real effects when an economically
1488 disadvantaged woman is released from prison and forbidden access to low-cost public
1489 housing or food stamps for herself and her children. There is lifelong harm when a young
1490 man earns his GED in prison, but upon release is denied access to student loans for more
1491 education. The consequences of collateral sanctions extend beyond those convicted of
1492 crimes to families and communities.

83 Travis, "But They All Come Back." See especially chapter 4: The Expanded Universe of Invisible Punishment. Jeff Manza and Christopher Uggen, "Locked Out: Felon Disenfranchisement and American Democracy" (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006). Michelle Alexander, "The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness" (New York: The New Press, 2010).

84 Ibid., 64.

1493

1494 Some collateral sanctions are necessary based on considerations of public safety. It is
1495 reasonable to exclude those convicted of financial crimes from employment positions
1496 where they would have access to monetary funds. Sex offender contact with vulnerable
1497 individuals is justifiably limited. But the use of collateral sanctions should be limited to
1498 such instances where there is a clear connection between the sanction and the offense for
1499 which a person was convicted.

1500

1501 The majority of invisible punishments that currently exist, however, do not fit this
1502 criterion, and therefore are unjust. The ELCA concurs with the action of the American
1503 Bar Association that has called for “restricting the reach of invisible punishment by
1504 limiting collateral sanctions to those that relate directly to the offense charged, and
1505 prohibiting sanctions that “without justification, infringe on fundamental rights, or
1506 frustrate a convicted person’s chances of successfully reentering society.”⁸⁵

1507

1508 10. Lowering crime rates and diversion

1509 This church encourages eliminating reliance on unnecessary secure detention and jail,
1510 the gateways to long-term incarceration. Since the vast majority of individuals who
1511 have committed crimes do not require or deserve institutional confinement, reforms are
1512 urgently needed.⁸⁶

1513

1514 Accordingly, diversion, probation and other
1515 alternatives to incarceration are needed. Data
1516 indicate, and principles dictate, that social
1517 services, rather than criminal services, early
1518 in a juvenile’s life will be more successful in

“Data indicate, and principles dictate, that social services, rather than criminal services, early in a juvenile’s life will be more successful in lowering recidivism than incarceration.”

85 American Bar Association, “ABA Standards for Criminal Justice: Collateral Sanctions and Discretionary Disqualification of Convicted Persons” 3rd ed. (Chicago: American Bar Association, 2004). Cited in Travis, “But They All Come Back,” 74-75.

86 S.D. Levitt, “Understanding Why Crime Fell in the 1990s: Four Factors that Explain the Decline and Six That Do Not” *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 18(1):163-190. Leavitt writes, “About 25% of the decline in violent crime can be attributed to increased incarceration. While one-quarter of the crime drop is not insubstantial, we then know that most of the decline — three-quarters — was due to factors other than incarceration.”

1519 lowering recidivism than incarceration. This is especially the case for status and property
1520 offenses and technical probation violations.

1521

1522 Many effective strategies already exist. The gap between effectiveness research and
1523 common practice will be closed by investment in systematic exploration and testing
1524 of new strategies to identify those that are most effective without doing harm to
1525 individuals, families and communities. As more is understood about what is effective,
1526 greater investment should be made in broad dissemination and replication of programs
1527 proven to work. Data indicate, and principles dictate, that strategies shown *not* to work
1528 be discontinued.

1529

1530 Decisions about where to invest scarce community dollars should be driven by reliable
1531 research, reserving more resource-intensive alternatives for youth and families most
1532 at-risk. Prevention and intervention programs that are effective or showing promise of
1533 effectiveness in preventing crime, increasing community safety and leading to lower
1534 incarceration rates include:

1535

- 1536 • school completion programs;
- 1537 • alternative discipline programs so that school detention is not a default option;
- 1538 • youth mentoring programs and parenting programs, drawing on evidence-based
1539 design;
- 1540 • out-of-school and youth development programs that blend structured activities
1541 with supervised free time that includes clear and consistent rules; and
- 1542 • truancy prevention and intervention programs in which there is close collaboration
1543 by families, schools and communities to set and enforce rules of school
1544 attendance.

1545

1546 An effective adult criminal justice system includes a diverse range of programmatic
1547 options that can be implemented at different decision points as an individual accused of a
1548 crime moves from arrest to final disposition. The same principles guiding our concern for
1549 juvenile prevention, intervention and diversion inform decisions about adults. Evidence-

1550 based practices shown to lead to lower rates of recidivism, fuller offender reintegration,
1551 and safer communities need to be adopted. Embracing such strategies represents the
1552 major reorientation of the criminal justice system this statement has advocated.

1553

1554 **VI. Conclusion: a new paradigm**

1555 In this social statement, the ELCA has encouraged consideration of a variety of reforms of
1556 the criminal justice system in the United States — primarily to decrease the incarcerated
1557 population, to provide greater reentry support to offenders, to invest more resources in
1558 prevention and intervention strategies, and to combat racial, ethnic and economic disparities
1559 in the administration of justice. These are worthy and necessary reforms.

1560

1561 At a deeper level, however, this church recognizes
1562 that a more fundamental transformation in
1563 thinking about criminal justice is required. This
1564 transformation would challenge the logic that
1565 equates more punitive measures with more just ones.

“At a deeper level, however, this church recognizes that a more fundamental transformation in thinking about criminal justice is required. This transformation would challenge the logic that equates more punitive measures with more just ones.”

1566 Such a perspective prevents viewing those caught
1567 in the criminal justice system as human beings,
1568 created in the image of God and worthy of compassionate response. This current punitive
1569 view prevents questioning the logic of the current system that incarcerates millions in the
1570 United States, and limits imagining better alternatives.

1571

1572 The ELCA recognizes that retreats from unduly harsh sentencing policies and the over-
1573 utilization of incarceration may be motivated by economic factors, rather than by a
1574 critique of the way the system functions. Improvement for any reason is important to
1575 the individuals involved, but this church believes responses to crime should be made on
1576 intellectual, moral and theological grounds as well. Those made simply on the basis of
1577 economics are less likely to endure.

1578

1579 Today it is important to join with others of good will to challenge the flawed public
1580 consensus about crime and criminal justice. Until such a fundamental shift in the public

1581 consensus about crime occurs, criminal justice policies that recognize neither the injustice
1582 nor the inefficiency of many of our current responses to crime will persist.

1583

1584 In God we place our hope for the fullness of justice promised only by the gospel. And to
1585 God we owe our thanks for human reason and its abilities to discern — with prudence
1586 and creativity — how our communities might reflect at least the justice of the law.

1587 When reason identifies sites of injustice in our communities, institutions and systems,
1588 compassion motivates our response. The ELCA has noted its deep appreciation for the
1589 high ideals of the current criminal justice system. And it has noted numerous issues about
1590 which it must be said that justice has not been done.

1591

1592 The ELCA therefore recommitting itself to ministry with, for, to and among the many, many
1593 people whose voices cry out for justice in our criminal justice system. “For what does the
1594 LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with
1595 your God?” (Micah 6:8).

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Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.



Response Form
Draft of a Social Statement on Criminal Justice

Please return your response by Oct. 31, 2012.

Mail completed response forms to:

ELCA Task Force on Criminal Justice
 Office of the Presiding Bishop
 8765 W. Higgins Rd.
 Chicago, IL 60631-4101

Respond online at

www.elca.org/criminaljustice

Email responses to

criminaljustice@elca.org

Please indicate the following about this response:

- This response comes from an individual.
- This response comes from a group. How many are in the group?
 - 2-5 11-20
 - 6-10 21 or more

Whether your response is from a group or from an individual, please provide as much of the following information as you wish:

Name: _____

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Address: _____

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Thank you for completing this form. Your response will contribute to the process by which this draft will be revised, corrected and strengthened. If you do not have a response for a specific question, simply skip the question and move to the next one.

1. How helpful did you find Section I – Prologue?

- | | | |
|----------------|---|----------------|
| Not Very | | Very |
| <u>Helpful</u> | | <u>Helpful</u> |
| ① | ② | ③ |
| | | ④ |
| | | ⑤ |

What do you see as the section’s strengths and weaknesses?

2. How helpful did you find subsections A and B in Section II – Justice?

	Not Very <u>Helpful</u>				Very <u>Helpful</u>
A. God’s distinct ways of relating the world					
2A.1 Twofold justice.....	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
2A.2 Twofold justice of God in Scripture.....	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
2A.3 Word of God and Baptism: marks of the church	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
B. Public life and the criminal justice system					
2B.1 Institution essential for public life	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
2B.2 Just ordering.....	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

What did you learn from subsections A and B?

3. How accurately does subsection C assess the criminal justice system?

	Not at all <u>Accurately</u>			Very <u>Accurately</u>	No Experience <u>With This</u>
C. Assessing the criminal justice system					
2C.1 Law enforcement	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
2C.2 Judicial system.....	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
2C.3 Corrections and reintegration.....	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
2C.4 Confronting racism	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
2C.5 Needs of those harmed.....	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
2C.6 Other concerns	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

If you gave a subsection a rating of three (3) or less, please tell us why.

6. How well did each subsection in Section V, Part A identify a current positive trend in criminal justice?

	Not Very <u>Well</u>				Very <u>Well</u>
A. Support for positive trends					
5A.1 Community-based alternatives to incarceration	①	②	③	④	⑤
5A.2 Specialized courts.	①	②	③	④	⑤
5A.3 Areas of sentencing reform.....	①	②	③	④	⑤
5A.4 Reentry programming	①	②	③	④	⑤
5A.5 Restorative justice	①	②	③	④	⑤
5A.6 Victims' rights	①	②	③	④	⑤

For the trends you gave a rating of three (3) or less, please tell us why.

7. How well did each subsection in Section V, Part B state a viable reform option?

	Not Very <u>Well</u>				Very <u>Well</u>
B. Needed reforms					
5B.1 Decreasing the incarcerated population	①	②	③	④	⑤
5B.2 Alternatives to incarceration	①	②	③	④	⑤
5B.3 Sentencing.....	①	②	③	④	⑤
5B.4 Racial disparities and discrimination	①	②	③	④	⑤
5B.5 National drug policy	①	②	③	④	⑤
5B.6 Prison privatization	①	②	③	④	⑤
5B.7 Transfer of juvenile offenders.....	①	②	③	④	⑤
5B.8 Rehabilitation, re-entry and transitional support	①	②	③	④	⑤
5B.9 Collateral sanctions.....	①	②	③	④	⑤
5B.10 Lowering crime rates and diversion	①	②	③	④	⑤

For the reform recommendations you gave a rating of three (3) or less, please tell us why.



8. How helpful did you find Section VI – Conclusion: a new paradigm?

Not Very

Very

Helpful

Helpful

①

②

③

④

⑤

What do you see as the section’s strengths and weaknesses?

9. Overall, how well does the Draft of a Social Statement on Criminal Justice provide a useful framework to help this church discern what it means to respond faithfully to the complicated issues of criminal justice?

Not Very

Very

Well

Well

①

②

③

④

⑤

Comments:

Thank you for reading the draft social statement and responding. Feel free to share additional comments with the task force by attaching additional sheets.

Prepared by the ELCA Task Force on Criminal Justice

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ITEM #: ELCAOB1012

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This document is available online at: www.elca.org/criminaljustice

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You are invited to share your response to the draft in two ways.

1) You may use the Response Form near the back of this booklet, or share your comments in letter or essay form. Please send them to the task force at the address below by Oct. 31, 2012.

ELCA Task Force on Criminal Justice
Office of the Presiding Bishop
8765 W. Higgins Rd.
Chicago, IL 60631-4101

2) You may, instead, respond online at www.elca.org/criminaljustice or email your comments to criminaljustice@elca.org.

You also are invited to participate in hearings on the draft to be held in many synods. Information and dates for these hearings will be posted at www.elca.org/criminaljustice. You also may contact your synod office for further information.



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

Congregational and Synodical Mission

Submitted by Stephen Bouman

The Congregational and Synodical Mission (CSM) unit of the ELCA carries the work of five former units and is basically the “Domestic Mission Unit” of the ELCA. The flow of our mission and ministry is towards the grassroots—investing in and accompanying synod systems and relationships to support Word and Sacrament communities as centers for evangelical mission. Critical to this work is building up the faith and discipleship of leaders, and planting and renewing ministries which re-root and orient their mission in their communities and the wider world. Within this flow toward the grassroots, CSM is finding its focus through several emerging platforms. Like iron filings to a magnet, these platforms are helping calibrate and focus the diverse giftedness of the unit to support these synod systems close to the ground. This report presents the platforms that are emerging at this point, serving as a roadmap for the mission of our unit organized by the ELCA Churchwide Organization Operational Plan goals and objectives.

1. *Directors for Evangelical Mission (DEM) organizing local mission tables under the leadership of the synod’s missionary bishop*
2. *Re-rooting in the Community: Mission Strategy*
3. *One Global/Domestic Vision for Mission*
4. *Centers For Lay Missional Leadership*
5. *Public Church Engagement*

Undergirding all of these platforms is worship, our commitments to multicultural inclusion and giftedness and our inclusion of youth and young adults. These platforms are public manifestations of the font and table, and communities of Jesus gathered around them.

Goal 1: The ELCA is an evangelizing, multicultural, multigenerational church growing in faith, and witnessing to God’s mission locally and globally, with more people worshipping in new and renewed congregations and living out their faith in the world.

1. A Growing Church and Mission Support Income

- Directors for Evangelical Mission (DEMs) are organizing local mission tables under the leadership of the synod’s missionary bishop.
 - A Mission Strategy Table
 - A New\Renewing Ministry Table
 - A Mission Support Table

These tables are meant to be local guiding coalitions of leaders. The DEM serves as a convener/catalyst/coach for the life of these tables, which undergird the evangelical life of the synod and its congregations and ministry partners. A joint meeting of the Conference of Bishops and Directors for Evangelical Mission last October reaffirmed these central commitments.

- In 2011, the ELCA approved 62 new start proposals. Fifty percent are located in multicultural or ethnic-specific communities. Our goal for 2012 is 70 new starts. Included in these are 24 “New Wine Ministries,” emerging with the leadership of those who were formerly members of congregations who voted to leave the ELCA during the past two years.

- There are currently 340 new congregations or Synodically Authorized Worshiping Communities currently under development.
- There are 163 congregations being supported with Renewed Evangelizing Congregations partnership support grants in 2012, totaling \$2.6 million. These grants support the strategic renewal of congregations, ethnic specific/multicultural ministries, ministries among people living in poverty and other specialized ministries (i.e. prison ministry, ministry with people with disabilities, etc.)
- The Missional Leaders Training Conference held February 2012 in Houston brought together campus ministry leaders for the first time along with mission developers and redevelopers. The Mission Support Tables are being infused with energy through the stewardship initiative of the ELCA Macedonia Project. Eighteen synods are already involved and phase two is gathering a new cohort of synods.

2. **Accompanying congregations in mission planning**

- The Living in Faith Together (LIFT) process passed at the 2011 Churchwide Assembly has directed each congregation to be on the road toward a mission strategy in the coming year. In order to accompany congregations in mission planning, the CSM unit has created an Interunit Implementation Team to guide the work over the next two years. This team will provide guidance in the development of a website that will share mission planning resources that are being created across the church. In addition the team will develop a mission planning document for congregations aimed at re-rooting them in their community. There will be, and are already, many different contextual approaches to this discernment for mission.

Synod area mission strategies are being developed in many communities, including Racine, Wisconsin; Detroit, Michigan; Minot, North Dakota (as a part of disaster response); and Omaha, Nebraska. Synods such as Northeastern Ohio, Rocky Mountain, South Carolina and many others are developing unique approaches to involving congregations in mission strategy discernment in their contexts.

- The ELCA Washington Office conducted its second annual National Advocacy Priorities Survey for ELCA members and congregations.
- The Advocacy team continues to strengthen the working relationship with Lutherans Restoring Creation- connecting congregational green practices, awareness raising and education with environmental policy priorities.
- The Advocacy team is collaborating with the ELCA's consultant for Corporate Social Responsibility to develop a congregational guide on hydraulic fracturing, its economic and environmental impacts and a variety of state regulations and responses.
- In partnership with community development and congregation-based organizing, Latino congregations and African descent congregations in the Southwest California Synod have completed Module III of a three module series (Building Capacity for Sustainable Ministries). The DEM and synod staff will now assist these congregations in moving forward in asset mapping, strategic planning, and advocacy. This configuration gives opportunity for solid cross cultural/multi-ethnic relationship building.
- In Philadelphia, Building Capacity for Sustainable Ministries has included "Growing Your Congregation" and "Stewardship" as key components for sustaining ministry.

3. Becoming a multicultural church

- Work with synodical anti-racism/multicultural teams and the ethnic specific associations is taking place by promoting initiatives, resources and trainings that advance racial justice.
Note: The work of becoming a multicultural church is integrated throughout the work of the unit and this report.

4. Leadership support and development

- A leadership model for advancing and sharpening skills that address racism, promote policies and practices that create access and equity has been introduced. Members of the CSM leadership team and the Administrative team will participate in a one day leadership development event during the spring of 2012.
- A national Latino youth network and a national Latina (women's) network have been established. In December 2011, a Latino youth retreat took place. The women's group has been active conducting retreats in different synods. The theme of the retreats is "Mujer Levantate!" ("Women Raise Up").
- In November 2011, Elisha's Call network (a group of young adult leaders of African descent) gathered 24 young adults to participate in an ecumenical HIV/AIDS training aimed at raising awareness and cultural competency among leaders (both clergy and lay) in the wider black church community across the country.
- In January 2012, participants of the Summit on Leadership and Evangelical Justice focused on American Indian issues for a day. They engaged in conversation with American Indian leaders and watched "Native Nations," a documentary produced by the Multicultural Ministries Program unit of the ELCA.
- Over 32,780 (as of March 1) youth and adult advisors have registered to participate in the ELCA Youth Gathering this summer in New Orleans. One day during the Gathering, each congregational group will meet with other groups from their synod gathering around the theme "Practice Discipleship." On other days, participants will experience "Practice Peacemaking" and "Practice Justice."
- In July, 635 youth and adult advisors will gather in New Orleans prior to the Youth Gathering for the Multicultural Youth Leadership Event (MYLE). The MYLE event exists to empower young people of color and those whose primary language is that other than English to claim their identity and cultivate their gifts for the purpose of becoming transformational leaders in the church and in the world.
- In July 2012, 40 youth and adult advisors will gather in New Orleans prior to the Youth Gathering for the Definitely-Abled Youth Leadership Event (DAYLE). DAYLE is a leadership development event designed to bless and empower gifted young people with a wide range of physical, cognitive and emotional differences, so that they might grow as faithful, wise and courageous witnesses.
- On December 2, 2011, the worship staff hosted a consultation of our Partners in Worship network. Twelve partners and DEMs from across the church gathered together to discuss revitalizing this network in the ongoing process of worship renewal in our church and how it is connected to mission and ministry. The intention of this network is to foster conversation about the worship life of this church. The hope is that this conversation would be about the continued worship renewal of the church and the connections between the worship and mission in the life of this church.

- Along with the Partners in Worship Network, the worship staff has continued its regular work of worship planning and leadership. They have planned and prepared worship materials, as well as supplied staff for the Bishop’s Academy January 4-8, 2012, the Conference of Bishop’s Meeting, March 1-6, 2012, the upcoming Church Council meeting and the weekly worship in the chapel at the Lutheran Center.
- Along with this initiative, we continue in the work of responding to various questions about worship practices and resources.
- In October 2011, there was a consultation to assess where non-degree leadership development stands and how together we can increase the missional imagination of ELCA members across the church. At the consultation, people working in this area from around the church and in different contexts had an opportunity to: 1) ascertain the expectations that synods have of non-degree programs; 2) share effective practices already in place; and 3) identify gaps in the overall program landscape of the ELCA to determine what and where programs can be strengthened.
- At a March 2012 gathering of the Lifelong Learning Partners at Spirit in the Desert in Carefree, Arizona discussions continued to develop tactics for reaching CSM’s goals of training 200–250 laypersons in missional leadership.
- The identification and formation of missional leaders continues to be a focus of our candidacy process. A pilot program was initiated in Region 9 to explore how God’s mission through the church is intentionally highlighted in the candidacy process. The team coordinating this pilot consists of the regional coordinator, Directors of Evangelical Mission, candidacy and synod staff from Region 9; seminary representation from Luther Seminary, Gettysburg Seminary and Southern Seminary; and churchwide staff from the Leadership Team of the CSM Unit and Research and Evaluation. The team will gather in North Carolina from March 26-27, 2012. The following are the most recent data:

Candidate Type	Number of Candidates
Ordained Minister	1575
A.I.M.	157
Diaconal Minister	108
Deaconess	12
Undecided	9
Grand Total	1861

- The CSM leadership team is also working closely with seminary deans to identify significant curricular and programmatic innovations and adjustments that will improve the ELCA's capacity to provide faithful, effective and affordable theological education for the diverse and growing variety of leaders needed for mission.
- The Advocacy staff planned and carried out a Bishops Gathering in Washington, D.C. for 60 bishops, policy staff and churchwide colleagues. This included 75 congressional visits, a learning day, and a Congressional Reception with five Members of Congress.
- The Advocacy Staff offered 23 leader scholarships for Ecumenical Advocacy Days for Lutheran lay and rostered congregational leaders. Planned denominational time at EAD was also offered.
- A churchwide consultation on Missional Leadership Centers was held October 10-12, 2011, bringing close to 30 practitioners from throughout the ELCA to Chicago. From this, consensus is being built around what the terms "lay missional leader" and "table" mean.

A process for engaging 150-200 new leaders per year in ELCA missional centers and tracking their progress is being created.

5. Ecumenical relationships and other partnerships

- The Program Director for Racial Justice Ministries is the newly appointed co-chair of the National Council of Churches Racial Justice Working Group. This working group will provide leadership to the NCC's 37 members on race and justice.
- An ecumenical consultation on Native American public policy advocacy issues was held in Washington, D.C. in November 2011. The consultation was initiated by the ELCA, United Church of Christ and Friends Committee on National Legislation. The consultation brought several mainline denominational leaders together to talk about ways to work more closely on Native American public policy issues. Three ELCA bishops were present for the meeting.
- In January 2012, the Advocacy Staff and Peace Not Walls collaborated through the Public Policy Procedures Group on a Letter with Partners to the President on Middle East Policy.
- The Advocacy Staff planned and supported Bishop Hanson at a November 2011 meeting with Partners held with the National Security Council on Middle East Policy.
- The CSM Unit and Advocacy Director engaged counterparts in The Episcopal Church to revise a Memorandum of Understanding for the joint international policy position—the first of its kind in the denominational advocacy offices.
- In cooperation with Augsburg Fortress Publishers, the Worship team has moved into the preparation stage of a National Service Prayer Book that will be available for chaplains serving in the armed services of the United States.

6. Expanding global engagement of this church

- The Glocal Mission Gatherings are the main arena for mutual planning, support and collaboration between GM and CSM. The theme of immigration and migration will involve close partnership with LIRS and with local mission tables in synods. There is an intense effort toward multicultural and youth inclusion in these events. The unit directors are working toward a unified mission theology to infuse the glocal events. Our units are also coming together around advocacy, leadership development, the hunger advisory team and the bi-national context of our immigrant ministries. CSM has dedicated a .50 FTE CSM staff position to coordinate Glocal planning efforts.

Goal 2: The ELCA is contributing to the alleviation of poverty and hunger globally and within the United States, and to achieving just, peaceful and sustainable livelihoods for impoverished and vulnerable people and communities.

1. International development

- The Washington Office invited Global Mission (GM) to a partners meeting and dinner with USAID Director Shah and Senators on International Development Policy.
- The International Policy Director began monthly conversations with GM staff about country-specific issues and established international policy priorities.

2. Disaster preparedness and response to domestic and international disasters and other humanitarian crises

- The end of 2011 and the beginning of 2012 finds Lutheran Disaster Response busily engaged in long term recovery projects in 12 states. The largest ongoing response are in Minot, North Dakota; Joplin, Missouri; Northern Alabama and in the Eastern states affected by Hurricane Irene. Response activities include volunteer coordination for clean-up, repair, and rebuilding, case management, and emotional and spiritual care. It is also a time of transition in Lutheran Disaster Response as the program director position is vacant and an interim director is on board to oversee the program.
- The Advocacy team collaborated with GM staff via the Public Policy Procedures Group on a letter from Bishop Hanson to Syrian Christian leaders. These teams also collaborated on a letter from Bishop Hanson and the Middle East Ready Bench to the Members of Congress, UN Ambassador Rice and the State Department urging dialogue and humanitarian intervention in Syria.

3. Alleviating poverty and injustice in the United States

- The Building Capacity for Sustainable Social Ministry three-module curriculum for congregations has been completed by participating congregations in Los Angeles and Philadelphia with two additional sites planned. The Los Angeles and Philadelphia congregations that participated have developed work plans that include support for their ministries. The Domestic Hunger grants process for 2012 was concluded with the awarding of 389 grants, specifically Relief (297 grants), Development (45 grants), Organizing (34 grants), and Advocacy grants (13). A total of \$869,050 was awarded. This is an increase over last year of about 21.5 percent. We are very thankful to ELCA members for their generous giving to the World Hunger Program.
- The Nellie Svee fund and the two Lutheran Endowment funds continue to provide support for social ministry through grants for those ministries. Over \$600,000 was awarded in grants for services provided to children and the elderly. The ELCA and LCMS affiliates recognize over 310 Lutheran social ministry organizations that serve six million people each year in the U.S. and the Caribbean. These organizations have a combined annual budget of \$18 billion dollars.
- Advocacy team and state policy directors led workshops and participated in the Hunger Leaders Annual Gathering in Florida.
- The Advocacy team prioritized concern for people in poverty, as represented in US budget and spending decisions, and worked with the Circle of Protection, a high profile ecumenical grouping advocating and engaging communities in a faith-based movement to prioritize spending for job creation and the safety net.
- The Washington Office has begun a virtual “Road Trip on U.S. Hunger and Poverty”—monthly stops in key states and weekly check-ins from congregations and advocates highlighting the connection between congregational ministry and policy priorities.
- The Advocacy team is developing several constitutive ideas for 2012 consideration of the Farm Bill reauthorizing anti-hunger, conservation and rural development programs.

Goal 4: The churchwide organization is achieving a growing and sustainable revenue base through strengthening mission funding and planned giving.

- **Mission Support income**

The Macedonia Project initiative provides grants to synods to assist them to strengthen relationships through Bible study, growing and developing healthy stewardship leaders and giving people an opportunity to respond to mission with a spirit of gratitude and generosity.

Goal 6: The churchwide organization is characterized by strong and inclusive leadership, a competent and well-supported staff team, efficient and effective systems and processes and a culture of continuous improvement and learning.

- **Systems and process improvement**

The Washington Office gives priority to the Lutherans Restoring Creation focus on measuring and addressing the ELCA Lutheran Center's carbon footprint and focus on resources for congregational green practices.

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Global Mission

Submitted by Rafael Malpica-Padilla

Global Engagements and Relationships

Middle East & North Africa (MENA)

As the effects of the Arab Spring began to be experienced by ELCA Global Mission in early 2011, the Global Community team recommended that the geographic scope of the former Middle East desk also include Arabic-speaking northern Africa, primarily to account for developments in Tunisia and Libya. This broadened scope has assisted the ELCA's capacity for analyzing and responding to regional developments.

In late 2011 and early 2012, MENA area program director, Robert Smith, traveled to Geneva and Beirut to take part in ecumenical consultations on the developing situation in Syria. The relationships shared with Syrian companions have informed ELCA communication and response to the crisis on a variety of levels. In addition to a pastoral letter from Bishop Hanson to Syrian patriarchs and church leaders, the ELCA Disaster Response is responding to church-based efforts to respond to civilian humanitarian needs. The political situation remains volatile and further ELCA response is anticipated.

Events in Egypt remain volatile, but not as violent as developments in Syria. Recent Egyptian efforts to limit the influence of foreign funded NGOs has brought increased scrutiny on ELCA-related ministries, including St. Andrew's Refugee Services (StARS). Following the departure of Rev. Peter Johnson to rejoin his family (who had been in Minnesota since being evacuated in the days leading up to the previous leader's departure), the StARS transition team hired Fiona Cameron, a British national, as executive director. Ms. Cameron has been designated as a Global Mission Associate of the ELCA.

Even with this intentionally broadened regional scope, MENA retains a sharp focus on our primary companion in the region, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL). Its bishop, Rev. Dr. Munib A. Younan, who also serves as President of the Lutheran World Federation, provides essential companionship as the ELCA navigates the often unpredictable Middle East context. In February 2012, ELCA Global Mission staff accompanied Bishop Hanson in a meeting with Israeli government officials to discuss several matters, including the Israeli government's continued refusal to give official status to the ELCJHL and to issue construction permits for the Mt. of Olives Housing Project. In the meantime, ELCA Global Mission has worked closely with the Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA to secure loans for the ELCJHL, the first MIF loans to international partners. The MIF loan to complete construction on Dar al-Kalima College in Bethlehem continues to be repaid on time. A second ELCJHL loan, designated for the construction of a Lutheran church on land gifted to the ELCJHL by King Abdallah of Jordan at the baptismal site of Jesus, is nearing completion.

In his second letter to the Corinthians, Paul wrote that "we are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair" (2 Corinthians 4:8 NRSV). Every day, we receive from our companions in the Middle East the gift of living in the hope of Christ, our crucified savior. The road is difficult, but our commitment to accompany one another is strong.

Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM)

The YAGM program experienced a 27 percent increase in the number of applications received in 2012 as compared to 2011. This includes a comparable increase in the percentage of applications from candidates of color. Such an increase in applications is exciting and speaks to the many successes of the program at-large. It also presents opportunities for re-visioning the

YAGM program as we move into the future. Principal program goals for the next two years include the following:

- A) Ensuring that current YAGM country programs are strong and well-established. The 2012-2013 program year includes one new country program (Madagascar), one re-developed program (Central Europe), and four new missionary country coordinators, representing fully half of the international country coordinator team. Ensuring that these programs are on solid footing before seeking to expand will contribute to the long-term stability of YAGM globally.
- B) Exploring programmatic, logistical, and financial opportunities for expanding YAGM to include at least one additional country program within the next two years. Currently, the YAGM program is only able to place about half the number of candidates who apply. An additional country program will allow YAGM to accommodate an additional 6-10 volunteers.
- C) Developing an active, dynamic YAGM alumni network, utilizing the gifts of a YAGM alumna who will serve in a two-year term contract position within the Global Mission unit. Her work will allow the ELCA to more fully map, channel and engage the many contributions that YAGM alumni are already making to this church and society.

New Global Mission personnel in 2012

Despite the economic and budget challenges of the last few years, ELCA GM has still been able to recruit the following missionaries for terms of two years or longer:

Cameroon – Professor, Lutheran Institute of Theology at Meiganga (candidate in process)

Central African Republic – Technical Advisor to Education Programs (candidate in process)

FILLED: Egypt – Director for St. Andrews Refugee Ministry (StARS)

FILLED: Ethiopia – Pastoral Care and Counseling

UNFILLED: Ethiopia - Management Teacher

FILLED: Indonesia – ESL Teacher, Deaconess School

IN PROCESS: Japan – Education J3 program, 3 positions

FILLED: Japan – Pastor, English language ministry and campus ministry

FILLED: Jerusalem – Program Administration

FILLED: Kenya – Pastor of Nairobi International Lutheran Congregation

FILLED: Madagascar – Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM) Country Coordinator

FILLED: Malaysia – Professor of Missiology/Church History

IN PROCESS: Papua New Guinea – Theology & English Instructor, Logaweng

FILLED: Senegal – Theological Advisor for Leadership Development

FILLED: Slovakia - Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM) Coordinator & Pastor

FILLED: South Africa - Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM) Country Coordinator

FILLED: South/Southeast Asia – Regional Representative for Diakonia

FILLED: West Africa – Regional Representative

Current Shared Personnel Placements between synods and Global Mission

The protocol *Agreement between the Conference of Bishops and the Global Mission unit on companion synod relationships in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* provides the opportunity for ELCA synods and ELCA GM to share in the placement of these missionaries:

3C South Dakota – Cameroon: Christian Lehmann

3C South Dakota – Nicaragua: Michael Busbey

5D Southeastern Iowa Synod – Tanzania: Mary Jo Maass

7C Metropolitan New York Synod -- Romania: Michael and Terri Church

7C Metropolitan New York Synod – Tanzania: Stephanie Schmiede

7C Metropolitan New York – Tanzania: Aaron and Allison Schutte
 7F Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod – Tanzania: Susan and Tom MacPherson
 8F Delaware-Maryland Synod -- Tanzania: Ann Bunio
 9B North Carolina Synod -- Costa Rica: Nicolette Filson
 MOSAIC (Social Ministry Organization headquartered in Nebraska) – Tanzania: John Striebel and Melissa Theesen

Note: three additional placements are pending.

International Leadership Development

Through this program, 53 students representing 25 of the ELCA’s global companions are receiving scholarship support for education and training opportunities. The ELCA supports education and training both in the United States and in areas closer to students’ home contexts. The majority of the scholarships are awarded to students who are pursuing advanced theological degrees. There is an increasing number of requests in other disciplines, including medical training, business and project management and development work. As a result of the generous support of ELCA members, we will be able to fund approximately 15 new requests from our global companions for the 2012-2013 academic year. We remain grateful for this support. However, our capacity, along with that of our ELCA seminaries, to fund scholarship requests has declined significantly over the last few years. We have begun to address this reality by 1) undertaking a close examination and evaluation of the program, 2) working closely with our ELCA seminaries to create various program options for academic programs that may prove more efficient to the funding partners, and 3) working with our global companions to develop strategic plans for leadership development to better respond to their leadership needs in their churches and institutions.

In addition, three Horizon International Interns will be placed during 2012-2013 in Bratislava, Slovakia (single intern), and in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia (intern couple).

Additionally, Global Sabbatical opportunities in both Hong Kong and Ethiopia have been arranged for ELCA seminary professors to spend their sabbaticals teaching in theological institutions of our global companions during the 2012-2013 academic year.

This has been an ELCA GM program since the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America began in 1988. Nearly 800 members of our international companion churches and institutions have completed courses of study through this program. A study will be conducted to evaluate its effectiveness and usefulness for our global companions so that it is aligned with GM's and our global companions' goals and priorities.

Here are the current international scholarship students:

Name	Last Name	Country of Origin	Place of Study
Simon Aroga	Anong	Cameroon	Centre Africain d'Etudes Superieures, Senegal
George Okoth	Arende	Kenya	Daystar University, Kenya
Millicent Yeboah	Asuamah	Ghana	Luther Seminary
Felix Ibrahim	Beanzoui	CAR	International Relations Institute of Cameroon
Sobkennisso	Bitrus	Nigeria	Luther Seminary
Sekenwa Moses	Briska	Nigeria	Luther Seminary

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
CHURCH COUNCIL

April 13-15, 2012

Exhibit K, Part 2

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Yi	Chen	China	Luther Seminary
Masresha			
Mengiste	Chufa	Ethiopia	Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago
Samba	Coulibaly	Senegal	Home for Bible Translators, Jerusalem
Emmanuel	Dadet	CAR	Universite de Bangui, CAR
Etana Abdissa	Debel	Ethiopia	Luther Seminary
Paul	Deouyo	Cameroon	University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa
Djibrilou	Diallo	Senegal	Lutheran Institute of Theology in Meiganga, Cameroon
Alemayehu Fite	Emiru	Ethiopia	Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago
Aretha	Ernst	Suriname	Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary Lutheran Institute of Theology in Meiganga, Cameroon
Pierre Lademba	Faye	Senegal	Cameroon
Mathew	Gadasu*	Ghana	CORAT, Kenya
Samson	Gelalecha*	Ethiopia	House of Tutors Learning Centers, USA
Yuki	Goto	Japan	Luther Seminary
Abraham	Guilavogui	Guinea	ELS Pastoral Formation Program in Dakar
Luc Sayi	Guilavogui	Guinea	ELS Pastoral Formation Program in Dakar
Eva	Guldanova	Slovakia	Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago
Tung Chiew	Ha	Malaysia	Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary
Johanes	Haufiku	Namibia	Stellenbosch University, South Africa
Henok	Jemberu	Ethiopia	Georgia Southwestern State University
Sanchita	Kisku	India	Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago Lutheran Theological Institute at Meiganga, Cameroon
Jacques	Lamah	Guinea	Cameroon
Ofelia Davila	Limpe	Peru	Luther Seminary
Barson			
Lahivelo	Mahafaly	Madagascar	Luther Seminary
Constance	Mamba	Swaziland	Stellenbosch University, South Africa
Christine	Mangale	Kenya	Lehman College, New York
Eduardo	Martinez	Colombia	Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, Colombia
Plastus	Mathe	South Africa	Leeds Metropolitan University, Swaziland
Ayalew			
Tessema	Mengesha	Ethiopia	Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago
Peter Matano	Mnene	Kenya	Luther Seminary
Rode	Molla	Ethiopia	Luther Seminary (special grant)
Sondang	Napitipulu	Indonesia	Lutheran Theological Seminary, Hong Kong
Gabriel Ezekia	Nduye	Tanzania	University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa
Nyoloho	Noko	Zimbabwe	University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Kenya
Margaret	Obaga	Kenya	Kenya
Thomas	Oduro*	Ghana	CORAT, Kenya
Anna Christina	Pangaribuan	Indonesia	STT-HKBP, Indonesia
Jonathan	Pimentel	Costa Rica	Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago
Swami	Raju	India	Luther Seminary (post-doctoral)
Jon Renis	Saragih	Indonesia	Jakarta Theological School, Indonesia
Barmen	Sinaga	Indonesia	Lutheran Theological Seminary, Hong Kong
Pintor Marihot	Sitanggang	Indonesia	Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago

Duangstada	Sribuaai	Thailand	Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia
Malick	Sy	Senegal	Home for Bible Translators, Jerusalem
Sara	Woldekiros	Ethiopia	University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa
Magdalena	Ya-Shalongo	Namibia	Theological Seminary at Philadelphia
Antoinette			Universite Protestante d'Afrique Centrale, Cameroon
Beanzoui	Yindjara	CAR	
Hossana	Yohanna	Nigeria	Luther Seminary

Resources for global awareness and engagement

Members of the ELCA Conference of Bishops and a variety of ELCA networks have been provided several new resources to create a broad awareness of ELCA global ministry:

- 2012 Global Mission Map Brochure -- see www.elca.org/resources and click on Global Mission.
- 2012 Hand in Hand Annual of current missionaries in each country -- see www.elca.org/resources and click on Global Mission.
- Spring 2012 Hand in Hand newsletter with stories of mission in action -- see www.elca.org/handinhand.
- Ways to use Global Links in your Communication Plan -- see www.elca.org/global-links and download from the link in the right column.
- Companion Synod Profiles have also been completed for 78 percent of the ELCA companion-synod relationships. They may be viewed or updated at www.elca.org/companionsynodprofiles.

Consultations

In their protocol *Agreement*, the Conference of Bishops and GM commit themselves to collaboration, to quality preparation and to develop transparency and communication tools for the sharing of information. Several initiatives are underway to fulfill this commitment.

In January and February, GM staff in the Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) desk sponsored two consultations for ELCA synods and congregations that relate to the Iglesia Luterana Salvadorena (Salvadoran Lutheran Church) and to the Iglesia Luterana de Colombia (Lutheran Church of Colombia). In conversation with representatives of these two companion churches, agreements have been reached for further collaboration in ministry. In January, LAC staff together with the Florida-Bahamas Synod staff began a year-long process to deepen the understanding of accompaniment by synod global mission and companion synod committee and re-vision its five companion synod relationships together with companion church leadership. GM staff in the Africa desk also participated in a lunch discussion at the March meeting of the Conference of Bishops for ELCA companion bishops to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania.

Future consultations planned by GM staff this year include:

- Cameroon – March 13-14, 2012 in Sioux Falls, SD
- Middle East – June 18-19, 2012 in Washington, DC
- CAR (Central African Republic) – August 6-7, 2012 in Minneapolis, MN
- Namibia – May 17-20, 2012 in Namibia
- Madagascar – August 24-25, 2012 in Chicago, IL

Consultations are also held annually in each ELCA region for synod leaders in global mission, world hunger, companion synod relationships and the malaria campaign. The schedule for these *Global Gatherings* includes:

Region 1 - Nov. 2-3, 2012, Kent WA

Region 2 - Nov. 12-13, 2012, Santa Ana, CA (note: this may be changed to Nov. 13-14 or Nov. 5-6)

Region 3 - Nov. 8-9, 2012, St. Paul, MN

Region 4 - Oct. 22-24, 2012, Kerrville, TX

Region 5 - Oct. 28-30, 2012, Madison, WI

Region 6 – just completed in Ohio on Jan. 31-Feb. 2, 2012. The dates of the next gathering are to be determined.

Region 7 - Sept. 27-28 (29), 2012, New York, NY

Region 8 - Sept. 11-12, 2012, Gettysburg, PA

Region 9 - Sept. 14-15, 2012, Columbia, SC

New Companion Synod Relationships

"The Global Mission unit establishes, shapes, and supports the Companion Synod Program as a way to deepen bilateral (church to church) relationships...ELCA synods are responsible for deepening relationships with specific international companions on behalf of the entire ELCA. Companion synod relationships are part of the wider work of the church for the sake of mission." (from the protocol *Agreement*)

To better fulfill this purpose, the process for beginning an additional companion synod relationship is being updated. It includes the following steps:

1. Initial interest and readiness
2. Exploring a potential match
3. Approval of relationship
4. Getting started

In the last year, these companion-synod relationships are new or in process:

2B Southwest California – El Salvador (completed)

5E Western Iowa Synod – Chile (step 2 in process above)

5I East-Central Synod of Wisconsin – Romania (steps 1 and 2 in process above)

Diakonia

The following are among the major 2012 commitments of ELCA Global Mission Diakonia Section.

Expand Malaria work funded by the ELCA Malaria Campaign, in partnership with companion churches in other countries.

In the Southern Africa region, the campaign has already enabled new grass-roots Malaria programs to come into being in Angola, Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia, and Zimbabwe, with guidance and technical support provided through the Lutheran Communion in Southern Africa. These projects will be scaled up in 2012 to reach more people and communities. In East Africa, the ELCA sent the first installment in its \$250,000 three-year pledge to continue support for the anti-Malaria work of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania, in partnership with Lutheran World Relief. In West Africa, the foundation for new Malaria work has been laid in Nigeria, in a three-way partnership with the ELCA's companion church in Nigeria and Global Health Ministries. In 2012, the campaign's work with companion churches will expand to Liberia and

the Central African Republic; increased Malaria work with the Lutheran World Federation in South Sudan will also be undertaken this year.

Be a faithful member of our global Lutheran family in ongoing relief and development work.

The ELCA is a member church of the Lutheran World Federation. One of the ways the ELCA lives out its commitment to the communion is through the financial support to LWF that is provided by ELCA GM: \$4 million in 2012. This is the reliable, ongoing source of funding for the programs of our Lutheran communion that provide development assistance and humanitarian aid in more than 30 countries. It enables the LWF to walk with communities in long-term relationships that are needed to achieve lasting change. This part of the work of the Lutheran communion intentionally and effectively links together work with impoverished communities in emergency response, rehabilitation, disaster mitigation and preparedness, and ongoing efforts to achieve sustainable development and peace with justice.

Work with companion churches.

The ELCA's work through LWF complements the ELCA's *church-to-church* work with companion churches. It has been an intentional commitment of ELCA GM to increase the amount of support provided from the World Hunger Appeal (grants and personnel) that enables companion churches to carry out their mission through their partnership with communities working to escape poverty and hunger. In 2012, \$4 million will be directed for this purpose.

Continuing post-earthquake response in Haiti.

With LWF. 2012 will see the fruition of work that began immediately after the devastating 2010 earthquake in Haiti—work that illustrates the link between disaster response and sustainable development. On February 2, 2012, ground was broken in the Gressier municipality for a “model village” that will provide permanent housing for 1,200 people who were displaced by the earthquake and are still living in temporary shelter. The lion's share of funding (\$3.5 million) for this LWF housing project comes from ELCA member gifts to ELCA Disaster Response. Not only will this project provide housing, it will also continue in the coming years to accompany the newly created community as it seeks to achieve sustainable economic development.

With the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Haiti. In addition to its work with the LWF, the ELCA works with its companion church in Haiti to assist earthquake survivors to restore their livelihoods and respond to the cholera epidemic that ravaged Haiti in the wake of the earthquake. In 2011, 500,000 people were reached through the church's community-based anti-cholera efforts, which saved lives and helped prevent the spread of this deadly disease. This year, the *cholera-specific* intervention will be repositioned to address underlying issues of sanitation and access to water. Another hallmark of the church's earthquake response is the church's new vocational school, built close to the epicenter of the earthquake. This school is another sign of hope. It provides young people with the skills that will enable them to contribute over the long term to the rebuilding of their country. The ELCA and the Lutheran church in Haiti have woven together an amazing web of partners to make this vocational education initiative come to life, a web that includes such diverse partners as a large Haitian business and a community college in Northwest Iowa. Through such alliances, the resources available—and the effectiveness of this vocational education effort—are multiplied.

Responding quickly and effectively in emergencies.

GM is also working with the Lutheran World Federation to enhance its capacity for disaster preparedness through the creation of three Emergency Response Hubs (in Kenya, El Salvador and Nepal). The work of these hubs will include pre-positioning disaster response materials in high-risk parts of the world. The ELCA has committed \$750,000 in 2012-2014 to get these hubs up and running. This system will enable LWF to provide food, shelter, and other aid more quickly to refugees of war and those experiencing natural disasters. It will save lives in times of crisis—often the lives of the most vulnerable and fragile: children, persons with disabilities, and the elderly. In 2012, the ELCA's financial resources will be stretched thin to continue to respond to the famine/food crisis in the Horn of Africa and East Africa and other disasters, even as there are clear indications that another massive food crisis is impending in West Africa.

Sustain our HIV and AIDS response.

GM continues to live out the ELCA's commitment to be part of the worldwide movement to combat HIV and AIDS. GM has and will continue to earmark over \$1 million each year for a church-based response to this pandemic, working with companion churches—primarily in Africa—and with the Lutheran World Federation.

Mission Formation

Missional formation occurs when ELCA members are transformed through their participation in God's mission for the sake of the world. In its efforts to be responsive to the needs of congregations and synods, GM is committed to accompanying ELCA congregations as they work toward a) building their capacity (by acquiring new skills and competencies) for missional engagement in both global and local contexts; b) deepening their understanding of accompaniment so they can extend the missional reach of the ELCA; and c) comprehending themselves as essential components of the ELCA, so that their missional efforts are celebrated as contributing to the ELCA's commonly agreed strategy for engagement with companions throughout God's world. A description of three programmatic endeavors below provide an idea of the work of the formation team in lieu of the above stated goals.

Glocal Mission Gatherings

For 2012 -2013, "Glocal" gatherings connect the present situation in the United States to a global perspective, offering us a chance to learn about the countries and cultures of our new neighbors from across the globe and around the corner as we share ministries. We will explore concrete ways to be in relationship with global Lutheran and ecumenical communities as well as with local immigrant ministries. Glocal Mission Gatherings are anchored in our biblical faith in God who calls us to "welcome the stranger," as our own ancestors were welcomed in this land.

April 27-29, 2012 - Northern Texas - Northern Louisiana Mission Assembly

May 18-19, 2012 - Minneapolis, Minnesota

June 6-7, 2012 - Cincinnati, Ohio

June 22-23, 2012 - Sioux Falls, SD

August 24-25, 2012 - Milwaukee, Wisconsin

September 14-15, 2012 - Chicago, Illinois

September 21-22, 2012 - Portland, Oregon

October 5-6, 2012 - Baton Rouge, Louisiana

October 26-27, 2012 - Puerto Rico

November 2-3, 2012 - Clive, Iowa

Los Angeles, California - To be announced
Denver, Colorado - To be announced

Review of the Global Mission 21

Over one decade ago, the board of the Division for Global Mission approved Global Mission in the Twenty-First Century (GM21) as the guiding vision for ELCA mission in contexts outside the United States. The central image of the document is “Accompaniment.” As it met the hunger within our church for models and images that informed the theology and practice of mission, Accompaniment soon gained currency throughout the ELCA. In many cases, however, the appeal of Accompaniment led to the notion of Accompaniment being consumed by some end-users who did not fully comprehend or subscribe to the theological and ethical content of the full concept. As the Global Mission unit, has lived with the concept for over one decade, experience with Accompaniment has led to internal conceptual refinement. The time has come for a restatement and reaffirmation of the concept of Accompaniment that includes the fruit of the ethical praxis of action and reflection.

The 99 Collective

The Formation program has also invested in The 99 Collective. The paragraphs below outline how this group describes itself and its plans for 2012.

The 99 Collective is a young adult-led movement of the Church that seeks to practice and struggle for radical hospitality for all people. We recognize the power inequities that exist in society between those who are seen as the norm and those who are marginalized by the norm. We recognize the need for radical leadership and action in order to end these inequities. We recognize the value of young voices leading and mature voices providing wisdom. We recognize the need to be led by a group of diverse leaders who represent the margins, the norm, and those who find themselves in both. The 2012 Plan for 99 collectivists includes the following:

The Website: While remaining a source for thought-provoking articles and stories of mission, we hope to also become a site for connection to each other. Want to join the collective? We invite you to come sign our covenant at the99collective.com/join-us/. Once you do, you’ll be placed on our interactive map alongside fellow collectivists. Also, we plan on adding a new open-source page for liturgy, ritual, images, and metaphor for the movement.

Global Mission Gatherings (GMG): These events focus on using accompaniment as a lens for transforming local and global mission. This year there will be over 20 GMG’s organized in partnership between the Global Mission Unit of the ELCA and local synods/churches. We will once again be leading workshops on “Radical Hospitality” at these events. As a great opportunity for inspiration, networking, and dreaming, we will also be hosting young adult house parties at many of the locations.

Accompany Pilots: We are constantly looking for different ways to help bring the conversation about accompaniment and mission to the church. With a focus on community organizing, creative arts, and social justice, a new pilot GMG will be hosted in the Pacific Northwest, where less than 20 percent of people attend church. Look for this TED-esque (Technology, Entertainment, Design) event this fall.

Ecumenical Advocacy Days: Join us March 23-26, 2012 in Washington DC where we’ll hear from seasoned faith-based activists, learn how to lobby congresspersons and senators around issues of justice, and host an incredible young adult reception that will move from communion table to dance party.

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Report of the Mission Advancement unit

Submitted by Ms. Christina Jackson-Skelton, Executive Director

The Mission Advancement unit is responsible for coordinating this church's communication, marketing, public relations, mission funding, major gifts, planned gifts and constituent data management. The governing description of this unit appears in continuing resolution 16.12.C11.

The work of Mission Advancement is carried out across five teams – Constituent Support, Marketing Communications, Mission Funding, ELCA Foundation and *The Lutheran* magazine. Highlights of recent work are detailed below.

Constituent Support

The Constituent Support team includes the ELCA Constituent Information System (ECIS), the Contact Center, Mail Services and the coordinator of ELCA resource centers. Donor data was converted into our integrated database system (ECIS) in August 2011 as part of Phase II of the ECIS conversion project. We are working to convert all of our remaining databases into the integrated database system. The goal is to have ECIS serve as the single repository for unifying constituent databases, contact lists and networks throughout the organization. There are already more than 950,000 constituent and organization records in ECIS. All ELCA appeals and campaigns are using ECIS as their primary data source. The Constituent Support team is responsible for migrating and improving the quality of data in ECIS, which in turn will help us communicate more effectively with our constituents.

The Contact Center has been processing around 5,000 calls every month for the last few months. These calls include requests for information and resources and come to the ELCA via phone, U.S. mail, email and website. The Contact Center also processes all credit card donations that come via phone.

Constituent Support also supports the ELCA e-store at <http://resources.elca.org>. Constituents and congregations are now able to order ELCA resources online without having to call the Contact Center. More than 1,600 orders are being processed through the e-store every month. We work closely with our fulfillment partners to ensure that all resource orders are shipped promptly to our constituents.

In addition to the standard mail services that the team provides to the units in the ELCA, the Mail Services staff has been working to ensure that all our donors receive appropriate and timely receipts and acknowledgement letters for their gifts to the ELCA. On average, more than 500 gift acknowledgement letters are being processed, printed and mailed to our constituents every day by the Mail Services staff.

Marketing Communications

Throughout 2011, the Marketing Communications team continued to support the churchwide organization's priorities and strategic operational goals for unified messaging and engaging communications with current and prospective donors.

Building upon the successful introduction of ELCA messages at the 2011 ELCA Churchwide Assembly in Orlando, a lead message, elevator speech and eight value statements were refined and shared with organizational leadership. These messages, along with minor design updates to the ELCA identity work, have been and will continue to be integrated throughout churchwide communications efforts, with resources made available to synods and congregations in 2012 and beyond.

The ELCA.org home page reflects a new look. The redesigned page was launched live to the public after months of working closely with stakeholder groups and agency professionals. Now, the new face of the ELCA prominently features stories of members and mission, a bold message of welcome, an interactive map highlighting the wide-ranging impact of our ministries, up-to-date news and events, resources for leaders, opportunities to support this church at work, ways to engage in conversation and

updated colors that reflect the ELCA's diverse and vibrant personality. Redevelopment work continues on ELCA.org throughout 2012, with an enterprise-wide strategy and rebuild of the full site.

Since the beta launch of LivingLutheran.com in December 2010, site visitors have found a place to read and discuss fresh daily stories and opinions from other members and leaders. As of March 2012, LivingLutheran.com has published 1,700 blog entries, videos and stories – engaging 16,000 visitors monthly.

The team introduced the 2011-2013 ELCA Good Gifts catalog and online store along with a new strategy for promotion and advertising. The ELCA has seen significant growth in revenue through ELCA Good Gifts in recent years, and 2011 was no exception. Nearly 12,000 donors (including 4,250 first-time donors) contributed a record-breaking \$2.5 million dollars through the ELCA Good Gifts catalog and online store – a 13 percent increase over 2010.

We also experienced growth in reaching more members through social media. In 2011, the ELCA Facebook fan page (www.facebook.com/Lutherans) grew by another 29 percent to 27,000 fans averaging 24 new fans per day. Twice daily posts reach 21,000 people, and there are 420 likes on average per day. The team has engaged in an analysis of current performance and will rollout new strategies for social media in 2012.

The team also focused significant resources on media relations and news. In 2011, 144 releases were developed and distributed to over 6,600 reporters and subscribers to ELCA News. Specifically targeted media outreach to major national and regional outlets yielded ELCA stories, articles and contributions in the Washington Post, HuffingtonPost.com, National Public Radio and other major and local media across the country.

Additional work included integrated video production, email campaigns, direct mail fundraising campaigns, collateral resources and the production of more than 256 print projects like *Seeds for the Parish* and *Stories of Faith in Action* magazine.

ELCA Foundation

The ELCA Foundation supports the work of the churchwide organization and other expressions and institutions of the church in the area of gift planning and major gifts, as well as providing a vehicle for investing through the ELCA Endowment Fund A. In 2011, through the efforts of 13 regional gift planners and churchwide staff, 139 gift annuities representing \$5.3 million in new contracts and four new unitrusts totaling \$2.1 million were established. Deposits to Endowment Fund Pooled Trust, a broadly diversified balanced fund designed for endowments and other long-term investments, totaled \$19.2 million for the year. Membership in Kalos, the ELCA Legacy Program, surpassed its original goal of 300 charter members and continues to grow.

Today, the ELCA Foundation holds more than \$173 million in its deferred gifts pool and \$385 million in the endowment fund. These funds are under the management of the Office of the Treasurer with Portico serving as investment advisor. Distributions to planned gift beneficiaries totaled \$22.5 million in 2011. In the coming year, the ELCA Foundation is actively planning to increase the level of planned gifts to benefit churchwide ministries as well as the assets under management in the Endowment Fund Pooled Trust.

In January 2012, the churchwide organization welcomed Annette Shoemaker as the new director of the ELCA Foundation. Previously, Ms. Shoemaker worked for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) where she managed a team of development officers for their foundation and also consulted with churchwide missions on stewardship and fundraising.

Mission Funding

The Mission Funding Team carries churchwide responsibility for Mission Support conversations and consultations, developing and executing other specific fundraising strategies and providing for World

Hunger education and constituency support. The focus is on the major, ELCA-mandated funding appeals detailed below.

Mission Support

Mission Support for churchwide ministries totaled \$50.4 million in 2011, which was \$2.4 million positive to the churchwide budget, but below 2010 results by \$2.2 million. Ten of 65 synods experienced an increase in Mission Support from congregations compared to the previous year – a positive direction compared to both 2009 and 2010, when only one synod realized an increase each year.

Based on 2012 synod Mission Support plans, the 2012 Mission Support budget recommendation is \$48.75 million. Mission Support remains the core of ELCA churchwide funding, representing almost 80 percent of the financial resources that enable the ELCA to start new ministries and renew existing congregations, to provide missionaries and accompaniment with global companion churches, to provide financial resources to ELCA seminaries, and to maintain important ecumenical relations with full communion churches and other ecumenical partners.

Synod-churchwide Mission Support consultations remain a central and important component of mission funding in the ELCA. In 2011, consultations were held with 27 synods and two regional gatherings of synods. These consultations are opportunities to discuss the interdependent relationship of congregations, synods and the churchwide organization and the shared responsibility to provide funding for domestic and global mission and ministry.

The LIFT report and recommendation related to Mission Support calls for a collaborative effort to develop a proposal for “renewed, sustainable financial support” (CA11.03.07) be brought to the ELCA Church Council at its November 2012 meeting and to the 2013 ELCA Churchwide Assembly. At its October 2011 and March 2012 meetings, the Conference of Bishops had preliminary discussions related to mission funding. Mission Advancement will participate in further planning and the development of a report to the ELCA Church Council.

ELCA Fund for Leaders

Despite a year of transition, the ELCA Fund for Leaders received more than \$1.5 million in new gifts and \$400,000 in realized bequests for 2011, bringing the total value of the Fund for Leaders Endowment Fund to just shy of \$25 million. While this means that we are still a long way from our goal of an endowment of over \$200 million, we are proud that the ELCA Fund for Leaders and the participating synod endowment funds were able to provide over \$1.1 million in scholarship funding to 184 future pastors and rostered lay leaders for the 2011-2012 academic year.

The Fund for Leaders has a new full-time director, Michael Nevergall, who previously served for six years as associate director for ELCA Domestic Disaster Response. Among Michael’s goals for the coming year are to introduce an ELCA Fund for Leaders alumni association and re-launch a matching grant challenge, through generous support from the ELCA Mission Investment Fund.

Vision for Mission

Vision for Mission is a means by which ELCA members can further support the wider ministries of the ELCA through an extra gift beyond their congregational offerings. The 2011 appeals yielded \$1.4 million, which surpassed the income budget goal of \$1.3 million. Key to this outcome has been the collaborative efforts of the Mission Funding and Marketing teams and the support of the Congregational and Synodical Mission and Global Mission units in lifting up stories to share. In 2012, we plan to sharpen the focus of the appeals and review the frequency and audiences of this funding program to achieve maximum impact now and into the future.

New Start Support

Mission Partners and Mission Founders programs have been reviewed, and a plan has been developed to update them to be in alignment with the new structure for developing congregations. The proposal was affirmed by the Synodical-Churchwide Relations Committee of the Conference of Bishops. The refreshed campaign will include a name change from Mission Partners and Mission Founders to one campaign for new start congregations that includes an option for designating to a specific ministry start or giving to the program broadly. Collateral will be developed to assist directors for evangelical mission in telling the story and lifting up opportunities to participate financially.

Missionary Sponsorship

Missionary Sponsorship is a significant factor, along with Mission Support, in covering the cost of ELCA missionaries serving with global companion churches. While most mainline denominations now require their missionaries to secure nearly 80 percent of their own support prior to deployment, the ELCA has continued to provide full support of its compensated missionaries. Despite this, the ELCA has not been immune to the downward trend in income experienced by other denominations. Income in 2011 was \$3.0 million, approximately 80 percent of goal and a decrease of 19 percent compared to the prior year. These results were disappointing in comparison to fiscal year 2010 when income was 97 percent of goal. Missionary Sponsorship continues to be primarily a congregational-funded program and the number of congregations supporting the program has dropped by 319 from 2007 to 2011.

The Missionary Sponsorship team is currently researching several causes exacerbating this trend:

- sponsoring congregations that have left the ELCA;
- a reduction in the number of missionaries in the sponsorship program;
- competing appeals;
- ongoing congregational economic concerns;
- an increase in the number of missionaries deployed by synods.

Wedgeworth Communications will assist with integrating the findings of this research into a strategic plan, as well as evaluating the effectiveness of current communication efforts. Strategic considerations will include the following possibilities:

- building the international scholarship program into the Missionary Sponsorship appeal;
- an intentional focus using the companion synod program to strengthen Missionary Sponsorship;
- leveraging the very popular Young Adults in Global Mission program to broaden the donor database for Missionary Sponsorship.

While the financial results of this past year have been disappointing, we remain optimistic about this church's commitment to its missionaries and the companion churches who continue to call them.

ELCA World Hunger

By the end of fiscal year 2011, giving to ELCA World Hunger had rebounded from the dip taken in 2010, with increases in direct giving and giving through synods and congregations. In addition, the ELCA received the largest property gift directed specifically for ELCA World Hunger, bringing total giving to ELCA World Hunger above 2009 and 2010. The year brought headlines of hunger increases in the nation (the first year in many of our lives when nearly half of the U.S. population is either at risk of falling below the poverty line or already have according to U.S. Census Bureau) and persistent levels of hunger and poverty internationally. Thanks to gifts to ELCA World Hunger, this church was able to make a real difference. It was also a year for living more fully into the new churchwide structure, with hunger-related networking, education and funding (previously in two different departments) now in one unit, more closely reflecting how ELCA World Hunger networking is done in synods and congregations.

Granting from ELCA World Hunger has been transitioned to a single table for domestic hunger and advocacy grants, with a new process aligning support for ELCA-related hunger education and

networking. In keeping with the objectives of the ELCA Churchwide Organization Operational Plan, the services of a consultant, Chris Grumm, have been secured to assess the comparative strengths and opportunities of ELCA World Hunger while creating focused recommendations to encourage greater participation, especially financial support. Additional programmatic work of ELCA World Hunger is covered in the Global Mission and Congregational and Synodical Mission unit reports.

ELCA Disaster Response

This church has responded positively and with generosity to a series of disasters in the United States and around the world. While no single disaster dominated the headlines, the churchwide organization issued more disaster alerts than any other time in the last six years. Also, more U.S. communities (and church buildings) were damaged in 2011 than in many years. Japan and Central America flooding, persistent drought in the Horn of Africa and a series of storms across the United States all brought news of destruction and hope in action by the ELCA. In keeping with the objectives of the ELCA Churchwide Organization Operational Plan, staff teams are working to identify communication and donor stewardship practices that will reinforce the important link between disaster response and the larger ministries of the ELCA, including ELCA World Hunger. There are many congregations and members whose primary pattern of giving restricted gifts to the ELCA is in relationship to disaster response.

ELCA Malaria Campaign

The ELCA Malaria Campaign was enthusiastically approved at the 2011 ELCA Churchwide Assembly. During the assembly, two synods announced they had raised and given over \$125,000 each during the pilot phase of the campaign. Leadership commitments were strong with 55 of 65 bishops, 29 of 34 Church Council members, and 33 of 40 senior staff donating or making commitments. Voting members of the Churchwide Assembly made commitments to give over \$250,000 during the course of the campaign. Marketing materials have been developed in support of the campaign launch and a new volunteer leadership team is being called to help grow the network and extend the vision. Church Council leaders are important advocates in lifting up and personally supporting this campaign.

In 2011, \$1.7 million was received. Major efforts in 2012 include:

- The ELCA Malaria Campaign National Leadership Team holds its inaugural meeting in April.
- An ELCA Malaria Campaign e-appeal will highlight World Malaria Day in April. A matching gift is planned for this intense week-long appeal.
- A malaria direct mail appeal will be mailed to a wider audience in May.
- A Regional Volunteer Corps will extend the reach of the ELCA Malaria Campaign staff in serving as spokespeople for the campaign.
- In the fall, campus recipients of malaria grants made available through a major gift will begin their matched fundraising efforts.

The Lutheran magazine

Paid circulation as of the March 2012 issue stood at 184,722, down 6.5 percent from a year ago. The circulation decrease for all of calendar 2011 totaled 24,014 (11.3 percent), compared with 37,606 (15.7 percent) in 2010 and 36,252 (12.69 percent) in 2009. The bulk of the reduction was attributable to congregational budget cuts and congregations disaffiliating with the ELCA. More positively, circulation loss for the first three months of 2012 slowed significantly to 1.7 from 6.7 percent in the same period in 2011.

This winter, *The Lutheran* launched two campaigns to address, at least in part, the circulation situation. The magazine identified non-subscribing congregations in the 18 synods participating in the Macedonia Project (an effort to increase Mission Support income within ELCA congregations), providing

those congregations free magazines on a quarterly basis for one year. *The Lutheran* also extended, for a limited time, subscriptions of congregations canceling their purchases because of budget concerns.

Lyla Rogan, a consultant from Cambridge, Mass., has agreed to help the magazine assess its current situation and possibilities for the future. Rogan worked with the Office of the Presiding Bishop this past year to help prepare the ELCA Churchwide Organization Operational Plan 2011-13. Through that work, she has gained valuable insights into the ELCA that should benefit *The Lutheran* Advisory Committee and leadership in a discussion about the future of the magazine. The goal is to reach consensus about the magazine's options by the end of summer 2012. That will allow time to confer with the Conference of Bishops in October and Church Council in November 2012. This is exciting and challenging work. By acting now while the magazine is not in crisis, *The Lutheran* will be able to better control its destiny and arrive at an informed, best possible outcome for its service to the ELCA.

Advertising sales were positive for fiscal year 2011, totaling \$727,000 against a budget of \$671,000, despite the advertising director's position being vacant the last six months of the year. However, the advertising goal for 2012 was set at \$650,000 because of a reduction in ad rates based on circulation volume and the complete loss of or reduced spending by several long-time advertisers.

In 2011, *The Lutheran* had income of \$2.7 million and expenses of \$2.6 million for a surplus of \$100,000. The magazine's endowment (cash reserves) totaled \$1.6 million as of Dec. 31, 2011, down 2.7 percent or \$43,804 from a year ago.

The Little Lutheran had income of \$148.6 thousand and expenses of \$148.2 thousand for a modest surplus while *The Little Christian* had income of \$24.6 thousand and expenses of \$24.4 thousand, also operating in the black. Paid circulation as of the March 2012 issues stood at 8,332 for *The Little Lutheran* and 927 for *The Little Christian*, which represent a decrease of 9.7 percent and increase of 5.6 percent, respectively, from that of a year ago.

Distribution of a prototype magazine, *Being Lutheran*, went as planned at the 2011 synod assemblies. Another distribution to large congregations occurred in fall 2011. After full consideration, the Advisory Committee of *The Lutheran* declined to go forward with the project.

The magazine welcomed four new Advisory Committee members at its March 2012 meeting. They are Sara J. Busse of Charleston, W.Va., the Rev. Keith Fry of Elgin, Ill., and John D. Hanna of Topeka, Kan., all serving six-year terms, and Jack H. Palmer of Defiance, Ohio, filling the unexpired portion of the term from Region 6. Also, Pamela E. Pritt of Hillsboro, W.Va., replaced Deborah Chenoweth of Hood River, Ore., as the advisor representing Church Council. Finally, the Rev. Paul L. Campbell of Carefree, Ariz., was elected chair of the committee and Judy R. Korn of Morris, Minn., was elected secretary.

The Lutheran website (www.thelutheran.org) averages 26,800 unique visitors monthly, an increase of 1,300 from the previous six-month period. Average visit length has decreased by 10 seconds to a still-impressive 81 seconds. The website continues to actively participate in social networks such as Facebook and Twitter. The companion sites for *The Little Lutheran* (www.thelittlelutheran.org) and *The Little Christian* (www.thelittlechristian.org) are updated monthly with answers to questions children ask about God, resource reviews, special features and an e-newsletter.

Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations (ER)

Submitted by Donald J. McCoid and Kathryn M. Lohre

This report of the activities of Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations, Office of the Presiding Bishop, is organized around the various areas of the section's responsibilities and ministry.

Full Communion Relationships

Coordinating Committees

Formula of Agreement (FOA): Presbyterian Church USA, Reformed Church in America and the United Church of Christ

As a result of the 2009 decisions taken by the Churchwide Assembly to adopt the sexuality statement, "Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust," the General Synod of the Reformed Church in America (RCA) adopted two resolutions in 2010. The first directed the RCA's Commission of Christian Unity to engage in direct dialogue with the ELCA. Drawing upon the Formula of Agreement, the framework of "mutual affirmation and admonishment" was applied; no church dividing issues were discovered. The ELCA-RCA final report submitted to the RCA's 2012 General Synod will describe greater understanding between our churches on human sexuality and roster issues. The second resolution directed the RCA Commission to invite the ELCA, the Presbyterian Church (USA), and the United Church of Christ – partners in the Formula of Agreement – along with the Christian Reformed Church and the Moravians "to engage in a consultation on the interpretation and use of Scripture in moral discernment and ethical decision-making." This consultation, which has met twice, has explored various areas of convergence. A progress report will be shared at the RCA's 2012 General Synod. These developments indicate the health and vitality of our full communion agreements, even under duress.

Called to Common Mission (CCM): The Episcopal Church and the Moravian Church

A joint meeting of the Lutheran-Episcopal and Lutheran-Moravian Coordinating Committees will be held in Chicago at the Lutheran Center May 29-31, 2012. There will be time for each committee to meet separately and some shared time for worship, getting acquainted, sharing ministry and exploring opportunities for joint cooperation. In November 2011, the LECC committee met in California. Reports were shared on shared parish arrangements among other agenda items.

United Methodist Church

The United Methodist Coordinating Committee met for one day, February 27, 2012 in Atlanta. They shared communion updates; a presentation and discussion on a model for local/grassroots ecumenical celebration; formation and theological reflection; a presentation and discussion on "Costly Unity" documents from *Ecclesiology and Ethics*; and a discussion on the further articulation of a Three Year Plan and next steps and assignments.

Bilateral Dialogues, Discourses, and Cooperation

African Methodist Episcopal Zion (AMEZ)

An historic ELCA-African Methodist Episcopal Zion (AMEZ) Summit took place in Salisbury, NC in October, 2011. The Summit was held at Hood Seminary in North Carolina between the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church (AMEZ) and the ELCA to celebrate relationships, explore common mission and to present a "Mission Statement." This was the culmination of a dialogue between neighbors in Salisbury, the AMEZ Seminary and the offices of the ELCA North Carolina Synod. This dialogue presents an innovative model for ecumenism that begins at the grassroots and grows to the national level. It is also the first time in the US that a historically White church and a historically Black church have agreed to cooperative ministry.

Anglican Church in Canada, ELCIC, TEC

The Anglican Church in Canada, ELCIC, TEC, and the ELCA met in New York in December 2011 to discuss shared ministry. The presiding bishops of each of the churches provided the leadership.

North American Lutheran Church

The ELCA Assembly in 2011 voted to extend an invitation to the North American Lutheran Church to have a dialogue about relationships and communication to "...strive for a mutual relationship, where possible, for both the ELCA and the NALC." (CA.11.05.32) Leaders from the ELCA and NALC met in Indianapolis, IN, from February 6-7, 2012.

Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (Cooperation)

The Committee on Lutheran Cooperation met at the Lutheran Center on February 8, 2012, to discuss church-to-church cooperation and to share denominational updates. Leaders of both church bodies have agreed to continue communication and information sharing; however, leaders from LCMS said they "have ended external cooperation with the ELCA headquarters," including in areas of support for chaplaincy, response to HIV and AIDS, and national coordination of recovery after disaster.

Ecumenical Visit to the Vatican in Rome

From February 13-16, 2012, Bishop Mark Hanson, Bishop Rob Hofstad, Bishop Jessica Crist and Bishop emeritus Donald McCoid journeyed to the Vatican in Rome. This group met with Pope Benedict XVI; Cardinal Kurt Koch, President for the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of Christian Unity; Cardinal Jean-Louis Pierre Tauran, President for the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue; Monsignor Michael Crotty, Secretary at the Apostolic Nunciature; and Archbishop Ladaria, Secretary of the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith and others.

Catholic Dialogue

The ELCA-Roman Catholic Round XII meeting will be held in May 2012 at Mundelein Conference/Retreat Center. The dialogue will focus on teaching authority -- Ministries of Teaching: Sources, Shapes, and Essential Contents.

Conciliar Relationships

The Lutheran World Federation (LWF)

The LWF is in transition with staff and implementation of its strategic plan. General Secretary Martin Junge brings excellent leadership to the LWF. LWF relief work includes the largest refugee resettlement in Africa.

Churches Uniting in Christ (CUIC)

CUIC met at the Lutheran Center in October. There was a decision to keep a modest agenda to address racism and explore a possible direction for the future. We are not members of CUIC, but we are partners in dialogue and mission.

The National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA (NCCC)

NCCC is undergoing a major transformation as it seeks to align its mission in today's ecumenical context with sustainable staffing and governance structures. Kathryn Lohre is the President of the NCCC (the first Lutheran in this role) and is providing leadership for these challenging considerations.

Christian Churches Together

The annual meeting of Christian Churches Together was held in Memphis, TN, February 14-17, 2012 and focused on racism and poverty in this setting of the Civil Rights movement.

The World Council of Churches (WCC)

The WCC continues to face financial downturns as it addresses growing global ministry needs. Planning is well underway for the October 2013 Assembly in Busan, South Korea.

Synodical Partnerships

The Northern Illinois Synod is establishing a new ecumenical and inter-religious relations committee. Donald McCoid met with these leaders to share some ideas about developing a plan to address opportunities, nurture existing relationships and further communication.

In December the SE Iowa Synod and the Episcopal Diocese of Iowa asked Donald McCoid to join in discussion of a model for updating ministry and possibilities for continued cooperation.

Synodical representatives who comprise the Lutheran Ecumenical Representatives Network (LERN) will gather April 16-19, 2012 at the National Workshop on Christian Unity (NWCU) in Oklahoma City, OK. The NWCU will focus on the 50th anniversary of Vatican II.

Inter-Religious Relations

In late 2011, complimentary copies of a 6-disc DVD series entitled *Discover Islam*, produced by Discover Islam–USA and endorsed by the Islamic Society of North America, were mailed to ELCA synod offices, seminaries, members of the Lutheran Ecumenical Representatives Network (LERN) and members of the Consultative Panel on Lutheran-Muslim Relations. The Panel is currently reviewing a study guide skillfully developed by its member, Carol LaHurd, to be used as an interpretative tool with the films, which will be available in April 2012.

On March 20, Bishop Hanson will participate in a dialogue with the Grand Mufti of Egypt, Rabbi David Saperstein and Cardinal McCarrick. The occasion is the awarding of The Coexist Prize by the Coexist Foundation in New York City at NYU. This is the first time the prize, granted to an unsung interfaith heroine, has been awarded. (At the time of writing this report, there are six finalists; in addition to the winner, there will be two runners-up selected by the committee.) There is a live webcast of the event and the dialogue, which focuses on the challenges and opportunities for coexistence.

The Consultative Panel on Lutheran-Jewish Relations and the Consultative Panel on Lutheran-Muslim Relations have been actively engaged, with the former meeting November 4, 2011 in Chicago. We are working toward a joint meeting in October 2012 to engage in discussion and planning together for a possible project around a Lutheran theological framework for inter-religious engagement and a possible series of case studies for use at the congregational level.

Human Resources (HR)

Submitted by Else Thompson

Human Resources, a section of the Office of the Presiding Bishop, includes staffing, compensation and benefits, payroll, training and development, employee relations, volunteer coordination and art management for the churchwide organization as well as international staffing and payroll for ELCA missionaries.

Human Resources is committed to serving the mission of the churchwide organization by serving its people—those here, those deployed, and those who formerly served. The section accomplishes its goals by working with other units in staffing positions, by meeting needs for training and development, through fair compensation and benefit systems and by promoting positive relationships.

The HR web site can be found at www.elca.org/humanresources; information regarding positions in Global Mission can be found at www.elca.org/globalserve.

Staffing

The Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM) program is a year-long, international, faith-based service/learning experience for ELCA young adults (ages 19-29). In cooperation with companion churches and related agencies, the program currently operates seven country programs: Argentina/Uruguay, Jerusalem/West Bank, Malaysia, Mexico, Central/Eastern Europe, Southern Africa and the United Kingdom. Currently, there are 50 YAGM in service. Applications and initial phone conversations have been completed and the process is underway to identify and place 60 young adults in service for the 2012 -2013 program year. One hundred eleven applications were received.

Human Resources received 707 applications in 2011, filled 37 positions from postings and had 11 participants in the summer intern program. As of December 31, 2011, there were 345 regular part and full time staff in the churchwide organization, 12 in Women of the ELCA (separately incorporated), two in Lutheran Men in Mission (separately incorporated) and 40 in the Mission Investment Fund (separately incorporated). Of the total of 399, 34 percent were persons of color. As of the same date, there were 238 mission personnel in 49 countries.

Compensation, Benefits and Payroll

In 2011, Human Resources provided the lead in implementing two major system changes. These included the successful move from the Hay compensation system to a broadbanding approach and the conversion of the payroll system from ADP to Ultipro. Additional modules in Ultipro are being rolled out in 2012. They are Ultipro Time Management, Ultipro Recruiting and Ultipro Performance Management.

Training and Development

ELCA Churchwide Organization employees can now access training and development courses through Skillsoft, a web-based training catalog. To date, 142 courses have been completed. The most common courses accessed are three modules on recognizing and preventing harassment (required of all new employees) and training on Microsoft's Outlook.

Human Resources is also leading the effort to respond to the churchwide operational plan and develop a leadership development process. The unit is working with the Administrative team and an Advisory Council of representatives from each of the six units.

Research and Evaluation (RE)

Submitted by Kenneth Inskeep

The primary responsibility of the staff of Research and Evaluation (RE) is to provide decision-makers in this church with relevant and useful information through high quality empirical research.

Staff engaged in research to support the work of the Group of Nine bishops related to the Churchwide Assembly actions from the LIFT (Living Into the Future Together)/Ecology Task Force report. A report will be forthcoming.

RE continues its work with the “Stewards of Abundance” project on seminarian student debt. Several projects are well underway, including an evaluation of the impact of financial counseling with seminarians, a survey on the decision-making process of young adults who have been encouraged to consider ministry as a career and a series of interviews with seminarians on the impact of debt on their view of ministry.

RE is continuing to work with Congregational and Synodical Mission (CSM) on a review of the Evangelizing Congregations Mission Plan, including the role of the Directors for Evangelical Mission (DEMs) and in support of an evaluation of the Macedonia Stewardship Project for synods. RE also works to support the candidate assignment process with CSM. RE has completed an initial evaluation of CSM's congregation-based organizing work as well as a full report for the Evangelical Lutheran Education Association on their member pre-schools and schools.

RE participated with the Faith Communities Today inter-denominational and inter-faith groups to conduct a national survey of congregations in 2010. Marty Smith, Senior Research Analyst, serves on the Faith Communities Today steering committee. The findings for ELCA congregations, which can be compared to the results of a national sample, are being reported in a series of topical summaries. Reports on worship and mission and identity are available from RE.

RE has devoted considerable time to the Integrated Database Project (ECIS) related to the submission of congregational annual reports and how data is supplied to and retrieved from the system for analysis.

RE has completed the following:

- work with the Women of the ELCA to assess their efforts in promoting online resources;
- an analysis of the website presence of hunger-related organizations for the World Hunger Appeal (WHA). A questionnaire is also being fielded to contributors to WHA and to those who once contributed to WHA but have not recently contributed; and
- an extensive report for the Southeast Michigan and the Northwest Lower Michigan synods in support of the cooperative discernment process now underway in both these synods.

The staff responds daily to requests from members, congregations, synods and the churchwide staff for information about the members, congregations, synods and rostered leaders of this church.

The staff also responds daily to questions about the demographic context of the church, including many reports developed to support the work of the DEMs. In the past few months, reports have been completed for the Metropolitan Chicago Synod, the Western North Dakota Synod and the Southern Ohio Synod. Every synod can access the latest projected population changes by ZIP Code and compare them to changes in average worship attendance for congregations in those ZIP Codes.

Synodical Relations (SR)

Submitted by Walter S. May, Jr.

15.12.F10. Responsibility for Synodical Relations

Responsibility for synodical relations shall be exercised by the Office of the Presiding Bishop to coordinate the relationships between the churchwide organization and synods, render support for synodical bishops and synodical staff, and provide staff services for the Conference of Bishops.

Welcome

On behalf of the Office of the Presiding Bishop and its responsibility for synodical relations, I extend a warm welcome to you. We are pleased to provide service and assistance to the Church Council in your ministry and work to strengthen relationships among the Church Council, synods, synodical bishops and the churchwide organization. We are grateful for your commitment and service.

As you know, the new design of the churchwide organization began on February 1, 2011. As of that date, the section known as Synodical Relations became a part of the Office of the Presiding Bishop.

In that transition, the Regional Coordinators became a part of the new Congregational and Synodical Mission unit and Pastor Craig Settlage, Director for Mission Support, moved to the new Mission Advancement unit. My profound thanks and gratitude goes to Craig for his leadership and ministry in sharing the Blue Ribbon Committee vision for mission support among the three expressions of this church. I look forward to our continued work with bishops and synods. We will continue our mutual work with regional coordinators and Pastor Settlage to partner in building relationships in the regions, and working with Bishops and their staffs in mission and mission support.

The other members of the synodical relations staff will remain in their roles with our team in the Office of the Presiding Bishop. We will continue to assist bishops, synodical staff and synodical officers in any way possible, especially as they deal with the realities of living into a hopeful new future.

My thanks to Marcia Johnson, who serves as Program Director/Synodical Services. I am extremely thankful for Marcia and her dedication and commitment to the ministry of this church. Along with Marcia, I wanted to say thank you for your concern and prayers and support. I look forward to our continued work as we plan and prioritize new ways of doing ministry.

My special thanks to Gail Liggett-Watson for her work and service, especially for planning, organizing and assisting in the implementation of our Conference of Bishops gatherings.

My thanks to Tchad Harris, who joins our staff as Administrative Services Coordinator. In this role, Tchad serves as my assistant working with the unit budget, electronic communications, web page maintenance, coordinating special gatherings and assisting Marcia Johnson with formation and events.

Bishops' Academy 2012

The Bishops' Academy was held January 4-8, 2012, at the Marriott Mission Valley, San Diego, CA. The theme of the academy was "Speaking Christian in the 21st Century." The presenters were Marcus Borg, Canon Theologian at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral in Portland, Oregon, and Peter Steinke, an internationally respected congregational systems consultant who has worked with churches and organizations for more than 20 years. The bishops' spouses also attended this academy. The spouses joined the bishops at a number of events and also had a separate agenda time.

Bishops' Assistants, Associates, and Administrative Assistants Gatherings

The gathering for the administrative assistants to synodical bishops will take place at the Lutheran Center August 20-22, 2012. This is the third time for this event, when executive assistants from across the synods gather to learn, network, and share resources and best practices.

The 2013 bishops' assistants and associates gathering will be held in the early part of 2013. The planning team for this gathering, which includes an assistant from each region, will meet soon to select a theme and begin working on a location and agenda.

Conference of Bishops

The Conference of Bishops met March 1-6, 2012, in Itasca, IL. The bishops spent time in worship, prayer and discussion about our shared leadership in mission. The bishops of Region 1 served as chaplains for this meeting. The presenter for the March 2012 meeting of the Conference of Bishops was Barbara Keller, who presented on the topic of Aftercare: Misconduct.

Federal Chaplaincy

The Federal Chaplaincy ministries continue to provide support for this church's nearly 200 active duty, guard and reserve military chaplains, and the nearly 130 persons in other federal chaplaincy ministries. The Rev. Darrell Morton has been called to serve as a parish pastor and began his work in November. Darrell has been an outstanding worker and colleague. He has a great work ethic and his wonderful interpersonal skills will serve him well as pastor. We will miss Darrell immensely and pray that God will continue to bless him in this next phase of his journey. We welcome The Rev. Eric Wester. Chaplain (COL, Ret) Eric Wester serves as adjunct faculty at the National Defense University (NDU), Fort McNair, Washington DC. In addition to teaching graduate courses about ethics, religion and national strategy at NDU, he also will teach a graduate seminar at the Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary (LTSS), Columbia, SC, (focused on military chaplaincy).

Perhaps the most notable new development for our chaplaincies is a plan for our first joint Lutheran – Episcopal Chaplains' Training Conference, May 7–11, 2012. The first program in May 2012 serves chaplains on the East Coast; a similar conference will be held in fall 2012 for chaplains on the West Coast. For decades, ELCA and LCMS chaplains—and before that ALC, LCA, AELC and LCMS chaplains—gathered for an annual continuing education seminar. These included daily worship and usually about eight formal education presentations, often from teaching theologians of the church. A decision by the LCMS leadership to cease joint ELCA – LCMS chaplaincies, coincides with ELCA initiatives to draw into closer fellowship and service with The Episcopal Church.

Synodical Vice Presidents' Gathering

Synodical Vice Presidents will gather October 5-7, 2012 to welcome new Vice Presidents and to learn from each other. The gathering overlaps with the Conference of Bishops, which will enable the Vice Presidents and Bishops to meet and worship together on a few occasions. We continue to see these gatherings of those who serve in synodical ministries as an important way to deepen our partnership in ministry across the whole ELCA.

Synod Assembly Participation

In collaboration with Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson, the synodical relations staff has begun preparing for the 2012 synod assemblies. Together we have assigned a churchwide representative to each assembly and will prepare these leaders for their time there. The assemblies begin in April and run through early July.

The Office of the Secretary and synodical relations have created materials to assist those synods that will be holding bishops elections. In addition to printed materials, Secretary David Swartling and I have had phone conversations with leaders from the synods that will be holding bishop elections. In these conversations, we discussed processes that are unique to each synod, answered questions from leaders and gained helpful information to benefit those who will preside at each election.

Theological Discernment

Submitted by Marcus R. Kunz

1. Social Statements and Messages

Criminal Justice social statement. The Draft of a Social Statement on Criminal Justice was released March 15, 2012. Early responses suggest it is being well received. Synodical hearings are being scheduled. Copies of the Draft are being made available both electronically and in hard copy to Council members at this meeting. A review of the draft is scheduled for the Program and Services Committee meeting.

Justice for Women social statement. A social statement on justice for women was authorized by the Churchwide Assembly in 2009. An initial consultation was held in Chicago January 21-22, 2012. A first meeting of the task force is scheduled for this fall; assembly action is anticipated in 2016. Mary Streufert and Roger Willer, both members of the Theological Discernment staff in the Office of the Presiding Bishop, will share staff responsibility for this task force. Bishop Jeff Barrow was present for the consultation and will serve on the task force. The Program and Services Committee will appoint two of its members as advisors to the task force at this meeting of the Church Council. Task Force members will be appointed and announced by mid-May.

Social message on mental illness. Kaari Reiersen has been contracted to lead the process of preparing a message on mental illness. A small, but lively, consultation was held March 16, 2012. A proposed message will come to the Church Council for consideration at its November 2012 meeting.

2. Addressing Social Concerns Review (ASCR) Task Force

The Addressing Social Concerns Review (ASCR) task force was formed by the Church Council in response to action by the 2011 Churchwide Assembly. The ASCR task force has met twice (January 19-21 and March 6-8, 2012). The task force is charged to bring a report and recommendation to the November 2012 Church Council meeting and a report to the 2013 Churchwide Assembly. ASCR task force chair Kit Kleinhans has prepared an interim report for the Church Council. This is Exhibit J, Part 1.

This review of how the ELCA addresses social concerns presents an important opportunity to accomplish several things:

- a. to reconnect a ministry of social witness with humanitarian care and development and, in turn, this three-fold way of addressing social concerns with the other ministries of a comprehensive evangelical mission that gives “free course” to the Gospel and embodies it in the life of the world;
- b. to rediscover and re-engage a constructive role for “affections” (to use an older term) or emotions in moral deliberation or theological discernment (rather than to treat emotions as a problem to be solved or a liability to be suppressed, as in, “let’s not get emotional, let’s be reasonable”); and
- c. to strengthen connections within congregations, synods and the church body by drawing on an explosion of new media and new venues to create broader participation and deeper trust (for which the experience of being heard is much more important than being represented on a task force).

3. Observance of the 500th Anniversary of Reformation

Conversation among churchwide staff about ELCA observance of the 500th anniversary has been taking place since 2008. Although several factors delayed progress, a proposal was reviewed and approved by the Administrative Team in January 2012 and reviewed by the Theological and Ethical Concerns Committee of the Conference of Bishops in March 2012.

The proposal calls for an “observance that serves the ELCA’s service of God’s mission in a religiously diverse culture by discovering opportunities and strengthening initiatives that bring historic ‘Lutheran’ or evangelical resources to that service in a renewed way.” It envisions the possibility of initiatives developed over a period of time, for which the 2017 observance is both a significant milestone in development and an invitation to participate in the initiative as it continues over several years. The proposal suggests several possibilities that

have been discussed with individuals and small groups. The proposal includes participation in other observances — the LWF observance, scheduled for 2015-2017 and for which planning has just begun; and the German “Luther Decade,” which began in 2008 and continues through 2017. Mikka McCracken, an LWF Council member, is among the ELCA members who participated in the first LWF planning session in November 2011.

A staff team has met twice and begun work, including a formal proposal for Church Council to review at its next meeting.

4. “Bound Conscience”

Motion F at the 2009 Churchwide Assembly called for a study of “bound conscience,” and it was referred to the Church Council. In November 2009 the Church Council, on the recommendation of an ad hoc team, voted to encourage “theological conversation on the foundations of decision-making in the church,” including “bound conscience” throughout the ELCA.

Responses included: study and work by a staff team in the summer of 2010 that led to information about “bound conscience” on the ELCA website; articles published in the November and December 2010 issues of Journal of Lutheran Ethics (www.elca.org/jle); and discussions by synod vice-presidents (fall 2010), synod bishops (winter 2011), and ELCA teaching theologians (summer 2011; presentations printed in the September 2011 issue of Journal of Lutheran Ethics; www.elca.org/jle). Although discussion of “bound conscience” continues, the work of the churchwide organization in response to the November 2009 and April 2010 Council actions is complete.

5. Other

Staffing. The position on the Theological Discernment team vacant since last summer has been recrafted into a new position. While the person in this position will continue to assist with the development of social statements, this position’s primary responsibility will be for the development of theological resources and networks, including editing the online Journal of Lutheran Ethics.

Lutheran Ethicists Gathering. The Lutheran Ethicist Gathering on January 5, 2012 brought together 25 military chaplains with 40 ethicists (pan Lutheran and Episcopalian) for a day of intense conversation around ethical problems in contemporary warfare. The event has served as a springboard for two more events sponsored by Lutheran and Episcopal chaplains that will feature ethicists from ELCA institutions.

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Revised April 9, 2012

Church Council Member Synod Visit Summary

The Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is committed to building relationships between the churchwide organization and synods, congregations, and institutions and agencies. According to the “Report on Governance” prepared for the 2005 ELCA Churchwide Assembly by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (2004), “Church Council voting members . . . interact with synods in their region in various ways, including attending at least one synodical council meeting per year, visiting congregations, and participating in synodical assemblies, especially in years when a synod is nominating people to the Church Council.”

At its November 2011 meeting, members of the Church Council prepared assignments for “[Church Council contacts with synods: 2011-2013](#).” The chart with the assignments is in Net Community under the Current Information tab.

Members are encouraged to report on synod visits regularly. A notebook including the full texts of reports submitted is available on the materials distribution table. Following is a summary of the reports received since the April 2011 meeting of the Church Council.

<u>Synod Name</u>	<u>Representative</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Date of Event</u>
Florida-Bahamas (9E)	Bill Horne	Synod Assembly	May 5-7, 2011
Southern Ohio (6F)	Marjorie Ellis	Synod Council	January 21, 2012
E. North Dakota (3B)	John Pederson	Synod Council	January 20, 2012
W. North Dakota (3A)	John Pederson	Synod Council	Feb. 10-11, 2012
NW Washington (1B)	Mark Johnson	Report CC Activities	March 17, 2012

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
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Exhibit L, Part 1
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Ecumenical Visits by Church Council Liaisons

Name: Vicki Garber
Meeting: GAMC (General Assembly Mission Council) meeting (PC-USA)
Date: February 15-17, 2012

It was an interesting experience to meet with the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. GAMC. They are so like us in many ways and so different in others.

Some of the business at the GAMC was internal:

1. They were in the process of reformulating their structure. They did this in an effort to more evenly distribute the work load of their committees. After much discussion, they moved from five committees to four and renamed the committees. Most of the discussion centered on the appropriate naming of the committees. As I observed the changes, I recognized that they were trying to be sure that none of their work was dropped, just differently distributed. They did have a lot of discussion on both evangelism and justice issues.
2. Another item of business was a change in the dollar amount of assessment per adult member over the course of the next two years. Their mission program is set based on that assessment. There was a lot of discussion, mostly centered on the fact that we have been in hard economic times and the desire on the part of some members to 'hold the line'. In the end they did approve the increase with a number of dissenting voices.

Most of the rest of the business covered at the GAMC meeting was related to items which they will be bringing to the General Assembly this summer for consideration:

1. They approved bringing before the Assembly an exciting vision for 1001 new worshipping communities within the next ten years. The vision is to create the conditions to try to ignite mission, to let God work, and to help congregations and worshipping communities form. It also seeks to recognize that some worshipping communities that don't necessarily look like traditional congregations are also the church at work and should be counted and named as such. Much discussion about this centered on the language 'worshipping communities'. Some felt that this demeaned the current 'congregations'. This measure, however, passed with some dissension.
2. One of the recommendations will likely receive attention in the media in the coming days and weeks, and they wanted to communicate with us directly about it, since there has been much misinformation. The following is directly from their communication to be shared with others.

"The GAMC is recommending that the upcoming General Assembly divest the church of its stock in three companies until they have ceased profiting from non-peaceful pursuits in Israel and Palestine. The three companies are: Caterpillar, Motorola Solutions, and Hewlett-Packard. The recommendation comes after years of unsuccessful engagement with these corporations, by the Mission Responsibility Through Investment Committee, regarding their business practices. The General Assembly's corporate engagement process called for divestment as a last resort in the corporate engagement process.

- *You can find the Presbyterian News Service story on this topic at <http://www.pcusa.org/news/2012/2/17/gamc-recommends-divestment-caterpillar-motorola-he/>*
- *The recommendation, which was approved by the GAMC, may be found at <http://www.pcusa.org/media/uploads/mrti/pdfs/2012-mrti-report-9-9-11.pdf>*
- *The Mission Responsibility Through Investment website is: <http://www.pcusa.org/mrti>*
- *We are suggesting that reporters contact Gail Strange in our Communications and Funds Development office. Her email address is gail.strange@pcusa.org and her phone contact is 888-728-7228, ext. 5340.*

The General Assembly will make the final decision on this matter, when it meets in Pittsburgh, June 30-July 7.”

There was a lot of discussion about this recommendation.

3. **They had created a number of mission videos that we saw and that will be seen in other venues.** These high quality videos highlight mission and ministry and were quite effective in communicating their new mission ideas.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Vicki T. Garber

Name: Paul Archer
Meeting: The Reformed Church in America and the General Synod Council
Date: February 10-13, 2012
Place: Orlando, Florida

I was invited to attend a two-part RCA event in Orlando, February 10 – 13, 2012. I was warmly greeted by everyone I encountered and was respectfully included in all the meetings I attended.

The first part of the event was titled “Conversations” and was an opportunity for RCA clergy and laity from around the country to gather and discuss the future ministries of the denomination. The RCA is near the end of a ten-year journey of discernment and self-evaluation entitled “Our Call”, which has helped them focus on particular areas of church-wide ministry: discipleship, leadership, mission, multiplication, revitalization and a multi-racial future freed from racism. The “Conversations” event was designed to give RCA members a forum – a non-legislative setting - for engaging in discussion about how the church will continue the momentum of “Our Call” when its ten-year cycle ends in 2013. Total attendance at the conference, including the officers and General Synod Council of the RCA, was about 530.

In the months prior to the conference, every RCA congregation was encouraged to conduct a “Congregational Discovery Workshop” to give its members an opportunity to express their views on the ministries and direction of the denomination. The information gathered at those workshops was used in forming the program for “Conversations.” Throughout all of these steps, the participants were encouraged to pray and to be open to the work of the Holy Spirit and were reminded to focus on “...how God is working in us, through us, and ahead of us.”

The program of questions, discussion topics and priorities was very well planned and naturally led to thoughts, opinions and suggestions being collected from the small groups to the larger groups and from the larger groups to the entire assembly. The end result was a collection of “themes” that emerged from the discussions on Saturday. These themes represented areas of ministry which were considered “distinctive” of the RCA and which should continue to be emphasized and supported, as well as aspects of the life of the church which could stand to be revamped or reemphasized.

“Conversations” was not intended to be the end of a process, but a key step on a long journey of “Discovery, Discernment, and Direction” for the RCA. Following are a few of my thoughts about the event:

- Clearly, the goal of the “Conversations” event and the process leading up to it was one of “Communal Discernment”. In my opinion, the process worked very well and could be used as a model for similar processes in other denominations.
- I had some concerns that the event was not free and that there was no effort to ensure representation from every part of RCA. However, I later learned all congregations were invited to participate in local “Discovery Workshops” and share their thoughts with the larger church and, second, that many scholarships were offered to those less able to afford such a trip. Also, many congregations were able to support the expenses of one or two members.
- I quickly felt welcomed by the members and leaders of the RCA and found myself engaged in the discussions about the future direction of a denomination with which I was totally unfamiliar. I believe this is primarily due to the fact that a great majority of the issues raised and discussed during the event were similar – if not exactly the same as those facing the ELCA.

At the conclusion of the “Conversations” event, the General Synod Council (GSC) met in the same location for a 1½-day meeting. There were many “routine” elements to the meeting, including a list of reports from RCA General Secretary, the Rev. Tom DeVries. The reports focused on a series of emphases or policies that were part of the “Our Call” initiative in the RCA, namely: Church Multiplication, Church Revitalization, Discipleship, Leadership, Mission, and “A Multiracial Future Freed From Racism”. Members of the Council individually reported on their opportunities to visit the Classis Meetings in their region since the last GSC meeting.

A great deal of time was devoted to follow-up discussions on the “Conversations” event and on how the church should move forward with the information gathered. In the end, the decision was made to distribute a survey to those who attended the event, including a summary of the “Conversations.” The goal was to solicit feedback on the process and the results, and to give the RCA leadership some direction on how to move the process forward to the General Synod meeting in June for possible legislative action.

I was given time on the GSC agenda to bring a greeting from myself and the ELCA. The Rev. Donald McCoid had suggested a basic text for the greeting from Bishop Hanson and the Church Council. I supplemented this “official” greeting with a few words of my own, thanking the RCA leadership for including me in the “Conversations” and in the GSC meeting, and for the warm welcome I received from everyone. I also shared with the GSC a few words about the work of the Addressing Social Concerns Review Task Force at the ELCA and asked the GSC members for any feedback they could give me on the RCA’s “Position Papers”—about how they were developed and used by the leadership or membership of the RCA. The only information I received about the RCA’s process for addressing social concerns with “Position Papers” was that the topic for such papers was typically initiated as part of the annual General Synod meeting and then sent to the appropriate RCA Commission (e.g. Christian Unity, Christian Discipleship and Education, Church Order, etc.) for study and development. I heard nothing about the process for developing the Position Papers, which included study by and feedback from the general membership. I did, however, receive comments from three members of the GSC on the effectiveness of the ELCA’s Social Statements, particularly “Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust,” which, I gathered, has been widely read and studied.

At the conclusion of my first meeting with the General Synod Council of the Reformed Church in America, I was struck by the similarities between this legislative body and the Church Council of the ELCA, most notably in the dedication, passion, and faithfulness of its members. I look forward to my next opportunity to meet with the GSC and to reconnect with my many new friends and acquaintances in the RCA.

In service to Christ,

Paul G. Archer
Voting Member, ELCA Church Council
Ecumenical Liaison to the Reformed Church in America

Name: Marjorie Ellis
Meeting: United Church of Christ Executive Council
Date: March 16-17, 2012
Place: Clevelan, Ohio

On behalf of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA), I had the pleasure of attending the 2012 Spring Executive Council Meeting of the United Church of Christ (UCC). The meeting was held in Cleveland, Ohio on Friday and Saturday, March 16th and 17th.

Since 2007, UCC has been working to reorganize and simplify its governance structure. Enabling amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws were adopted in the 28th General Synod in July 2011. Ratification by two-thirds of the Conferences of the UCC is required for the amendments to become effective. The Executive Council anticipates completion of the ratification process on or about June 9, 2012. To date, no Conference has failed to ratify the amendments.

UCC successfully completed a churchwide campaign designed to bring all congregations together for a common goal. The purpose of the Mission 1 campaign was “one united church on a shared mission for 11 powerful days to feed the hungry and confront food-related injustice.” The entire UCC organization achieved its stated goals to battle hunger through works, education, letters to Congress and both food and monetary donations. The Council is contemplating the next churchwide effort to continue to promote the “oneness” of the organization.

In response to a resolution adopted by the 28th General Assembly, the Executive Council received the “Discover Islam: Documentary Films” DVD set for review. The Discover Islam Foundation provided this resource as an educational tool to promote better understanding of the Muslim faith.

In addition to normal business items, the following are items of note:

1. UCC continues to develop a strategic vision plan for the national setting. The working draft is on the following page.
2. The next General Synod is planned for 2013 in Long Beach, California. UCC had previously considered changing the Synod cycle to every three years and will revisit the question again this fall.
3. The Budget and Finance committee requested a reallocation and redistribution of funds to accommodate a funding shortfall of \$85,000.
4. The size of the Executive Council has been reduced due to reorganization. Total membership will now be at a maximum of 91 members.

The Executive Council is a very diverse group of individuals experiencing the same struggles as any other major denomination. UCC strives to maintain 40% minority representation on the Council. The structure encourages independence. All guidance provided can be utilized or not at the pleasure of each individual Conference, Association or Local Church. Leadership would like to be in the position where “the dog is wagging the tail, not the reverse.”

Respectfully Submitted,

Marjorie B. Ellis
Ecumenical Representative - ELCA
April 12, 2012

God is still speaking,
**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**



CORE PURPOSE

Drawn together by the Holy Spirit, we are a distinct and diverse community of Christians that come together as one church, joining faith and action. In covenant with the church in all of its settings, we serve God in the co-creation of a just and sustainable world as made manifest in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

CORE VALUES

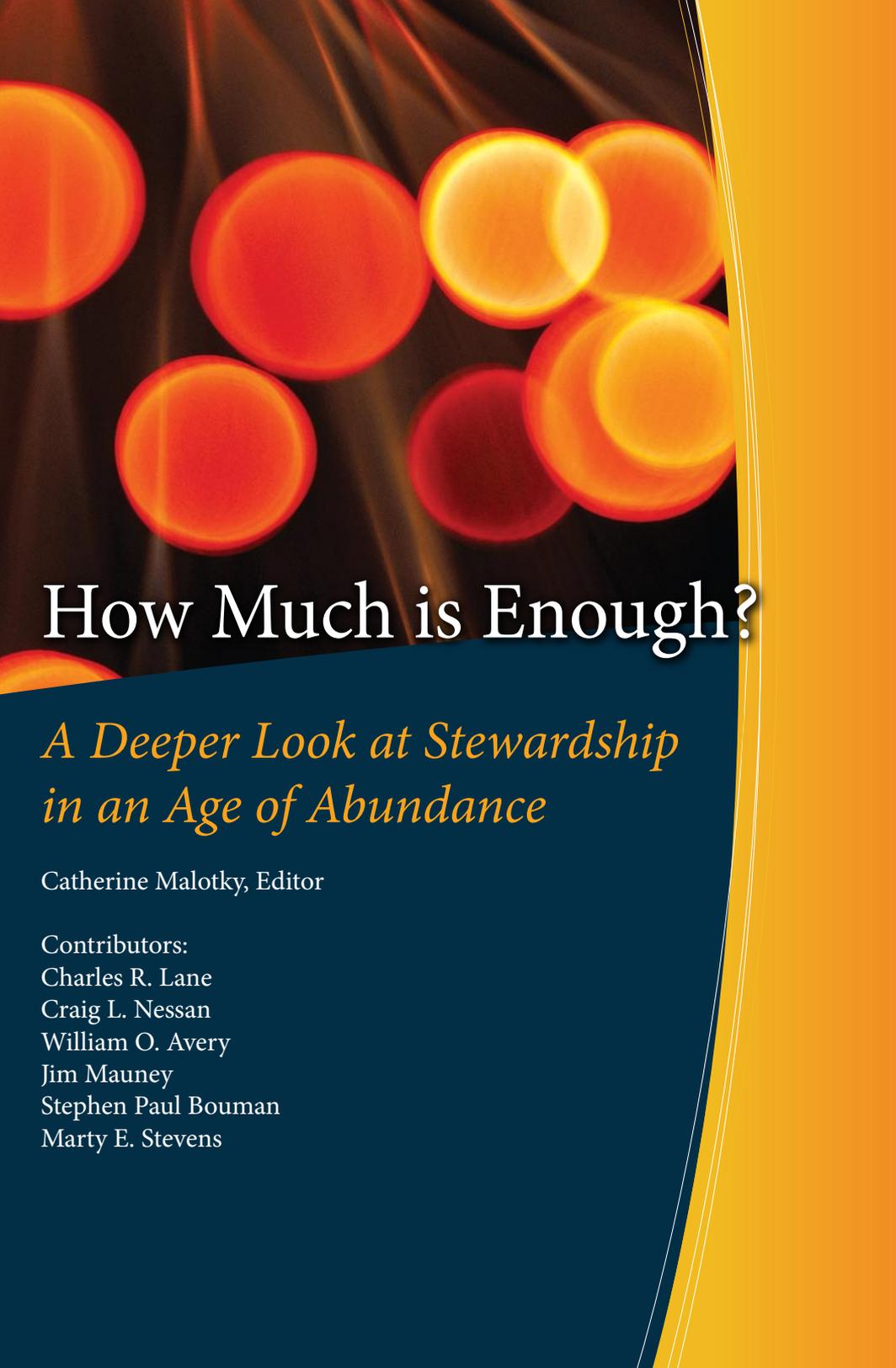
Continuing Testament
Extravagant Welcome
Changing Lives

BOLD, INSPIRATIONAL GOALS (BIGs)

1. The UCC is a bold, widely-known and respected public voice of Christianity in service of God's ever-unfolding mission.
2. There is a welcoming UCC community of faith that is accessible to all — no matter who they are or where they are on life's journey.
3. Every UCC member is well-equipped to be growing in faith, be theologically conversant, and be active in the global mission of the church.
4. The UCC has a wealth of prepared, excellent leaders that reflect the diversity of God's beloved community.

CONTEXT

As leaders, we strive to promote a common purpose, describe what success looks like, and spell out compelling goals and strategies for achieving that success. Thus, we propose these bold, inspirational goals, each with strategies supported by robust funding for viable ministry and mission.



How Much is Enough?

A Deeper Look at Stewardship in an Age of Abundance

Catherine Malotky, Editor

Contributors:

Charles R. Lane

Craig L. Nesson

William O. Avery

Jim Mauney

Stephen Paul Bouman

Marty E. Stevens

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Region 9 of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America/
Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary Council on Stewardship Education
4201 North Main Street, Columbia, SC

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*For more information on the Stewardship of Life Institute
visit **www.stewardshipoflife.org**.*

Introduction

Like shifting tectonic plates deep beneath the earth's surface, the foundations for mission funding in the church are changing. Some of what is familiar is slipping beneath the surface. Simultaneously, new and unforeseen landscapes and perspectives are emerging. The challenge for the ELCA early in the 21st Century is to find its footing, so that the church in mission can participate in God's ongoing work of transforming the world.

Several dynamics in contemporary society call for visionary efforts to learn how to build on new foundations with resilience and sustainability.

- Whereas the church was once the source of most social services that brought relief and assistance to local communities, today governmental and non-governmental organizations more frequently are the first line of response to the needs of the neighbor. Hospitals, for example, once sprang from faith traditions but now operate as secular for-profit and not-for-profit organizations offering the same services. As social services become more regulated and complex, moreover, they tend to “graduate” from the church's sphere. Add to this the proliferation of worthy organizations that respond admirably to human need, and givers have more and more choices about whom and what they support. How does this affect their giving to congregations and other church-related initiatives?
- Givers' experience in the business world has enhanced the demand for accountability. Given the scope of worthy causes, givers want their resources (time, talent, or treasure) to be well spent. People still want to make a difference. While older generations grew up expecting to give to the church, that is no longer the case for younger generations and will continue to change further into the 21st Century. How do we take this shift seriously? Frankly, if we understand that the church's primary mission is to make the world a better place by making tangible God's desire for all to experience health and wholesome hospitality, we need to be able to demonstrate both efficiency and effectiveness in the church.
- We are living in a time when financial wellbeing is more and more an individual's own responsibility, both in the short-term and in the long-term. Unfortunately, many people do not understand the basics of personal finance and are therefore susceptible to trusting a financial services industry that is not grounded in a fiduciary standard nor informed by

spiritual values. There is plenty of anxiety to go around, and it produces reactive responses. Reactivity is not a hallmark of good stewardship, since it is not based in thoughtful planning. How does the church develop a more sophisticated way of framing what it means by financial wellness? If people come to realize that they have enough to sustain themselves, thankful, generous givers could well be the outcome.

- What does it mean to be the steward of a community? Paying a pastor or janitor, keeping up with the electric bill, buying Sunday School curricula, or replacing the boiler does not, on the surface, sound like mission. In the days of undesignated giving, church councils could take care of such matters without fussing too much. What was left could be offered for activities that sound more like mission, such as sending money to a missionary sponsored by the congregation. In a culture of designated giving, however, the more mundane expenses involved in community life are a harder sell. Fortunately, younger generations are highly attuned to the value of community, as the popularity of social media attests. So what does a financially healthy congregation look like? What is the right balance between internal and external mission support?

Consistent with the shifting instincts in our members, giving in the ELCA has been declining for some time. In 2007, the Churchwide Assembly responded by establishing a Blue Ribbon Committee on Mission Funding. The committee, in turn, charged the Stewardship of Life Institute (SOLI), housed at the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, to address the forming of stewardship leaders through theological education and the first call process. One of the outcomes of this work is a list of core perspectives, core practices, and core leadership skills that are indicators of a well-formed stewardship leader in the document *Competencies in a Well-formed Stewardship Leader*.

The competencies examined in this journal were originally developed by a group of ELCA leaders who have expertise in stewardship and whose related work occurs in many arenas of the church. Once the competencies were outlined, they were vetted first to ELCA seminaries, where they were well received as a helpful guide for students' development as church leaders. It soon became apparent, however, that the competencies were not just for leaders being paid to do their work. They also apply to any one in the church who steps forward as a stewardship leader in congregations, church-related organizations, synods, or even families.

The six competencies in a well-formed stewardship leader are as follows:

- Trusts God's abundance
- Grounds oneself in biblical and theological principles
- Holds a holistic perspective
- Perceives connectedness
- Engages and critiques culture
- Embraces financial health as an expression of faith.

In an attempt to emphasize that leadership is more than just believing the right things (though that's important), the competencies assume that core beliefs (or perspectives) will be manifest in behavior –both in the leader's personal life and in his or her work. Integrity is an important value here. It's simply not possible to be a good stewardship leader if one does not model healthy personal stewardship.

A number of interpretive resources are being developed to help integrate the competencies into the life of the church. This journal is one such effort. In early 2010, the Region 9 Council for Stewardship Education received a grant from SOLI to publish this journal with the goal of offering biblical, theological, and practical reflection on each of the competencies.

Each author – chosen for recognized expertise and commitment as a stewardship leader in the ELCA - addresses one competency.

1. Trusts God's abundance

Charles Lane, the director of the Center for Stewardship Leaders at Luther Seminary in St. Paul, MN, advocates for God's abundance over scarcity – a reality that is evident in Scripture and in our lives. He identifies several ways an attitude of abundance can become distorted and undermine the abundance God offers. Finally, he invites us to imagine how both individuals and congregations through generosity can express a trust in God's abundance.

2. Grounds oneself in biblical and theological principles

Craig Nesson, dean at Wartburg Seminary in Dubuque, IA, begins with the idea that the Triune God is the Chief Steward. As a result, we model our stewardship after God, who cannot be anything but a steward. In defining stewardship, he turns a stewardship lens on the Bible, which is, fundamentally, a story of God's generosity. Finally, he outlines five stewardship principles, each of which aligns well with one of the competencies.

3. Holds a holistic perspective

William Avery, former professor of contextual education at the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, proposes the counter-cultural idea that we cannot compartmentalize stewardship as a separate feature of our lives. He embraces the integration reflected in the Wholeness Wheel, a model for stewardship of self. He identifies the slipperiness of maintaining balance between all the dimensions on the wheel and then explores the paradox between "being" and "having." He concludes by calling the church to a communal spirituality.

4. Perceives connectedness

Jim Mauney, bishop of the Virginia Synod, challenges us to choose love. Entering into the complexity of love, he explores the depth of God's love for us and the way in which even the mundane becomes an expression of God's abundance. He gives witness to the way small gifts are magnified when a community is involved, extending the reach of the giver far beyond his or her own hands. He reminds us community can be a blessing, especially as we seek to steward the community on behalf of others.

5. Engages and critiques culture

Stephen Bouman, executive director of the ELCA's Congregational and Synodical Mission Unit in Chicago, offers a critique of the North American fault line between scarcity and abundance. Then he turns to the unique socio-political point of view of Yahweh and traces its disruption of prevailing points of view that defer to the rich rather than those with the least. The critical point is everyone brings something to the table. Each has equal value in God's eyes. God's economy, Bouman insists, is about what we are offered. When the church is fully and consistently missional, it can become a community where in concrete terms equal value becomes a reality.

6. Embraces financial health as an expression of faith

Marty Stevens, professor of Old Testament and registrar at the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, jumps to the crux of the matter: we cannot claim to be stewards, unless we act like stewards. She reminds us that Jesus talked more about money than almost anything else. She further acknowledges that our relationships with money are complicated. We need to understand ourselves and our communities in this regard. In suggesting some practical ways we can orient ourselves toward financial health, Stevens reminds congregations as a whole that they are powerful teachers through their stewardship practices - at least as much as individuals are in congregations.

It has been my privilege to contribute to the development of the competencies, as well as to this journal. My hope is we can all discover a generosity that springs from financial health - not for our own sakes, or even the church's - but for the sake of the world God has so wonderfully provided.

With deep gratitude,
Catherine Malotky
Philanthropic Adviser
Luther Seminary
St. Paul, Minnesota

1.

A Well-formed Stewardship Leader Trusts God's Abundance

*Charles R. Lane
Director of the Center for Stewardship Leaders
Luther Seminary
St. Paul, Minnesota*

“God is good, all the time.” “All the time, God is good.”

If you have attended a youth gathering in recent years, you have probably heard these two sentences shouted back and forth between a leader and the gathering participants. “God is good,” announces the leader. “All the time,” reply the participants. “All the time,” shouts the leader. “God is good,” echoes through the hall.

“God is good, all the time,” is the starting point for reflecting on God's abundance. Our conviction is that God not only wants good for God's people, God also acts to bring good to God's people.

God's abundance in scripture

God showers goodness on the earth and the people whom God has created. To trust God's abundance, we must recognize it.

In Jesus

God's abundance is seen most clearly in our Lord, Jesus Christ. John's gospel says it this way, “And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.... From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.” (John 1:14, 16) Writing to the Colossians, Paul says of Jesus, “He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.” (Colossians 1:18-19)

What abundance do we see in Jesus Christ? In him is an abundance of forgiveness, an abundance of hope, and an abundance of community. We “who were once estranged and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled in his fleshly body through death, so as to present you holy and blameless and irreproachable before him.” (Colossians 1:21) In Jesus, we can come together in spite of our differences, in the hope that our differences will not ultimately divide us from each other, or from God. This is the ground of true community.

In the waters of baptism, we are joined to Christ. Through his cross God has opened the floodgates of heaven, drowning us in God’s mercies. In the bread and the wine, in remembrance of him, we receive forgiveness, life, and salvation.

In creation

God’s abundance is also evident in every aspect of life. The starting point for any talk about stewardship is the claim that God is the source of all that exists. There is a children’s song entitled, “Everything that is, is His.” That title says it well. The Bible claims that God is the source of all that is, and that God is the owner of all that is.

The psalmist marvels not only at the magnitude of God’s creation, but also at the place God has given human beings in this creation,

*When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and
the stars that you have established;
what are human beings that you are mindful of them, mortals that
you care for them?
Yet you have made them a little lower than God, and crowned them
with glory and honor.
You have given them dominion over the works of your hands; you
have put all things under their feet,
all sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field,
the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, whatever passes along the
paths of the seas.*

O Lord, our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

Psalm 8:3-9

The first step in becoming a steward is to learn to rejoice in the fact that God is the creator and owner of all that is. A steward is one who cares for that which belongs to another. As stewards, we can join the author of Psalm 8 wondering at God’s abundant blessings. We can be awed at the honored place God has given us in the creation.

Having said this, however, we should guard against falling into the trap of imagining that we have this abundance because we have earned and deserve it. The biblical witness is clear – this abundance is because of God’s loving generosity, not our own. Our place is to marvel at God’s goodness, and, in thanksgiving, to manage well the abundance God has entrusted to us. We also need to avoid imagining that we are the

owners of what God has entrusted to us. What we have is not ours to do with as we wish. It is God's. We are charged with managing consistent with God's direction.

Our lives can echo Paul's confident assertion, "And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work." (2 Corinthians 9:8)

God's abundance in our lives

For those of us who live in the United States, a land of extraordinary wealth, recognizing and trusting in God's abundance should be easy. The vast majority of us have more than enough to meet the day's needs, certainly when compared to the lives of most people in the world. Most of us have enough excess so that we are able to save for the future. If we have done so, we can look forward to a retirement in which we will not need to count on the support of younger family members to live a comfortable life.

Martin Luther, in his explanation of the First Article of the Apostles' Creed writes, "God provides me with food and clothing, home and family, daily work, and all that I need from day to day." From faith's point of view, we can interpret the abundance of our lives as a result of God's provision. We could confess that God provides not only all we need for daily life, but also much that we want for daily life. As good as this point of view is, there are several pitfalls to avoid.

An attitude of scarcity

It is true that many individuals whose lives are filled with possessions live as if they have too little to take any joy in their abundance. Similarly, it is the experience of many congregations in the United States that an attitude of scarcity overshadows the abundance that is. An attitude of scarcity, whether individual or congregational, is characterized by a reluctance to give generously, or to take risks for the sake of the mission of the gospel. An attitude of scarcity disables the ability to respond to the opportunities God presents for fear of insufficient resources.

We need to consider why this is. How is it that an individual with considerable assets can be so captive to an attitude of scarcity that generous giving is seen as impossible? How is it that a congregation full of people who have considerable abundance can have the attitude that its resources are insufficient to accomplish the work that God has placed before it?

At least part of the answer is our American brand of consumerism. In order to move product, we are told hundreds of times a day that we don't have all we need to be happy. We are promised that if we would buy this product or that, our lives will be much more complete, much happier. One byproduct of this is that many people become convinced that they really don't have enough. In a consumer culture, there is no such state as "having enough," because there is always something else out there that might make me happier still (for a price). This is a vicious and unending cycle

that leaves us trapped in a feeling of insufficiency and scarcity. It's certainly a far cry from the abundance honored by the psalmists.

Many people who have traveled to countries around the world with standards of living far beneath our own come back to the United States awestruck at how happy the very poor people in these very poor countries are. My own experience after a two-week trip to India was exactly this. The people I met there barely had enough to feed themselves from day to day, and yet they exhibited a trust in God and a happiness in life that left me feeling that my faith was quite inferior. In retrospect, I have come to realize that in their minds they had enough. By my standards, they had next to nothing. By their standards, they had enough, and they were quite content.

If you never feel you have enough, living with a sense of God's abundance is difficult indeed. If you feel that you have enough, then God's abundance is easy to see.

It is a great irony that we who have more than any other people in the world often live in an attitude of scarcity and with anxiety about what we don't have. If we are to recognize God's abundance, we will need to get past these inaccurate attitudes. What might it take for us to begin to see abundance, given the messages that surround us?

An attitude of entitlement

While God's abundance was celebrated and honored by our forebears in faith, they also knew of the dangers of abundance.

Perhaps no where are these dangers spelled out more clearly than in Moses' speech to his people just before they are to enter the Promised Land. He warns, "Take care that you do not forget the LORD your God, by failing to keep his commandments, his ordinances, and his statutes, which I am commanding you today. When you have eaten your fill and have built fine houses and live in them, and when your herds and flocks have multiplied, and your silver and gold is multiplied, and all that you have is multiplied, then do not exalt yourself, forgetting the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, who led you through the great and terrible wilderness, an arid wasteland with poisonous snakes and scorpions. He made water flow for you from flint rock, and fed you in the wilderness with manna that your ancestors did not know, to humble you and to test you, and in the end to do you good. Do not say to yourself, "My power and the might of my own hand have gotten me this wealth." But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth, so that he may confirm his covenant that he swore to your ancestors, as he is doing today." (Deuteronomy 8:11ff)

The danger of abundance is that God showers God's people with all God's good gifts, and God's people turn right around, forget God, and claim themselves as the source for all they have. Unfortunately, this danger did not go out of style with the ancient Israelites.

When we take credit for what we have, then we can quickly start to define ourselves by our possessions. Eric Barreto has written, "Our stuff has become stuffing. It

gives us and our lives shape.” (“Rethinking Stewardship: Our Culture, Our Theology, Our Practices”, Word and World Supplement Series 6, p. 66) Rather than marveling at God’s generosity, we can start to marvel at our own accomplishments, forgetting that “it is God who gives you the power to get wealth.” (Deuteronomy 8:18)

When we take credit for what we have, then we can become obsessed with accumulating more, because more things will mean that we have been even more successful. Remember the successful farmer Jesus offered as an example of what not to do. “Then he told them a parable: ‘The land of a rich man produced abundantly.’ And he thought to himself, ‘What should I do, for I have no place to store my crops?’ Then he said, ‘I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, ‘Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.’ But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?’ So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich toward God.” (Luke 12:16-21)

An attitude of being favored above others

There is another danger in abundance, a serious discussion of which is well beyond the scope of this article. For those of us who find ourselves awash in possessions, we can too quickly drift to seeing ourselves as especially blessed by God, seeing our provisions as a sign of God’s favor. We must remember that out-of-balance abundance is due not to God’s apportionment of blessings, but rather to human systems. For centuries countries have magnified their blessings by moving resources from other parts of the world to themselves. Within countries, many systems are in place to aid the rich in getting richer while the poor fall farther and farther behind. To not name these realities is to call God’s justice into question. Remember God’s primary identity as one who executes justice for the orphan and the widow, and who loves the strangers...” (Deuteronomy 10:18)

If we are to experience the blessing of God’s abundance in our lives, much less make good use of it for the sake of the world, we need to stand guard against the dangers of abundance. It is so tempting to go to God only in tough times, but to credit our own resourcefulness or smarts in the good times. The proper attitude in the face of God’s abundance is awe and thanksgiving - awe that God would entrust so much to me; thanksgiving that God chooses to be in relationship with me, which gives me the opportunity to be a steward on God’s behalf.

Trusting God’s abundance in daily life

When we trust God’s abundance, this trust transforms our lives. This trust recognizes God as the source and owner of all that is, and clarifies our role as that of steward or caretaker. Our job is to care properly for the abundance God has rained down upon us.

For example, trusting in God's abundance drives me to care for the earth. This is not just because I want a better place to live, or even just because I want it to be healthy for my children and grandchildren. While both of these are true and good, as a steward my trust in God's abundance causes me to care for the earth because the earth is the Lord's. It is my privilege and responsibility, my duty and delight to exercise proper care of this most basic gift of God. Genesis 1:28-31 clearly describes our place in creation, and the privilege we have to care for this earth as God's representative.

Trusting in God's abundance drives us to care for all the possessions God has entrusted to our care. We can short-sightedly understand that God is concerned about how much we give away, but once the giving is accomplished, our stewardship is over. We can falsely understand that the rest of our money is ours to do with as we please. Trusting in God's abundance causes us to realize that all we have is really God's, 100% of it. Our role as stewards of God's generosity is to care for all that God has entrusted to us in a way consistent with God's wishes, even that which we "keep."

Trusting in God's abundance drives a person to a generous life. In so many ways a stingy life is not consistent with a life that recognizes God's abundance. How do we know that we have gone beyond stingy? One biblical standard for a generous life is the tithe, giving away 10% of what God has entrusted to the steward's care. There are many good discussions about the proper place of the tithe in modern life – some say it should not apply to modern life, others say it is only a starting point, the place from which we should grow in our generosity. It is at least a helpful measuring stick against which a child of God can measure personal generosity.

The tithe is proportionate giving, a powerful giving discipline. Proportionate giving calls us to give in proportion to how we have received, and to make a decision about our giving. Proportionate giving recognizes that some of God's people have far greater financial resources than others, and also recognizes that as a person moves through life, they will have greater financial resources at some times and lesser at other times. Proportionate giving challenges the wealthy person whose giving is substantial in actual dollars, yet might be a small percentage of income. Proportionate giving lifts up the person with few financial resources whose giving is modest in actual dollars, yet lavish compared to income. Proportionate giving is a key to giving that is sustainable through all the years of life.

Congregations also become different when God's abundance is recognized. When a congregation trusts God's abundance, this trust transforms the congregation's life. One of the greatest dangers facing any congregation is slipping into concern about survival. Scarcity mentality can take over and the congregation's decisions can be driven by the question, "What do we need to do to survive?" As Scott Cormode has written, "The purpose of the church is not to stay open. The purpose of the church is to enable people to become more like Christ." (*Making Spiritual Sense*, Abingdon

Press, 2006. p. 121.) Congregations who are concerned about survival make decisions based on staying open rather than being Christ-like. Ironically, this almost always dooms the congregation to extinction because it has ceased to be what God calls it to be.

Congregations who trust in God's abundance are free to be "little Christs" in the world because they trust in God's providing, both in the present and in the future. Congregations can invite members to generous giving because of the conviction that the spigot of God's generosity will not run dry. Congregations can invest in new ministry without concern that reserves might become depleted. Congregations can model God's generosity by giving generously to ministries beyond their walls.

Again, ironically, congregations who live this way find that they not only survive, they thrive, because their life reflects God's call to be God's presence in the world.

A well-formed stewardship leader trusts in God's abundance. There are a few pitfalls to watch for, but when a child of God lives this trust they are at the important first step of living as a steward of the generosity of God. A child of God who marvels at God's abundance and lives a life committed to caring responsibly for that abundance is truly a well-formed steward.

2.

A Well-Formed Stewardship Leader is Grounded in Biblical and Theological Principles

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“Think of us in this way, as servants of Christ and stewards of God’s mysteries.” (1 Corinthians 4:1) So Paul wrote to the congregation at Corinth and so we are challenged to consider ourselves as stewards in the church to this day. “Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy.” (1 Corinthians 4:2) This article is written to encourage all those who have leadership in Christ’s church to claim their calling as “stewards of God’s mysteries.” Stewardship is nothing less than a core paradigm for interpreting the entire Christian life! Too often members of the church take stewardship as an episodic program or focus that can be left behind after a season of giving it attention. Instead, stewardship serves as arguably the central lens for focusing all of life and all of ministry. Truly, may we be found “trustworthy” in this calling!

Triune God as Chief Steward

Who is God? This is the starting point for all theological reflection about stewardship. Stewardship is not merely something Christians are called to do, but rather is based upon how God has chosen to be revealed in the world. The Triune God is the Chief Steward over creation, redemption, and sanctification.

Creating

In the beginning God the Creator became steward over the birth of the entire universe. God was pregnant with love and mercy and both needed to be expressed

in relationship to others. Therefore God created the universe, including the earth and the biosphere we inhabit, to be the recipients of this boundless love and mercy. By creating the cosmos and the world in which we dwell, God chose to live in relationship with all that was made, including humankind. God stewards by continuing to create new life in many and various forms and by restoring the health and well being of those who are broken. Moreover, God has called human beings, created in God's own image, to partner in God's stewardship of the earth: "The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it" (Genesis 2:15). We reflect God's image by living as those to whom God has entrusted the care and stewardship of this beautiful creation.

Redeeming

At the right moment in time God the Redeemer chose to bestow infinite love upon humanity in an unimaginable form. In order to break through our hardness of heart, God became one of us, assuming human flesh in the incarnation of Jesus Christ. Jesus shared every dimension of human existence—birth, childhood, adolescence, and adulthood; joy, tears, anger, and laughter; child, brother, friend, and teacher—culminating in his participation in human suffering and death. Jesus' participation in the fullness of all aspects of human life gives expression to God's gracious stewardship of all things human, in order that we might return to our original relationship as God's beloved sons and daughters. The Triune God cares for us so much as to send the only Son to die on the cross and be raised from the tomb, "so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life" (John 3:16). The mission of the Son of God was to steward fallen humanity back into right relationship with our Creator.

Sanctifying

Finally, it is the work of God the Holy Spirit to sanctify and perfect the whole creation. As Spirit, God engages with boundless and relentless energy to preserve, renew, and restore life. Sometimes the Spirit works as a still, quiet voice to accomplish healing, reconciliation, or hope. At other times the Spirit is loud, converting our apathetic voices into shouts of praise, or working miracles beyond imagination. By the efforts of the Holy Spirit, the Triune God stewards the entire universe toward its mysterious future, which we trust will manifest God's *shalom* in a new heaven and new earth. The arrival of this eschatological reality will not be the negation of the creation, but rather will usher in the fulfillment and completion of all God's purposes. This will be the arrival of the very kingdom of God by the power of the Spirit. As Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, God stewards us and all created things to the end of time.

Characteristics of the Chief Steward

Characteristic of the Triune God's stewarding work are efficacious dispositions that God imparts also to those made in God's own image: generosity, graciousness, and abundant life. God is revealed as exceedingly *generous* in deciding to create and sustain the plenitude of planets and stars, continents and creatures! Apart from God's generosity nothing would have been made that was made. As those created in God's image, we reflect back to God the same generosity we have first received. Living generously in relation to others is the apt reflection of God's own generosity to us.

God in Christ is also revealed as infinitely *gracious*. "But God proves his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." (Romans 5:8) In the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, God has poured out upon us unlimited forgiveness, mercy, and grace. "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God—not the result of works, so that no one may boast." (Ephesians 2:8-9) If our boasting is excluded, there is only one alternative: to extend to others the same graciousness we have received from God, our Savior.

God the Spirit means *abundant life*! We dwell in a world that is captive to the fear of scarcity. Rather than celebrating the good gifts God has showered upon us, including the abilities and talents God bestows on each and every person, we are often stifled, bemoaning the absence of things we think we lack. This is as true of our individual lives as it is characteristic of congregational thinking. By contrast, the Holy Spirit promises to provide everything we need for abundant lives and vital congregational ministry. Do we believe that? This does not mean we do not have to be resourceful and responsible for what God entrusts to us. But it does mean the Spirit provides sufficiently for what we need in order to enjoy the abundant life God desires us to enjoy. (John 10:10) If the Spirit gives to us so recklessly and abundantly, how can we not respond with abundance to the needs of others?

Defining stewardship

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." (Genesis 1:1) A translation of Psalm 24:1 reads: "God owns everything!" The acknowledgement of God as the creator and "owner" of everything that has been made is the starting point for our stewardship. As long as we continue to deceive ourselves thinking we own the property and possessions in our care, we will not adequately grasp the heart of stewardship. We have been carefully taught to believe that it is by our own labor, effort, and work that we earn a living and thereby can purchase all the things we have. This is one of the deepest convictions about wealth and property in our society. However, the claims of Christian stewardship contradict such universal and deeply embedded assumptions about private ownership.

Stewardship involves responsibility and accountability for the care and management of what belongs to another. Although borrowed from the ancient world, the

image of steward speaks directly to our own situation as well. God not only owns “everything,” but all that I have is a gift and trust from God. Therefore I am responsible and accountable to God for its wellbeing and care.

Generous

Jesus told surprising parables about stewardship. In Matthew 20, the master tells the steward to pay the day laborers equally, regardless of the number of hours they had worked. The owner responds to the complaints about unfairness: “Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous? So the last will be first, and the first will be last.” (Matthew 20:15-16) Here we learn about God’s reckless generosity! Stewards of God’s mysteries need to brace themselves for God’s blessing of those we perceive to be poor, weak, or undeserving. God as owner reverses conventional notions of entitlement and merit. Are we ready to be stewards of such unimaginable grace?

Beyond human logic

In Luke 16 Jesus tells another remarkable story about stewardship. Here, according to human logic, it appears that the steward is devious and unethical in his dealings with debtors. The steward, without the knowledge of the master, reduces the amount owed on account by significant factors. Yet the master commends the dishonest steward for his shrewdness: “...for the children of this age are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than are the children of light.” (Luke 16:8) In this parable, Jesus summons his disciples to radically reframe their management of wealth according to the conviction that God is the one to whom we owe final allegiance. In a logic that transcends human calculations, Jesus challenges his hearers to serve God above all things. The punch line of the entire text is this: “No one can serve two masters; for a slave will either hate the one and love the other, or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.” (Luke 16:13) This parable disorients conventional understanding about how to manage our affairs. Stewardship subverts human logic, by asserting God as the origin of all that we have.

A way of life

In our approach to stewardship in the life of the church, we tend to think episodically. We associate autumn as the season for stewardship in relation to gathering pledges and preparing budgets for the next year, and stewardship as one episode in the flow of congregational life. This point of view does not do justice to the comprehensive character of Christian stewardship. Stewardship is a way of life, a way of living in gratitude for God’s generosity and remaining accountable to God for how we use our time, spiritual gifts, and possessions. The life of the steward anticipates the day when God will say: “Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been

trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.” (Matthew 25:23)

A Bible full of stewardship

Stewardship is a lens through which the steward is to view all the Bible, not just select passages. The great pattern of Scripture revolves around God’s generosity and human stewardship of the gifts God has given.

In the Old Testament God’s generosity was poured out upon Abraham and Sarah as God promised to make of them a great nation, give them a land, and bless them. They were then called by God to be stewards of these promises by living in faithfulness to God’s Word and obedience to the covenant. The stories of the patriarchs and matriarchs are narratives that disclose their halting stewardship of the promises God had extended to them.

In the Exodus, God’s generosity took the form of deliverance of the Israelites from their bondage in Egypt. The stories about their wandering in the wilderness can be understood as the adventure of learning what it meant for them to live as stewards accountable to God for the gift of liberation. The giving of the law at Sinai established the framework for what God expected of them as stewards of this freedom, including the exclusive worship of the one, true God and care for the weakest members of society—orphans, widows, the poor, and strangers.

The kings of Israel were given the command to do justice in all the land. The royal house was entrusted with great responsibility: to care for the people in equity and righteousness. When the king failed to serve as a just steward of his duties, God sent prophets to hold the king accountable and the people accountable for their stewardship of God’s covenant: “He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?” (Micah 6:8)

With the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, God has given to all humanity the forgiveness of sins, mercy, and eternal life. God’s generosity has been revealed as exceedingly loving and kind, beyond all imagination. We receive God’s gifts in Christ Jesus as undeserving beggars, overwhelmed by unexpected beneficence. The story of the New Testament is about the infinite blessings of God which we receive as stewards by our discipleship and share with others. Love of God and love of neighbor is the dutiful response of stewards to God’s gifts. (Matthew 22:37-40)

Though once a fierce enemy of the Christian Gospel, by God’s grace Paul encountered the living Christ and was made a servant and steward of the mysteries of God. Paul lived out his stewardship as a missionary to the Gentiles, carrying the good news to Jew and Gentile across the Roman Empire at great personal risk and cost. The Pauline letters bear witness to his stewardship of the Christian message

to the people who heard his proclamation, even as he called them to reflect God's generosity as stewards in their own lives. (Romans 12:1-2)

The Bible is not just a book containing stewardship texts. The Bible is itself the story of God's generosity and God's call to us to be stewards of that grace. The Bible is the lens through which we are to view all of life as a matter of stewardship: "Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received" (1 Peter 4:10).

Five stewardship principles

The core biblical and theological foundation we have established leads the church to abide by several orienting principles to guide and direct the life of the Christian steward. Five foundational stewardship principles are:

1. Gratitude as one's basic approach to life.

For the steward gratitude is not an occasional response but, believing God's generosity in Jesus, as the basis for a posture of thanksgiving in all things: "For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected, provided it is received with thanksgiving; for it is sanctified by God's word and by prayer." (1 Timothy 4:4-5) All stewardship begins in gratitude to God as the Giver of life, salvation, and health. See also the first competency: *Trust's God's abundance*.

2. Stewardship is counter-cultural.

We live in an acquisitive, narcissistic culture. From an early age we have been socialized to measure our worth according to the impressiveness of our possessions and our security according to our financial holdings. By contrast, Jesus warns his followers of the spiritual danger of money: "'You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich toward God." (Luke 12:20-21) It requires immense spiritual strength and the support of a counter-cultural community of faith to resist the lure of measuring one's life according to riches. See also the fifth competency: *Engages and critiques culture*.

3. Stewardship entails a life of care for the neighbor.

The Gospel sets us free from preoccupation with whether we have done enough to deserve God's love. It sets us free for sharing God's love with others. "And who is my neighbor?" (Luke 10:29) God gives us a world of neighbors in need. Our neighbors include the members of our family, our friends, and our colleagues at work. But that is not all. God also gives us impoverished neighbors in our local communities and neighbors in need across the globe. See also the fourth competency: *Perceives connectedness*.

4. *Stewardship involves care for God's creation.*

For too long Christians have understood themselves as sovereign over rather than stewards of creation. Many of the disastrous consequences for the environment derive from an attitude that has misconstrued what it means to “have dominion” over the earth (see Genesis 1:26). There is only one Dominus (Lord) over creation, that is, God the Creator. Jesus invited his followers to live at peace with other creatures, often employing plants and animals as examples of what it means to live in God's kingdom: “Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these.” (Matthew 6:28-29) The extent of environmental degradation in the contemporary world makes this a first order priority for Christian stewards. See also the fourth competency: *Perceives connectedness.*

5. *Tithing as a spiritual discipline.*

The value of tithing is in claiming it as a freely chosen spiritual discipline to assist the steward in worshipping God above all things. I choose to make my giving decision first, and arrange my life from there. In this way tithing is not imposed from without but rather elected from within. And that makes all the difference. See also the sixth competency: *Embraces financial health as an expression of faith.*

Leading stewardship

Stewardship leaders have the responsibility to implement these biblical and theological principles not just at the time when soliciting pledges or collecting time and talent sheets, but to introduce them throughout the church year in every season of life. I am not sometimes a steward and at other times something else. Stewardship is a way of life—from dawn to dusk, birth to death, each and every day. Worship services, educational opportunities, youth activities, congregational committees, and every other congregational function are permeated with opportunities to claim our common vocation as stewards of God's mysteries.

Resources:

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3.

A Well-Formed Stewardship Leader Holds a Holistic Perspective

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During my childhood my parents regularly quoted I Corinthians in order to teach my brother and me that our bodies were God's temple: "Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?... For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple" (I Cor. 3:16-17). That is, my parents used this passage to reinforce to their teenage sons that we were not to smoke or drink or use illicit drugs, but to take good care of our bodies.

While my brother and I took this message to heart, it was decades before I understood that in this passage Paul uses "you" in the plural, not the singular. In other words, what Paul writes is that "the Corinthian *community* (italics added) is a temple of God, because the divine Spirit dwells in it."¹ To be sure, Paul later applies the image of the temple to the body of the individual Christian (I Cor. 6:19), because the Spirit dwells in every one of the baptized, but the individual application is secondary to the communal. The Spirit gives itself to the individual through the community. This passage makes a critical point when we examine what it means that a stewardship leader holds a holistic perspective.

The foundational point is that stewardship has to do with the community first, and then with the individual. Therefore, in this essay I want to consider not only the individual steward leader but also the community which forms that leader. Too often, stewardship talk focuses on the individual as if stewardship were not at its most basic communal. In fact, when I refer to the individual steward, I invite you as

reader to apply what I say also to the church community. A holistic view of stewardship—which understands the communal nature of stewardship—enhances leadership in such congregations.

Stewardship from a holistic perspective

Stewardship with a holistic perspective flies in the face of the dramatic American propensity to divide our lives into separate compartments. American Christians are just as skilled at compartmentalization as our non-churched neighbors. We compartmentalize our faith from our politics and complain when the gospel has political implications (which it always does). We separate spiritual matters from our wallets as if they are unrelated parts of life. We divorce our Sunday worship from our Monday work, and we divide our understanding manner at work from our imperviousness at home. The list goes on.

Living as a steward—both individually and congregationally—is a full response to God’s initiative without compartmentalization.

Response

Stewardship is always responsive to what God first has done for us. Most churchgoers will say something like, “being a steward means being a caretaker of what belongs to God.” However, we too often live as owners, not stewards. Our society tells us repeatedly that we are free to “do it my way.” We speak of “my house,” “my money,” “my job,” “my children,” even “my wife” or “my husband,” as if we owned them. American society teaches us that the last thing any of us should want is to be bound rather than free. Bondage to another is a fate to be avoided at all costs. Even our spirituality, as many today define it, is a form of freedom so that we can define our spirituality in any way that meets our needs.

Ironically, despite this emphasis on individual freedom, think of the ways our society does try to define us — by how much education and how prestigious a job we hold, by how much money we make, by where we live and what we wear. We are most often defined by what we do and have rather than whose we are. This secular and false self is fabricated by social compulsion, says Henri Nouwen.² Adds Eugene Peterson, “Most...people...are dominated by a sense of self, not a sense of God.”³

In contrast, stewards know themselves as bound to Another. We are not free. Because God has chosen us as sons and daughters, we belong to God. Of course, God does not force God’s will on us. Instead, God is Immanuel—God *with* us, in the person of Jesus Christ. *With* is the language of love, of invitation rather than coercion. Divine Love gives, even when no response is returned. What does it mean to be bound to Love? Stewards see the difference between this and the seduction of untethered freedom. Stewards choose Immanuel rather than being adrift in the short-term claims of self.

Integration

Stewards respond without compartmentalization. Science has learned what the Bible has affirmed from the beginning, that all things in this cosmos are inter-related. Everything in the cosmos has the same basic matter. Relationships are the basic building blocks in nature from electrons to humans. The conception of the world as an interconnected web of relationships is one of the major themes that recur throughout modern physics.⁴ Thus, the emphasis is on the whole as more than the sum of its parts rather than on separation, isolation, and compartmentalization.

The emphasis on wholeness is found in changes in the health field. Physicians are discovering that they need to treat the whole person—mind, body, and spirit—not just the presenting issues. The holistic health movement understands that the whole is made up of interdependent parts which should not be isolated. The system as a whole determines how its parts behave. A disturbance in one part of the body, mind, or spirit is a disturbance in all. Therefore, holistic health is an ongoing process rather than a one-time fix.⁵ Likewise, holistic education is “based on the promise that each person finds identity, meaning and purpose in life through connections to the community, to the rational world, and to humanitarian values such as compassion and peace.⁶ That is, one aim of holistic education is to call forth from people a reverence for life and a passionate love of learning. It aims to place an emphasis on

The Wholeness Wheel



relationships and lifting up intrinsic human values. “A holistic way of thinking tries to encompass and integrate multiple layers of meaning and experience rather than defining human possibilities narrowly.”⁷

The ELCA’s growing emphasis on healthy leaders is built on The Wholeness Wheel, which models that stewardship of the self is a holistic endeavor, involving at least six dimensions.

We know that we are served best by a healthy balance in all six of these dimensions. Most of us are challenged to find the time, energy, and will to devote ourselves to enhancing each dimension.

When leaders behave as owners, we can quickly come to believe that God’s mission will not be accomplished except by ourselves. The implication is that we do not believe in God’s ability to bring God’s purposes to fulfillment. This is unbelief, Luther’s definition of original sin, and idolatry. In contrast, stewards assume that, while we are called to contribute, God will accomplish God’s purposes based on God’s capacity, not ours alone. At the end of every day we can pray, “God, with your help, I’ve done what I can today. I entrust the mission back to you, knowing that you are continuing to work in the world and through many others besides me for your mission.”

This dynamic is true for any leader, but it is especially true for church leaders, professional or volunteer. Many years ago, Stanley Hauerwas and William Willimon described church leaders: “...Persons who are attracted to the pastoral ministry are often people who have a need ‘to help people.’ They like to be liked and need to be needed. Their personal needs become the basis for their ministry—and also their greatest problem. Underestimating how terribly deep other people’s needs can be, they enter ministry with insufficient boundaries and are devoured by the voracious appetite of people in need. One day they awake to find that they have sacrificed family, self-esteem, health, and happiness for a bunch of selfish people who have eaten them alive from the inside out.”⁸

The antidote is to understand at the core of our being that we belong first to God and not to those we serve. This does not mean that needs are neglected. Rather it speaks to the priority of one over the other. Martin Luther understood this point well, and described it in his paradoxical assertion about the freedom of a Christian, “A Christian is a perfectly free lord of all, subject to none. A Christian is a perfectly dutiful servant of all, subject to all.”⁹ Church leaders who understand that they belong to God first and primarily, are the very people who can hold this tension between self-care and the care of others.

Over the years, I have observed that my own life pulls me in many different directions, yet I do seem to find time to do what I really think is important. For example, I’m a runner (actually now I’m slow enough to be called a jogger) which I have done about five days a week for over thirty years. It’s very important to me, and therefore I take the time to run most days. I reap many benefits. I find that I am able

to work better and accomplish more because I have taken the time to exercise. I also understand that caring for my God-given body is part of my calling as a steward. In those times when I felt like I didn't have time, I remembered that this is how I am a steward, not an owner. I am grateful for the way this perspective has kept me exercising, as I am not equally successful in other dimensions.

So many things need our attention. Time is a precious commodity and needs stewarding. So do our bodies, our budgets, our relationships, and our expertise. As a way to gauge your own holistic stewardship, you may want to do a little inventory. Ask yourself: What is it that I now make sure I do every day? Or every week? Or every month? How might I modify my "will-do-no-matter-what" list so it is in line with a holistic view of living as steward of the life God has given me?

Celebrate the ways you do this well, and then think about the support you need to change in those dimensions that need work. From whom might you receive that support: your church community, your immediate and/or extended family, your place of employment? You'll need your imagination (individually and collectively) as a basic ingredient for this change. Remember that healthier boundaries are likely to create a healthier, more productive you.

Problem or paradox?

I have come to believe that our desire to solve problems and find peace can work against our holistic stewardship. Not every difficulty in life is a problem to be solved. Instead, many of the deepest aspects of our lives are paradoxes that can only be held in creative tension.

Think of the way Jesus suggests stewards approach possessions in the Gospel of Luke. Luke Timothy Johnson, in his book *Sharing Possessions*, points out that all humans need a center from which to derive meaning for their lives—some place which will help them get up each morning, some place to which they can retreat when they are beaten down by life, a place where hope still lives even when all seems hopeless. To understand where this center is for different humans, Johnson drew a continuum between BEING at one extreme and HAVING at the other:

BEING—————HAVING

Here we encounter a basic paradox of human life, rather than a problem to be solved. As stewards we may simply want to *be* God's, without needing to *have* anything. However, because we are not ethereal beings, we cannot simply *be*, we also must *have* some things to survive—water, food, clothing, and shelter, for example.

Too easily, we can extend our basic needs so that a need for basic clothing becomes a need to have stylish clothing. Our need for basic shelter becomes the need for an elaborate home with land. In our mobile society, our legs and feet for walking extend to a bicycle, and then to an automobile, and then to a fancy SUV, and so forth.

Says Johnson, the more things we have, the more our center drifts toward having things, and away from being God's. A center in having is fragile ground. It can all disappear in an instant, and will at death.¹⁰

Only Jesus entrusted himself to God entirely, even through temptation (see Matthew 4:1-11). All the rest of us exist somewhere in the continuum. When Jesus said, "You cannot serve God and mammon [wealth]" (Luke 16:13), he knew he was asking the impossible of us. Thus, on the one hand, we live in God's grace because we cannot totally center our being in God as Jesus did. On the other hand, by living as God's stewards we can move our center of identity closer to being rather than having.

I have come to see this principle as one of the most crucial insights into why we Christians have such ambivalent attitudes toward money and possessions. We think we ought to be able to solve our problems about money once and for all, but we never can. Like the person who both needs food and yet must use it wisely, so we all must acknowledge that we must *have* certain things in order to live. Therefore, stewards continually try to separate what we actually "need" from what we "want." Once we give in to feeding our wants, our appetites become limitless. A gift of Christian community is our mutual discernment distinguishing between wants and needs, and the encouragement to live faithfully in this paradoxical tension.

If you feel overwhelmed by the work ahead of you to become healthier and more balanced, reframe your work not as a problem to be solved, but as work that holds the dimensions of The Wholeness Wheel in creative tension. When we hold all six in creative tension, we soon realize that we may not be able to attend to all six every day or even every week. There are times when we will need to focus on only one or two. But by realizing these six must be kept in tension, we cannot neglect any of them for long or the tension will be lost. In other words, it's important to see the six dimensions as a whole and only secondarily to see them as six separate slices.

Bible-centered spirituality

Spiritual well-being totally surrounds The Wholeness Wheel, which is critical for a holistic perspective on stewardship. Today as never before church leaders are being asked to be spiritual leaders, guides, or mentors. Are we up to this challenge?¹¹

From a Lutheran perspective, the gift of God coming to us, especially in the death and resurrection of Jesus, directs spirituality like an engine pulls a train. Spirituality is God's gift to us. It is not a quest for God, but God's quest for us. Much of what passes for spirituality is humanity's attempt to find or aspire to God-likeness. However, in Jesus' death and resurrection, we have a God who has come to us and is among us and whose presence is there to be discovered through the gift and power of the Holy Spirit. Faith is the posture for developing spirituality. One pastor said, "Faith is the empty hands by which we receive the gifts of God."

Unlike a common contemporary understanding, spirituality is at its roots communal. Spirituality begins in baptism; it is grounded in grace. It is nourished first

and foremost in Word and Sacrament. Individual approaches to spiritual exercises will help us be free of distractions in order to listen to God, but these exercises grow from the communal, not the other way around. From these communal settings, one becomes increasingly aware that "...it is not I who lives, but Christ who lives in me." (Gal. 2:20)

Isn't Paul's confession here a perfect way to describe a steward? This is a foundational point about spirituality: it is not centered in us and our efforts; it is centered in God and God's invitation to recognize God's presence in our lives and in this world. Therefore, such spirituality is rooted in corporate worship and only secondarily in exercises done individually.

I began this essay by pointing out that a holistic view of stewardship, like Paul's view of the body as God's temple, is first and foremost communal and only secondarily individual. This point of view draws us to think holistically. The reality of the interconnected nature of the cosmos and the insight that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts can inform your use of The Wholeness Wheel and your way of exercising leadership. The insight that much of life is not a problem to be solved but a paradoxical tension in which to live, can radically change the worldview or lens by which we approach issues we confront daily and change our definition of success. Finally, a view of spirituality which is not an amorphous sentimentality but a robust practice rooted in worship will help us deepen a subsequent individual or small group practice that can anchor us in steward leadership.

Endnotes

1 The Jerome Biblical Commentary, Raymond Brown, Joseph Fitzmyer, Roland Murphy, eds., (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1968), p. 259 of the New Testament.

2 Henri J. M. Nouwen, *The Way of the Heart*, (New York: The Seabury Press, 1981), 22.

3 Eugene H. Peterson, *The Contemplative Pastor*, (Carol Stream, IL: Word Publishing, 1989), 140.

4 See William O. Avery and Beth Ann Gaede, *If This Is the Way the World Works*, (Herndon, VA: The Alban Institute, 2007), 68, and sources used there.

5 See *Holistic Health* from the American Holistic Health Association on the internet <http://ahha.org/rosen.htm>.

6 See *Holistic Education* from Wikipedia at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Holistic_education.

7 Loc. Cit.

8 Stanley Hauerwas and William H. Willimon, *Resident Aliens*, (Nashville: The Abingdon Press, 1989), 126.

9 Helmut Lehmann, general ed., Harold Grimm, ed., *Luther's Works*, American edition (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1957), 344.

10 Much of this material is found in Luke Timothy Johnson, *Sharing Possessions*, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981).

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4.

A Well-Formed Stewardship Leader Perceives Connectedness

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Choosing to love

It is a great time to be the church, not because it is going swimmingly, without conflict or contention, but because of where we are grounded: in God. The author of Ephesians understands this grounding. Paul's prayer for the believers in Ephesus:

I pray that, according to the riches of [God's] glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Ephesians 3:14-19

How does this play out for the Christian steward? G. K. Chesterton wrote, "My acceptance of the universe is not optimism, it is more like patriotism. It is a matter of primary loyalty. The world is not a lodging-house at Brighton, which we are to leave because it is miserable. It is the fortress of our family, with the flag flying on the turret, and the more miserable it is the less we should leave it. The point is not that this world is too sad to love or too glad not to love; the point is that when you do love a thing, its gladness is a reason for loving it, and its sadness a reason for loving it more." (Gilbert Keith Chesterton, *Orthodoxy*, John Lane Company, New York, 1908; p. 121)

For God, this world is not too sad to love. The point is that when God loves a world, its gladness is a reason for loving it, and its sadness a reason for loving it more

and filling it more with God's very own presence in Jesus Christ. I have heard many say that giving is in the DNA of all that exists by the power of God who has given us all that is good.

Think about how this works for new parents. In the first seconds after a hope-filled birth, the mother, who has been connected by umbilical cord for months now, just bonds to that child, now someone completely other than she is. When the father holds the child that is six seconds old, he bonds to that child, a miracle incarnate. They may not say it, but they know in their hearts the spirit of Romans 8, "As long as you live and I live, nothing shall separate you from my love! Nothing!" And then, for the next two or three months, they take on an exciting and miserable schedule of feeding every two hours, hovering over this child like robins over their tiny, chirping babes, ever on the wing to feed, protect, care for, brood over, and cover in their love. And then, for the rest of their lives they will seek to give and give and give and give to this one to whom they are most definitely connected.

Biblical witnesses used parental imagery often to help us understand God's connection to us. The writer of John's gospel expresses the fullness of the gospel with: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son..." (John 3:16) The Father sent the Son, not to remain distant, but to express the love that is within Emmanuel, God with us.

We speak of giving as that which is done with no strings attached, but that emphasis is only needed if there is a shared expectation of getting something in return. In God's economy, the giver has given because there are bonds of love connecting with the other that inspires the giving. "For God so *loved* the world that he gave..." In God's economy, giving is a desire to be connected with, to be determined to edify, to be excited about strengthening. Providential love and care goes deep. It goes so deep that we could never completely comprehend its fathomless undergirding.

The depth and breadth of God's love

The giving of God is lost if it is not seen as profoundly rejoicing over the very infrastructure of all things. From Chesterton's *Orthodoxy*:

All the towering materialism which dominates the modern mind rests ultimately upon one assumption; a false assumption. It is supposed that if a thing goes on repeating itself it is probably dead; a piece of clockwork. People feel that if the universe was personal it would vary; if the sun were alive it would dance. This is a fallacy even in relation to known fact. For the variation in human affairs is generally brought into them, not by life, but by death; by the dying down or breaking off of their strength or desire. A man varies his movements because of some slight element of failure or fatigue. He gets into an omnibus because he is tired of walking; or he walks because he is tired of sitting still....The thing I mean can be seen,

for instance, in children, when they find some game or joke that they specially enjoy. A child kicks his legs rhythmically through excess, not absence, of life. Because children have abounding vitality, because they are in spirit fierce and free, therefore they want things repeated and unchanged. They always say, "Do it again"; and the grown-up person does it again until he is nearly dead. For grown-up people are not strong enough to exult in monotony. But perhaps God is strong enough to exult in monotony. It is possible that God says every morning, "Do it again" to the sun; and every evening, "Do it again" to the moon. It may not be automatic necessity that makes all daisies alike; it may be that God makes every daisy separately, but has never got tired of making them. It may be that He has the eternal appetite of infancy; for we have sinned and grown old, and our Father is younger than we. The repetition in Nature may not be a mere recurrence; it may be a theatrical ENCORE."

p. 107-109

The more I love, the more I want to get into the very infrastructure of it all. When my wife and I were younger and got a birth notice from a friend, we pampered the relationship and their joy by sending a silver bracelet the size of a small rubber band that may be remembered from time to time. But now that we are grandparents of a six-month old, we are giving that child diapers! We give that child baby food, clothes, dozens of books, CD's of all kinds of songs, and developmental toys of every size and texture! I won't get near the ground to stop a leak in my house, but I am all over the floor around my grandchild! And what joy there is in giving time to this one and being asked to do nothing more than to hold the child so her mom can be about doing other things. The more I love, the more I desire to get connected into the very depth of the infrastructure!

Because of this, I wonder if God grieves the loss of every species of animal and seed that is a loving part of God's infrastructure of creation with all its ecological cycles, while we, the creatures, for the sake of our ever important progress, simply discount the loss of thousands of species a decade as having no bearing at all upon our decisions.

The hope in our stewardship

Giving goes to the infrastructure of life. It not only is of the DNA of God's universe, it also impacts the whole world. Imagine the joyful, intentional, loving stewardship of a whole life that knows its giving is not in vain but is a willful, faithful desire to tap into the whole infrastructure of God's design!

I have often heard that the wind created by the butterfly's wings in China impacts the winds that scatter seeds in Iowa. I wonder what God is able to do with a

life of stewardship lived in love in this world. If a widow's two copper coins could so capture and impact our Lord's Church through twenty centuries, imagine what a lifetime of intentional, loving, sacrificial giving has silently done for countless others in our Lord's name.

There is an excitement and a joy and a love that desires to make things happen for another. There is a rich pleasure in seeing that it is making a difference for the other, that the giving truly does edify, brings hope, builds capabilities, opens doors, launches new beginnings, taps the ability to perform, ignites confidence, sets apart, generates spirit, crafts confidence, puts grounded plans to flight. But that's the reason that you plant a red bud tree, so you can see the beauty of what you intentionally, lovingly planted in your grounded hope. You have an ability to see its spring beauty in red to purple to lavender to pink in its blooming, its summer fullness, its autumn colors. The unseen impact, however, are the thousands of seeds blown by the wind, taken by birds to countless unseen places where forests are launched by the scores of generations to come.

Stewardship is a willingness not only to connect the giving to an intended hope in love; it is the willingness to be connected to all that is and can be in God's hands. Stewardship is being a tiny, tiny part of the whole body, a drop in the whole blood system, a single cell in the constant, ongoing forming and dividing, a spark in the nerve system. And that drop, that cell, that spark quickly becomes a part of the whole.

My, how I have seen this in the life of the Church! But one example: Single drops of baptismal water in Southwest, Virginia dropped upon John A. Morehead were turned into drops of sweat for and around the world. Morehead became a Lutheran youth who became pastor, teacher, scholar, professor and president of Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, President of Roanoke College, President of the United Synod South, chairman of the European Commission of the national Lutheran Council, Executive Director of the National Lutheran Council, President of the Lutheran World Convention. "Morehead organized the distribution of clothing, food and money from America given for the people of more than a dozen European countries, feeding thousands of people daily in Russia. Four countries nominated him for the Nobel Peace Prize but he died before a selection was made." (George E. Handley, *Biographical Sketches of Lutheran Pastors in Virginia*, Virginia Synod, LCA, 1992.) His leadership brought together over 80 million Lutherans from forty nations.

Global community

In late July 2010, I attended the Eleventh Assembly of the Lutheran World Federation in Stuttgart, Germany. I met dozens and dozens of Lutherans from around the world, and I had many, many conversations over meals and at tea breaks during the conference. As soon as they would hear that I was from the ELCA, they would speak of the companion synod of the ELCA with which they were connected. There

are 120 such connections in 79 countries. I listened to bishops speak to how the crisis of refugees in Kenya, Rwanda, or Sierra Leone triggered a chain reaction. The Lutheran response was shaped by local congregations which engaged the judicatory bodies of Lutheran congregations in these countries, which then connected to synods and congregations around the world, all connected by baptismal water drops, wine drops, sweat and blood drops and pennies dropped. I witnessed my dollars given to the church both absorbed and reformed in the vastness of ministries going out in every direction. My offering re-emerged, visible now in bishops of national churches who had been educated in seminaries in Europe and America, in bright, competent youth from around the world serving in medical fields, teaching fields, mission fields. And the enzyme for all this was offerings, added to prophets and evangelists speaking about the needs of the world and what God can do through us now.

I became caught up in trying to make sense of how my cents were part of seminaries, colleges, outdoor ministries, hospitals, social service agencies, preschools, elementary and high schools, public works, private care for seniors, new congregations, old congregations, circulating through the infrastructure of a network of local, synodical, churchwide, global expressions. And then came the greetings from the World Council of Churches, the World Communion of Reformed Churches, the Head of the World Mennonite Churches, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Patriarch of the Orthodox Church, Cardinal Kasper as a Papal Legate from the Pope. I thought of the many dialogues with these bodies of Christians and our ongoing work with them in responding to disasters. I then began to think about our ongoing dialogues with those of the Jewish faith and Islamic faith and our working with them as we respond to disasters around the globe, too.

The stewardship of my life was connected to all of this, caught up in the DNA of the giving God, and loving the very infrastructure of it because God so loves it that the Father gave his only Son. The Son so loves it that he emptied himself and came into the midst of it and died at the hands of it, for it. The Spirit so loves that the Church is strengthened with the fruits of love, joy, peace, kindness, gentleness, generosity, faithfulness, and self-control. (see Galatians 5:22)

Stewardship as legacy

Isaiah warned Hezekiah, “Hear the word of the Lord: Days are coming when all that is in your house, and that which your ancestors have stored up until this day, shall be carried to Babylon; nothing shall be left, says the Lord. Some of your own sons who are born to you shall be taken away.” Then Hezekiah said to Isaiah, “The word of the Lord that you have spoken is good.’ For he thought, ‘why not, if there will be peace and security in my days?’”(2 Kings 20:16-19)

Hezekiah had a short-term perspective. How far this is from St. Paul’s words to Timothy: “Guard the good treasure entrusted to you, with the help of the Holy Spirit living in us.”(2 Timothy 1:14)

Our connectedness is both time specific, and across time. We are the recipients of the legacy of the faith of our forbearers. We have also received a world they developed and tended. We are also leaving a legacy, whether we do so intentionally or not. Our stewardship to generations to come is all about the way we are stewards of life now. If God was so in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, how much more as Ambassadors for Christ, then, should we be engaged in the very infrastructure of our Lord's Church and our Lord's world!

Stewardship within, from and of community

I was struck by this "Century Mark":

Hold Tight: For over 20 years Kyle Childress' Baptist congregation in Texas has ended worship with a ritual he learned from an African-American pastor: 'Let's take each other's hands,' it begins. 'Now look who you're holding hands with, and hold on tight! Because we're going to need each other this week.' Over the years several members have told Childress that at first they didn't know how to respond when encountering a crisis, until it hit them: they could call the person whose hand they had held the previous Sunday." (October 19th 2010 issue, *The Christian Century*, volume 127, number 21) <http://www.faqs.org/periodicals/201010/2172849531.html>

We can lean on our communities to support ourselves when we are in need. This is a powerful way of both being connected and of strengthening connection.

Stewardship is also about how we respond as communities. Together we can do so much more. Recall the powerful reach of joint efforts, such as Lutheran World Federation, the World Council of Churches, Lutheran Services in America, Lutheran Social Services, campus ministries, outdoor ministries, and so many others that require our connection to serve.

But we are also called to be stewards of our communities themselves, both our faith communities and our civic communities. In a culture that so values the individual, we can lose sight of the tending a community requires. We can neglect the hard work of nurturing and enhancing the health and vision of our communities, not so much for the sake of the communities themselves, but so that they can carry out the mission for which they have been created.

Giving is connectedness. It is the DNA of the universe of the God who said, "Let there be Light," and "This is my beloved Son." With hands outstretched from the cross, he has held us tight and we cling to him. As God's ambassadors, we move *our* hands from our own pockets to meet the open hands of sisters and brothers, those next to you in the pew, those across the world, and those yet to come.

5.

A Well-formed Stewardship Leader Engages and Critiques Culture

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Scarcity and Abundance: Today's Cultural Fault Line

“We think we are a Christian nation, but we are not,” says Harold Bloom. “We are Americanized Gnostics, believers in a pre-Christian tradition of individual divinity. Americans believe that God knows and loves them in a personal way, and that something inside them, deeper even than a soul, is already in contact with God. The American self stands outside of creation; it is older than creation, as old as God, of which it is a part. In the American religion, to be free is to be joined in solitude with God, or Jesus, the American God or the American Christ.” (Harold Bloom, *The American Religion: The Emergence of the Post-Christian Nation*, Simon and Shuster, 1993, jacket cover)

Harold Bloom offers a strong critique of our American way of life. Do you agree with him? Agree or not, we are invited as Christian stewards to step outside of ourselves to look at the structures and norms among us that have cultural momentum. We are charged to ask, “Must it be this way?”

There are any number of game-changing contemporary realities to offer up for review:

- Books being “cooked” at places like Enron, where ethics were strained or even abandoned for the sake of serving shareholders and improving the bottom line of some above others.
- Real estate as the next big thing, profit continually skimmed off the top with ever more complicated credit arrangements, until it could not be sustained any more.

- Ballooning deficits at all government levels driving painful and sometimes unjust fiscal balancing acts. Too often those without leverage are the first to get cut: children and their schools, people who are hungry, the elderly, the medically uninsured, those who live in poverty.

The Christian steward is not an automatic foe or advocate of any economic system. Christian stewards hold before themselves the model of God's vision of good for all. It is an abundant vision that tilts toward the orphan, the widow, the last, the least, the lost, the most vulnerable. In God's vision we are all deeply connected. The wellbeing of any impacts the wellbeing of all. This vision of abundance for all is the steward's primary lens.

Instead of deep connection, our world is lurching along with a scarcity model, marked by hyper individualism, fear, and a too-frequent inability to remember our connection to each other, especially the most vulnerable. In the words of Bernstein's MASS, "How easily things get broken." (Leonard Bernstein, MASS, *XVI Fraction: Things Get Broken*, 1997)

When we lose our sense of connection with one another we lose our sense of holy obligation. Jesus taught that sharing the need is not a burden. Budgets are one place to look for evidence of our spiritual health, both in our governmental efforts and church efforts to respond to our common life together. For example, our churchwide and synodical budgets reflect our efforts on behalf of the most vulnerable among us: mission pastors, congregations in poverty, parish schools, candidates for ministry, congregations in vacancy or at risk, fragile new ethnic ministry starts, struggling congregations in stressed communities, under-funded campus ministries, accompaniment in places of hurt and hope around the world (including Haiti and addressing AIDS and malaria in Africa).

I think most of the issues in the church and the public square run along this fault line between a sense of limited resources and a sense of God's abundance rooted in justice. Frankly, this struggle is as old as creation. But so is stewardship of the public square, the art of naming and tending in the garden which makes us human. In the Garden we are subjects of history, actors and actresses. Naming, blessing, tending the Garden is as old as creation and inherent in bearing the "image of God." Steward leaders proclaim that everyone is created in the image of God.

Steward leaders who are willing to critique the culture and call out the ethics of these two colliding economies are able to see the beginnings of renewal. Steward leaders do not believe that God is holding out on us. Steward leaders expect miracles from an abundant God. Steward leaders know that truthful engagement with the culture is another opportunity for the people of God to be transformed in the generosity of the Gospel.

Here is what a stewardship of abundance looks like. Our delegation approached the village of Bushasha, Tanzania, near Lake Victoria by the border with Uganda and Rwanda. Even at a distance, beating drums anticipate our arrival. The villagers begin

to shout in Swahili, “*Karibu! Karibu!*” (Welcome, and welcome again in the Name of Jesus!) In this part of the world, getting enough to eat is a daily struggle and yet they have prepared a feast for us. The rubble of their church lies in the background, destroyed by Idi Amin’s bombs years ago. They cannot afford the bricks to restore it. Out under some trees we worship the God of abundance and celebrate the Eucharist.

During the offertory the people rise and move toward the altar. Some bring money. Those too poor to bring money offer what they possess: sugarcane, a goat, a bunch of bananas, bolts of cloth, an egg, cassava, yams. Everyone brings something. Everyone has a gift. After the liturgy it is auctioned. Those with money buy from those without. It all goes to the Lord in a renovated economy where all have gifts.

They prepared a feast for us. The pastor told me that they had saved food for days, but not just to feed us. This impoverished congregation used our arrival to collect the food necessary to feed others in Bushasha. As the liturgy ended, neighbors came streaming down the hillside to be fed by the stewards of Bushasha. So, in a place where it looked like there weren’t even two loaves or any fish, God’s generosity and the great faith of the people produced a vision of what it looks like when people hear the words of Jesus, “YOU give them something to eat.” (Matthew 14:16) The African church believes that the one who gave the command is the one who provides the food. The very act of feeding the poor and welcoming the stranger with the large and small gifts of every person was a powerful critique of the myth of scarcity. Our God is generous indeed!

Our best way to engage and critique a culture of scarcity is through our transformation into disciples and stewards who live God’s vision. Yet over the past decade the collective generosity of the members of the ELCA has been declining. Could we need to reform our own culture as well as that of the public square?

Survival and Abundance

There is a long and persistent Biblical tradition that places the theology of the Jewish faith and communities, and then of the Christian faith and communities, within the larger socio-political and religious context. Norman Gottwald speaks of two competing narratives, or ways of understanding and being in the world. One was the ethos of survival coming out of the Canaanite myths and the other was the ethos of Yahweh, the God of the widows and orphans. One is a consensus of scarcity, the other a consensus of abundance. (Norman Gottwald, *The Tribes of Yahweh: A Sociology of the Religion of Liberated Israel*, Sheffield Academic Press, 1999)

The larger socio-political context for Jesus and the emerging Christian tradition was the patronage system of the Roman *polis* or city. This was a zero sum game. It continued the tension between an ethos of scarcity and one of abundance. To hear the way the social order was being turned upside down in Jewish theology, listen to Mary’s Magnificat: “...he has brought down the mighty from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly...” (Luke 1:52), and in the first sermon Jesus preached in Nazareth

(based on Isaiah 58): “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor...” (Luke 4:18)

These competing myths of scarcity and abundance are with us today. This biblical ethos of compassion for the least, the last, the most vulnerable informs the life of the steward and the way in which Lutheran Christians engage and critique the culture. Let us see how these two worlds clash and engage by examining how Jesus and Paul taught about stewardship for the life of the world.

The Macedonian Offering: Interdependence

“They gave themselves first to the Lord and, by the will of God to us...” (2 Corinthians 8:5) With that simple sentence we get to the heart of what is at stake in the mission support and stewardship of our church and each of its disciples. Money and mission support is a referendum on relationships. Priorities are clarified. It is a spiritual issue.

In 2 Corinthians 8, Paul unpacks for his Corinthian audience the game-changing Macedonian offering he promoted. In 8:13, we get a little lecture on ancient economics as Paul engages the culture and critiques it. “I do not mean that there should be relief for others and pressure on you, but it is a question of a fair balance...” Paul is offering the idea of a just distribution of wealth as a way toward unity in the midst of economic diversity. The far flung churches involved in this offering were geographically diverse, like the ELCA. They were economically diverse, as well, like the ELCA. Paul is actually trying to say here that the way in which we share our wealth captures how we see our relationships. It’s a new economics. I am suggesting that there is something about relationships that is really critical here in how Paul (and Jesus) understood how money works (see also Acts 2:42).

Paul was invoking the patronage system in Hellenic and Roman culture. In the *polis* (city), giving money bestowed power, status and honor on the *oikoumene* (household) that gives it. Charity or patronizing the arts built power for the giver. Sound familiar?

However, Paul wanted to drive toward unity and the value of every member of the community, so he began with the gifts of the poor, not the neediness of the poor. He also sought to protect the collection by stressing equality and reciprocity. Paul’s message reflected this from the beginning of the “campaign.” First they gave themselves to the Lord. They did that by repenting after they were fighting with each other. And then, by the will of God—meaning God wants this—they gave themselves to us. Those giving *and* those receiving are both part of the church. For Paul, stewardship rests on relationships, not only individual relationships, but our communal relationships; what it means to be interdependent; what it means to live from and for others. See also 2 Corinthians 9:6-8.

Paul learned this from Jesus, who referred to this patronage system when confronting the status ambitions of Peter and John (Mark 10:35-45). Each wanted to sit at the side of Jesus in power and status. Jesus reminded them that in the patronage

system of the Gentiles the rich and prominent lord it over those below them. Jesus said to Peter and John, “But it is not be so among you.” (Mark 10:43a) With Jesus, the power ladder is inverted. The last shall be first, and the first shall be last. This is the spirit Paul drew on for the Macedonian offering.

A transformed patronage system has something to say about the church’s radical call to relationship and inclusion to community with and among the poor. For some, that is a personal call, but not for all. The church bears this call collectively, and some will be called to that radical discipleship, as were Jesus and the twelve. Some will be called instead to radical patronage... a Jesus-infused patronage that says that God has blessed us to be a blessing. There is a place for both the Macedonians and the Corinthians in this call to radical discipleship and Jesus-style patronage.

I see offerings and mission support in that way; that somehow those who have a lot share what they have and those don’t have quite as much receive what they need. In this way everyone is part of the sharing. And when the church turns its face towards those without the Gospel, the stranger, and those who are poor, it’s always being renewed. That’s why offerings are such a powerful sign of hope.

Paul invites the Corinthians and the ELCA to see ourselves as Macedonians. In other words, at exactly that point where a spirit of conflict or fear or scarcity is the most powerful—when we look for what reduction in spending will help us survive given the economy and all the other pressures—a gift made to the wider church or to the synod becomes the Macedonian offering. In fact we are called to rejoice in this poverty and to embrace the radical joy that comes from giving ourselves to God and to each other. In this way a community of abundance in Jesus encounters a culture of scarcity and fear.

The good life and Jesus’ love

The story in Mark 10:17-31 begins with a question: “What must I do to inherit eternal life?” Jesus responds with a call: drop everything and follow me. The story has three sections.

In section one, a rich man emerges from the crowds and asks the question: “What must I do to inherit eternal life?” The question is not about *bios*, the Greek word for physical life, it is about *zoa*, eternal life, life from God. The questioner depicts this life as an inheritance to be bestowed at the end of days. The tension in the question is between this and a way of life flowing from Jesus’ invitation to follow him. Life after death? Or life now and forever?

Jesus’ first move is to humor him and allow him to display his own righteousness. Then, *in love*, Jesus confronts this righteous man. Love is the context of our efforts to teach and live as stewards in our parishes, synods, and as churchwide. The love of Jesus surrounds us in this work. Our love of Jesus, of one another, and of those we are called to serve lifts us up in hopefulness and the confidence of faith. “Jesus, looking upon him, loved him.” (Mark 10:21)

Go. Sell. Give. Come. Follow. This is not something he must do, but something

he must be able to receive from God. The gift to be received is the gift of being called to follow Jesus. The man can't receive it because his hands are full. The gift is a life of discipleship that involves dispossession, a lightening of his load, a freeing of his hands. In the light of this story what does this say about the average of 1.7 percent stewardship in the ELCA? (The biblical tithe is 10%) How will we teach this story to one another? Life, *zoa*, is at stake.

Section two follows with a discussion between Jesus and the disciples about this encounter. Jesus says, "How hard it will be for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!" (Mark 10:23b) He invokes the image of a camel trying to slouch through the eye of a needle. The disciples wonder who can be saved, and Jesus responds that all things are possible with God. The common wisdom is that riches are seen as a sign of God's favor, not as an obstacle. Seeing riches as a sign of God's favor, faulty spiritual wisdom according to this story, lies behind so much of the life of each of us and those we are called to serve. It lies behind the hubris of rich nations. Thus the question of the disciples, Who then can be saved, hearkens back to the quandary illustrated by the rich man: how do I receive what God offers? This is the question that lies at the heart of how we follow Jesus.

In section three, Peter asserts "Look, we have left everything and followed you." (Mark 10:28) Jesus tells him he will receive one hundred fold here and in eternal life. The last shall be first, and the first last. This section is about the life that Jesus offers in the community of the Church, the community of the cross. Peter's response, like the rich man's, asserts his righteousness. Jesus points out the result of receiving what he offers: life in the community of the cross, many brothers, sisters, mothers, fathers, children...oh, and persecution and a task and labor that will bring you up against trouble. The gift comes with a community. What we receive is life together that bears the world in its alienation, suffering and death.

I don't believe that we have a money problem in our church. What we have is a faith issue and the collision of two economies. These economies collide with every decision we make about this world's goods. It's about dispossession and reception. It's about keeping our eyes on the brothers and sisters God has given us in the process of every decision we make.

The human economy (what must I do) is about acquisition and possession, about scarcity and insecurity. It is alienating. It is the culture of Enron. It is the image of the rich man, alone, unable to receive Jesus' gift because his hands are full.

The economy of God is always about something received, a calling, a gift, a given community. When we are caught up in an economy of possession, goaded by fear, scarcity and individualism, this is the exact place where the steward leader's critique is needed to speak to full hands and anxious hearts. Yet God's critique does not break out *against* us to judge and condemn us, but to draw us out into the community of the cross. Maybe that's something like a church in mission, together on the road.

6.

A Well-Formed Stewardship Leader Embraces Financial Health as an Expression of Faith

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If you are reading these articles in order, by now you are completely convinced that life with God includes healthy stewardship of all God has given. Obviously, if (competency #1) I trust in God's abundance, (#2) ground myself in biblical and theological perspectives, (#3) hold a holistic perspective, (#4) perceive connectedness, and (#5) engage and critique culture, then I certainly (#6) embrace financial health as an expression of faith. No brainer! But it can be one thing to be convinced in the abstract that financial health is an expression of faith, and quite another thing to see how my own financial health is an expression of my faith.

If you are not reading these articles in order, perhaps you turned to this final article as a way to read the 'ending' before you read from start to finish. Well, the 'ending' is this: your personal financial health is an important dimension of your overall "faith-health." The robustness of your faith is expressed, at least in part, in the faithfulness of your attitudes towards money and all that money represents.

In the final stewardship competency, the rubber hits the road, as they say. The sixth competency focuses specifically on embracing *my* financial health as an expression of *my* faith. A beneficial by-product of this first-person focus will be an increased ability to assess and enable the financial health of congregations. But make no mistake, until steward leaders have their own financial houses in order, they cannot be effective in leading others in this area.

Core perspectives: beliefs about money

1. Our relationship with money is an integral part of our relationship with God.

Americans are very good at segmenting our lives into what we have come to see as opposites: sacred and secular, public and private, business and pleasure, individual and community, body and soul. We didn't invent this tendency to compartmentalize our lives; we are heirs of centuries of Western tradition that drew distinct contrasts between spiritual and non-spiritual aspects of life. In the sixteenth century, the phrase 'filthy lucre' was first used in a publication by William Tyndale, the great translator of the Bible into English. Now phrased 'filthy rich,' the topic of money conjures up vague feelings of shame. In some cases, the Church itself focused more and more on a dualistic understanding of life, emphasizing eternal life in heaven to the exclusion of life here and now. So it's no wonder we think of our relationship with money as belonging to the secular side of life, disconnected from our relationship with God.

But as soon as we realize what we're saying – that our relationship with money is disconnected from our relationship with God – we know that can't be right. God calls us to be disciples as whole persons, all the time, engaged in all aspects of life on earth. And in this day and age, life on earth involves money. We know that our relationship with God is all-encompassing because that's what the Bible teaches.

"You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might" (Deuteronomy 6:5). As the Israelites are poised to enter the Promised Land, Moses summarizes the people's commitment to God in this well-known verse. Centuries later, Jesus would cite the verse as the epitome of the Law (Matthew 22:37; Mark 12:30; Luke 10:27). It's hard to miss the use of the word 'all' in threefold repetition, a sign of completeness in the ancient world. In this all-encompassing commitment, our relationship from money cannot be excluded.

In the Gospels, we note that Jesus talks about money more than any other topic except the kingdom of God – more than sin, more than love, more than heaven and hell. And of course, what Jesus says about money is not unrelated to what Jesus says about the kingdom of God. For example, in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus moves seamlessly from being generous to loving our enemies to giving alms to praying to fasting (Matthew 5:38-6:18). All our attitudes and actions are caught up in our relationship with God. Living in covenant relationship with God demands nothing less.

2. We have an understanding of the power that money can hold in our family, church, and community

It goes without saying that money is power in today's world. In and of itself, money as power is not necessarily a bad thing. Money as power can become a bad thing when it takes hold of our attitudes and actions. Jesus puts the issue starkly: "No one can serve two masters; for a slave will either hate the one and love the other, or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth."

(Matthew 6:24) When money becomes master, we become idolaters, worshipping something other than the God who claims and calls us.

Perhaps you have seen the cartoon by Thom Tapp: in the first panel, the pastor and an adult baptismal candidate are standing in a baptismal pool. The pastor says, “Well, Charles, when I baptize you... (second panel) everything that goes under belongs to God.” In the third panel, the candidate is fully submerged, except for his arm stuck out of the water holding his wallet.



The Baptism

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The Bible warns against failing to submit totally to God’s rule over all of our lives. In Deuteronomy, shortly after the admonition to commit totally to God noted above, the people are warned about the temptations of life in the Promised Land. “Take care that you do not forget the LORD your God ... When you have eaten your fill and have built fine houses and live in them, and when your herds and flocks have multiplied, and your silver and gold is multiplied, and all that you have is multiplied, then do not exalt yourself, forgetting the LORD your God, ... Do not say to yourself, ‘My power and the might of my own hand have gotten me this wealth.’ But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth, so that he may confirm his covenant” (Deuteronomy 8:11-18). It’s easy to think that the salary we ‘earn’ is entirely our own doing. We forget the talents God gave us that enable us to do the work we do, the fortuitous circumstances of living in a country with a market economy that will pay fair wages and benefits, the sacrifices made by others to equip us with the education and skills needed, the God-given gifts of family and friends who support us in our occupations. It’s easy to think that we do it all ourselves. Sat-

isfaction with a good standard of living can lead us to serve money as master, rather than God who gives and enables all good things.

Signals of the beliefs being practiced

1. Transparency with self and others regarding the relationship with money

The core practices that emerge from our core beliefs include truth-telling to ourselves and others about how we see money as part of our relationship with God and how we resist the insidious temptation to serve money as master of our lives. A great way to begin to get a handle on transparency in your own life is to write a Money Autobiography, the story of the formation of your relationship with money. (See the appendix for suggested questions to stimulate thoughts.) This exercise helps us see, for example, that family members raised during the Great Depression taught us to save for a rainy day; or another example is that you learned that shopping is a remedy for loneliness or boredom. The assumption is that once we can understand our own attitudes about money and how it functions in our lives, we can make healthier and more faithful decisions about money.

Transparency with self and others also means intentionally raising our own consciousness about how money functions in our lives. One simple way to begin to raise our awareness is to connect attitudes about money to everyday activities. For example, whenever I pray the petition, “Give us this day our daily bread,” I intentionally lower my voice to a whisper. It serves to remind me to be aware of how my own daily bread is shared (or not) with others. It reminds me of my well-meaning and oft-repeated resolutions to do more to fight hunger and poverty. Sometimes, raising awareness of attitudes can have a better chance of success and be more fun if we do it with others. I have a ritual with one of my friends that our parting words to each other are always, “Go in peace, keep warm and eat your fill.” The quote comes from James 2:16, where the author is making the point that faith necessarily brings forth good works. The entire sentence is, “If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, and one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill,’ and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that?” (James 2:15-16) For my friend and me, it serves as a reminder that our words of goodwill call for acts of justice. And the best part is – if someone overhears and looks at us funny, we get to explain what we’re up to.

Involving others in our attempt to be transparent can provide a means of critique when we need it. The parable of the bigger barns in Luke 12 follows the admonition of Jesus, “Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of possessions.” (Luke 12:15) The farmer’s crops are so abundant that his barns are bursting at the seams. The farmer goes astray when he “thinks to himself” (Luke 12:17). That’s when he comes up with the selfish and self-aggrandizing idea to pull down the current barns and build bigger ones. What if the farmer had consulted a friend with his problem? Or asked the community how best

to deal with the plentiful harvest? Someone outside the immediate situation could have suggested a better way: share the harvest with those who have need, or at least store the abundance in someone else's barn and pay them rent!

When we are not transparent with ourselves about our attitudes toward money, we become oblivious to those around us. The biblical prophets rail against the rich, not specifically because they are rich, but because they are rich and oblivious. Amos castigates the rich elite of Israel because they lie around all day on ivory couches and drink wine from bowls, "but are not grieved over the ruin of Joseph," that is, their neighbors and kin (Amos 6:6). The rich man in Jesus' parable in Luke 16 is doomed to eternal torment because he was luxuriously rich and completely oblivious to the destitute Lazarus lying just outside. One wonders how things would have turned out if just one of those at the rich man's feast had called his attention to the poor man at the gate.

2. A commitment to manage and monitor personal financial health

Personal financial health is best achieved in the same way as personal physical health: develop good daily habits and have an annual check-up. Good habits include basics like preparing a budget so that you live within your means, saving, giving, paying debts on time, and continuing to learn about financial issues. Again, involving others in your good habits can be a way to reinforce good behaviors. Some years ago, I decided to shop at consignment or thrift stores before shopping at retail department stores. My mother was at first embarrassed by my new behavior, I think because she feared people would think I could only afford hand-me-downs. I saw my new behavior as a decision for recycling and as wise stewardship of resources. I persisted, and even began dragging her along with me. Now we both enjoy rummaging through consignment and thrift store items, rejoicing in our good bargains. The money I save by shopping this way is donated to charities, extending the wise stewardship of resources.

At least once per year, everyone should have a financial check-up. Make a personal balance sheet. Record all the details of your assets: bank accounts, investments, retirement accounts, real estate, cars, and furnishings. Record all the details of your liabilities: credit card debt, mortgage, student loan debt, other debt. Make sure your insurance coverage is adequate based on the replacement cost of your assets. Make sure your estate planning distributes your assets to your desired beneficiaries, including charitable institutions. Review your debt ratios to see if you are living within your means. Review your investment allocations to make sure you are diversified among cash, stocks, and bonds. Commit to socially responsible investments. Review your expected resources available upon retirement, including social security, retirement savings, and any defined benefit plans (pensions). Commit to reading at least one article each month on financial issues in an effort to become more conversant and knowledgeable about financial matters.

Your personal financial health matters. It matters in the sense that you need to manage and monitor your personal finances so that you can live a productive and joyful life in service to God. Perhaps more importantly, it matters because others in the Church are watching you. As a leader, your actions will always speak more loudly than your words. You cannot talk to others about living within your means if you cannot demonstrate it. This is especially true for rostered leaders who serve in charitable institutions – never forget, you are living on other people’s resources and your personal financial stewardship matters.

Core leadership skills: beliefs and personal behaviors influence leadership

1. Foster a climate that supports others as they deal with money in their lives (giving, saving, spending)

The core beliefs have led to core practices by stewards who are now ready to lead others into being stewards. To the extent that core practices discussed above were helpful in developing your own financial health, it makes sense to offer those practices to others by means of personal testimony. There are many potential venues for this in congregational life:

- Teaching experiences are particularly appropriate for such self-disclosure and encouragement of others to embark on a life of personal financial health as an expression of faith in God.
- Counseling sessions can be fruitful places for extended discussion about the role of money with those about to be married, already married, about to engage in baptism or confirmation rituals, or recently widowed.
- Adult education sessions can be offered on investments, debt counseling, retirement planning, and estate planning. Good curricular materials are available for talking about money with children and youth.
- Of course, preaching on biblical texts is also a venue for talking openly about the role of money in our lives, although preachers will want to exercise caution in a context that is an explicitly one-sided monologue without opportunity for further conversation.

2. Assess a congregation’s money/finance/stewardship culture (ethics, transparency, etc.)

Leaders should give as much attention to assessing a congregation’s stewardship culture as they do to assessing its worship culture or education culture or mission culture. A congregation’s stewardship culture is the product of tradition, attitudes and habits of individual members, contextual influences, and imitation of leaders. Developing a Money Autobiography of the congregation can involve lots of members and will uncover deep-seated values about money. Investigate the details of the budgeting process. Improve transparency by engaging a wide cross-section of the congregation in preparation and approval of the budget. Governance structures, es-

pecially for making and reviewing personnel decisions, should model our values of ethical, transparent life in community.

Differences of opinion often arise around the disclosure of personal financial information, whether on the revenue side (who contributes what amount) or on the expense side (who is paid what). Typically, the more secretive people want to be, the more they understand money as a private matter disconnected from both their relationship with God and their commitment to a public community of faith. These conflicts can be opportunities for rich, honest discussion on the role of money in our lives as an expression of faith.

Just as the personal attitudes and habits of leaders teach congregation members, so the habits of congregations teach their own members. For example, congregations who regularly engage in fundraising activities outside the annual budget teach members that the budget is not an all-inclusive funding of the congregation's ministry. Members will learn to hold back in regular contributions because they know they will be asked to contribute outside the budget process. In addition, fundraising outside the budget encourages members to discriminate regarding which ministries they will financially support, without engaging in communal discussion of the mission priorities of the congregation as a part of the annual budget process. For example, if the youth ministry is primarily supported by fundraising events, those who see youth ministry as a priority will contribute financially. But the issue of youth ministry as a congregational priority is avoided at annual budget meetings. Congregations who undertake large amounts of debt without a credible plan for repayment teach members to live beyond their means.

3. Comprehend how the basics of congregational finance (budgeting, balance sheets, risk management, etc.) impact the mission of the congregation

Every congregation makes financial decisions about the use of scarce resources, including personnel, property, and money. Steward leaders are called to interpret a congregation's financial decisions to tell the story of mission. A congregation's budget is a ministry plan for mission, disclosing missional priorities and constraints.

Steward leaders are also called to see that sufficient policies and procedures are in place to guarantee the safeguarding of the congregation's assets. Dual controls should be in place for handling cash. Donor restrictions on funds should be honored. Policies should be in place governing investments and endowments. Annual audits should be undertaken. Property should be protected (fire suppression, fencing, etc.) and insured. Although congregations normally do not account for depreciation in their annual budgets, adequate reserves should be accumulated for property replacement or refurbishment.

Competent steward leaders embrace financial health as an expression of faith, both in their own lives and in the lives of the communities they serve. Living in covenant relationship with God demands nothing less.

APPENDIX A:

Writing a Money Autobiography

Use the following questions to help you recall your story of the formation of your relationship with money in three stages.

Your Past Story

- o What was the prevailing attitude about money in your family during your childhood and adolescence: Never enough? Plenty? Talked about? Secretive?
- o Who controlled the money in your family of origin? Why?
- o As a child, how did you come to have money? Did you get an allowance? Did you work? Did you ask for money when you needed it? How do you remember feeling about this?
- o As a young adult (high school, college) how did you come to have money? Did you get an allowance? Did you work? Did you ask for money when you needed it? How do you remember feeling about this?
- o How did the amount of money you had as a young adult influence your feelings of self-worth? Did it impact your lifestyle?
- o What do you remember seeing and hearing about giving to others, including the congregation? Who taught you about charitable giving?
- o Who stands out as your primary role model for what you learned about money management?

Your Present Story

- o How would you describe your present attitude toward money?
- o Do you discuss your financial situation with any other person? How comfortable are you talking about your personal finances?
- o Who controls the money in your family now? Are there differing attitudes in your family around money?
- o How does the amount of money you have now influence your feelings of self-worth? How does it impact your lifestyle?
- o What is your current charitable giving? Are you tithing? Why or why not?

Your Future Story

- o In what directions do you sense the Holy Spirit is leading you in your relationship with money? What would you like to experience differently about your relationship with money?
- o What values and beliefs inspire you in your relationship with money?
- o What obstacles and beliefs hinder you in your relationship with money?
- o What are the next steps in your relationship with money?

How Much Is Enough?

APPENDIX B:

Competencies in a Well-Formed Stewardship Leader



“And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work.”

2 Corinthians 9:8
—NRSV



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Appendix B: Competencies in a Well-Formed Stewardship Leader
also available at [http://www.elca.org/Growing-In-Faith/Discipleship/
Stewardship/Competencies.aspx](http://www.elca.org/Growing-In-Faith/Discipleship/Stewardship/Competencies.aspx)



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Competencies
in a well-formed
stewardship
leader

For Pastors, Deaconesses, Diaconal
Ministers and Associates in Ministry

What qualities should a stewardship leader have?

These competencies are a way of thinking about what attributes or assets a well-formed stewardship leader would have. This list is meant to be a guide for leadership formation in this church. Those who work with stewardship in congregations may find these competencies helpful for their work. These competencies can help calibrate stewardship health for all who lead, no matter the number of years of service to this church or what title is held.

The list assumes that every leader in the ELCA grounds stewardship behaviors in beliefs about one's relationship with God. The *core perspectives* column reflects beliefs; the *core practices* column reflects abilities or behaviors; and the *core leadership skills* column reflects behaviors the leader uses to lead others.

This document has been developed (as directed by the 2007 Churchwide Assembly) by the Stewardship of Life Institute and has been reviewed and favorably received by ELCA seminars. These competencies are offered to this church for guidance and advice in forming and supporting effective, healthy, missional public ministers with clear perspectives, sound personal habits and confident leadership skills in stewardship.

CORE PERSPECTIVES	CORE PRACTICES
The pastor, deaconess, diaconal minister or associate in ministry believes that	In their personal life, the pastor, deaconess, diaconal minister or associate in ministry embodies
Trusts God's abundance	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> as caretakers of all that we have and are, we are called and freed to participate in and with God's generosity for the health of the whole world. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> an attitude of abundance rather than scarcity. generosity and sustainability in stewardship practice. ongoing assessment of the integrity of choice.
Grounds oneself in biblical and theological principles	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> stewardship is grounded in biblical and theological principles (Trinitarian orientation). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> an ability to listen to and interpret all of Scripture with an ear for stewardship themes. an awareness of the history of stewardship in the life of this church.
Holds a holistic perspective	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> we are stewards of our whole lives including our time, energy, wisdom, bodies, money and other resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a total response to the gospel that does not compartmentalize faith, and thus includes care of the earth, money, family, communal relationships and self.
Perceives connectedness	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> stewardship is corporate; that is, it expresses a fundamental connectedness within the body of Christ (an inclusive ecclesiology, as in Paul's collection for the church in Jerusalem). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a sense of responsibility to peers and this church regarding personal stewardship practices. accountability for decisions and a commitment to collaboration/collegiality around stewardship practice.
Engages and critiques culture	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> stewardship is missiology. We give through this church, not to this church. Non-ELCA agencies/initiatives that can and do align with God's purposes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> an ability to speak of economic systems and the realities of business with some sophistication a reflective stance toward consumer culture. a commitment to a baptismal understanding of the implications of our choices (both commission and omission) for the generations that follow us. a concern about present injustice as well as the long-term sustainability of our decisions and systems.
Embraces financial health as an expression of faith	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> our relationship with money is an integral part of our relationship with God. we have an understanding of the power that money can hold in our family, church and community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> transparency with self and others regarding the relationship with money. a commitment to manage and monitor personal financial health.



CORE LEADERSHIP SKILLS

As a leader, the pastor, deaconess, diaconal minister or associate in ministry can

- motivate a faith community's stewardship journey through mission interpretation and gratitude for partnership.
- reframe conversation to highlight assets (not just money).
- cast a vision for a vital future.

- teach and preach Scripture from a holistic stewardship orientation.

- articulate their personal stewardship journey.
- help others articulate their stewardship journeys.

- encourage in others both accountability for and openness to the gifts of a greater whole (both church and culture).
- make use of current stewardship resources and conversation.

- frame questions insightfully—how is God at work here? What is God providing for the work before us?
- preach often, broadly and prophetically on stewardship themes.

- foster a climate that supports others as they deal with money in their lives (giving, saving and spending).
- assess a congregation's money/finance/stewardship culture (ethics, transparency, etc.).
- comprehend how the basics of congregational finance (budgeting, balance sheets, risk management, etc.) impact the mission of a congregation.

Three questions to measure Stewardship Competencies

1. **Perspective**—by the time a leader graduates, completes internship or finishes first call theological education, what core messages about stewardship will this leader be able to articulate to self, church and society?
2. **Practices**—by the time a leader graduates, completes internship or finishes first call theological education, what core practices should we expect to see in a well-formed stewardship leader?
3. **Skills**—by the time a leader graduates, completes internship or finishes first call theological education, what core skills should we expect to see in a well-formed stewardship leader who can help bring capacity to this church's mission in witness and service to God?

APPENDIX C: Competencies How-to Guide

Appendix C: Competencies in a Well-Formed Stewardship Leader is available for viewing and download at

<http://www.elca.org/Growing-In-Faith/Discipleship/Stewardship/Competencies.aspx>

WORKSHOP DESIGN

This workshop brings participants personal, insight, contact with the discipline of stewardship as a well-formed leadership leader. The workshop is based on a simple premise: We learn best when we share what we want to learn and when we prove that knowledge actively. An opening prayer sets the tone for the simple format before meeting with the professor to discuss discipleship stewardship will lead.

Objectives
Participants in this workshop will: make plans to...

• Be more active and self-organize as a professor or leader.

• Develop personal energy and spiritual vitality.

• Develop spiritually, socially and emotionally sound communication and language.

• Be able to connect a process of self-formation regarding stewardship competencies.

• Develop ongoing personalization skills with other participants and with the workshop.

Participatory Format
Participants will be arranged in small groups. The materials, you will discuss and the discussion for the activity will be done. Some participants will be given talking...

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America God's work. Our faith.

HOW-TO GUIDE Competencies in a Well-Formed Stewardship Leader

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This Guide helps you lead a 75-minute workshop in which participants consider the content of the Competency in a Well-Formed Stewardship Leader and begin an ongoing personalization process and implementation plan for their own stewardship leadership.

Follow these steps to ensure the best use of this How-to Guide:

1. Identify yourself with the content of the Competency in a Well-Formed Stewardship Leader and the spiritual context of the work of stewardship leadership.
2. Read through the simple workshop design in this Guide. This is a tool to help you organize the activity by which participants can be equipped.
3. If you are unable to attend, read a selection of activities for each of the four segments.

4. Choose which activity you will use for each segment. These are choices on the range of needs and capacities of participants. Most work or presentations are designed to make, as well as materials you might need to facilitate or create.

5. Add your own materials about how you will conduct each activity.

6. If you are leading a larger workshop, where several activities for each of the content segments is to be done, consider:

1. Prepare a Devotional Prayer and some preliminary notes about how you will do the workshop.
2. Prepare a closing prayer.

Leader Note: You can find a well-formation activity at www.elca.org/stewardship. You can find implementation resources for competencies at www.elca.org/stewardship.

RESOURCES FOR STEWARD LEADERS

On www.elca.org/stewardship for the following resources and more:

- **A Scripture Foundation for Competencies of a Well-Formed Stewardship Leader** at www.elca.org/stewardship/competencies.
- **The Great Commission, the Good and Beautiful Field Guide for Competencies**. Training in God's stewardship begins by seeing the world God has placed around us and grows by understanding how these gifts can be used for God's work. Augsburg Fortress (Order Code: 978-0-8002-1868-9). This support is available for evangelism stewardship.
- **Stewardship Principles**. (Lithology-based prospectus for teaching individuals and congregations. Downloadable at www.elca.org/stewardship.)
- **Answering to God's Call for Evangelizing**. Recognizing a biblical perspective includes caring for creation, for us, for our neighbors, for the poor, justice and the lives of Jesus Christ for the sake of the world. Augsburg Fortress (Order Code: 978-0-8002-2022-5). Downloadable at www.elca.org/stewardship.
- **Made by Simple**. A practical approach to holy congregations and faithful grace stewards with a focus on simplicity, generous living and the faithful use of God's abundant blessings. Available at www.elca.org/stewardship or in a DVD set from Augsburg Fortress (Order Code: T2300000).
- **Money Leadership for Thinking Congregations**. An insightful guide that engages people in healthy communication and self-assessment of their feelings, practices, needs and systems related to money. Augsburg Fortress (Order Code: 978-0-8002-1868-9).

1. CLARIFY YOURS

From the start of a competency, clearly write words or phrases that make you an existing leader or a hope for the future in your own life or in your group. Write down and talk about what words or phrases that would describe the message and concept. What other words or phrases emerge from the list that help you understand what that activity is really about? (about 15-20)

2. ASSESS YOUR NEEDS

Discuss the words and the message with every group member and write down the words and phrases that you feel are most important. Write down the words and phrases that you feel are most important. Write down the words and phrases that you feel are most important. Write down the words and phrases that you feel are most important.

3. SET YOUR GOALS

What are the most important words or phrases that you feel are most important? Write down the words and phrases that you feel are most important. Write down the words and phrases that you feel are most important. Write down the words and phrases that you feel are most important.

4. COMMUNICATE YOURS

What are the most important words or phrases that you feel are most important? Write down the words and phrases that you feel are most important. Write down the words and phrases that you feel are most important. Write down the words and phrases that you feel are most important.

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America God's work. Our faith.

HOW-TO GUIDE Competencies in a Well-Formed Stewardship Leader

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This Guide helps you lead a 75-minute workshop in which participants consider the content of the Competency in a Well-Formed Stewardship Leader and begin an ongoing personalization process and implementation plan for their own stewardship leadership.

Follow these steps to ensure the best use of this How-to Guide:

1. Identify yourself with the content of the Competency in a Well-Formed Stewardship Leader and the spiritual context of the work of stewardship leadership.
2. Read through the simple workshop design in this Guide. This is a tool to help you organize the activity by which participants can be equipped.
3. If you are unable to attend, read a selection of activities for each of the four segments.

4. Choose which activity you will use for each segment. These are choices on the range of needs and capacities of participants. Most work or presentations are designed to make, as well as materials you might need to facilitate or create.

5. Add your own materials about how you will conduct each activity.

6. If you are leading a larger workshop, where several activities for each of the content segments is to be done, consider:

1. Prepare a Devotional Prayer and some preliminary notes about how you will do the workshop.
2. Prepare a closing prayer.

Leader Note: You can find a well-formation activity at www.elca.org/stewardship. You can find implementation resources for competencies at www.elca.org/stewardship.

RESOURCES FOR STEWARD LEADERS

On www.elca.org/stewardship for the following resources and more:

- **A Scripture Foundation for Competencies of a Well-Formed Stewardship Leader** at www.elca.org/stewardship/competencies.
- **The Great Commission, the Good and Beautiful Field Guide for Competencies**. Training in God's stewardship begins by seeing the world God has placed around us and grows by understanding how these gifts can be used for God's work. Augsburg Fortress (Order Code: 978-0-8002-1868-9). This support is available for evangelism stewardship.
- **Stewardship Principles**. (Lithology-based prospectus for teaching individuals and congregations. Downloadable at www.elca.org/stewardship.)
- **Answering to God's Call for Evangelizing**. Recognizing a biblical perspective includes caring for creation, for us, for our neighbors, for the poor, justice and the lives of Jesus Christ for the sake of the world. Augsburg Fortress (Order Code: 978-0-8002-2022-5). Downloadable at www.elca.org/stewardship.
- **Made by Simple**. A practical approach to holy congregations and faithful grace stewards with a focus on simplicity, generous living and the faithful use of God's abundant blessings. Available at www.elca.org/stewardship or in a DVD set from Augsburg Fortress (Order Code: T2300000).
- **Money Leadership for Thinking Congregations**. An insightful guide that engages people in healthy communication and self-assessment of their feelings, practices, needs and systems related to money. Augsburg Fortress (Order Code: 978-0-8002-1868-9).

APPENDIX D: Self-Assessment Tool

Stewardship Life & Ministry Values

A Readiness Tool

Name: _____ Date: _____

Welcome!

Thank you for participating! This survey intends simply to help Christian leaders assess their personal understandings of Stewardship as it relates to their lives, to others' lives, and to the church as a whole.

There are no “right” or “wrong” answers. The survey will help you find out “where you are” and, it is hoped, challenge you to identify areas for future growth.

Instructions: Please assign a numerical value to each of the statements below with “1” representing strong disagreement and “5” representing strong agreement.

Value 1: Christians Trust in God's Abundance

- ___ The object of Christian Stewardship is to share what we own with others.
- ___ The earth has sufficient resources to provide enough for all.
- ___ I often feel anxious about whether I will have enough to “make ends meet.”
- ___ God always provides enough for those who are faithful.
- ___ Most people are grateful for what they have.
- ___ Most people feel that they have earned what they have.
- ___ I usually end up giving more than I can really afford.

Value 2: The Bible and Tradition Give Us Guidance

- ___ Tithing is a firm expectation of all faithful Christians.
- ___ Tithing is an Old Testament concept that has nothing to do with the teachings of Jesus
- ___ The correct proportion to share varies with the abundance received.
- ___ Biblical teaching about stewardship appears in only a few important passages.
- ___ It is counterproductive to preach too often about stewardship.
- ___ Lutheran theology has very little to say specifically about stewardship.
- ___ Most people are already very well aware of what the scriptures say about stewardship.
- ___ Biblical teaching about stewardship is interwoven throughout the Bible.

Value 3: Stewardship Affects All Aspects of Life

- _____ When we talk about stewardship, we are referring only to the management of time, talent and treasure.
- _____ Concern about physical health, diet and exercise is secondary to the main point of stewardship
- _____ A theology of the cross implies that sometimes my family has to suffer for my faithful service.
- _____ If you don't have much money it is perfectly fine to give time and talent instead of money.
- _____ Taking care of my house and my yard is a distraction from time I need to spend on ministry.
- _____ Honoring Sabbath time requires me to neglect the needs of my congregation.
- _____ I regularly engage in conversation with congregation members about balancing life priorities.

Value 4: Stewardship Expresses Our Interconnectedness

- _____ My stewardship decisions are between me and God; it is not anyone else's business.
- _____ Good stewardship leads to greater levels of independence and self-sufficiency.
- _____ I regularly feel supported and encouraged in my work by people outside my congregation.
- _____ There is value in discussing stewardship issues openly with peers and colleagues.
- _____ If the larger church consistently makes bad decisions, it is more faithful to support non-ELCA missions.
- _____ Most people don't understand what they get in return for their mission support.
- _____ I regularly preach and teach the story of how the church is working throughout the world.

Value 5: Christian Stewardship Engages Our Culture

- _____ Community-based organizations are legitimate expressions of God's work in the world.
- _____ In order to reach out to the world, the church must give people what they want.
- _____ People are entitled to what they have earned.
- _____ The economic well-being of all people often requires us to use up natural resources.
- _____ Our congregation engages in practices that reflect a counter-cultural attitude about stewardship.

- _____ Capitalist business interests stand in fundamental contradiction to the Gospel.
- _____ We have initiated intentional efforts in our congregation to help people be less materialistic.

Values 6: Financial Health Is an Expression of Faith

- _____ Money has very little to do with the development of my spiritual life.
- _____ People who really love Jesus should not worry or think too much about money.
- _____ Paying back my educational loans makes it impossible for me to be a good steward.
- _____ Our congregation is actively engaged in helping people plan healthy financial lives.
- _____ Most people would give more if their financial lives were more healthy and stable.
- _____ It is healthier to talk with others about money than to keep our financial life a secret.
- _____ I am personally involved in the budget and finance operations of my congregation.

After discussing this assessment with my financial stewardship coach, I have decided to set the following goals for growth in the faithful stewardship of my life:



Publishing House of the ELCA (Augsburg Fortress)

Submitted by Beth A. Lewis

Year to Date Accomplishments

Strategic Focus: We continue to implement our strategy, emphasizing the creation of high quality, market-leading, group-use worship and faith formation resources for congregations and text/reference resources for higher education.

Resources for Congregations: Over the past few months, our [Augsburg Fortress](#) and [sparkhouse](#) resource developers and creative partners have been busy developing dynamic new resources to assist congregations with faith formation for all ages. The number of congregations using [Spark Sunday School](#) continues to increase. All three formats, classroom, lectionary and rotation have proven to be very popular, especially lectionary and rotation. For summer 2012, we have published [Spark Summer: Splash in God's Word](#) for kids' summer programming. Another very popular resource is [Making Sense of the Cross](#) by David Lose. While not specific to Lent, we have heard that many congregations have selected this fine video and print resource for their Lenten study. In addition, we have recently published several more Book of Faith resources, [Water Marks](#) by Diane Jacobson and [Books of Faith: Jeremiah/Lamentations](#).

In addition to faith formation resources, we have a number of new worship and music resources available, including [New Proclamation 2012 Easter through Christ the King](#), [Field Guide to Contemporary Worship](#), and [Go Make Disciples: An Invitation to Baptismal Living](#) to assist congregations in launching a catechumenate program, and a wide collection of music including [Yours Is the Glory: Settings of Global Tunes for Organ](#) and [By Day and By Night: Piano Settings](#). Later this spring, you will want to watch for our exciting new [Prelude Music Planner](#), a web-based subscription resource providing a wealth of music, thoughtful commentary, and time-saving tools for church musicians.

Recently, we celebrated the LACE (Lutheran Association of Christian Educators) selection of Bethany Stolle, Sr., developer for youth resources at sparkhouse, as their "[Educator of the Year](#)." We were thrilled by this recognition for our colleague's work both in the congregation where she is an active member, but also because of the affirmation of her fine work along with many others in creating high quality faith formation resources for youth in the ELCA and our full communion partner congregations.

Resources for Higher Education: [Fortress Press](#) is well known for the publication of superb textbooks and reference resources for undergraduate and graduate education in colleges, universities and seminaries. A few of the many new Fortress Press books published since the November 2011 Church Council meeting include:

[Cross and Resurrection: God's Wonder and Mystery](#), Facets series, by Klaus Schwarzwäller, translated by Ken Sundet Jones and Mark C. Mattes
[Dreaming: Christian Explorations of Daily Living](#), Compass series, by Barbara A. Holmes
[The Emergence of Islam: Classical Traditions in Contemporary Perspective](#) by Gabriel Said Reynolds
[Encounters with Jesus: The Man in His Time and Place](#) by Ariana Destro and Mauro Pesce
[Ethics That Matters: African, Caribbean, and African American Sources](#), edited by Marcia Y. Riggs and James Samuel Logan
[The Four Gospels on Sunday: The New Testament and the Reform of Christian Worship](#) by Gordon W. Lathrop
[Introducing the Bible](#), Second Edition by John Drane

[*The Lutheran Confessions: History and Theology of the Book of Concord*](#) by Charles P. Arand, Robert Kolb, and James A. Nestingen
[*Mark as Story: An Introduction to the Narrative of a Gospel*](#), third edition by David Rhoads, Joanna Dewey, and Donald Michie
[*Martin Luther's Basic Theological Writings*](#), third edition, Timothy F. Lull and William R. Russell, editors
[*Ministry with Persons with Mental Illness and Their Families*](#), edited by Robert H. Albers, William H. Meller, and Steven D. Thurber
[*The New Testament: A Literary History*](#) by Gerd Theissen
[*The Old Testament: A Literary History*](#) by Konrad Schmid
[*The Practice of Prophetic Imagination: Preaching an Emancipating Word*](#) by Walter Brueggemann
[*Proclamation and Celebration: Preaching on Christmas, Easter, and Other Festivals*](#) by Susan K. Hedahl
[*Religion and Culture: Contemporary Practices and Perspectives*](#), edited by Richard D. Hecht and Vincent F. Biondo III
[*Studying Paul's Letters: Contemporary Perspectives and Methods*](#), edited by Joseph A. Marchal
[*Tanakh: A Theological and Critical Introduction to the Jewish Bible*](#) by Marvin A. Sweeney
[*Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*](#), third edition by Emanuel Tov
[*Theological Education Underground: 1937-1940, DBWE Vol. 15*](#) by Dietrich Bonhoeffer, edited by Victoria J. Barnett
[*Transforming Vision: Explorations in Feminist Theology*](#) by Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza
[*Treatise on Good Works: Luther Study Edition*](#) by Martin Luther, translated and introduced by Scott H. Hendrix
[*We Have Been Believers: An African American Systematic Theology*](#), second edition by James H. Evans Jr.

Digital Delivery of Content: Since 2005, we have led denominational publishers in delivery of content through our web-based subscription resources such as [*Sundaysandseasons.com*](#), [*Herewestandconfirmation.org*](#), [*Spark OnLine*](#), etc. In addition, we are among the leaders of religion and theology book publishers in delivery of content through various eReader platforms. Our numbers, as of the end of January 2012, are: Amazon Kindle 1200+ titles, Barnes & Noble Nook 875 titles, Google Editions 1500+ titles, and Apple iBookstore 100 titles. These numbers grow every week.

In addition, we have approximately 900 active titles available through POD (Print on Demand). This POD technology allows us to keep books in print indefinitely without the burden of carrying inventory on our balance sheet for books with small demand in the marketplace.

In partnership with OliveTree, we published our [*Lutheran Study Bible mobile app*](#) last fall.

We also use a wide range of digital means to communicate and build interest communities around our various faith formation, worship and education resources. You can follow us via a number of [*digital social media*](#) communities, sign up for our [*free eNewsletters*](#), register for our many [*free educational webinars*](#), read [*Beth Lewis' One Mission blog*](#), or use our free ecumenical lectionary preaching blog, [*The Hardest Question*](#).

Summary: With the rapid changes in sales channels and delivery media, it is an exciting, though challenging time, to be the ministry of publishing. We welcome suggestions from our partners in ministry from across this church. Please send your ideas to Beth Lewis at [*ceo@augsbu.org*](mailto:ceo@augsbu.org).

Portico Benefit Services

Submitted by Jeffrey D. Thiemann

This Portico Benefit Services' summary of activities provides a brief overview of a number of topics, including: Name Change, Health Care Reform, Continued Momentum in Health, North American Lutheran Church (NALC) Update, Philosophy of Benefits, ELCA Participating Annuity Update and Financial Well-being.

Name Change

Our name change to Portico Benefit Services was announced in November 2011, and the response has been predominantly positive. Our tagline, a Ministry of the ELCA, reinforces our ongoing connection to this church and its mission. Starting in March 2012, we are switching our email and web addresses to *mail@PorticoBenefits.org* and *www.PorticoBenefits.org*, respectively. We expect to take 12-18 months to complete the transition to our new name. Former *elcabop.org* email and web addresses will remain operational through the end of 2012.

Health Care Reform

In addition to Health Care Reform conversations with the ELCA Churchwide Organization Administrative Team, the Conference of Bishops and the ELCA Church Council, two webinars with a focus toward synod staffs were held in January and February of this year. Our plan is to continue efforts to 1) enhance our knowledge and expertise on emerging issues, and 2) provide relevant information to our employers and members throughout 2012 and 2013. The upcoming health care legislation and regulation challenges and changes may be as volatile as the stock market was in 2011!

Continued Momentum in Health

Positive movement continued to be made in 2011 by our plan members to take action on behalf of their health. Congregations and other employers earned discounts totaling more than \$1.1 million after at least 65 percent of their plan members with ELCA-primary coverage completed the Mayo Clinic Health Assessment by April 30, 2011.

We are seeing health improvement for those who take the health assessment every year. The collective of members and spouses who took the health assessment in each year from 2008 to 2011 reported a reduction in average number of health risks from 4.4 risks per person in 2008 to 4.0 risks per person in 2011. In addition, 5.6 percent of the collective shifted from very high or high-risk categories to moderate or low-risk categories.

Our work on member health is also making a positive financial impact for employers. While large U.S. employers are expecting an increase in health care costs of about 7 - 9 percent in 2012, for the fourth year in a row, employers in our plan will experience a below-average increase in health care contributions.

North American Lutheran Church (NALC) Update

In December 2010, the NALC and the ELCA Board of Pensions agreed that NALC congregations/ministries could participate in the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program if the Board of Pensions was the sole benefits provider to pastors, rostered laypersons and lay employees of NALC congregations/ministries. The agreement to be the NALC's sole benefits provider ended on January 1, 2012 because the NALC chose to offer benefits through Hahn Financial Group. We completed the transition of 201 members out of our program at the beginning of 2012. Since then 79 NALC members have rolled out their retirement accounts.

Philosophy of Benefits

Neither the vocation of rostered leaders and lay employees nor the mission of congregations and other ministries has changed in principle, nor has the mission of Portico Benefit Services. Current realities, however, call for a review of the philosophy of benefits and the principles used to implement the philosophy, keeping in mind the historic and continuing ELCA intentions of fairness and protection while looking at the cost of providing benefits. The review will involve a historic analysis, collaborative work with churchwide leaders, an advisory group to include representation from the Conference of Bishops and the ELCA Church Council, and a review advisory group with representatives from various stakeholders, including ELCA congregations. Target dates have been set so as to have a draft for review ready for the October 2012 Conference of Bishops meeting and the November 2012 ELCA Church Council meeting. Additionally, in response to requests from the seminary presidents, we are investigating the possibility of an institutional health plan that would afford large institutions more flexibility in how they provide health benefits to their employees.

ELCA Participating Annuity Update

In 2011, we reopened the ELCA Participating Annuity, which is a type of immediate variable annuity that provides an income stream for life and income growth potential over the long term. It was determined at the November 2011 board of trustees meeting that another downward annuity adjustment was necessary, so an adjustment of -3.8 percent became effective in January of 2012. It was heartening, however, to enact a smaller reduction than had been estimated under a proposed three-year recovery plan. With the combination of adjustments and investment returns, the funded ratio as of the ELCA Participating Annuity Investment Fund as of January 31, 2012 was .993.

Financial Well-being

We have made a lot of progress on the End-to-End Project, a cohesive program that helps our members during all three phases of preparing for retirement—accumulation, transition and distribution. We have selected a partner to provide guidance on a variety of financial topics with planners working directly with our members. The project implementation team is in place to launch these expanded capabilities for all ELCA Retirement Plan members in the second quarter of 2012, and our goal is to increase the number of members engaged with a financial planner. This will be a significant step in our journey to attain recognized leadership in helping empower financial well-being.

Portico Benefit Services Digest of Board Actions

Submitted by Jeffrey D. Thiemann, President and CEO

Date of Board Meeting: February 24-26, 2012

Category I: Policies with an impact beyond the unit which require Church Council approval.
None

Category II: Policies related to the day-to-day functioning of the unit or to the specific mandate of the unit.

February amendments

Approved an amendment to the ELCA Retirement Plan adding an automatic enrollment feature.
(Approval by the Board of Trustees)

Approved an amendment to the ELCA Retirement Plan eliminating spousal consent for withdrawals of \$20,000 or less. (Approval by the Board of Trustees)

Approved an amendment to the ELCA Retirement Plan clarifying existing plan language. (Approval by President)

Approved an amendment to the ELCA Retirement Plan for The Evangelical Lutheran Good Samaritan Society clarifying existing plan language. (Approval by President)

Approved an amendment to the ELCA 457(b) Deferred Compensation Plan clarifying existing plan language. (Approval by President)

Approved an amendment to the ELCA Medical and Dental Benefits Plan clarifying existing plan language. (Approval by President)

Other Actions

Deemed board position vacant for trustee who missed three meetings in a rolling 2-year period per Bylaw Section 4.3.

Approved revisions to the 2012-2014 Strategic Plan.

Approved resolution endorsing the end-to-end project strategy.

Category III. Other procedures and board actions.

Approved the Slate of Committee Vice Chairs.

Approved the appointment of Cecil D. Bykerk and Kevin D. Anderson as co-chairs of the Appeals Committee.

Received the Board of Pensions' 2012 February Management Report.

Appointed (by the Board of Trustees Chair) a Portico governance and election ad hoc committee made up of trustees Kevin D. Anderson (chair), Janette E. Drew, Gregory W. Heidrich, and Jewelie A. Grape, General Counsel.

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Lutheran Men in Mission
Report to the ELCA Church Council

The vision of Lutheran Men in Mission is for every man to have a growing relationship with Jesus Christ through an effective men's ministry in every congregation. Lutheran Men in Mission lives out that vision through the resources we publish, the events we produce and ongoing leadership development.

Events

"As a man, I find it easy to over think life and attempt to control outcomes. To be the helper and not the helped, as that would be a sign of weakness, or so society would have me believe. The truth is, everyone has a story and has buried pain somewhere along the way, and men are no different. The OYTL retreat allowed me to not only realize how much pain I had buried, but also how to accept healing through the word of God and communion with other holy men. In essence, my faith has deepened, become more personal, and has greater meaning in my life. Not only that, I now have a very strong channel of support through my Brothers in Christ. If you are on the fence sitting there reading this, don't waste another minute thinking about going to one of these retreats. If it feels uncomfortable, that's a fantastic place to start."

The above response is typical of what we are receiving with the *One Year to Live* retreat. The retreat continues to spread to new areas. The retreat is designed to help men take an honest look at their faith, what is keeping them from experiencing God more fully, and what they believe God is calling them to do for the rest of their lives within the safety of a small group. The retreat is completely "lay led" as all the small group facilitators have been participants in earlier retreats. The intent is to eventually bring this to every synod.

Most recently, Lutheran Men in Mission Men introduced *One Year to Live* to the United Methodist Men at a retreat in South Georgia.

Leadership

Building Men for Christ is training designed to help rostered and lay leaders, male and female, to see ministry with and to men as an integral part of overall congregational ministry. *Building Men for Christ* also helps them reach and activate men for the congregation's ministry and outreach. Like *One Year to Live*, this one-day workshop continues to spread to new areas. Please go to lutheranmeninmission.org for the updated schedules of *One Year to Live* and *Building Men for Christ*.

Resources

The *Master Builders Bible for Men* continues to be our strongest resource, with nearly 50,000 in circulation. Along with the study questions written in the margins, what makes this resource unique is the thirty-two page section for men's ministry leaders. The tenth anniversary edition will be published later this year.

Since the last ELCA Church Council meeting, LMM has given away nearly 6,000 *El Nuevo Testamentos* to Spanish-speaking ministries through our synod and congregational men's ministries.

ManTalk is a deck of playing cards designed to help men engage in meaningful (and fun) conversation. Four categories of questions deal with relationships, sports and leisure, lessons and reflections, and ethics and spirituality.

The most recent issues of the [foundations](http://foundations.org) newsletter have focused on the impact Lutheran Men in Mission has had on a ten year-old boy and his father, and the impact LMM has had on singer-songwriter Peter Mayer. [foundations](http://foundations.org) is distributed to approximately 8,000 men on our list, and every ELCA congregation.

Inter-Generational Ministry

Lutheran Men in Mission's Young Men's Ministry Specialist, along with the Young Men's Ministry Council, has produced a strategy to develop leaders among young men in congregations and synods. The training includes a three-step movement: learn (theology, discipleship, leadership), listening (discernment) and live (living out your calling). This takes place through assigned readings, internet/conference calls, and in-person discussions and coaching. The third group to undergo this training will start soon.

The role of the Young Men's Ministry Council is to work with the Executive Director and the LMM Board of Directors to design ministry that not only engages younger men, but also trains middle- and older-aged men in developing meaningful relationships with younger men. Lutheran Men in Mission promotes the "I-Go" model: Identify, Invite and Invest, first published in [*Coming of Age*](#), a study done with young men in 2005.

In Mission,
Doug Haugen, Executive Director

Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA

Submitted by Eva Roby

Financial Update

The Mission Investment Fund (MIF) remains a strong, stable financial institution, one that is able to offer security to our investors. Our total assets rose to \$642.4 million as of December 31, 2011, up from \$641.7 million at year-end 2010. Net assets, or equity, rose to \$179.2 million at December 31, 2011, up from \$172.1 million at year-end 2010. Our capital ratio, an important indicator of financial strength and stability, rose to 27.9 percent.

The number of total investors in MIF increased to 14,362, with 10,248 individual investors, 3,491 congregations and 623 ELCA-related ministries. As of December 31, 2011, MIF's total investment obligations were \$458.3 million, a slight decrease from \$465.0 million the previous year.

At December 31, 2011, our outstanding loans totaled \$446.0 million, down from \$456.9 million at year-end 2010. At December 31, 2011, MIF had 761 outstanding loans, virtually even with the previous year.

Loans and Real Estate

As the economy showed signs of strengthening throughout the year, MIF began to see an increase in applications for new loans. Particularly encouraging is the revived interest in larger capital projects that many congregations and ministries had deferred throughout the recession. In 2011, we funded \$58 million in new loans, up substantially from \$45 million the previous year. A total of 74 loans were paid off between January 1 and December 31, 2011.

Even as the economy began to improve in 2011, some congregations continued to struggle financially, and we worked with them to provide the financial assistance they required. In 2011, MIF granted 18 loan modifications (temporarily changing payments or terms of a loan), far fewer than the 50 we granted in 2010. Our delinquency ratio (the percentage of total loans that are 90 days or more past due) was 2.34 percent as of December 31, 2011, down from 3.65 percent at year-end 2010. We monitor these loans diligently and work closely with these borrowers to return their payments to the terms of their original loan.

As of December 31, 2011, MIF held approximately \$21 million in real estate, net of a \$6.5 million allowance for losses. Of the \$21 million, \$9 million continues to be held for future congregational use, with the balance being held for sale. Throughout 2011, MIF sold four properties and did not purchase any new properties.

Marketing

Marketing efforts continue to be directed toward the goals of our strategic plan: increasing awareness of MIF, increasing participation of ELCA congregations and members as investors and borrowers, and securing customers' confidence in the strength and stability of MIF. Traditional marketing techniques as well as e-commerce approaches are being employed to broaden our reach. MIF's regional managers are furthering their direct outreach to current and prospective customers in their respective regions.

Partnerships

MIF is proud to collaborate with our ELCA partners on a number of initiatives to help grow our church. In partnership with the ELCA's Congregational and Synodical Mission unit (CSM), we are supporting the "new wine" ministries, designated as new-start congregations, that have chosen to remain faithful to the ELCA when segments of their congregations have left in the aftermath of the church's 2009 decisions on human sexuality. As part of a CSM pilot program to guide these transitioning congregations,

MIF has agreed to fund early-stage strategic consulting to assess each of the ministries' specific mission and goals.

Campus ministries are another shared focus. For several years, MIF has provided inspections of campus properties, and now, as a natural extension of that service, we will assist with the documentation and tracking of the ELCA's investment and ownership position in these properties. In addition, we will assist in managing future property purchases and sales as they occur to maximize the return of investment dollars for use in future projects.

MIF will again have a highly visible presence at the ELCA's Youth Gathering in New Orleans this summer—the largest gathering of youth and adults within the ELCA. MIF is making a grant for scholarships to help a number of congregations send youth and youth ministers to the Gathering. Our grant, to help cover the cost of transportation, housing and meals, will work in concert with CSM's offer of financial assistance for congregations attending the Gathering event itself.

Looking Ahead

As many indicators are pointing to a stronger economy in 2012, we are confident that congregations and other ministries will proceed with much-needed capital projects and MIF's loan portfolio will achieve its budgeted growth for 2012. Meanwhile, we have begun work toward developing a new strategic plan for 2013 and beyond.

Women of the ELCA

Submitted by Linda Post Bushkofsky

The women's organization continues its strong ministries in global education, scholarships, anti-racism, grants, Bible study, cross-cultural immersion and stewardship. The organization's award-winning publications – *Gather*, *Interchange (Intercambio)*, *Café*, and its two websites – support and inspire the women of the church. The work of the churchwide staff of Women of the ELCA is to support the organization's participants as they live out our mission of mobilizing women to act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ.

At its Eighth Triennial Convention (July 2011), Women of the ELCA endorsed the “1,000 Days Movement” addressing the 1,000-day window of opportunity in good nutrition for pregnant mothers and infants, from conception through the child's second birthday. *Women of Faith for 1,000 Days* is the name of the ecumenical women's effort that is being coordinated by Bread for the World staff. Part of Women of the ELCA's commitment is that each woman in this organization would have 1,000 conversations about nutritional health needs in 1,000 days.

As an organization, we are committed to bringing healing and wholeness to the church, the society and the world. Our partner, the Justice for Women Working Group of the National Council of Churches, has created a valuable tool to assist in gender analysis. Women are using this new tool to critically examine systems of power and develop effective strategies to protect and promote gender equity and gender justice.

The organization will hold its fifth cross-cultural immersion experience on the Rocky Boy's Chippewa Cree Reservation in Box Elder, Montana, September 22-27, 2012. Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, which has been working among the people of the Chippewa Cree tribe since the early 1920s, will host the event. The registration deadline is August 31, 2012, and additional information is available at womenoftheelca.org.

The organization's health initiative, Raising Up Healthy Women and Girls, is making available \$50,000 in seed grants for congregational units. Each grant has a maximum of \$1,000 and can be used for health initiative programs that intentionally involve women across generations. These grants are easily replicable by other units. Grants were made to 13 congregational units in the 2011-2012 cycle and to 17 congregational units in the 2010-2011 cycle; the 2012-2013 cycle will launch this fall.

Gather magazine's summer Bible study, “Along the Way,” invites participants to meet some biblical travelers, enter in conversation with them and explore their own journeys of faith. The writer, the Rev. Julie A. Kanarr, is an ELCA pastor from Port Townsend, Wash. The supporting magazine articles are about a lot of fun traveling activities—road trips are a great springboard for storytelling and reflection. This fall *Gather* will kickoff a nine-month study written by Dr. Audrey West, of Bethlehem, Pa., called “Gathered by God.” It's a word study on *Gather* and invites participants to explore all the ways that God gathers us together.

A successful Women Building Global Community consultation was hosted January 20-22, 2012. The focus of the consultation was to connect the *Raising Up Healthy Women and Girls* (health initiative), *Women Building Global Community* (Women of the ELCA's global education program), and Women of the ELCA's 25th Anniversary offering recipient (ELCA Malaria Campaign).

The organization looks forward to celebrating its 25th anniversary with a yearlong celebration that begins in June 2012. The organization will be launching a special 25th anniversary appeal with 50 percent of the total offerings designed for the ELCA Malaria Campaign. Those dollars will be earmarked for medicine, clean water and advocacy efforts. The organization sees this partnership continuing its long history of serving as change-makers in the global church.

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
CHURCH COUNCIL
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