



Design Proposal for the Churchwide Organization Rationale and Narrative

The churchwide organization is an instrument for accomplishing the purposes of this church that are shared with and supported by the members, congregations and synods of this church (ELCA Constitution 11.12.). The churchwide organization serves on behalf of and in support of this church's members, congregations and synods in proclaiming the Gospel, reaching out in witness and service both globally and throughout the territory of this church, nurturing members of this church in the daily life of faith, and manifesting the unity of this church with the whole Church of Jesus Christ (11.11).

In 2010, the presiding bishop appointed the Churchwide Design Team¹ to evaluate and propose changes in the churchwide organization in light of the changing mission and ministry needs of this church and the resources available to the churchwide organization. This action was precipitated by a significant drop in mission support. In 2008, after adjusting for inflation, the value of mission-support income had declined by half since the founding of this church in 1988. From 2008 to 2011, estimated churchwide mission support dropped from \$65.3 million to \$48 million. The work of the design team is based on an estimate of \$48 million with a contingency plan of \$45 million.

Information Available to the Design Team

The design team took full advantage of the work of the LIFT/Ecology (Living into the Future Together) task force.² In 2009, the LIFT task force was authorized by the ELCA Church Council in collaboration with the Conference of Bishops to study the "ecology" of the ELCA and make recommendations that "will position this church for the future and explore new possibilities for participating in God's mission." These recommendations will be presented to the 2011 ELCA Churchwide Assembly. In support of the work of the task force, extensive studies were conducted with congregations, synods and the churchwide organization. These studies, including surveys of lay and clergy leaders in addition to the participants at a majority of 2010 synod assemblies, were foundational to the deliberations of the design team. The design team also consulted with the LIFT planning team by conference call and one face-to-face meeting.

The design team encouraged synodical bishops to meet regionally and to share their thoughts and ideas. Seven of the nine regions responded.

The design team consulted three times by conference call with the Executive Committee of the Church Council and twice with representatives of the Planning and Evaluation Committee of the Church Council.

The design team provided opportunities for the executive directors, churchwide staff and units to share their thoughts and ideas. Responses were received from each of the executive directors of program units and from 75 individual staff members.

The design team conducted a detailed analysis of the churchwide organization's job positions and its grants to partners in ministry.

¹ The members of the design team are Wyvetta Bullock, executive for administration, Office of the Presiding Bishop; Jonathan Beyer, executive for Information Technology; Mark Hanson, presiding bishop; Sherman Hicks, executive director, Multicultural Ministries; Kenneth Inskip, executive for Research and Evaluation; Christina Jackson-Skelton, treasurer of the ELCA; Else Thompson, executive for Human Resources.

² Full reports of the research conducted in support of LIFT are available from the Research and Evaluation unit of the ELCA. The reports include: *The 2008 Faith Communities Today: Survey of ELCA Congregations* (2009); *The 2006 ELCA Congregational Survey* (2007); *Lutherans Say 6: The Religious Beliefs and Practices of Lay Leaders in the ELCA* (2009); *The Number and Size of Synods in the ELCA* (2009); *The Synod Assembly Responses to LIFT Surveys* (2010); and *The Living into the Future Together Report on the Open, Clergy, and Lay Leader Questionnaire* (2010). Notes are available from the LIFT Consultation on Mission Capacity and Funding.

Two organizational consultants advised the design team: Michael Hansen of Hansen and Associates, Potomac, Maryland; and John Andrews of D. Hilton Associates, The Woodlands, Texas. Consultants in communications and development also provided input.

Based on this work, the design team concluded that this church has the potential to strengthen its capacity for mission in response to the good news of the gospel. In this context, the design team also concluded that the two existing priorities of the churchwide organization are widely shared by the members, congregations and synods of this church. These priorities are:

- 1. Accompanying congregations as growing centers for evangelical mission; and**
- 2. Building the capacity of this church for evangelical witness and service in the world to alleviate poverty and to work for justice and peace.**

To this end, the churchwide organization can continue to play a significant and pivotal role in the life of this church by working with its local and global mission partners to build, support and extend the mission of this church.

The Goals of the Design Team

The design team embraced the following goals:

1. To design a churchwide organization that effectively and efficiently works with its ministry partners to respond nimbly with and on behalf of this church to the needs of the world in both its local and global context.
2. To design a churchwide organization that effectively and efficiently works with its ministry partners to build the capacity of this church for local and global mission.
3. To maximize the stewardship of this church's resources by creating for the churchwide organization the most efficient operational infrastructure possible.
4. To create new resources by better communicating and interpreting the effectiveness and efficiency of this church's response to the needs of the world.
5. To strengthen the response of this church to the needs of the world by increasing the collaboration and accountability within the churchwide organization and between the churchwide organization and its mission partners.
6. To reflect our core values as presented in the ELCA Constitution and the "Commitments for Implementation" of the ELCA Plan for Mission.

The Design Proposal

Achieving the priorities of this church is dependent upon strong interdependent relationships between congregations, synods, the churchwide organization and the agencies and institutions of this church. These interdependent relationships will extend the mission capacity of this church, promote accountability and provide for the best stewardship of the resources of this church. It will be a priority of the churchwide organization to help build these interdependent relationships with and among its mission partners.

Congregational and Synodical Mission

Because strong and vibrant congregations are central to the capacity of this church to fully participate in God's mission, the churchwide organization will work with synods toward vital congregational mission.

- Synods are best positioned to work directly with congregations in planning and carrying out mission, while the primary role of the churchwide organization is to provide support and build capacity.
- The Congregational and Synodical Mission unit will provide support and build capacity in the following areas:
 1. Centers for Mission (new congregations and renewed congregations, worship, congregation-based organizing, youth and young adults, stewardship)
 2. Directors for Evangelical Mission
 3. Ethnic Specific and Multicultural Mission
 4. Leadership for Mission (candidacy/assignment, mission schools and lifelong learning, outreach leadership, TEEM, seminary relationships, colleges and universities)

5. Hunger and Justice (poverty, advocacy, disaster and social ministry-related issues, including relationships with ELCA World Hunger, Lutheran Disaster Relief, Lutheran Services in America, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service)

Global Mission

The churchwide organization will continue to support and build the capacity of this church for global mission. The churchwide organization will provide integrated support of this church's work in other countries and the means through which churches in other countries engage in mission to this church and society.

- The Global Mission unit will build capacity and provide support in the following areas:
 1. Global Community (*kerygma, martyria*) (with companion churches, including placement of international mission personnel, grants, scholarships/leadership development)
 2. Mission Formation and Relationships (*koinonia*) (mutual learning with companions and growth in the accompaniment model for mission, companion synod relationships, young adults in global mission, relationships with independent Lutheran organizations)
 3. International Development and Disaster Relief (*diakonia*)

Mission Advancement

The full participation of this church in the mission of God depends upon how clearly members understand that mission and their level of commitment to it. To this end, the churchwide organization will create a Mission Advancement unit. The Mission Advancement unit will strengthen the identity and mission of this church through focused, strategic and integrated communication with the members of this church and the wider society and the development of financial resources, including mission support, major gifts, appeals, and planned giving.

- The Mission Advancement unit will be responsible for:
 1. Marketing and Public Relations
 2. The ELCA Foundation
 3. *The Lutheran Magazine*
 4. Mission Funding (mission support, the ELCA World Hunger and Disaster Appeal, Global Mission appeals, new congregational ministry and Vision for Mission, Fund for Leaders)
 5. Major Gifts and Planned Giving
 6. Constituent Data Management

The Office of the Presiding Bishop

The Office of the Presiding Bishop will provide leadership for the life and witness of this church.

- The Office of the Presiding Bishop will provide:
 1. Oversight of the work of the churchwide organization, including the supervision of the work of the other officers
 2. Leadership and care for synodical bishops and the relationship with the Conference of Bishops
 3. Theological discernment (justice for women, studies)
 4. Oversight of the ecumenical and inter-religious relations of this church
 5. Relationships with separately incorporated ministries
 6. Oversight of the military chaplaincies of this church
- The Office of the Presiding Bishop will include:
 1. Human Resources
 2. Research and Evaluation

The Office of the Secretary

The Office of the Secretary will fulfill the normal functions of the secretary of a corporation.

- The Office of the Secretary will provide for:
 1. The minutes and records of official church meetings, including the Churchwide Assembly, Church Council and Conference of Bishops
 2. The rosters of this church, annual congregational reports, archives and records management

3. The publication of official documents
4. Changes to the ELCA Constitution and interpretation of the Constitution
5. Legal services
6. Risk management
7. Central meeting planning and management and arrangements for Churchwide Assembly, Church Council, Conference of Bishops, and all other churchwide meetings

The Office of the Treasurer

The Office of the Treasurer will fulfill the normal functions of the treasurer of a corporation.

- The Office of the Treasurer will provide for:
 1. Financial, accounting, insurance, property management, investment and money management systems and related services for churchwide units
 2. Relationships with the ELCA Board of Pensions, Endowment Fund of the ELCA, Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA
 3. The information technology infrastructure

Separately Incorporated Ministries

- Related to the Office of the Presiding Bishop
 1. Augsburg Fortress
 2. Lutheran Deaconess Association
 3. Lutheran Men in Mission
 4. National Lutheran Campus Ministry
 5. Women of the ELCA
- Related to the Office of the Treasurer
 1. ELCA Board of Pensions
 2. Endowment Fund of the ELCA
 3. Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA
- Related to the Office of the Secretary
 1. ELCA Risk Management

Impact

The churchwide organization will contain three units (down from the current 16 unincorporated units and sections) and three offices. There still will be nine separately incorporated ministries. The staffing will decrease by approximately 65 employees (approximately 60 full-time equivalent positions). More specific detail will be provided.

Administrative Team

The presiding bishop will convene and oversee a management and planning team that will include the full-time officers of the ELCA, the executive for administration in the Office of the Presiding Bishop, and the executives of the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit, the Global Mission unit, and the Mission Advancement unit.

Time Line

October 2010

- Conversation with ELCA Conference of Bishops
- Consideration of proposal direction by ELCA Church Council (October 8, 2010)
- Announce decisions (beginning October 11, 2010)

November 2010: Action by ELCA Church Council

August 2011: Action by ELCA Churchwide Assembly