

Confessing Our Faith Together

The Orderly Exchange of Ordained Ministers of Word and Sacrament
Principles, Policies, and Procedures

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America • The United Methodist Church

Confessing Our Faith Together:

The Orderly Exchange of Ordained Ministers of Word and Sacrament

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INTRODUCTION

The following document is the result of collaborative work done by the churches participating in *Confessing Our Faith Together*, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and The United Methodist Church. It is intended both for use by ordained ministers (pastors and elders) interested in ecumenical service in a congregation of either church, as well as judicatory leaders seeking guidance in the implementation of such service.

For those who seek to serve there are five basic steps to follow:

1. Congregations are not to contact clergy directly for ecumenical service, unless directed by the appropriate conference or synod.
2. Read the “Principles for the Orderly Exchange of Ordained Ministers of Word and Sacrament” carefully.
3. Contact your conference or synod office for authorization to make yourself available for ecumenical service under the applicable processes.
4. Complete the ministerial profile or mobility forms of your own church body.
5. After authorization by your church body to make yourself available for ecumenical service, contact a conference or synod staff member of the full-communion partner in the geographic area you wish to serve and follow that church’s procedure for such service.

As the “Principles for the Orderly Exchange of Ordained Ministers of Word and Sacrament” make clear, the process is for the sake of the mission of God. It is not for the convenience of those who may wish to serve in another church body, and such service always is understood to be at the invitation of the receiving church body.

PRINCIPLES FOR ORDERLY EXCHANGE OF ELDERS AND PASTORS

Through adoption of *Confessing Our Faith Together*, The United Methodist Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America entered into a relationship of full communion. Among other things, full communion means that the two churches “recognize each other’s various ministries and make provision for the orderly exchange of ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament.” All references to ordained ministers herein refer exclusively to persons ordained for Word and Sacrament ministry as defined by the two churches, whether known internally as Elders or as Pastors. There is, therefore, no basis in this agreement for the exchange of persons serving as Synodically Authorized Ministers (ELCA) or Local Pastors (UMC).

The orderly exchange of ordained ministers is for the sake of participation by the two churches in the mission of God, and can be an important sign of our unity in Christ. This particular provision of full communion seeks to allow and encourage the more effective use and deployment of our churches’ ordained ministers in order to enhance our shared ministry and mission. It encourages those in our churches who are responsible for the deployment of ordained ministers to draw upon the available ministers of the participating churches to meet missional needs.

Ordained ministers in one church may be invited, or may express their own desire, to serve in another church; they do not, however, have a right to demand such service in the other church. The orderly exchange of ordained ministers is understood to be at the invitation of the receiving church and subject to that church’s polity and procedures. Furthermore, the procedures outlined in this document apply only to availability within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and The United Methodist Church; this agreement of full communion is not automatically transferable to other church bodies with whom either might relate.

Confessing Our Faith Together, with its commitment to full communion, exists to foster orderly exchange of ordained ministers for extended service in ministries in participating churches while they remain ministerial members of their own churches. It does not directly address the permanent transfer of ministerial membership. When it seems appropriate for a transfer of ministerial membership, such transfer will be authorized according to the polities of the two churches. Full communion also may encourage occasional service by ordained ministers in participating churches, but that service continues to be authorized according to the polities of each of the two churches.

Means of implementing orderly exchange need not be identical in each participating church. The existing polity of each church continues to be respected. It is important, however, that these provisions be parallel as much as possible and that each church be familiar with and conversant about the provisions of the other. The two churches may need to continue conversations toward clarification of church policies in order to enhance the orderly exchange of ministers and to find ways to celebrate visibly our full communion relationship and the recognition of their ordained ministries.

PRINCIPLES OF AGREEMENT

Seeking to promote greater understanding among the participants in *Confessing Our Faith Together*, representatives of the two churches offer the following principles to guide implementation efforts.

1. It is important to the faithful and orderly exchange of ordained ministers among the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and The United Methodist Church that one who would serve in a congregation of the other church first be educated and formed for ministry in one's own tradition, and have experience in serving in that church's ordained ministry. Such experience and grounding in one's own tradition are seen to be essential prior to serving in a setting of another tradition; therefore, service in an ecumenical setting is not intended for a first call or appointment.
2. To be eligible to serve in the other church, an ordained minister will demonstrate to the appropriate regional body of the inviting church knowledge of and an appreciation for the history, polity, theological and liturgical identity, practices of ministry, and discipline of that church. The minister will also be expected to preach, teach, administer the sacraments, and participate in the governance of that church in accordance with the tradition, laws, and practices of the inviting church.
3. An ordained minister of a full communion church may be eligible to engage in occasional or extended service in any position open to a minister in the other church except as noted otherwise in the polity of either church.
4. In evaluating the availability of ordained ministers for service, regional bodies of each church will do so in accordance with the stated intentions in *Confessing Our Faith Together*.
5. Placement, supervision, and evaluation procedures of the inviting church shall be observed.
6. Approval for extended service shall occur only in consultation with, and concurrence of, the synod bishop of the sending church body. When granting concurrence for an ordained minister to serve in the other church, the sending body will do so in accordance with the stated intentions in *Confessing Our Faith Together*. The minister remains accountable to the sending body for continuation of ministerial status.
7. Responsibility for pastoral care of ordained ministers is shared by the inviting and sending bodies: in the ELCA, the synod; in The United Methodist Church, the conference.
8. In a disciplinary review or judicial process, the ordained minister remains under the jurisdiction of the sending body, but the inviting body may be asked to participate as appropriate.
9. Each church will develop a process whereby an ordained minister from a partner church may be granted full participation, which may include privilege of voice and vote, in the appropriate Annual Conference or Synod Assembly of the church in which the ordained minister is serving.
10. An ordained minister serving in the other of the participating churches will continue to participate in the pension and benefits program of the sending church.

**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA:
FULL COMMUNION CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS**

For the implementation of church-to-church relationships of full communion, the following continuing resolutions in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* apply:

- 8.72.11.** An ordained minister of this church, serving temporarily in a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by a Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, may be retained on the roster of ordained ministers—upon endorsement by the synodical bishop and by action of the Synod Council in the synod in which the ordained minister is listed on the roster—under policy developed at the direction of the presiding bishop and secretary, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.
- a. A Letter of Call may be issued to an ordained minister of this church, serving temporarily in such a church body, by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or a Synod Council, in accord with the Table of Sources of Calls (ELCA churchwide continuing resolution 7.44.A05.b.).
 - b. A Letter of Call may be issued to an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister of this church, serving temporarily in such a church body, by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or a Synod Council, in accord with the Table of Sources of Calls (ELCA churchwide continuing resolution 7.52.A05.b.).
 - c. A Letter of Call issued by the Church Council or a Synod Council for service in a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been established by the Churchwide Assembly shall be governed by churchwide constitutional provision 7.43. and churchwide bylaw 7.43.01.
 - d. A Letter of Call to an ordained minister of this church or to an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister who serves in a congregation of another church body, under a relationship of full communion, or an institution of such a church body on the territory of the synod, may be issued by the Synod Council. A Letter of Call to an ordained minister of this church or to an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister who serves in a national or international agency or institution of another church body, under a relationship of full communion, may be issued by the Church Council.
- 8.72.12.** An ordained minister of a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by a Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may be authorized by the synodical bishop to serve in a congregation or employing entity of this church. Such service shall be rendered under a contract between the congregation or employing entity and the ordained minister in a form proposed by the synodical bishop and approved by the congregation or employing entity. Any such service shall be in accord with churchwide policies developed at the direction of the presiding bishop and secretary, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

- 8.72.13. Whenever an ordained minister of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is to serve or is serving in a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by the Churchwide Assembly, or whenever an ordained minister of a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been so declared and established is to serve or is serving in this church, a full sharing of relevant information concerning such ordained minister's experience and fitness for ministry is expected between the synodical bishop (or other appropriate office or entity) of this church and the appropriate person, office, or entity in the other church. Relevant information related to fitness for ministry shall include, but is not limited to, any information concerning disciplinary proceedings or allegations that could result, or could have resulted, in disciplinary proceedings.
- 8.72.14. An ordained minister from a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by a Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may be granted the privilege of both voice and vote in the Synod Assembly during the period of that ordained minister's service in a congregation of this church, in accord with ELCA churchwide bylaw 8.72.12.
- 8.72.15. The availability of ordained ministers from a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by a Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be understood normally in three categories: availability to serve in an occasional situation; availability to meet an extended need, including service in "yoked parish" settings; and availability for a transfer of roster status.
- a. *Occasional service:* An occasional situation is defined as one in which an ordained minister of a church body with which a relationship of full communion exists may be asked to preach or administer the sacraments in an ELCA congregation on an occasional basis with the authorization of the synodical bishop.
 - b. *Extended service:* An ordained minister of a church body with which a relationship of full communion exists may be invited to serve as the pastor of an ELCA congregation for an extended period of time, yet remain an ordained minister of his or her present church body. Such a person would be expected to preach, teach, and administer the sacraments in an ELCA congregation in a manner that is consistent with the Confession of Faith of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and to live in a manner consistent with the ministerial policy of this church. Such service shall be rendered only as authorized by the synodical bishop in order to serve the ministry and mission needs of the ELCA in a given situation.
 - c. *Transfer:* An ordained minister of a church body with which a relationship of full communion exists who seeks to serve indefinitely within the ordained ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may apply for admission to the roster of ordained ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and be approved through the candidacy process for admission to the roster. Such an ordained minister would then become an ELCA pastor upon receipt and acceptance of a regular call and installation in an ELCA congregation or other setting.

- d. Roster status in more than one church body is precluded in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. As required by ELCA church-wide constitutional provision 7.22. and bylaw 7.31.11., ordained ministers on the roster of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America must accept and adhere to this church's Confession of Faith, as well as abide by this church's standards and policies for ordained ministers.

8.72.16. An ordained minister of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, while serving in an ecumenical setting, remains subject to the standards, policies, and discipline of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. An ordained minister of a church body with which a relationship of full communion exists is understood by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as subject to the standards, policies, and discipline of the church body in which the ordained minister is rostered or holds ministerial membership. Such an ordained minister, while serving in an ELCA congregation or other ministry, is expected to abide by the standards and policies of this church related to ordained ministers.

**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA:
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES RELATED TO THE AVAILABILITY OF ORDAINED MINISTERS**

The ELCA-UMC implementing resolutions for the for full-communion proposal, *Confessing Our Faith Together*, adopted by the 2008 UMC General Conference and the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly, declared, “the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and The United Methodist Church hereby . . . recognize the validity of our respective ministries, including . . . each other’s ordination of persons to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament; [and] recognize the full interchangeability and reciprocity of all ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament, subject to the constitutionally approved invitation for ministry in each other’s churches.”

In accord with the governing documents of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, policy related to the orderly exchange of ordained ministers between the participating church bodies is developed by the Vocation and Education unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council. Such policy applies to ordained ministers of this church who, while being retained on the roster of the ELCA, would serve temporarily in a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been established, and to ordained ministers of a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been established who would serve temporarily in a congregation or other ministry setting of this church.

I. ORDAINED MINISTERS OF ANOTHER CHURCH BODY SERVING IN THE ELCA
Occasional Service

An ordained minister of a church body with which a relationship of full communion exists may be asked to preach or administer the sacraments in an ELCA congregation on an occasional basis with the authorization of the synodical bishop.

Extended Service

An ordained minister of a church body with which a relationship of full communion exists may be invited by the synodical bishop to serve as the pastor of an ELCA congregation for an extended period of time, yet remain an ordained minister of another church body. Such a person will be expected to preach, teach, and administer the sacraments in an ELCA congregation in a manner that is consistent with the “Confession of Faith” of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and to live in a manner consistent with the expectations of this church as stated in “Vision and Expectations — Ordained Ministers in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.” Such service shall be rendered only as authorized by the synodical bishop in order to serve the ministry and mission needs of the ELCA or its ecumenical partners in a given situation.

Service in a congregation of this church or employing entity shall be rendered under a contract between the congregation or employing entity and the ordained minister, for a stated period of time in a form proposed by the synodical bishop and approved by the congregation. Extended service is reviewed annually by the Synod Council or Church Council.

Upon the recommendation of the synodical bishop and approval by the Synod Council, the synodical bishop authorizes an extended service ministry. Upon such authorization the ordained minister enters service in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America through an entry rite to be developed which acknowledges the ordained minister’s service as pastor in a congregation or other setting of ministry in this church.

The Rite of Installation is not used as that rite is for use only for a regularly called ordained minister of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. An ordained minister who is approved to serve in an extended service ministry in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may be granted, under S7.27., voice and vote in a Synod Assembly.

At any time for the sake of the ongoing ministry, the synodical bishop may withdraw authorization for service—or the congregation, employing agency or ordained minister may terminate a contract for extended service—after consultation with the other parties to the contract.

Transfer of Roster Status

An ordained minister of a church body with which a relationship of full communion exists who seeks to serve indefinitely within the ordained ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may apply for admission to the roster of ordained ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America under the policy of “Admission to the Roster of Ordained Ministers of Persons Ordained in Another Christian Tradition” for consideration of approval by a synodical Candidacy Committee of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Such an ordained minister would then become an ELCA pastor upon receipt and acceptance of a regular call and installation in an ELCA congregation or other approved setting. Roster status in more than one church body at a time is precluded in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

II. ORDAINED MINISTERS OF THE ELCA SERVING IN ANOTHER CHURCH BODY

An ordained minister of this church, serving for an extended period of time in a church body with which a relationship of full communion exists, may be retained on the roster of ordained ministers upon the recommendation of the synodical bishop and by action of the Synod Council in the synod in which the ordained minister is listed on the roster.

III. PROCEDURES FOR AVAILABILITY OF ORDAINED MINISTERS

A. Resources

The Vocation and Education unit recommends resources such as the following to assist synodical bishops in familiarizing ordained ministers of another church body with the life and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:

- *The Book of Concord* (Kolb and Wengert);
- Constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, particularly chapters, 2-7, and 9;
- Vision and Expectations — Ordained Ministers in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;
- The Use of the Means of Grace;
- *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, *Lutheran Book of Worship*, and *With One Voice*;
- *Christian Dogmatics* (Braaten and Jensen);
- *The Lutherans in North America* (Nelson);
- *One Great Cloud of Witnesses* (Almen).

B. Assessment

Authorization for extended service is given by the Synod Council, on the basis of the synodical bishop’s assessment of the ordained minister’s suitability for service. The bishop may wish to

appoint a panel to assist in this determination. The Vocation and Education unit recommends that this not be a responsibility of the full synodical Candidacy Committee, although members of the committee may serve on the panel.

C. Pension and Medical Insurance

A determination of the ordained minister's medical and disability insurance will be made. (The basic principle that has been established is that an ordained minister remains in his or her parent church body's pension and benefits plan. The congregation or other ministry setting being served contributes to the pension and benefits plan of the ordained minister's parent body.) Similarly, an ordained minister of this church serving in another church body will need to determine that Board of Pensions (or another comparable plan) coverage is provided by the employing body.

D. Accountability and Pastoral Care

An ordained minister of another church body is accountable to the jurisdiction or judicatory in which the ordained minister is "rostered" or in other ways a member. Similarly, an ordained minister of this church serving in another church body remains on the roster of this church and is accountable to the synodical bishop of the synod in which rostered. The synodical bishop is responsible for appropriate pastoral care and leadership for a congregation served by an ordained minister of another church body in the same manner as when the congregation is served by an ordained minister of this church (ELCA constitutional provision 10.31.a.3.).

E. Exchange of Information

The assessments, authorizations, and reviews necessary to the orderly exchange of ordained ministers between church bodies with which a relationship of full communion exists require the complete and continuing disclosure to the synod of all information concerning the past and present ministry of ordained ministers serving in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, or of ELCA ordained ministers serving under call from the Synod Council or Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Such disclosure must include any disciplinary proceedings concerning such ordained ministers, including discipline related to conduct during service in the ELCA by an ordained minister of another church body.

F. Source of Call

An ordained minister of this church serving in a congregation, local, or regional ministry setting of another church body serves under a Letter of Call from the Synod Council in which the ordained minister is rostered. An ELCA ordained minister serving in a national ministry setting of another church body serves under a Letter of Call from the ELCA Church Council. This call is subject to annual review by the Synod Council or Church Council.

G. Recognized Status of an Authorized Minister

An ordained minister of another church body serving in a congregation or other ministry of this church needs to be appropriately recognized. While not a member of this church nor included in the Roster of Ordained Ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, an ordained minister of another church body shall have a recognized status within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The Vocation and Education unit, in consultation with the Office of the Secretary, will develop a recommended nomenclature for this status.

IV. Titles

The usual title “pastor of (insert name of congregation)” would be used for ordained ministers serving in an ELCA congregation. The professional title of “The Rev.” for an ordained minister also would be understood as applicable, in view of that ordained minister’s officially recognized status in a church body with which the ELCA has a relationship of full communion.

Adopted by the Church Council as policy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, April 1998 [CC98.04.03].

**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA:
GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

Associate in Ministry – An Associate in Ministry is a rostered lay minister who has been examined, called, and commissioned for service in congregations, agencies, schools and institutions of the ELCA. Their primary areas of service are education, music and the arts, administration, service and general ministry.

Bishop – An ordained minister of Word and Sacrament in the ELCA, elected to provide pastoral care and leadership in a synod and its congregations, who seeks to strengthen the unity of the Church. The bishop is the chief executive officer of the synod, elected to a term of six years and may be reelected.

Bishop’s Assistant or Associate – A person who assists the synodical bishop in carrying out the responsibilities of the office. A bishop’s assistant or associate may be an ordained minister, a rostered lay minister, or a layperson.

Book of Concord – Published June 25, 1580, fifty years to the day after the initial presentation of the *Augsburg Confession*, the *Book of Concord* is a collection of ten foundational documents for Lutheran theology: the three ecumenical creeds, *Augsburg Confession*, *Apology*, *Smalcald Articles*, *Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope*, *Small Catechism*, *Large Catechism* and *Formula of Concord*. It became the official standard of doctrine for most Lutheran churches, and the ELCA constitution accepts the *Augsburg Confession* as a “true witness to the Gospel,” and the other confessional writings “further valid interpretations of the faith of the Church.”

Church Council – The board of directors for the ELCA, serving as the interim legislative authority between meetings of the Churchwide Assembly. The Church Council meets at least two times each year, and is composed of the four churchwide officers (presiding bishop, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer) and 33 other persons elected to six-year terms by the Churchwide Assembly.

Communion – A grouping of churches having common origins and traditions and in communion with each other nationally and/or internationally. The Lutheran World Federation is a communion of churches.

Coordinating Committee – Coordinating committees are instrumental in a full communion relationship with respect to the area of “reception.” Through a bilateral dialogue, the purpose of the coordinating committee is to find and initiate multiple ways in which both communions will learn about the nature of the full communion relationship, grow into the relationship, and facilitate a vision for the future of the relationship.

Churchwide Assembly – The biennial churchwide assembly is designated as the “highest legislative authority” in the ELCA. Synodical assemblies elect the clergy and lay voting members who will represent the Synod at the assembly that deals with the purposes, functions, and directions of ELCA ministries. The assembly also addresses issues that affect the life of the entire ELCA.

Churchwide Assembly – The highest legislative authority of the ELCA. It reviews the work of the churchwide officers and churchwide units. It establishes churchwide policy, approves social teaching statements and full-communion agreements, and adopts the budget for churchwide ministries. The Churchwide Assembly meets biennially in regular session, and is comprised of more than 1,000 voting members elected by Synod Assemblies throughout this church.

Churchwide Organization – The churchwide organization functions interdependently with the congregations and synods of the ELCA. It is responsible for developing churchwide policy, standards for leadership, including ordained and rostered lay ministries, and the coordination of the ministries of the ELCA both globally and throughout the territory of this church.

Conference of Bishops – An advisory body comprised of the bishops of the 65 synods, the presiding bishop, and the secretary of the ELCA. The conference meets at least two times each year and is a forum in which goals, objectives, and strategies may be developed and shared concerning pastoral leadership, rostering policies, and care and counsel for the synods. The Conference of Bishops reviews recommendations from the Vocation and Education unit pertaining to policies and programs related to the roster of ordained ministers, and the three rosters of lay ministers (associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers).

Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions – The basic commitments of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as well as its organizational outline, structural patterns, and rubrics of governance are expressed by its constitutional provisions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions. The document governs the life of the ELCA as congregations, synods, and churchwide organization.

Deaconess – A Deaconess is a rostered lay minister who has been examined, called, and consecrated for service in congregations, agencies, schools and institutions of the ELCA. Deaconesses comprise one of the three rosters of lay ministers in the ELCA, and are a continuation of the European Deaconess movement of the 19th century. They are members of the Deaconess Community of the ELCA, and participate in the life of that community.

Diaconal Minister – A Diaconal Minister is a rostered lay minister who has been examined, called, and consecrated for Word and Service ministry in congregations, agencies, schools and institutions of the ELCA. Diaconal Ministers comprise the newest of the three rosters of lay ministers in the ELCA, which was established in 1993 as a result of an extensive Study of Ministry authorized at the establishment of this church. Their focus for ministry is the extension of the church’s ministry of witness and care into the world.

Evangelical – From the Greek word for “gospel” and its German derivative. Original designation for the early reformers that is still used in German-speaking areas for non-Roman and non-Orthodox Christians. Historically unrelated to twentieth-century evangelical movements in the United States.

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America – On January 1, 1988, this church came into existence by the uniting of the 2.85 million member Lutheran Church in America, 2.25 million member American Lutheran Church, and the 100,000 member Association of Evangelical

Lutheran Churches. This church is therefore the youngest of the two large Lutheran churches in North America, while at the same time, it is the oldest, tracing its history through its many predecessors. The first Lutheran church body organized in the United States was the Ministerium of Pennsylvania and Adjacent States, which was established on August 25, 1748, in Philadelphia. The ELCA reflects the long-held dream of numerous members and leaders for greater Lutheran unity.

Lutheran Book of Worship – *Lutheran Book of Worship* (1978) was the primary worship resource for Evangelical Lutheran Church in America congregations and its liturgical texts and patterns of worship are considered the norm within the ELCA. It is supplemented by the worship resources, *With One Voice* (1995), *Libro De Liturgia Y Cantico* (1998), and *This Far by Faith* (1999). In 2006 a new primary worship resource, *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, was introduced and has been widely embraced by congregations throughout this church.

Ecumenical – Pertaining to the “whole inhabited earth.” It is now used to describe the movement to restore unity to all Christians or to describe openness and self-examination shared with other Christians to the end that Christ’s prayer for unity might be fulfilled. It is sometimes used to describe any cooperative venture between communions.

Ecumenism: The Vision of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America – Published in 1991, this document presents the ecumenical vision and a declaration of the ELCA’s ecumenical commitment. It is available online (www.elca.org/ecumenical/vision.html).

Epitome – Written by Jacob Andrea in 1576, the *Epitome* is a summary of the work of Lutheran theologians who met at Torgau, Germany, to discuss theological controversies within Lutheranism. The *Epitome* is the first part of the *Formula of Concord*.

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) – This denomination was formed in 1987 by the merger of the Lutheran Church in America, The American Lutheran Church, and the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches.

Formula of Concord – The *Formula of Concord* (FC), written in 1577, is composed of two parts, the Solid Declaration and the Epitome. The twelve articles comprising the FC are a restatement and exposition of the Augsburg Confession that resolved the major controversial issues within early Lutheranism and formed the foundation for the *Book of Concord*.

Full Communion (from the biblical term *koinonia* meaning to share, to act together, to be in fellowship) – A relationship between two distinct churches or communions where each maintains its own autonomy and recognizes the catholicity and apostolicity of the other. The term often refers to an agreement of pulpit and table fellowship and includes mutual respect and consultation in teaching. For more characteristics of Full Communion see: www.elca.org/ecumenical/FullCommunion/characteristics.html

Koinonia – a Greek word meaning to share, to act together, or to be in fellowship with one another. *Koinonia* occurs at least twenty-two times in the Bible. A unifying term, *koinonia* may be translated in a sense of communal *sharing* and activated *caritas* in the vital life of fellowship,

Gospel, in Christ's body and blood, in salvation, and in mission. In its most appropriate and unifying sense, Christians are a *koinonia* (i.e., a Christocentric and universal fellowship of sharing) called in Christ by and for the Gospel. In terms of method, *koinonia* ecclesiology is at heart Christocentric; in terms of vocation, Christians of every stripe share in a broad, global *koinonia*. In terms of unity, Christians are called to fellowship with one another from the linguistic and semantic ground of the Gospel. Finally, *koinonia* language in the New Testament is not a unity that assumes a former brokenness. Rather, Christians are called from the healthy sinews of a living Gospel, recasting the ecumenically popular John 20:17 "That they may all be one," as a phrase to be heard *anew* not from this side of our centuries-old ecclesial brokenness, but on the far *first* side of this divide, in the original and informative, unfractured ground of Gospel hope for unity in the world.

Luther, Martin – The founder of the Lutheran movement. Martin Luther (1483-1546) was born and died in Eisleben, Germany. Luther is known as the Father of Protestantism. He had studied to become a lawyer before becoming an Augustinian monk in 1505, and was ordained a priest in 1507. While continuing his studies in pursuit of a Doctor of Theology degree, he discovered significant differences between what he read in the Bible and the theology and practices of the church. On October 31, 1517, he posted a challenge on the church door at Wittenberg University to debate 95 theological issues. Luther's hope was that the church would reform its practice and preaching to be more consistent with the Word of God as contained in the Bible.

What started as an academic debate escalated to a religious war, fueled by fiery temperaments and violent language on both sides. As a result, there was not a reformation of the church but a separation. "Lutheran" was a name applied to Luther and his followers as an insult but adopted as a badge of honor by them instead. Lutherans still celebrate the Reformation on October 31 and still hold to the basic principles of theology and practice espoused by Luther, such as *Sola Gratia* (saved by the grace of God alone), *Sola Fide* (Salvation is through faith alone), and *Sola Scriptura* (The Bible is the only norm of doctrine and life).

Lutheran World Federation – The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) is a global communion of Christian churches in the Lutheran tradition. The LWF currently has 138 member churches in 77 countries all over the world, with a membership of nearly 65 million Lutherans.

Means of Grace – The practice of Word and Sacrament ministries as understood by the ELCA. For an in-depth discussion, see: *Principles for Worship: Renewing Worship* Vol. 2. Augsburg Fortress, Publishers (2002).

Membership – The baptized membership of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in 2008 was 4.7 million members in approximately 10,500 congregations. Members of congregations may also be recognized as "confirmed," "voting," and "associate" as defined by the *Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.

Ministry – The ELCA affirms the universal priesthood of all its baptized members and commits itself to the equipping and supporting of all its members for their ministries in the world and in this church.

Occasional Services – A companion to *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, this book provides services for specific occasions and specific situations, such as the rites of ordination, consecration, and commissioning, and orders for the blessing of dwellings, blessing of vestments, and the like.

Ordained Ministry – The ELCA confesses that within the people of God and for the sake of the Gospel ministry entrusted to all believers, God has instituted the office of ministry of Word and Sacrament. To carry out this ministry, the ELCA calls and ordains qualified persons. This church teaches that there is one office of ordained ministry, comprised of pastors and bishops.

Pastor – The normal term used to describe an ordained minister of Word and Sacrament. A parish pastor serves in a congregational setting. The term pastor may be used to describe an ordained minister serving in a non-congregational setting as well.

Presiding Bishop – An ordained minister of Word and Sacrament who is a teacher of the faith of this church and provides leadership for the life and witness of this church. The Presiding Bishop is the chief executive officer of the churchwide organization, and is the chief ecumenical officer of the church. The presiding bishop is elected to a six-year term and may be reelected.

Principles of Organization – The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America understands itself as one church, recognizing that all power and authority in the Church belongs to the Lord Jesus Christ. The congregations, synods, and churchwide organization are interdependent partners sharing responsibility in God’s mission.

Representational Principles – Among the principles of organization, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has determined that at least 60 percent of the members of assemblies, councils, committees, boards, and other organizations shall be laypersons; that, as nearly as possible, the lay members shall be 50 percent female and 50 percent male; and that, where possible, the representation of ordained ministers shall be both female and male. It also has determined that a minimum goal of 10 percent of the membership of its assemblies, councils, committees, boards, or other organizational units shall be persons of color or whose primary language is other than English.

Sacramental Practices – “The Use of the Means of Grace” was adopted for “guidance and practice” by the 1997 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as a “statement on the practice of Word and Sacrament.”

Solid Declaration – Theologians met at Bergen Abbey in Germany in 1577 to discuss the formulations of the Lutheran Theologians at Torgau (see *Epitome* above). The *Solid Declaration* became the product of these negotiations and the second part of the *Formula of Concord*.

Synod – Geographic area overseen by a bishop. Similar to United Methodist Church Annual Conferences, there are 65 synods in the ELCA. Each synod, in partnership with the churchwide organization, bears primary responsibility for the oversight of the life and mission of the ELCA in its territory.

Synod Assembly – The highest legislative authority of the synod, with a regular meeting held at least biennially (with most Synod Assemblies meeting annually). All ordained ministers and rostered lay ministers serving under call are voting members, as well as representative lay voting members from every congregation within the synod.

Synodically Authorized Minister – When need exists for Word and Sacrament ministry within a congregation of this church where it is not possible to provide appropriate ordained pastoral leadership, the synodical bishop may authorize a lay member of an ELCA congregation to provide this ministry. Such individuals are supervised by a pastor appointed by the synodical bishop; such service is rendered during its duration under the sacramental authority of the bishop as the synod’s pastor. Such lay ministers are not ordained, but licensed for this service.

Unaltered Augsburg Confession – The first version of the *Augsburg Confession* (AC) was written in 1530 by Philip Melancthon and presented to Charles V at the Diet of Augsburg as a statement of Lutheran beliefs. This is the version found in the *Book of Concord*. In 1540, Melancthon revised some of the articles of the AC into an “Altered Augsburg Confession.” The 1540 version is also known as the *variata*.

Vision and Expectations – The ELCA Church Council adopted the document “Vision and Expectations — Ordained Ministers in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America” in 1990 as a statement of this church about the vision for ordained ministry in the life of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the expectations of those who serve in that ministry. A similar document defines expectations for rostered lay ministers.

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH: A PRIMER ON ITINERANCY OR APPOINTMENT SYSTEM

“United Methodist clergy are called to be sent. Not called to be called.” These words of Bishop Yeakel succinctly describe the itinerant (or appointment) system. The primary goal of the appointment system is to match the gifts and graces of a particular pastor to the ministry needs of a particular congregation at a particular time. This itinerant¹ system, where pastors move from one appointment² to another, dates back to John Wesley who began the itinerant system during his work in England, and extended it to the American frontier when circuit³ riding preachers traveled on horseback from town to town. At that time, bishops matched preachers to circuits four times a year. Today’s bishops typically fix appointments once a year. To understand the appointive process, it helps to know a little about how The United Methodist Church is organized. Individual congregations are part of a larger network known as an Annual Conference under the leadership of a bishop. Most Annual Conferences are comprised of several Districts. Ordained clergy are members of an Annual Conference rather than a congregation.

The bishop and cabinet are responsible for the health of the entire Annual Conference. Ordinarily, district superintendents assist the bishop in prayerfully making appointments. They generally meet with pastors and representatives of local congregations every year to assess the effectiveness of ministry there. The pastor-parish relations committee represents the congregation officially in this process. Often, when everyone agrees that a current pastor’s gifts and graces are a good match for the specific needs of a ministry setting, the pastor is assigned to remain for another year. Sometimes, however, a particular pastor is needed elsewhere or a congregation requires someone with a new set of gifts and graces. In that case, the pastor will move and the church will receive someone new. The process always involves consultation, but the details vary according to the Annual Conference and the bishop. Appointments are formally ‘fixed’ at the regular session of Annual Conference and they take effect on a designated Sunday, usually in early summer.

¶ 338. The Itinerant System

The itinerant system is the accepted method of The United Methodist Church by which ordained elders are appointed by the bishop to fields of labor.²⁰ All ordained elders shall accept and abide by these appointments. Persons appointed to multiple-staff ministries, either in a single parish or in a cluster or larger parish, shall have personal and professional access to the bishop and cabinet, the committee on pastor-parish relations, as well as to the pastor in charge. The nature of the appointment process is specified in ¶¶ 430-434.

20. See Judicial Council Decision 713.

¹Itineracy, itinerancy: The system in The United Methodist Church by which pastors are appointed to their charges by the bishops. The pastors are under obligation to serve where appointed. The present form of the itineracy grew from the practice of Methodist pastors traveling widely throughout the church on circuits. Assigned to service by a bishop, they were not to remain with one particular congregation for any length of time (Source: A Dictionary for United Methodists, Alan K. Waltz, Copyright 1991, Abingdon Press. Used by permission).

²Appointment, ministerial: The annual assignment to a field of service of ministerial members active in an annual conference. The appointment may be to a pastoral charge or to special appointments beyond the local church. Only those ministerial members who are retired or who have been granted a sabbatical leave, a disability leave, or a leave of absence do not receive an appointment. The clergy deployment system for The United Methodist Church is referred to as the itinerant system. Under this system ordained ministers are appointed or sent by the bishop to their assignments. It is the obligation of the ministerial members to accept these appointments. The term is also often applied to the place or position to which the ordained minister has been assigned by the bishop (Source: A Dictionary for United Methodists, Alan K. Waltz, Copyright 1991, Abingdon Press. Used by permission).

³Circuit: Two or more local churches joined together for pastoral supervision. The churches on a circuit constitute one pastoral charge. When a pastoral charge consists of only one local church, it is called a station (Source: A Dictionary for United Methodists, Alan K. Waltz, Copyright 1991, Abingdon Press. Used by permission).

PASTORAL ASSIGNMENT PROCESS

¶ 336. Ministry, Authority, and Responsibilities of an Elder in Full Connection

An elder in full connection is authorized to give spiritual and temporal servant leadership in the Church in the following manner:

1. Elders in full connection shall have the right to vote on all matters in the annual conference except in the election of lay delegates to the general and jurisdictional or central conferences (¶ 602.1a) and shall share with deacons in full connection responsibility for all matters of ordination, character, and conference relations of clergy. This responsibility shall not be limited by the recommendation or lack of recommendation by the board of ordained ministry, notwithstanding provisions which grant to the board of ordained ministry the right of recommendation.¹³ They shall be eligible to hold office in the annual conference and to be elected delegates to the general and jurisdictional or central conferences under the provision of the Constitution (¶ 35, Article IV). Every effective elder in full connection who is in good standing shall be continued under appointment by the bishop provided that if the elder is appointed to serve in an affiliated relationship in a missionary conference (¶ 586) and that appointment is terminated by the bishop who presides in the missionary conference, then the responsibility for meeting this obligation rests with the bishop of the conference of which the elder is a member.¹⁴
2. There are professional responsibilities that elders are expected to fulfill and that represent a fundamental part of their accountability and a primary basis of their continued eligibility for annual appointment. These shall include:
 - a) Continuing availability for appointment.
 - b) Growth in vocational competence and effectiveness through continuing formation is expected of conference members. The board of ordained ministry (¶ 634.2n) shall set minimal standards and specific guidelines for continuing formation for members of their conference and ensure their availability. Further specificity of priorities for current appointments shall be arranged in consultations with appropriate bodies in that setting.
 - c) Annual participation in a process of evaluation with committees on pastor-parish relations or a comparable body.
 - d) Annual participation in evaluation with his or her district superintendent.
 - e) Willingness to assume supervisory and mentoring responsibilities within the connection.
3. If an elder fails to meet these professional responsibilities, the provisions of ¶ 362.4c may be invoked.
4. Clergy who are retired, on incapacity leave, or on sabbatical leave may at their own initiative apply to the conference board of ordained ministry for affiliate membership in the annual conference where they reside. By a two-thirds vote of the executive session, such clergy may be received with rights and privileges, including service on conference boards, agencies, task forces, and committees, with voice but without vote. Voting membership shall be retained in the clergy member's home annual conference for the duration of affiliate member relationship. Such persons may serve on the board, agency, task force or committee of only one annual conference at any one time.

13. See Judicial Council Decision 690.

14. See Judicial Council Decisions 462, 473, 492, 534, 552, 555.

Section XI. Clergy from Other Annual Conferences, Other Methodist and Christian Denominations

¶ 346. Provisions for Clergy from Outside the Annual Conference

- ...
2. Elders or Ordained Clergy from **Other Denominations**—On recommendation of the board of ordained ministry, the clergy members in full connection may approve annually clergy in good standing in other Christian denominations to serve appointments or ecumenical ministries within the bounds of the annual conference while retaining their denominational affiliation; provided they present suitable credentials, give assurance of their Christian faith and experience, and release required psychological reports, criminal background and credit checks, and reports of sexual misconduct and/or child abuse. They shall submit, on a form provided by the conference board of ordained ministry: a notarized statement detailing any convictions for felony or misdemeanor or written accusations of sexual misconduct or child abuse; or a notarized statement certifying that the candidate has not been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor, or accused in writing of sexual misconduct or child abuse. They shall give evidence of their agreement with and willingness to support and maintain United Methodist doctrine, discipline, and polity. Their ordination credentials shall be examined by the bishop and the board of ordained ministry and, upon its recommendation, may be recognized as valid elders in The United Methodist Church while they are under appointment. When the board of ordained ministry certifies that their credentials are at least equal to those of United Methodist elders, they may be accorded the right to vote in the annual conference on all matters except the following: (a) constitutional amendments; (b) election of delegates to the general and jurisdictional or central conferences; (c) all matters of ordination, character, and conference relations of ministers. They may serve on any board, commission, or committee of an annual conference, except the board of ordained ministry and the board of trustees (¶¶ 634.1, 2512.1). They shall not be eligible for election as delegates to the general, jurisdictional, or central conferences. They shall also be subject to the provisions governing sabbatical leave, leave of absence, location, retirement, minimum salary, and pension. They shall not have security of appointment.
 3. Between conference sessions, the board of ordained ministry may approve them for appointment pending the recognition of their orders. The bishop may make ad interim recognition of valid ordination after consultation with the cabinet and executive committee of the board of ordained ministry, pending recognition by the vote of the clergy members in full connection. In every case, prior examination shall be made of the ordained minister's understanding, acceptance, and willingness to support and maintain United Methodist doctrine, discipline, and polity.³⁴

34. See Judicial Council Decision 444.

¶ 347. Transfers

- ...
3. *From Other Denominations*
 - a) On recommendation of the board of ordained ministry, the clergy members in full connection may recognize the orders of ordained clergy from other denominations and receive them as probationary members or local pastors. They shall present their credentials for examination by the bishop and board of ordained ministry

and give assurance of their Christian faith and experience. They shall give evidence of their agreement with and willingness to support and maintain United Methodist doctrine, discipline, and polity and present a satisfactory certificate of good health on the prescribed form from a physician approved by the board of ordained ministry. The board of ordained ministry, in consultation with the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, shall determine whether they meet the educational requirements for conference membership. A psychological report, criminal background and credit check, and reports of sexual misconduct and/or child abuse shall be required. They shall submit, on a form provided by the conference board of ordained ministry:

- (1) a notarized statement detailing any convictions for felony or misdemeanor or written accusations of sexual misconduct of child abuse; or
 - (2) a notarized statement certifying that the candidate has not been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor, or accused in writing of sexual misconduct or child abuse.
- b) Ordained elders or ordained clergy from other Christian denominations shall serve as probationary members for at least two years and complete all the requirements of ¶ 335, including courses in United Methodist history, doctrine, and polity, before being admitted into full conference membership.
- c) Following the probationary member's election to full conference membership as a deacon or an elder as provided in ¶ 326, the bishop and secretary of the conference shall provide a certificate of full membership in the annual conference.
4. The board of ordained ministry of an annual conference is required to ascertain from an ordained clergyperson seeking admission into its membership on credentials from another denomination whether or not membership in the effective relation was previously held in an annual conference of The United Methodist Church or one of its legal predecessors, and if so, when and under what circumstances the ordained minister's connection with such annual conference was severed.
5. Ordained clergy seeking admission into an annual conference on credentials from another denomination who have previously withdrawn from membership in the effective relation in an annual conference of The United Methodist Church or one of its legal predecessors shall not be admitted or readmitted without the consent of the annual conference from which they withdrew or its legal successor, or the annual conference of which the major portion of their former conference is a part, such consent to be granted upon recommendation of its board of ordained ministry.

Section VIII. Appointment-Making

¶ 430. *Responsibility*

1. Clergy shall be appointed by the bishop, who is empowered to make and fix all appointments in the episcopal area of which the annual conference is a part. Appointments are to be made with consideration of the gifts and evidence of God's grace of those appointed, to the needs, characteristics, and opportunities of congregations and institutions, and with faithfulness to the commitment to an open itineracy. Open itineracy means appointments are made without regard to race, ethnic origin, gender, color, disability, marital status, or age, except for the provisions of mandatory retirement. Annual conferences shall, in their training of staff-parish relations committees, emphasize

the open nature of itinerancy and prepare congregations to receive the gifts and graces of appointed clergy without regard to race, ethnic origin, gender, color, disability, marital status, or age. The concept of itinerancy is important, and sensitive attention should be given in appointing clergy with physical challenges to responsibilities and duties that meet their gifts and graces. Through appointment-making, the connectional nature of the United Methodist system is made visible.

2. Appointment-making across conference lines shall be encouraged as a way of creating mobility and open itinerancy. The jurisdictional committee on ordained ministry will cooperate with bishops and cabinets in providing information on supply and demand within the jurisdiction.
3. The United Methodist Church promotes and holds in high esteem the opportunity of an inclusive church (§ 4. Article IV) with the formation of open itinerancy (§ 430.1).
4. Cross-racial and cross-cultural appointments are made as a creative response to increasing racial and ethnic diversity in the church and in its leadership. Cross-racial and cross-cultural appointments are appointments of clergypersons to congregations in which the majority of their constituencies are different from the clergyperson's own racial/ethnic and cultural background. Annual conferences shall prepare clergy and congregations for cross-racial and cross-cultural appointments. When such appointments are made, Bishops, cabinets, and boards of ordained ministry shall provide specific training for the clergy persons so appointed and for their congregations.

¶431. Consultation and Appointment-Making

Consultation is the process whereby the bishop and/or district superintendent confer with the pastor and committee on pastor-parish relations, taking into consideration the criteria of ¶ 432, a performance evaluation, needs of the appointment under consideration, and mission of the Church. Consultation is not merely notification. Consultation is not committee selection or call of a pastor. The role of the committee on pastor-parish relations is advisory. Consultation is both a continuing process and a more intense involvement during the period of change in appointment.²⁰

1. The process of consultation shall be mandatory in every annual conference.
2. The Council of Bishops shall inquire annually of their colleagues about the implementation of the process of consultation in appointment-making in their respective areas.²¹

20. See Judicial Council Decisions 101, 501.

21. See Judicial Council Decision 701.

¶ 432. Criteria

Appointments shall take into account the unique needs of a charge, the community context, and also the gifts and evidence of God's grace of a particular pastor. To assist bishops, cabinets, pastors, and congregations to achieve an effective match of charges and pastors, criteria must be developed and analyzed in each instance and then shared with pastors and congregations.

1. *Congregations*-The district superintendent shall develop with the pastor and the committees on pastor-parish relations of all churches profiles that reflect the needs, characteristics, and opportunities for mission of the charge consistent with the Church's statement of purpose (§ 421.1). These profiles shall be reviewed annually and updated when appropriate to include:

- a) The general situation in which a congregation finds itself in a particular setting: size, financial condition, quality of lay leadership, special needs for pastoral ministry, and history.
 - b) The convictional stance of the congregation: theology; prejudices, if any; spiritual life.
 - c) The ministry of the congregation among its people for the sake of the community: service programs, basis for adding new members, reasons for losing members, mission to community and world, forms of witness.
 - d) The qualities and functions of pastoral ministry needed to fulfill the mission, goals, and special needs of the congregation.
2. *Pastors*-The district superintendent annually shall develop with the pastor profiles reflecting the pastor's gifts, evidence of God's grace, professional experience and expectations, and also the needs and concerns of the pastor's spouse and family. These profiles shall be reviewed annually and updated when appropriate to include:
- a) *Spiritual and personal sensibility*: personal faith, call and commitment to ordained ministry, work through the institutional church, integration of vocation with personal and family well-being, lifestyle.
 - b) *Academic and career background*: nature of theological stance, experience in continuing education, professional experience, record of performance.
 - c) *Skills and abilities*: in church administration, leadership development, worship and liturgy, preaching and evangelism, teaching and nurturing, interpreting and promoting the connectional giving system, counseling and group work, ability to work in cooperation, ability in self-evaluation, and other relational skills.
 - d) *Community context*: the ability of the pastor to relate effectively to his or her community setting, such as rural, town, urban, suburban, and so forth.
 - e) *Family situation*.
3. *Community Context*-The district superintendent may develop community profiles with the pastor and the committee on pastor-parish relations. Sources of information for these profiles could include: neighborhood surveys; local, state, and national census data; information from annual conference committees on parish and community development; and research data from the Connectional Table and other Church agencies. Profiles may be reviewed annually and updated when appropriate to include:
- a) General demographic data and trends including age, sex, and racial-ethnic composition of the community.
 - b) Economic trends, including the incidence of poverty.
 - c) Projected community changes.
 - d) Other sociological, economic, political, historical, and ecumenical aspects of the community surrounding the church.

¶ 433. *Process of Appointment-Making*

The process used in appointment-making shall include:²²

1. A change in appointment may be initiated by a pastor, a committee on pastor-parish relations, a district superintendent, or a bishop.
2. The bishop and the cabinet shall consider all requests for change of appointment in light of the profile developed for each charge and the gifts and evidence of God's grace, professional experience, and family needs of the pastor.

3. When a change in appointment has been determined, the district superintendent should meet together or separately with the pastor and the committee on pastor-parish relations where the pastor is serving, for the purpose of sharing the basis for the change and the process used in making the new appointment.
4. All appointments shall receive consideration by the bishop, the district superintendent(s), and the cabinet as a whole until a tentative decision is made.
5. The process used in making the new appointment shall include:
 - a) The district superintendent shall confer with the pastor about a specific possible appointment (charge) and its congruence with gifts, evidence of God's grace, professional experience and expectations, and the family needs of the pastor, identified in consultation with the pastor (§ 432.2).
 - b) If the appointment is to a cooperative parish ministry or to a charge that is part of a cooperative parish ministry, the following shall be included in the consultation process:
 - (1) The prospective appointee shall be informed prior to the appointment that the charge under consideration is part of a cooperative parish ministry.²³
 - (2) The coordinator or director of the cooperative ministry, or, if there is no coordinator or director, a representative of the staff of the cooperative ministry, shall be conferred with concerning the prospective appointment and shall have the opportunity to meet with the prospective appointee prior to the appointment being made.²⁴
 - (3) The prospective appointee shall have demonstrated skills in cooperative Christian mission or show potential for the same to ensure that the cooperative venture is strengthened during the time of the appointee's leadership.
 - c) If the appointment is to a position other than pastor in charge, the following shall be included in the consultation process:
 - (1) The prospective appointee shall be informed prior to the appointment that the position under consideration is part of a multiple-staff ministry and shall be furnished an initial written job description approved by the committee on pastor-parish relations.
 - (2) The pastor in charge shall be conferred with concerning the prospective appointee.
 - (3) The prospective appointee and pastor in charge shall meet for discussion of the job description and mutual expectations.
6. The district superintendent shall confer with the receiving committee on pastor-parish relations about pastoral leadership (§ 432.1).
7. When appointments are being made to less than full-time ministry, the district superintendent shall consult with the clergy person to be appointed and the committee on pastor-parish relations regarding proportional time, salary, and pension credit and benefit coverage.
8. If during this consultative process it is determined by the bishop and cabinet that this decision should not be carried out, the process is to be repeated until the bishop, basing his or her decision on the information and advice derived from consultation, makes and fixes the appointment.
9. A similar process of consultation shall be available to persons in appointments beyond the local church.

10. When the steps in the process have been followed and completed, the announcement of that decision shall be made to all parties directly involved in the consultative process, that is, the appointment cabinet, the pastor, and the committee on pastor-parish relations, before a public announcement is made.

22. See Judicial Council Decision 701.

23. See Judicial Council Decision 556.

24. See Judicial Council Decision 556.

¶ 434. *Frequency*

While the bishop shall report all pastoral appointments to each regular session of an annual conference, appointments to charges may be made at any time deemed advisable by the bishop and cabinet. Appointments are made with the expectation that the length of pastorates shall respond to the long-term pastoral needs of charges, communities, and pastors. The bishop and cabinet should work toward longer tenure in local church appointments to facilitate a more effective ministry.

Section XIII. Evaluation for Continuing Formation for Full Members and Local Pastors

¶ 350. *Evaluation*

Evaluation is a continuous process for formation in servant ministry and servant leadership that must take place in a spirit of understanding and acceptance. Evaluation serves as a process for pastors to assess their effectiveness in ministry and to discern God's call to continue in ordained ministry.

1. The district superintendent, in consultation with the pastor-parish relations committee, will evaluate annually the pastors' effectiveness for ministry (¶¶ 334.2c, 421, 634.2n, q), using criteria, processes, and training developed by the cabinet and the board of ordained ministry. The pastors in local churches shall participate annually in an evaluation with the committee on pastor-parish relations for use in an ongoing effective ministry and for identifying continuing education needs and plans (¶ 259.2g[5]), using criteria, processes, and training developed by the board of ordained ministry and the cabinet.
2. Clergy serving in appointments to extension ministries will undergo annual evaluation by their immediate supervisors, engage in annual self-evaluation, and include copies of these evaluations in the annual report submitted to their bishop, district superintendent, and the board of ordained ministry (¶ 344.2a). When possible, they shall have a conversation with their district superintendent about their ministry.

¶ 259. *Administrative Committees* [Pastor Parish Relations Committee]

- ...
2. There shall be elected annually by the charge conference in each local church a committee on pastor-parish relations or staff-parish relations who are professing members of the local church or charge or associate members (¶ 227), except in cases where central conference legislation or local law provides otherwise. People serving on this committee must be engaged in and attentive to their Christian spiritual development so as to give proper leadership in the responsibilities with which the committee is entrusted.

In conducting its work, the committee shall identify and clarify its values for ministry. It shall engage in biblical and theological reflections on the mission of the church, the primary task, and ministries of the local church.

The committee shall reflect biblically and theologically on the role and work of the pastor(s) and staff as they carry out their leadership responsibilities. The committee shall assist the pastor(s) and staff in assessing their gifts and setting priorities for leadership and service. It is the responsibility of the committee to communicate with the committee on lay leadership and/or the church council when there is a need for other leaders or for employed staff to perform in areas where utilization of the gifts of the pastor(s) and staff proves an inappropriate stewardship of time.

- a) The committee shall be composed of not fewer than five nor more than nine persons representative of the total charge. One of the members shall be a young adult and one member may be a youth. In addition, the lay leader and a lay member of the annual conference shall be members. No staff member or immediate family member of a pastor or staff member may serve on the committee. Only one person from an immediate family residing in the same household shall serve on the committee.
- b) In order to secure experience and stability, the membership shall be divided into three classes, one of which shall be elected each year for a three-year term. The lay member of the annual conference and the lay leader are exempt from the three-year term. To begin the process of rotation where such a process has not been in place, on the first year one class shall be elected for one year, one class for two years, and one class for three years. Members of the committee shall be able to succeed themselves for one three-year term. When vacancies occur during the year, nominees shall be elected at the church council (or alternative church structure).
- c) In those charges where there is more than one church, the committee shall include at least one representative and the lay leader from each local church.
- d) The committees on pastor-parish relations of charges that are in cooperative parish ministries shall meet together to consider the professional leadership needs of the cooperative parish ministry as a whole.
- e) The committee shall meet at least quarterly. It shall meet additionally at the request of the bishop, the district superintendent, the pastor, any other person accountable to the committee, or the chairperson of the committee. The committee shall meet only with the knowledge of the pastor and/or the district superintendent. The pastor shall be present at each meeting of the committee on pastor-parish relations or staff-parish relations except where he or she voluntarily excuses himself or herself.

The committee may meet with the district superintendent without the pastor or appointed staff under consideration being present. However, the pastor or appointed staff under consideration shall be notified prior to such meeting with the district superintendent and be brought into consultation immediately thereafter.

The committee shall meet in closed session, and information shared in the committee shall be confidential.

- f) In the event that only one congregation on a charge containing more than one church has concerns it wishes to share, its member(s) in the committee may meet separately with the pastor or any other person accountable to the committee or the district superintendent, but only with the knowledge of the pastor and/or district superintendent.

- g) The duties of the committee shall include the following:
- (1) To encourage, strengthen, nurture, support, and respect the pastor(s) and staff and their family(s).
 - (2) To promote unity in the church(es).
 - (3) To confer with and counsel the pastor(s) and staff on the matters pertaining to the effectiveness of ministry; relationships with the congregation; conditions that may impede the effectiveness of ministry; and to interpret the nature and function of the ministry.
 - (4) To confer with, consult, and counsel the pastor(s) and staff on matters pertaining to priorities in the use of gifts, skills, and time and priorities for the demands and effectiveness of the mission and ministry of the congregation.
 - (5) To provide evaluation at least annually for the use of the pastor(s) and staff in an ongoing effective ministry and for identifying continuing educational needs and plans.
 - (6) To communicate and interpret to the congregation the nature and function of ministry in The United Methodist Church regarding open itinerancy, the preparation for ordained ministry, and the Ministerial Education Fund.
 - (7) To develop and approve written job descriptions and titles for associate pastors and other staff members in cooperation with the senior pastor. The term associate pastor is used as a general term to indicate any pastoral appointment in a local church other than the pastor in charge (see ¶ 339). Committees shall be encouraged to develop specific titles for associate pastors that reflect the job descriptions and expectations.
 - (8) To consult with the pastor and staff concerning continuing education and spiritual renewal, to arrange with the church council for the necessary time and financial assistance for the attendance of the pastor and/or staff at such continuing education and spiritual renewal events as may serve their professional and spiritual growth, and to encourage staff members to seek professional certification in their fields of specialization.
 - (9) To enlist, interview, evaluate, review, and recommend annually to the charge conference lay preachers and persons for candidacy for ordained ministry (see ¶¶ 247.8 and 310), and to enlist and refer to the General Board of Global Ministries persons for candidacy for missionary service, recognizing that The United Methodist Church affirms the biblical and theological support of persons regardless of gender, race, ethnic origin, or disabilities for these ministries. Neither the pastor nor any member of the committee on pastor-parish relations shall be present during the consideration of a candidacy application or renewal for a member of their immediate family. The committee shall provide to the charge conference a list of students from the charge who are preparing for ordained ministry, diaconal ministry, and/or missionary service, and shall maintain contact with these students, supplying the charge conference with a progress report on each student.
 - (10) To interpret preparation for ordained ministry and the Ministerial Education Fund to the congregation.

- (11) To confer with the pastor and/or other appointed members of the staff if it should become evident that the best interests of the charge and pastor(s) will be served by a change of pastor(s). The committee shall cooperate with the pastor(s), the district superintendent, and the bishop in securing clergy leadership. Its relationship to the district superintendent and the bishop shall be advisory only.⁹ (See ¶¶ 430-433.)
- (12) To recommend to the church council, after consultation with the pastor, the professional and other staff positions (whether employee or contract) needed to carry out the work of the church or charge. The committee and the pastor shall recommend to the church council a written statement of policy and procedures regarding the process for hiring, contracting, evaluating, promoting, retiring, and dismissing staff personnel who are not subject to episcopal appointment as ordained clergy. Until such a policy has been adopted, the committee and the pastor shall have the authority to hire, contract, evaluate, promote, retire, and dismiss nonappointed personnel. When persons are hired or contracted, consideration shall be given to the training qualifications and certification standards set forth by the general Church agency to which such positions are related. The committee shall further recommend to the church council a provision for adequate health and life insurance and severance pay for all lay employees. In addition, the committee shall recommend that the church council provide, effective on and after January 1, 2006, 100 percent vested pension benefits of at least three percent of compensation for lay employees of the local church who work at least 1040 hours per year, are at least 21 years of age, and have at least one year of permanent service. The church council shall have authority to provide such pension benefits through either a denominational pension program administered by the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits or another pension program administered by another pension provider.
- (13) To recommend to the charge conference, when the size of the employed staff of the charge makes it desirable, the establishment of a personnel committee. This committee shall be composed of such members of the committee on pastor-parish relations as it may designate and such additional members as the charge conference may determine.
- (14) To educate the church community on the value of diversity of selection in clergy and lay staff and develop a commitment to same.
- (15) Members of the committee on pastor-parish relations (or staff-parish relations) shall keep themselves informed of personnel matters in relationship to the Church's policy, professional standards, liability issues, and civil law. They are responsible for communicating and interpreting such matters to staff. Committee members should make themselves available for educational and training opportunities provided by the conference, district, and/or other arenas that will enable them to be effective in their work.
- (16) To consult on matters pertaining to pulpit supply, proposals for compensation, travel expense, vacation, health and life insurance,

pension, housing (which may be a church-owned parsonage or housing allowance in lieu of parsonage if in compliance with the policy of the annual conference), and other practical matters affecting the work and families of the pastor and staff, and to make annual recommendations regarding such matters to the church council, reporting budget items to the committee on finance. The parsonage is to be mutually respected by the pastor's family as the property of the church and by the church as a place of privacy for the pastor's family. The chairperson of the committee on pastor-parish relations, the chairperson of the board of trustees, and the pastor shall make an annual review of the church-owned parsonage to assure proper maintenance.

9. See Judicial Council Decision 701.

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH:
GLOSSARY OF TERMS

25 Articles of Religion – Upon recognition of American independence in 1783, John Wesley realized that the Methodists in America should become an independent church. Wesley furnished the American Methodists with a liturgy (The Sunday Service of the Methodists in North America) and a doctrinal statement—the Articles of Religion. Wesley revised the Anglican Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion into twenty-four articles and the church in America revised them into the Twenty-Five Articles of Religion.

Authorized/licensed Minister – In the UMC, persons who are not ordained as elders but who are appointed to preach and conduct divine worship and perform the duties of a pastor are licensed by the annual conference board of ordained ministry.

Book of Discipline, The – A fundamental book outlining the law, doctrine, administration, organizational work, and procedures of The United Methodist Church. Each General Conference amends *The Book of Discipline*, and the actions of the General Conference are reflected in the quadrennial revision. Often referred to as *The Discipline* (*Sharing God's Gifts Glossary of United Methodist Terms* <http://umcgiving.org/content/glossary.asp>).

Commissioned ministers/ Commissioning – Probationary members of the annual conference who are preparing for ordination as elders. The probationary period begins with a commissioning of the candidate for leadership and service in the name of Jesus Christ.

Confession of Faith, The – A statement devised by The Evangelical United Brethren Church. At the time of union in 1968 with The Methodist Church, the Confession of Faith was included in the *Book of Discipline* as one of the historic doctrinal statements of The United Methodist Church.

Consecration – UMC elders who are elected to the office of bishop are consecrated, or set apart, for such service. The Order for the Consecration of Bishops (*Book of Worship*, page 700) includes the sign-act of the laying on of hands by other bishops. Laying on of hands is a sign of episcopal unity and collegiality, signifying the bishop-elect's empowerment by the Holy Spirit and admission to the duties of the office.

Coordinating Committee – Coordinating committees are instrumental in a full communion relationship with respect to the area of "reception." Through a bilateral dialogue, the purpose of the coordinating committee is to find and initiate multiple ways in which both communions will learn about the nature of the full communion relationship, grow into the relationship, and facilitate a vision for the future of the relationship.

Deacon – A UMC deacon is an ordained clergyperson who is called to serve all people, particularly the poor, the sick, and the oppressed, and to equip and lead the laity in ministries of compassion, justice, and service in the world. In this capacity, he or she leads the church in relating the gathered community to their ministries in the world, thus connecting the church's worship with its service in the world. A deacon has the authority to teach and proclaim God's

Word, to lead in worship, to assist elders in the administration of the sacraments of Holy Baptism and Holy Communion, to perform the marriage ceremony where the laws of the state permit, and to bury the dead (Source: InfoServ).

Deaconess – A UMC deaconess is a laywoman who, in response to God’s call and on recommendation by the General Board of Global Ministries, is commissioned by a bishop to share faith in Jesus Christ through ministries of love, justice, and service. Deaconesses serve the church in any capacity not requiring full clergy rights. They are related to the General Board of Global Ministries. A lifetime commitment to mission is presumed (*Sharing God’s Gifts Glossary of United Methodist Terms*).

Ecumenical – Pertaining to the “whole inhabited earth.” It is now used to describe the movement to restore unity to all Christians or to describe openness and self-examination shared with other Christians to the end that Christ’s prayer for unity might be fulfilled. It is sometimes used to describe any cooperative venture between communions. The UMC is said to be “constitutionally ecumenical,” because paragraph six of its constitution declares that the UMC will seek and work for unity at all levels of church life. See the Web site for the General Commission of Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns (at www.gccuic-umc.org).

Elder – A person ordained to a lifetime ministry of service, word, sacrament, and order. He or she is authorized to preach and teach God’s word, to administer the sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion, and to order the life of the church for mission and ministry (*Sharing God’s Gifts Glossary of United Methodist Terms*).

General Conference – The highest legislative body in The United Methodist Church. The voting membership consists of an equal number of clergy and lay delegates elected by the annual conferences. General Conference convenes every quadrennium (four years) to enact legislation and to establish the general ministry of the church. It is the only body that can speak officially for the denomination (*Sharing God’s Gifts Glossary of United Methodist Terms*, <http://umcgiving.org/content/glossary.asp>).

General Rules of The United Methodist Church – A set of rules devised in 1738 by John Wesley for his societies. According to *The Book of Discipline* (2004, page 48), “the General Rules were originally designed for members of the Methodist societies who participated in the sacramental life of the Church of England.” The three-fold rules connect faith and life, as John Wesley taught it. The rules are summarized this way: first: by doing no harm...; second: by... doing good of every possible sort...; and third, by attending upon all the ordinances of God. In 1743, Wesley published these in a pamphlet entitled *The Nature, Design, and General Rules of the United Societies*. The General Rules were approved by the American Methodist Church in 1785 and continue to be published as a part of *The Book of Discipline*.

Koinonia – a Greek word meaning to share, to act together, or to be in fellowship with one another. *Koinonia* occurs at least twenty-two times in the Bible. A unifying term, *koinonia* may be translated in a sense of communal *sharing* and activated *caritas* in the vital life of fellowship, Gospel, in Christ’s body and blood, in salvation, and in mission. In its most appropriate and unifying sense, Christians are a *koinonia* (i.e., a Christocentric and universal fellowship of

sharing) called in Christ by and for the Gospel. In terms of method, *koinonia* ecclesiology is at heart Christocentric; in terms of vocation, Christians of every stripe share in a broad, global *koinonia*. In terms of unity, Christians are called to fellowship with one another from the linguistic and semantic ground of the Gospel. Finally, *koinonia* language in the New Testament is not a unity that assumes a former brokenness. Rather, Christians are called from the healthy sinews of a living Gospel, recasting the ecumenically popular John 20:17 “That they may all be one,” as a phrase to be heard *anew* not from this side of our centuries-old ecclesial brokenness, but on the far *first* side of this divide, in the original and informative, unfractured ground of Gospel hope for unity in the world.

Local Pastor – A person who is not ordained but is licensed and annually authorized by the district committee on ordained ministry to perform all duties of an ordained minister, including the sacraments, while assigned to a particular charge under the supervision of a district superintendent. A clergy mentor oversees the local pastor’s work in the course of study for ordained ministry and advises on matters of pastoral responsibility (*Sharing God’s Gifts Glossary of United Methodist Terms* <http://umcgiving.org/content/glossary.asp>).

Prevenient Grace – For United Methodists, prevenient grace is “the divine love that surrounds all humanity and precedes any and all of our conscious impulses. This grace prompts our first wish to please God, our first glimmer of understanding concerning God’s will, and our ‘first slight transient conviction’ of having sinned against God.”

Probationary members – In the UMC, probationary members are candidates for ordination. Ordinarily, probationary members have completed all of the educational and other requirements for ordination and are recommended for a probationary or review period (minimum of 3 years) before ordination.

Standard Sermons – John Wesley’s standard sermons, preached between 1746 and 1760, are collected in the first four volumes of Wesley’s *Sermons on Several Occasions*. Although the precise number of sermons (about 53) is disputed between British and American Methodists, the sermons serve as a doctrinal authority because they lay out John Wesley’s unique understanding of the way of salvation.

United Methodist Church, The (UMC) – This denomination was established in 1968 by the union of The Evangelical United Brethren Church and The Methodist Church. It has more than 10 million members in sixty-three Annual Conferences in the United States and nearly forty conferences outside the United States (Africa, Europe, and the Philippines).

Wesley, John – The founder of the Methodist movement within the Church of England. John Wesley (1703-1791) was born at Epworth, England, the son of a Church of England clergyman. He graduated from Christ College, Oxford. An Anglican priest himself, Wesley was, for a brief period, a missionary to Georgia. A prolific preacher and writer, his writings provided a core of standard doctrine and interpretation to guide the new Methodist movement. In 1784, he sent instructions to America for the formation of a separate Methodist church for the United States (*A Dictionary for United Methodists*, Alan K. Waltz, Copyright 1991, Abingdon Press. Used by Permission.).

World Methodist Council - This Christian world communion brings together member churches in the Methodist/Wesleyan family for support, education, and the sharing of ideas and resources for ministry. In addition, it seeks to provide a common witness and to hold each other accountable for the ministry of making disciples of Jesus Christ.