

ELCA Church Council holds Spring 2017 meeting

ITASCA (April 11, 2017) – The Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) met at the Eaglewood Conference Center, Itasca, Ill., March 30-April 2. The council, which serves as the ELCA’s board of directors, met in plenary on Friday, March 31, and spent the remainder of its time in retreat, focused on the Called Forward Together in Christ process that will determine goals and priority areas for the ELCA.

The council took the following action:

- Designated Milwaukee, Wis., as the site of the 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly, either Aug. 5-10 or Aug. 12-17.
- Affirmed the direction of the ELCA Foundation Task Force on Structure and Governance to move toward a structure in which the deferred giving programs of the ELCA Foundation are transferred to the Endowment Fund of the ELCA. The council authorized the task force and staff to begin steps to lay the groundwork for that transition, bringing a complete proposal to its November 2017 meeting.
- Authorized a task force to implement a strategy toward authentic diversity within the ELCA.
- Designated 5 percent of the churchwide seminary grant in fiscal year 2018 for a focused, collaborative project among all seminaries that expands the number of people of color preparing for rostered ministry in this church.
- Approved the updated manual of policies and procedures for the management of the rosters.
- Received the ELCA churchwide organization operational plan report for 2016.
- Affirmed the succession plan proposed by the ELCA Domestic Mission unit for the corporate social responsibility position.
- Approved a Church Council designated fund in the amount equal to the excess revenue over expenses from fiscal year 2016, or \$1,630,000, for release in fiscal year 2018 for the budgeted operations of the ELCA churchwide organization.
- Approved the report of the ELCA audit committee.
- Designated churchwide representatives to 2017 synod assemblies.
- Received responses to 2016 ELCA Churchwide Assembly actions on “Examining the opportunities and implications of campaign zero, a policy platform in affirmation of Black Lives Matter,” “African Descent Lutherans” and “Call to Discernment on U.S. Foreign and Military Policy.”
- Approved governing documents of the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, Wartburg Theological Seminary, Luther Seminary and Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia (to be subsequently a supporting organization for United Lutheran Seminary); received draft documents relating to the proposed asset acquisition of Trinity Lutheran Seminary by Capital University.
- Declared newly elected committee chairs as members of the executive committee of the Church Council beginning Sept. 1, 2017.

- Approved changes to governing documents for 1517 Media and the Deaconess Community of the ELCA.
- Elected members to the governing bodies of Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary, Luther Seminary, the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, Trinity Lutheran Seminary, Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg (to be subsequently known as United Lutheran Seminary), Mosaic Inc., Portico Benefit Services, Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA, Publishing House of the ELCA (1517 Media), and Committee on Appeals.
- Received reports from the church's secretary, treasurer, and executive for administration, and the ELCA Conference of Bishops.