

## Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church

### Information About Commitment and Expectations for Commission Members

#### **The task**

The 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly directed “the Church Council to establish a Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church comprised of leaders of diverse representation from all three expressions that, working in consultation with the Conference of Bishops and the Church Council, shall reconsider the statements of purpose for each of the expressions of this church, the principles of its organizational structure, and all matters pertaining thereunto, being particularly attentive to our shared commitment to dismantle racism, and will present its findings and recommendations to the 2025 Churchwide Assembly in preparation for a possible reconstituting convention to be called under the rules for a special meeting of the Churchwide Assembly.” [CA22.01.06]

#### **Nominations process**

At its November 2022 meeting, the Church Council authorized the establishment of a Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church (CRLC) to consist of no more than 35 voting members. It directed the Executive Committee of the Church Council to initiate the process of forming the commission.

The commission will be composed of three voting members from each region of this church, for a total of 27, and up to eight at-large voting members. The member's role will be to represent the interests of this whole church while also bringing the perspective of the member's geographical area and being mindful of other considerations.

- Each synod council or synod executive committee will be invited to submit two potential nominees. In addition, there will be an open nomination process. For each region the Church Council will appoint two people from among the synod nominations and one person from the open nominations.
- At-large members will be chosen from among all the names received, both from synod nominations and from the open nomination process.

To be nominated through the open nomination process, please complete and submit the [nomination form](#). Synod councils and synod executive committees will use a similar form to submit their nominees. The deadline for nominations is March 9, 2023.

The Executive Committee of the Church Council will serve as the nominating committee and will present a slate of nominees to the Church Council at its April 2023 meeting for appointment to the commission.

#### **The commission**

No more than 35 individuals will be appointed to the commission, which will reflect a balance of competencies and the various constituencies and multiple perspectives within the ELCA. All members of the commission must be voting members of an ELCA congregation. No employee of the churchwide organization nor person related to a churchwide organization staff member shall be nominated as a voting member of the CRLC, in accordance with ELCA Constitution bylaws 19.05.04. and 19.05.05. Churchwide organization staff will support the work of the CRLC.

The selection process will give attention to diversity regarding gender, race, language, geography, lay or rostered status, and other factors. Individuals are sought whose perspectives and personal styles are passionate and energetic, yet thoughtful and collaborative.

The commission will be populated according to the representational principles of this church (ELCA Constitution 5.01.e., 5.01.F19., and 5.01.H21.):

- At least 60% will be lay voting members.
- Of the at least 60% laypersons, as nearly as possible, at least 45% will be women and, as nearly as possible, at least 45% will be men. Memberships not allocated to women or men may be allocated to people who identify as gender-nonbinary, gender-fluid, women, men, or other genders.
- Representation of rostered ministers will include both men and women.
- The constitution calls for at least 10% of membership to be persons of color or whose primary language is other than English; the council acted to increase that representation to at least 25%.
- The constitution sets a goal of 10% youth or young adults (age 30 and under); the council acted to strive for at least 20% youth or young adults.

### **Individuals and skill sets sought**

Members of the ELCA are sought who can bring a range and diversity of knowledge, insight, and competencies related to this church's governing documents, ecclesiology, theology, and commitment to racial justice. Such individuals would include, but are not limited to, those with expertise in or familiarity with Scripture and theology; ELCA polity, constitutions and governing policies; nonprofit governance; and diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility.

Interested individuals should submit an open nomination form by March 9, 2023, available [here](#).

### **Membership commitment in brief**

Attendance at all meetings of the commission is expected. Two in-person meetings per year at the Lutheran Center in Chicago are anticipated in addition to at least bimonthly (every two months) online meetings. The commission will begin its work with an in-person meeting June 22-24, 2023, and will complete its work in April 2025. Travel expenses will be covered by the churchwide organization in accordance with guidelines and policies of the ELCA. Membership assumes commitment between meetings to do assigned readings and willingness to provide leadership at selected events. It requires an agreement to refrain from communication on behalf of the commission about the topics, the commission dynamics, or the commission conversations (e.g., social media posts, blogs, public speaking). Beyond this baseline of commitment, individual participation varies according to the phase of the commission's work and the particular competencies of individuals, such as writing skills.

### **Membership commitment in detail**

The ELCA holds high expectations for and grants significant trust to a commission that leads the work to reconsider the statements of purpose and the principles of this church's organizational structure, and "all matters pertaining thereunto." The commission leads this work on behalf of the whole denomination, and the process comprises different phases across a nearly 24-month period. Each phase contributes significantly toward a faithful outcome, and members are engaged during each phase:

- *Listening*: Listening occurs in *ad hoc* situations and at organized listening events at which church members have a chance to share their insights and concerns about the topics and the process. Each commission member will be expected to host at least one listening event.

- *Study:* This entails reading outside of meetings and engaging with presentations and consultations from others such as full communion partners and teaching theologians.
- *Resource production:* The commission may provide resources of various kinds as a means for church members to engage the issues and provide feedback.
- *Report and recommendations:* Commission members write and direct the development of the report with the findings and recommended next steps. Members will consult with the Conference of Bishops and the Church Council in their work. This final phase includes sending a revised draft to the conference and council for their review and further action in anticipation of the 2025 Churchwide Assembly.

Potential members of the commission must be prepared to devote significant time and energy toward the tasks with which they might be entrusted. Over the course of the commission's work, membership commitment entails:

- *Attendance and contribution* at each of the 14-15 meetings total. Generally, there will be two in-person meetings per year at the Lutheran Center in Chicago and the remaining meetings will be held online every two months. The first meeting is scheduled for June 22-24, 2023. All travel, room costs, and meals for the in-person meetings will be covered by the churchwide organization in accordance with the guidelines and policies of the ELCA.
- *Leadership* in the various feedback activities: Listening events (2023), stakeholder feedback (2024), and engagement and consultation with key leaders (2025).
- *Reading* in advance of each meeting — such preparation includes articles or essays (early on) and stakeholder response forms and reports (following the feedback period, for instance).
- Other leadership as opportunities present themselves, such as hosting a workshop at the 2023 Rostered Ministers Gathering or an informational booth at the 2024 ELCA Youth Gathering, including the MYLE, the tAble, and the Young Adult Gathering.

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