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## Appendix A: Lutheran World Federation

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### Growing and Renewing

Twenty years after the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) defined its self-understanding and ecclesial qualities as a communion of churches, the member churches will gather in Stuttgart, Germany, for the 11th Assembly in July 2010, around the theme “Give Us Today Our Daily Bread.” This theme, taken from the prayer the Lord Jesus Christ taught his disciples, was chosen not only to recall the main purpose of the organization’s founding in 1947 to meet the needs of those affected by World War II, but also to be a prayer of renewal in the members’ calling within a very vulnerable world, a world where there is a widening gap between rich and poor, alongside unprecedented developments in technology and accumulations of wealth previously unseen in human history.

Today, relationships have been strengthened and membership is growing. In the two years since 2007, the sixtieth anniversary celebration of the LWF’s founding, the communion has grown from 66 million members to almost 68.5 million members in 140 member churches in 79 countries. In addition to the reception of a new member church from Republic of Congo (Congo–Brazzaville), the increase in membership is due to the rapid growth of Lutheran churches in the Global South, especially in Africa. LWF celebrates this gift. However, the organization must also reflect on the implications of this growth for the member churches’ work together, especially in meeting the needs of the most vulnerable and suffering communities.

### The ELCA in Action with the Communion

The Lutheran World Federation exists to:

- Further a united witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ and strengthen the member churches both in carrying out the missionary command and in their efforts toward Christian unity worldwide;
- Further worldwide among the member churches diaconic action, alleviation of human need, and the promotion of peace and human rights, social and economic justice, care for God’s creation, and sharing of resources; and,
- Further through cooperative study the self-understanding and the communion of member churches and help them to act jointly in their common tasks.

The ELCA actively participates in the communion in various ways—locally, regionally, and globally—with or through the LWF departments.

The Department for World Service (DWS) serves as the relief and development arm of the communion. It provides humanitarian aid and assists in rehabilitation and development

in more than 30 countries with over 50 international staff and 5,500 local staff. Member churches and their related agencies contribute to and otherwise support the LWF’s common mission in *diakonia*.

The Department for Mission and Development (DMD) assists, coordinates, and accompanies member churches and other related agencies in creating, developing, and implementing holistic ministries. It also fosters communion in mission that is transformational within and among the member churches. Every year more new projects from member churches are implemented and supported. The focus of these projects ranges from evangelism initiatives to leadership training to community development.

About one third of the ELCA World Hunger Appeal funds channeled through the Global Mission program unit support both DWS and DMD programs and projects to address hunger and poverty. Global Mission also contributes to and participates in addressing specific communion priorities, such as witness and evangelism, HIV and AIDS, inclusion of women and youth, and leadership development. LWF is grateful to the ELCA for its generous support and its enthusiasm in learning about the communion.

Through the Department of Theology and Studies (DTS), North American theologians join other internationally renowned scholars in theological reflection and writing on critical issues, working to inspire, interpret, critique, and correct the self-understanding and expressions of our communion. To understand what it means to be a part of a communion of churches within an ecumenical and international context is crucial to the ELCA’s life and work as a church. In March 2010 some 20 ELCA theologians will join a global consultation in Augsburg, Germany, “Theology in the Life of the Lutheran Churches: Transformative Perspectives and Practices Today.”

The Office of International Affairs and Human Rights (IAHR) advocates for justice and peace on behalf of the member churches as an accredited agency at the United Nations, both in Geneva and New York (Lutheran Office for World Community). The latter is a joint office of the ELCA and LWF. The IAHR also assists member churches to build and strengthen their advocacy capacities.

The Office of Ecumenical Affairs (OEA) serves as the main arm for ecumenical relations at the international level. Its tasks include promotion of ecumenical engagement of member churches regionally and nationally. Fostering meaningful relations with Lutheran churches that are not LWF members is also an important responsibility of this office. Some ELCA members avail themselves of the Ecumenical and Communion formation courses offered through DTS and OEA in cooperation with LWF-North America.

## ELCA Leadership

Individual members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and its predecessor bodies have served in the leadership of the LWF since its inception. The following ELCA members have been elected or appointed to leadership roles with terms running from the 10th Assembly in Winnipeg, Canada (2003) until the 11th Assembly in Stuttgart, Germany, in 2010:

Bp. Mark S. Hanson, *LWF President*  
Pr. Emmanuel F. Y. Grantson, *council member*  
Pr. Abigail Z. Hoffman, *council member*  
Pr. Barbara R. Rossing, *council member*  
Ms. Linda J. Brown, *council advisor*  
Ms. Kristi S. Bangert, *council consultant*  
Pr. Rafael Malpica-Padilla, *council advisor, Renewal Committee and North American Regional Committee*  
Ms. Belletech Deressa, *council consultant* (to July 2008)  
Mr. Louis Dorvilier, *council consultant* (since November 2008)  
Pr. Donald J. McCoid, *council advisor* (since November 2007)  
Pr. M. Wyvetta Bullock, *LWF Endowment Fund Board*  
Ms. Linda Post Bushkofsky, *Regional Coordinator for Women in Church and Society*  
Ms. Mae Helen Jackson, *liaison to Youth Desk* (2008-2010)  
Mr. Nate Kerr, *liaison to Youth Desk* (2008-2010)  
Bp. Jessica R. Crist, *North American Regional Committee*

The LWF also acknowledges and gives thanks for ELCA members serving on the LWF staff in Geneva: Pr. Karen L. Bloomquist, director of the Department for Theology and Studies, and Ms. Kathryn L. Johnson, assistant general secretary for ecumenical affairs.

## Give Us Today Our Daily Bread: Pray and Act

The ELCA continues to make significant contributions to the diaconic work of LWF, that is, to the international relief and development work of the communion, as well as to the witness and proclamation work of other member churches. These contributions include financial support and various other kinds of involvement in the communion. These contributions are especially important in this year before the LWF Assembly. The following are ways in which members and congregations of the ELCA can be involved:

**LWF Sunday:** The ELCA has designated the first Sunday of October as LWF Sunday, on which congregations are invited to celebrate and lift up the gift of the relationship with the communion and its work. This year's theme will be related to the 11th Assembly theme, addressing the issues surrounding food security and sovereignty.

**Communion Formation:** The LWF–North America (LWF–NA) Regional Officer conducts workshops, delivers presentations, and preaches to deepen understanding and to invite greater participation in the communion. However, ELCA members who are passionate about global mission and relationship with the communion also can be communicators on behalf of the communion in their respective communities.

Informational resources are available from the LWF–NA website; information on other specific topics can be requested from the office.

In 2008, LWF also began offering formal ecumenical and communion training with the LWF Geneva staff. Seminarians may register for a January-term course for credit. A new LWF class for rostered leaders will be offered for the first time in December 2009, initially open to assistants to synodical bishops. Both courses will be held at the Ecumenical Center in Geneva, Switzerland, and can be taken for academic credit in various institutions.

### **Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification:**

This year marks the tenth anniversary of the signing of the “Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification,” a significant and historical moment in the dialogue between the Roman Catholic Church and the LWF. There will be two events to celebrate this occasion, the first to be held October 1 in Chicago, Ill., and the second on October 31 in Augsburg, Germany. Member churches are invited to celebrate with the whole communion and to revisit and learn more about this concrete gift.

**The LWF Endowment Fund:** Though all member churches are encouraged to make contributions to the LWF Endowment Fund, the ELCA, through the ELCA Foundation, is the only member church that manages a portion of the fund outside the LWF headquarters. ELCA members’ ongoing support of this fund is greatly appreciated.

The LWF wishes to express its gratitude for prayer and action in support of the communion on the part of the ELCA and its members.

## The LWF in North America: Toward a Regional Identity

Following the LWF’s momentous decision to call itself a communion of churches, the North American member churches, specifically the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC) and the ELCA, envisioned a more active participation as regional entities in the life of the communion. As a result, the LWF–North America office was established in 1998. It is the only regional office whose physical presence is based solely within its own region. Today there are three member churches participating in LWF–NA: the ELCA, the ELCIC, and the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church Abroad (EELCA). The LWF–NA maintains a presence at the member churches’ national church council meetings, works closely with the respective church offices and leaders that relate to the communion, and experiences first-hand the realities the member churches face. LWF–NA’s identity as a regional communion expression continues to be reflected upon and discerned. The journey continues, and as LWF and the ELCA work together, may we become bread for each other for the sake of the gospel.

Teresita Valeriano, *regional officer for the Lutheran World Federation–North America*