

Glossary of Terms

ELCA TERMS

- **1517 Media** • 1517 Media, a non-profit corporation that provides pastors, educators, worship planners and members of the ELCA with products and services that communicate the Gospel, enhance faith and enrich the life of the Christian community from a Lutheran perspective.
- **Conference of Bishops** • The 65 bishops of the ELCA meeting for prayer, deliberation, and discernment.
- **Churchwide Council** • The governing board of the ELCA, entrusted with the business of the ELCA between triennial churchwide assemblies.
- **Churchwide** • Term referring to any ministry, process, or emphasis carried out across the entire ELCA. The term is also used to refer to the headquarters of the ELCA in Chicago, Illinois, which is housed in the ELCA Lutheran Center near O'Hare airport.
- **ELCA** • Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (Denominational title), formed by the 1988 merger of the American Lutheran Church (ALC), the Lutheran Church in America (LCA), and the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches (AELC). The three expressions of this church body are the congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization headquartered in Chicago. The ELCA has approximately 3.14 million members in 8,894 congregations (2020 statistics)
- **Full Communion** • A relationship between Christian denominations in which each fully accepts the validity of the other's ministry and sacraments. Full Communion Partners • In the ELCA this term refers to those denominations with which we enjoy full-communion relationships: Episcopal Church USA, United Methodist Church USA, Moravian, Presbyterian Church USA, Reformed, and United Church of Christ.
- **Portico** • Portico, a nonprofit corporation based in Minnesota, provides retirement, health and related benefits and services to enhance the well-being of nearly 50,000 pastors, deacons, employees and their families. The vision of Portico is for those they serve to lead healthy lives and achieve financial security.
- **Presiding Bishop** • The pastor elected by the churchwide assembly to lead the ministry of the entire ELCA; currently serving is Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton.
- **Region 2** • One of 9 regions of the ELCA and includes 5 synods.

SYNOD TERMS

- **Bishop** • The pastor elected by the Synod Assembly to lead a synod of the ELCA; currently serving the RMS is Bishop Meghan Johnston Aelabouni.
- **Conference** • A geographical grouping of congregations within the synod. Ten in the RMS: Wyoming, Utah, North Colorado, Boulder-Broomfield, Metro East, Metro West, Metro South, Southeast Colorado, North New Mexico, and Border.
- **DEM** • Director for Evangelical Mission is a shared position between the Rocky Mountain Synod and Churchwide to focus on congregational growth and missional development.
- **Executive Committee** • Four officers and four at-large members of the Synod Council.
- **Office of the Bishop** • Located in Denver, Colorado, where the bishop and staff facilitate our ministry together. The Office of the Bishop is on the campus of the RMS Lutheran Center at 7375 Samuel Drive, Denver, CO 80221.
- **RMS** • Rocky Mountain Synod
- **Synod** • In the ELCA, one of 65 geographical units or expressions of the church.
- **Synod Council** • The elected leaders of a synod, including laity and clergy, the vice president, secretary, treasurer, and bishop.

LEADERSHIP TERMS

- **Candidacy** • The process by which those discerning a call to ministry are supported and guided through the process of Entrance, Endorsement, and Approval as they prepare for ministry vocations as rostered ministers.
- **Deacon** • A rostered minister called and ordained to the ministry of Word and Service.
- **Dean** • A rostered minister chosen to lead one of the conferences within a synod.
- **Interim** • A rostered minister who is serving a ministry between two called persons.
- **Intern** • A candidate for ministry who is on staff of a ministry as part of their candidacy process.
- **Lay Person** • A leader who is not ordained
- **Officers** • The officers of the synod are the Bishop, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer.
- **On Leave From Call** • rostered pastors and deacons who are currently without a call to a ministry.
- **Pastor** • A rostered minister called and ordained to the ministry of Word and Sacrament.
- **Roster, Rostered** • The Roster is the official list of all the pastors and deacons in the ELCA. A leader who appears on this list is said to be “rostered.”

- **Transition Ministry** • The process of matching the gifts of rostered leaders with a new ministry opportunity.

RELATED EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

- **Seminary** • The theological educational institutions that train rostered ministers and ministry professionals in the ELCA. There are 9 Lutheran Seminaries in the US. There are three located in Region 2.
- **PLTS** • Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary (Berkeley, CA) is the Seminary in the territory of Region 2.
- **CLU** • California Lutheran University is the one ELCA university in Region 2, one of 27 ELCA Colleges and Universities nationwide.
- **Wartburg West** • Wartburg College is a college of the ELCA in Waverly, Iowa, with the Wartburg West Urban Semester located for more than 30 years in Denver, Colorado.

ASSEMBLY TERMS

- **Guest** • Any person who attends an assembly to observe, not as a voting member.
- **Memorial** • A document which is considered by the voting members of a Synod Assembly, asking the Churchwide Assembly to take a position or initiate an action related to a specific issue. Memorials are adopted, or they fail.
- **Plenary** • A full session of all voting members in which business is conducted, and reports are heard.
- **Reference and Counsel** • This committee reviews all resolutions and memorials prior to their consideration at an assembly.
- **Resolution** • Requests for actions, priorities, or positions are brought before the assembly in the form of a resolution. Resolutions are adopted, or they fail.
- **Voting Member** • At an assembly of this church, an individual elected to listen, discern, and decide on behalf of the whole church. (The term, “delegate” is not used in relation to assemblies.)