



Report of the Department for Research and Evaluation

Organization

Advisory Committee

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Pr. Jeffrey J. Marian, Gurnee, Ill. (2005)

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Vacancy

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Constitutional Mandate

The Department for Research and Evaluation is responsible for assisting the presiding bishop, other leaders, and staff of the churchwide organization by providing reliable, relevant information and appropriate evaluation related to the purposes of this church. The mandate of this department appears in continuing resolution 15.31.E99. of the *Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, printed in Section X of this volume.

Report of Work 2001-2003

The department divides its work into general research, evaluation, and demographic research.

General Research

The department designs the majority of its projects to support the work of the Office of the Presiding Bishop and to meet the research needs of the churchwide units. Continuous research is conducted through these auspices on behalf of congregations and synods. The department is currently engaged with the Office of the Presiding Bishop in support of strategic planning. The following is a sample listing of the types of projects undertaken.

The department continues its analysis of, and reporting on, the data collected as part of the U.S. Congregational Life Survey and Faith Communities Today. Both projects were Lilly-funded, cross denominational projects. These projects have provided the department and the ELCA with the most complete picture of its members, pastors, and congregations in the history of the ELCA. The department is working hard to disseminate its findings. Reports from the projects are

regularly posted on the departmental Web page at www.elca.org/re/.

The department is continuing to work with the Division for Congregational Ministries and the Publishing House of the ELCA. Surveys have been conducted on the use of Augsburg Fortress Sunday school and Vacation Bible school curriculum. A panel of congregations is participating in a multi-part survey that is designed to inform the work of the Renewing Worship team.

The department worked with the Youth Gathering staff on identifying the youth group resource needs of congregations. The department is working with the staff on a full evaluation of the 2003 Youth Gathering.

The department completed its study, in conjunction with the Division for Ministry, on the supply of, and demand for, clergy in the ELCA. Findings were presented to the ELCA Conference of Bishops and shared with the larger church. This full report is available at www.elca.org/re/.

The department, in conjunction with the Department for Synodical Relations, completed a survey on the functions of regions. Also in support of the Department for Synodical Relations, the department provides synods with data and consultation services for synodical planning, it assisted with the first-call assignment process, and in the revision of clergy mobility forms.

The department continues to work with the Division for Church in Society and the Division for Ministry to evaluate the resource Talking Together as Christians about Homosexuality. The department, also in cooperation with the Division for Church in Society, completed its work on the impact of welfare reform on congregations. A report about local congregational social ministry in the ELCA is available at www.elca.org/re/reports/dcs/hfreport.pdf.

Evaluation

The department continues to work with the Division for Global Mission on an ongoing review of the Companion Synod Program.

An evaluation of the 2002 Synodical-Churchwide Consultation held October 4-6, 2002, was completed.

The department continues to work with the Division for Higher Education and Schools to help shape its new policies and procedures regarding campus ministry.

The department fielded a survey to a sample of congregation council members in support of an audit of churchwide communications.

The evaluation of the ELCA Web site also is ongoing.

The department completed an evaluation of the Commission for Women's 2001 Roundtable. An evaluation of the event Primer Encuentro de Mujeres Latinas en Ministerio was also supported by the department.

The department worked with the Women of the ELCA on completing an evaluation of the 2002 Triennial Gathering held in July 2002.

A presentation on membership growth in the ELCA was made to the Communicator's Conference sponsored by the Department for Communication, and to the ELCA Church Council.

The department, in cooperation with the Division for Outreach and the Mission Investment Fund, completed a survey of new ministry starts. The questionnaire focuses on the steps leading to the purchase of new sites and of building construction. The department also is engaged in a major interdenominational study on the most effective means of beginning new congregations.

Demography

The department provides custom demographic reports upon request and standardized reports at www.elca.org/re/. These reports provide churchwide and synodical staff, pastors, and members of congregations, with current and historic membership information for individual congregations, along with information on the United States population including estimates and projections for ZIP code areas.

The department, in cooperation with the Division for Outreach and in support of synodical outreach commit-

tees, mapped targeted synods to identify areas where the population of African American, Asian, Latino, and Native American people is concentrated, but where the membership of ELCA congregations is predominately white. The department continues to respond to on-going requests from the Division for Outreach, synods, and congregations for demographic studies and now is producing a monthly newsletter designed primarily for Division for Outreach mission directors called "Demography Demos."

Synod trend reports were completed and posted for synods on the department's Web page at www.elca.org/re/synoddata/trend99/trendfp.html. Reports also are available on the age distribution of clergy serving in each synod at www.elca.org/re/synoddata/age/agefp.html. The department is working on a trend report on campus ministry for the Division for Higher Education and Schools.

The department continues to respond to a large number of requests for information in relation to the work of the department and the needs of the ELCA.

DEPARTMENT FOR RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

Kenneth W. Inskeep, *director*