



Saint Paul Area Synod

105 West University Avenue St. Paul, MN 55103-2094
651.224.4313 Fax 651.224.5646 www.spas-elca.org

A synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Committee for Public Witness

This synod-wide committee consists of a number of work groups, each addressing issues related to the ways the church has been sent by God to witness publically in the presence of local citizens, business, government, non-profit institutions and the arts – the arena sometimes known as the “public square”. Folded into this committee structure are current work groups on:

- hunger
- anti-racism and multiculturalism

Other work groups that yearn for a wider reach into our synod’s life may also be a part of this committee structure. These might include groups interested in working on a synod-wide basis to address issues like:

- immigration reform
- gun violence
- support for LGBTQ persons
- prison ministry
- care for creation
- poverty
- other topics of wide-spread interest

Such work groups will be authorized annually through a simple application process, with applications submitted to the Bishop. To be included in the application are the following:

1. A statement of the work group’s overall mission;
2. A measurable goal for the year;
3. A list of projected activities;
4. The names and contact information of at least three members of ELCA congregations in the Saint Paul Area Synod, who will participate in the work group, with one person designated as the key contact person or convener.

Members of the work groups will be invited to meet at least once a year with the Bishop for extended conversation about the collective witness of our synod in these local, timely matters. Modest staff support from the synod (communication, goal setting, etc.) will be available for each work group, but work groups are expected to function independent of staff support. Activities of the work groups will be included in the calendar of events for the synod. Each work group will be authorized on an annual basis and will expire when interest wanes. Work groups may be asked to advise the Bishop on matters that call for pastoral response.

The Public Witness Committee, consisting of the designated leaders of the various work groups, may bring resolutions for consideration at Conference and Synod Assemblies and will meet once annually to deliberate on such proposed resolutions.



Bishop Lull
September 2015

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: How does a group become an authorized work group within the Public Witness Committee structure of the Saint Paul?

A: Send a letter attached to email to the Bishop (patricia.lull@spas-elca.org) and include a brief statement of your group's mission, a measurable goal and proposed activities for the year, and the names and contact information of at least three participants in the group. One participant needs to be designated as the leader or convener and will serve on the formal Public Witness Committee.

Q: What counts as a measurable goal?

A: Work groups will likely focus on awareness raising, sponsoring activities to engage participants in action, or advocacy to change systems in the public arena. Some groups may do all three. A measureable goal for awareness might be to engage 50 persons from 3 or more congregations in reading and discussing a selected text on the impact of racism. For engaging others in action a measurable goal might be to have 12 congregations participate in an energy-efficiency audit with a commitment to making the recommended changes in the congregation's building. A measurable advocacy goal would be to enlist 100 ELCA members to write to Congress about proposed cuts to school nutrition programs. A measureable goal is one that can be achieved in a year's time and which reflects the overall mission of the work group.

Q: Will the synod help advertise meetings of a work group?

A: Yes. Information needs to be submitted to the synod communications coordinator, Chloe Ahlf, chloe.ahlf@spas-elca.org in a timely fashion.

Q: Is there synod-wide money to support the activities of a work group?

A: There is no designated budget line for this committee. Modest funds may be available to support events but most funding will need to be generated from congregations and individuals or outside grants.

Q: Is there a limit to the number of work groups that will be authorized each year?

A: No. The number of work groups will be driven by the interest of those in the synod. Work groups with a similar purpose may be asked to merge.

Q: When are applications due?

A: In this inaugural year, work groups may apply anytime from October 2015 through February 2016.

Q: Our congregation has a very strong advocacy group addressing affordable housing. Can this become a work group within this structure?

A: Yes, if the scope of the work allows persons from many congregations to participate.

Q: Who do I talk to if I still have questions?

A: Contact Bishop Patricia Lull at patricia.lull@spas-elca.org or 651-224-4313.