

Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada

Minutes of the National Church Council Meeting via Zoom

March 4-6, 2022

Present:

- Officers: National Bishop Susan Johnson
Gene Blishen, Treasurer
- Linda Grainger, Secretary
Sheila Hamilton, Vice-Chair
- Council: Rev. Chris Bishopp
Bruce Cook
Rev. Jane Gingrich
Rev. Dr. James Hendricksen
Kathleen Jensen
Rev. Íris Kristjánsdóttir
Pat Lovell – NCC rep to CoGS
- Rev. Dr. Kimber McNabb
John Nilson
Linda Sander
Curt Satre
Rev. Canon Dr. Murray Still - *CoGS rep to NCC* (Present on Friday, Saturday a.m. & Sunday)*
- Synod Bishops: Bishop Larry Kochendorfer, ABT Synod (*present on March 4 & 5*)
Bishop Kathy Martin, BC Synod
- Bishop Michael Pryse, Eastern Synod
Bishop Jason Zinko, MNO Synod
- Staff: Trina Gallop Blank, Assistant to the Bishop, Communications and Resource Generation
Rev. Paul Gehrs, Assistant to the Bishop, Justice and Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations
Kyle Giesbrecht, Director of Finance and Administration
Deacon Gretchen Peterson, Assistant to the Bishop, Youth & Leadership
Rev. Dr. Ali Tote, Assistant to the Bishop, Faith, Order and Doctrine
Desiree Mendoza, Meetings and Communications Coordinator
- Guests: Rev. Lindsey Jorgensen-Skakum – Co-chair, Task Force on Homophobia, Biphobia, and Transphobia
Rev. Steve Hoffard – Co-chair, Task Force on Homophobia, Biphobia, and Transphobia
Rev. Aneeta Saroop – Chair, Task Force on Racism, White Supremacy, and issues of Racial Injustice
Rev. Ron Flamand - Task Force on Racism, White Supremacy, and issues of Racial Injustice
Deacon Sarah Rudd – Chair, Task Force on Ableism
- Regrets: Rev. Lyle McKenzie, Assistant to the Bishop, Worship (*on sabbatical*)
Bishop Sid Haugen, SASK Synod

FRIDAY, MARCH 4, 2022, 3:00 P.M.

Business Session One:

Vice-Chair Sheila Hamilton called the meeting to order.

Opening Prayer

Led by the meeting chaplain, Bruce Cook.

Recognition of Territory

Land acknowledgements are a way that people insert an awareness of Indigenous presence and land rights in everyday life. This is often done at the beginning of ceremonies, lectures, meetings, or any public event. It can be a subtle way to recognize the history of colonialism and a need for change in settler colonial societies.

However, these acknowledgements can easily be a token gesture rather than a meaningful practice. All settlers, have a responsibility to consider what it means to acknowledge the history and legacy of colonialism.

What are some of the privileges settlers enjoy today because of colonialism?

How can individuals develop relationships with peoples whose territory they are living on in the contemporary Canadian geopolitical landscape?

What are you, or your organization, doing beyond acknowledging the territory where you live, work, or hold your events?

What might you be doing that perpetuates settler colonial futurity rather than considering alternative ways forward for Canada?

Do you have an understanding of the on-going violence and the trauma that is part of the structure of colonialism?

Today, as a settler here on Turtle Island, I respectfully acknowledge the lands where we live which includes the Salish and Qualicum peoples of Northwest coast, the Tlingit and Athabaskan peoples of the British Columbia Interior, the Cree and Tahitan peoples of the Western subarctic, the Okanagan and Secwepemc peoples of the Plateau, the Siksika and Dene peoples of the Plains, the Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee peoples of the Woodlands and eastern subarctic to name but a few.

We honour with gratitude the land itself and the first people — past, present and future — who have stewarded it throughout generations. We cannot undo history, but we can seek to walk with justice, mercy and humility now.

(Land acknowledgement recited by Bruce Cook at the beginning of his Opening Prayer)

Welcome

Vice-Chair Sheila Hamilton welcomed Bishop Kathy Martin of the BC Synod to NCC. Bishop Kathy isn't new to NCC as she was a past member, serving as a rostered member from the BC Synod.

Approval of Agenda

Additions to the Agenda under New Business:

- Motion expressing gratitude to the National Office staff
- Talk on Russian investment

M/S That NCC approves the amended meeting agenda. **CARRIED.**

Code of Conduct

NCC Covenant

Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

No conflicts of interest were expressed.

Approval of September 9-11, 2021 NCC Meeting Minutes

M/S That NCC approves the September 9–11, 2021 NCC meeting minutes. **CARRIED.**

Approval of E-vote Minutes

M/S That NCC approves the Nov. 19 and Dec. 1, 2021 e-vote minutes.

CC-2022-01 That NCC appoints the following individuals to the Committee on Nominations for the 2022 National Assembly: Wayne Street (ABT), Rev. Patricia Giannelia (BC), Rev. Doug Reble (Eastern), Cheryl Bauer-Hyde (SK), Rev. Tyler Gingrich (MNO) and Linda Grainger (National Secretary). **CARRIED.**

CC-2022-02 That NCC approves the appointment of Rev. Marilyn Fowlie-Neufeld to the rostered position in the Court of Appeal vacated by the resignation of Rev. Dr. Kayko Driedger Hesslein for the remainder of the three-year term until 2022. **CARRIED.**

CARRIED.

Report of the National Bishop

Bishop Susan Johnson gave an oral report to supplement her written report. She highlighted the work of the National Office staff by saying “We’re like family...” Regretfully, one staff is leaving the team. Danica Cuaderno, office assistant, has accepted full-time work at a daycare in a school division, where her daughter will also be attending the daycare program.

Bishop Susan mentioned that the Assembly Planning Committee has decided that no joint in-person gathering will take place this year. The General Synod may hold its meeting next year or in 2024, depending on the decision of the Council of General Synod (CoGS). Now NCC will have to decide whether to hold the 2022 National Convention in person or online. This decision will be made later in the meeting.

Staff Presentation

The ELCIC Program Staff comprised of Trina Gallop-Blank, Assistant to the Bishop, Communications and Resource Generation; Rev Paul Gehrs, Assistant to the Bishop, Justice and

Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations; Deacon Gretchen Peterson, Assistant to the Bishop, Youth and Leadership; and Kyle Giesbrecht, Director of Finance and Administration, presented to NCC focusing on the strategic goal — *Compassionate Justice* in their respective reports.

Vice-Chair Sheila Hamilton thanked the staff for their presentation.

Business from the Report of the National Bishop

Program Committee for Leadership for Ministry (PCLM)

CC-2022-03 To change the Continuing Education policy so that the annual amount available be raised to \$9000 per student and that the ten-year maximum amount be raised to \$45,000.

CARRIED.

CC-2022-04 That LTS and Luther would have the freedom to make a choice regarding accreditation in a way that is supportive of the school's vision and mission, choosing to be accredited by the body(ies) that make sense for each of their constituencies. The decision is to be made by each school's Board of Governors, which includes the bishops and other members of the ELCIC. **CARRIED.**

Breakout on all the reports – questions and comments

**Reports——
Officers**

Synod Bishops

Conference of Bishops

Council of General Synod (CoGS) Report

Draft 2019 Convention Actions Report

Draft 2022 National Convention Agenda Items

Bishop Susan mentioned to NCC that the Assembly Planning Committee made a very difficult decision to not proceed with the in-person Assembly. This leaves ELCIC to hold its 2022 National Convention and decide whether to hold it in-person or online. A suggestion was made to move the dates toward the weekend to accommodate delegates working during the week. Bishop Susan shared some of the plans such as: holding a session with the Anglicans to mark our Full Communion anniversary; sharing the work of the Task Forces on Racism, White Supremacy, and issues of Racial Injustice; Homophobia, Biphobia, and Transphobia; Ableism; and Carbon Neutral; and good news reports from schools, to name a few.

M/S That NCC defers the action on holding the National Convention to Unfinished Business on Sunday. **CARRIED.**

Nominations for ELCIC Secretary and Treasurer

CC-2022-05 That NCC approves the nomination of Gene Blishen for Treasurer, and Linda Grainger for Secretary. **CARRIED.**

Bishop Susan asked NCC to think of who they can nominate for the Vice-Chair position which is an ecclesiastical ballot. Experience in NCC will be an advantage and the individual must be a lay person. She encouraged the Council to use their discernment.

Closing Prayer

Led by the meeting chaplain.

Meeting adjourned.

SATURDAY, MARCH 5, 2022, 11:00 A.M. – 2:00 P.M.

Business Session Two:

Bishop Susan called the meeting to order.

Opening Prayer

Led by the meeting chaplain.

Strategic Plan for 2022-2025

Members of the working group gave a presentation to NCC on the proposed Strategic Plan. Members of this working group include: Rev. Jane Gingrich, Rev. Dr. Kimber McNabb, Bruce Cook, Kathleen Jensen, and Sheila Hamilton.

Introduction to the Four Task Force Reports—

Rev. Paul Gehrs, Assistant to the Bishop, Justice and Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations, introduced the four task force reports to NCC. He mentioned that all four task forces worked hard on the reports and the language used in their reports.

He welcomed the task force members who were able to come. The following task force members introduced themselves to NCC: Rev. Lindsey Jorgensen-Skakum and Rev. Steve Hoffard (Co-chairs, Task Force on Homophobia, Biphobia, and Transphobia); Rev. Aneeta Saroop (Chair) and Rev. Ron Flamand (Task Force on Racism, White Supremacy, and issues of Racial Injustice); and Deacon Sarah Rudd (Chair, Task Force on Ableism).

CC-2022-06 That NCC recommends “A prayer to encourage this work,” by Rev. Steve Hoffard, for use across the church as together we follow God’s call to be a diverse, equitable and inclusive community that celebrates all and upholds life-giving relationships.

A prayer to encourage this work

Creator God, you have formed every one of us in your image. All of us molded as a unique and beautiful part of your diverse creation . . . each of us equally loved, valued and precious in your sight.

As a church we recognize that truth and sometimes even proclaim it while sadly at the same time erecting barriers, sometimes unknowingly, too often even knowingly, to those who differ from us in anyway.

We know we have work to do. As members of the body of Christ, we are called to help each other be a better church. We ask that you come among us not only today but in the days ahead as we continue the work.

Inspire us with courage and creativity.

Challenge us to new learning.

Push us when we get stuck.

Help us to listen carefully to one another and to those who have been pushed to the margins, and give us strength to carry on even when the work is hard.

This we continue to pray until all are included and celebrated without exception . . . without obstacles . . . and without endless debate.

In the name of the one who fully welcomes all to the table, Jesus the Christ. Amen.

By Rev. Steve Hoffard

Written for the joint meeting of the Task Force on Ableism; the Task Force on Homophobia, Biphobia, and Transphobia; and the Task Force on Racism, White Supremacy, and Racial Justice.
November 20, 2021

CARRIED.

CC-2022-07 That NCC communicates to the Task Forces on Ableism; Addressing Racism, White Supremacy, and issues of Racial Injustice; Addressing Homophobia, Biphobia, and Transphobia; and Carbon Neutrality, its deep gratitude for the work done so far. **CARRIED.**

Report of the Task Force on Homophobia, Biphobia, and Transphobia**

M/S That NCC receives the Report and recommendations of the Task Force Addressing Homophobia, Biphobia, and Transphobia (March 2022) with deep gratitude and recommends it to the 2022 National Convention for adoption. **DEFERRED.**

*Breakout Session Questions:**

- 1. What stood out in the report for you?*
- 2. What questions or concerns do you have regarding the report and recommendations?*

**These questions were used in every breakout session for every task force report discussion.*

***Discussion on this topic continued under “Unfinished Business,” Business Session Four.*

Report of the Task Force on Ableism

(Breakout Session)

CC-2022-08 That NCC receives the Report and recommendations of the Task Force Addressing Ableism (March 2022) with deep gratitude and recommends it to the 2022 National Convention for adoption. **CARRIED.**

Report of Faith, Order, and Doctrine Committee

Rev. Dr. Ali Tote gave a presentation on the work of the Faith, Order, and Doctrine Committee.

CC-2022-09 That NCC adopts the *Theology & Practice of Online Communion* report prepared by the Faith, Order, and Doctrine Committee and recommends it be reported to the 2022 National Convention. **CARRIED.**

Bishop Susan asked Rev. Dr. Ali Tote to extend NCC’s heartfelt thanks to the Faith, Order, and Doctrine Committee for the very thoughtful and large amount of work done.

Closing Prayer

Led by the meeting chaplain.

(Break then resumed at 3:00 p.m.)

Report of the Task Force Addressing Racism, White Supremacy, and issues of Racial Injustice*

Bishop Susan welcomed Rev. Aneeta Saroop and Rev. Ron Flamand who are part of the Task Force Addressing Racism, White Supremacy, and issues of Racial Injustice and thanked them for joining our meeting.

(Breakout Session)

CC-2022-10 That NCC receives the Report and recommendations of the Task Force Addressing Racism, White Supremacy, and issues of Racial Injustice (March 2022) with the exception of recommendation no. 7, with deep gratitude and recommends it for adoption to the 2022 National Convention. **CARRIED.**

A working group was formed to work on the wording under recommendation no 7. The group comprised of Rev. Paul Gehrs, Bruce Cook and Pat Lovell. They will report back in the next business session.

**Discussion on this topic continued under “Unfinished Business,” Business Session Four.*

Report of the Task Force on Carbon Neutrality

Rev. Paul Gehrs gave an introduction on the Report of the Task Force on Carbon Neutrality.

(Breakout Session)

(Break then resumed after 10 minutes)

CC-2022-11 That NCC receives the Report of the Task Force on Carbon Neutrality with deep gratitude, endorses the recommendations, and recommends the Report & recommendations to the 2022 National Convention for adoption. **CARRIED.**

Finance Report

Kyle Giesbrecht, Director of Finance and Administration presented the financial reports to NCC. Treasurer Gene Blishen mentioned that ELCIC is “clean” of any Russian investments* from its investment portfolio. The synod treasurers would like to communicate this to all the synods.

**Discussion on this topic continued under “Unfinished Business,” Business Session Four.*

2022 Budget

CC-2022-12 That NCC approves the revised 2022 budget with a consolidated deficit of \$193,396. **CARRIED.**

Church Extension and Capital Fund (CECF)

CC-2022-13 That NCC approves 70% of the CECF investment income be allocated to synods, based on the current formula, 50% even and 50% baptized membership. **CARRIED.**

CC-2022-14 That NCC approves for each synod to give a proportional amount from the investment rebate equaling \$61,000 for the ELCIC Welcoming Church Project (for new immigrants). **CARRIED.**

Closing Prayer

Led by the meeting chaplain.

SUNDAY, MARCH 6, 2022, 2:00 P.M. – 4:30 P.M.

Business Session Four:

Vice-Chair Sheila Hamilton called the meeting to order.

Opening Prayer

Led by the meeting chaplain.

Approval of Strategic Plan

CC-2022-15 That NCC approves the Strategic Plan (2022-2025) as presented. **CARRIED.**

Correspondences:

-BC Synod

CC-2022-16 That NCC refers to the Conference of Bishops and the ELCIC Officers including consultation with the Task Force on Homophobia, Biphobia, and Transphobia the request from the BC Synod in Convention to initiate a review of the ELCIC “Manual Re: Discipline for Rostered Ministers” to make changes where the manual is prejudiced and discriminates against rostered ministers who are LGBTQ2SIA+ and their families, and to do so in consultation with the ELCIC Task Force on Homophobia, Biphobia, and Transphobia, and LGBTQ2SIA+ rostered ministers in the ELCIC. **CARRIED.**

-Sabbatical Leave for Trina Gallop Blank, Assistant to the Bishop

Trina Gallop Blank left the meeting room as NCC discussed.

CC-2022-17 That NCC approves the sabbatical request in regards to time change from Trina Gallop Blank, Assistant to the Bishop, Communications and Resource Generation. **CARRIED.**

-Letters to NCC re: GSI

Bishop Susan explained to NCC that GSI will proceed with the study of pension options. There will be discussions between their officers and ELCIC’s, and then with NCC afterwards. GSI will report on this at the 2022 National Convention.

With regards to the letter provided by Rev. Leena Jensen, it’s unclear whether she’s speaking for herself or on behalf of the organization/group (Committee for Real Pensions for Lutheran Pastors) that she’s representing. ELCIC doesn’t have any relationship with their organization/group, and to not enter into any kind of conversation is prudent.

NCC is in the process of discussion with GSI and that a report to the National Convention will take place.

M/S That NCC requests that Bishop Susan reply to the letters from Rev. Leena Jensen and Bill Kuehnbaum. **CARRIED.**

Unfinished Business

2022 National Convention

CC-2022-18 That NCC approves an online National Convention in 2022 for essential business and an in person special convention in 2023 to deal with other matters. **CARRIED.**

Task Force Report on Homophobia, Biphobia, and Transphobia

CC-2022-19 That NCC receives the report of the Task Force Addressing Homophobia, Biphobia, and Transphobia with deep gratitude and recommends the Report and recommendations 1-8 to the 2022 National Convention for adoption. **CARRIED.**

CC-2022-20 That NCC requests members of the Task Force on Homophobia, Biphobia, and Transphobia to work with appointed members of NCC to rewrite recommendations 9-11 to include time for study and discernment. The officers will appoint NCC members to work after consultation with the Task Force. **CARRIED.**

Recommendation 7 from the Report of the Task Force on Racism, White Supremacy and issues of Racial Injustice

Bruce Cook on behalf of the working group (with Pat Lovell and Rev. Paul Gehrs) presented the rewriting of recommendation no. 7.

Proposed Motion:

That NCC proposes to the Task Force on Racism that recommendation #7 be amended to read:

That the ELCIC reviews the nomination, election, and hiring processes to intentionally ensure diversity, equity, and inclusion. All ELCIC leaders should encourage, monitor, and empower People of Colour, Indigenous, Black, Asian/Pacific Islander and other racialized people for service at all levels of the church.

M/S That NCC withdraws the proposed motion presented by the working group tasked to rewrite recommendation no. 7 of the Report of the Task Force on Racism, White Supremacy, and issues of Racial Injustice. **CARRIED.**

New Motion:

CC-2022-21 That NCC appoints Rev. Paul Gehrs, Bruce Cook and Pat Lovell to work with the Task Force on Racism, White Supremacy, and issues of Racial Injustice, to clarify expanded language in recommendation no. 7 of the Report. **CARRIED.**

Constitution Committee

That NCC approves the revision to Part VII, Section 7 of the ELCIC Administrative Bylaws to read as...

The members of National Church Council shall be voting delegates at convention. In addition, the maximum number of synod elected or appointed voting delegates at convention shall be one hundred and fifty (150), comprised of a maximum of ninety (90) delegates who shall be lay and a maximum of sixty (60) delegates who shall be rostered pastors or rostered deacons **serving under call or appointment.** Of these one hundred and fifty (150) delegates, synods shall make reasonable efforts to elect or appoint one-fifth (1/5) of such delegates who are sixteen (16) to thirty (30) years of age as of the first day of convention.

And that NCC approves the revision to Part XVI, Section 1 of the ELCIC Administrative Bylaws to read as...

The Court of Appeal shall consist of five (5) members, three (3) lay and two (2) rostered, who shall be elected by the convention for a term of three (3) years. No member may hold a position on National Church Council, Synod Council or a synodical committee for theological education and leadership. No member shall serve more than two (2) consecutive terms. A vacancy occurring ad interim may be filled by the National Church Council until the next regular convention, which shall fill the unexpired term.

If there is an appeal ongoing at the time of the convention, current members will continue until that appeal has been finalized. The term for newly elected members will commence once the ongoing appeal has been finalized or once a new appeal commences, whichever comes first. The term will conclude at the next convention.

M/S That NCC approves to divide the changes to the ELCIC Administrative Bylaws as presented by the Constitution Committee. **CARRIED.**

CC-2022-22 That NCC approves the revision to Part VII, Section 7 of the ELCIC Administrative Bylaws to read as...

The members of National Church Council shall be voting delegates at convention. In addition, the maximum number of synod elected or appointed voting delegates at convention shall be one hundred and fifty (150), comprised of a maximum of ninety (90) delegates who shall be lay and a maximum of sixty (60) delegates who shall be rostered pastors or rostered deacons **servicing under call or appointment.** Of these one hundred and fifty (150) delegates, synods shall make reasonable efforts to elect or appoint one-fifth (1/5) of such delegates who are sixteen (16) to thirty (30) years of age as of the first day of convention.

CARRIED.

CC-2022-23 That NCC refers the proposed bylaw changes to Part XVI, Section 1 of the ELCIC Administrative Bylaws back to the Constitution Committee to consult with the lawyer.

The Court of Appeal shall consist of five (5) members, three (3) lay and two (2) rostered, who shall be elected by the convention for a term of three (3) years. No member may hold a position on National Church Council, Synod Council or a synodical committee for theological education and leadership. No member shall serve more than two (2) consecutive terms. A vacancy occurring ad interim may be filled by the National Church Council until the next regular convention, which shall fill the unexpected term.

If there is an appeal ongoing at the time of the convention, current members will continue until that appeal has been finalized. The term for newly elected members will commence once the ongoing appeal has been finalized or once a new appeal commences, whichever comes first. The term will conclude at the next convention.

CARRIED.

On Russian Investment (Ukraine-Russia Conflict)

CC-2022-24 That NCC acknowledges the Report from the Finance Committee that the ELCIC has reviewed its financial investments managed by TD Wealth Management and ELFEC, and that the Church is clear of any Russian investments in its portfolio. Bishop Susan mentioned that this will be added to the statement to be issued very soon. **CARRIED.**

CC-2022-25 That NCC approves the following statement in addition to the Report of the Finance Committee for release to the Church.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC) joins the World Council of Churches, The Lutheran World Federation, and The Canadian Council of Churches in calling for an immediate ceasefire in Ukraine and global solidarity with the people of Ukraine.

We denounce any and every use of deadly armed force to resolve disputes that could be resolved by dialogue. We firmly believe that dialogue – based on principles of international law and respect for established national borders – was and is the proper path for the resolution of tensions surrounding Ukraine. We call for an immediate end to the current armed hostilities, and for the protection of all human lives and communities threatened by this violence.

The ELCIC through its partnership with the Canadian Lutheran World Relief calls on its members to respond through financial support to the urgent humanitarian needs in Ukraine (<https://elcic.ca/2022/02/25/ukraine-emergency-appeal/>).

We ask all members, congregations and related agencies to examine their financial investments to ensure they do not support Russian investments.

We urge all members and all people of good will around the world to join us in prayer for peace for the people of Ukraine and the region.

Loving God, you are our peace. We pray for peace between Russia and Ukraine. We pray for the people of Ukraine – those who are forced to flee, those who are trapped and unable to flee, those who are in need of aid, those who have died. We pray for Ukrainian and Russian soldiers, that they may be moved to lay down their weapons. We pray for world leaders, that they would be fed into your ways of peace and justice. We pray for our whole world who watches and worries. God have mercy!

CARRIED.

New Business

CC-2022-26 That National Church Council expresses sincere appreciation for the faithful work of the ELCIC staff over the past triennium:

- Rev. Susan Johnson for her leadership in modeling a life of faith
- Rev. Paul Gehrs for his dedication to social justice issues, connecting with other faiths and the environment
- Trina Gallop-Blank for helping us put our thoughts into words
- Kyle Griesbecht for his steady financial guidance, helping to secure the future of the ELCIC
- Deacon Gretchen Peterson for her energetic collaboration with youth, diaconal and leadership ministries
- Rev. Lyle McKenzie for his calm spiritual guidance
- Rev. Dr. Ali Tote for his thoughtful overseeing of matters of faith and witness
- Desiree Mendoza for her attention to detail and always being there to help

And for all the other staff that works so hard behind the scenes to keep our ELCIC running so smoothly, we give our thanks and appreciation.

CARRIED.

Talking Points/Highlights

Task Force Reports

FOD Committee Report

Strategic Plan

Clear of any participation from Russian investment

Welcoming program (including funds) for immigrants

Approval of the reports from Finance Committee

Jane and Gretchen's unicorn costumes

Recognition of retiring members

Prayers by the meeting chaplain

Welcome of Bishop Kathy Martin

Members of Task Forces who were present

NCC officially met six times during this triennium (four of which were via Zoom)

Heartfelt *thank you* to NCC (for this weekend meeting and incredible work dealing with difficult conversations)

(Appendix A: March 2022 NCC Meeting Highlights)

Meeting Evaluation

Desiree will send a survey to NCC members requesting feedback on this meeting.

Vice-Chair Sheila Hamilton mentioned that there will be a National Church Council (NCC) meeting in July. A pre-convention and post-convention NCC meeting will be held. For the pre-convention NCC meeting, the group will be asked to do an evaluation for the last triennium so that the newly elected NCC members from the convention will benefit from it.

Closing Prayer

Led by the meeting Chaplain Bruce Cook.

Next Meetings:

Next Meetings:

2022

July 12-15*

Chaplain- Rev. Jane Gingrich (for NCC meeting prior to convention)

Bible Study-

**Planned dates for 2022 National Convention. Please wait for further information and official announcement.*

September 15–17 (Thursday-Saturday) – *Scheduled one week later after the WCC 11th Assembly, August 31–September 8.*

2023

March 3–5 (Friday-Sunday)

September 7–9 (Thursday-Saturday)

Meeting Adjourned.



March 2022

National Church Council Meeting Highlights

The ELCIC's National Church Council (NCC) met via zoom for its March 2022 meeting. NCC members met for four sessions over three days from March 4–6, 2022.

The following are a few of the major highlights from the meeting. For specific wording on motions and additional actions, draft minutes will be posted once available on the NCC section of the ELCIC website.

Following much consideration, NCC made the decision to hold the 2022 ELCIC National Convention online, along with a special convention to be held in-person in 2023. The ELCIC is required to have a convention every three years, with the time and place determined by NCC. The online gathering will ensure we are able to address essential business of the church, and the special in-person convention in 2023 will allow an opportunity to meet together next year and fully enjoy all the various components of convention that make us feel like we are coming together as church, such as in-person worship, singing and fellowship. As per Part VII, Section 20 of the ELCIC Administrative Bylaws, delegates to the regular convention will also be delegates to the special convention in 2023.

NCC received the reports of four task forces at this meeting.

Several members of the Task Force on Addressing Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia, Task Force on Addressing Ableism and the Task Force on Addressing Racism, White Supremacy, and Racial Injustice were present during the task force reporting and discussions. These task forces were formed following the 2019 ELCIC National Convention.

NCC also received the report from the Task Force on Carbon Neutrality.

NCC received all of these reports with gratitude and have recommended them to National Convention for adoption. All of the reports came with multiple recommendations. NCC has referred a few of the recommendations back to the task forces for more conversation. It is anticipated that these reports will be addressed at the 2023 Special Convention.

All of these task forces have done an incredible amount of work under challenging circumstances. Almost all of their collaboration has been done online during the pandemic.

The Faith, Order and Doctrine committee presented their report to NCC following study and engagement with the broader church. The report on Online Communion was adopted and will be circulated throughout the church.

NCC adopted a new 2022-2025 National Church Strategic Plan. The plan is a shift in recognizing the true structure of NCC and its responsibility to develop priorities for the church and then monitor. The new areas of the strategic plan are: striving to be a Healthier Church, seeking to cultivate Effective Partnerships, encouraging Relational Leadership and leading with Compassionate Justice.

NCC members issued a statement on Ukraine. In the statement, the ELCIC joins with the World Council of Churches, The Lutheran World Federation and the Canadian Council of Churches in calling for an immediate ceasefire in Ukraine and global solidarity with the people of Ukraine. The ELCIC through its partnership with Canadian Lutheran World Relief calls on its members to respond through financial support to the urgent humanitarian needs in Ukraine (<https://elcic.ca/2022/02/25/ukraine-emergency-appeal/>). ELCIC members, congregations and related agencies are asked to examine their financial investments to ensure they do not support Russian investments.

As part of the recommendations of the Church Extension and Capital Fund Advisory Board, NCC approved funding for the Welcome Church initiative, an ELCIC-wide vision to assist all newcomers to Canada with settlement, support, meaningful relationships and more.

The Welcome Church initiative's purpose is to greet newcomers to Canada with radical hospitality. Initially conceived as a program to welcome newcomers immigrating from Hong Kong, this proposal is calling for a joint effort of all ELCIC congregations and pastors in sharing hope, friendship and practical and spiritual support with all the new arrived in their midst.

This Welcome Church initiative is aimed at creating a shared vision and culture, and developing a shared network and framework for welcoming all newcomers (Hong Kong, immigrants, refugee, working permits) into Canada.

The next meetings of NCC are scheduled as follows:

- July 2022, TBA (coinciding with the 2022 ELCIC National Convention)
- September 15–17, 2022
- March 3–5, 2023
- September 7–9, 2023