

LUTHERAN ADVOCACY MINISTRY – ARIZONA

Statement of Working Relationships

Approved by the GCS Synod Council February 22,2020

Approved by LSS-SW Board of Directors April 23,2020

The Lutheran Advocacy Ministry – Arizona is a joint ministry of the Grand Canyon Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (GCS-ELCA) and Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest (LSS-SW) together in partnership with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) through ELCA World Hunger. Lutheran Advocacy Ministry - AZ is an instrument for coordinated Lutheran impact on public policy in Arizona.

Article I – Purpose

Lutheran Advocacy Ministry - AZ, as an advocacy ministry of the ELCA, derives its purpose from the Constitution of the ELCA, which states:

To participate in God's mission, this church shall: . . . Serve in response to God's love to meet human needs, caring for the sick and the aged, advocating justice and dignity for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, and standing with the poor and powerless and committing itself to their needs. {4.01.c.}

To fulfill these purposes, this church shall: . . . Lift its voice in concord and work in concert with forces for good, to serve humanity, cooperating with church and other groups participating in activities that promote justice, relieve misery, and reconcile the estranged. {4.03.g} . . . Study social issues and trends, work to discover the causes of oppression and injustice, and develop programs of ministry and advocacy to further human dignity, freedom, justice, and peace in the world. {4.03.l}

Lutheran Advocacy Ministry - AZ is called to advocate for justice in public policy, with a particular emphasis on alleviating poverty and hunger and supporting ELCA members and congregations, as well as our ecumenical and interfaith partners in the ministry of advocacy.

Article II - Authority, Relationships and Accountabilities

The Holy Scriptures, the Lutheran Confessions, the Ecumenical Creeds, the ELCA Constitution, ELCA Social Statements, ELCA Messages and social policy actions

adopted by the ELCA, and the Social Statements of the ELCA predecessor church bodies provide Lutheran Advocacy Ministry-AZ the basis on which to choose issues, develop statements, and advocate positions. The counsel of the ELCA Washington Office may also be utilized. Positions taken must be consistent with the Public Policy Framework as approved by the LSS-SW Board of Directors.

Lutheran Advocacy Ministry - AZ speaks on behalf of the official positions of the ELCA applied to the specific context of public policy issues in Arizona.

All members of ELCA congregations in Arizona are potentially active participants in the advocacy efforts of Lutheran Advocacy Ministry - AZ.

Article III – Ecumenical Relationships and Associations

Lutheran Advocacy Ministry - AZ works in a covenant relationship with the Arizona Conference of Churches and LSS-SW. Lutheran Advocacy Ministry - AZ shall seek to particularly encourage advocacy and communicate with those churches with whom the ELCA is in full communion.

The principle of institutional separation and functional interaction shall be the norm regarding association with other advocacy groups. Lutheran Advocacy Ministry - AZ shall seek collegial relationships with other advocacy groups individually or collectively for the exchange of information and to enhance its advocacy efforts. Membership in advocacy coalitions shall not imply agreement with any policy or position which is in conflict with ELCA or GCS-ELCA policies or positions. The Lutheran Advocacy Ministry - AZ mailing list shall not be made available to other organizations.

Article IV - Operating Principles

Lutheran Advocacy Ministry - AZ shall seek to:

- A. Identify priority issues according to the authority stated in Article II and articulate the ELCA's position on those issues.
- B. Monitor legislation and administrative regulations relating to the Lutheran Advocacy Ministry - AZ Advocacy Agenda.
- C. Develop, support and provide information for members of congregations who wish to participate in the ministry of advocacy.

- D. Provide a means to share information about synod programs for justice and advocacy.
- E. Cooperate ecumenically and with other community groups and organizations on issues of mutual interest.
- F. Initiate contacts and activities to raise awareness of Lutheran Advocacy Ministry - AZ and its Advocacy Agenda with the legislative and executive branches of state government, state agencies, and others as may be deemed appropriate. Local congregations shall be encouraged to work in cooperation with Lutheran Advocacy Ministry - AZ to engage in advocacy and urge members to join the Advocacy Network.

Lutheran Advocacy Ministry - AZ recognizes and celebrates that ELCA social policy is interpreted daily by baptized members as they live out their callings and vocations as pastors, bishops, lay leaders and as advocates in the public and private sectors.

Article V– Organization

Section 1. Structure

Lutheran Advocacy Ministry - AZ is a ministry of the GCS-ELCA, LSS-SW, the ELCA, and ELCA World Hunger and functions with the advice and counsel of the Lutheran Advocacy Ministry - AZ Policy Committee. The goals, objectives and activities of Lutheran Advocacy Ministry - AZ are administered by a Director.

Section 2. Policy Committee

- A. **Role:** The Lutheran Advocacy Ministry - AZ Policy Committee develops the policy decisions of Lutheran Advocacy Ministry - AZ including the annual Advocacy Agenda, and works with the Director to establish priority issues, goals, and objectives. The Policy Committee provides oversight of program development and budget and provides support, advice and counsel to the Director.
- B. **Responsibilities:** Policy Committee members are expected to attend Policy Committee meetings; read materials in preparation for meetings; keep up to date on issues and concerns of the office; and help with the promotion of the Lutheran Advocacy Ministry - AZ Advocacy Agenda and activities;
- C. **Membership:** The Policy Committee shall consist of not less than seven (7) nor more than twelve (12) members. All members shall be members of ELCA

congregations in Arizona. Consideration is given to representation from the geographical areas in Arizona, as well as a balance of male and female, clergy and lay, and people of language, color, and varying economic status.

- D. **Term of Office:** All Policy Committee members shall serve a regular term of three years until the appointment of their successors at the spring meeting of Policy Committee. There shall be a maximum of six consecutive years of service. Terms of office shall be staggered. When first constituted, the members of the Policy Committee shall determine which members initially serve for a term of one, two, or three years, such that as nearly as possible, one-third of the membership is appointed each year.
- E. **Advisory (Non-Voting) Members:** The Policy Committee may appoint advisory (non-voting) members to the Policy Committee. LSS-SW shall be entitled to assign one Advisory Member to the committee. Each of the advisory (non-voting) members shall be entitled to participate in the deliberations of the Policy Committee, but shall have no vote.
- F. **Removal:** Any member may be removed or asked to resign at any time for cause or neglect of duties and responsibilities as defined herein or for failure to attend Policy Committee meetings for one year. A majority vote of the remaining members of the Policy Committee shall be necessary to remove a member.
- G. **Vacancies:** Vacancies will be filled by appointment of the Bishop of the GCS-ELCA. The person named to fill a vacancy shall be named to hold office until the expiration of the normal term of the person replaced.
- H. **Nomination:** The chair shall appoint a nominating committee of at least two (2) Policy Committee members and the Director, one of whom shall be designated chair of the committee. The nominating committee shall present nominees to the Policy Committee for all Policy Committee vacancies at the spring meeting. Nominees accepted by the Policy Committee shall be recommended for appointment by the Bishop of the GCS-ELCA. The chair shall submit recommendations for Policy Committee vacancies to the Bishop for appointment.
- I. **Meetings:** The Policy Committee shall meet at least two (2) times each year. Notice and agenda of each meeting of the Policy Committee shall be given to each Policy Committee member at least one week prior to the date of the meeting. The presence at any meeting of a majority of the voting members of Policy Committee shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

- J. **Electronic Voting and Meetings:** A question may be referred to the members of the Policy Committee for decision by electronic ballot sent to each member of the Policy Committee. All Policy Committee members shall be notified of the results of such ballot. A resolution based on a question adopted as a result of such extraordinary ballot may be acted upon as valid and effective as if it had been passed at a meeting of the Policy Committee, duly convened and held, and the result of such a ballot shall be recorded in the minutes of the next meeting of the Policy Committee. Meetings of the Policy Committee may be conducted via videoconferencing or other electronic means.
- K. **Travel Expenses:** Policy Committee members may be reimbursed for the expenses incurred in traveling to attend Policy Committee meetings.

Section 3. **Officers**

- A. The Policy Committee shall elect annually a chair and a vice-chair from among its members. A secretary may be elected or appointed from among or beyond the membership. The chair shall chair both the Policy Committee and the Executive Committee. The chair shall preside at all meetings of the Policy Committee and shall be an ex-officio member of all task forces of the Policy Committee. The chair shall perform all duties incidental to the office of the chair.
- B. Any officer elected or approved by the Policy Committee may be removed by majority vote of the Policy Committee whenever in its judgment it is in the best interests of Lutheran Advocacy Ministry - AZ to do so. Upon removal of an officer a successor may then be elected or appointed at any meeting of the Policy Committee.
- C. The chair or executive committee may appoint and convene task forces, composed of Policy Committee members and others, as needed.
- D. The Executive Committee shall be composed of the Policy Committee officers and the Director. The Executive Committee is responsible for the management function of Lutheran Advocacy Ministry - AZ and for decisions that must be made between Policy Committee meetings.

Article VI – Director

Section 1. **General**

The GCS-ELCA and LSS-SW shall select and hire a Director for Lutheran Advocacy Ministry - AZ. The GCS-ELCA is the employer of record for the Director. The Director serves as staff of the GCS-ELCA and is accountable to the Bishop of the GCS-ELCA through the Personnel Policies of the GCS-ELCA.

Section 2. Responsibilities

The functional responsibilities of the Director include:

- A. Advocacy with Arizona state government public policy makers in accordance with the social justice positions of the ELCA;
- B. Collegial collaboration with public policy coalitions with similar commitments;
- C. Development of an advocacy network among congregations, agencies, and organizations for the purpose of education and shared advocacy strategy;
- D. Research, study, analysis of pending public policy concerns;
- E. Administration of the office, its budget and resources.

Section 3. Policy Committee Membership

The Director shall serve as an ex-officio member of the Policy Committee.

Section 4. Annual Review

Goals, objectives and activities for Lutheran Advocacy Ministry - AZ are outlined each year as guidelines for the work of Lutheran Advocacy Ministry - AZ. The Director's performance is reviewed annually by the Bishop of the GCS- ELCA with input from LSS-SW.

Article VII - Adoption and Review

This Statement of Working Relationships must be adopted by formal action of the Synod Council of the GCS-ELCA and the Board of Directors of LSS-SW. The Lutheran Advocacy Ministry - AZ Policy Committee will review this Statement of Working Relationships biannually. Amendments may be recommended upon a two-thirds vote of the Lutheran Advocacy Ministry - AZ Policy Committee and presented to

the Synod Council of the GCS-ELCA and the Board of Directors of LSS-SW for final adoption.