

	ELCA <i>Evangelical Lutheran Church in America</i>	LCMC <i>Lutheran Congregations in Missions for Christ</i>	AFLC <i>Association of Free Lutheran Congregations</i>
Finances			
Employee Benefits and Insurance	<p>Provides full range of benefits for full-time and part-time pastors and lay employees, including retirement plans, short/long-term disability plans, survivor benefits, and group life insurance. Also covers accidental death and dismemberment.</p> <p>Group medical insurance offered for both current employees and retirees. Dental insurance is also offered.</p> <p>What is offered is sponsored and paid for by the congregation. HRA (Health Reimbursement Arrangement), and FSA (Flexible Spending Account) also offered.</p> <p>Lay employees are eligible to enroll if scheduled to work at least 20 hours/week for six or more months per year.</p>	<p>Provides full range of benefits for employees working 30 or more hours per week, including retirement plans, long-term disability plans, and life insurance (which must be purchased with long-term disability). Also covers accidental death and dismemberment.</p> <p>Long term disability is not available if an individual has waived Social Security benefits. Short-term disability is not provided.</p> <p>Group medical insurance* is Blue Cross Blue Shield of MN. Dental insurance is also offered. <i>* Note: Abortion is explicitly not covered under medical plan.</i></p> <p>HSA is also offered.</p> <p>It is unclear whether this same coverage applies to lay leaders.</p> <p>Paid for by pastor and congregation.</p>	<p>Provides full range of benefits for full-time pastors and lay employees working 32 or more hours per week, including retirement plans, long term disability insurance, survivor benefits, and group life insurance. Also covers accidental death and dismemberment.</p> <p>Group health insurance not offered. The Benefits Handbook makes no mention of dental insurance.</p> <p>HRA (Health Reimbursement Arrangement), and FSA (Flexible Spending Account) are offered for tax advantage purposes.</p> <p>Paid for by congregation and individuals.</p>
Pension	<p>The ELCA Board of Pensions offers a number of retirement options, including a defined benefit pension plan that guarantees retired pastors a specific benefit upon retirement.</p> <p>New employees to the ELCA may be able to transfer their former employer's retirement plan balance over to the ELCA.</p>	<p>Individual control of pension fund administered through Edward Jones. Pastors have a great deal of control over their individual pension fund.</p> <p>Congregation participation is optional.</p> <p>New employees cannot transfer prior balances.</p>	<p>Provided by AFLC for pastors and workers by Hartford Life Insurance Company. Offers a defined contribution retirement (i.e., congregation defines what they will put into the plan, such as matching contributions) rather than defining some guaranteed benefit at retirement.</p> <p>Currently, each participating congregation must match 166.7% of the employee's contributions up to 5% of gross wages.</p> <p>Each congregation may choose whether they want to participate.</p> <p>An employee of a non-participating congregation cannot contribute to the plan.</p> <p>New employees to the AFLC may be able to transfer their former employer's retirement plan balance over to the AFLC.</p>

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Disability	<p>Offers paid disability benefits beginning two months after disability begins, continuing for length of the disability through full retirement age (beyond in some instances). Plan provides income/benefits including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly income • Contributions to ELCA Retirement Plan account • Health and survivor benefits coverage <p>With regard to short-term disability, the congregation is responsible for paying the first two months of benefits.</p>	<p>Short-term disability is not provided.</p> <p>Long-term coverage begins after 60 days, with health and survivor benefits only.</p>	<p>Offers long term disability only.</p>
Continuing Education	<p>Offers multiple continuing education opportunities for pastors and congregational members. Also provides grants to support the cost of continuing education in certain circumstances.</p>	<p>None offered through LCMC directly. Individual congregations and districts use own discretion regarding how much to budget for continuing education (e.g. sabbaticals, seminarian internships, annual leadership conferences, etc.).</p> <p>An annual leadership conference is hosted by LCMC.</p>	<p>None as was found in literature for pastors or lay workers that would be paid for by AFLC. Fundamental Principles 5, 7, and 9 leaves this to congregational discretion.</p>
Property	<p>Control of property, including control of property in event of a split in the congregation, is determined by congregational constitution.</p> <p>ELCA has approved constitutions stating that property will remain with the congregation provided it becomes a part of another Lutheran body or body in full communion with ELCA.</p>	<p>Except otherwise agreed in writing between LCMC and one or more member congregations, each congregation retains its own property/assets.</p>	<p>Congregations maintain complete control over their property.</p> <p>No involvement by AFLC unless stated in congregation constitution.</p> <p>Disposal of property in the event of a split in the congregation is determined by the current congregation constitution.</p>
Benevolence	<p>While the ELCA establishes benevolence expectations for the support of the broader church and mission opportunities, there is no specific sanction for failure of congregations to do so.</p>	<p>LCMC does not dictate giving, nor do they set any guidelines for benevolence. Rather, congregations are encouraged to tithe 10% of budget.</p> <p>Congregations are not required to give to LCMC, but many voluntarily donate a portion of their benevolence to LCMC.</p> <p>Funds are administered by congregation, who are encouraged to use some funds locally and some globally. Benevolence is to include not just sending funds, but congregational involvement.</p> <p><i>Note: LCMC does not administer any benevolence (and has an annual nationwide operating budget of ~ \$300K).</i></p>	<p>Benevolence gifts to AFLC are left to congregational discretion and free will.</p>

Exhibit B - Master Comparison of Synod Alternatives

as of October 31, 2009

	ELCA <i>Evangelical Lutheran Church in America</i>	LCMC <i>Lutheran Congregations in Missions for Christ</i>	AFLC <i>Association of Free Lutheran Congregations</i>
Governance			
Constitution	<p>Drafted by congregation for review by ELCA.</p> <p>ELCA has both its own constitution and a Model Constitution for Congregations.</p> <p><u>Note:</u> The ELCA has approved congregational constitutions that differ in substantial respects from the ELCA Model Constitution for Congregations (e.g., Hosanna Lutheran Church).</p>	<p>LCMC has its own constitution and bylaws which are available online. As part of joining LCMC a congregation accepts their master constitution.</p> <p>There is no reference to LCMC approving individual congregational constitutions, so is it believed that congregational constitutions are at the discretion of each individual congregation, as long as they do not conflict with the master LCMC constitution.</p>	<p>Drafted by congregation for review by AFLC (as part of affiliation process).</p> <p>AFLC has no constitution, only a set of Fundamental Principles and Rules For Work as a guide for congregations.</p>
Process of Affiliation	<p><i>Not applicable given we are currently affiliated.</i></p>	<p>LCMC is intentionally easy to join and leave. Congregational membership involves completing a 2-page subscription form which includes the Statement of Faith. It should be noted that currently a congregation may belong to both the ELCA and LCMC, however a pastor must choose to be rostered with only one organization.</p>	<p>Steps for affiliation are as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Visit by AFLC president or his assistant 2. Constitution submitted for approval to AFLC. 3. Affiliation form filled out and submitted. 4. Process takes a few weeks.
Accountability of Pastors	<p>Pastors are governed by two principal documents:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Visions and Expectations for Ordained Ministers b) Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline. <p>The first document is aspirational. The second outlines specific misconduct leading to pastoral discipline.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. disclosure of confidential communications 2. neglect of duties 3. misconduct in relationship to family 4. sexual morality 5. personal or professional fiscal malfeasance 6. membership in inappropriate organizations 7. conviction of a felony. 	<p>All pastors rostered with LCMC must subscribe to the LCMC Statement of Faith, comply with all LCMC ministry standards, and be accountable to the LCMC Ministry Board.</p> <p>As for misconduct, knowledge/disclosure of criminal convictions may warrant removal as a rostered LCMC pastor.</p>	<p>Besides adhering to Fundamental Principles and Rules for Work, accountability of Pastors is left to discretion of the congregation.</p>
Representation/Voting	<p>Each congregation is entitled to send two voting members to the Metro Chicago Synod assembly.</p> <p>Voting members for the bi-annual Churchwide Assembly are elected at the synod assemblies.</p> <p>Each synod is entitled to elect one voting member for every 5,800 baptized members in the synod and one voting member for every 50 congregations in the synod. Each synod is entitled to at least two voting members.</p> <p>Synodical bishops also are ex officio voting members of the Churchwide Assembly.</p>	<p>Each congregation is entitled to send two delegates for up to 500 member churches, and 1 delegate for each 200 thereafter to the annual LCMC convention.</p> <p>A national LCMC decision does not become binding on congregation until it is ratified and approved by a 2/3 vote of all member congregations. In other words, the national body cannot bind local churches without their approval.</p>	<p>Left to the congregation through their constitution and use of Fundamental Principles and Rules For Work.</p> <p>4 AFLC regional assemblies that congregations may attend.</p>

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Accountability of Congregation	<p>Congregations are principally accountable to their own constitutions. Congregations can, however, be subject to discipline for the following issues:</p> <p>a. Departing from the faith confessed by the ELCA as set forth in both current and proposed constitutions.</p> <p>b. Willfully disregarding or violating any of the criteria for recognition as congregations of the ELCA.</p> <p>c. Willfully disregarding or violating the provisions of the constitution or bylaws of the ELCA.</p>	<p>Congregations must agree to the basic tenants of LCMC.</p> <p>LCMC may suspend the membership of a church for cause by three-quarters vote of the LCMC board of trustees.</p>	<p>Must adhere to Fundamental Principles and Rules for Work.</p> <p>Discipline process is unclear.</p>
Structure/Hierarchy	<p>3 entities - congregations, synods, churchwide org.</p> <p>Congregations: ELCA is made up of ~10,500 congregations in the US, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands.</p> <p>Synods: ELCA congregations are organized into 65 synods who unite the work of congregations within their areas, serving as regional support and guiding pastors/staff candidates through the call process. MetroChicago Synod is led by Bishop Wayne Miller.</p> <p>Churchwide Organization: Includes ELCA Churchwide Assembly, Church Council, officers, offices and churchwide units. Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson.</p>	<p>LCMC maintains a flat structure consisting of member congregations and the Board of Trustees.</p> <p>Congregations may form into districts, or groupings formed around geography, theology, values, shared interests, worship styles, etc. Districts govern themselves within the guidelines set by the association (LCMC) and have not national legislative authority. Joining a district is not required.</p> <p>Areas are reapportioned each year as new congregations join the association, to keep balanced geographical representation on the Board of Trustees.</p>	<p>The AFLC is not an incorporated synod, but a free association. Each local congregation is a separate corporation, and several additional corporations are sponsored by them to direct our common endeavors.</p> <p>These five corporations are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coordinating Committee - School Corporation - Mission Corporation - Association Retreat Center - AFLC Foundation




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Pastoral Calls & Ordination Process	<p>All candidates for ordination must receive a call letter from either the local congregation, local Synod Council, or churchwide organization through the Churchwide Council. These letters must be signed by the candidate, congregational officer and synod bishop. Ordinations must be performed by the Metro Chicago bishop or another currently serving bishop within the ELCA. Ordinations occur at the local congregation during a worship service.</p> <p>The 21-step call Process involves the congregation, call committee, church council and local synod.</p> <p>Pastoral Rosters maintained by synod. Women allowed on the pastoral rosters.</p>	<p>Member churches of LCMC are authorized to call and ordain ministers pursuant to the standards member churches adopt from time to time. Called and ordained LCMC pastors may belong to clergy rosters of another association or church.</p> <p>Congregations may issue a call to whomever they choose, but must follow LCMC Ministry Standards, governing documents, and Statement of Faith. A call packet is available to guide congregations through the process; still due diligence responsibility lies with congregation.</p> <p>Pastors seeking a call advertise their profiles online, and congregations are free to interview any available pastor. Conversely, congregations can display a call packet online for pastors to search.</p> <p>LCMC approval is not needed before placing a call. Congregations are free to call pastors regardless of whether they are identified on LCMC list of pastors.</p> <p>Women allowed to as pastors.</p>	<p>A candidate must be approved and recommended or call by the Coordinating Committee of AFLC to be ordained. B7The AFLC requires that ordained pastors accept the innerrancy and infallibility of Scripture.</p> <p>A free congregation selects and calls its own pastor.</p> <p>The AFLC Coordinating Committee maintains the clergy roster, which includes Licensed Lay pastors, Fellowship Roster Pastors (transfers) and Regular Ordained Clergy</p> <p>Women are not allowed as pastors.</p>
Resources/Practices			
Overall	The ELCA has its own publishing house and its website offers a huge variety of worship and educational resources.	N/A	N/A
Liturgy	No required liturgy but generally follows the Revised Common Lectionary of liturgical readings. Sponsors a liturgical planning resource, <i>Sundays and Seasons</i> , with suggestions for hymns and special music appropriate to the readings each week, and adult and children's sermon suggestions. Numerous resources for pastors, worship committees, church musicians and altar guilds.	<p>LCMC makes no recommendations. Worship style is determined by the congregation.</p> <p>Most congregations use liturgical/worship planning resources available from other Lutheran denominations</p>	<p>Makes no recommendation as to the use of liturgy and vestments except that simplicity in worship is encouraged.</p> <p>Preaching the word of God must be the central part of the service, meeting the needs of all who hear.</p> <p>Hymn books honor the word of God and the Sacraments. "The Ambassador Hymnal" contains several orders of worship.</p> <p>Most congregations use liturgical planning resources available from other Lutheran denominations.</p>

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Worship/Sunday School	Offers printed worship resources/hymnals including <i>Evangelical Lutheran Worship, This Far by Faith, With One Voice</i> , and <i>Worship and Praise Songbook</i> . Has specific Schools and Early Childhood Ministries and provides numerous resources for lifelong learning from Sunday School through adult education.	No official worship or Sunday School materials exist at this time. Many congregations continue to use their previous hymnals, worship music and Sunday School materials. That said, some new resources are being developed by various different collaborative efforts of LCMC congregations. Typically this information is exchanged at the Annual Gathering and Leadership Conference.	"The Ambassador Series" is a Sunday School curriculum, plus information for confirmation and new member instruction. Most congregations use worship planning resources available from other Lutheran denominations.
Pastoral Supply	The Metropolitan Synod of the ELCA website has a list of available supply pastors, 62 at the current time.	The congregation is responsible for calling pastors, although the LCMC offers a list of rostered clergy on their website. Local pulpit supply is at the discretion of the congregation, however pastors need to agree with the LCMC Statement of Faith.	No information available.
Camps/Colleges/Seminaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 8 seminaries - 28 ELCA related colleges - 2,000+ schools & early childhood centers/camps 	LCMC does not have a seminary. Works cooperatively with a number of seminaries around the country. Publishes ministry standards that include course requirements for ensuring pastors have a solid confessional Lutheran theological education, and provides a Seminary Dept Relief fund. Most LCMC congregations directly support church camps or campus ministries of their choice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Association of Free Lutheran Theological Seminary - Association Free Lutheran Bible School - FLY boot camp
Theology/Doctrine			
Family	Indispensable social institution because of its role in establishing conditions of trust and protection for the vulnerable. All types of families are recognized, and all families have the responsibility to provide safety and develop trustworthy relationships.	Blessed and ordained by God.	Blessed and ordained by God.

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<p>Marriage/Divorce</p>	<p>Marriage is a covenant of mutual promises and commitment blessed by God. While historic Christian tradition and Lutheran Confessions have recognized marriage as a covenant between a man and woman, some feel that marriage can also be used to describe similar benefits and support for same-gender couples entering lifelong monogamous relationships.</p> <p>ELCA lacks consensus on how to regard these relationships, yet encourages respect for the conscience bound belief of their neighbor, noting that these different beliefs follow from strongly held different understandings of Scripture/tradition.</p> <p>ELCA as a whole has not endorsed the blessing or marriage of same sex couples, but <i>permits</i> (not mandates) congregations to find ways to hold publicly accountable same-gender relationships that intend to be lifelong and monogamous.</p> <p>Pastors carry both legal and religious responsibilities for marriage, and hold and exercise pastoral discretion for the decision to marry in the church.</p> <p>In some situations the trust in a marriage becomes so deeply damaged that the marriage must come to a legal</p>	<p>The LCMC affirms that God created us male and female, and that it is God's will and intention that human sexual expression and fulfillment take place only within the boundaries of marriage between one man and one woman.</p> <p>LCMC does not publish a specific position on the topic of divorce, however, they do affirm they are firmly committed to accepting the normative authority of the Bible. See Other.</p>	<p>Marriage is between one man and one woman, like Christ and the Church.</p> <p>Same-sex relationships not sanctioned.</p> <p>Divorce should be guarded against as stated in the Bible.</p>
<p>Sin</p>	<p>Definition of sin is consistent with Augsburg Confession</p> <p>All are born into sin, but also have free will and are still responsible for own sins.</p>	<p>All are born into sin, but also have free will and are still responsible for own sins.</p>	<p>Sin separates one from God. The Christian seeks to refrain from those acts, thoughts and words that are against a stated law of God.</p> <p>Where actions and practices are neither forbidden nor encouraged in Scripture specifically, the earnest believer should search the Scriptures for principles to guide decisions and conduct.</p>
<p>Sacraments</p>	<p>2 Sacraments: Holy Communion and Holy Baptism</p> <p>Open communion sanctioned. Believe in real presence of Christ (body and blood) through the bread and wine.</p> <p>Infant baptism sanctioned.</p>	<p>2 Sacraments: Holy Communion and Holy Baptism</p> <p>Open communion sanctioned. Believe in real presence of Christ (body and blood) through the bread and wine.</p> <p>Infant baptism sanctioned.</p>	<p>2 Sacraments: Holy Communion and Holy Baptism</p> <p>No official policy on open communion, however each person must examine themselves and understand that real presence of Christ (body and blood) is received through the bread and wine.</p> <p>Infant baptism sanctioned.</p>

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Salvation	Saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.	Saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.	He who believes in and accepts the sufficient work of Jesus for his salvation and is baptized, is a child of God.
Bible Version/Translation	Value in reading a number of current translations and comparing curious or troubling texts with the aid of commentaries that seek to clarify meanings. Readers are encouraged to a) seek to understand the depth of what is being said and value scholarship/textual study, and b) discover the text's meaning/context for those first addressed by the authors, as well as for today	No one version or revision of the Bible to the exclusion of others. Recommend all that are reverent and true translations. At congregational discretion.	No one version or revision of the Bible to the exclusion of others. Recommend all that are reverent and true translations. At congregational discretion.
Pastoral & Lay Leadership	<p>The pastoral office can be filled by either men or women as long as they are qualified.</p> <p>The ELCA recently adopted a resolution (by majority of voting members at the 2009 churchwide assembly), which <i>permits</i> congregations to call/roster members in publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous same-gender relationships. However, no congregation is required to do so. No one is asked to violate their bound conscience, and all are asked to respect the bound conscience of others.</p> <p>Leaders who have been called to serve in the ELCA are considered to be rostered. Ordained leaders are pastors. To qualify for ordained ministry, individuals must graduate either from an ELCA seminary or, if they attend a non-ELCA seminary, they must affiliate with an ELCA seminary for some parts of the education process.</p> <p>Rostered lay leaders serve in the role of Associate in Ministry or Diaconal Lay Leader. Lay leadership training is provided largely at the synod level through formal education as well as various workshops and continuing education courses.</p> <p>Those who are going to serve as ministers of word and</p>	<p>The pastoral office can be filled by either men or women as long as they are qualified.</p> <p>The LCMC does not support individuals in same-gender relationships to serve in a pastoral capacity.</p> <p>Those who are going to serve as ministers of word and sacrament must be ordained.</p>	<p>The pastoral office is to be filled by qualified men only.</p> <p>The AFLC does not support individuals in same-gender relationships to serve in a pastoral capacity.</p> <p>Pastors must be trained, examined, and ordained for ministry in Lutheran congregations, required to support AFLC institutions, and listed on the Fellowship or Clergy roster of the AFLC (as either an ordained or licensed lay pastor).</p> <p>Christian lay people practice their gifts in the life of the congregations, in fellowship outside the congregation, and in service to a needy world. Lay pastors on the AFLC roster may be exempted from ordination.</p> <p>Those who are going to serve as ministers of word and sacrament must be ordained.</p>

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<p>Sexuality</p>	<p>Opposes non-monogamous, promiscuous or casual sexual relationships of any kind. Indulging immediate desires for satisfaction, sexual or otherwise, is to "gratify the desires of the flesh". Such transient encounters do not allow for trust in the relationship that creates the context for trust in sexual intimacy.</p> <p>Regarding homosexuality, the ELCA is opposed to all forms of violence or discrimination against homosexuals and is committed to welcoming all people, regardless of sexual orientation, into our congregation.</p> <p>Regarding same-gender committed relationships, the recent ELCA social statement recognizes that its members are not in agreement, and identifies different perspectives that are present amongst us. (see Other)</p>	<p>Affirms that God created us male and female, and that it is God's will and intention that human sexual expression and fulfillment take place only within the boundaries of marriage between one man and one woman.</p>	<p>Affirms that God created us male and female, and that it is God's will and intention that human sexual expression and fulfillment take place only within the boundaries of marriage between one man and one woman.</p> <p>Directs individuals to share love in Christ for every person, including those leading homosexual lifestyle while rejecting their lifestyle as sin.</p> <p>Encourages prayer and support for individuals and organizations seeking to reach and rescue those in homosexual lifestyle.</p>
<p>Authority of Scripture</p>	<p>The canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the written Word of God. Inspired by God's Spirit speaking through their authors, they record and announce God's revelation centering in Jesus Christ.</p> <p>Through them, God's spirit speaks to us to create and sustain Christian faith and fellowship for service in this world. The ELCA accepts the Bible as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith and life.</p> <p>ELCA Lutherans respect individual interpretations of the Bible, yet always through the lens of Jesus' person, life and witness. Studying various versions/scholars is encouraged in Christian community, using helps provided by scholarly work to get to the heart and meaning of Biblical texts.</p>	<p>The LCMC believes the Bible as the inspired Word of God and the sole authoritative source of their proclamation, faith and life.</p> <p>They reject any notion that science, personal experience, tradition, or other human endeavors have equal footing with the Bible, and maintain the Bible must have final authority in matters of faith/practice.</p> <p>Congregations have significant latitude in shaping ministry in their local setting as they are viewed as the primary expression of the church. The LCMC generally does not speak for its members.</p> <p>However, in circumstances where the truth of God's Word is being consistently challenged, the LCMC may decide to speak to the issue (e.g., Sexuality).</p>	<p>Believe in the Holy Bible as the complete written Word of God, preserved to us by the Holy Spirit for our salvation and instruction.</p> <p>The Bible is the only authentic and infallible source of God's revelation to us and all men, and is the only inerrant and completely adequate source and norm of Christian doctrine and life.</p> <p>The Bible, as a whole and in all its parts, is the Word of God under all circumstances regardless of man's attitude toward it.</p>

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Identity			
Overall Identity		<p>LCMC is a free standing synod created in August, 1999 in reaction to what was viewed as the ELCA's violation of the Lutheran Confessions. They are affiliated with the renewal group WordAlone and loosely affiliated with Lutheran CORE.</p> <p>Currently LCMC consists of a 239 congregations in 9 countries. Growth has been rapid in recent months as congregations react to the ELCA statement on human sexuality and ministry guidelines.</p>	<p>The AFLC is a venture of faith. It is an attempt to build an effective and orderly Christian fellowship with a minimum of human organization, and is an experiment in extreme ecclesiastical democracy and decentralization.</p> <p>A free congregation selects and calls its own pastors, conducts its own program of worship, fellowship and service and owns and maintains its own property.</p> <p>Currently AFLC consists of 270 congregations.</p>
Marketing/Promotion	Very wide array of service including: ELCA & Metro synod websites, county-wide resource centers, TV/video productions, radio ministry, TV ads, The Lutheran newsletter, ELCA news service, and more.	Marketing includes website, social media, newsletters, etc. Some printed materials, most available via the LCMC website, which is straightforward and easy to navigate.	Marketing includes primarily newsletters, brochures and pamphlets.
Logo/Signage	 <p>Evangelical Lutheran Church In America God's work. Our hands.</p> <p>While there is no formal requirement to use ELCA logo and/or signage, ELCA member congregations are requested to use the ELCA brand mark for consistency and effectiveness.</p>	 <p>No requirement to use LCMC logo and/or signage.</p>	 <p>AFLC Association of Free Lutheran Congregations</p> <p>No requirement to use AFLC logo and/or signage.</p>
Outreach/Ministries/ Evangelism (e.g. Missionaries)	<p>Many connections with Lutheran, ecumenical and interfaith organizations, such as Lutheran World Relief and Lutheran Disaster Response.</p> <p>Full communion relationships with 6 other churches.</p> <p>Many campus ministries, outdoor ministries and social service agencies across the country.</p> <p>The ELCA establishes mission congregations.</p>	<p>Mission churches and missionaries are supported directly through benevolence giving of the member congregations. Church plants both at home and abroad are also supported. Congregations deal directly with the missionaries and mission churches. Local outreach and evangelism is determined by the congregation.</p> <p>Also sponsor a group called LCMC-Lutheran Men, which every man in an LCMC congregation is urged to join.</p> <p>The Mission Loan Fund is used to provide interest-free loans to congregations.</p>	<p>The following entities/facets focus on Outreach:</p> <p>AFLC Commission on Evangelism, Parish builders, World Missions Committee, Free Lutheran Association of Pilot Supporters, Women's Missionary Federation, Home Mission, World Mission, Youth Ministries, Free Lutheran Youth Convention, magazines and publications, downloads, FLY Boot Camp, Gideon's Plan, College Ministry, "The Lutheran Ambassador", Association Retreat Center</p>

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Other		
<p><u>ELCA Social Statement</u> Recently, the ELCA adopted their social statement by two-thirds vote. This document builds on the key Lutheran principles of justification by grace and Christian freedom to serve the neighbor, and emphasizes that relative to human sexuality, building/ protection of trust is central to relationships. It affirms that we are called to be trustworthy in our human sexuality and to build C44 institutions and practices in which trust and trustworthy relationships can thrive.</p> <p>The social statement addresses marriage, same-gender relationships, families, commitment, social responsibility and moral discernment.</p> <p><u>Bound Conscience</u> As evident in Reformation writings, the concept of bound conscience plays an important part in Lutheran ethics and pastoral care, and was often raised by Luther in his teachings.</p> <p>Bound conscience describes those who, after careful reflection/discussion, hold a position on pastoral and ethical concern because they are convinced of it by understandings of Scripture/tradition, and see it as inextricably linked with faithful living. It emphasizes the</p> <p>The idea of bound-conscience is central to the ELCA's p</p>	<p>The LCMC believes the Bible as the inspired Word of God and the sole authoritative source of their proclamation, faith and life.</p> <p>They reject any notion that science, personal experience, tradition, or other human endeavors have equal footing with the Bible, and maintain the Bible must have final authority in matters of faith/practice.</p> <p>Congregations have significant latitude in shaping ministry in their local setting as they are viewed as the primary expression of the church. The LCMC generally does not speak for its members.</p> <p>However, in circumstances where the truth of God's Word is being consistently challenged, the LCMC may decide to speak to the issue (e.g., Sexuality).</p>	