



ARCHIVES OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT STATEMENT

MISSION STATEMENT

The Church is a people created by God in Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, called and sent to bear witness to God's creative, redeeming, and sanctifying activity in the world. (c.f. *ELCA Constitution*, 4.01) To assist in fulfilling this mission the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall: (a) provide archives for the retention of its valuable records, and (b) coordinate archival activity in the synods, regional centers for mission, institutions, and agencies of this church.

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT STATEMENT

The Archives of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is the official archives repository for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) churchwide office. The archives collects any and all valuable records no longer needed in the day-to-day conduct of church administration, according to records retention schedules created in conjunction with churchwide units, the Director for Library and Records Management, and archives staff.

Records of Augsburg Fortress, Publishers, and its predecessors, are maintained by that agency in Minneapolis. Some administrative records and parish education materials are available at the ELCA Archives in Elk Grove Village, Ill.

Predecessors of the ELCA

The ELCA Archives is the main repository for the three immediate predecessor church bodies of the ELCA: **The American Lutheran Church, Lutheran Church in America** and the **Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches**. The ELCA Archives also collects the following material from their predecessor bodies:

Evangelical Lutheran Church/Norwegian Lutheran Church of America (1917-1960) and all predecessors

The ELCA Archives collects convention minutes, yearbooks, and periodicals. The main repository for records is the ELCA Region 3 Archives, Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minn.

American Lutheran Church (1930-1960)

The ELCA Archives is the main repository, collecting records from all churchwide offices, minutes, publications, auxiliaries, and districts, except for Iowa, Illinois, Wisconsin Districts which are held by the ELCA Region 5 Archives at Wartburg Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa.

Lutheran Synod of Buffalo (Buffalo Synod) (1845-1930)

The ELCA Archives is the main repository collecting records from all churchwide offices, minutes, publications, auxiliaries, and districts.

Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Ohio (Joint Synod of Ohio) (1818-1930)

The ELCA Archives is the main repository collecting records

from all churchwide offices, minutes, publications, auxiliaries, and districts.

Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Iowa (Iowa Synod) (1854-1930)

The ELCA Archives collects convention minutes, yearbooks, and periodicals. The main repository for records is the ELCA Region 5 Archives at Wartburg Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa.

First Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Texas (Texas Synod) (1851-1930)

The ELCA Archives is the main repository, collecting records from all churchwide offices, minutes, publications, and auxiliaries.

United (Danish) Evangelical Lutheran Church (1884-1960)

The ELCA Archives is the main repository collecting records from all churchwide offices, minutes, publications, auxiliaries, and districts. Significant related collections are held by the Danish Immigrant Archives, Dana College, Blair, Neb.

Lutheran Free Church (Friends of Augsburg) (1893-1963)

The ELCA Archives collects convention minutes, yearbooks, and periodicals. The main repository for records is the ELCA Region 3 Archives, Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minn.

American (Danish) Evangelical Lutheran Church (1874-1962)

The ELCA Archives is the main repository, collecting records from all churchwide offices, minutes, publications, auxiliaries, and districts. Significant related collections are held by the Danish Immigrant Archives, Grand View College, Des Moines, Iowa.

Augustana Evangelical Lutheran (Synod) Church (1860-1962)

The ELCA Archives is the main repository, collecting records from all churchwide offices, minutes, publications, auxiliaries, and conferences.

Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (Suomi Synod) (1890-1962)

The ELCA Archives collects convention minutes, yearbooks, and periodicals. The main repository for records is the archives of Finlandia University, Hancock, Mich.

United Lutheran Church in America (1918-1962)

The ELCA Archives is the main repository, collecting records from all churchwide offices, minutes, publications, and auxiliaries, as well as minutes and publications from member synods. Many of those member synods have their records at the appropriate regional archives.

General Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the United States (General Synod) (1820-1918)

The ELCA Archives collects convention minutes, yearbooks, periodicals, and global mission records. The main repository for records is the archives of the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg.



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General Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in North America (General Council) (1867-1918)

The ELCA Archives collects convention minutes, yearbooks, periodicals, and global mission records. The main repository for records is the Lutheran Archives Center at Philadelphia.

United Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the South (United Synod South) (1867-1918) and predecessors

The ELCA Archives collects convention minutes, yearbooks, periodicals, and global mission records. The main repository for records is the James R. Crumley, Jr. Archives, ELCA Region 9, Columbia, S.C.

Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches, Christ Seminary-Seminex, and Evangelical Lutherans in Mission (ELiM)

Formed by members of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod as a reaction to disagreements with LCMS authorities, Evangelical Lutherans in Mission (ELiM) and Christ Seminary-Seminex were integral to the formation of the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches. The archives collects the official records of all three organizations and various records, publications and personal papers of individuals that relate to the controversy.

Personal Papers

For the ELCA and its predecessors, the archives will seek to include personal papers that complement the official records of the organizations. These papers are predominantly from persons who were active in churchwide ministries; served in positions in churchwide offices or agencies; were missionaries, and/or fit within the scope of a specialized collecting area.

The Helen M. Knobel Archives of Cooperative Lutheranism

Originally collected by the Lutheran Council in the U.S.A., the ELCA churchwide archives continues to serve several **inter-Lutheran agencies and organizations**, such as Lutheran World Relief and Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, as their official archives repository and will seek to collect records from other inter-Lutheran organizations that are national in scope.

Lutheran World Federation

Records of the Lutheran World Federation's U.S.A. National Committee, 1947-1987, Lutheran World Ministries are collected. The archives also contains some records of the Lutheran World Convention, a predecessor of the LWF. The archives collects certain major publications of the LWF, as well as materials related to American delegations to LWF assemblies and assembly materials, and some minutes of committees and groups collected by Americans participating in LWF-related activities. The LWF central archives is at their headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, and includes the archives of the LWF Regional Office in North America.

Global Missions

A collecting emphasis of the archives is the churchwide ministry for global mission. A fuller documentation of global missions is achieved by the addition of personal papers of missionaries, mission field records, and often copies of records from mission partner churches.

Lutheran Deaconess Movement in North America

The archives documents the history of the Lutheran Deaconess movement in North America and seeks records relating to any of the motherhouses and training programs founded by all of the ELCA predecessor church bodies, in addition to the ELCA Deaconess Community.

Congregational Histories and Records on Microfilm

Congregations of the ELCA are the owners of their records and have responsibility for collecting and preserving them. The ELCA archives does accept and welcome donations of congregational histories and bulletins from special events. The ELCA Archives serves congregations as a repository for microfilm or digital images of congregational records.

Monographs, Reference Library

The ELCA Archives maintains a non-circulating reference library. Books sought for this collection are historical works related to the history of North American Lutheranism or the history of the ELCA or its predecessor bodies. Selected publications from other Lutheran church organizations also may be included for reference purposes.

Lutheran Periodicals

In addition to the official church periodicals, periodicals published by independent Lutheran organizations, seminaries, synods, congregations and other groups are collected by the archives. For other titles, the decision to collect will depend upon the utility of the publication for reference purposes related to existing collections, its inclusion in a periodical index, or the availability of holdings in other libraries or archives.

Institutional Archives

The ELCA churchwide archives cooperates with ELCA colleges, universities, seminaries, hospitals, and other social service agencies, who maintain their own archives. Under normal circumstances, ELCA synodical or regional archives would be the primary location for depositing records of disbanding organizations.

Archives of ELCA Synods and Regional Centers for Mission

While the ELCA churchwide archives does not serve as the official repository for ELCA synods and regions, the ELCA Archives retains some documentation of ELCA constituent synods including:

1. Annual assembly minutes.
2. Synodical newsletters and *Lutheran* supplements.
3. Synod histories.
4. Positive, reference copies of microfilmed synod minutes or newsletters.
5. Minutes and newsletters of the regional centers for mission coordinating council meetings.

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