



Letter to the ELPNA Membership, Region 3  
From the Region 3 Board of Directors

December 2020

Dear ELPNA Region 3 Members,

Beginning a year ago (fall 2019) members of the Region 3 BOD have been wrestling with the question, **“Does an organization that has less than 150 members nationally need 2 boards?”** Currently, there is a national board made up of representatives from the 9 ELCA regions and an executive board. And there is a board in Region 3 made up of 9 board members.

National Board

- Executive team of chair, vice-chair, secretary, and treasurer
- Set of Bylaws - Incorporated
- Representatives from the nine regions called Regional Directors
- Committees work on goals that were set at a national retreat in November 2019
- National board manages the funds for the other 8 regions (total of about \$8000)
- National board gives out grants in all/any regions
- National board manages the membership and communications (website, newsletters, Facebook, Constant Contact)
- National board began providing live online education in November 2020 to all national members
- National board has established and maintains a relationship with the national ELCA

Region 3 Board

- Executive team of chair, vice-chair, secretary, and treasurer (manages our funds of about \$8000)

- Set of bylaws ( must follow the national bylaws), incorporated through the national organization
- Board members are recruited from the general membership – current membership is 55 members. Board size has decreased from 15 in 2017 to 9 members in 2020.
- Current committees include
  - Communications
  - Membership
  - Bylaws
  - Outreach & Mission (grants)
  - Programs/Education
  - Marketing/Promotion (outreach to synods and other ELCA groups)

Over the past 5 – 10 years, it has been increasingly difficult to recruit and retain board members at the region 3 level. I don't believe that this signals a lack of engagement, but instead a shifting sense of how we are willing and able to provide volunteer time and leadership outside of our own families and communities. We began to wonder if we were using up our human resources (your time and expertise) to “do the work of a board” rather than using our human resources to “do the work of the organization”. If we didn't have board meetings at the region 3 level, would we have more time and energy for giving grants and developing mentoring relationships to go along with those? Would we have more time to develop deeply meaningful education events and retreats? Would we have more time to reach out to the synods in our regions and establish some cooperative working models?

So with these questions in mind, we have been talking, wondering and exploring since early in 2020 (please see the BOD minutes on the website from March, May, and July)

Then in late October, we called an all member meeting to discuss these changes. We are extremely grateful for all of you who took the time to offer your input that day. This is what we think we heard you saying:

- Geographical barriers gone now because of Covid and the use of zoom
- Lydia reminding us to focus on mind body and spirit
- Annette reminding us to nourish and take care of ourselves as well as our people. Also she emphasized educational, support and net working
- Three priorities mentioned several times education, impact on the greater church and grants and can this be done without a board
- Discussion of possible delay right now because of Covid and all of the concerns that brings forward
- Originally region 3 was a safety net for National but now not needed for that purpose
- Region 3 leadership needed at national board now
- One person recommended a pilot process as a chapter first before actual dissolution
- Asking for volunteers for National board

- Members appreciate the education and CEUs provided by Region 3
- Members appreciate the newsletters (email) and website provided by Region3
- Members appreciate the networking and fellowship that we have at our educational and retreat events.

With this input in mind the Region 3 Board of Directors met at our regular meeting time on November 16<sup>th</sup> and we are ready to vote on the motion:

- Be it so moved that the Region 3 Board of the ELPNA will cease to exist after 12/31/2020.
- It will be replaced with 3 Regional Directors, who will represent region 3 on the national board and serve the needs of the region 3 members through quarterly all member virtual meetings. (Please see the Regional Director Job Description for more details. It is attached).

This vote will happen on December 21, 2020 at 1:00 PM zoom meeting. You have until then to contact me or any other Region 3 Board member with your questions or concerns.

Serving Christ with you,

Becky Hulden, FCN, BSN