

**CONSTITUTION, BYLAWS,
AND CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS
of the
MINNEAPOLIS AREA SYNOD
of the
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**

**as adopted by the Constituting Convention
of the
West Metropolitan Minnesota Synod
of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
June 6, 1987
as amended by the
1989 Minneapolis Area Synod Assembly
June 10, 1989
and
1990 Minneapolis Area Synod Assembly
June 16, 1990
and
1992 Minneapolis Area Synod Assembly
June 5, 1992
and
1993 Churchwide Assembly of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
August 1993
and
1994 Minneapolis Area Synod Assembly
June 3, 1994
and
1995 Minneapolis Area Synod Assembly
June 2, 1995
and
1995 Churchwide Assembly of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
August 31, 1995
and
1997 Minneapolis Area Synod Assembly
June 6, 1997
and
1997 Churchwide Assembly of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
August 20, 1997
and
1998 Minneapolis Area Synod Assembly
April 25, 1998
and
1999 Minneapolis Area Synod Assembly
June 5, 1999
and
1999 Churchwide Assembly of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
August 22, 1999**

and

**2000 Minneapolis Area Synod Assembly
May 20, 2000**

and

**1999 Churchwide Assembly of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
effective January 1, 2001**

and

**2001 Minneapolis Area Synod Assembly
effective May 31, 2001**

and

**2001 Churchwide Assembly of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
September 5, 2001**

and

**2002 Minneapolis Area Synod Assembly
effective June 6, 2002**

and

**2003 Churchwide Assembly of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
effective September 2, 2003**

and

**2003 Minneapolis Area Synod Assembly
effective February 24, 2004**

and

**2006 Minneapolis Area Synod Assembly
effective April 29, 2006**

and

**2007 Churchwide Assembly of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
effective August 11, 2007**

and

**2009 Churchwide Assembly of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
effective August 23, 2009**

and

**2011 Minneapolis Area Synod Assembly
effective May 7, 2011**

and

**2011 Churchwide Assembly of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
effective September 16, 2011**

and

**2012 Minneapolis Area Synod Assembly
effective February 18, 2012**

and

**2013 Minneapolis Area Synod Assembly
effective June 1, 2013**

and

2013 Churchwide Assembly of the

**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
effective August 17, 2013
and
2014 Minneapolis Area Synod Assembly
effective May 3, 2014
and**

**2015 Minneapolis Area Synod Assembly
effective May 16, 2015
and
Synod Council of Minneapolis Area Synod
effective June 11, 2015
and
Synod Council of Minneapolis Area Synod
effective June 7, 2016
and
2016 Churchwide Assembly of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
effective August 13, 2016
and
Synod Council of Minneapolis Area Synod
effective March 23, 2017
and
2017 Minneapolis Area Synod Assembly
effective May 6, 2017
and
Synod Council of Minneapolis Area Synod
effective January 16, 2018
and
Synod Council of Minneapolis Area Synod
effective March 20, 2018
and
2018 Minneapolis Area Synod Assembly
effective May 5, 2018
and
Synod Council of Minneapolis Area Synod
effective September 20, 2018
and
Synod Council of Minneapolis Area Synod
effective June 15, 2023
and
Synod Council of Minneapolis Area Synod
effective January 11, 2024**

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CODIFICATION EXPLANATION

The provisions of the Constitution, the Bylaws, and the Continuing Resolutions which pertain to the same matter have been placed together. This arrangement requires that the three types of material be identified by means other than physical separation.

The three types of provisions are identified by the following devices:

- a. All constitutional provisions are in bold face type.
- b. All bylaw provisions are printed in light face type.
- c. All continuing resolutions are printed in italic type.
- d. A numerical codification indicates general subject, constitutional provisions, bylaw provisions, and continuing resolutions.

A dagger (†) in front of provision numbers denotes that the provision is required by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Chapter 1.

NAME AND INCORPORATION

- † S1.01. The name of this synod, as determined by the Churchwide Assembly, shall be Minneapolis Area Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.**
- † S1.02. For the purposes of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws, the Minneapolis Area Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is hereafter designated as "this synod" or "the synod."**
- † S1.11. This synod shall be incorporated. Amendments to the Articles of Incorporation of this synod shall be submitted to the Church Council for ratification before filing.**
- † S1.21. The seal of this synod is a cross with three united flames emanating from the base of the cross and three entwined circles beside the cross. The name of this synod and the year of its constituting convention form the circular outer edge of the seal.**

Chapter 2.
STATUS

- † S2.01. **This synod possesses the powers conferred upon it, and accepts the duties and responsibilities assigned to it, in the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, which are recognized as having governing force in the life of this synod.**
- † S2.02. **The name Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA or “this church”) as used herein refers in general references to this whole church, including its three expressions – congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization. The name Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is also the name of the corporation of the churchwide organization to which specific references may be made herein.**
- †S2.03. **No provision of this constitution shall be inconsistent with the constitution and bylaws of this church.**

Chapter 3.
TERRITORY

- † S3.01. **The territory of this synod, as determined by the Churchwide Assembly, shall be: the counties of Anoka, Carver, Hennepin, Isanti, Scott, Sherburne (part), Wright (part), in the state of Minnesota.**
- † S3.02. **"Determined by the Churchwide Assembly," as stipulated by †S3.01. is understood to include the reported changes in synod relationship made by any congregation in a border area agreed under ELCA bylaws 10.01.01. and 10.02.02.**

Chapter 4.
CONFESSION OF FAITH

- † S4.01. **This synod confesses the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.**
- † S4.02. **This synod confesses Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and the Gospel as the power of God for the salvation of all who believe.**
- a. **Jesus Christ is the Word of God incarnate, through whom everything was made and through whose life, death, and resurrection God fashions a new creation.**
 - b. **The proclamation of God's message to us as both Law and Gospel is the Word of God, revealing judgment and mercy through word and deed, beginning with the Word in creation, continuing in the history of Israel, and centering in all its fullness in the person and work of Jesus Christ.**
 - c. **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. Through them God's Spirit speaks to us to create and sustain Christian faith and fellowship for service in the world.**
- † S4.03. **This synod accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life.**
- † S4.04. **This synod accepts the Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds as true declarations of the faith of this synod.**
- † S4.05. **This synod accepts the Unaltered Augsburg Confession as a true witness to the Gospel, acknowledging as one with it in faith and doctrine all churches that likewise accept the teachings of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession.**
- † S4.06. **This synod accepts the other confessional writings in the Book of Concord, namely, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles and the Treatise, the Small Catechism, the Large Catechism, and the Formula of Concord, as further valid interpretations of the faith of the Church.**
- † S4.07. **This synod confesses the Gospel, recorded in the Holy Scriptures and confessed in the ecumenical creeds and Lutheran confessional writings, as the power of God to create and sustain the Church for God's mission in the world.**

Chapter 5.

NATURE OF THE CHURCH

- † S5.01. All power in the Church belongs to our Lord Jesus Christ, its head. All actions of this synod are to be carried out under his rule and authority.**
- † S5.02. This church confesses the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church and is resolved to serve Christian Unity throughout the world.**
- † S5.03. The Church exists both as an inclusive fellowship and as local congregations gathered for worship and Christian service. Congregations find their fulfillment in the universal community of the Church, and the universal Church exists in and through congregations. This church, therefore, derives its character and powers both from the sanction and representation of its congregations and from its inherent nature as an expression of the broader fellowship of the faithful. In length, it acknowledges itself to be in the historic continuity of the communion of saints; in breadth, it expresses the fellowship of believers and congregations in our day.**
- † S5.04. This church, inspired and led by the Holy Spirit, participates in the Lutheran World Federation as a global communion of churches, engaging in faithful witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ and in service for the sake of God's mission in the world.**

Chapter 6.
STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

- † S6.01. **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.**
- † S6.02. **To participate in God's mission, this synod as a part of the Church shall:**
- a. Proclaim God's saving Gospel of justification by grace for Christ's sake through faith alone, according to the apostolic witness in the Holy Scripture, preserving and transmitting the Gospel faithfully to future generations.**
 - b. Carry out Christ's Great Commission by reaching out to all people to bring them to faith in Christ and by doing all ministry with a global awareness consistent with the understanding of God as Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier of all.**
 - c. Serve in response to God's love to meet human needs, caring for the sick and the aged, advocating dignity, justice, and equity for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations, and standing in solidarity with the poor and oppressed and committing itself to their needs.**
 - d. Worship God in proclamation of the Word and administration of the sacraments and through lives of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, witness, and service.**
 - e. Nurture its members in the Word of God so as to grow in faith and hope and love, to see daily life as the primary setting for the exercise of their Christian calling, and to use the gifts of the Spirit for their life together and for their calling in the world.**
 - f. Manifest the unity given to the people of God by living together in the love of Christ and by joining with other Christians in prayer and action to express and preserve the unity which the Spirit gives.**
- †S6.03. **Each synod, in partnership with the churchwide organization, shall bear primary responsibility for the oversight of the life and mission of this church in its territory. In fulfillment of this role and consistent with policies and procedures of this church, the synod shall:**
- a. Provide for pastoral care of congregations and rostered ministers in the synod;**
 - b. Plan for, facilitate, and nurture the mission of this church**

through congregations;

- c. Strengthen interdependent relationships among congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization, and foster relationships with agencies and institutions affiliated with or related to this church as well as ecumenical partners.**
- d. Interpret the work of this church to congregations and to the public on the territory of the synod.**

†S6.03.01. In providing for pastoral care of congregations and rostered ministers in the synod, the responsibilities of the synod include the following:

- a. providing for pastoral care of congregations, ministers of Word and Sacrament and ministers of Word and Service in the synod, including:
 - 1) approving candidates for rostered ministry in cooperation with the appropriate seminaries of this church, which may be done through multi-synod committees;
 - 2) authorizing ordinations and ordaining rostered ministers on behalf of this church;
 - 3) consulting in the call process for rostered ministers.
- b. providing for leadership recruitment, preparation, and support in accordance with churchwide standards and policies, including:
 - 1) nurturing and supporting congregations and lay leaders;
 - 2) seeking and recruiting qualified candidates for the rostered ministries of this church;
 - 3) making provision for pastoral care, call review, and guidance;
 - 4) encouraging and supporting persons on the rosters of this church in stewardship of their abilities, care of self, and pursuit of continuing education to undergird their effectiveness of service; and
 - 5) supporting recruitment of leaders for this church's colleges, universities, seminaries, and social ministry organizations.
- c. providing for discipline of congregations, ministers of Word and Sacrament, ministers of Word and Service; as well as for termination of call, appointment, adjudication, and appeals consistent with Chapter 20 of this church's constitution.
- d. providing for archives in conjunction with other synods.

†S6.03.02. In planning for, facilitating, and nurturing the mission of this church through congregations, the responsibilities of the synod include the following:

- a. developing of new ministries, redevelopment of existing ministries, and support and assistance in the conclusion, if necessary, of a particular ministry;
- b. leading and encouraging of congregations in their evangelism efforts;
- c. assisting members of its congregations in carrying out their ministries in the world;

- d. encouraging congregations to respond to human need, work for justice and peace, care for the sick and the suffering, and participate responsibly in society;
 - e. providing resources for congregational life;
 - f. grouping congregations in conferences, clusters, coalitions, or other area subdivisions for mission purposes.
- †S6.03.03. In strengthening interdependent relationships among congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization, and in fostering relationships with agencies and institutions affiliated with or related to this church as well as with ecumenical partners, the responsibilities of the synod include the following:
- a. promoting interdependent relationships among congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization, and entering into partnership with other synods in the region;
 - b. fostering organizations for youth, women, and men, and organizations for language or ethnic communities;
 - c. developing relationships with social ministry organizations and ministries, participating in their mission planning, and providing partnership funding;
 - d. supporting relationships with and providing partnership funding on behalf of colleges, universities, and campus ministries;
 - e. maintaining relationships with and providing partnership funding on behalf of seminaries and continuing education centers;
 - f. fostering supporting relationships with camps and other outdoor ministries;
 - g. fostering supporting relationships with preschools, elementary schools, and secondary schools operated by congregations of the synod;
 - h. fostering relationships with ecumenical and global partners;
 - i. cooperating with other synods and the churchwide organization in creating, using, and supporting regions to carry out those functions of the synod which can best be done cooperatively with other synods and the churchwide organization.
- †S6.03.04. In interpreting the work of this church on the territory of the synod, the responsibilities of the synod include the following:
- a. encouraging financial support for the work of this church by individuals and congregations;
 - b. participating in churchwide programs;
 - c. interpreting social statements in a manner consistent with the interpretation given by the churchwide unit or office which assisted in the development of the statement, and suggestion of social study issues;
 - d. providing ecumenical guidance and encouragement.
- S6.03.05. This synod acknowledges its responsibility to provide spiritual guidance and leadership resources to Augsburg College. It is further acknowledged

that this synod is responsible for electing delegates to the Governing Membership of Augsburg College and, in partnership with the ELCA, providing financial support to church higher education of the ELCA.

The Synod Assembly shall elect 8 persons to the Governing Membership. Election shall be for a two-year term. No delegate may serve more than two consecutive terms.

- S6.03.06. This synod acknowledges its responsibility to provide spiritual guidance and leadership resource to Lutheran Social Service. It is further acknowledged that this synod is responsible for electing persons to the Board of Directors of Lutheran Social Service.

The Synod Council shall elect two persons to the Board of Directors of Lutheran Social Service. The terms shall be three years. No one shall serve more than two consecutive terms.

- S6.03.07. This synod acknowledges its responsibility to provide spiritual guidance and leadership resource to Luther Seminary. It is further acknowledged that this synod is responsible for electing two persons to the Board of Luther Seminary and, in partnership with the ELCA, providing financial support to theological education of the ELCA. This synod shall elect two persons to the Board of Luther Seminary. The term shall be three years. No one shall serve more than two consecutive terms.

- S6.03.08. This synod acknowledges its responsibility to provide spiritual guidance and leadership resource to Lutheran Campus Ministry. It is further acknowledged that this synod is responsible for electing persons to the Board of Lutheran Campus Ministry and, in partnership with the ELCA, providing financial support to Lutheran Campus Ministry.

The Synod Assembly shall elect two persons to the Board of Lutheran Campus Ministry. The term shall be three years. No one shall serve more than two consecutive terms.

- S6.03.09. This synod acknowledges its responsibility to provide spiritual guidance and leadership resource to the Minnesota Council of Churches. It is further acknowledged that it is the responsibility of this synod to appoint representatives to the Board of Minnesota Council of Churches.

- † S6.04. **Except as otherwise provided in this constitution and bylaws, the Synod Council shall establish processes that will ensure that at least 60 percent of the members of the synod assemblies, councils, committees, boards, and other organizational units shall be laypersons; and that, as nearly as possible, at least 45 percent of the lay members of assemblies, councils, committees, boards, or other organizational units shall be women and, as nearly as possible, at least**

45 percent shall be men; and that, where possible, the representation of rostered ministers shall include both men and women. This synod shall establish processes that will enable it to reach a minimum goal that 10 percent of its assemblies, councils, committees, boards, or other organizational units be persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English.

- † S6.04.01. It is the goal of this synod that at least 10 percent of the voting members of the Synod Assembly, Synod Council, committees, and organizational units of this synod be youth and young adults. The Synod Council shall establish a plan for implementing this goal. For purposes of the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this synod, the term "youth" means a voting member of a congregation who has not reached the age of 18 at the time of election or appointment for service. The term "young adult" means a voting member of a congregation between the ages of 18 and 30 at the time of election or appointment for service.
- † S6.05. **Each assembly, council, committee, board, commission, task force, or other body of this synod or any synod units shall be conclusively presumed to have been properly constituted, and neither the method of selection nor the composition of any such assembly, council, committee, board, commission, task force, or other body may be challenged in a court of law by any person or be used as the basis of a challenge in a court of law to the validity or effect of any action taken or authorized by any such assembly, council, committee, board, commission, task force, or other body.**
- †S6.06. **References herein to the nature of the relationship between the three expressions of this church – congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization – as being interdependent or as being in a partnership relationship describe the mutual responsibility of these expressions in God’s mission and the fulfillment of the purposes of this church as described in this chapter, and do not imply or describe the creation of partnerships, co-ventures, agencies, or other legal relationships recognized in civil law.**

Chapter 7.
SYNOD ASSEMBLY

- † S7.01. **This synod shall have a Synod Assembly, which shall be its highest legislative authority. The powers of the Synod Assembly are limited only by the provisions in the Articles of Incorporation, this constitution and bylaws, the assembly's own resolutions, and the constitutions and bylaws of this church.**
- † S7.11. **A regular meeting of the Synod Assembly shall be held at least triennially.**
- S7.11.01 **The time and place of the Minneapolis Area Synod Assembly shall be determined by the Synod Council. The time and place for the next regular assembly normally shall be announced six months prior to the assembly.**
- S7.12. **Special meetings of the Synod Assembly may be called by the bishop with the consent of the Synod Council, and shall be called by the bishop at the request of one-fifth of the voting members of the Synod Assembly.**
- a. **The notice of each special meeting shall define the purpose for which it is to be held. The scope of actions to be taken at such a special meeting shall be limited to the subject matter(s) described in the notice.**
- b. **If the special meeting of the Synod Assembly is required for the purpose of electing a successor bishop because of death, resignation, or inability to serve, the special meeting shall be called by the Synod Council after consultation with the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.**
- S7.13. **Notice of the time and place of all meetings of the Synod Assembly shall be given by the secretary of this synod.**
- S7.14. **One-half of the members of the Synod Assembly shall constitute a quorum.**
- † S7.21. **The membership of the Synod Assembly, of which at least 60% of the voting membership shall be composed of laypersons, shall be constituted as follows:**
- a. **All rostered ministers under call on the roster of this synod shall be voting members of the Synod Assembly.**
- b. **A minimum of one lay member elected by each congregation**

with fewer than 175 baptized members and a minimum of two lay members elected by each congregation with 175 or more baptized members related to this synod, normally one of whom shall be male and one of whom shall be female, shall be voting members. The Synod Council shall establish a formula to provide additional lay representation from congregations on the basis of the number of baptized members in the congregation. The Synod Council shall seek to ensure that, as nearly as possible, at least 45 percent of the lay members of the assembly shall be women and, as nearly as possible, at least 45 percent shall be men. Additional members from each congregation normally shall be equally divided between male and female.

c. Voting membership shall include the officers of this synod.

S7.21.A14 *From 175 to 749 baptized members, 2 voting members; from 750 to 2249 baptized members, one voting member for each additional 500 members; from 2250 baptized members up, one voting member for each additional 1000 members.*

S7.21.01. Voting members shall begin serving with the opening of a regular Synod Assembly and shall continue serving until the opening of the next regular Synod Assembly.

S7.21.02. Each congregation of the Minneapolis Area Synod is entitled to add one youth voting member (persons age 15-18 years of age) in addition to its allotted voting members to the Minneapolis Area Synod Assembly.

†S7.21.03. If a special Synod Assembly is called and voting members at the previous assembly are unable to serve as voting members, where permitted by state law, the congregation through the Congregation Council may elect new members who shall continue to serve until the next regular Synod Assembly.

S7.22. This synod may establish processes that permit retired rostered ministers, or those designated as disabled, or on leave from call, on the roster of the synod to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with †S7.21.c. If the synod does not establish processes to permit the rostered ministers specified above to serve as voting members, they shall have voice but not vote in the meetings of the Synod Assembly.

S7.23. The presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and such other official representatives of this church as may be designated from time to time by the Church Council shall have voice but not vote in the meetings of the Synod Assembly. Like privileges

shall be accorded to those additional persons whom the Synod Assembly or the Synod Council shall from time to time designate.

- S7.23.01 Retired Ministers of Word and Sacrament on the roster of this synod shall, in caucus, elect 10% of their number to be voting members of the Synod Assembly prior to the first business session of each regular and special meeting of the Synod Assembly; all others shall be advisory members with voice but not vote.
- S7.23.02 Retired Ministers of Word and Service on the roster of this synod shall, in caucus, elect 10% of their number to be voting members of the Synod Assembly prior to the first business session of each regular and special meeting of the Synod Assembly; all others shall be advisory members with voice but not vote.
- S7.24. Ministers under call on the rosters of this synod shall remain as members of the Synod Assembly so long as they remain under call and so long as their names appear on the rosters of this synod. Lay members of the Synod Assembly representing congregations shall continue as such until replaced by the election of new members or until they have been disqualified by termination of membership. Normally, congregations will hold elections prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.**
- † S7.25. **Except as otherwise provided in this constitution or in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, each voting member of the Synod Assembly shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod.**
- S7.26. **This synod may establish processes through the Synod Council that permit representatives of congregations under development and authorized worshipping communities of the synod, which have been authorized under ELCA bylaw 10.02.03., to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with †S7.21.**
- S7.26.A18 *To authorize representatives of congregations under development and authorized worshipping communities of the synod as voting members of Synod Assembly.*
- S7.27. **This synod may establish processes through the Synod Council to grant a minister of Word and Sacrament from a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and establish by the Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

the privilege of both voice and vote in the Synod Assembly during the period of that minister's service in a congregation of this church.

S7.28. Duly elected voting members of the Synod Council who are not otherwise voting members of the Synod Assembly under †S7.21. shall be granted the privilege of both voice and vote as members of the Synod Assembly.

† S7.31. Proxy and absentee voting shall not be permitted in the transaction of any business of this synod.

S7.32. Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedures of the Synod Assembly, unless otherwise ordered by the assembly.

S7.33. "Ex officio" as used herein means membership with full rights of voice and vote unless otherwise expressly limited.

Chapter 8.
OFFICERS

†S8.01. The officers of this synod shall be a bishop, a vice president, a secretary, and a treasurer.

S8.10. Bishop

† S8.11. The bishop shall be elected by the Synod Assembly. The bishop shall be a minister of Word and Sacrament of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

† S8.12. As this synod's pastor, the bishop shall:

- a. Preach, teach, and administer the sacraments in accord with the Confession of Faith of this church.
- b. Have primary responsibility for the ministry of Word and Sacrament in this synod and its congregations, providing pastoral care and leadership for this synod, its congregations, its ministers of Word and Sacrament, and its ministers of Word and Service.
- c. Exercise solely this church's power to ordain (or provide for the ordination by another synod bishop of) approved candidates who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested letter of call for the office of ministry of Word and Sacrament (and as provided in the bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.)
- d. Consecrate (or provide for the consecration of) approved candidates who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested letter of call for service as ministers of Word and Service.
- e. Attest letters of call for persons called to serve congregations in the synod, letters of call for persons called by the Synod Council, and letters of call for persons on the roster of this synod called by the Church Council.
- f. Install (or provide for the installation of) rostered ministers whose calls the bishop has attested.
- g. Exercise leadership in the mission of this church and in so doing:
 - 1) Interpret and advocate the mission and theology of the whole church;
 - 2) Lead in fostering support for and commitment to the mission of this church within this synod;
 - 3) Coordinate the use of the resources available to this synod as it seeks to promote the health of this church's life and witness in the areas served by this synod;

- 4) **Submit a report to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly concerning the synod's life and work; and**
 - 5) **Advise and counsel this synod's related institutions and organizations.**
- h. Practice leadership in strengthening the unity of the Church and in so doing:**
- 1) **Exercise oversight of the preaching, teaching, and administration of the sacraments within this synod in accord with the Confession of Faith of this church;**
 - 2) **Be responsible for administering the constitutionally established processes for the resolution of controversies and for the discipline of rostered ministers, and congregations of this synod;**
 - 3) **Be the chief ecumenical officer of this synod;**
 - 4) **Consult regularly with other synod bishops and the Conference of Bishops;**
 - 5) **Foster awareness of other churches throughout the Lutheran world communion and, where appropriate, engage in contact with leaders of those churches;**
 - 6) **Cultivate communion in faith and mission with appropriate Christian judicatory leaders functioning within the territory of this synod; and**
 - 7) **Be ex officio a member of the Churchwide Assembly.**
- i. Oversee and administer the work of this synod and in so doing:**
- 1) **Serve as the president of the synod corporation and be the chief executive and administrative officer of this synod, who is authorized and empowered, in the name of this synod, to sign deeds or other instruments and to affix the seal of this synod;**
 - 2) **Preside at all meetings of the Synod Assembly and provide for the preparation of the agenda for the Synod Assembly, Synod Council, and the council's Executive Committee;**
 - 3) **Ensure that the constitution and bylaws of the synod and of the churchwide organization are duly observed within this synod, and that the actions of the synod in conformity therewith are carried into effect;**
 - 4) **Direct and guide the work of the other officers;**
 - 5) **Exercise supervision over the work of all synod staff members;**
 - 6) **Appoint all committees for which provision is not otherwise made;**
 - 7) **Be a member of all committees and any other organizational units of the synod, except as otherwise provided in this constitution;**

- 8) Provide for preparation and maintenance of synod rosters containing the names and addresses of all rostered ministers of this synod and a record of the calls under which they are serving or the date on which they become retired or disabled.
- 9) Annually bring to the attention of the Synod Council the names of all rostered ministers on leave from call or engaged in approved graduate study in conformity with the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this church and pursuant to prior action of this synod through the Synod Council;
- 10) Provide for prompt reporting to the secretary of this church of:
 - a) additions to and subtractions from the rosters of this synod and the register of congregations;
 - b) the issuance of certificates of transfer for rostered persons in good standing who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested, regular letter of call under the jurisdiction of another synod; and
 - c) the entrance of the names of such persons for whom proper certificates of transfer have been received;
- 11) Provide for preparation and maintenance of a register of the congregations of this synod and the names of the laypersons who have been elected to represent them; and
- 12) Appoint a statistician of the synod, who shall secure the reports of the congregations and make the reports available to the secretary of this church for collation, analysis, and distribution of the statistical summaries to this synod and the other synods of this church.

†S8.13. The synod bishop may appoint an attorney, admitted to the bar within the territory of the synod or the state where the synod is located, to be Synod Attorney. The appointment must be approved by the Synod Council and reported to the Synod Assembly and to the ELCA secretary. The appointment continues until resignation or until a successor is appointed. The Synod Attorney provides legal advice and counsel to the synod officers and the Synod Council. The Synod Attorney is expected to be familiar with the governing documents and policies of the synod and, as necessary, to attend meetings of the Synod Council. The Synod Attorney serves without salary but may be retained and compensated for specific legal services requested by the synod.

S8.14. The bishop may have such assistants as this synod shall from time to time authorize.

† S8.15. The presiding bishop of this church, or the appointee of the presiding bishop, shall install into office, in accord with the policy and approved rite of this church, each newly elected synod bishop.

†S8.16. Conflicts of Interest

†S8.16.01. The following procedures shall govern matters of potential conflicts of interest for synod bishops:

- a. Whenever a synod bishop determines that a matter of the kind described in †S8.16.01.b. may require the bishop's determination or action with respect to a related individual as defined in †S8.16.01.c., the synod bishop shall withdraw from personal involvement in such matter and shall so notify the presiding bishop. The presiding bishop shall then appoint another synod bishop from the same region to handle the matter to conclusion. In dealing with such matter, the appointed bishop shall exercise all of the functions and authority to the same extent as if the appointed bishop were the elected bishop of the withdrawing bishop's synod.
- b. Matters include any proceedings under Chapter 20, proceedings under provisions 7.46. and 7.75 of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* (†S14.18. and †S14.43.), candidacy, reinstatement, and similar matters where determinations or actions by the synod bishop could change, limit, restrict, approve, authorize, or deny the related individual's ministry on one of the official rosters of this church.
- c. A related individual is one who, with respect to the synod bishop, is a spouse, parent, son, daughter, sibling, uncle, aunt, niece, nephew, grandparent, grandchild, including corresponding members of blended families and in-laws (parent, son, daughter, or sibling of a spouse, spouse of a sibling, or the parent or sibling of the spouse of a sibling).

S8.20. Vice president

† S8.21. The vice president shall be elected by the Synod Assembly. The vice president shall be a layperson. The vice president shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod. The vice president shall not receive a salary for the performance of the duties of the office.

S8.22. The vice president shall chair the Synod Council.

S8.30. Secretary

†S8.31. The secretary shall be elected by the Synod Assembly. The secretary shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod. The

secretary may be either a layperson or minister of Word and Sacrament.

† S8.32. The secretary shall:

- a. Keep the minutes of all meetings of the Synod Assembly and Synod Council, be responsible for distribution of such minutes, and perform such other duties as this synod may from time to time direct.**
- b. Be authorized and empowered, in the name of this synod, to attest all instruments which require the same, and which are signed and sealed by the bishop.**
- c. In consultation with the bishop, classify and arrange all important papers and documents and deposit them in the archives of this synod.**
- d. Submit to the secretary of this church at least nine months before each regular Churchwide Assembly a certified list of the voting members elected by the Synod Assembly.**

S8.40. Treasurer

† S8.41. The treasurer may be elected by the Synod Assembly or may be appointed by the Synod Council. The treasurer shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod. The treasurer may be either a layperson or a minister of Word and Sacrament.

S8.42. The treasurer shall provide and be accountable for:

- a. Management of the monies and accounts of this synod, its deeds, mortgages, contracts, evidences of claims and revenues, and trust funds, holding the same at all times subject to the order of this synod.**
- b. Investment of funds upon the authorization of the Synod Council.**
- c. Receipt and acknowledgement of offerings, contributions, and bequests made to this synod, collecting interest and income from its invested funds, and paying regular appropriations and orders on the several accounts as approved and directed by the Synod Council. The treasurer shall transmit each month to the treasurer of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America the funds received by this synod for the general work of this church.**
- d. Maintenance of a regular account with each congregation of this synod and informing the congregation, at least quarterly, of the status of this account.**

- e. **Rendering at each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly a full, detailed, and duly audited report of receipts and disbursements in the several accounts of this synod for the preceding fiscal year, together with the tabulation, for record and publication in the minutes, of the contributions from the congregations.**
- f. **Obtaining a fidelity bond in the amount determined by the Synod Council for persons handling synod funds, which bond shall be in the custody of the secretary. The premium for the bond shall be paid by this synod. Fidelity coverage provided by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be deemed a fulfillment of this requirement.**

S8.50. General Provisions

† S8.51. The terms of office of the officers of this synod shall be:

- a. **The bishop of this synod shall be elected to a term of six years and may be reelected.**
- b. **The vice president and secretary of this synod shall be elected to a term of four years and may be reelected. The officer shall serve until a successor takes office.**
- c. **The treasurer of this synod shall be [elected] [appointed] to a term of four years and may be [reelected] [reappointed]. The treasurer shall serve until a successor takes office.**

S8.51.01. The bishop shall serve no more than two consecutive terms. No other officer shall serve more than two consecutive terms. Temporary interim service pursuant to †S8.54. or S8.55. shall not be counted toward these term limits.

†S8.52. The terms of the officers shall begin on the first day of the third month following election or, in special circumstances, at a time designated by the Synod Council.

†S8.53. Each officer shall be a voting member in a congregation of this synod, except that the bishop need not be a member of a congregation of this synod at the time of election.

† S8.54. Should the bishop die, resign, or be unable to serve, the vice president, after consultation with the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, shall convene the Synod Council to arrange for the appropriate care of the responsibilities of the bishop until an election of a new bishop can be held or, in the case of temporary disability, until the bishop is able to serve again. Such

arrangements may include the appointment by the Synod Council of an interim bishop, who during the vacancy or period of disability shall possess all of the powers and authority of a regularly elected bishop. The term of the successor bishop, elected by the next Synod Assembly or a special meeting of the Synod Assembly called for the purpose of election, shall be six years with the subsequent election to take place at the Synod Assembly closest to the expiration of such a term and with the starting date of a successor term to be governed by constitutional provision S8.52.

S8.55. Should the vice president, secretary, or treasurer die, resign, or be unable to serve, the bishop, with the approval of the Executive Committee of the Synod Council, shall arrange for the appropriate care of the responsibilities of the officer until an election of a new officer can be held or, in the case of temporary disability, until the officer is able to serve again. The term of the successor officer, elected by the next Synod Assembly, shall be four years.

† S8.56. The Executive Committee of the Synod Council shall determine whether an officer is unable to serve; the officer may appeal the decision of the Executive Committee by requesting a hearing before the Synod Council. A meeting to determine the ability of an officer to serve shall be called upon the request of at least three members of the Executive Committee and prior written notice of the meeting shall be given to the officer in question at least ten calendar days prior to the meeting.

† S8.57. The recall or dismissal of an officer and the vacating of office may be effected for willful disregard or violation of the constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this church; for such physical or mental disability as renders the officer incapable of performing the duties of office; or for such conduct as would subject the officer to disciplinary action as a rostered minister or as a member of a congregation of this church.

a. Proceedings for the recall or dismissal of a synod bishop shall be instituted by written petition by:

- 1)** the Synod Council on an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of its members present and voting;
- 2)** the Synod Assembly on an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of its members present and voting;
- 3)** at least 10 synod bishops; or
- 4)** the presiding bishop of this church.

b. Proceedings for the recall or dismissal of an officer of a synod, other than the synod bishop, shall be instituted by written petition by:

- 1)** the Synod Council on an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds

- of its members present and voting;
- 2) the Synod Assembly on an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of its members present and voting;
- 3) the synod bishop.
- c. The Petition shall be filed with the chair of the Committee on Appeals (in care of the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 8765 West Higgins Road, Chicago, Illinois, 60631) and shall set forth the specific charge or charges.
- d. Upon filing of a written petition, the Executive Committee of the Synod Council may temporarily suspend the officer from service in the synod without prejudice, but with continuation of compensation, including benefits, if the officer is a salaried employee of the synod.
- e. In the case of alleged physical or mental incapacity of an officer of the synod, the procedures outlined in † S8.56 shall be followed, and such officer shall comply with the decision of the Synod Council. If such officer fails or refuses to comply, the Synod Council may proceed to petition for recall or dismissal as follows:
 - 1) the Synod Council will submit a written report of their findings and the basis of their decision to the Committee on Appeals.
 - 2) the Committee on Appeals, exclusive of any members who are disqualified, shall review the findings and decision of the Synod Council and by an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of those present and voting may adopt the findings and grant the petition.
- f. If the synod officer is a minister of Word and Sacrament, grounds for recall or dismissal include those set forth in ELCA bylaw 20.21.01. and as defined under the process described in ELCA constitutional provisions 20.20. and 20.21. as grounds for discipline. If the officer is a minister of Word and Service, grounds for recall or dismissal include those set forth in ELCA bylaw 20.22.01. and as defined under the process described in ELCA constitutional provisions 20.20. and 20.21. as grounds for discipline.
- g. If the officer is a layperson, grounds for recall or dismissal include those set forth in ELCA bylaw 20.41.01. as grounds for discipline.
- h. If the case of alleged willful disregard of violation of the constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions or of alleged conduct as would subject the officer to disciplinary action, the following procedures shall apply:
 - 1) the petition shall be referred to the Committee on Appeals, which shall function as the discipline hearing committee that shall conduct a hearing in accordance with the rules provided for in ELCA bylaw 20.21.16. except to the extent that those rules are in conflict with the provisions of this bylaw; and
 - 2) the members of the Committee on Appeals, other than those

who are disqualified, may grant the petition by an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of those present and voting.

- i. Written notice of a decision by the Committee on Appeals that the charges have been sustained shall be given to the affected officer and to the Synod Council, and the office shall be vacated.**

† S8.58. If the bishop is to be temporarily absent from the synod for an extended period not to exceed 90 days, the bishop, after consultation with the presiding bishop and with the consent of the Synod Council, may appoint as acting bishop for such period an minister of Word and Sacrament of this church. Except as limited by action of the Synod Council, an acting bishop shall possess all of the powers and authority of a regularly elected bishop other than authority to ordain or to authorize the ordination of properly approved candidates for ordination.

Chapter 9.
NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

- † S9.01.** **The Synod Assembly shall elect such officers of this synod and such other persons as the constitution and bylaws may require, according to procedures set forth in the bylaws. The Synod Assembly shall elect members of the Churchwide Assembly in accordance with bylaw 12.41.11. of the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.**
- S9.02.** **In all elections by the Synod Assembly, other than for the bishop, a majority of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election.**
- E** **There shall be a Nominating Committee consisting of 10-15 members who shall be elected by each of the conferences to serve for each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly. Additional nominations may be made from the floor for all elections for which nominations are made by the Nominating Committee.**
- S9.03.01.** **The Nominating Committee shall consist of 10-15 members elected by the conferences of this synod for two-year terms. In the spirit of inclusivity and with attention to the principles stated in †S6.04 of this constitution, each conference shall elect one member to the Nominating Committee in alternate years.**
- S9.03.02.** **The Nominating Committee shall make nominations for elections by the Synod Assembly under †S9.01. In addition, the committee shall make nominations for elections by the Synod Council under †S10.02 and provide other resourcing recommendations and support requested by the Synod Council. The Nominating Committee shall perform its work in accordance with the principles and goals of inclusivity set out in †S6.04 of this constitution.**
- S9.04.** **The bishop shall be elected by the Synod Assembly by the following procedure:**
- a.** **There shall be a Bishop Election Committee consisting of seven members who are nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected by the Synod Council to oversee the election process outlined in the constitution and bylaws.**
- b.** **Nominations for bishop may be made as follows:**
- 1)** **Each Conference Assembly shall nominate up to three persons for Bishop. Those Conference Assemblies shall be held at least 60 days prior to the Synod Assembly.**

Each of the nominees shall be contacted by the Synod Vice-President to determine willingness to be a candidate for bishop. All persons responding affirmatively to be a candidate shall submit background information using a uniform format to the synod office at least 45 days prior to the Synod Assembly. The background information shall be sent to all voting members at least 30 days prior to the Synod Assembly.

- 2) There shall be a Nominating Ballot for nominations from the floor of the Synod Assembly. Each voting member of the Synod Assembly may nominate one person for bishop during the nomination process at the Synod Assembly by completing the Bishop Nominating Ballot Form provided by the Bishop Election Committee. The Nominating Ballot includes a space to nominate any ordained person in addition to all the names of persons nominated from the Conference Assemblies.
- 3) The names of persons nominated for bishop according to paragraphs 1) and 2) above, shall be announced to the Synod Assembly without indication of number of nominations.

c. The balloting shall be as follows:

- 1) First ballot. The first ballot shall be limited to the persons nominated according to paragraph b., above. Three-fourths of the votes cast shall be necessary for election on the first ballot.
- 2) Second ballot. The second ballot shall be limited to the seven persons (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of votes on the first ballot. Three-fourths of the votes cast shall be necessary for election on the second ballot.
- 3) Third ballot. The third ballot shall be limited to the five persons (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of votes on the second ballot. Two-thirds of the votes cast shall be necessary for election on the third ballot.
- 4) Fourth ballot. The fourth ballot shall be limited to the three persons (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of votes on the third ballot. Two-thirds of the votes cast shall be necessary for election on the fourth ballot.
- 5) Fifth and subsequent ballots. The fifth and subsequent ballots shall be limited to the two persons (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of votes on the fourth or previous ballot. A majority of the votes cast shall be necessary for election on the fifth or subsequent ballot.

- d. **During an election of a bishop, a nominee may withdraw his or her name from any ballot prior to the vote on that ballot. If a nominee withdraws from a ballot, the name of the person who received the greatest number of votes on the previous ballot without qualifying for the ballot will be added, so that the ballot contains the number of names specified in S9.04.c.**
- e. **During the balloting process, and according to a schedule outlined in the bylaws, printed information about candidates shall be made available to voting members and opportunity to address the Synod Assembly shall be offered to candidates for the office of bishop.**

S9.04.01. The vice-president of this synod, or a designee, shall preside over the election process at the Synod Assembly.

S9.04.02. The Bishop Election Committee shall be elected by the Synod Council at its first meeting following the Synod Assembly in the year preceding an election year or, in the event of an election to fill an un-expired term, as soon as the vacancy is known.

- a. The task of the committee shall be to oversee the entire nomination and election process. The committee shall work in cooperation with the vice-president and the Synod Assembly planning and election committees.

- 1) Prior to each conference assembly and the Synod Assembly, the committee shall:

- (a) prepare information explaining the nomination and election procedure to congregations and distribute the information, to each of the congregations within this synod; and
- (b) prepare information explaining the nomination and election procedure to voting members of each conference assembly and the Synod Assembly and distribute the information to each voting member.

This information shall be distributed at least ninety days before the Synod Assembly or, in the event of an election to fill an un-expired term, if there are fewer than ninety days to the assembly, as soon as possible after the vacancy is known.

- 2) During the Synod Assembly, the committee shall provide a Bishop Nomination Form to be used during the nomination process. In addition, the committee shall prepare and make available to each voting member, information about nominees and arrange opportunities for nominees to address

the Synod Assembly, as provided in S9.04.03.

- b. The committee shall have final authority for matters pertaining to the election outlined in S9.04. and S9.04.01. through .03.

S9.04.03. During the balloting process, printed information about candidates shall be made available to voting members and opportunities to address the Synod Assembly shall be offered to candidates, as follows:

- a. Prior to the second ballot, printed information about the seven candidates (plus ties) whose names will appear on the ballot shall be made available to voting members, and each of the candidates, or a speaker designated by an absent candidate, shall be invited to address the Synod Assembly.
 - 1) The Bishop Election Committee shall provide each nominee with a Nominee Information Form to be completed by the nominee and returned to the committee for copying and distribution as soon as possible after the first ballot.
 - 2) Each of the seven candidates (plus ties) shall be invited to address the entire Synod Assembly for five minutes. If a candidate is absent from the assembly, the candidate may address the assembly electronically, if possible. Alternatively, the candidate may designate someone to speak for the candidate.
- b. Prior to the third ballot, each of the five candidates (plus ties) whose names will appear on the ballot shall be invited to participate in a question-and-answer session in front of the entire Synod Assembly.
 - 1) The session shall be approximately one-and-a-half hours in duration.
 - 2) The session shall be conducted by an impartial moderator appointed by the Bishop Election Committee. The moderator shall ask questions of the candidates and monitor their responses in a fair manner. The moderator may be assisted by a person selected by the moderator or, if the moderator prefers, by the committee.
 - 3) Voting members may submit written questions to be asked by the moderator by sending them to the moderator.
 - 4) The moderator, assisted by the committee, shall select questions to be asked of the candidates from among questions submitted by voting members and questions they judge to be in the widest interest of the Synod Assembly.
 - 5) The candidates shall appear at the question-and-answer session together.
 - 6) At the conclusion of the session, each candidate shall be given opportunity to address the entire Synod Assembly

with a summary statement not to exceed five minutes.

7) If a candidate is absent from the Synod Assembly, the candidate may participate in the session electronically, if possible.

c. Prior to the fourth ballot, each of the three candidates (plus ties) whose names will appear on the ballot shall be invited to address the Synod Assembly for five minutes. If a candidate is absent from the assembly, the candidate may address the assembly electronically, if possible. Alternatively, the candidate may designate someone to speak for the candidate.

d. Prior to the fifth ballot and prior to each subsequent ballot, additional opportunity for candidates to address the Synod Assembly and/or for voting members to ask questions of the candidates may be provided at the discretion of the Bishop Election Committee in consultation with the Committee of Reference and Counsel.

S9.05. The Nominating Committee shall nominate at least one person for vice president; additional nominations may be made from the floor.

S9.06. The Synod Council shall nominate at least one person for secretary; additional nominations may be made from the floor.

S9.07. If the treasurer is elected, the Synod Council shall nominate at least one person for treasurer; additional nominations may be made from the floor.

S9.08. In all elections, except for the bishop, the names of the persons receiving the highest number of legal votes, but not elected by a majority of the legal votes cast on a preceding ballot, shall be entered on the next ballot to the number of two for each vacancy unfilled. On any ballot when only two names appear, a majority of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election.

S9.09. The result of each ballot in every election shall be announced in detail to the assembly.

†S9.10. When notified by the secretary of this church, on behalf of the Nominating Committee of the Churchwide Assembly, the Synod Assembly shall nominate two persons in the specified categories for possible election by the Churchwide Assembly to the Church Council.

†S9.12. Background checks and screening shall be required and completed for persons nominated as synod officers prior to their election, if possible, or as soon as practical after their election. The specific procedures and timing of background checks and screening shall be determined by the Synod Council.

Chapter 10

SYNOD COUNCIL

- † S10.01. **The Synod Council consisting of the four officers of this synod, 10 to 24 other members, and at least one youth and at least one young adult, shall be elected by the Synod Assembly.**
- a. **Each person elected to the Synod Council shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod, with the exception of ministers on a roster of this synod who reside outside the territory of this synod. The process for election and the term of office when not otherwise provided shall be specified in the bylaws. A member of the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, unless otherwise elected as a voting member of the Synod Council, may serve as an advisory member of the Synod Council with voice but not vote.**
 - b. **The term of office of members of the Synod Council, with the exception of the officers and the youth member, shall be three years.**
- S10.01.01. The Synod Council shall consist of the following:
- the four elected officers of this synod (bishop, vice president, secretary, treasurer);
 - nine to eleven persons, nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected at-large by the Synod Assembly as voting members of the Synod Council;
 - two youth elected by the Synod Assembly as voting members of the Synod Council.
- a. The youth members shall be 14-17 years of age or entering grade 10, 11, or 12 at the time of election.
 - b. Each youth member shall be elected to a two-year term. No youth member shall serve more than two consecutive terms.
 - c. It shall be encouraged that one youth member shall be elected at each Synod Assembly (staggered terms).
- S10.01.02 While complying with ELCA constitutional provision enumerated in the Minneapolis Area Synod Constitution S.06.04, the Nominating Committee should be mindful of diversity in the following ways when seeking nominees:
- a. To embrace the diverse gifts of the Synod with special attention to skills, talents, and professional diversity;
 - b. To have equitable representation between lay, lay-rostered, and rostered leaders;

- c. To consider congregational context (e.g., urban, rural, suburban, exurban), geographic diversity, congregational size, and congregational diversity (e.g., ethnic specific ministries, congregations in redevelopment, mission starts).

S10.01.03 The term of each member of the Synod Council shall begin at the close of the Assembly at which he or she is elected.

S10.01.04. No Synod Council member may serve more than two consecutive terms.

S10.01.05 No more than one Synod Council member may come from any single congregation. The congregation where the Bishop and other synod officers hold membership may have one other member.

S10.01.A14 Pending approval of the amendment to S10.01 by the 2014 Minneapolis Area Synod, this plan will be activated. Transition to this new size and makeup of the Synod Council will become effective as current members' terms expire. At the 2014 synod assembly, five members will be elected to the Synod Council, elected to two-year terms. At the 2015 assembly, six council members' terms end. Four people will be elected to three-year terms by the 2015 Synod Assembly. The Synod Council will be asked to extend the term of the three clergy elected during the 2014 Synod Assembly by one year. At the 2016 Synod Assembly, two council members' terms end, and four people will be elected to three-year terms. During the transition time, from 2014-16, the Synod Council may elect two to three members for one-year terms for purposes of representation, diversity, or expertise.

S10.01.A16 Voting members of Synodically Authorized Worshiping Communities and Congregations Under Development may be elected to Synod Council.

† S10.02. The Synod Council shall be the board of directors of this synod and shall serve as its interim legislative authority between meetings of the Synod Assembly. It may make decisions which are not in conflict with actions taken by the Synod Assembly or which are not precluded by provisions of this constitution or the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

S10.03. The functions of the Synod Council shall be to:

- a. Exercise trusteeship responsibilities on behalf of this synod.**
- b. Recommend program goals and budgets to the regular meetings of the Synod Assembly.**
- c. Carry out the resolutions of the Synod Assembly.**
- d. Provide for an annual review of the roster of the ministers of Word and Sacrament and the roster of ministers of Word and Service, receive and act upon appropriate recommendations**

regarding those persons whose status is subject to reconsideration and action under the constitution and bylaws of the ELCA, and make a report to the Synod Assembly of the Synod Council's actions in this regard.

- e. Issue letters of call to rostered ministers as authorized by Chapter 7 of the constitution and bylaws of the ELCA.
 - f. Fill vacancies until the next regular meeting of the Synod Assembly except as may otherwise be provided in the constitution or bylaws of this synod, and determine the fact of the incapacity of an officer of this synod.
 - g. Report its actions to the regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.
 - h. Perform such other functions as are set forth in the bylaws of this synod, or as may be delegated to it by the Synod Assembly.
 - i. Participate in moral, ethical, and theological discourse as part of the process of creating vision for the life of this synod.
 - j. Make provision for supervising and evaluating the work of the various activities performed by boards and committees within the synod structure.
 - k. Issue letters of call to authorized assistants to the bishop upon nomination of the bishop.
 - l. Establish procedures for the review and approval of all requests for and disbursements of churchwide funding.
- S10.04.** Any proposal to appropriate funds, whether by amendment to the budget or otherwise, which is presented to a meeting of the Synod Assembly without the approval of the Synod Council shall require a two-thirds vote for adoption.
- S10.05.** No elected member of the Synod Council shall receive compensation for such service.
- S10.06.** If a member of the Synod Council ceases to meet the requirements of the position to which she or he was elected, the office filled by such member shall at once become vacant.
- S10.07.** The composition of the Synod Council, the number of its members, and the manner of their selection, as well as the organization of the Synod Council, its additional duties and responsibilities, and the number of meetings to be held each year shall be as set forth in the bylaws.
- S10.07.01.** To the extent permitted by state law, meetings of the Synod Council and its committees may be held electronically or by telephone conference, and notice of all meetings may be provided electronically.
- S10.07.02.** There shall be Program Committees to help further the mission of this

synod.

- a.** Each program committee shall be approved by the Synod Council which shall appoint the original committee after which
- b.** Each program committee shall elect its own members to be approved by the Synod Council.
- c.** Each program committee shall be assigned a member of the Synod Council who will function as liaison.
- d.** Each program committee shall make an annual written report to the Synod Council.
- e.** Periodically the members of the Program Committees will meet with other synod leaders to work on the vision for the synod.

S10.07. A24 The Program Committees include the following:

- a. Mission Table*
- b. Racial Justice Organizing Team*
- c. EcoFaith Organizing Team*
- d. Hunger*
- e. Ministry Imagination Grant Committee*
- f. Children, Youth, and Family*

Chapter 11.

COMMITTEES

- † S11.01. **There shall be an Executive Committee, a Consultation Committee, a Committee on Discipline, a Mutual Ministry Committee, an Audit Committee, and such other committees as this synod may from time to time determine. The duties and functions of such committees, or any other organizational units created by this synod, and the composition and organizational structure of such units, shall be as set forth in this constitution or in the bylaws or continuing resolutions, and shall be subject to any applicable provisions or requirements of the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.**
- S11.01.01. The officers of this synod and three persons elected for staggered two-year terms by the Synod Council from its membership at its first meeting following the Synod Assembly shall constitute the Executive Committee of the Synod Council. This committee shall have the power and authority of the Synod Council between meetings of the council. Its activities shall be reported and reviewed at the succeeding meeting of the Synod Council.
- S11.01.02. The Candidacy Committee of this synod shall consist of 24 members, including 23 persons nominated by the Bishop and elected by the Executive Committee for a term of five years and one staff person assigned to the Committee by the Bishop with voice but not vote. No elected member shall serve more than two consecutive terms. The Candidacy Committee shall elect a member of the Committee to serve as chair for a term of three years. No chair may serve more than two consecutive terms. The Candidacy Committee shall elect a member of the Committee to serve as secretary for a term of three years. No secretary may serve more than two consecutive terms. The functions of the Candidacy Committee are set forth in the Candidacy Manual of the Division for Ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- † S11.02. **The Consultation Committee of this synod shall consist of at least six persons and not more than 12 persons, of whom half shall be rostered ministers and half shall be laypersons, who shall each be elected by the Synod Assembly for a term of six years without consecutive reelection. The functions of the Consultation Committee are set forth in Chapter 20 of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* and in Chapter 17 of this constitution. The size of the Consultation Committee, in accord with this provision, shall be defined in this synod's bylaws.**
- † S11.03. **The Committee on Discipline of this synod shall consist of twelve persons of whom six shall be rostered ministers and six shall be**

laypersons, who shall each be elected by the Synod Assembly for a term of six years without consecutive reelection.

- a. The functions of the Committee on Discipline of this synod are set forth in Chapter 20 of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.
- b. The Synod Council shall fill vacancies on the Committee on Discipline for any unexpired term.

† S11.04. The Mutual Ministry Committee shall be appointed by the Executive Committee of the Synod Council to provide support and counsel to the bishop.

†S11.06. The Audit Committee of this synod shall consist of three to six persons, none of whom are members of the synod staff. Up to half of the committee members may be Synod Council members. The Audit Committee members shall be elected by the Synod Council for a term of three years and be eligible for re-election to a second consecutive three-year term. The terms of the Audit Committee members shall be staggered. The Audit Committee shall be responsible for assisting the Synod Council in fulfilling its general oversight of the synod's accounting, financial reporting, internal control systems, and external audit processes as provided in †S15.31.

S11.10. General Provisions

†S11.11. This synod shall in its bylaws or by continuing resolution establish a process to ensure that the members of its committees and other organizational units will be persons possessing the necessary knowledge and competence to be effective members of such units, and to meet the requirements of †S6.04. With the exception of ministers on the rosters of this synod who reside outside the territory of this synod, each member of a committee of this synod, or any other organizational unit created by this synod, shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod.

Chapter 12.
CONFERENCES, CLUSTERS, COALITIONS, OR OTHER AREA
SUBDIVISIONS

† S12.01. This synod may establish conferences, clusters, coalitions, area subdivisions, and networks as appropriate within its territory and in collaboration with other synods and partners as specified in the bylaws and continuing resolutions. The purpose of such groupings shall be to foster interdependent relationships for missional purposes among congregations, synods, the churchwide organization, and other partners.

S12.01.01. There shall be geographic conferences with boundaries established by the Synod Council.

S12.01.02. There shall be a conference assembly which meets at least once a year at least 60 days prior to the Synod Assembly. Voting members to the conference assembly shall be all rostered leaders under call. In addition, each Congregation shall be entitled to the same number of voting members to the conference assembly as it has to the Synod Assembly. Whenever possible the same voting members will attend both assemblies. The selection of the voting members shall be made in accordance with the guidelines set forth in †S6.04.

The conference assembly shall be responsible for:

- a. The election of a dean
- b. The election of a synod nominating committee member and such other officers for the conference as needed;
- c. Acting on any matters placed before it by, a congregation, or a voting members;
- d. Preparation of voting members for participation in the Synod Assembly;
- e. Every three years nominate voting members for the ELCA Churchwide Assembly;
- f. Fostering interdependent relationships among the congregations, institutions within its boundaries, synod and churchwide units for the furtherment of mission and ministry

S12.01.03. There shall be a conference dean who shall function in such a manner as to stay in regular contact with rostered leaders within the conference. The dean shall be an ordained minister. The dean shall be elected by the Conference Assembly for a three-year term to begin at the close of the next Synod Assembly. No dean shall serve more than two consecutive terms. A dean may be appointed to represent specialized ministries (MCPCE).

The conference deans shall meet periodically with the bishop for the

purpose of discussing issues and needs of the church.

S12.01.04 There may be a conference chair, secretary, or whatever other officers the conference believes necessary.

S12.01.A14 Congregations organize themselves into conferences for 1) mutual support, 2) community engagement and 3) public voice of the Church. Mutual support may include but is not limited to: collaboration on ministries, sharing among leadership, and hosting staff or lay leader trainings together. Community engagement may include but is not limited to: organizing area-wide or demographic-specific efforts to minister in the larger community, contacting government officials, or advocacy on issues of concern in the community. Public voice of the Church may include but is not limited to: speaking with one voice to the media and in public forums on issues of common concern and responding to crises and issues of injustice on local or larger stages.

S12.01.B14 The default conference for individual congregations is geographic, with neighboring churches. Congregations may make individual decisions to join affinity clusters according to their size, context (i.e. urban, downtown, 1st, 2nd+ ring suburbs, rural) or another affinity (i.e. immigrant, ethnic-specific, Narrative Lectionary). Individual rostered leaders may form affinity clusters based on their work (campus ministry, chaplaincy, interim pastors) or other work in which they both support each other and hold each other accountable.

S12.01.C17 The conferences and their congregations shall be as follows:

ELCA - MINNEAPOLIS AREA SYNOD CONFERENCES

BLOOMINGTON CONFERENCE

*Christ the King Lutheran Church, Bloomington
Community of the Cross Lutheran Church, Bloomington
Grace Lutheran Church of Bloomington
Lutheran Church of the Atonement, Bloomington
Peace Evangelical Lutheran Church, Bloomington
St. Luke's Lutheran Church, Bloomington
St. Stephen Evangelical Lutheran Church, Bloomington
Transfiguration Lutheran Church, Bloomington*

CENTRAL CONFERENCE

*Augustana Lutheran Church of Minneapolis
Bread of Life Lutheran Church for the Deaf, Minneapolis
Calvary Evangelical Lutheran Church of Minneapolis
Central Lutheran Church, Minneapolis*

Grace University Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
Lake of the Isles Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
Messiah Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
Mount Olive Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
Norwegian Lutheran Memorial Church, Minneapolis
Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
Salem English Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
St. Paul's/San Pablo Evangelical Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
Trinity Lutheran Congregation, Minneapolis
University Lutheran Church of Hope, Minneapolis

CROSSTOWN CONFERENCE

Calvary Lutheran Church, Edina
Edina Community Lutheran Church, Edina
House of Prayer Lutheran Church, Richfield
Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, Minneapolis
Normandale Evangelical Lutheran Church, Edina
Oak Grove Lutheran Church, Richfield
Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church, Edina
Tapestry Richfield (New Start)
Woodlake Lutheran Church, Richfield

NORTH MINNEAPOLIS CONFERENCE

Christ the River of Life Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, Minneapolis
First Lutheran Church Columbia Heights
Gethsemane Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
Grace Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
Gustavus Adolphus Evangelical Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
Mount Carmel Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
Nativity Lutheran Church, St. Anthony
Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
St. Olaf Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
St. Timothy Lutheran Church, Columbia Heights

NORTHERN CONFERENCE

Braham Evangelical Lutheran Church, Braham
Cambridge Evangelical Lutheran Church, Cambridge
Faith Lutheran Church, Isanti
Glen Cary Lutheran Church, Ham Lake

Long Lake Lutheran Church, Isanti
New Life! Lutheran Church, Oak Grove
Our Saviour's Evangelical Lutheran Church of East Bethel
Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church, Dalbo
Siloa Evangelical Lutheran Church, Braham

NORTHWEST HENNEPIN CONFERENCE

Advent Lutheran Church, Maple Grove
Cross of Glory Lutheran Church, Brooklyn Center
Elim Lutheran Church, Robbinsdale
Faith-Lilac Way Lutheran Church, Robbinsdale
Family of God Lutheran Church, Brooklyn Park
First Lutheran Church of Crystal, Brooklyn Park
Holy Nativity Evangelical Lutheran Church, New Hope
House of Hope Lutheran Church, New Hope
Lao Evangelical Lutheran Church, Robbinsdale
Lord of Life Lutheran Church, Maple Grove
Maple Grove Lutheran Church, Maple Grove
Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Brooklyn Park
St. James Lutheran Church, Crystal
Valley of Peace Lutheran Church, Golden Valley

RUM RIVER CONFERENCE

Amazing Grace, Fridley (New Start)
Christ Lutheran Church of Blaine
Cross of Hope Lutheran Church, Ramsey
Faith Lutheran Church of Coon Rapids
Grace Lutheran Church, Andover
Lord of Life Lutheran Church, Ramsey
Peace Lutheran Church of Coon Rapids
Servant of Christ Lutheran Church, Champlin
St. Philip's Lutheran Church of Fridley
Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, Anoka

SOUTH MINNEAPOLIS CONFERENCE

Bethel Evangelical Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
Bethlehem Lutheran Church Twin Cities, Minneapolis Campus
Christ Church Lutheran, Minneapolis
Diamond Lake Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Minneapolis

Fabric, Minneapolis
Lake Nokomis Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
Lutheran Church of Christ the Redeemer, Minneapolis
Minnehaha Communion Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
Minnesota Swahili Christian Congregation, Minneapolis
Mount Olivet Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
Nokomis Heights Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
Our Redeemer Oromo Evangelical Church, Minneapolis
Richfield Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
Spirit Garage, Minneapolis
St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
St. Peder's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Minneapolis

SOUTHWEST CONFERENCE

All Saints Lutheran Church, Norwood Young America
Cristo Obrero, Shakopee/Chaska (New Start)
Cross of Peace Evangelical Lutheran Church, Shakopee
Crown of Glory Lutheran Church, Chaska
East Union Lutheran Church, Carver
Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, Henderson
Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church, Waconia
Family of Christ Lutheran Church, Chanhassen
Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, New Prague
Hope Lutheran Church of Jordan
Immanuel Lutheran Church, Eden Prairie
Living Joy, A Lutheran Faith Community, Prior Lake
Prairie Lutheran Church, Eden Prairie
Shepherd of the Lake Lutheran Church, Prior Lake
St. Andrew Lutheran Church, Eden Prairie
St. John Lutheran Church, Belle Plaine
St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Shakopee
Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, Watertown
West Union Lutheran Church, Carver

WESTERN PARKS AND LAKES CONFERENCE

All Saints Lutheran Church, Minnetonka
Bethlehem Twin Cities – Minnetonka Campus
Gethsemane Lutheran Church of Hopkins
Good Shepherd Evangelical Lutheran Church, Wayzata
Mount Calvary Lutheran Church, Excelsior
Mount Olivet West, Victoria
Spirit of Christ Community Lutheran Church, St. Louis Park
St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Mound
Westwood Lutheran Church, St. Louis Park
Vista Lutheran Church, St. Louis Park

WESTERN WATERS CONFERENCE

Alleluia! Lutheran Church, St. Michael
Elk River Lutheran Church, Elk River
Saron Lutheran Church, Big Lake
Spirit of Joy Lutheran Church, Buffalo
St. John Lutheran Church, Zimmerman
Trinity Lutheran Church, Monticello
Word of Peace Lutheran Church, Rogers
Zion Lutheran Church, Buffalo

394 CORRIDOR NORTH CONFERENCE

Christ Memorial Lutheran Church, Plymouth
Light of Christ Lutheran Church, Delano
Lutheran Church of St. Philip the Deacon, Plymouth
Lyndale Lutheran Church, Maple Plain
Mount Olivet Lutheran Church of Plymouth
Oak Knoll Lutheran Church, Minnetonka
Our Father's Lutheran Church, Rockford
Peace Lutheran Church, Plymouth
Saint Barnabas Lutheran Church, Plymouth
Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, Long Lake

- S12.02.** **This synod shall participate in the region in accordance with function, governance, and funding provisions outlined in Chapter 18 of the ELCA constitution.**

Chapter 13.
CONGREGATIONS

- † S13.01.** Each congregation, except those certified as congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America by the uniting churches, prior to being listed in the register of congregations of this synod, shall adopt the Model Constitution for Congregations or one acceptable to this synod, which is not in contradiction to the constitution and bylaws of the ELCA.
- a.** New congregations. A congregation newly formed by this church and any congregation seeking recognition and reception by this church shall:
 - 1)** Accept the criteria for recognition and reception as a congregation of this church, fulfill the functions of the congregation, and accept the governance provisions as provided in Chapter 9 of the ELCA constitution and bylaws.
 - 2)** Adopt governing documents that include fully and without alterations the Preamble, Chapter 1, where applicable, and all required provisions of Chapters 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 15, 16, 17, 18, and 19 in the Model Constitution for Congregations consistent with requirements of the constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this church. Bylaws and continuing resolutions, appropriate for inclusion in these chapters and not in conflict with these required provisions in the Model Constitution for Congregations, the constitution of this synod, or the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, may be adopted as described in Chapters 16 and 18 of the Model Constitution for Congregations.
 - 3)** Accept the commitments expected of all congregations of the ELCA as stated in †C6.01., †C6.02., and †C6.03., of the Model Constitution for Congregations.
 - b.** Congregations from another church body. If a congregation is a member of another church body, the leaders of the congregation first should consult with the appropriate authorities of that church body before taking action to leave its current church body. After such consultation, leaders of the congregation should make contact with the ELCA synod bishop or staff where the congregation is located.
 - c.** Recognition and reception. Recognition and reception into this church of transferring or independent congregations by the

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is based on the judgment of the synod and action by the synod through the Synod Council and Synod Assembly. The synod bishop shall provide for prompt reporting of such additions to the secretary of this church for addition to the register of congregations.

- † S13.02.** It shall be the responsibility of each congregation of this synod to elect from among its voting members laypersons to serve as members of the Synod Assembly as well as persons to represent it at meetings of any conference, cluster, coalition, or other area subdivision of which it is a member. Normatively, congregations should hold elections prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly. The number of persons to be elected by each congregation and other qualifications shall be as prescribed in guidelines established by this synod.
- S13.11.** When a rostered minister of this church resigns, the Congregation Council shall receive the letter of resignation, report it to the congregation, and at once notify the bishop of this synod.
- S13.12.** A congregation under financial obligation to its former rostered minister of this church shall make satisfactory settlement of the obligation before calling a successor.
- †S13.19.** A congregation considering a relocation shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located and the appropriate unit of the churchwide organization before any steps are taken leading to such action. The approval of the Synod Council shall be received before any such action is effected.
- †S13.20.** A congregation considering development of an additional site to be used regularly for worship shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located and the appropriate unit of the churchwide organization before any steps are taken leading to such action.
- S13.21.** The alignment of congregations in pastoral charges, and all alterations in any alignment, shall be subject to approval by the Synod Assembly or by the Synod Council.
- † S13.22.** Each congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America within the territory of this synod, except those which are in partnership with the Slovak Zion Synod, shall establish and maintain a relationship with this synod.
- † S13.23.** Provision 9.71. of the ELCA constitution shall govern the relationship of this synod and a congregation of this synod regarding the property

of the congregation. This synod may transfer or convey property to a congregation of the synod, subject to restrictions accepted by the congregation, including provision that if the Synod Council, in its sole and exclusive discretion, determines (1) that the property is not being used to serve the mission and ministry needs of this church, or (2) that the congregation has transferred, encumbered, mortgaged, or in any way burdened or impaired any right, title, or interest in the property without the prior approval of the Synod Council, then title to the property shall revert to the synod, and the congregation, upon written demand, shall reconvey the property to the synod.

S13.24. If any congregation of this synod has disbanded, or if the members of a congregation agree that it is no longer possible for it to function as such, or if it is the opinion of the Synod Council that the membership of a congregation has become so scattered or so diminished in numbers as to make it impractical for such a congregation to fulfill the purposes for which it was organized or that it is necessary for this synod to protect the congregation's property from waste and deterioration, the Synod Council, itself or through trustees appointed by it, may take charge and control of the property of the congregation to hold, manage, and convey the same on behalf of this synod. The congregation shall have the right to appeal the decision to the Synod Assembly.

S13.25. This synod may temporarily assume administration of a congregation upon its request or with its concurrence.

S13.30. Discipline

† S13.31. Congregations and members of congregations are subject to discipline in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 20 of the ELCA constitution and bylaws.

†S13.40. Synodically Authorized Worshiping Communities

†S13.41. Authorized worshiping communities, acknowledged under criteria, policies, and procedures approved by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, shall accept and adhere to the Confession of Faith and Statement of Purpose of this church, shall be served by leadership under the criteria of this church, and shall be subject to the discipline of this church.

Chapter 14.
ROSTERED MINISTERS

S14.10. Ministers of Word and Sacrament

† S14.11. The time and place of the ordination of those persons properly called to congregations or non-congregational service of this synod shall be authorized by the bishop of this synod.

† S14.12. Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,

a. Every minister of Word and Sacrament shall:

- 1) preach the Word;
- 2) administer the sacraments;
- 3) conduct public worship;
- 4) provide pastoral care;
- 5) seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel;
- 6) impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through distribution of its communications and publications;
- 7) witness to the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation and abroad; and
- 8) speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, advocating dignity, justice, and equity for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, and embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations.

b. Each pastor with a congregational call shall, within the congregation:

- 1) offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead;
- 2) relate to all schools and organizations of the congregation;
- 3) install regularly elected members of the Congregation Council; and
- 4) with the council, administer discipline;
- 5) endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the ELCA churchwide organization and of this synod.

S14.13. The pastor (a) shall keep accurate parochial records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received,

members dismissed, or members excluded from the congregation, (b) shall submit a summary of such statistics annually to this synod, and (c) shall become a member of the congregation upon receipt and acceptance of the letter of call. In a parish of multiple congregations, the pastor shall hold membership in one of the congregations.

S14.14. Whenever members of a congregation move to such a distance that regular attendance at its services becomes impractical, it shall be the duty of the pastor to commend them, upon their consent, to the pastoral care of a Lutheran congregation nearer to their place of residence.

S14.15. Each minister of Word and Sacrament on the roster of this synod shall submit a report of his or her ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.

† S14.16. When a congregation of this church desires to call a pastor or a candidate for the ministry of Word and Sacrament of this church:

- a. Each congregation of this synod shall consult the bishop of this synod before taking any steps leading to the extending of a call to a prospective pastor.
- b. For issuance of a letter of call to a pastor or candidate by a congregation of this synod in accord with ELCA constitutional provision 7.41., a two-thirds vote shall be required of members of voting members of the congregation present and voting at a meeting regularly called for the purpose of issuing such a call.
- c. When the congregation has voted to issue a call to a prospective pastor, the letter of call shall be submitted to the bishop of this synod for the bishop's signature.

S14.17. No minister of Word and Sacrament shall accept a call without first conferring with the bishop of this synod. A minister of Word and Sacrament shall respond with an answer of acceptance or declination to a letter of call within 30 days of receipt of such call. In exceptional circumstances with the approval of the bishop of this synod and the chair of the Congregation Council of the congregation issuing the call, an additional 15 days may be granted to respond to a letter of call.

†S14.18. The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between minister of Word and Sacrament and a congregation shall be as follows:

- a. The call of a congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment

which shall be terminated only by the pastor's death or, following consultation with the synod bishop, for any of the following reasons:

- 1) mutual agreement to terminate the call or the completion of a call for a specific term;
- 2) resignation of the pastor, which shall become effective, unless otherwise agreed, no later than 30 days after the date on which it was submitted;
- 3) inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in that congregation in view of local conditions;
- 4) inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in view of disability or incapacity of the pastor;
- 5) suspension of the pastor through discipline for more than three months;
- 6) resignation or removal of the pastor from the roster of ministers of Word and Sacrament of this church;
- 7) termination of the relationship between this church and the congregation;
- 8) dissolution of the congregation or the termination of a parish arrangement; or
- 9) suspension of the congregation through discipline for more than six months.

b. When allegations of disability or incapacity of the pastor under paragraph a.4) above, or ineffective conduct of the pastoral office under paragraph a.3) above, have come to the attention of the bishop of this synod,

1) the bishop, who has sole discretion, may investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson, or

2) when such allegations have been brought to the synod's attention by an official recital of allegations by the congregation council or by a petition signed by at least one-third of the voting members of the congregation, the bishop personally shall investigate such conditions together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson.

c. In case of alleged disability or incapacity under paragraph a.4) above, the bishop's committee shall obtain and document competent medical opinion concerning the pastor's condition. When a disability or incapacity is evident to the committee, the bishop of this synod may declare the pastorate vacant. When the pastorate is declared vacant, the Synod Council shall list the pastor on the roster of ministers of Word and Sacrament as

disabled. Upon resumption of the ability to conduct the office effectively, the bishop shall take steps to enable the pastor to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another appropriate call.

- d. In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of the congregation under paragraph a.3) above, the bishop's committee shall endeavor to hear from all concerned persons after which the bishop together with the committee shall present their recommendations first to the pastor and then to the congregation. The recommendations of the bishop's committee must address whether the pastor's call should come to an end and, if so, may suggest appropriate severance arrangements. The committee may also propose other actions that should be undertaken by the congregation and by the pastor, if appropriate. If the pastor and congregation agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action need be taken by the synod.
- e. If either party fails to assent to the recommendations of the bishop's committee concerning the pastor's call, the congregation may dismiss the pastor only at a legally called meeting after consultation with the bishop, either (a) by two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee did not recommend termination of the call, or (b) by a majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee recommended termination of the call.
- f. If, in the course of proceedings described in paragraph c. or paragraph d. above, the bishop's committee concludes that there may be grounds for disciplinary action, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action in accordance with the provisions of this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions.

†S14.19. Ministers of Word and Sacrament shall respect the integrity of the ministry of congregations which they do not serve and shall not exercise ministerial functions therein unless invited to do so by the pastor, or if there is no duly called pastor, then by the interim pastor in consultation with the Congregation Council.

†S14.21. The records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members transferred or dismissed, members who have become inactive, or members excluded from the congregation shall be kept accurately and permanently. They shall remain the property of each congregation. At the time of the closure

of a congregation, such records shall be sent to the regional archives. The secretary of the congregation shall attest to the bishop of this synod that such records have been placed in the secretary's hands in good order by a departing pastor before:

- a. installation in another call, or
- b. approval of a request for change in roster status.

†S14.22. The pastor shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to a former congregation before:

- a. installation in another call, or
- b. approval of a request for change in roster status.

†S14.23. During service to a congregation, an interim pastor shall have the rights and duties in the congregation of a regularly called pastor. The interim pastor may delegate the same in part to an interim supply pastor with the consent of the bishop of this synod. The interim pastor and any rostered minister who may assist shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a pastor. Upon completion of service, the interim pastor shall certify to the bishop of this synod that the congregation records, for the period for which the interim pastor was responsible, are in order.

†S14.24. With the approval of the synod bishop expressed in writing, which sets forth a clear statement of the purpose to be served by such a departure from the normal rule of permanency of the call as expressed in †S14.18., a congregation may call a pastor for a specific term. Details of such calls shall be in writing setting forth the purpose and conditions involved. Prior to the completion of a term, the bishop of this synod or a representative of the bishop shall meet with the pastor and representatives of the congregation for a review of the call. Such call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of †S14.18.

†S14.25. All ministers of Word and Sacrament under a call shall attend meetings of the Synod Assembly, and the pastors of congregations shall also attend the meetings of the conference, cluster, coalition, or other area subdivision to which the congregation belongs.

S14.30. Ministers of Word and Service

† S14.31. The time and place of the consecration of those persons properly called to congregations or non-congregational service of this synod shall be authorized by the bishop of this synod.

† S14.32. Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, every Minister of Word and Service shall:

- a. Be rooted in the Word of God, for proclamation and service;
- b. Advocate a prophetic diakonia that commits itself to risk-taking and innovative service on the frontiers of the Church's outreach, giving particular attention to the suffering places in God's world;
- c. Speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, advocating dignity, justice, and equity for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, and embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations;
- d. Equip the baptized for ministry in God's world that affirms the gifts of all people;
- e. Encourage mutual relationships that invite participation and accompaniment of others in God's mission;
- f. Practice stewardship that respects God's gift of time, talents, and resources.
- g. Be grounded in a gathered community for ongoing diaconal formation;
- h. Share knowledge of the ELCA and its wider ministry of the gospel, and advocate for the work of all expressions of this church; and
- i. Identify and encourage qualified persons to prepare for ministry of the gospel.

S14.33. The minister of Word and Service shall become a member of the congregation upon receipt and acceptance of the letter of call. In a parish of multiple congregations, the minister of Word and Service shall hold membership in one of the congregations.

S14.34 Each minister of Word and Service on the roster of this synod shall submit a report of his or her ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.

†S14.41. When a congregation of this church desires to call a minister of Word and Service or a candidate for the ministry of Word and Service of this church:

- a. Each congregation of this synod shall consult the bishop of this synod before taking any steps leading to the extending of a call to a prospective minister of Word and Service.
- b. For issuance of a letter of call to a minister of Word and Service or candidate by a congregation of this synod in accord with ELCA constitution provision 7.71., a two-thirds vote shall be required of members of the congregation present and voting at a meeting regularly called for the purpose of issuing such a call.
- c. When the congregation has voted to issue a call to a prospective minister of Word and Service, the letter of call shall be submitted to the bishop of this synod for the bishop's signature.

S14.42. No minister of Word and Service shall accept a call without first conferring with the bishop of this synod. A minister of Word and

Service shall respond with an answer of acceptance or declination to a letter of call within 30 days of receipt of such call. In exceptional circumstances with the approval of the bishop of this synod and the chair of the Congregation Council of the congregation issuing the call, and additional 15 days may be granted to respond to a letter of call.

†S14.43. The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between a Minister of Word and Service and a congregation shall be as follows:

- a. The call of a congregation, when accepted by a minister of Word and Service, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment which shall be terminated only by the death of the minister or, following consultation with the synod bishop, for any of the following reasons:
 - 1) mutual agreement to terminate the call at the completion of a call for a specific term;
 - 2) resignation of the minister of Word and Service, which shall become effective, unless otherwise agreed, no later than 30 days after the date on which it was submitted;
 - 3) inability to conduct the office effectively in that congregation in view of local conditions;
 - 4) inability to conduct the office effectively in view of disability or incapacity of the minister of Word and Service;
 - 5) suspension of the minister of Word and Service through discipline for more than three months;
 - 6) resignation or removal of the minister of Word and Service from the roster of ministers of Word and Service of this church;
 - 7) termination of the relationship between this church and the congregation;
 - 8) dissolution of the congregation or the termination of a parish arrangement; or
 - 9) suspension of the congregation through discipline for more than six months.
- b. When allegations of disability or incapacity of the minister of Word and Service under paragraph a.4) above, or ineffective conduct of the ministry of Word and Service under paragraph a.3) above, have come to the attention of the bishop of this synod,
 - 1) the bishop, who has sole discretion, may investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson, or
 - 2) when such allegations have been brought to the synod's attention by an official recital of allegations by the Congregation Council or by a petition signed by at least one-third of the voting members of the congregation, the bishop personally shall investigate such conditions together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson.
- c. In case of alleged disability or incapacity under paragraph a.4)

above, the bishop's committee shall obtain and document competent medical opinion concerning the minister of Word and Service's condition. When a disability or incapacity is evident to the committee, the bishop of this synod may declare the position vacant and the minister of Word and Service shall be listed on the roster of ministers of Word and Service as disabled. Upon resumption of the ability to conduct the office effectively, the bishop shall take steps to enable the minister of Word and Service to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another appropriate call.

- d. In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of the congregation under paragraph a.3) above, the bishop's committee shall endeavor to hear from all concerned persons, after which the bishop together with the committee shall present their recommendations first to the minister of Word and Service and then to the congregation. The recommendations of the bishop's committee address whether the minister of Word and Service's call should come to an end and, if so, may suggest appropriate severance arrangements. The committee may also propose other actions that should be undertaken by the congregation and by the minister of Word and Service, if appropriate. If the minister of Word and Service and the congregation agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action need be taken by the synod.
- e. If either party fails to assent to the recommendations of the bishop's committee concerning the minister of Word and Service's call, the congregation may dismiss the minister of Word and Service only at a legally called meeting after consultation with the bishop, either (a) by two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee did not recommend termination of the call, or (b) by a majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee recommended termination of the call.
- f. If, in the course of proceedings described in paragraph c. or paragraph d. above, the bishop's committee concludes that there may be grounds for disciplinary action, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action in accordance with the provisions of this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions.

†S14.44. Ministers of Word and Service shall respect the integrity of the ministry of congregations which they do not serve and shall not exercise ministerial functions therein unless invited to do so by the Congregation Council.

†S14.45. The minister of Word and Service shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to a former congregation before:

- a. installation in another call, or
 - b. approval of a request for change in roster status.
- †S14.46. With the approval of the synod bishop expressed in writing, which sets forth a clear statement of the purpose to be served by such a departure from the normal rule of permanency of the call as expressed in †S14.43., a congregation may call a minister of Word and Service for a specific term. Details of such calls shall be in writing setting forth the purpose and conditions involved. Prior to the completion of a term, the bishop of this synod or a representative of the bishop shall meet with the minister of Word and Service and representatives of the congregation for a review of the call. Such call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of †S14.43.
- S14.47. All ministers of Word and Service under a call shall attend meetings of the Synod Assembly, and the ministers of Word and Service of congregations shall also attend the meetings of the conference, cluster, coalition, or other area subdivision to which the congregation belongs.

Chapter 15. FINANCIAL MATTERS

- † S15.01. The fiscal year of this synod shall be February 1 through January 31.
- † S15.11. Since the congregations, synods, and churchwide organization are interdependent units that share responsibly in God's mission, all share in the responsibility to develop, implement, and strengthen the financial support program of the whole church. The gifts and offerings of the members of ELCA are given to support all parts of this church; thus the unity of this church should be evidenced in determining each part's share of the gifts and offerings. Therefore:
 - a. The mission of this church beyond the congregation is to be supported by such a proportionate share of each congregation's annual budget as each congregation determines. This synod shall develop guidelines for determining "proportionate share," and shall consult with congregational leaders to assist each congregation in making its determination.
 - b. This synod shall receive the proportionate share of the mission support from its congregations, and shall transmit that percentage or amount of each congregation's mission support as determined in consultation with the churchwide organization

and approved by the Synod Assembly as part of its budget consideration.

- c. Should the Synod Assembly not approve the proportionate share of mission support determined in consultation with the churchwide organization, a new consultation with the churchwide organization shall take place. The Synod Council is authorized to amend the budget adopted by the Synod Assembly to reflect the results of this consultation.

† S15.12. The annual budget of this synod shall reflect the entire range of its own activities and its commitment to partnership funding with other synods and the churchwide organization. (Removed sentence requiring the budget to include the percentage of mission support to CW.)

S15.13. On the basis of estimated income, the Synod Council shall authorize expenditures within the budget for the fiscal year. Expenditure authorizations shall be subject to revision, in light of changing conditions, by the Synod Council.

S15.14. Except when such procedure would jeopardize current operations, a reserve amounting to no more than 16% of the sum of the amounts scheduled in the next year's budget for regular distribution to synod causes shall be carried forward annually for disbursement in the following year in the interest of making possible a more even flow of income to such causes. The exact number of dollars to be held in reserve shall be determined by the Synod Council.

S15.21. No appeal to congregations of this or any other synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for the raising of funds shall be conducted by congregations or organizations related to or affiliated with this synod without the consent of the Synod Assembly or the Synod Council.

† S15.31. This synod shall arrange to have an annual audit of its financial records conducted by a certified public accountant firm recommended by the synod Audit Committee and approved by the Synod Council. The audited annual financial report shall be submitted by this synod to the churchwide Office of the Treasurer and to the congregations of this synod.

† S15.32. This synod shall maintain adequate, continuous insurance coverage in accordance with standards recommended by the churchwide organizations. Insurance programs offered or endorsed by the churchwide organization shall be deemed to fulfill this obligation.

Chapter 16.
INDEMNIFICATION

- † S16.01.** Subject to the limitations and duties imposed by law, each person who is or was made or threatened to be made a party to any proceeding by reason of the present or former capacity of that person as a Synod Council member, officer, employee, or committee member of this synod shall be indemnified against all costs and expenses incurred by that person in connection with the proceeding. Indemnification of any person by reason of that person's capacity as a director, officer, employee, or committee member of any other organization, regardless of its form or relationship to this synod, is subject to the provisions of †S16.02.
- a. The term “proceeding” means a threatened, pending, or completed lawsuit, whether civil or criminal, an administrative or investigative matter, arbitration, mediation, alternative dispute resolution, or any other similar legal or governmental action. Except as otherwise required by law, the term proceeding” does not include (a) any action by this synod against the individual seeking indemnification, or (b) subject to †16.04., a disciplinary hearing or related process described in Chapter 20 of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.
 - b. The term “indemnification” includes reimbursement and advances of costs and expenses for judgments, penalties, fines, settlements, excise taxes, reasonable attorneys’ fees, disbursements, and similar required expenditures.
- † S16.02.** Whenever a person who, while a Synod Council member, officer, committee member, or employee of this synod, is or was serving at the request of this synod (or whose duties in that position involve or involved service in the capacity of) a director, officer, partner, trustee, employee, or agent of another organization, is or was made or threatened to be made a party to a proceeding by reason of such capacity, then such person shall be entitled to indemnification only if (a) the Synod Council has established a process for determining whether a person serving in the capacity described in this section shall be entitled to indemnification in any specific case, and (b) that process has been applied in making a specific determination that such person is entitled to indemnification.
- † S16.03.** This synod may purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of itself or any person entitled to indemnification pursuant to this chapter against any liability asserted against and incurred by this synod or by such other person in or arising from a capacity described in †S16.01. or †16.02.

† S16.04.

When written charges against an rostered minister of this church are made in disciplinary proceedings under Chapter 20 of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* by the synod bishop or when written charges against a congregation are made in disciplinary proceedings by the Synod Council or the synod bishop, and the discipline hearing committee determines that no discipline shall be imposed, then if such determination is not reversed or set aside on appeal, indemnification shall be made by the synod to the accused for reasonable attorney's fees and other reasonable expenses related to the defense of the charges. The determination of the reasonableness of such fees and expenses shall be made by the Synod Council.

Chapter 17.
ADJUDICATION

- † S17.01. The synod bishop and the Executive Committee of the Synod Council shall be available to give counsel when disputes arise within this synod.
- † S17.02. The synod bishop and the Executive Committee of the Synod Council shall receive expressions of concern from rostered ministers of this church, congregations, and organizations within this synod; provide a forum in which the parties concerned can seek to work out matters causing distress or conflict; and make appropriate recommendations for their resolution. When the matter at issue cannot be resolved in this manner, the prescribed procedures for investigation, decision, appeal, and adjudication shall be followed. Allegations or charges that could lead to the discipline of a rostered minister of this church shall not be addressed by the Executive Committee but shall be resolved through the disciplinary process set forth in the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- † S17.03. When there is disagreement among units of this synod on a substantive issue that cannot be resolved by the parties, the aggrieved party or parties may appeal to the synod bishop and the Executive Committee of the Synod Council for a consultation. If this consultation fails to resolve the issue, a petition may be addressed by the parties to the Synod Council requesting it to arbitrate the issue. The decision of the Synod Council shall be final.
- † S17.04. When a component or beneficiary of a synod has a disagreement on a substantive issue that it cannot resolve, it may address an appeal to the synod bishop and the Executive Committee of the Synod Council. In this case the decision of the Executive Committee shall prevail, except that upon the motion of a member of the Synod Council, the decision shall be referred to the Synod Council for final action.
- †S17.10. Adjudication in a Congregation
- † S17.11. When there is disagreement among factions within a congregation on a substantive issue that cannot be resolved by the parties, members of a congregation shall have access to the synod bishop for consultation after informing the chair of the Congregation Council of their intent. If the consultation fails to resolve the issue(s), the Consultation Committee of this synod shall consider the matter. If the Consultation Committee of this synod shall fail to resolve the issue(s), the matter shall be referred to the Synod Council, whose decision shall be final.

Chapter 18.

AMENDMENTS, BYLAWS, AND CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

† S18.10. Amendments to Constitution

† S18.11. Certain sections of this constitution incorporate and record therein provisions of the constitution and bylaws of this church. If such provisions are amended by the Churchwide Assembly, corresponding amendments shall be introduced at once into this constitution by the secretary of this synod upon receipt of formal certification thereof from the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

† S18.12. Whenever the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America officially informs this synod that the Churchwide Assembly has amended the Constitution for Synods, this constitution may be amended to reflect any such amendment by a majority vote at any subsequent meeting of the Synod Assembly without presentation at a prior Synod Assembly. An amendment that is identical to a provision of the Constitution for Synods shall be deemed to have been ratified upon its adoption by this synod. The Church Council, through the secretary of this church, shall be given prompt notification of its adoption.

† S18.13. Other amendments to this constitution may be adopted by this synod through either of the following procedures:

- a. An amendment may be adopted by a two-thirds vote at a regular meeting of the Synod Assembly after having been presented in writing at the previous regular meeting of the Synod Assembly over the signatures of at least 25 members and been approved by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting at such regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.**
- b. The Synod Council may propose an amendment, with notice to be sent to the congregations of this synod at least six months prior to the next regular meeting of the Synod Assembly. Such an amendment shall require for adoption a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting at such a regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.**

All such amendments shall become effective upon ratification by the Churchwide Assembly or by the Church Council.

† S18.20. Amendments to Bylaws

† S18.21. This synod may adopt bylaws not in conflict with this constitution nor

with the constitution and bylaws of the churchwide organization. This synod may amend its bylaws at any meeting of the Synod Assembly by a two-thirds vote of voting members of the assembly present and voting. Newly adopted bylaws and amendments to existing bylaws shall be reported to the secretary of this church.

† S18.30. Amendments to Continuing Resolutions

† S18.31. This synod may adopt continuing resolutions not in conflict with this constitution or its bylaws or the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of the churchwide organization. Such continuing resolutions may be adopted or amended by a majority vote of the Synod Assembly or by a two-thirds vote of the Synod Council. Newly adopted continuing resolutions and amendments to existing continuing resolutions shall be reported to the secretary of this church.