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Assembly Welcome

Welcome to the Central States Synod Assembly. We are gathering under the theme of: **Together: Traveling the way of Jesus.** The word “synod” means “walking together.” As congregations and ministry sites across Missouri and Kansas, we have committed to walking together, and we recognize that together we can do more ministry than we can individually. Understanding the reality that we are **United with Christ in baptism**, we are connected to one another, and together we are **traveling the way of Jesus**. It is all about Jesus. It is in this relationship with **Jesus** that we ground our actions, our ministry, and our purpose as communities of faith.

I know that it may sound a bit ironic to focus on “traveling” the way of Jesus when we gather **online**, and voting members do not actually need to travel across the synod to participate in the assembly. I also know that technology can be challenging for some of us (myself included!). But we are in this together and will provide the assistance you need to participate fully.

The synod assembly provides us with the opportunity to participate in making decisions together that reflect the **ways of Jesus**. And so, we will take this day together to:

- **Gather** – Mindful that it is the Holy Spirit that calls us together as people of God and disciples of Jesus.
- Hear God’s **Word** – Knowing that we hear and see God at work in and through the ministries of the church.
- Respond with our **Offerings** – Affirming the responsibility to use the resources entrusted to us to participate in God’s mission.
- Partake in a **Meal** – Celebrating that God’s table extends into the world to feed those who hunger. And there will be a lunch break!
- And be **Sent** out to serve the Lord, letting love guide our decisions as we continue traveling together.

In other words, we will be gathering for an extended worship service because all our discussions, decisions, and votes are centered in the truth that we are the church, the body of Christ, and as the body of Christ, we want our actions to reflect Christ.

So welcome to worship!

I pray that our assembly will be a blessing to all of us.



The Rev. Susan Candea, Bishop
Central States Synod, ELCA

From Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton



Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America

“And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age’”

(Matthew 28:18-20).

Dear siblings in Christ,

We know the gospel changes lives and that God’s power and grace are real and at work today. Together we are called to bear God’s creative and redeeming word to all the world. What if we could make God known to more people? To the child who’s never heard of Jesus? To young adults who are trying to make sense of the world? To older adults who often feel lonely and isolated?

Our purpose – “to activate each of us so that more people know the way of Jesus and discover community, justice and love” – is an expression of our calling and our longing for others to know the love of God in Christ Jesus. We live out our purpose through worship and service, in our congregations and communities, through our individual vocations and our collective work as church together.

Many of you have wondered why we set a goal to reach one million new, young and diverse people. We believe that each of us is made in the image of God, redeemed by Jesus on the cross, and filled with the Holy Spirit. Our focus on young and diverse people is not exclusive but an acknowledgment that younger and more diverse people are disproportionately missing from our pews and gatherings. We are challenging one another to reach out across differences of all sorts to meet our neighbors.

Setting a goal to engage with one million is a way for us to know whether the work we are doing is, in fact, reaching new people. It encourages us to work together to be a church that cares about the world around us and is effective and faithful in responding to God’s call.

Join us on this future-focused journey to widen our welcome and break down the barriers that keep people from engaging with the church. Together, we can help people experience the difference God’s grace and love in Christ make for all people and creation.

In Christ,

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton
Presiding Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Synod Bishop and ELCA Representative



The Rev. Susan Candea, Bishop, Central States Synod, ELCA

Susan Candea graduated from California Lutheran College, Thousand Oaks, CA in 1979 with a B.A. in Political Science and then attended Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque, IA where she received her M.Div. in 1983. Since then, she has over 30 years of parish ministry experience and 6 years on synod staff before being elected bishop in 2019.

She has been involved in many aspects of ministry throughout the church including advocacy work, campus ministry, youth gatherings, community organizing, interfaith and ecumenical work. She currently serves as the chair of Leadership Committee of the Conference of Bishops, Bishops and the Candidacy Leadership Development Working Group, is an advisory bishop for the Quality of Call Initiative in the ELCA, and serves on the boards of LSTC, Bethany College, and Kansas Interfaith Action. In May of 2020 she received an honorary doctorate degree from Wartburg Theological Seminary.

She is passionate about preaching the gospel and connecting the radical and inclusive good news in ways that challenge us to live out our faith in public ways. She has three sons and two grandchildren and enjoys spending time with her family, going on hikes and listens to audio books (good mystery stories) as she drives the many miles across the synod to be with congregations.



Kristen Opalinski, Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations Manager

Kristen Opalinski serves as the Manager for Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations (EIR) on the staff of the Office of the Presiding Bishop for the Evangelical Lutheran church in America (ELCA). Her work includes staffing various ecumenical committees and networks, including the Lutheran Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Representatives Network and the National Planning Committee for the National Workshop on Christian Unity. Kristen also manages the EIR communication platforms for the ELCA and convenes the Lutheran World Federation North America regional meetings. In addition to her work with the ELCA, from now through September, she is serving as the visual identity coordinator for the 13th Assembly of the Lutheran World Federation, which will take place in Krakow, Poland, September 13-19, 2023.

Kristen is a graduate of Augsburg University in Minneapolis and the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia (now United Lutheran Seminary), where she earned a Master of Arts in Religion with specializations in public leadership and conflict transformation.

Kristen was a Young Adult in Global Mission (YAGM) in South Africa (2009-2010). From 2010-2014, she served as regional communications officer for the Lutheran Communion in Southern Africa (LUCSA) through a partnership with ELCA Global Mission. During her tenure with LUCSA, Kristen also served as an interfaith delegate at COP17 (UN climate conference in Durban) and as the communications director for the Interfaith Action for Peace in Africa's (IFAPA) 2012 summit in Johannesburg.

Kristen has written [a number of articles](#) for *Living Lutheran Magazine*, including [reflections on her personal faith journey](#), [women's leadership development across the global church](#), and [the Lutheran church's legacy of peacemaking](#). In addition to her writing, she is an artist, photographer, and graphic designer. Her work has been featured by the Lutheran World Federation, Augsburg University, the (RED) Campaign, CNN, the United Nations, The Desmond Tutu Peace Foundation, and Westminster John Knox Press.

Kristen is passionate about deepening opportunities for ecumenical and inter-religious formation and leadership throughout the ELCA and building bridges across various cultures, contexts, and faiths.

Central States Synod 2023 Synod Assembly

June 3, 2023

2022 Synod Assembly Agenda

Pre-assembly - (via Zoom)

Monday – May 1

7:00 – 8:30 p.m. **Assembly Voting Member Orientation**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81412164836?pwd=QUp4RTBWaHk0UzhodXE4RldLbzA0QT09>

Meeting ID: 814 1216 4836

Passcode: 592832

Monday – May 22

7:00 – 8:00 pm. **Resolutions Hearing**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87447822019?pwd=MmsrOTRhKzc5ZUNaOS8ycUUzSUtUUT09>

Meeting ID: 874 4782 2019

Passcode: 590286

Tuesday – May 23

7:00 – 8:00 pm. **Budget Hearing**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85113275088?pwd=U1NQNJlLcFpnU28zOTZ0UjJiMWRpZz09>

Meeting ID: 851 1327 5088

Passcode: 548825

Wednesday – May 24

7:00 – 8:00 pm. **Compensation Guidelines Hearing**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84863088243?pwd=MWg3OGtKYmNWa1hWdXg5Z2pReXRJdz09>

Meeting ID: 848 6308 8243

Passcode: 566939

Thursday – May 25

7:00 – 8:30 pm **Assembly Voting Member Orientation**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81412164836?pwd=QUp4RTBWaHk0UzhodXE4RldLbzA0QT09>

Meeting ID: 814 1216 4836

Passcode: 592832

Assembly – June 3 (online)

9:00 am – 3:00 pm.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87855139078?pwd=QWwzWURJT3JwbldOZDVMREtaa0NrUT09>

Meeting ID: 878 5513 9078

Passcode: 975687

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Saturday – June 3, 2023

8:00 a.m. Zoom Session Opens

9:00 a.m. Gathering {Mark 1:14-20 Jesus begins his ministry & calls disciples}

9:00 a.m. Opening Worship - Gathering

9:30 a.m. Welcome and Introductions

9:45 a.m. Constitution Amendments

10:00 a.m. Nominations and elections

10:20 a.m. *Ministry Highlights – Partnerships*

10:30 a.m. Break

10:45 a.m. Word {Matthew 13: 31-34 – Jesus speaks in parables}

10:45 a.m. Churchwide Report

11:15 a.m. Bishop's Report

11:35 a.m. *Ministry Highlights – Ministers of Word and Service*

11:45 a.m. Offering {Mark 12:41-44 offering of widow or Luke 19: 11-26 parable of ten pounds}

11:45 a.m. Budget Report and vote

12:10 p.m. *Ministry Highlights – Supported by synod budget*

12:15 p.m. Meal {Luke 9:10-17 – Feeding the 5000}

12:15 p.m. Lunch Break

12:45 p.m. Anniversaries

12:50 p.m. Bethany Village Annual Meeting

1:10 p.m. Vice President's Report

1:15 p.m. *Ministry Highlights – Feeding Ministries*

1:20 p.m. Break

1:30 p.m. Sending {John 13 (washing of feet) Love guides our travels together}

1:30 p.m. Compensation Guidelines

1:45 p.m. Resolutions

2:45 p.m. *Ministry Highlights – Ecumenical Relationships*

2:50 p.m. Closing Worship - Sending

3:00 p.m. Assembly concludes

Voting Member Information regarding Assembly Procedures

INTRODUCTION

Each synod assembly's authority and procedures must conform to the requirements of the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of the Central States Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The parliamentary procedures are shaped by the most current version of *Robert's Rules of Order*. Further, each assembly may adopt other specific rules to better conduct its business. Finally, time and experience has led to several ordinary practices that are carried over from assembly to assembly simply because they have proven to be effective.

For the most part, these organizational factors work well to provide an orderly framework within which each voting member may be fully and actively involved in the deliberative process of the assembly. However, at times, these same factors may seem artificially restrictive and notably frustrating if voting members do not know why a specific procedure is being followed or how they may participate at a particular moment. In addition, the online format of this year's assembly may feel additionally restrictive. Please know that these rules and procedures have been thought out and evaluated by synod leadership as well as other synods conducting online assemblies and gatherings. The intent is to allow the assembly to reliably conduct the business of the synod in the most equitable and accessible format possible.

The chart and notes which follow are a first opportunity for you to understand the procedures of this assembly in order that you may fully and actively participate. Another opportunity is the **Voting Members' Orientation** which will be held on Monday May 1, at 7:00 p.m., and again Thursday, May 25 at 7:00 p.m. both via Zoom. Although oriented towards new voting members, these sessions will be helpful for all voting members as we will be utilizing a new voting process this year. Finally, during the assembly, if you have any questions, please feel free to communicate with the synod's officers, council members; Dallas Rakestraw, assembly parliamentarian; or the Rev. Dave Whetter, Bishop's Associate.

RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR CENTRAL STATES DIGITAL SYNOD ASSEMBLY

Prior to the assembly

- Each voting member must register and include a unique email address. (**For voting purposes, voting members may not share the same email address.**)
- We will be using Slido for voting purposes. Voting members will need to access the app through their smartphone, tablet, or computer. Slido can be accessed at www.slido.com or through either the Apple App Store or Google Play. A QR code will also be available prior to the assembly.
- Hearings for the budget, resolutions, and compensation guidelines will take place the week prior to assembly. (See the assembly material for the schedule.) These hearings are open to any member of the synod, not only voting members.
- There will be two voting member orientation sessions. (See the assembly material for the schedule) Voting members may log in to familiarize themselves with the zoom features such (muting/unmuting, camera, and view controls) sample how we will move through the agenda, and experience practice votes.

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During the assembly

- Voting members can start logging in up to an hour before the first session. This is necessary to allow voting members to 'check in' and to resolve any technical problems they may have.
- When voting members log onto the zoom meeting, they will be presented with a link and QR code that will allow them to log into the Slido voting tool. Voting members will need to have access to the email they used for registration. All credentialling, quorums and voting will be determined using Slido.
- All Zoom participating sites will be muted and may be asked to turn off videos. Voting members will be asked to unmute only when recognized by the chair.
- Only motions made and seconded will be open for discussion. If a motion or resolution comes from the synod council or synod committee, no second is needed. The bishop will declare the motion is properly before the assembly and will ask if anyone wishes to speak.
- **To speak to a motion before the assembly**, voting members must use the Q&A function of Slido. In that request to speak, voting members are asked to use the following terms*:
 - **For** (wish to speak in favor of the item being discussed)
 - **Against** (wish to speak in opposition to the item being discussed)
 - **Question** (have a question regarding the item being discussed)
 - **Amend** (would like to make an amendment)
 - **Second** (if seconding an amendment or other motion on the floor)
 - **Call the question** (request that the debate be closed)
 - **Nomination** (Make a nomination from the floor)

*Only the terms above need to be entered into the Q&A function, not the actual comment, question or amendment. Once called upon, you will be allowed to address the assembly.

- The chair will call upon individuals in the order in which they appear in the Q&A (alternating when possible, those in favor and those opposed). Each individual will have up to **two minutes** to speak once they are unmuted. Voting members are reminded to always begin their comments with their name and their congregation's name and location.
- When making an amendment participants may be asked to ***input the text of the amendment in the Zoom chat.***
- Should an issue arise that makes it difficult to participate or prevents your participation in the debate and vote, such as too much noise, confusion over what is being voted on, or a breach of proper procedure, you may enter "**Question**" in the Q&A. You will be recognized by the chair so that the matter can be addressed and clarified.
- When there are no further speakers wishing to comment, or the debate has been ended, the bishop will call for a vote.
- **Voting** will be done using Slido. Once the chair discerns that there is no further discussion, a poll will appear with the options:
 - In favor/Aye
 - Opposed/Nay
 - Abstain

The chair will give the assembly 60 seconds to vote before the poll is closed. Results will be announced immediately with those results appearing on the screen. Only those voting members logged into Slido will be allowed to vote.

- The bishop will call for the results and the vote tally will be displayed.
- **Elections** will also be done using Slido. After nominations are closed and the ballot is ready, voting members will be instructed to use the app to cast their ballot.

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REQUESTING HELP

- Voting members may request help by. . .
 - Sending a private message to **“help desk”** through the chat function of zoom or the Help Desk room in Slido.
 - Calling or texting **(913) 336-3111**. Please leave a message with your name, phone number and the issue you are having. A member of our tech support team will contact you as quickly as possible.
 - Additional help resources and materials are available on the synod website.
- Voting members may ask a question directly of the parliamentarian by sending a private chat to **“Parliamentarian”**.

Whether you are attending your first assembly, or you have attended previous assemblies as a voting member, your full and active participation is both welcomed and necessary for the continued wellbeing of our synod.

VOTING MEMBER PRACTICE SESSIONS

Voting members are encouraged to participate in Voting Member Orientation. Although it is not required, we will cover a range of topics beginning with navigating zoom, using chat and polling features then moving on to sampling the Slido app and discussing procedures for addressing the assembly.

We have two sessions scheduled. The log-in information and topics covered are the same for each session.

Assembly Practice Session

- May 1, 2023 7:00 PM
- May 25, 2023 7:00 PM

Join Zoom Meeting*

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81412164836?pwd=QUUp4RTBWaHk0UzhodXE4RldLbzA0QT09>

Meeting ID: 814 1216 4836

Passcode: 592832

** Please note: This zoom link and information is NOT the same as the official synod assembly. That information will be mailed to voting members, using the email address you provided with your registration.*

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SLIDO.COM VOTING INSTRUCTIONS

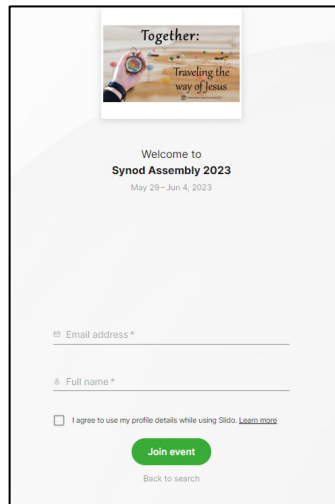
Voting members have multiple options for accessing the Slido voting platform.

USING A WEB BROWSER

- Using a web browser, navigate to www.slido.com. At the top of the page is the option for “Joining as a participant.” Enter the event code **2023CSS-assembly**.

Joining as a participant? #2023CSS-assembly →

- On the next page, enter the email address and full name you used to register for the assembly. (Voting members may not share the same email address.) Click “I agree to use my profile details” and Join Event.



The screenshot shows the Slido event registration page. At the top, there is a banner with the text "Together: Traveling the way of Jesus". Below the banner, it says "Welcome to Synod Assembly 2023" and "May 29 - Jun 4, 2023". There are two input fields: "Email address *" and "Full name *". Below these fields is a checkbox labeled "I agree to use my profile details while using Slido. [Learn more](#)". At the bottom, there is a green "Join event" button and a link "Back to search".

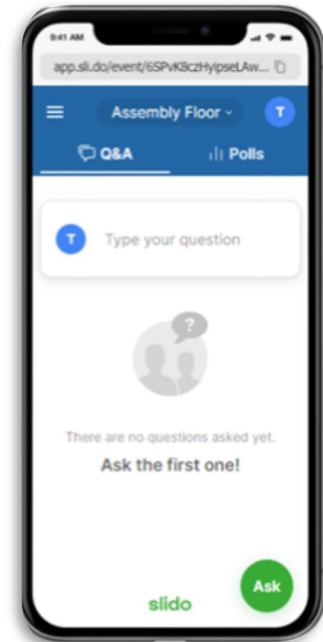
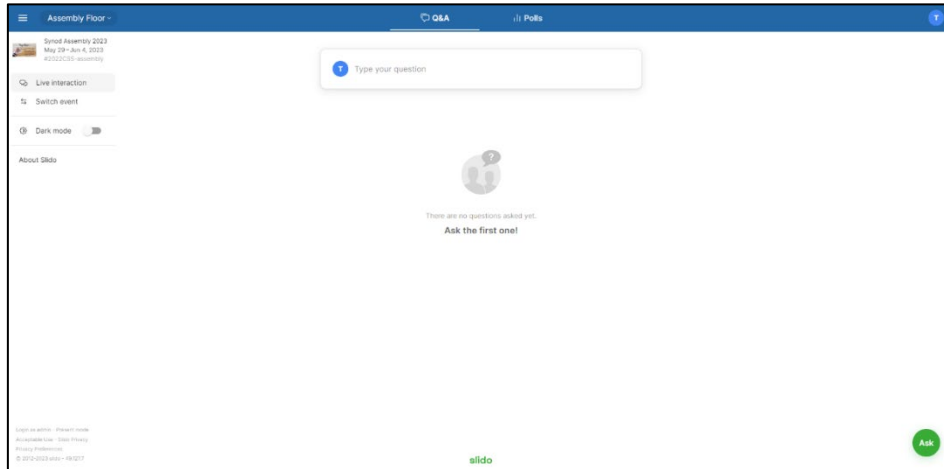
- A four-digit access code will be sent to your email address. Enter the code and confirm.
- You will then be entered into the “assembly floor.”

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SCANNING THE QR CODE

- Voting Members may use a smartphone or tablet by scanning the QR code.
- At the log in screen, enter your email address and full name.
- A four-digit access code will be sent to your email address. Enter the code and confirm. You will then be entered into the “assembly floor.”



- At the top of the page, you will see Q&A and Polls. By default you will be in Q&A mode where you can ask questions, make motions, and interact with the assembly. Simply type your request in the dialogue box and click the green “Ask” button at the lower right.
- When voting occurs, the Polls will become active and you can enter your vote on the business before the assembly.
- Additionally at the far upper left of the browser screen or the very top center of the mobile device you will see a drop down menu that shows “assembly floor.” You may choose to navigate to the following rooms*:
 - Assembly Floor – General business and functions of the assembly.
 - Announcements – Announcements not pertaining to the direct business before the assembly.
 - Conversation and Comments – General fellowship and interactions among the voting members.
 - Help Desk – Technical support and assistance.

*Please note, you will only be able to vote while in “Assembly Floor.” The votes will not appear in any of the other rooms.

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SPECIAL HEARINGS FOR THE ASSEMBLY

The following hearings will be held prior to the start of the Assembly. These sessions are open to all members of the Central States Synod. Assembly registration is not required.

Pre-assembly - (via Zoom)

Monday – May 1

7:00 – 8:30 p.m.

Assembly Voting Member Orientation

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81412164836?pwd=QUp4RTBWaHk0UzhodXE4RldLbzA0QT09>

Meeting ID: 814 1216 4836

Passcode: 592832

Monday – May 22

7:00 – 8:00 pm.

Budget Hearing

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87447822019?pwd=MmsrOTRhKzc5ZUNaOS8ycUUzSUtUUT09>

Meeting ID: 874 4782 2019

Passcode: 590286

Tuesday – May 23

7:00 – 8:00 pm.

Resolutions Hearing

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85113275088?pwd=U1NQNJlLcFpnU28zOTZ0UjJiMWRpZz09>

Meeting ID: 851 1327 5088

Passcode: 548825

Wednesday – May 24

7:00 – 8:00 pm.

Compensation Guidelines Hearing

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84863088243?pwd=MWg3OGtKYmNWa1hWdXg5Z2pReXRJdz09>

Meeting ID: 848 6308 8243

Passcode: 566939

Thursday – May 25

7:00 – 8:30 pm

Assembly Voting Member Orientation

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89156447493?pwd=ZllrTVhNTjZGZjVHZThlWWFGT0xCUT09>

Meeting ID: 891 5644 7493

Passcode: 829951

Bishop's Report of the Central States Synod Assembly 2023

Together: Traveling the Way of Jesus

Together: The presiding bishop of the ELCA, Elizabeth Eaton, often spoke of how *we are church together for the sake of the world*. That understanding has guided my calling as the bishop and pastor of this synod. We are not the church in isolated silos but in an interdependent relationship with one another and the whole ELCA. As bishop, I do this work together with:

- **Synod Staff** – We welcomed Ben Godwin as our new administrator on July 11, 2022, following the retirement of Dawne Bockelman. I have a terrific staff that works together as a team. I am so grateful to be doing this work with them!
- **Conference of Bishops** – I chair the committee on leadership for the conference and the Candidacy Leadership Development Working Group, which was formed to adapt the current candidacy process across the ELCA. I am an advisory bishop for the Quality of Call Initiative (a project funded by a donor to look at and improve the quality of calls for women in ministry). I am working with seven other bishops in the region with a grant to implement specific goals to address the ministry challenges of women.
- **Ecumenical Relationships** – Not only do we office with the Episcopal Diocese, but we continue to look for ways to collaborate, mainly in the areas of providing pastoral leadership for congregations and advocacy, along with other full communion partners. I represent the ELCA at installations and annual conferences of the United Methodist Church.
- **Conference deans, rostered ministers, Synod Authorized Ministers, and lay leaders.** As the pastor of the synod, I am glad that members of this synod feel that they can reach out to me with concerns, questions, struggles, and joys. I am here to listen, to be supportive, and to help in whatever ways I can. I value the relationships that we have built together.

Traveling:

- Since the last synod assembly, I have traveled to **38 of our congregations and ministries** to preach, teach, and hold conversations. While I often wish I could “smush” the synod together, eliminating the miles between destinations, I always appreciate the opportunities to be with folks in their own congregations. (No, I have not kept track of the miles I have driven!) I still aim to visit every single congregation on a Sunday morning.
- In August, I traveled to Columbus, OH, to attend the churchwide assembly. In January, I had the opportunity to travel to Minneapolis for the Bishops’ Academy, a time of learning with other bishops, and then to Palestine and the Holy Land at the invitation of the Lutheran Church of Jordan and Holy Land.
- A few times a year, I travel to Lindsborg to attend Bethany College Board meetings and to Chicago to attend the board meetings of LSTC.

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The Way of Jesus:

What does it mean to travel the way of Jesus in the midst of very anxious systems? The pandemic took a toll on all aspects of our life today. Worship attendance and financial support continue to decline. Divisions are deep and painful. It is easy to want solutions or answers to fix things. It is also easy to become reactionary and blame others for what may make us uncomfortable. But Jesus doesn't just give us answers. Rather he invites us into a relationship and a journey as travelers in the reign of God. That journey has led me to:

- Make public statements on gun violence, anti-trans legislation, and the shooting of a young black man in Kansas City. While some have labeled these statements as "political or social" propaganda, my goal was to express the gospel in the public arena.
- Gather our synod in conferences where I invited people into conversations about "what does this mean" to be the church today.
- Host the Fall Theological Conference to take a deeper, theological look at our synod mission statement and what it means as leaders to travel the way of Jesus.
- Help lead, along with Reconciling Works, professional development workshops across the synod to deepen our understanding of the gospel and care for those in the queer community. My expectation is that all rostered ministers and synod authorized ministers attend professional development workshops every year.
- Partnered with Lutherans Restoring Creation to lead Bible studies through Lent to examine how Scripture and the gospel lead us into a deeper relationship with creation.
- Share blogs on how my travels in Palestine revealed how we can travel the way of Jesus in our own communities.

There have been some significant **challenges** for me as the bishop. I have had consultations with four congregations that have or are in the process of disaffiliating. Each disaffiliation is the end of a relationship, and I grieve, wondering why we can't continue to walk with one another to proclaim the gospel. We also instituted synod administration of Bethany Lutheran Church in Webster Groves. The remaining members refused to work with me to close the congregation, which was no longer functioning.

I also experience tremendous **support** as the bishop, for which I am so appreciative, feeling that this is indeed where Christ is calling me to travel at this point in the church, **together** with all of you!



Bishop Susan Candea

Central States Synod 2023 Synod Assembly

June 3, 2023

Synod Statistical Information June 2022 through May 2023

New People in the Synod

Effective Date

The Rev. Jealaine Marple, from Southeast IA Synod to First Lutheran, Mission Hills, KS	6/1/2022
The Rev. Linda Conway, from Southwest Washington Synod to specialized ministry	6/10/2022
The Rev. Susan Tarkka, first call to Overland Park Lutheran, Overland Park, KS	8/28/2022
The Rev. Varinia Espinosa, from Metro Wash. DC Synod to Good Shepherd, Manchester, MO	9/1/2023
The Rev. Andrew Beers, first call to St. Paul's, Wichita, KS	10/4/2022
The Rev. Jacqueline Thornton, first call to Immanuel, Salina, KS	10/15/2022
The Rev. Matt Helfrich, acceptance onto roster	12/11/2022
The Rev. Vicki Hedger, first call to Lord of Love, Belton, MO	1/14/2023
The Rev. Andrew Patty, acceptance onto roster	1/22/2023
The Rev. Kathy Whitney, reinstated onto roster	1/25/2023

Seminarians in Candidacy

Elizabeth Carr from Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque IA, as Word and Sacrament
Sarah Freyermouth from Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago IL, as Word and Sacrament
Joanne Hickey from Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago IL, as Word and Sacrament
Jennelle Hinck from United Lutheran Seminary, Philadelphia PA, as Word and Sacrament
Eric Jenson from Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago IL, as Word and Sacrament
Megan Mong from Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago IL, as Word and Sacrament
Brenda Rodger from Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque IA, as Word and Sacrament
Lisa Simmelink from Luther Seminary, St. Paul MN as Word and Sacrament

Moves Within the Synod

Effective Date

The Rev. Kimberly Frederking, from St. John, Ellis, KS to St. John, Salina, KS	11/14/2022
The Rev. Melissa Woeppel, from Living Christ, Florissant, MO to Bethany College, Lindsborg, KS	1/1/2023
The Rev. Anteneh Gebreselassie, call to serve as solo pastor at Advent, Olathe, KS	1/1/2023
The Rev. Brenda Ulrich, call to interim paster at Grace Lutheran, Osage City, KS	1/1/2023
The Rev. Jennifer Thomas, call to churchwide	2/27/2023

Transfer out of the Synod

Effective Date

The Rev. Elizabeth Cummings, to New England Synod	6/15/2022
The Rev. Jennifer Obermeuller, to Southwest Texas Synod	8/22/2022
The Rev. Philip Vickers, to Southeastern Synod	8/31/2022
The Rev. Heather Yerion-Keck, to East Central Synod of Washington	9/11/2022
The Rev. Elizabeth Kocher, to Nebraska Synod	11/2/2022
The Rev. Susan Schubert, retired, to Grand Canyon Synod	3/3/2023

Necrology

Effective Date

The Rev. Bill Horn, retired, Wichita, KS	1/21/2023
The Rev. Melvin Peterson, retired, Liberty, MO	8/20/2022
The Rev. Paul Bauermeister, retired, Ballwin, MO	9/11/2022
The Rev. Steve Little, Blanchard, OK	4/17/2023
Marianne Wilkinson, Deacon, Lawrence, KS	11/18/2022

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Synod Statistical Information June 2022 through May 2023 (Continued)

On Leave From Call and Disability

Effective Date

The Rev. Melaku Tizazu, 1 st year OLFC	7/1/22
The Rev. Bethany Ann Rutten-Kempes, 3 rd year OLFC	9/10/2022
The Rev. Tim Carey, disability	10/1/2022
The Rev. Mike Malone, 2 nd year OLFC	11/1/2023
The Rev. Keith Hohly, 1 st year OLFC	1/1/2023
The Rev. Kim Knowle-Zeller, 8 th year OLFC	1/1/2023
The Rev. Jim Peters, 1 st year OLFC	2/19/2023
The Rev. Katherine Hayes-Wallenburg, 3 rd year OLFC	3/17/2023
The Rev. Anita Strommen, 3 rd year OLFC	4/1/2023

Resigned or Ended Calls

Effective Date

The Rev. Melaku Tizazu, from Immanuel Oromo, Kansas City, MO	7/1/22
The Rev. Tim Carey, from Emmanuel, Hutchinson, KS	8/21/2022
The Rev. Stephen Starr, from Bethany, Webster Groves, MO	10/1/2022
The Rev. Ed Hatcher, from Peace Lutheran, Sullivan, MO	12/22/2022

Resigned or Removed from Roster

Effective Date

Mr. Stephen Starr, Webster Groves, MO	10/8/2022
Ms. Shelly Klingensmith, Great Bend, KS	1/1/2023
Mr. Ed Hatcher, Sullivan, MO	1/26/2023
Ms. Emily McQuillan, St. Louis, MO	4/28/2023

Retirement

Effective Date

The Rev. James Brandt, from specialized ministry	7/1/2022
The Rev. Barry Hong, from specialized ministry	7/1/2022
The Rev. Noni Strand, from specialized ministry	7/1/2022
The Rev. Austra Reines, from synod council call	8/1/2022
The Rev. Dinah Dutta, from OLFC	10/1/2022
The Rev. Jerry Reynolds, from OLFC	10/1/2022
The Rev. Keith Hohly, from OLFC	1/1/2023
The Rev. Susan Langhauser, from Advent, Olathe, KS	1/1/2023
The Rev. William Neuman, from Good Neighbor Parish	1/1/2023

Congregational Changes

Effective Date

Immanuel Oromo Christian Church, Kansas City, MO, closed	6/30/2022
Zion, Hollenburg, KS, closed	7/10/2022
Blue Ridge Trinity, Raytown, MO, closed	7/21/2022
Hillside Community, Spring Hill, KS, withdrew from the ELCA	9/1/2022
Bethany, Webster Groves, MO, closed	10/1/2022
Peace, Sullivan, MO, withdrew from the ELCA	12/11/2022
United, Cole Camp, MO, closed	12/31/2022
Friends' Home, Savonburg, KS, withdrew from the ELCA	2/19/2023
Our Redeemer, Ness City, KS, closed	4/30/2023

Respectfully submitted –

Ben Godwin, Synod Administrator

Central States Synod 2023 Synod Assembly

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Individuals Milestone Anniversaries

<p>5 Years Deacon Gail Brecht The Rev. Samantha Pfalzgraf The Rev. Beverly Struckmann The Rev. Melaku Tizazu</p> <p>10 Years The Rev. Jennifer Jackson The Rev. Jealaine Marple The Rev. Kristina Reyes The Rev. Rodney Thompson The Rev. Stephen Zeller</p> <p>15 Years Deacon Anne Chida The Rev. Stephen Haverlah The Rev. Cheryl Hoops The Rev. Michael Kern The Rev. Shelly Klingensmith The Rev. Carrie McElfresh The Rev. Ted Mosher The Rev. Amy Stewart Deacon Shirley Talbot The Rev. Jeremie Vore</p> <p>20 Years The Rev. Robert Bennight The Rev. Ashley Huber The Rev. Kristen Koch The Rev. Jerry Reynolds The Rev. Jill Seagle</p>	<p>25 Years The Rev. Daryn Holdsworth The Rev. John Kotovsky The Rev. Jennifer Thomas</p> <p>35 Years The Rev. Sally Baehni The Rev. Orin Cummings The Rev. Shawn Norris</p> <p>40 Years The Rev. Jeffery Alvestad The Rev. Elliott Anderson The Rev. Susan Candea The Rev. Timothy Carey Deacon Priscilla Moore The Rev. Richard Mueller The Rev. William Neuman</p> <p>45 Years The Rev. Roy Christell The Rev. Linda Daniels-Block The Rev. Thomas Hallstrom The Rev. Craig Lantz The Rev. Francine Lantz The Rev. Craig Nesson The Rev. Arthur Stull</p>	<p>50 Years The Rev. Michael Brecke The Rev. Kenneth Haugk The Rev. David Paap The Rev. Maynard Peterson The Rev. David Swan The Rev. James Wagner</p> <p>55 Years The Rev. Larry Cross The Rev. William George The Rev. Richard Monson The Rev. John Schroepel The Rev. Kenneth Zindle</p> <p>60 Years The Rev. Kenneth Branch</p> <p>65 Years The Rev. John Frey The Rev. Roger Gieschen The Rev. Raymond Otto</p>
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Congregational Milestone Anniversaries

<p>25 Years Community Lutheran Church, Eagle Rock MO</p> <p>75 Years Lutheran Church of the Resurrection, Prairie Village KS St. Mark Lutheran Church, Olathe, KS</p> <p>125 Years First Lutheran Church, Dorrance KS</p>	<p>150 Years Ada Lutheran Church, Courtland KS Amana Lutheran Church, Scandia KS St John Lutheran Church, Salina KS Walsburg Lutheran Church, Leonardville KS</p> <p>175 Years Pyrmont Trinity Lutheran Church, Stover MO</p>
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Congratulations to everyone who is celebrating an anniversary of note this year.

Synod Assembly Offering 2023

As part of our gathering each year, we receive Synod Assembly offerings from congregations and individuals to help fund ministries that are carried out in and through the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and our synod. This year's Synod Assembly offering will be dedicated to the **Campus Ministry Team of the Central States Synod**. The Central States Synod has four active campus ministries:



[Bethany College](#)

As a college of the ELCA, Bethany College is deeply rooted in the Lutheran intellectual tradition and boldly open to insights from other religious and secular traditions. Spiritual development at Bethany is integral to our mission of preparing students for lives of faith, learning, and service. Our spiritual and religious life is decidedly ecumenical and interfaith, serving and providing opportunities for students, faculty, and staff of any or no religious background. Each week, time is held apart across campus for Chapel Break, a time of reflection, community building, spiritual practice, and religious ritual and tradition. Additionally, a variety of campus ministry organizations develop programs through which students forge affirming community, recognize the imago dei in themselves and others, and learn to live out Christ's radical message of love.



[Lutheran Campus Ministry at Kansas State University](#)

Lutheran Campus Ministry at Kansas State University works to help K-State students experience God's love and share it with the world! LCM at K-State affirms that ALL people are created in God's Image, and that God loves ALL people, including you! We share God's love with students through weekly worship, Bible study, meals, and pastoral presence on campus, as well as fellowship and service events and retreats. We work in partnership with other campus organizations, particularly the campus ministries of the ELCA's full-communion partners.



[Westwood House \(University of Kansas\)](#)

Westwood House is an ecumenical collaboration between LCM-KU and Wesley KU devoted to helping students know that **"God loves you—no exceptions."** We seek to feed students in body, mind, and spirit through our weekly worship, Bible study (called Pizza with the Pastors), community meals, and access to our food pantry. We are also present on campus every week, whether to listen to students and engage in conversation with them about what is on their hearts and minds, or by giving them a "Blessing on the Go," providing them with a protein bar to help get them through the day.



[LuMin St. Louis](#)

LuMin St. Louis is a progressive ecumenical campus ministry that primarily serves Washington University and St. Louis University. We are here to help students build an honest, safe community as they wrestle through questions of identity & vocation during their college & early professional years. We live out our Christian faith with total inclusivity for all people and a focus on social justice. We have Dinner and Jesus (worship) together every Sunday and Pastor Tina is at both campuses during the week. We offer a variety of weekly & monthly events for undergrad, grad students & young professionals.

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Congregations are encouraged to use the link for online giving on the [Synod Assembly webpage](https://www.css-elca.org/assembly) (<https://www.css-elca.org/assembly>).

Click on the GIVE button and designate Synod Assembly offering in the drop-down menu.

Or you may mail your offering to the synod office.

Central States Synod
420 W 14th St
Kansas City, MO 64105

These offerings, which are above and beyond a congregation's regular giving, reflect our commitment not only to the ministries of our synod – the work we do together – but also reflect our hope and trust in God's abundant care.

Special Thanks to...

- Kaw Prairie Community Church for providing us studio space
- Kristen Opalinski for joining us from Churchwide
- Bishop Susan Candeia for leading the synod assembly
- Vice President, Nancy Nagel; Secretary, Chad Langdon; Treasurer, Scott Schulte; and all synod council members
- Nominations Committee, and Pat Bjuland, Chair
- The Resolutions Committee
- Compensation Guidelines Committee
- Mr. Dallas Rakestraw, Parliamentarian
- The members of all the synod teams and committees who prepared presentations and reports for the assembly

2023 Nominations for Central States Synod

Introduction

Each year the voting members of the Synod Assembly elect people who have been nominated to various positions, such as members of the Synod Council. Ultimately, the voting members of the Assembly are responsible for the nominations, but they are assisted by members of congregations, area ministry leaders, and the Nominating Committee. There are two stages to the nominating process, one before the assembly and one at the assembly. All Synod Council positions (except the youth positions) require a background check and therefore nominees need to submit a [disclosure form](#) along with the [nomination form](#).

Pre-Assembly

Early in the calendar year, the Nominating Committee works with conferences to fulfill its responsibility as described in the synod bylaws (S9.03.04). Nomination forms are to be submitted to the synod office no later than April 15, 2023. The chair of the Nominating Committee is Pat Bjuland, Atonement Lutheran Church, Overland Park, KS.

Phone: 816-674-0828. E-mail: pbjuland@sbcglobal.net.

At the Assembly

Nominations may also take place at the assembly as described in the synod bylaws (S9.03.05). People nominated from the floor need to provide information requested on the biographical form and in some cases, a disclosure form.

Participating in the Process

Whether you are a voting member of the assembly or not, if you have questions about how you can participate in the nominating process or would like to suggest someone for nomination, please contact your pastor, the chair of the Nominating Committee, Pat Bjuland, or Tim Anderson at the synod office (913-948-9701, tanderson@css-elca.org).

Helpful information:

Responsibilities for Synod Council members:

- Be the board of directors for the synod and serve as its interim legislative authority between meetings of the Synod Assembly.
- Carry out the resolutions of the assembly.
- Attend council meetings, ordinarily three times a year.
- Interpret the work of the synod through their conferences and across the synod.

The term "persons of color and/or person whose primary language is other than English" (PC/L*) is understood to mean African American, Black, Arab, and Middle Eastern, Asian and Pacific Islander, Latino, Native American, and Alaska Native people.

The term "youth" means a voting member of a congregation who has not reached the age of 18 at the time of election.

The term "young adult" means a voting member of a congregation between the ages of 18 and 30 at the time of election.

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. (S6.04.B09. Adopted by 2009 Churchwide Assembly)

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Pre- Assembly Nominations 2023

The Nominating Committee offers the following nominations:

Synod Council Members (3-year term except where noted)

Vice President (incumbent eligible) (4-year term)	Nancy Nagel*
Treasurer (incumbent eligible) (4-year term)	Scott Schulte*
Secretary (incumbent eligible) (4-year term)	Chad Langdon*
Central Kansas Conference – lay female	Julie Barstow
Border Conference – clergy male	Zac Sturm
Youth – male (2-year term)	

* Incumbent

Consultation Committee (6-year term)

1 lay member	Rosalind Thorpe
1 clergy member	Kristen Koch

Discipline Committee (6-year term)

3 lay members	Pat Bjuland Cathy Hohl Dennis Kemper
1 clergy member	Steven Cauley

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Biographical Information—Nominees

Synod Council Members

Position: Vice President **Name:** Ms. Nancy Nagel
Congregation membership: Peace Lutheran, Washington, MO
Congregational Activities: President, VP, Bell Choir, congregational care, outreach committee
Synodical/Churchwide Activities: VP 2019-present
Community Activities: Neighbors United-Undoing Racism, 4 Rivers Progressive Coalition, YMCA
YOUTH: No **YOUNG ADULT:** No **POC/LOE:** No

Position: Treasurer **Name:** Mr. Scott Schulte
Congregation membership: Advent, Olathe, KS
Congregational Activities: Treasurer, chair of the Finance Committee, Assisting Minister, BeFriends Ministry, member of Council, Confirmation Guide, Financial Secretary
Synodical/Churchwide Activities: Synod Treasurer, chair of Mission Endowment Committee, attendee at 2019 churchwide assembly
Community Activities: Treasurer for homes association, co-treasurer for BV West Band Boosters Association.
YOUTH: No **YOUNG ADULT:** No **POC/LOE:** No

Position: Secretary **Name:** Rev. Chad Langdon
Congregation membership: Christ Lutheran, Wichita, KS
Congregational Activities: Pastor, youth ministry, justice ministry, outdoor ministry
Synodical/Churchwide Activities: Camp Tomah Shinga Board 2013-2018, Synod Day Coordinator for 2018 National Youth Gathering, Synod Council Secretary 2019-2023
Community Activities: Volunteer Coordinator, Lake Afton Public Observatory. Acting Secretary for Wichita chapter of Direct Action and Research Training Center (DART)
YOUTH: No **YOUNG ADULT:** No **POC/LOE:** No

Position: Central Kansas Conference Representative **Name:** Ms. Julie Barstow
Congregation membership: Peace Lutheran, Manhattan, KS
Congregational Activities: Director of Youth & Family Ministry, preparing Easter baskets, God's Work. Our Hands Sunday, Working on Church gardens for the food pantry.
Synodical/Churchwide Activities: 2019 churchwide assembly, synod youth leader initiative, regularly attend synod assembly, and involved with Camp Tomah Shinga.
Community Activities: Member of local PEO chapter supporting women in education, serve with family at the annual community Christmas dinner, and donate blood regularly.
YOUTH: No **YOUNG ADULT:** No **POC/LOE:** No

Position: Border Conference Representative **Name:** Rev. Zac Sturm
Congregation membership: Atonement Lutheran, Overland Park, KS
Congregational Activities: Senior Pastor (2019 – present), Associate Pastor (2017-2019)
Synodical/Churchwide Activities: Voting member of 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly. Member of Central States Synod Discipline committee
Community Activities: Co-President of Good Faith Network of Johnson County KS, Flag football coach, Olathe youth sports.
YOUTH: No **YOUNG ADULT:** No **POC/LOE:** No

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Consultation Committee Members

Position: Consultation Committee **Name:** Ms. Rosalind Thorpe

Congregation membership: Atonement Lutheran, Overland Park, KS

Congregational Activities: Staff at Atonement as Director of Outreach Ministries, since 08/2019; as Ministry Assistant from 3/2013-08/2019. As Director of Outreach Ministries, I organize and connect congregational members with ministries in the community through a variety of service projects; work with visitors/new members; and have various office responsibilities. I was also a 17-yr member of Atonement's Handbell Choir and have recently joined the Sanctuary Choir.

Synodical/Churchwide Activities: In the past, I have served as a synod assembly delegate from Atonement; have also helped with organizing a service activity for a past synod assembly.

Community Activities: Support Hillcrest Transitional Housing, Brookridge Elementary, and several food pantries through my work (above)

YOUTH: No **YOUNG ADULT:** No **POC/LOE:** No

Position: Consultation Committee **Name:** Rev. Kristen Koch

Congregation membership: Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church, St. Ann, MO

Congregational Activities: 20 year ordination anniversary, 10 years in current call

Synodical/Churchwide Activities: Current co-dean of Eastern Missouri Conference, Taught lay-preaching course for Lutheran School of Theology in St. Louis, Synod coordinator for the Quality of Call Initiative for Women of the ELCA, Served one term as at-large member of Synod Council

Community Activities: Pattonville Community Action Team (Organization that aids collaboration between Pattonville School District and local non-profits)

Served one term on Resolutions Committee **YOUTH:** No **YOUNG ADULT:** No **POC/LOE:** No

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Discipline Committee Members

Position: Discipline Committee

Name: Ms. Pat Bjuland

Congregation membership: Atonement Lutheran, Overland Park, KS

Congregational Activities: PMA, Library Coordinator, Write weekly Prayers of the People for worship, schedule worship assistants, worship coordinators, and prayer readers for worship, Stewardship Committee, Personnel Committee, Stephen Minister, Outreach Team

Synodical/Churchwide Activities: Chair of the synod nominating committee since 2015, Consultation Committee 2016-2022

Community Activities: Good Faith Network, MLM

YOUTH: No **YOUNG ADULT:** No **POC/LOE:** No

Position: Discipline Committee

Name: Ms. Cathy Hohl

Congregation membership: Lutheran Church of the Atonement, Florissant, MO

Congregational Activities: Previously on Stewardship Committee, Endowment Committee, Church Council, and numerous ad hoc committees. Currently congregational president, adult choir, and creation care team.

Synodical/Churchwide Activities: Attended two most recent synod assemblies.

Community Activities: Various events sponsored by neighborhood or congregation.

YOUTH: No **YOUNG ADULT:** No **POC/LOE:** No

Position: Discipline Committee

Name: Mr. Dennis Kemper

Congregation membership: Unity Evangelical Church, Bel Nor, MO

Congregational Activities: Parish Ministry Associate, Assistant Treasurer, Various ad hoc committees (constitution update, emergency procedure update, etc.), Stewardship committee, Worship committee, Lector, Assisting Minister

Synodical/Churchwide Activities: Treasurer Lutheran School of Theology - St Louis, Board Chair of Lutheran Elementary School Association, Pulpit supply for Our Savior Lutheran Church, Salem, MO

Community Activities:

YOUTH: No **YOUNG ADULT:** No **POC/LOE:** No

Position: Discipline Committee

Name: Rev. Steven Cauley

Congregation membership: Living Lord Lutheran Church, Lake St. Louis, MO

Congregational Activities: Senior Pastor of Living Lord Lutheran Church since 2020.

Synodical/Churchwide Activities: National Development Council Lutheran Men-in-Mission.

Community Activities:

YOUTH: No **YOUNG ADULT:** No **POC/LOE:** No

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2023 Nomination Biographical Information

Anyone accepting nomination for a Synod Council position must have a background check and therefore fill out a disclosure form. This does not apply to nominees for the Consultation and Discipline Committees or Churchwide voting members.

Conference _____

Position Nominated for: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____ e-mail: _____

Congregational membership (include city/state): _____

Congregational activities: _____

Synodical/churchwide activities: _____

Community activities: _____

Person of color/language other than English? ____ yes ____ no

Youth (younger than 18 years old) ____ yes ____ no (DOB _____)

Young Adult (between 18 & 30 years old) ____ yes ____ no (DOB _____)

Nominated by: _____

*Please return this form no later than **April 15, 2023** to Central States Synod, 420 W. 14th St., Suite 101, Kansas City, MO 64105 or Tim Anderson at tanderson@css-elca.org*

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Disclosure Form

As part of the election process, the Central States Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, requires, by continuing resolution S9.12.A08, that a background check be obtained for all nominees for synod officers and synod council members, **except for youth**. Please return this form directly to Tim Anderson at the synod office or by e-mail to tanderson@css-elca.org.

AUTHORIZATION

During the 2023 nominating and election process and at any time during the tenure of any position as a synod officer or Synod Council member to which I may be elected, I hereby authorize First Advantage Background Services, Corporation, P.O. Box 105292, Atlanta, GA 30348, 1-800-845-6004, on behalf of the Central States Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to verify my social security number and do a check of the national criminal data base for any convictions. An additional credit history check will be done for the nominees for the position of the synod treasurer. I understand that I may request a complete and accurate disclosure of the nature and scope of the background verification.

Nominee Name (Please print and include middle name)

Address (Complete address with city/state/zip)

Nominee Signature

Date

Social Security Number *

Date of Birth

*For Identification Purposes Only

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SYNOD CONSTITUTION UPDATES & PROPOSED CHANGES

At the recent 2022 Churchwide Assembly, several changes were made to the required provisions in the model synod constitutions. Our synod secretary, Chad Langdon, reported the substantive changes to the Synod Council and according to †S18.11, amendments to required provisions in the Constitution for Synods passed by the Churchwide Assembly are automatically incorporated into the constitutions of individual synods.

The new model synod constitution also had some options and recommended changes to make. At the October 2022 Synod Council meeting, we discussed these optional changes and made some decisions.

- Recommended constitutional provision changes may be adopted by a majority vote at the Synod Assembly. This applies to changes 2, 4 & 5 listed below.
- By-laws may be adopted by a two-thirds vote at a Synod Assembly. This applies to changes 1 & 3 listed below.

In addition to changes required by the 2022 Churchwide Assembly, the synod council proposes the following changes, which will be presented for adoption at the 2023 Central States Synod Assembly:

Change #1 was made to address the ability to have online assemblies. We deliberately wanted to keep an annual assembly. This is a change to a by-law.

S7.11.01. A regular meeting of the Synod Assembly shall be held annually. The **time and place time, place, and format** of the synod assembly shall be determined by the synod council.

Change #2 was recommended by the 2022 Churchwide Assembly and made so that it is easier to have a quorum for Synod Assemblies. This is a change to a provision, but is not required.

S7.14. **One-half One-third** of the voting members of the Synod Assembly, as defined by †S7.21., S7.24., S7.27., shall constitute a quorum.

Change #3 was made to combine the following two provisions into one, ensuring that all rostered ministers (retired, on disability, and on leave from call) may attend the Synod Assembly as voting members. This is a change to a by-law.

S7.22.01. All retired ministers, and those designated as disabled on the rosters of this synod shall serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly. All registration fees (not including housing and meals) will be waived for all retired ministers on the rosters of this synod. In the event at least 60 percent of the assembly membership is not lay, the retired ministers of word and sacrament together with the ministers of word and sacrament on leave from call will caucus and elect the appropriate representation.

S7.22.02. All rostered ministers on the roster of the synod who are on leave from call, may serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with †S7.21.c. In the event at least 60 percent of the assembly membership is not lay, the retired ministers of word and sacrament together with the ministers on leave from call will caucus and elect the appropriate representation.

S7.22.01. All retired ministers, those designated as disabled on the rosters of this synod, and all rostered ministers who are on leave from call may serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with †S7.21. All registration fees (not including housing and meals) will be waived for all retired ministers on the rosters of this synod. In the event at least 60 percent of the assembly membership is not lay, the retired ministers, those designated as disabled on the

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rosters of this synod, and the rostered ministers on leave from call will caucus together and elect the appropriate representation.

Change #4 recognizes a change in the required provision coming from the 2022 Churchwide Assembly. The required provision struck the words “proclaiming God’s love for the world” and replaced them with a broader description of what that might look like. We felt it was important however, to keep the words “proclaiming God’s love for the world” so we added them back in as an additional statement.

The required provision change:

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

a. Every minister of Word and Sacrament shall:

[...]

8) speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God’s love for the world 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.

Our addition to the required provision:

9) proclaim God’s love for the world.

Change #5 recognizes a change in the required provision coming from the 2022 Churchwide Assembly, but seeks to make the same correction listed above in Change #4. Whereas Change #4 addresses the duties of a minister of Word and Sacrament, this change addresses the duties of a minister of Word and Service. Again, we felt it was important to keep the words “proclaiming God’s love for the world” so we added them back in as an additional statement.

The required provision change:

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

[...]

c. Speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God’s love for the world, witnessing to the realm of God in the community, the nation, and abroad 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;

Our addition to the required provision:

j. proclaim God’s love for the world.

Central States Synod 2023 Synod Assembly

June 3, 2023

CONSTITUTION, BYLAWS and CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

Central States Synod

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Amended at synod assembly on June 5, 2021

Chapter 1

NAME AND INCORPORATION

- †S1.01. The name of this synod, as determined by the Churchwide Assembly, shall be the Central States Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- †S1.02. For the purposes of this constitution and the accompanying by-laws, the Central States 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 States of Missouri and Kansas.
- S3.01.01. The exceptions shall be those congregations which are assigned to an adjacent synod and including those congregations from an adjacent state which are assigned to this synod, all in accordance with the constitution and bylaws and continuing resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- †3.02. “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 10.01.03

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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

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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:
- 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.
 - 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.
 - Serve in response to God's love to meet human needs, caring for the sick and the aged, advocating dignity and justice for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, and standing with the poor and powerless, and committing itself to their needs.
 - Worship God in proclamation of the Word and administration of the sacraments and through lives of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, witness, and service.
 - 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.
 - 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. This synod, in cooperation 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:
- Provide for pastoral care of congregations and rostered ministers in the synod;
 - Plan for, facilitate, and nurture the mission of this church through congregations;
 - 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.
 - Interpret the work of this church to congregations and to the public on the territory of the synod.
- †S6.03.01. The responsibilities of the synod include the following:
- providing for pastoral care of congregations, ministers of Word and Sacrament, and ministers of Word and Service, including:

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- 1) approving candidates for the ministry of Word and Sacrament in cooperation with the appropriate seminaries of this church, which may be done through multi-synod committees;
 - 2) authorizing ordinations and ordaining ministers of Word and Sacrament on behalf of this church;
 - 3) approving ministers of Word and Service, which may be done through multi-synod committees;
 - 4) authorizing ordinations and ordaining ministers of Word and Service on behalf of this church; and
 - 5) consulting in the calling 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 and 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 relationships 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 supportive funding;

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- d. supporting relationships with and providing supportive funding on behalf of colleges, universities, and campus ministries;
- e. maintaining relationships with and providing supportive 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 companions
- 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.

†S6.04. 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 lay persons; and that, at least 45 percent of the lay members of assemblies, councils, committees, boards, or other organizational units shall be women and at least 45 percent shall be men; and that, where possible, the representation of ministers of Word and Sacrament 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 10 percent of the membership of Synod Assemblies, councils, committees, boards, and/or other organizational units be persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English.

†S6.04.02. 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

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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 the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- †S7.11.¹ A regular meeting of the Synod Assembly shall be held at least triennially.
- S7.11.01. A regular meeting of the Synod Assembly shall be held annually. The time and place of the synod assembly shall be determined by the synod council.

S7.11.B.18 TRAVEL EQUALIZATION

That the Central States Synod at its 1991 Synod Assembly approves the following plan for travel equalization among Congregations who send official voting members to Synod Assemblies beginning in 1992.

- a. All congregations shall be treated the same; any congregation further than 100 miles (one way) from the Assembly site is eligible to submit a voucher for travel equalization.
- b. An Equalization Fund be established for each Assembly by adding a specified amount to each congregational voting member's registration fee. This fee will vary, depending upon Assembly site.
- c. Reimbursement will be at the Synod Rate or (if the Fund does not permit) at a rate calculated by the total Fund divided by the total miles submitted.
- d. Reimbursement will be for travel by one car per congregation or by other public conveyance at the same rate as a car.
- e. The Travel Equalization sheet must be signed at the end of the Assembly's closing worship, and checks made out to congregations which qualified and signed for the equalization reimbursement will then be processed following the Assembly.

S7.11.H.18 RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE

That the Synod Council shall appoint a Resolutions Committee.

- a. The Committee shall consist of 6 persons.

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- 1) Members of the Committee need not be voting members of the corresponding Synod Assembly.
 - 2) One person will be appointed from each Conference, in consultation with that Conference's leadership.
 - 3) One person, to serve as Committee Chair, shall be an at-large appointment
 - 4) Appointments shall be by the synod council for a term of three years, Members shall be limited to no more than two consecutive terms on the Committee.
 - 5) Members of the Committee who are not voting members of the Assembly shall have voice, but not vote.
- b. The functions of the Resolutions Committee are to:
- 1) Ensure that resolutions submitted for consideration to the Synod Assembly are in the proper form;
 - 2) Eliminate duplication when similar resolutions are offered;
 - 3) Present resolutions in a logical sequence to allow adequate consideration of each; and
- c. Resolutions for consideration by the Synod Assembly will be regarded as properly received when:
- 1) The resolution is submitted by a synodical committee, team, or conference of the Central States Synod; by an individual who is a voting member of a congregation of this Synod; or by an agency or institution recognized by the Synod.
 - 2) The resolution is received in the Synod office:
 - a) No less than 45 days prior to the opening of the Assembly; or
 - b) No less than seven days prior to the opening of the Assembly if it directly relates to an item of business on the published proposed Assembly agenda; or
 - c) No less than seven days prior to the opening of the Assembly if it is of such an urgent nature that it clearly cannot be postponed until the next Assembly.
- d. Properly received resolutions will be considered by the Committee.
- 1) The Resolutions Committee will convene after the 45 day deadline to consider all properly received resolutions. The meeting will be scheduled to ensure that the resolutions will be available to Assembly voting members as part of the pre-Assembly material.
 - 2) The Resolutions Committee may meet prior to the beginning of the Assembly to consider resolutions that were properly received according to c.2).b). and c.2).c).
 - 3) The Resolutions Committee may meet during the Assembly to serve the Assembly as directed by the Assembly or the officers of the Synod.
 - 4) All those submitting resolutions will be contacted by a member of the resolutions committee to address any concerns or questions regarding the resolution.

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- e. The Resolutions Committee will take action on every properly received resolution. The Committee may take the following actions:
 - 1) The Committee may report the resolution to the Assembly as submitted.
 - 2) By a three-quarters majority vote of the Committee, the Committee may act to not report the resolution (withholding it from consideration by the Assembly). The properly received resolution will be made available to the Assembly members, and the Committee chair will announce that the resolution is not reported. The Assembly may direct the Committee to report the resolution according to the provisions of *Robert's Rules of Order*.
 - 3) Where more than one properly received resolution deals with the same concern, the Committee may consolidate the substance of the resolutions in one resolution. In doing so, the original resolutions will be included as background. By a majority vote, the Assembly may direct the Committee to present the originally submitted resolutions rather than considering the consolidated resolution.
 - 4) The Committee may submit an alternative resolution or may choose to make substantive changes to the submitted resolution. In doing so, the original resolution(s) will be included as background. By a majority vote, the Assembly may direct the Committee to present the originally submitted resolution(s) rather than considering the alternative resolution.
 - 5) The Committee Chair may present the resolution to the Assembly and move that the matter be referred by the Bishop to an appropriate synodical committee, team, or task force, or that it be referred to legal counsel.
 - 6) In fulfilling its role, the Committee may deem it necessary to present a resolution drafted by the Committee. The Assembly, Committees of the Assembly, or the Presiding Officer of the Assembly may direct the Committee to present a resolution drafted by the Committee.
 - 7) Together with one of the other allowed actions, by a three-quarters majority vote of the Committee, the Committee chair may move to limit debate on a specific resolution.

S7.11.I.21 On those years when the assembly is held in person, planning for Synod Assemblies will provide opportunities for the youth voting members to get together for fellowship, be oriented to the purpose and procedures of the assembly, and be fully engaged in 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

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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 voting members of the Synod Assembly, as defined by †S7.21., S7.24., S7.27., shall constitute a quorum.
- †S7.21.** The membership of the Synod Assembly, of which at least 60 percent of the voting membership shall be composed of laypersons, shall be constituted as follows:
- a. All ministers of Word and Sacrament under call on the roster of this synod in attendance at this Synod Assembly shall be voting members.
 - b. All ministers of Word and Service under call, on the rosters of this synod shall be voting members in the Synod Assembly.
 - c. 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, typically one of whom shall be a man and one of whom shall be a woman, 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 at least 45 percent of the lay members of the assembly shall be women and at least 45 percent shall be men.
 - d. Voting membership shall include the officers of this synod.
- †S7.21.01.** Voting members shall begin serving with the opening of a regular Synod Assembly and shall continue serving until voting members are seated at the next regular Synod Assembly.
- †S7.21.02** If a special 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 Synod Assembly.
- S7.21.03.** The formula established by the Synod Council to provide additional lay representation from congregations on the basis of the number of baptized members in the congregation shall be as follows:
- a. A minimum of two lay members elected by each congregation related to this synod, shall be voting members. Additional lay representation from congregations shall be on the basis of the number of baptized members as reported in the most recently published parochial reports. Congregations having 500-1500 baptized members shall have 4 voting members; 1501-2500 baptized members shall have 6 voting members; and over 2500 baptized members shall have 8 voting members. No more than 50 percent of the voting members from a congregation shall be of the same gender.
 - b. In the event that a congregation is unable to adhere to S.7.21.03a at their annual meeting, the congregation may request a waiver to be filed with the Synod Office by March 1. Such a request for waiver must state in detail the process followed to elect the voting members and the reasons for requesting a waiver. The Synod Council shall rule

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upon the request at their spring meeting. The Synod Council in acting on these waiver requests shall seek to ensure that no more than 50 percent of the lay members of the assembly shall be of the same gender. The Synod Council will report their decision back to the congregation in a timely manner.

- c. Any congregation may elect an additional lay voting member from its membership to the Synod Assembly provided that the person is a person of color or whose primary language is other than English.
- d. Any congregation may elect a youth from its voting membership as an additional lay voting member to the Synod Assembly provided that the person has not yet reached their 18th birthday at the time of election and otherwise meets the requirements to be a voting member.

S7.22. This synod may establish processes that permit retired-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. above. 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.

S7.22.01. All retired ministers, and those designated as disabled on the rosters of this synod shall serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly. All registration fees (not including housing and meals) will be waived for all retired ministers on the rosters of this synod. In the event at least 60 percent of the assembly membership is not lay, the retired ministers of word and sacrament together with the ministers of word and sacrament on leave from call will caucus and elect the appropriate representation.

S7.22.02. All rostered ministers on the roster of the synod who are on leave from call, may serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with †S7.21.c. In the event at least 60 percent of the assembly membership is not lay, the retired ministers of word and sacrament together with the ministers on leave from call will caucus and elect the appropriate representation.

†S7.23. The presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and such other official representatives of the churchwide organization as may be designated by the presiding bishop 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.A18 A rostered minister of the Evangelical Lutheran Church who is rostered in a synod other than the Central States Synod who is serving as interim pastor in a congregation of the Central States Synod, shall have the privilege of voice, but not vote, at the Central States Synod Assembly. This pastor shall have the privilege of sitting on the floor with the voting members of the congregation the pastor is serving.

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.

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- S7.24.A. 21** A Synod Authorized Minister serving under a covenant by authority of the Bishop of the Central States Synod shall have the privilege of voice and vote at assemblies of the Central States Synod.
- †S7.25.** Except as otherwise provided 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.
- S7.26.01.** Synod Authorized Worshipping Communities of the Synod, shall have one lay member as their representative and voting member at the Synod Assembly.
- S7.27.** This synod may establish processes through the Synod Council to grant an ordained minister from a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established 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 ordained minister's service in a congregation of this church.
- S7.27.01.** Consistent with the language of 8.72.14 of the Constitution and Bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, an ordained minister from a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by a Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America will be granted the privilege of both voice and vote in the Synod Assembly during the period of that ordained minister's service in a congregation of this synod, in accord with ELCA churchwide by-law 8.72.12.
- 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 the Synod Assembly.
- S7.32.** Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure 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 I:
- Preach, teach, and administer the sacraments in accord with the Confession of Faith of this church.

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- 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 synodical 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. Ordain (or provide for the ordination 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 this synod, letters of call for persons called by the Synod Council, and letters of call for persons on the rosters 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 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) Be a member of the Conference of Bishops and Consult regularly with other synod 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

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- 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 this synod and the churchwide organization are duly observed within the synod, and that the actions of this synod in conformity therewith are carried into effect;
 - 4) Exercise supervision over the work of the other officers;
 - 5) Coordinate 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 this synod, except as otherwise provided in the 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 their retired or disability status took effect:
 - 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:
 - a) additions to and subtractions from the rosters of this synod,
 - b) the issuance of certificate of transfer for rostered ministers 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 roster 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 parochial 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 secretary of this church. 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

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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 synodical bishops:

- a. Whenever a synod-bishop determines that a matter of the kind described in †S8.16.01.b. may require his or her 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 provision 7.46. of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* (†S14.13.), 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.

S8.22.01. The vice president shall chair the Executive Committee.

S8.22.02. The vice president is an ex officio member of synod teams, committees, and task forces. "Ex officio" as used herein means membership with full rights of voice and vote unless otherwise expressly limited.

S8.22.A04. The vice president shall be a voting member of the Churchwide Assembly.

†S8.23. In the event of the death, resignation, or disability of the bishop, 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 conduct of the duties of the bishop until a new bishop shall be elected or, in the case of temporary disability, until the bishop resumes full performance of the duties of the office.

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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 a rostered minister.

†S8.32. The secretary shall:

- a. Keep the minutes of all meetings of the Synod Assembly and Synod Council, be responsible for the printing and 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.

S8.32.01. The secretary shall provide information to the Synod Council and the Nominations Committee regarding positions to be elected and goals for ensuring diversity in filling elected positions (cf. S9.03.02. and S10.07.05.).

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 rostered minister.

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 acknowledgment 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. Giving of corporate surety in the amount determined by the Synod Council, which shall be in the custody of the secretary, and the premium therefore shall be paid by this synod. Fidelity coverage provided by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be deemed a fulfillment of this requirement.

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S8.50. General Provisions

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

- 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 re-elected. The officer shall serve until his or her successor takes office.
- c. The treasurer of this synod shall be elected to a four-year term and may be re-elected. The treasurer shall serve until his or her successor take office.

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, 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; for such conduct as would subject the officer to disciplinary action as a rostered minister of 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 elected members present and voting;
 - 2) The Synod Assembly on an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of its members

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- present and voting;
- 3) at least 10 synodical 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 elected 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 the 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, other than those 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 bylaws 20.22.01 and as defined under the process described in the ELCA constitutional provisions 20.21 and 20.22 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 20.23.01 and as defined under the process described in the ELCA constitutional provisions 20.21 and 20.22 as grounds for discipline.
- g. If the officer is a layperson, grounds for recall or dismissal includes those set forth in the ELCA bylaws 20.41.01. as grounds for discipline.
- h. If the case of alleged and willful disregard or 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 the ELCA bylaw 20.22.14 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, the bishop, with the consent of the Synod Council, may appoint as acting bishop for such period a minister

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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.
- S9.03. There shall be a Nominating Committee consisting of not less than five or more than fifteen members who shall be appointed by the Synod Council 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 five members with one member from each conference. One of the members will serve as chair of the Nominating Committee.
- S9.03.02. At the time of the appointment and acceptance of the members of the Nominating Committee, the Secretary of this Synod shall cause the following information to be published in the publication(s) of this Synod:
- a. The names, telephone numbers, e-mail addresses, and conference of each member of the Nominating Committee;
 - b. The positions open for nomination/election with the specific characteristics and term of office of each.
- S9.03.03. At the first meeting of the Nominating Committee, the Secretary of this Synod shall provide the chairperson of the Nominating Committee with a list of all positions open for nomination/election and the specific category, conference, and characteristics for each position.
- S9.03.04. Every attempt shall be made by the Nominating Committee to obtain at least one nominee for each open position on the Synod Council and other elective positions. In no case where the plan for inclusive representation lists specific characteristics shall nominees with differing characteristics be placed in nomination for the same position in order to fill this requirement.
- S9.03.05. Persons may be nominated from the floor of the Assembly for all positions on the ballot providing:
- a. The person nominated fulfills the specific characteristics for that position;
 - b. The nominee has consented to nomination in writing and that written consent is submitted at the time of nomination.
- S9.03.06. Should the Nominating Committee be unable to find a candidate for a position that meets all of the requirements for that position, the Nominating Committee shall:
- a. search for a person of the other gender to fill the position,
 - b. search for a person of the same gender but with a differing racial characteristic.

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- S9.04.** The bishop shall be elected by the Synod Assembly by ecclesiastical ballot. Three-fourths of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election on the first ballot. If no one is elected, the first ballot shall be considered the nominating ballot. Three-fourths of the legal votes cast on the second ballot shall be necessary for election. The third ballot shall be limited to the seven persons (plus ties) who received the greatest number of legal votes on the second ballot, and two-thirds of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election. The fourth ballot shall be limited to the three persons (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of legal votes on the third ballot, and 60 percent of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election. On subsequent ballots a majority of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election. These ballots shall be limited to the two persons (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of legal votes on the previous ballot.
- 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.
- S9.12.A21.** The Synod Council Executive Committee shall provide for background checks for persons nominated, including nominations for an additional term, for positions as synod officers and Synod Council members, with the exception of youth members or nominees who are still regarded as minors or juveniles according to prevailing law, prior to the Synod Assembly at which the election will take place or as soon as possible after the Synod Assembly for newly elected synod officers and Synod Councils members nominated from the floor. The process shall be as follows:
- a. Prior to the Synod Assembly appropriate notice of the background check requirement and protocol will be provided to voting members, potential nominees, and others as directed by the Synod Council.
 - b. Nominees and newly elected synod officers and Synod Council members are required to provide written consent to a background check and all information necessary to complete a background check, which should be completed prior to the Synod Assembly

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with respect to nominees identified before the assembly and prior to installation for newly elected synod officers and Synod Council members and officers nominated from the floor, if possible.

- c. All records regarding elected officers and Synod Council members shall be maintained for at least five years following the person's leaving office or no longer serving on the Synod Council. Records may be retained longer as determined by the Synod Council Executive Committee on an individual basis. One synod staff person may be designated to assist in obtaining and maintaining records as directed by the designated Synod Council Executive Committee member.
- d. All background checks for nominees and newly elected synod officer and Synod Council members will entail a criminal background check. A financial background check will be completed for nominees for treasurer and newly elected bishops. The Executive Committee shall decide whether additional types of background checks are appropriate for each synod officer and Synod Council member position.
- e. The background check results shall be provided to that nominee or elected synod officer or Synod Council member and to the Synod Council's Executive Committee. Further disclosure of the results may be determined by the Executive Committee but should ordinarily be restricted to matters of public record.
- f. The Synod Council Executive Committee may adopt other procedures or protocols as are necessary to provide for background checks for nominees and newly elected synod officers and newly elected Synod Council members and shall report such actions to the Synod Council.

Chapter 10

Synod Council

- †S10.01.** The Synod Council consisting of the four officers of the 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 members, shall be three years.
- S10.01.01.** For the purposes of this chapter, "youth" and "young adult" are defined as stated in †S6.04.02. One youth and one young adult shall be elected as members of the Synod Council.
- S10.01.02.** The youth member shall be elected for a term of two years.
- †S10.02.** The Synod Council shall be the board of directors of the 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

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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:
- Exercise trusteeship responsibilities on behalf of this synod.
 - Recommend program goals and budgets to the regular meetings of the Synod Assembly.
 - Carry out the resolutions of the Synod Assembly.
 - Provide for an annual review of the roster of ministers, receive and act upon appropriate recommendations regarding those persons whose status is subject to reconsideration and action under the constitution and bylaws of ELCA, and make a report to the Synod Assembly of the Synod Council's actions in this regard.
 - Issue letters of call to rostered ministers as authorized by Chapter 7 of the constitution and bylaws of ELCA.
 - 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 the synod.
 - Report its action to the regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.
 - 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.
- S10.03.01.** The Synod Council shall provide for review of constitutions and bylaws of congregations in accord with †C17.03 and †C17.04 of the *Model Constitution for Congregations* and for review of area ministry constitutions. Similar review of constitutions shall be made available to auxiliary organizations.
- 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.
- S10.06.01.** When a Synod Council member has been absent without valid reason from two consecutive meetings of the Synod Council, a member of the Executive Committee shall contact that member. If it is determined that the Synod Council member is unable to carry out the term of office, a letter of resignation shall be requested. If a resignation is not submitted, the Executive Committee can, through vote, take action to dismiss the member. The Executive Committee shall, in writing, inform the individual of the formal action.
- 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 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.** Members of the Synod Council (other than the officers) shall begin their terms at the close of the Synod Assembly at which they are elected. Members of the Synod Council (other than the

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officers and youth) shall serve for three years or until their successors are elected, and may be re-elected for one consecutive term.

S10.07.03. Terms of two years or more shall be considered as a full term.

S10.07.04. One of the 10-24 members shall be a minister of word and service.

S10.07.05. The 10 to 24 members of the Synod Council who are not elected officers of the Synod and who are not elected to youth positions as provided in S10.01.02. shall be:

- a. One rostered minister or one layperson from each conference
- b. An additional 5 to 7 members elected at large by the Synod Assembly will include one youth, one young adult, one minister of word and service, and two persons of color or primary language other than English.
- c. At any given time, at least 60 percent of the members (other than officers) so elected shall be laity, at least 45 percent of the lay members shall be women and at least 45 percent shall be men.

S10.07.06. The Secretary of this Synod, in consultation with the Synod Council, shall maintain a chart of the individual characteristics of each position on the Synod Council and shall instruct the Nominating Committee of the characteristics of each position open for nomination and election.

S10.07.07. The Synod Council shall meet at least twice a year.

S10.07.08. In the situation of a vacancy on the Synod Council, the Executive Committee is empowered to appoint a person to fill that vacancy using the guidelines set forth in †S6.04 and S11.11. At the Synod Council meeting following such an appointment, the Council shall vote to ratify the appointee to fill the unexpired term.

S10.07.09. The following procedures shall apply to appointment to vacated positions on the Synod Council:

- a. Where the person elected fits all of the characteristics of that position as detailed by the plan for inclusive representation:
 - 1) the person(s) on the original ballot shall be approached first;
 - 2) should a. 1) be ineffective, the appointed personnel shall have the same characteristics as the person vacating the position;
 - 3) should a. 1) and 2) prove impossible, any person may be appointed within the restrictions of rostered minister of word and sacrament or layperson as they apply to the position.
- b. Where the person occupying the position does not fit the characteristics for that position as detailed by the plan for inclusive representation;
 - 1) the original characteristics for that position shall be in force;
 - 2) should b. 1) be ineffective, the procedure outlined in a. shall apply.
- d. Following appointment and completion of a single term, a position shall revert to the original characteristics for that position in the nomination/election process.

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

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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.

S.11.01.01.

The Executive Committee shall be composed of the four elected officers plus three others ratified by the Synod Council from its body.

- a. The Executive Committee shall serve as the interim authority for the Synod Council between meetings of the Synod Council. It may make decisions which are not in conflict with the actions taken by the Synod Council or 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.
- b. The Executive Committee may act on other specific issues when given authority to do so by the Synod Council.
- c. The Executive Committee shall execute its responsibilities as found elsewhere in this constitution, which are required by the ELCA Model Constitution. These are specified in the following paragraphs; †S6.03.e (8), S.8.22.02., S8.55, †S8.56, S10.06.01, S10.07.04, †S11.01, †S11.04, †S17.01, †S17.02, †S17.03, and †S17.04.

S11.01.A18

The Synod Council shall establish and appoint such teams and committees as deemed necessary to carry out the mission and ministry of this synod.

- a. As much as possible, the composition of all teams or committees shall conform to †S6.04 of this constitution.
- b. The terms of office, normally 2 to 5 years, shall be determined by the Synod Council. Members of teams and committees may be re-appointed unless otherwise directed by this constitution.
- c. The Bishop shall assign staff responsibility for each team or committee to provide advice, support and counsel.
- d. Meetings of the teams and committees shall be public and ordinarily notice of each meeting shall be published in advance of the meeting date.
- e. Each team and committee shall report annually to the Synod Council.

†S11.02.

The Consultation Committee of this synod shall consist of at least 6 persons and not more than 12 persons, of whom half shall be ministers of Word and Sacrament 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.

S11.02.01.

The Consultation Committee shall consist of six persons.

†S11.03.

The Committee on Discipline of this synod shall consist of 12 persons of whom 6 shall be ministers of Word and Sacrament and 6 shall be laypersons, who shall each be elected by the Synod Assembly for a term of six years without consecutive reelection.

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- 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 terms of committee members shall be staggered so that the terms of four committee members (2 clergy and 2 lay) expire every two years.
- c. 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.

S11.04.01 The Executive Committee may act as the Mutual Ministry Committee.

†S11.05. The Audit Committee of this synod shall consist of three to six persons, none of whom is a member 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 ordained ministers on the roster 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 entities, 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 affiliates.

S12.01.A.18 Beginning July 1, 2018 the synod shall be divided into five Conferences

- a. The purposes of the Conference are to:
 - 1) Strengthen each congregation's mission in its setting.
 - 2) Encourage cooperation among congregations within each conference. -
 - 3) Strengthen the care and nurture of rostered persons and their families.
 - 4) Connect congregations, synod ministries, and churchwide resources to one another in order to equip laity and rostered ministers for ministry.

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- b. All congregations, synod agencies and institutional ministries are encouraged to relate to any or all Conferences as best serves this church's mission. Rostered ministers serving a specialized ministry will associate with the Conference of the congregation where they hold membership.

The names of and congregations in the Conferences are:

1) Western Kansas

Albert, KS (Peace); Bird City, KS (St. John); Brewster, KS (Our Savior); Dodge City, KS (Parroquia El Divino Nino); Dorrance, KS (First); Ellis, KS (St. John); Galatia, KS (St. Paul); Garden City, KS (Iglesia Luterana Sagrado Corazon de Jesus); Garden City, KS (St. James); Garfield, KS (Garfield); Great Bend, KS (St. Mark); Great Bend, KS (Trinity); Hays, KS (Trinity); Hoisington, KS (Emmanuel); Kensington, KS (St. John); Lincoln, KS (Denmark); Lucas, KS (Gloria Dei); Ness City, KS (Our Redeemer); Oberlin, KS (Faith); Otis, KS (Trinity); Phillipsburg, KS (Zion); Rush Center, KS (Hope); Russell, KS (St. John); Saint Francis, KS (Salem); Sharon Springs, KS (Sharon); Smith Center, KS (American); Stuttgart, KS (Emmanuel); WaKeeney, KS (Bethlehem); WaKeeney, KS (Emanuel); WaKeeney, KS (Immanuel); WaKeeney, KS (Zion); Wilson, KS (Excelsior); Wilson, KS (Immanuel); Winona, KS (Bethesda)

2) Central Kansas

Assaria, KS (Assaria); Belleville, KS (American); Beloit, KS (Zion); Burdick, KS (Hebron); Concordia, KS (Concordia); Courtland, KS (Ada); Derby, KS (Cross of Glory); Eureka, KS (Christ); Falun, KS (Falun); Glasco, KS (St. Paul); Greenleaf (Trinity); Hanover, KS (St. John); Hanover, KS (Zion); Haysville, KS (Resurrection); Herington, KS (St. Paul); Hollenberg, KS (Emanuel); Hutchinson, KS (Zion); Junction City, KS (Faith); Leonardville, KS (Walsburg); Lindsborg, KS (Bethany); Lindsborg, KS (Messiah); Manhattan, KS (First); Manhattan, KS (KSU Campus Ministry); Manhattan, KS (Peace); Marquette, KS (Elim); McPherson, KS (Trinity); McPherson, KS (New Gottland); New Cambria, KS (Peace); Olsburg, KS (Olsburg); Onaga, KS (New Hope); Peabody, KS (St. Paul); Salina, KS (Immanuel); Salina, KS (Redeemer); Salina, KS (St. John); Scandia, KS (Amana); Smolan, KS (Salemsborg); Tescott, KS (St. Paul); Washington, KS (Good Shepherd); Waterville, KS (St. Mark); Wellington, KS (St. John); White City, KS (Marion Hill); Wichita, KS (Christ); Wichita, KS (Gloria Dei); Wichita, KS (Partners); Wichita, KS (Reformation); Wichita, KS (St. Paul); Windom, KS (Andover);

3) Border

Atchison, KS (St. Mark); Belton, MO (Lord of Love); Bendena, KS (St. John); Blue Springs, MO (All Saints); Emporia, KS (St. Mark); Kansas City, KS (St. Martin); Kansas City, MO (The Gathering Table); Kansas City, MO (Gloria Dei); Kansas City, MO (Immanuel); Kansas City, MO (Oromo Mission); Kansas City, MO (St. James); Kansas City, MO (St. Mark Hope and Peace); Lancaster, KS (St. John); Lawrence, KS (KU Campus Ministry); Lawrence, KS (Good Shepherd); Lawrence,

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KS (Trinity); Lee's Summit, MO (Martin Luther); Lenexa, KS (Kaw Prairie); Lenexa, KS (Salem); Liberty, MO (Hosanna!); Mission Hills, KS (First); Olathe, KS (Advent); Olathe, KS, (St. Mark); Osage City, KS (Grace); Overland Park, KS (Atonement); Overland Park, KS (Holy Cross); Overland Park, KS (Overland Park); Prairie Village, KS (Lutheran Church of Resurrection); Raytown, MO (Blue Ridge Trinity); Robinson, KS. (Upper Wolf); Saint Joseph, MO (First); Saint Joseph, MO (South Sudanese); Spring Hill, KS (Hillside); Topeka, KS (First); Topeka, KS (Our Savior); Topeka, KS (Trinity); Valley Falls, (St. Paul).

4) Osage

Butler, MO (St. Matthew American); Camdenton, MO, (Our Savior); Cole Camp, MO (Immanuel Brauersville); Cole Camp, MO (St. Paul); Cole Camp, MO (United); Columbia, MO (St. Andrew); Eagle Rock, MO (Community); Hollister, MO (Peace); Jefferson City, MO (Our Savior); Joplin, MO (Peace); Lohman, MO (St. Paul); Nevada, MO (St. Paul); Pittsburg, KS (St. John); Rolla, MO (Hope); Russellville, MO (Trinity); Salem, MO (Our Savior); Salisbury, MO (Peace); Savonburg, KS (Friends Home); Sedalia, MO (Christ & Trinity); Springfield, MO (Messiah); Springfield, MO (Prince of Peace); Stover, MO (Pymont Trinity); Sunrise Beach, MO (Kent Memorial); West Plains, MO (St. Paul)

5) **Eastern Missouri**

Bel-Nor, MO (Unity); Cape Girardeau, MO (St. Mark); Chesterfield, MO (Trinity); Clayton, MO (St. Mark); Creve Coeur, MO (Holy Cross); Desoto, MO (Redeemer); Ferguson, MO (Zion); Florissant, MO (Lutheran Church of the Atonement); Florissant, MO (Lutheran Church of the Living Christ); Hazelwood, MO (Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd); Imperial, MO (Family of Christ); Kirkwood, MO (Trinity); Lake St. Louis, MO (Living Lord); Manchester, MO (Good Shepherd); Poplar Bluff, MO (St. Andrew); Saint Ann, MO (Shepherd of the Hills) Saint Charles, MO (The Bridge); St. Charles, MO (Hope); Saint Louis, MO (Bethel); Saint Louis, MO (Gethsemane); Saint Louis, MO (Holy Trinity); Saint Louis, MO (Resurrection); Saint Louis, MO (St. Louis Campus Ministry); Saint Louis, MO (St. Thomas-Holy Spirit); St. Louis, MO (St. Phillip) Sedgewickville, MO (Sargent's Chapel); Sedgewickville, MO (Sedgewickville); Sullivan, MO (Peace); Washington, MO (Peace); Webster Groves, MO (Bethany); Webster Groves, MO (Christ)

- c. Each Conference shall organize itself to plan and implement its mission purposes, and in consultation with the Bishop's office to develop a plan to strengthen pastoral care for rostered ministers and their families.

- 1) The Conference Deans shall be ministers of Word and Sacrament appointed by the Bishop.

The Conference Deans shall:

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- a) Communicate with the Bishop and/or synod staff regarding pastoral care needs and emergencies among rostered persons and their families.
 - b) Meet with the Bishop and other Deans at least once per year.
 - c) Communicate with Conference congregations, agency and institutional ministries and rostered ministers regarding synod and-Conference events and programs.
- 2) Conference Synod Council Member shall be a lay or a rostered Minister elected by the Synod Assembly and serve terms as specified in the Synod Constitution. The Conference Synod Council Member shall:
- a) Fulfill the responsibilities of a Synod Council member.
 - b) Communicate between the Synod Council and the Conference their respective mission needs and challenges.

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 roster 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 constitution and bylaws of this church.
 - 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 the constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this church. Bylaws, 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 Chapter 16 and 18 of the *Model Constitution for Congregations*.
 - 3) Accept the commitments expected of all congregations of this church 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 leadership 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 contact the ELCA synod bishop or staff where the congregation is located. The synod bishop or synod staff where the transferring or independent congregation is located shall confer

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with the congregation to assure its understanding and acceptance of commitment to and affiliation with this church.

- 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 roster of congregations.

- †S13.02 It shall be the responsibility of each congregation of this synod to choose 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, or coalition of which it is a member. 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 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 shall make satisfactory settlement of the obligation before calling a successor.
- †S13.20 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.
- †S13.21. 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.
- †S13.22. 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 constitution of this church 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 missions 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 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. The Synod Council, itself or through trustees appointed by it, may take charge and control of the property of a congregation of this synod to hold, manage, and convey the same on behalf of this synod, if any of the following apply:
- a. The congregation has disbanded, ceased to worship, or otherwise ceased to exist as a congregation.
 - b. The congregation has abandoned its property.
 - c. The remaining members of the congregation decide that it is no longer possible to function as a congregation or that they are unable to provide required governance.

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- d. The Synod Council determines that the membership of a congregation has become so scattered or so diminished in numbers that it cannot provide required governance or that it has become impractical for the congregation to fulfill the purposes for which it was organized.
- e. The Synod Council determines that it is necessary for this synod to protect and preserve the congregation's property from waste and deterioration.

The congregation shall have the right to appeal any such decision to the next 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 *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. The synod's involvement in and responsibility for such disciplinary processes shall be as set forth in that chapter.

S13.40. Synod-Authorized Worshipping Communities

S13.41. Authorized worshipping 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

S14.10 MINISTERS OF WORD AND SACRAMENT

†S14.11 The time and place of the ordination of those persons properly called to ministry in 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 available channels of effective communication;
- 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, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world.

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 within the congregation;
- 3) install regularly elected members of the Congregation Council; and
- 4) with the council, administer discipline

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- 5) endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the ELCA churchwide organization and of this synod and
- 6) encourage adherence to covenantal relationship with this church as expressed in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.

- S14.13.** The pastor shall keep accurate parochial records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from the congregation, and shall submit a summary of such statistics annually to this synod. The pastor shall be a member of the congregation that has extended 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 pastoral candidate by a congregation of this synod in accord with ELCA constitutional provision 7.41., a two-thirds vote shall be required 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 the synod for this 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 to acceptance or declination to a letter of call within thirty 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 fifteen days may be granted to respond to a letter of call.
- †S14.18.** The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between a 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 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

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- 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) physical disability or mental 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 physical disability or mental 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 in his or her 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 physical disability or mental 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 with disability status. Upon removal of the disability and the restoration of the pastor to health, 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 a 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

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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 parochial 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 his or her 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 parochial 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 of years. 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, or coalition, to which the congregation belongs.

S14.30. Ministers of Word and Service

†S14.31. The time and place of the ordination of those persons properly called to ministry in this synod shall be authorized by the bishop of this synod.

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†S14.32. Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, every Ministers 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, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world, witnessing to the realm of God in community, the nation, and abroad;
- 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 this church and its wider ministry of the gospel and advocate for the work of all expressions of the church; and
- i. Identify and encourage qualified persons to prepare for ministry of the gospel.

†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 constitutional 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.

†S14.43. 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 deacon's death or, following consultation with the synod bishop, for the following reasons:
 - 1) mutual agreement to terminate the call or 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;

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- 4) physical disability or mental 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 physical disability or mental incapacity of the minister of Word and Service 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 in his or her 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 physical disability or mental 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 with disability status. Upon removal of the disability and the restoration of the minister of Word and Service to health, 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 must 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 congregation agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action need be taken by the synod.

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- 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 a 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..

Chapter 15

FINANCIAL MATTERS

†S15.01. The fiscal year of this synod shall be February 1 to January 31.

†S15.11. Since the congregations, synods, and churchwide organizations are interdependent expressions that share in God's mission, all share in the responsibility to develop, implement, and strengthen the financial support of the whole church. The gifts and offerings of the members of ELCA are given to support all parts of this church, 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

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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 supportive funding with other synods and the churchwide organization.

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.

†S15.31. 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. The financial reports shall be in the format approved from time to time by the Office of the Treasurer.

†S15.32. This synod shall maintain adequate, continuous insurance coverage in accordance with standards recommended by the churchwide organization. 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 section †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 †S16.04., 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 as (or whose duties in that

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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 section †S16.01. or section †S16.02.
- †S16.04. When written charges against a 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 decided 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 a concern relates directly to the synod bishop, the vice-president will lead the Executive Committee's efforts at resolving the matter. When the matter at issue cannot be resolved in this manner, the applicable procedures for investigation, decision, appeal, and adjudication shall be followed. Allegations or charges that could lead to the discipline of an ordained minister or a person on the official roster of this church shall not be addressed by the Executive Committee but shall be resolved through the disciplinary process set forth in the *Constitution and Bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.
- †S17.03. When there is disagreement between or among congregations of this synod on a substantive issue that cannot be resolved by the parties, the council of an affected congregation may petition the synod bishop for a consultation after informing the other affected congregation(s) of its intent to do so. If this consultation fails to resolve the issue, the bishop shall refer the matter to the Consultation Committee of the synod, which shall undertake efforts to find an appropriate solution. If the Consultation Committee's efforts fail to resolve the issue(s), the entire matter shall be referred to the Synod Council for adjudication by whatever process the council deems necessary. The decision of the Synod Council shall be final.
- †S17.04. When conferences, clusters, coalitions, or area subdivisions of this synod have a disagreement on a substantive issue that they cannot resolve, the aggrieved party or parties may petition the synod bishop and the Executive Committee of the Synod Council requesting a consultation after

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informing the other affected parties of their intent to do so. 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 between or among factions within a congregation on a substantive issue which cannot be resolved by the parties, members of the congregation may petition the synod bishop for consultation after informing the president of the Congregation Council of their intent to do so. The synod bishop shall seek a timely resolution of the dispute. If the issue relates directly to the pastor, the bishop may begin the process in †S14.18.d. In all other matters, if the bishop's consultation fails to resolve the issue, the bishop shall refer the matter to the Consultation Committee of the synod, which shall undertake efforts to find an appropriate solution. If the Consultation Committee's efforts fail to resolve the dispute, the entire matter shall be referred to the Synod Council for adjudication by whatever process the council deems necessary. The Synod Council's decision shall be final.

Chapter 18

AMENDMENTS, BYLAWS, AND CONTINUING RESOLUTION

- †S18.10. Amendments to Constitution
- †S18.11. Certain sections of this constitution incorporate and record therein required 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:
- Introduced with the support of at least 15 voting members and having been approved by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting at a regular meeting of the Synod Assembly, an amendment may be adopted unchanged by a two-thirds vote at the next regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.
 - 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.

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†S18.20.

Amendments to Bylaws

†S18.21.

This synod may adopt bylaws not in conflict with this constitution or 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 Synod Council. Newly adopted continuing resolutions and amendments to existing continuing resolutions shall be reported to the secretary of this church.

Budget/Finance Treasurer's Report

As in prior years, my report will consist of three primary sections. In the first section, I'll provide a review of the fiscal year that was completed on January 31, 2023. The second part will provide a brief overview of the changes that have been made to achieve a "spending budget" for the 2023 fiscal year. Finally, I'll conclude with a review of the proposed budget for 2024. This is the budget that will be voted on during the assembly.

There are two versions of the budget contained in the material immediately following my report. The first version is the traditional worksheet style budget with rows and rows of numbers. This version provides a detailed breakout of each budget category. The second version is a narrative budget that provides a textual description of the ministries of the synod and the funding required to support them at a higher level.

Financial status at the close of the recently completed fiscal year

The primary theme for the 2022 fiscal year was the significant decrease in giving from the congregations of the synod for mission support. During the year we received approximately \$100,000 less than we had received in 2021.

There are several factors contributing to this decrease. I believe the primary reason is the trend of continued decline in mission support that we have experienced over the past 20 years that has been exacerbated by the effects of the COVID pandemic on our congregations. Many of the congregations of the synod are struggling with their finances because of the pandemic and it will continue to be a challenging time for us all into the foreseeable future.

We offset the decrease in mission support with reductions in our expenses, including the automatic reduction in the amount we share with the Churchwide organization, since it is percentage based and not a fixed amount. We did end the year with a \$40,000 deficit that we covered with the release of temporarily restricted funds remaining from our 2020 PPP loan and the surplus we experienced that year.

I do want to express my thanks to all our congregations for their support during 2022. Your support clearly demonstrates that we are Church together and we make the best use of the resources we are blessed with, especially during challenging times.

Income vs. Expenditures

Total Expenditures for 2022 were \$1,613,315. Total Revenue & Support was the same, which was \$67,000 less than anticipated and \$21,362 less than the previous year. The synod ended the year with a \$40,474 deficit in our operating budget before the release of temporarily restricted funds. By comparison, we ended 2021 with a \$4,669 surplus.

As I mentioned previously, synod spending was lower than budgeted. The lower expenses were in the following areas: Operations, Leadership Training, Faith Innovations, Technology Enhancements, and

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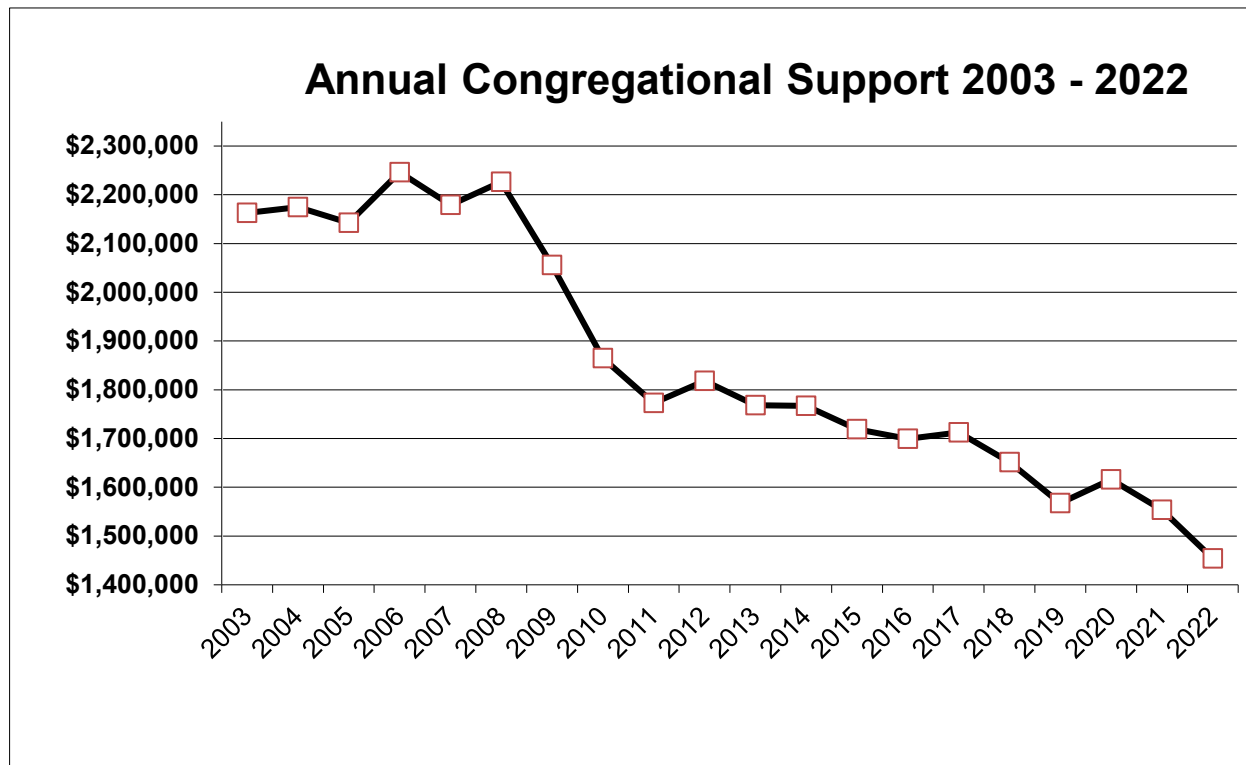
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Enhanced Outreach & Evangelism. These were in addition to the decrease in the amount shared with the Churchwide ministry.

A detailed listing of the actual income and expenditures for 2022 is included in the attached budget spreadsheet. Refer to the "FYE 1/31/2023 Actual" column.

Congregational Support

The synod experienced a 6.9% decrease of \$99,658 in congregational support from the previous year, decreasing from \$1,553,806 to \$1,454,148. The following graph shows this as well as the giving trend over the past 20 years.



A report detailing the support received in 2022 from each congregation of the synod is attached as a part of this report.

ELCA Churchwide

In 2022, the synod continued to contribute to the Churchwide organization at a 50% rate. This means that half of the donations received from our congregations are shared with the larger church. The total contributed was \$727,074, which was a decrease of \$49,829 or 6.9% from the previous year.

Annual Audit

We were not able to complete the audits for the 2020 and 2021 fiscal years last year as we had planned. Our auditors are committed to completing those plus the audit for 2022 by the end of 2023. In

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fact, we will be receiving the audit results for 2020 by June 13. When the audited financial statements for these years are available, they will be posted on the synod web site.

Current fiscal year budget, calendar year 2023

The Synod Council revised the approved budget for the current fiscal year to create a “spending budget” that considers additional or revised information received since last year’s assembly. This spending budget is included in the attached detailed budget spreadsheet as the “Revised” column for 2023 (FYE 1/31/2024).

In 2021 we placed the surplus from 2020 into a temporarily restricted account. We used some of these funds in 2022 and it is still our intention to use some of these funds to augment our Support & Revenue for 2023 to share this surplus with our congregations and other ministry partners. You will see this show up in several areas of the spending budget for the 2023 fiscal year.

For the 2023 spending budget, only a few changes were made:

- a. Implemented a net decrease in Synod Salaries & Benefits resulting from several changes, an increase for the bishop and bishop’s assistant based on the synod guidelines, a 2% increase for the remainder of the staff, except for the Synod Administrator who will receive a pro-rated increase, since he joined the synod staff midway through 2022. In addition, we will not be shifting to a purchase of services arrangement for DEM Pr. Donna Simon. She will continue to be compensated directly from Churchwide.
- b. Increased the amount for Operations to reflect that we will be incurring costs for the completion of three audits this year, instead of the usual one. We are spending funds that were not spent for these audits in 2022 and 2020.

Proposed budget for calendar year 2024, Fiscal Year Ending January 31, 2025

The proposed budget for the fiscal year ending on January 31, 2025, is shown in the attached detailed budget spreadsheet for your consideration. This is shown in the “Proposed” column for the year 2024 (FYE 1/31/2025) in the attached budget spreadsheet. This budget will be presented at the synod assembly for approval.

The budget presented is targeting congregational giving of \$1,450,000, which represents a decrease of \$100,000 from the budget for 2023. In this budget, our Total Support & Revenue will support our anticipated Total Expenses of \$1,555,175. This is a decrease of \$92,608 from the amount budgeted for 2023.

The general theme for this budget is dealing with the anticipated reduction of congregation donations for Mission Support. To address this, we implemented a combination of usage of temporarily restricted funds and reductions in spending in several areas. The significant changes in this proposed budget include the following:

1. The amount to be released from temporarily restricted funds has been increased to \$40,000.
2. The amount of contributions to be shared with Churchwide was reduced by \$50,000 to \$725,000.
3. The Leadership Training grant was eliminated.
4. Synod Salaries & Benefits were decreased by \$10,772 with the elimination of a part-time position and compensation for occasional staff support. There are salary increases for the

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bishop and bishop's assistant per compensation guidelines, and a 3% increase for the remainder of the staff.

5. The amount of the synod grant for Campus Ministry pastors' salary & benefits was reduced by \$7,000 to \$138,000.
6. Travel costs were decreased by \$4,500.
7. The amount for Operations was reduced to \$46,000 with the expectation that we will have completed all the backlogged financial audits in 2023.
8. The amount of funds to be set aside for future bishop transitions was reduced by \$3,000 to \$7,000. We are not expecting this to be a permanent change.

In closing, I would like to express my thanks to the members of the Mission Budget Team for all their good work throughout the year. The team consists of the synod officers plus our bookkeeper, Barbara Beedle, who in a pleasant surprise move has not completely retired as we expected at last year's assembly.

It is an honor and privilege for me to serve the synod and I am blessed to be able to work with each of these good and faithful servants.

Respectfully submitted,



Scott Schulte
Treasurer

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		2024	2023		2022		
		FYE 1/31/2025	FYE 1/31/2024		FYE 1/31/2023		
		Proposed	Revised	Approved	Actual	Revised	Approved
SUPPORT AND REVENUE							
1	Congregations	1,450,000.00	1,550,000.00	1,550,000.00	1,454,147.90	1,550,000.00	1,550,000.00
2	Annual Appeal	15,000.00	15,000.00	15,000.00	18,373.04	15,000.00	10,000.00
3	Shared Mission	0.00	0.00	0.00	259.00	0.00	700.00
4	Interest	175.00	200.00	200.00	113.55	200.00	200.00
5	Temp. Restricted Funds Released	40,000.00	32,583.00	33,579.00	40,473.55	65,116.00	63,634.00
6	Reimbursement/Other Income	50,000.00	50,000.00	50,000.00	99,948.21	50,000.00	50,000.00
Total Support & Revenue		1,555,175.00	1,647,783.00	1,648,779.00	1,613,315.25	1,680,316.00	1,674,534.00
EXPENDITURES							
7	ELCA CHURCHWIDE MINISTRY	725,000.00	775,000.00	775,000.00	727,073.95	775,000.00	780,000.00
SYNOD MINISTRY							
A. Agencies & Institutions							
8	Camp Tomah Shinga	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00
9	Hollis Center-Outdoor Ministry	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00
10	Kansas Interfaith Action Coalition	2,500.00	2,500.00	2,500.00	2,500.00	2,500.00	2,500.00
11	Missouri Voices of Faith	2,500.00	2,500.00	2,500.00	2,500.00	2,500.00	2,500.00
Total Agencies/Institutions		20,000.00	20,000.00	20,000.00	20,000.00	20,000.00	20,000.00
B Teams and Task Forces							
29	Candidacy	5,000.00	7,000.00	7,000.00	6,000.44	7,000.00	8,000.00
31	Parish Ministry Associates	500.00	500.00	500.00	580.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
35	Leadership Training	0.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	0.00	10,000.00	10,000.00
39	Teams & TF Expenses (Shared)	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	400.00	2,000.00	2,000.00
Total Teams and Task Forces		6,500.00	13,500.00	13,500.00	6,980.44	20,000.00	21,000.00
C. Oversight & Pastoral Care							
41	Synod Salaries & Benefits	487,264.00	498,036.00	505,454.00	523,338.85	498,491.00	485,709.00
42	Campus Ministry Salaries & Ben	138,000.00	145,000.00	145,000.00	145,000.04	145,000.00	145,000.00
43	Fall Theological Conference	4,000.00	4,000.00	4,000.00	4,000.00	4,000.00	4,000.00
48	Travel (Synod Staff)	38,000.00	42,500.00	42,500.00	41,740.05	40,000.00	45,000.00
55	Call Process Ministries	0.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	150.00	1,500.00	1,500.00
59	Legal Fees (Discipline)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Oversight/Pastoral Care		667,264.00	690,536.00	697,954.00	714,228.94	688,991.00	681,209.00
D. ELCA Partnerships							
61	Region IV	500.00	1,200.00	1,200.00	551.10	1,200.00	1,200.00
62	Bethany College	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	15,000.00	15,000.00	15,000.00
63	Seminaries (LSTC & Wartburg)	20,000.00	20,000.00	20,000.00	30,000.00	30,000.00	30,000.00
64	Planned Giving Partnership	22,625.00	22,625.00	22,625.00	22,625.00	22,625.00	22,625.00
Total ELCA Partnerships		53,125.00	53,825.00	53,825.00	68,176.10	68,825.00	68,825.00
E. Office							
65	Rent & Occupancy	24,000.00	24,000.00	24,000.00	24,000.00	24,000.00	24,000.00
67	Depreciation	4,000.00	4,000.00	4,000.00	2,037.17	4,000.00	4,000.00
68	Operations - Total	46,000.00	52,422.00	46,000.00	37,790.97	55,000.00	46,000.00
Total Office		74,000.00	80,422.00	74,000.00	63,828.14	83,000.00	74,000.00
F. Synod Council							
70	Meetings	1,300.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	1,360.17	2,000.00	3,500.00
Total Synod Council		1,300.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	1,360.17	2,000.00	3,500.00
G. Conferences Support							
71	Dean's Meetings	986.00	2,500.00	2,500.00	1,667.51	2,500.00	1,000.00
72	Tech Enhancements & Communications	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	5,000.00	5,000.00
73	Enhanced Outreach & Evangelism	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	5,000.00	10,000.00
75	Total Conferences Support	986.00	2,500.00	2,500.00	1,667.51	12,500.00	16,000.00
77	H. Contingency	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
78	I. Bishop Transition Set Aside	7,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00
TOTAL SYNOD MINISTRY		830,175.00	872,783.00	873,779.00	886,241.30	905,316.00	894,534.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES		1,555,175.00	1,647,783.00	1,648,779.00	1,613,315.25	1,680,316.00	1,674,534.00
NET REVENUE OVER OR (UNDER) EXPENSES		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

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Data Provided for Informational Purposes Only to Detail the Budget Line Item for Fiscal Year Ending 1/31/2024

Synod Salaries & Benefits detail for the year ending 1/31/24 is:

Description	Bishop	Clergy Staff	Non-Clergy Staff	Total Compensation
Base Salary	90,923.00	158,577.18	157,286.42	406,786.60
Employer's Social Security (1)	0.00	0.00	8,478.83	8,478.83
Pension (2)	12,729.22	14,374.43	10,609.68	37,713.33
Basic Medical	5,568.00	30,654.00	28,807.56	65,029.56
Plan Administration & Disability	1,545.69	2,036.38	1,803.65	5,385.72
Continuing Education	1,000.00	2,000.00	0.00	3,000.00
DEM Purchase of Services	0.00	(48,358.20)	0.00	(48,358.20)
Anticipated Portico Increases for January 2024	1,712.00	9,428.00	8,860.00	20,000.00
Total Compensation Prior to Reimbursements	113,477.91	168,711.79	215,846.14	498,035.84

Notes and Comments:

- (1) Employer's Social Security paid totally by clergy.
- (2) Pension rates for clergy are at the maximum contribution rates of 12%. The Bishop receives an additional 2% for a total of 14%. Others are at 10%. Medical plan costs are vary depending on the employee's age and if their spouse and/or children are covered. The 2023 Portico custom comparison was used get the above amounts.
- (3) Number of FTE (full-time equivalents)

Bishop	1.00
Clergy Staff	2.25
Non-clergy Staff	<u>2.75</u>
Total	<u>6.00</u>

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Data Provided for Informational Purposes Only to Detail the Budget Line Item for Fiscal Year Ending 1/31/2025

Synod Salaries & Benefits detail for the year ending 1/31/25 is:

Description	Bishop	Clergy Staff	Non-Clergy Staff	Total Compensation
Base Salary	92,014.00	149,437.46	162,225.31	403,676.77
Employer's Social Security (1)	0.00	0.00	8,359.90	8,359.90
Pension (2)	12,881.90	14,621.21	10,927.98	38,431.09
Basic Medical	5,568.00	23,409.00	30,174.60	59,151.60
Plan Administration & Disability	1,564.24	2,071.33	1,857.76	5,493.33
Continuing Education	1,000.00	2,000.00	0.00	3,000.00
DEM Purchase of Services	0.00	(50,848.50)	0.00	(50,848.50)
Anticipated Portico Increases for January 2024	1,883.00	7,915.00	10,202.00	20,000.00
Total Compensation Prior to Reimbursements	114,911.14	148,605.50	223,747.55	487,264.19

Notes and Comments:

- (1) Employer's Social Security paid totally by clergy.
- (2) Pension rates for clergy are at the maximum contribution rates of 12%. The Bishop receives an additional 2% for a total of 14%. Others are at 10%. Medical plan costs are vary depending on the employee's age and if their spouse and/or children are covered. The 2023 Portico custom comparison was used get the above amounts.
- (3) Number of FTE (full-time equivalents)

Bishop	1.00
Clergy Staff	2.25
Non-clergy Staff	<u>2.50</u>
Total	<u>5.75</u>

2024 Narrative Budget

Continuing with our practice of recent years, we are presenting this narrative budget as a supplement to the usual spreadsheet style budget also included in the assembly binder material. This approach helps relate the dollar figures in the budget to the synod's ministry plans for the coming year. Through this narrative budget, we hope to make it clear that each budgeted expense affects ministry and that each ministry helps to carry out the overall mission of the synod and the larger church.

Since we all walk together to carry out God's mission, let's walk through how we will spend our money in 2024!

We are Church Together (\$725,000)

Half of all contributions received by the Central States Synod are shared with the Churchwide organization of the ELCA. This amount enables mission and ministry to happen beyond our borders (although some of these funds do indeed come back to us in terms of grants for new ministries and campus ministries.)

The Ministry Entrusted to the Synod. (\$26,500)

Walking together does not always mean seeing exactly where the other person goes. Different interests and responsibilities exist even among those who walk together.

This area of the budget supports the work of Camp Tomah Shinga and Hollis Renewal Center. These ministries provide outdoor ministry space, so our kids and congregations have places to go for retreat and to get in touch with God's creation. **(\$15,000)**

We will support advocacy agencies in both Kansas and Missouri to work ecumenically to voice our concerns on matters important to all the corners of the synod. **(\$5,000)**

Do you enjoy having a pastor or Parish Ministry Associate to lead you? That's due to the work of the Candidacy Committees or the PMA Team, who have shepherded those interested in the ministry along the way. **(\$5,500)**

Various ministries that help develop giving and the stewardship of resources through teams and committees such as Lutherans Restoring Creation, the Stewardship Team, and the Companion Synod Team occasionally incur expenses to facilitate the work that they do. **(\$1,000)**

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The Ministry of Oversight and Pastoral Care (\$667,264)

When you walk together, you need someone to lean on from time to time.

The ministry of Oversight and Pastoral Care includes the salaries for Synod Staff, who work tirelessly to “be there” when called upon. They lend support and encouragement to congregations and to leaders, in all the “highs” and “lows” of life together. They sometimes take the brunt of anger and frustration as the powers and principalities of this present age cause friction in human community. These are leaders committed to “being there” in whatever the circumstances. **(\$487,264)**

This area of the budget also supports the salaries of Campus Ministers, who greet new students at Campus ministry sites in both states. **(\$138,000)**

To enable the synod staff to be physically present with congregations and pastoral leaders this area includes travel expenses, the annual Fall Theological gathering of leaders, and legal fees as needed to protect our journey together. **(\$42,000)**

The Ministry of ELCA Partnerships (\$53,125)

A good walk sometimes calls for some specific guidance or expertise. No one goes off on a mountain hike without first investing in a good geographic contour map. It helps you plan the route, know about twists, turn and inclines, and can prepare you for the unexpected.

In the same way, our ELCA Partnership Ministries through Region IV, Bethany College, our Seminaries at Chicago and Dubuque, and our Planned Giving Partnerships help us anticipate and navigate through a changing landscape in the world. It’s not a large portion of the budget, but it’s an important one.

Region IV helps give us a “bird’s eye” view of things changing and affecting a wider area of adjacent Synods, coordinating ministry. **(\$500)**

Planned Giving Services help individuals, congregations and institutions better use resources, investing them, advising, and helping people do estate planning that assures a future for the things we value. **(\$22,625)**

Our Seminaries and Bethany College help shape and train leaders for the church of tomorrow with an eye toward the heritage of the past. **(\$30,000)**

The Ministry of Place and Property (\$74,000)

“Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to rest his head....” Jesus says, but then Jesus didn’t have to keep files to satisfy legal obligations and didn’t have a photocopier. There are some necessary things about administering a synod, and part of that is having a place to gather for meetings, to “hang one’s hat” when one is not out visiting congregations and leaders.

The Central States Synod offices are strategically located in Kansas City, right in the middle of our two-state footprint. In 2019, we decided to share office space with the local diocese of the Episcopal

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Church. They have been great partners with us and the space we have fulfills the needs of the staff and provides for good meeting space, when needed, for various teams and committees. You are encouraged to stop by and see your offices anytime. **(\$24,000)**

There are also the usual costs for running an office for any kind of an organization: a copier, paper, phone services, financial audits and computers. All those things that the staff needs to conduct the “business” of the synod. **(\$50,000)**

The Ministry of Leadership and Outreach (\$9,286)

As we walk together, we need to support those that lead us by helping them communicate and providing them with the tools that they need. The same is true for enabling our congregations to reach outward to those in need of hearing the good news. We also need to look ahead to ensure a smooth change of leadership.

There are funds for Synod Council Meetings, Conference and Deans’ gatherings, and a set aside for bishop transitions, so that we anticipate the turnover of staff in election years.

How are these ministries funded?

Our mission relies primarily on congregations forwarding a portion of their regular offerings to our synod office as undesignated Mission Support (some call this “regular benevolence to synod”). When these offerings increase or decrease from year to year, the work of the church is strengthened or weakened and this has an impact not only synodically, but nationally and globally. **(\$1,450,000)**

Individuals, families, and congregations may designate gifts for the Synod Assembly offering and in response to the Annual Appeals or other special project needs. **(\$15,000)**

We will once again use some of the surplus that we realized in 2020 to help support the work of the synod if we don’t receive the offerings or donations needed. **(\$40,000)**

In addition, the synod receives grants from the Churchwide organization for specific synod missions and reimbursements from a variety of agencies. **(\$50,000)**

To support all of these ministries, as a synod we will spend a total of \$1,555,175 in 2024!

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Congregational Giving FYE 1/31/2023

This report does not reflect any congregational gifts to local ministries that do not pass through the Central States Synod. If you believe there are discrepancies between this report and your congregational giving, please contact Ben Godwin, bgodwin@css-elca.org at the synod office.

Border Conference Congregation Name	City	State	Mission Support	Benevolence
Advent Lutheran Church	Olathe	KS	\$ 40,500.00	\$ 41,663.00
All Saints Lutheran Church	Blue Springs	MO	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,200.00
Atonement Lutheran Church	Overland Park	KS	\$ 63,801.50	\$ 69,899.37
Blue Ridge Trinity Lutheran Church	Raytown	MO	\$ -	\$ -
First Lutheran Church	Shawnee Mission	KS	\$ -	\$ -
First Lutheran Church	St. Joseph	MO	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,560.00
First Lutheran Church	Topeka	KS	\$ 35,494.74	\$ 38,568.58
Gathering Table	Kansas City	MO	\$ -	\$ -
Gloria Dei Lutheran Church	Kansas City	MO	\$ 24,000.00	\$ 24,000.00
Good Shepherd Lutheran Church	Lawrence	KS	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 8,000.00
Grace Lutheran Church	Osage City	KS	\$ 4,355.00	\$ 5,155.00
Holy Cross Lutheran Church	Overland Park	KS	\$ 56,250.00	\$ 56,250.00
Hope Local Worshipping Community	Shawnee	KS	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00
Hosanna! Lutheran Church	Liberty	MO	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00
Immanuel Lutheran Church	Kansas City	MO	\$ 22,350.00	\$ 22,370.00
Kaw Prairie Community Lutheran Church	Lenexa	KS	\$ -	\$ -
Lord of Love Lutheran Church	Belton	MO	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00
Lutheran Church of the Resurrection	Prairie Village	KS	\$ 18,000.00	\$ 18,735.00
Martin Luther Lutheran Church	Lee's Summit	MO	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 6,000.00
Our Savior's Lutheran Church	Topeka	KS	\$ 22,119.10	\$ 22,219.10
Overland Park Lutheran Church	Overland Park	KS	\$ 1,952.28	\$ 3,223.42
Salem Lutheran Church	Lenexa	KS	\$ 17,690.00	\$ 17,690.00
South Sudanese Congregation	St. Joseph	MO	\$ -	\$ -
St. James Lutheran Church	Kansas City	MO	\$ 6,867.38	\$ 6,867.38
St. John Lutheran Church	Bendena	KS	\$ 4,203.50	\$ 5,767.50
St. John Lutheran Church	Lancaster	KS	\$ 7,276.72	\$ 8,000.72
St. Mark Hope & Peace Lutheran Church	Kansas City	MO	\$ 2,750.00	\$ 2,750.00
St. Mark's Lutheran Church	Atchison	KS	\$ 986.19	\$ 986.19
St. Mark's Lutheran Church	Emporia	KS	\$ 17,146.00	\$ 17,146.00
St. Mark's Lutheran Church	Olathe	KS	\$ 26,874.00	\$ 30,072.40
St. Martin Lutheran Church	Kansas City	KS	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
St. Paul's Lutheran Church	Valley Falls	KS	\$ 900.00	\$ 900.00
Trinity Lutheran Church	Lawrence	KS	\$ 19,825.00	\$ 23,285.00
Trinity Lutheran Church	Topeka	KS	\$ 8,100.00	\$ 8,255.00
Upper Wolf Lutheran Church	Robinson	KS	\$ 1,640.00	\$ 4,301.00

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Central Kansas Conference Congregation Name	City	State	Mission Support	Benevolence
Ada Lutheran Church	Courtland	KS	\$ -	\$ -
Amana Lutheran Church	Scandia	KS	\$ -	\$ -
American Lutheran Church	Belleville	KS	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,100.00
Andover Lutheran Church	Windom	KS	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 6,000.00
Assaria Lutheran Church	Assaria	KS	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 12,000.00
Bethany Lutheran Church	Lindsborg	KS	\$ 30,499.96	\$ 40,879.70
Christ Lutheran Church	Eureka	KS	\$ 100.00	\$ 400.00
Christ Lutheran Church	Wichita	KS	\$ 18,724.49	\$ 18,779.49
Concordia Lutheran Church	Concordia	KS	\$ 13,726.07	\$ 14,153.53
Cross of Glory Lutheran Church	Derby	KS	\$ 2,640.00	\$ 2,640.00
Elim Lutheran Church	Marquette	KS	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00
Emanuel Lutheran Church	Hutchinson	KS	\$ 23,000.00	\$ 26,120.00
Faith Lutheran Church	Junction City	KS	\$ 3,840.00	\$ 3,840.00
Falun Lutheran Church	Falun	KS	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 3,500.00
First Lutheran Church	Manhattan	KS	\$ 50,672.23	\$ 56,689.82
Gloria Dei Lutheran Church	Wichita	KS	\$ 19,962.13	\$ 19,962.13
Good Shepherd Ev. Lutheran Church	Washington	KS	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,000.00
Hebron Lutheran Church	Burdick	KS	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,050.00
Immanuel Lutheran Church	Salina	KS	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,980.50
Marion Hill Lutheran Church	White City	KS	\$ 2,400.00	\$ 2,400.00
Messiah Evangelical Lutheran Church	Lindsborg	KS	\$ 5,554.82	\$ 7,587.51
Mision San Juan de Dios (Partners)	Wichita	KS	\$ -	\$ -
New Gottland Lutheran Church	McPherson	KS	\$ 6,975.00	\$ 6,975.00
New Hope Lutheran Church	Onaga	KS	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,950.00
Olsburg Lutheran Church	Olsburg	KS	\$ 5,324.43	\$ 5,324.43
Peace Lutheran Church	Manhattan	KS	\$ 7,000.00	\$ 7,000.00
Peace Lutheran Church	New Cambria	KS	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00
Redeemer Lutheran Church	Salina	KS	\$ 10,125.00	\$ 10,125.00
Reformation Lutheran Church	Wichita	KS	\$ 33,200.00	\$ 33,325.00
Resurrection Lutheran Church	Haysville	KS	\$ 3,700.00	\$ 7,985.00
Salemsborg Lutheran Church	Smolan	KS	\$ 1,320.00	\$ 13,200.00
St. John Lutheran Church (Lanham)	Hanover	KS	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00
St. John's Lutheran Church	Salina	KS	\$ 20,900.00	\$ 24,025.00
St. John's Lutheran Church	Wellington	KS	\$ -	\$ -
St. Mark's Lutheran Church	Waterville	KS	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00
St. Paul Lutheran Church	Glasco	KS	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 6,193.55
St. Paul Lutheran Church	Herington	KS	\$ 7,673.69	\$ 7,673.69
St. Paul Lutheran Church	Peabody	KS	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,200.00
St. Paul Lutheran Church	Tescott	KS	\$ 1,006.00	\$ 1,056.00
St. Paul Lutheran Church	Wichita	KS	\$ 2,250.00	\$ 4,250.00
Trinity Lutheran Church	Greenleaf	KS	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00

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Trinity Lutheran Church	McPherson	KS	\$ 38,000.00	\$ 49,885.00
Walsburg Lutheran Church	Leonardville	KS	\$ 3,475.00	\$ 3,695.00
Zion Lutheran Church	Beloit	KS	\$ 2,300.00	\$ 2,300.00
Zion Lutheran Church	Hanover	KS	\$ -	\$ -
Zion Lutheran Church	Hollenberg	KS	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,300.00

Eastern Missouri Conference Congregation Name	City	State	Mission Support	Benevolence
Bethany Lutheran Church	Webster Groves	MO	\$ -	\$ 93,931.82
Bethel Lutheran Church (Univ. City)	St. Louis	MO	\$ 29,095.00	\$ 29,095.00
Christ Lutheran Church	Webster Groves	MO	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 25,000.00
Family of Christ Lutheran Church	Imperial	MO	\$ 800.00	\$ 1,100.00
Gethsemane Lutheran Church	St. Louis	MO	\$ 19,480.00	\$ 19,480.00
Good Shepherd Lutheran Church	Manchester	MO	\$ 63,414.00	\$ 63,414.00
Holy Cross Lutheran Church	Creve Coeur	MO	\$ 20,004.00	\$ 20,504.00
Holy Trinity Lutheran Church	St. Louis	MO	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 4,300.00
Hope Lutheran Church	St. Charles	MO	\$ 11,048.41	\$ 11,048.41
Living Lord Lutheran Church	Lake Saint Louis	MO	\$ 30,500.00	\$ 32,500.00
Lutheran Church of the Atonement	Florissant	MO	\$ 3,059.67	\$ 3,059.67
Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd	Hazelwood	MO	\$ 8,420.00	\$ 8,470.00
Lutheran Church of the Living Christ	Florissant	MO	\$ 9,471.13	\$ 10,671.13
Peace Lutheran Church	Sullivan	MO	\$ 2,100.00	\$ 2,100.00
Peace Lutheran Church	Washington	MO	\$ 10,083.37	\$ 10,333.37
Redeemer Lutheran Church	Desoto	MO	\$ 6,809.31	\$ 8,422.63
Resurrection Lutheran Church	St. Louis	MO	\$ -	\$ 3,190.29
Sargents Chapel Lutheran Church	Sedgewickville	MO	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 6,000.00
Sedgewickville Lutheran Church	Sedgewickville	MO	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00
Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church	St. Ann	MO	\$ 2,170.00	\$ 2,170.00
St. Andrew Lutheran Church	Poplar Bluff	MO	\$ -	\$ -
St. Mark Lutheran Church	Cape Girardeau	MO	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,200.00
St. Mark Lutheran Church	Clayton	MO	\$ 13,500.00	\$ 13,590.00
St. Philip's Lutheran Church	St. Louis	MO	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00
St. Thomas / Holy Spirit Lutheran Church	St. Louis	MO	\$ 8,999.98	\$ 10,031.98
Trinity Lutheran Church	Chesterfield	MO	\$ 28,944.00	\$ 29,519.00
Trinity Lutheran Church	Kirkwood	MO	\$ 13,033.37	\$ 14,408.37
Unity Lutheran Church	Bel-Nor	MO	\$ 14,160.00	\$ 16,060.00
Zion Lutheran Church	Ferguson	MO	\$ 8,836.45	\$ 10,096.45

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Osage Conference Congregation Name	City	State	Mission Support	Benevolence
Christ and Trinity Lutheran Church	Sedalia	MO	\$ 1,660.00	\$ 2,271.64
Community Lutheran Church	Eagle Rock	MO	\$ -	\$ -
Friends Home Lutheran Church	Savonburg	KS	\$ 7,800.00	\$ 9,600.00
Hope Lutheran Church	Rolla	MO	\$ 2,640.60	\$ 2,700.60
Immanuel Lutheran Church; Brauersville	Cole Camp	MO	\$ 1,400.00	\$ 9,941.50
Kent Memorial Lutheran Church	Sunrise Beach	MO	\$ 19,739.00	\$ 20,857.00
Messiah Lutheran Church	Springfield	MO	\$ 36,298.00	\$ 39,688.00
Our Savior Lutheran Church	Salem	MO	\$ 550.00	\$ 650.00
Our Savior's Lutheran Church	Camdenton	MO	\$ 4,350.03	\$ 4,360.03
Our Savior's Lutheran Church	Jefferson City	MO	\$ 10,200.00	\$ 10,200.00
Peace Lutheran Church	Hollister	MO	\$ -	\$ 500.00
Peace Lutheran Church	Joplin	MO	\$ 3,550.00	\$ 3,858.00
Peace Lutheran Church	Salisbury	MO	\$ 900.00	\$ 900.00
Prince of Peace Lutheran Church	Springfield	MO	\$ 7,351.87	\$ 8,881.87
Prymont Trinity Lutheran Church	Stover	MO	\$ 800.00	\$ 1,264.00
St. Andrew Lutheran Church	Columbia	MO	\$ 63,000.00	\$ 63,000.00
St. John Lutheran Church	Pittsburg	KS	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 6,885.00
St. Matthew Lutheran Church	Butler	MO	\$ 3,647.89	\$ 3,647.89
St. Paul Lutheran Church	Cole Camp	MO	\$ 6,295.00	\$ 12,828.37
St. Paul Lutheran Church	Lohman	MO	\$ 15,597.80	\$ 15,597.80
St. Paul Lutheran Church	Nevada	MO	\$ 5,550.42	\$ 5,550.42
St. Paul Lutheran Church	West Plains	MO	\$ 780.00	\$ 1,170.00
Trinity Lutheran Church	Russellville	MO	\$ 6,500.00	\$ 6,885.00

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Western Kansas Conference Congregation Name	City	State	Mission Support	Benevolence
Iglesia Luterana Sagrado Corazon de Jesus	Garden City	KS	\$ 1,050.00	\$ 1,050.00
American Lutheran Church	Smith Center	KS	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 6,000.00
Bethesda Lutheran Church	Winona	KS	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,500.00
Bethlehem Lutheran Church	Wakeeney	KS	\$ 3,250.00	\$ 4,350.00
Denmark Lutheran Church	Lincoln	KS	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00
Emmanuel Lutheran Church	Hoisington	KS	\$ 650.00	\$ 650.00
Emmanuel Lutheran Church	Stuttgart	KS	\$ 8,523.44	\$ 8,523.44
Excelsior Lutheran Church	Wilson	KS	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,300.00
Faith Lutheran Church	Oberlin	KS	\$ 2,100.00	\$ 2,100.00
First Lutheran Church	Dorrance	KS	\$ 3,425.00	\$ 4,457.00
Garfield Lutheran Church	Garfield	KS	\$ 387.20	\$ 387.20
Gloria Dei Lutheran Church	Lucas	KS	\$ 2,900.00	\$ 3,441.00
Hope Lutheran Church	Rush Center	KS	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00
Immanuel Lutheran Church	Wilson	KS	\$ 6,617.36	\$ 7,989.36
Our Redeemer Lutheran Church	Ness City	KS	\$ 600.00	\$ 600.00
Our Saviors Lutheran Church	Brewster	KS	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,000.00
Parroquia El Divino Nino	Dodge City	KS	\$ -	\$ -
Peace Lutheran Church	Albert	KS	\$ 2,950.00	\$ 2,950.00
Salem Lutheran Church	St. Francis	KS	\$ -	\$ -
Sharon Lutheran Church	Sharon Springs	KS	\$ 1,880.00	\$ 1,880.00
St. James Lutheran Church	Garden City	KS	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,350.00
St. John Lutheran Church	Bird City	KS	\$ -	\$ -
St. John Lutheran Church	Ellis	KS	\$ 2,400.00	\$ 2,790.26
St. John Lutheran Church	Kensington	KS	\$ 8,250.00	\$ 8,250.00
St. John Lutheran Church	Russell	KS	\$ 15,833.37	\$ 15,833.37
St. Mark Lutheran Church	Great Bend	KS	\$ 2,410.00	\$ 2,460.00
St. Paul Lutheran Church	Galatia	KS	\$ 607.00	\$ 857.00
Trinity Lutheran Church	Hays	KS	\$ 5,000.12	\$ 5,000.12
Trinity Lutheran Church	Otis	KS	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 16,222.00
Zion Lutheran Church	Phillipsburg	KS	\$ 7,650.00	\$ 7,725.00
Zion Lutheran Church	Wakeeney	KS	\$ 2,826.23	\$ 2,826.23

Compensation Guidelines

Changes to Compensation Guidelines for 2024:

Family and Medical Leave Policy (Page 11 and Page 15):

- After reviewing the policies of other synods and the “norm” for the business community, it was determined that our recommendation for Family and Medical Leave will be eight (8) weeks of paid leave with the option to extend the leave without repercussion an additional four (4) weeks by use of vacation time and/or unpaid leave.
 - The committee further updated the language in the policy to offer clarity that this is for more than the birth of a child.
 - Caring for parents, grandchildren, etc.

Pulpit Supply Rates (Page 12):

- The Committee is recommending an increase the pulpit supply rate from \$160 to \$165 for one worship service plus \$55 for each additional service.

Rostered Ministers Recommended Compensation Worksheet – 2024

Line 9, Service Type:

- The worksheet has been updated to include calculations for Synod Authorized Ministers (SAM). The user is required to choose “Pastor,” “Deacon,” or Synod Authorized Minister. It was decided that the Baseline salary for SAM’s would be 30% lower than that for Word and Sacrament. All other calculations are the same.

Line 10, Baseline:

- The baseline figure is adjusted each year using the US Inflation Calculator, (<https://www.usinflationcalculator.com/inflation/current-inflation-rates/>). To stay consistent with our commitment to follow the US Inflation Calculator for all compensation recommendations, the Compensation Committee did originally recommend an increase of 8% to the Baseline figure for 2024. However, upon review, the Synod Council Executive Committee overrode this recommendation and has elected to recommend a 3% increase to the 2024 Baseline figure which is reflected in the worksheet.

General Language:

- Because this worksheet is being used for multiple types of leaders (Word and Sacrament, Word and Service, and SAM) the descriptive language in the worksheet has been adjusted to fit all leaders. Therefore, instead of “pastor”, “clergy” or other specific descriptors we now use the term “minister” when referring to the leader.
 - Since SECA only applies to clergy, that is noted in Step 5, SECA Allowance.
 - Since Housing Allowance only applies to Clergy and SAM’s who are authorized to perform the sacraments this is noted in Step 6, Housing Furnishing Allowance.

COMPENSATION GUIDELINES FOR 2024

*Compensation & Benefits for Rostered Ministers
Pastors and Deacons*



CENTRAL STATES SYNOD

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

COMPENSATION GUIDELINES TASK FORCE:

Pr. Chris Deines, Lindsborg, KS
Pr. Mike Kern, Liberty, MO
Dennis Kemper, Bel-Nor, MO
David Stock, Holts Summit, MO
Jennifer Leclair, Lake St. Louis, MO

SYNOD STAFF:

The Rev. Dave Whetter, Bishop's Associate

GUIDELINES FOR 2024 PROPOSED

to the Central States Synod Assembly, June 3, 2023

A MESSAGE FROM THE BISHOP OF THE SYNOD . . .

Dear Central States Synod,

*Each year a team gathers to review the compensation guidelines for rostered ministers as they seek to provide guidance (that is why they are called guidelines) to congregations and ministries in determining appropriate compensation for pastors, deacons, **and** synod authorized ministers. (The Excel worksheet that accompanies these guidelines can now be used to determine appropriate and fair compensation for our synod authorized ministers who are serving as lay pastors.) The team then submits their recommendations to the executive committee of the synod council for their review. And then these guidelines are submitted to the entire synod assembly for adoption.*

We go through this process because while the task is difficult, it is also very important for the rostered ministers and synod authorized ministers and for the health and well-being of the congregation and ministry setting. It is not easy to have frank conversations about finances and financial needs, but that is precisely what these guidelines help us to do – talk openly and frankly with one another recognizing both the needs of and demands on ministers as well as the budget realities and expectations of the congregation.

In addition to having a conversation about the fair compensation for ministers serving throughout the synod, it is also important to have a conversation about the expectations, goals, and priorities of both the minister and the congregation. I strongly urge every congregation to do an annual performance review of their rostered ministers and synod authorized ministers. This is not simply to reflect on how things have gone this past year in their relationship with one another, but also to set goals and expectations for the coming year. It is much easier to talk through things before they become major concerns.

I appreciate the work of the Compensation Guidelines team, as well as your work in having these conversations with your ministers. They reflect the commitment we all have to building healthy relationships so that together we can do the ministry we are called to do as the body of Christ..



*The Rev. Susan Candea, Bishop
Central States Synod*

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

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[2024 Compensation Worksheet](#)

(The updated Compensation Worksheet can be downloaded from the synod website. Visit <https://www.css-elca.org/documents> and select Compensation Worksheet 2024)

SECTION 1: COMPENSATION

A. APPROPRIATE COMPENSATION

Determining appropriate compensation is difficult! Rostered ministers (pastors and deacons) are not always paid what they should be paid. By virtue of their educational requirements and congregational/ministry site expectations, rostered ministers are professionals. They bring to their congregations or ministry sites many gifts, and should be compensated according to their education, ability, and responsibility, and in line with the incomes of professionals in comparable positions. Some synods define this as high school principals; others compare it with rostered leaders of other denominations. Based on their compensation, rostered ministers should be able to provide for their own economic needs as well as those of their spouse and/or children.

The Central States Synod cannot provide specific tax or legal advice to rostered ministers, congregations, or specialized ministries. If you have questions about tax matters or legal issues, contact a qualified tax adviser or attorney. Information provided by the IRS specifically for churches and religious organizations can be found at:
<http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p1828.pdf>

Just as the rostered minister ought to be paid a livable wage, compensation should not exceed the community's ability to give according to their own needs. The contributions of individuals and families in a congregation come from their own hard work, labor and time spent away from loved ones. All in the congregation need to find the appropriate balance in compensating rostered ministers and church professionals. Mission, ministry, and expectations must be clearly articulated if rostered ministers are to be held accountable for their service. A Congregation Council or specialized ministry governing board is expected to annually review the joint ministry expectations of the congregation or ministry and its professional ministers. Constructive adjustments in expectations and/or direction can be made at this time. For the financial health of the community, compensation packages ought to be annually reviewed as well. Realistic expectations and adequate compensation are critical to the future wellbeing of the whole community.

Everyone must remember that the process for determining compensation must be open, honest, and gracious conversation. Both professional ministers and ministry representatives, (whether the Congregation Council, a staff support committee, or personnel committee), should articulate their expectations clearly and develop a regular ministry evaluation process to note changes as program directions shift or as the rostered minister's skills or needs change. Honest assessment leads to healthy ministry. Not even carefully crafted guidelines can give congregations or specialized ministries automatic, concise and simple answers to what are inherently complex issues. Following the criteria set forth in the Rostered Minister Recommended Salary Worksheet will be helpful in ministry assessment and compensation discussions.

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While the focus of these guidelines applies only to rostered ministers, the principles apply to other church workers. Youth directors, secretaries, custodians, choir directors, organists, teachers and others also deserve fair compensation, and the responsibility of the congregation to these persons is no less than to the rostered minister.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Housing and Social Security allowances (Parts B, C, and D below) are provided for pastors only. All other recommended guidelines in this document apply to all rostered ministers (pastors and deacons).

If current compensation is below a level agreed to be fair, moving to a level of adequate compensation may involve patience on the part of rostered ministers as a ministry works to achieve that goal. It will also involve a ministry's determined effort in stewardship and education to reach that level. For example, if the compensation is 10% below the guideline, the ministry might make the commitment to increase the rostered minister's salary by 6% - 8% per year for three years to reach the appropriate compensation guideline three years hence. Finally, adequate and fair compensation encourages good morale on the part of professional ministers and the congregation or specialized ministry as they work together to do ministry and mission in the name and spirit of Jesus Christ. See Section 4. Part A. for a list of non-cash compensation options.

If the congregation or specialized ministry is already ABOVE the appropriate compensation guideline, a cost of living increase equivalent to the CPI-U for the Midwest should be considered (<https://www.bls.gov/news.release/cpi.t04.htm>), since the failure to provide a cost of living salary increase is, in effect, a salary cut. In addition, merit increases should be considered for all rostered ministers.

B. HOUSING ALLOWANCE FOR PASTORS

Pastors called to congregational or specialized ministries may designate a portion of their compensation as a "housing allowance." This is a significant tax advantage giving pastors the ability to exclude from federally taxable income that part of compensation that is used to provide a home (Internal Revenue Code section 107). Please remember that this designation does not change the total defined compensation paid to a pastor. This is also not an exclusion for income used in determining Social Security or SECA tax obligations.

Portico Benefit Services provides helpful information on housing allowance. Please contact them for more information.

Congregations that pay their pastors a housing allowance must approve a resolution prior to the beginning of each calendar year. Both pastor and congregation should keep a copy for their files. The original should be in the records of the congregation. See page two of the worksheet for a sample resolution.

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The following kinds of expenses can be used when calculating the housing allowance.

- Mortgage or rent payments
- Real estate taxes
- Property Insurance
- Down Payment on a home
- Utilities
- Furnishings & Appliances (purchase & repair)
- Remodeling & repairs
- Yard maintenance & improvements

Only the lowest of the following can be used when a pastor files their federal income tax return:

- The fair rental value of the home (including all expenses listed above)
- The amount actually spent to provide a home
- The amount officially designated as the housing allowance

The housing allowance amount is always excluded from federal income. This means that the congregation or specialized ministry excludes this amount from Box 1 of the W-2. The amount will, however, be entered in Box 14 of the W-2, which is merely an information item. A pastor should always check with her or his own tax advisor for personal questions or concerns about the housing allowance or other tax issues.

C. MINISTRY-PROVIDED HOUSING (PARSONAGES)

Where a congregation provides a parsonage, the congregation should assume all costs for maintenance and utilities. The congregation may pay these costs directly or give an allowance to the pastor sufficient to cover the expenses. In addition to these costs, the congregation should provide and maintain major appliances in the parsonage. While living in a parsonage has many advantages, it does not build home equity for retirement. If a parsonage is provided, the congregation is encouraged to provide the pastor a Housing Equity Allowance. It is helpful for the congregation to pay directly to a tax deferred plan which delays the income tax due until the funds are actually withdrawn for use; this can be done by making additional employer contributions with Portico Benefit Services. It is recommended that these contributions total at least 3% of the defined compensation (Salary & Cash Value of Parsonage). When housing is provided for a pastor couple, a 30% housing allowance for *each* spouse must be included when calculating defined compensation for Portico Benefit Services.

D. SOCIAL SECURITY ALLOWANCE FOR PASTORS

While most pastors are employees for federal income tax reporting purposes, they all are self-employed for social security purposes. This means that pastors are not subject to "FICA" taxes, even though they report their income taxes as employees and receive a W-2 from their church. Rather, they pay the "self-employment tax" (SECA – Self-Employed Contributions Act) of 15.30% of their salary and housing allowance. Since congregations are required to pay 7.65% of a lay employee's salary for social security benefits, it is fair and recommended to pay this amount as a Social Security allowance to the pastor. Many

congregations provide an allowance for all or part of this expense. This allowance, if provided, is part of the taxable income for the pastor. Deacons and lay ministers are considered to be employees of the congregation and congregations are required to pay Social Security taxes and file federal tax W-2 or 1099 forms, as appropriate.

SECTION 2: BENEFITS

A. ELCA BENEFITS PLAN (PORTICO)

The congregation shall budget for and participate in the ELCA Retirement, Medical, Disability, and Life Insurance benefits (Portico). Medical insurance shall be provided for the rostered minister and their family, unless their spouse has separate medical insurance that covers the family, and the rostered minister waives the coverage. Rates are based on geographic location and rate class, defined compensation, plan member age, health benefit option, and household coverage level. To determine the amount to be contributed go to Employerlink.PorticoBenefits.org and use the calculator tools provided on the website and see the four health plan options.

Each year in the fall, all employers (congregations) and plan members must go through open enrollment on the Portico website to choose the health plan they are going to provide and participate in. The health plan chosen cannot be changed during the next year, even if there is a transition in the call. For consistency across the synod, we recommend congregations in conversations with their rostered ministers offer the best possible health care plan. We recognize the importance of having healthy leaders.

The synod recommends a minimum 12% retirement contribution, regardless of the age of the rostered minister. Retirement contributions can be modified during the year. Congregations in consultation with their rostered ministers have the option of reallocating 2% of the recommended retirement contribution to help those rostered ministers reduce their student loan principal. Other options also include extra contributions to their continuing education and professional expenses.

Portico Benefit Services, the nonprofit benefit ministry of the ELCA, provides the benefit program for rostered ministers, lay employees, and their families. Portico provides health, dental, prescription drug, retirement, disability, and group life insurance benefits in one bundled program.* This program is designed to address the needs of rostered ministers and provide seamless benefits during change of call, leave from call, and other events unique to ministry. A bundled approach helps ensure rostered ministers and lay employees are protected against significant financial loss from a variety of risks. Through Portico, congregations** in this synod and across the country pool their collective purchasing power to provide benefits in a cost-effective manner. For more information, see the ELCA Philosophy of Benefits at <https://porticobenefits.org/elca-together/philosophy-of-benefits/>.

Congregations and plan members share the cost of benefits. Congregations are expected to support the well-being of their covered plan members by paying all or a significant portion of the contributions for benefits. Plan members are expected to participate in the cost of utilizing the benefits (e.g., deductibles, coinsurance, and copays).

The ELCA Church Council has approved a balance of cost-sharing between congregations and plan members. Portico offers a choice of ELCA-Primary health benefit options that fit this approved balance. Each fall, congregations in this synod should select one of these approved options to offer their sponsored plan members for the following year. During annual enrollment, Portico will notify congregations which options fit within the range that the ELCA Church Council has approved. Congregations should engage in conversation with their rostered minister to determine the option that best fits their needs. Current contribution rates are available on at EmployerLink/PorticoBenefits.org or by calling Portico at 800.352.2876.

* A plan member may waive health coverage if they have access to valid medical insurance coverage through their spouse or another employer.

** “Congregations” may also refer to multi-point parishes or other non-parish ministry agencies such as Bible camps, long-term care facilities, hospitals, campus ministries, etc.

B. AUTOMOBILE EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT

Automobile expense and other work-related travel are business expenses of the congregation and should not be considered by the congregation as part of the rostered minister’s compensation. Automobile reimbursements should be sufficient to cover all congregation-related activities. Car expenses include actual expense plus depreciation. The Internal Revenue Service requires accurate records to support automobile expenses. The rostered minister is responsible for maintaining adequate records for every vehicle used for work-related travel. Because new tax laws no longer allow non-reimbursed business expenses, including mileage, to be claimed on tax returns, we recommend congregations use one of the options below rather than providing an automobile allowance:

- The congregation purchases or leases a vehicle and assumes the total expense.
- The congregation reimburses for actual miles driven at a specific rate per mile. The rate might vary depending on where the vehicle is driven and how many miles are driven each year. The current IRS reimbursement rate can be found on <https://www.irs.gov/tax-professionals/standard-mileage-rates>. The “business” rate shall be used.
- The Central States Synod does not recommend that congregations provide an automobile allowance.

C. PROFESSIONAL EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT

It is recommended that the congregation share professional expenses such as books, clerical apparel, periodicals, professional dues, software, entertaining, and hospitality costs incurred in the performance of the duties of the ministry as well as technology tools such as phones and tablets which are essential and necessary for the minister's calling. The Central States Synod recommends that this be set as a line item in a budget.

D. VACATION

Because a rostered minister is "on call" day and night and carries heavy responsibilities daily, the recommended minimum annual vacation time is four weeks, which includes four Sundays. The congregation should consider granting additional vacation time based on length of service in ministry. The length of vacation time, including the number of Sundays off and when vacation time is to be taken, are all matters which need to be discussed openly with your rostered minister and are an important part of their compensation. Vacation time should be used within the calendar year and not accumulated, except by special agreement with the congregation council. Vacation time is available during the first year of any call. Vacation time is a good investment in the health and well-being of the rostered minister and his/her family. Time spent in outdoor ministries and retreats with congregation youth and adults, or work on area ministry, synod, or ELCA committees should not be considered vacation time or educational leave.

E. DAYS OFF

At least one, and preferably two, full days off should be granted each week. It is understood that congregation emergencies may require a change in schedule from time to time. Days off due to illness shall not be subtracted from vacation time.

F. HOLIDAYS

It should be noted that the rostered minister is seldom able to take advantage of three-day weekends and other holidays such as Christmas and Easter. Consideration is to be given and the rostered minister encouraged to take days off another time during the week to compensate for these and national holidays. Compensation time is not to be counted as vacation time.

G. CONTINUING EDUCATION

The Lutheran Church has a history of an educated and well-trained leadership. The congregation should expect its rostered ministers to be involved in continuing education programs which will provide opportunity for personal development, enrichment of devotional life, and growth in effectiveness and competency. Continuing education is regarded as an essential ongoing process that assists the leader in maintaining and sharpening the professional skills required for congregation rostered leader in a rapidly changing world. The ELCA expects each rostered minister to participate in an average of 50 contact hours of annually. Congregation and synod staff should consider a rostered minister's continuing education record when granting compensation increases and in the call process.

Continuing education is understood to be "professional growth" and "self-renewal," as distinguished from program development, vacation, or a theological convocation. Both the rostered minister and the congregation will benefit from the minister's involvement in continuing education. It is therefore suggested that any continuing education program be mutually studied and agreed upon by the leader and the congregation council. Continuing education may include courses, seminary classes, workshops, or independent study when directed toward a goal.

Conferences and events provided by this synod (such as the annual Bishop's Convocation) are not to be considered as part of continuing education.

The recommended continuing education time is two weeks (fourteen full days which include Sundays), plus the recommendation of \$1,000 per year to fund the continuing education. It is also recommended that this amount accumulate in a separate fund so that the equivalent of three years funds is available and that the rostered minister use at least one week per year. Unless a congregation has an explicit written policy relating to the use of continuing education funds, upon beginning a new call within the ELCA, those funds will transfer to the new congregation.

H. SABBATICAL

When a rostered minister has served longer than five years and has served for at least three years in their current call, the congregation is encouraged to grant sabbatical leave of three to six months. Further sabbaticals shall be granted every five years. Compensation during sabbatical leave shall remain unchanged for the pastor or deacon. The congregation is responsible for the costs of pulpit supply and emergency coverage, or the salary of an interim pastor, during a sabbatical leave. The purpose of sabbatical leave is for rest and renewal of rostered minister. *See Appendix A.*

SECTION 3: DISABILITY AND LEAVE

A. TEMPORARY DISABILITY

In the case of disability due to injury, or physical or mental health condition, the congregation shall continue to pay the full compensation and housing for the first sixty days of disability, until the temporary disability benefits of Portico Benefit Services go into effect. Disability benefits under the ELCA Disability Benefits Plan provide monthly income, health and survivor coverage, and contributions to the ELCA Retirement Plan. These benefits are designed to help rostered ministers adapt and recover from disabling illness and injury until they can return to work, if possible. The congregation council and rostered minister should contact the synod office and Portico prior to taking actions related to disability.

B. FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE POLICY

The Central States Synod and the ELCA seek to provide compensation and benefit policies that meet the needs of all rostered ministers. As such, this synod recommends that all congregations create a Family and Medical Leave policy that supports the needs and health of the rostered minister.

Family and Medical Leave shall be granted for the following:

- To provide care for a family member during physical or mental illness, injury, or other needs. Covered family members should, at minimum, include spouse, domestic partner, parents, siblings, children, foster children, in-laws, grandparents, and grandchildren.
- Adding a family member by birth, adoption, or foster care.

Since each family's situation is unique, congregations are encouraged to be flexible and understanding in granting the necessary time for the rostered minister to meet the needs of their family situation. Family and Medical Leave is a good investment in the health and well-being of the rostered minister and their family as well as a positive way to lift up and model healthy familial commitments to the whole congregation. Any weeks on leave are minimal relative to the length of a rostered leader's time in the congregation and the health that leader requires to care for congregations. Paid Family and Medical Leave shall not reduce allotted vacation time.

A minimum of eight weeks paid Family and Medical Leave shall be granted to a rostered leader, with the option to extend that leave without repercussion an additional four weeks by use of vacation time and/or unpaid leave.

A sample Family and Medical Leave Policy is included in Appendix B.

SECTION 4: OTHER MATTERS

A. ADDITIONAL COMPENSATION

Congregations who are unable to meet compensation guidelines or would like to reward faithful ministers for their service might consider a variety of means of additional compensation. They should ask their rostered minister what other types of compensation would be beneficial to them. Congregations are invited to think creatively about this.

Examples vary by congregation, but some have provided:

- Additional vacation and/or continuing education time
- Additional continuing education funds
- Services from congregation members: licensed daycare, haircuts, car service, dry cleaning, lawn care, snow blowing, etc.
- Additional retirement contributions (above 12%)

B. INTERIM AND PART-TIME MINISTRIES

Because situations vary greatly with interim and part-time ministries, guidance for structuring and compensating these ministries will be provided by the synod office staff as needed.

C. PULPIT SUPPLY

Pulpit supply is to be arranged and paid for by the congregation. \$165 for one worship service, plus \$55 each additional service is a recommended minimum. If additional responsibilities are requested, such as service planning, visitation, faith formation, etc., additional compensation should be considered. Mileage reimbursement should be provided, based on the current IRS business rate (<https://www.irs.gov/tax-professionals/standard-mileage-rates>).

APPENDIX A - Extended Leave (Sabbatical Guidelines)

PREFACE

The Biblical witness is the story of God's continuing faithfulness to invest the Gospel into human hands and lives. The Apostle Paul speaks of it as pouring God's love into earthen vessels: "We have this treasure in earthen vessels to show that the transcendent power belongs to God and not to us." (2 Cor. 4:7). Earthen vessels are meant to be filled and emptied, again and again. But care must be taken that, once emptied, the vessels can be filled once again.

St. Paul cautions us that spiritual strength essential to effective ministry comes from God and does not come from ourselves. Both in the strength and in the filling, it is a transcendent power given to us, poured into us as God's people. This is true for all the baptized. It is equally true, perhaps even to a greater degree, of those we look to for filling and spiritual nurture, the rostered ministers who serve among us: pastors and deacons.

The concept of wholeness and wellness in ministry is an important principle in the life of the Church. Healthy congregations and healthy rostered ministers are essential to a healthy community of faithful people. It is our belief that sabbatical leave for rostered ministers is an expression of mutual care for one another.

Sabbatical Leave should be considered by both clergy and congregation as an integral feature of clergy's life and ministry. The clergy and congregation should plan together a definite sabbatical schedule which provides benefits in ministry for both. Sabbatical leave is a privilege granted by a congregation to its leader. It is an opportunity the congregation provides its leader to experience a renewal of oneself and of one's mission. It is a time for reflection, spiritual re-encounter, renewal, and community.

The distinct benefits of a sabbatical leave are twofold:

- a) The mission of the congregation benefits from the opportunity to be re-empowered through caring for the ministry of the congregation in the absence of a rostered leader in addition to the presence following sabbatical leave of rostered leaders whose skills and creativity have been renewed or enhanced through a time for reflection, spiritual re-encounter, renewal, and community.
- b) The ministry of rostered leaders benefits from the personal renewal that comes from an extended time for reflection, spiritual re-encounter, renewal, and community.

The Central States Synod has developed the following guidelines for congregations, institutions, and agencies of the church to make a sabbatical leave possible for the rostered persons who serve among us. An extended sabbatical leave provides an opportunity for rostered ministers to reflect on their call to ministry and relationship to God. An extended sabbatical leave should be holistic, including time for prayer, reflection, relaxation, and refreshment of body and spirit.

EXTENDED SABBATICAL LEAVE GUIDELINES

1. An extended sabbatical leave of three to six months be granted to rostered ministers. To be eligible for sabbatical leave, leaders shall have been (a) in rostered ministry for five years and (b) at least three years in their current call. Following their first sabbatical, rostered leaders shall be eligible for sabbatical leave every five years.
2. The rostered minister is normally expected to serve the congregation, agency, or institution for at least one year following completion of the sabbatical leave.
3. The congregation, institution, or agency shall maintain the defined compensation (base salary, housing, and Social Security allowance) and ELCA Retirement and Benefits program be maintained at the current budget level. Rostered leaders and congregations are encouraged to apply for outside funding support when available.
4. Extended sabbatical leave shall be presented to the congregation council or governing body of the agency or institution not less than twelve (12) months prior to the beginning of the proposed leave.
5. Expenses incurred by the rostered leader during the sabbatical leave will be borne by that leader. Continuing education funds would normally be used to cover some of the expenses.
6. Realizing the congregation, agency, or institution will be without the services of its regularly called person, it should consult with the synodical bishop regarding possible options for continuing coverage during the period of the sabbatical leave.
7. It is understood that the extended sabbatical leave is a mutually negotiated agreement between the rostered person and the congregation, agency, or institution. The extended sabbatical leave agreement will be filed with the synod office ordinarily at least three months prior to the beginning date of the sabbatical leave.

The above extended Sabbatical Leave Guidelines were amended by the Synod Council Executive Committee Meeting on May 13, 2022.

APPENDIX B: Sample Family and Medical Leave Policy

[**Name of Congregation/Ministry**] is committed to a culture that helps our rostered leaders and employees meet the demands of family and employment responsibilities. Offering our rostered leaders and employees the option of taking paid time off when they or a family member is sick is not just good for our leaders and their families, it's good for our faith community.

Therefore, it is our policy to provide up to 8 weeks of paid family and medical leave, with the option to extend that leave without repercussion an additional four weeks by use of vacation time and/or unpaid leave, in a 12-month period to eligible rostered leaders as defined below.

Eligibility

To be eligible for paid Family and Medical leave (PFML), a rostered leader or employee must qualify for leave from work for a reason covered by the Federal Family and Medical Leave Act:

- For the employee's own serious health condition.
- For the birth of the employee's child, and to care for the newborn child.
- For the placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care; or
- To care for the employee's spouse, domestic partner, child, or parent who has a serious health condition.

This leave will also be extended for siblings, children, foster children, in-laws, grandparents, and grandchildren.

Use of Paid Family Medical Leave (PFML), Rate of Pay and Benefits While on Leave

PFML will be subject to the following general requirements:

1. Generally, employees are entitled to take up to 8 weeks of paid leave in a single 12-month period for the reasons specified above. For the purposes of this policy, [**Name of Congregation/Ministry**] will calculate the amount of PFML available to an employee using a "rolling" 12-month period.
2. Employees are entitled to extend their leave without repercussion an additional four weeks by use of vacation time and/or unpaid leave.
3. Any PFML taken for the birth/adoption/foster care placement of a child must be completed within one year after the date of birth or placement.
4. Full-time rostered leader(s)/employees will be compensated at the regular, base weekly rate of pay. The compensation rate of those who are parttime will be pro-rated based on an average number of hours worked in the 6 months before leave begins.
5. If the reason for PFML also is covered by the [**Name of Congregation's/Ministry's**] short-term benefits policy (or other policies), benefits will run concurrently. However, [**Name of Congregation/Ministry**] will supplement the employee's pay so that the employee receives 100 percent compensation during the period of leave.

6. To the extent applicable, PFML will run concurrently with federal FMLA and any leave provided under state or local law.
7. If a rostered leader/employee is enrolled in group health insurance or other insurance benefits, these benefits will continue as if the employee had not taken leave.

How to Request PFML?

If a rostered leader/employee requests leave for a reason that the employee believes qualifies under this policy, the employee must comply with **[Name of Congregation/Ministry]** notification policy **[include reference to handbook page here if congregation has one]**. Failure to comply with **[Name of Congregation's/Ministry's]** notification policies and procedures or to provide documentation or information requested may result in delay or denial of requested time off.

Reinstatement

When the rostered leader/employee timely returns from PFML and used the leave for the stated purpose, the rostered leader/employee will be reinstated to the same position held when leave began.

Before returning to work from PFML for the employee's own serious health condition, the employee may be required to submit certification from a health care provider that the employee is able to resume work.

Compliance with State and Local law

[Name of Congregation/Ministry] recognizes the co-existence of state and/or local laws regarding family and medical leave. Where such laws apply and provide greater family and medical leave rights than this policy, **[Name of Congregation/Ministry]** will comply with those laws.

Notes on this Sample Policy

The Federal Family and Medical Leave Act covers private sector employers who employ 50 or more employees for at least 20 workweeks in the current or preceding calendar year. Although this Act does not apply to many congregations, we seek to provide benefits in line with the spirit of this Act, taking into consideration the unique structure and number of employees in most of our congregations.

Please note that the information provided, while research-based, is not guaranteed for accuracy and legality. Please seek legal assistance, or assistance from state or federal governmental resources, to make certain your legal interpretation and decisions are correct. This information is for guidance, ideas, and assistance.

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2022 Central States Synod Assembly Actions

Number	Subject	Action
SA 22.01	Limitations of Bishops by Gender	This resolution was not put to a vote as it was deemed unconstitutional; synod does not have the authority to limit or dictate election of bishops
SA 22.02	Rules for Retired Pastors	This resolution was not put to a vote as it was deemed unconstitutional; synod does not have authority to override rules for rostered ministers as dictated by Roster Manual of ELCA
SA. 22.03	Congregation disposition of assets	This resolution was not put to a vote as it was deemed unconstitutional given the synod does not have the authority to dictate what congregations do with their assets
SA.22.04	Season of Global Awareness during Epiphany season; September 18, 2022 to remember Lutheran Church in Russia; April 23, 2023 to remember Lutheran Church in Papua New Guinea	Communication has gone out through the synod communications encouraging congregations to remember and pray for companion synods
SA.22.05	Memorial Calling for the Just Transition from Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Sent memorial to churchwide for consideration at the assembly; emphasized Creation Care through Lent; worship resources provided; Bishop led Bible study; Lutherans Restoring Creation led retreat and congregations are gathering in cohorts as “cool congregations.”
SA. 22.06	Developing LGBTQIA+ Education and cultural competency	Hearts Across the Heartland has been meeting with synod staff; worked with Reconciling Works to host professional development days offered across the synod in February; providing resources on the synod website
SA.22. 07	Discerning a Path Toward Becoming a Reconciling in Christ Synod	This resolution was withdrawn by the authors.
SA.22.08	Thanksgiving for Ministry	Joined in prayer at the assembly

Resolution SA23.01

Resolution to Encourage Development of Mission Partnership Support “One Body Together in Mission”

WHEREAS:

The Central States Synod Constitution (+S6.03.2.) states *“In planning for, facilitating, and nurturing the mission of this church through congregations, the responsibilities of the synod...include developing new ministries, redevelopment of existing ministries, and support and assistance in the conclusion; if necessary, of a particular ministry”*;

AND WHEREAS:

In order to fulfill the constitutional mandate cited above (+S6.03.02), the Central States Synod Mission Table has primary oversight responsibility for developing new ministries and support for existing Synodically Authorized Worshipping Communities (SAWC) and SAWCs under exploration including the following communities:

- Gathering Table; Kansas City, MO
- Iglesia Luterana Sagrado Corazon de Jesus – ELCA; Garden City, KS
- Partners Ministry; Wichita, KS
- South Sudanese Congregation; Saint Joseph, MO
- Delmar Loop SAWC Exploration; St. Louis, MO

AND WHEREAS:

The Holy Scriptures admonish us: *“For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ”* (I Corinthians 12:12). Thus, we are Church together; and again the Holy Scriptures remind us: *“If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it”* (I Corinthians 12:26); and the Holy Scriptures promise us: *“And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work”* (II Corinthians 9:8);

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The constituents of the Central States Synod seek to build up the Body of Christ through the development of ways to strengthen their participation in relationships with other mission partners across the synod to support and assist existing SAWCs, as well as other SAWC explorations. Possible ways to encourage the development of Mission Partnership Support could include the following:

- Remembering existing and exploratory SAWCs in congregational and individual prayers;
- Including SAWC developers in your own personal prayers;
- Contacting a specific SAWC and inquiring what their specific ministry needs are;
- Planning a mission trip to a SAWC to learn more about its ministry;
- Inviting a member from a SAWC to speak to your congregation in an effort to learn more about the SAWC’s mission;
- Joining with other individuals and congregations to provide financial support to a SAWC;
- Participating in a synod-wide mission support effort to raise additional mission support of the synod’s SAWCs; and
- Donating funds from Congregational Endowment Funds and Congregational Memorial Gifts to support the mission of SAWCs;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT:

The Central States Synod Mission Table will provide resources to congregations and others to assist them with the implementation of plans to develop and strengthen relationships with their mission partners.

The Central States Synod Mission Table:

Rev. Aimée Frye Appell
Rev. Roy Christell
Rev. Robert Dealey

Rev. Varinia Espinosa
Rev. Tina Reyes

Rev. Jill Seagle
Rev. Donna Simon

Resolution SA23.02

A SEASON OF GLOBAL AWARENESS

Remembering our Companion Synods and ELCA ministries around the world

Because it is vitally important for the people, the congregations and the leadership of the Central States Synod to be aware that we are part of a world-wide community of faith, the Companion Synod Team calls upon the Voting members of the Central States Synod Assembly to adopt the following resolution.

Be it resolved that the Epiphany Season be designated as a “Season of Global Awareness” for congregations within the Central States Synod and that congregations intentionally lift up the church around the world through prayer, song, educational events and in any way appropriate to the context of the congregation. The focus would be not only on our Companion Synods in Papua New Guinea and Russia, but also the Global Ministry we share in and through the Global Mission Arm of the ELCA such as Missionary Sponsorship, Young Adults in Global Mission, and our support of Projects that promote the witness of the Gospel, works of compassion and Justice ministry around the world.

Be it also resolved that Sunday, October 8th, 2023 shall be designated as the Sunday to remember, lift up and celebrate our companion church relationship with the “Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Urals, Siberia and Far East” (ELCUSFE) with a special focus on the Far Eastern Deanery. *(This date was chosen because the first Sunday in October is widely observed by the churches in Russia as a harvest Sunday when they give thanks and celebrate the completion of the fall harvest).*

Be it also resolved that Sunday, April 7th, 2024 be designated as the Sunday to remember, lift up and celebrate our companion church relationship with the Kote District of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Papua New Guinea (ELCPNG). *We chose this Sunday because the Gospel lesson is John 20:19-31 which includes John’s version of Jesus commissioning the disciples to share the Gospel with everyone, everywhere with the words, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” It also includes the account of Jesus encountering the disciples at a time and place and in a manner that they least expected. This is a common occurrence in our interactions with our companion Siblings in Papua New Guinea and Russia.*

The Central States Synod Companion Synod Team will provide resources for mission education and worship for the Epiphany Season, and additionally, prayer requests, recent news and communications from our Companion Churches prior to the two Companion Synod Sundays to help us to “accompany one another” in our journey as followers, servants and witnesses to Jesus Christ in our respective parts of God’s world.

The Companion Synod Team of the Central States Synod – ELCA

Rebecca Blocksome	Penny Holste
Jon Brudvig	Gary Kallansrud
Jim Cooper	Alex Lang
Daniel Lilienkamp	Emily Greble
Doug Reed.	Keith Holste
Peggy Schaefer	Gary Teske
Andrew Beers	

Resolution SA 23.03
Creation of a Synod Campus Ministry Team

WHEREAS:

In 2020, the Church Council of the ELCA approved the Future Church program to guide our denomination for the next decade in ministry together. A central commitment of this program was to reach 1 million new, young, and diverse people. Today, young adults are increasingly attending higher education in various forms from technical schools and community colleges, to liberal arts colleges, and to the large state regional and flagship universities. We also know that currently we are not reaching all of the young adults we could if we worked more cooperatively with congregations, ecumenical partners, and our own campus ministries. Our hope in creating this ministry team is to provide vision, advocacy, and development of stronger communities of faith with young adults attending higher education institutions in our Synod.

By using our collective resources and interest, we envision development of best practices for the ministries and partner congregations within the Central States Synod. As the Covid-19 pandemic demonstrated, campus ministry provides a place of belonging and of faith exploration, which are vital to the development of the whole person. To that end, campus ministry is a part of the greater faith community that we share. The support of parish and campus ministries of and for one another demonstrates a desire to grow faithfully and healthfully with one another in our shared journey.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The Central States Synod take the following actions:

- Approve the creation of the Synod Campus Ministry Team to help provide vision, advocacy, and develop partnerships beneficial for our ministry with young adults.
- Invite the Synod Campus Ministry Team to work cooperatively in finding ecumenical partners and incorporating them into the work of ecumenical campus ministry.
- Empower the Synod Campus Ministry Team to advocate to the congregations the importance of campus ministries to the future of the church
- Encourage the Synod Campus Ministry Team to work with congregations and community partners in finding opportunities for new ministries that reach young adults.

Central States Synod, Lutheran Campus Ministry:

Rev. Dan Baldwin, Campus Pastor, LCM-KU, Lawrence, KS

Rev. Kevin Clark, Campus Pastor, LCM-K-State, Manhattan, KS

Rev. Andrew Patty, Pastor, Trinity Lutheran Church, Topeka, KS

Rev. Tina Reyes, Campus Pastor, LCM-St. Louis, St. Louis, MO

Rev. Melissa Woeppel, Campus Pastor, Bethany College, Lindsborg, KS

Resolution SA23.04
Bethany Village Chaplaincy Endowment Support

WHEREAS:

Bethany Home Association, dba Bethany Village, is a social ministry of the Central States Synod. As a residential facility which has provided elder care since 1911, Bethany is committed to providing elder care that empowers the gifts of our residents, including providing a Chaplain who offers pastoral care, leads worship, leads Bible Studies, offers venues for residents to share their gifts. Bethany Village seeks to meet the spiritual and social needs of our residents and their families even through end-of-life events.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The Central States Synod designates the second Sunday in November as Bethany Village Sunday, requesting that each congregation collect an offering to strengthen and support the Chaplaincy Endowment funds of Bethany Village to ensure the ongoing spiritual care of our residents. Congregations will send their offerings to Bethany Village: Chaplaincy Endowment, 321 N. Chestnut St, Lindsborg, KS 67456.

Submitted by:

Bethany Village Board of Directors:

Rev. Amy Truhe	Galen Swenson	Karen Carlson
Rev. Chris Deines	Connie Dorf	Monette Johnson
Rev. Tim Leaf	Eric Anderson	Judy Murphy
Rev. Dean Apel	Ryan Biegert	Jim Ruble

Resolution SA23.05

Thanksgiving for Ministry

Baptized, we welcome one another as fellow members of the Body of Christ and workers with us in the reign of God. Our merciful God gives us particular companions to know and to love in our pilgrimage here on earth. Since the last assembly, the following rostered ministers, whom we remember with thanksgiving and reverence, have died:

The Rev. Paul Bauermeister, St. Louis, MO (9/11 2022)
Marianne Wilkinson, Deacon, Lawrence, KS (11/18/2022)
The Rev. Bill Horn, Wichita, KS (1/21/2023)
The Rev. Steve Little, Blanchard, OK (4/17/2023)

The following persons have served the Church faithfully, using their gifts and abilities to build up the Body of Christ, and have now retired from active ministry on the roster of the Church since the last Central States Synod Assembly:

The Rev. James Brandt, from specialized ministry, Lenexa, KS (7/1/2022)
The Rev. Barry Hong, from specialized ministry, St. Louis, MO (7/1/2022)
The Rev. Noni Strand, from specialized ministry, Salina, KS (7/1/2022)
The Rev. Austra Reines, from synod council call, Springfield, MO (8/1/2022)
The Rev. Dinah Dutta, from specialized ministry, Lawrence, KS. (10/1/2022)
The Rev. Jerry Reynolds, from On Leave from Call, Manhattan, KS (10/1/2022)
The Rev. Keith Hohly, from on leave from call, Overland Park, KS (1/1/2023)
The Rev. Susan Langhauser, from Advent Lutheran Church, Olathe, KS (1/1/2023)
The Rev. William Neuman, from Good Neighbor Parish, Herrington/Hebron, KS (1/1/2023)

The body of Christ gathers as congregations to proclaim the gospel, share the means of grace, and empowered to carry out God's mission in the world. The following congregation(s) disaffiliated from the ELCA, discerning that they were called to participate in God's mission through other denominations:

Hillside Community Lutheran Church, Spring Hill, KS took their second vote to disaffiliate on 9/1/2022.
Peace Lutheran, Sullivan, MO took their second vote to disaffiliate on 12/11/2022.
Friends Home Lutheran Church, Savonburg, KS took their second vote to disaffiliate on 2/19/2023.

After many years of faithful ministry, the following congregation(s) closed, trusting that in the midst of death, there is always resurrection, and the mission of the church continues:

Immanuel Oromo Christian Church, Kansas City, MO (6/30/2022)
Zion Lutheran Church, Hollenburg, KS (7/10/2022)
Blue Ridge Trinity Lutheran Church, Raytown, MO (7/21/2022)
Bethany Lutheran Church, Webster Groves, MO (10/1/2022)
United Lutheran Church in Cole Camp, MO (12/31/2022)
Our Redeemer, Ness City, KS (4/30/2023)

Therefore, be it resolved that this Assembly recognizes and gives thanks for the ministry of these ministers and these congregations.