



## Recommendation: Constitutional Amendments Related to a Roster of Ministry of Word and Service

### Background

Related to the report and recommendations of the Word and Service Task Force, the Office of the Secretary prepared constitutional amendments necessary to unify the three existing lay rosters into one Ministry of Word and Service roster. Secretary Wm Chris Boerger also prepared a memorandum offering rationale for the amendments. (See Section VI of the *Pre-Assembly Report*.)

The proposed constitutional amendments necessary to unify the three existing lay rosters primarily affect Chapters 7 and 20 of the ELCA constitution, Chapter 14 of the *Constitution for Synods* and Chapter 9 of the *Model Constitution for Congregations*. Amendments in other parts of the constitutions would be largely editorial in nature and authorized by the action the Church Council has recommended below.

Should the 2016 Churchwide Assembly decide not to endorse the recommendations of the Word and Service Task Force, elements of the following Church Council recommendation not related to unifying the three existing lay roster would be presented separately to the assembly.

### Recommended for Assembly Action

#### Two-Thirds Vote Required

To authorize the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to strike the words “ordained minister/s” and replace with the words “minister/s of Word and Sacrament” in the *Constitutions, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*;

To authorize the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to strike the word “clergy” and replace with the words “minister/s of Word and Sacrament” in the *Constitutions, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*;

To authorize the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to strike the words “pastor/s” and replace with the words “minister/s of Word and Sacrament” where appropriate in the *Constitutions, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, for the purpose of clarity and consistency;

To authorize the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to strike the words “associate in ministry, diaconal minister and deaconess” and replace with the words “minister/s of Word and Service” in the *Constitutions, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*;

To authorize the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to make editorial corrections that identify the rosters of this church and implement the creation of the ministers of Word and Service roster in the *Constitutions, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*; and

To adopt, *en bloc*, with the exception of such amendments as may be considered separately, the following amendments to the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.

7.20. **ORDAINED MINISTRY OF WORD AND SACRAMENT**

7.22. **An ordained minister of Word and Sacrament** of this church shall be a person whose commitment to Christ, soundness in the faith, aptness to preach, teach, and witness, and educational qualifications have been examined and approved in the manner prescribed in the documents of this church; who has been properly called and ordained; who accepts

- and adheres to the Confession of Faith of this church; who is diligent and faithful in the exercise of the ministry; and whose life and conduct are above reproach. **An ordained minister of Word and Sacrament** shall comply with this church's constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions.
- 7.23. The standards for acceptance and continuance of **pastors in the ordained ministry ministers of Word and Sacrament** of this church shall be set forth in the bylaws.
- 7.24. The secretary of this church shall maintain a roster containing the names of **ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament** who qualify on the basis of constitutional provisions 7.22., 7.23., ~~7.30.~~, and 7.31., and related bylaws.
- 7.30. STANDARDS FOR **ORDAINED MINISTERS OF WORD AND SACRAMENT**
- 7.31. In accordance with the description of **an ordained minister** stated in 7.22., **pastors as ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament** shall be governed by the following standards, policies, and procedures.
- ~~7.31.10.~~ **Basic Standards**
- ~~7.31.101.~~ **Basic Standards.** Persons admitted to and continued in the **ordained ministry of Word and Sacrament** of this church shall satisfactorily meet and maintain the following, as defined by this church's constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions and in policies developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council:
- ...
- ~~7.31.102.~~ **Responsibilities.** Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,
- a. Every **ordained minister of Word and Sacrament** shall:
- ...
- 6) **impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through distribution of its communications and publications;**
- 7) witness to the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation, and abroad; and
- ~~78)~~ 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 **ordained minister-pastor** with a congregational call shall, within the congregation:
- 1) offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead;
- 2) ~~supervise~~ **relate to** all schools and organizations of the congregation;
- 3) **impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through distribution of its periodicals and other publications;**
- ~~4)~~ **endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the churchwide organization and synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;**
- ~~5)~~ install regularly elected members of the Congregation Council; **and**
- ~~64)~~ with the council, administer discipline; **and**
- ~~5)~~ **endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the ELCA churchwide organization and its synod.**
- 7.31.~~103.~~ **Preparation and Approval.** Except as provided **below in 7.31.04.**, a candidate for **ordination as a pastor the ministry of Word and Sacrament** shall have:
- ...
- f. been examined and approved by the appropriate committee according to criteria, policies, and procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, after consultation with the Conference of Bishops, **and adoption adopted** by the Church Council;
- ...

- 7.31.104. **Admission Approval under Other Circumstances.** Candidates for ordination as pastors or for reception the ministry of Word and Sacrament who by reason of (a) age and prior experience, (b) ordination in another Lutheran church body, or (c) ordination in another Christian church body, whether in North America or abroad, shall be approved by the candidacy committee for ordination or reception according to criteria, policies, and procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council. In preparing such criteria, policies, and procedures, the appropriate churchwide unit shall consult with the seminaries of this church and, as appropriate, with other churchwide units.
- 7.31.105. **Reinstatement.** A person seeking reinstatement to the ordained ministry as a pastor as a minister of Word and Sacrament, whether having served previously in this church or in one of its predecessor bodies, shall be registered by the pastor and council of the congregation of which such a person is a member with the candidacy committee of the synod in which the person was last rostered or, upon mutual agreement of the synodical bishops involved, after consultation with and approval by the secretary of this church, with the candidacy committee of the synod of current residence. The person then shall be interviewed, examined, and approved by the candidacy committee under criteria, policies, and procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council. In this process, the committee shall review the circumstances related to the termination of earlier service together with subsequent developments. The person is reinstated after receiving and accepting a letter of call to serve as a pastor minister of Word and Sacrament in this church.
- 7.31.106. **On Leave from Call.** An ordained minister of Word and Sacrament of this church, serving under a regularly issued letter of call, who leaves the work of that ministry without accepting another regularly issued letter of call, may be retained on the roster of ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament of this church, upon endorsement by the synodical bishop, by action of the Synod Council in the synod of which the ordained minister of Word and Sacrament is a member, under policy developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.
- Normative Pattern: By annual action of the Synod Council in the synod of which a member, upon endorsement by the synodical bishop, an ordained minister of Word and Sacrament who is without a current letter of call may be retained on the roster of ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament of this church for a maximum of three years, beginning at the completion of an active call.
  - Study Leave: By annual action of the Synod Council in the synod of which a member, with the approval of the synodical bishop and in consultation with the appropriate churchwide unit, an ordained minister of Word and Sacrament engaged in graduate study, in a field of study that will enhance service in the ordained ministry of Word and Sacrament, may be retained on the roster of ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament of this church for a maximum of six years.
  - Family Leave: An ordained minister of Word and Sacrament who has been in active service under call for at least three years may request leave for family responsibilities. By annual action of the Synod Council in the synod of which a member, upon endorsement by the synodical bishop, such an ordained minister of Word and Sacrament who is without a current letter of call and who requests leave for the birth or care of a child or children of the ordained minister of Word and Sacrament or the care of an immediate family member (child, spouse, or parent) with a serious health condition may be retained on the roster of ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament of this church—under policy developed by the appropriate

churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council—for a maximum of six years beginning at the completion of an active call.

...

- 7.31.107. Ordination in Unusual Circumstances.** For pastoral reasons in unusual circumstances, a synodical bishop may provide for the ordination by another pastor-minister of Word and Sacrament of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America of an approved candidate who has received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested letter of call for the office of ordained ministry minister of Word and Sacrament. Prior to authorization of such an ordination, the bishop of the synod of the candidate's first call shall consult with the presiding bishop as this church's chief ecumenical officer and shall seek the advice of the Synod Council. The pastoral decision of the synodical bishop shall be in accordance with policy developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.

**7.31.20. Invitation to Service**

- 7.31.2108. Invitation to Service.** In accord with bylaw 8.762.11, and following, an ordained minister of Word and Sacrament of a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been established by the Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may serve contractually in a ministry setting of this church under a "Letter of Invitation to Service" upon the authorization of the bishop of the synod in which such service occurs.

- 7.31.09. Licensure and Synodically Authorized Ministry.** When need exists to render Word and Sacrament ministry for a congregation or ministry of this church where it is not possible to provide appropriate pastoral leadership, the synod bishop—acting with the consent of the congregation or ministry, in consultation with the Synod Council, and in accord with standards and qualifications developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and approved by the Church Council—may authorize a person who is a member of a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to offer this ministry. Such an individual shall be supervised by a minister of Word and Sacrament appointed by the synod bishop; such service shall be rendered during its duration under the sacramental authority of the bishop as the synod's pastor. Such an individual will be trained and licensed to fulfill this ministry for a specified period of time and in a given location only. Authorization, remuneration, direct supervision, and accountability are to be determined by the appropriate synodical leadership according to churchwide standards and qualifications for this type of ministry. Authorization for such service shall be reviewed annually and renewed only when a demonstrated need remains for its continuation.

**7.40. CALLS FOR ~~ORDAINED~~ MINISTERS OF WORD AND SACRAMENT**

- 7.41. Letters of Call.** Letters of call to ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament of this church or properly approved candidates for this church's roster of ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament shall be issued in keeping with this church's constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions as well as policies regarding such calls developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and approved by the Church Council.

**7.41.10. General Categories**

- 7.41.101. Service under Call.** An ordained minister of Word and Sacrament of this church shall serve under a letter of call properly extended by a congregation, a synodical Synod Council or, a Synod Assembly, the Church Council, or the Churchwide Assembly.

- a. Calls may be extended for stated periods of time and for shared-time ministry by the appropriate calling body under criteria recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council for service in

a congregation, synod, or churchwide unit, in an institution or agency of this church, or in another setting in a category of work as provided by continuing resolution 7.44.A16.

b. A pastor serving under call to a congregation shall be a member of that congregation. In a parish of multiple congregations, a pastor shall be a member of one of the congregations being served.

c. ~~Ordained~~ Ministers of Word and Sacrament serving as interim pastors in interim ministry appointed by the synodical bishop may serve under a letter of call, according to policies developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and approved by the Church Council. A call to interim ministry shall be a term call extended by the Synod Council upon recommendation of the synodical bishop.

**7.41.102. Initial Call to Congregational Service.** Because the responsibilities of the office of the ~~ordained~~ ministry of Word and Sacrament are most clearly focused in the congregational pastorate, experience in which is deemed by this church to be invaluable for all other ~~ordained service~~ ministry of Word and Sacrament, initial service of at least three years shall be in the parish ministry in a congregation of this church or, with the approval of the synodical bishop, a congregation of a church body with which a relationship of full communion exists. Exceptions to the three-year requirement may be granted under criteria and procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.

**7.41.103. Calls to Non-Congregational Service.** Calls to serve in institutions, agencies, and other entities inside and outside this church may be extended where there is an identifiable relationship of the work to the purpose of the ~~ordained~~ ministry of Word and Sacrament. Such calls involve, for example, the care of the Word, the administration of the sacraments, pastoral care, and activities closely associated with those tasks including oversight in the church and in inter-Lutheran and inter-church agencies and institutions. Care is to be exercised so that positions in the church and in the world that can be filled adequately and appropriately by the laity not be filled by ~~ordained~~ ministers of Word and Sacrament for their convenience or status. Synodical councils and the Church Council may seek the advice of the Conference of Bishops in specific situations.

**7.41.104. Non-Stipendiary Service Under Call.** When it is deemed necessary for the mission needs of this church, a letter of call may be issued by the Synod Council—according to criteria, policies, and procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council—to ~~an ordained~~ minister of Word and Sacrament for non-stipendiary service after the Synod Council has sought and received approval by the Conference of Bishops. Care is to be exercised so that positions in the church and in the world that can be filled adequately and appropriately by the laity not be filled by ~~ordained~~ ministers of Word and Sacrament for their convenience, status, or personal preference. A call to non-stipendiary service is to be reviewed at least annually by the Synod Council and continued only as warranted for the ministry needs of this church. Such a call may be terminated by the Synod Council when it is deemed to be fulfilling no longer the mission needs of this church.

**7.41.105. Calls to Serve in Unusual Circumstances.** When it is deemed to be in the interests of this church in the care of the Gospel, ~~ordained~~ ministers of Word and Sacrament may be called for a stated period of time, not to exceed three years, to minister on behalf of this church while employed in an occupation outside the traditional range of the ~~ordained~~ ministry of Word and Sacrament. Such calls may be extended by a Synod Council or the Church Council upon recommendation by the Conference of Bishops according to criteria and procedures



recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council. Such calls shall be reviewed annually.

**7.41.106. Calls in Predecessor Church Bodies.** Accountability for specific calls to service extended in predecessor church bodies shall be exercised according to the policies and procedures of this church.

**7.41.107. Retirement.** ~~Ordained in~~ Ministers of Word and Sacrament may retire upon attainment of age 60, or after 30 years on the roster of ~~ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament~~ of this church or one of its predecessor bodies, and continue to be listed on the roster of ~~ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament~~ of this church, upon endorsement by the synodical bishop, by action of the Synod Council in the synod in which the ~~ordained minister of Word and Sacrament~~ is listed on the roster.

- a. The policies and procedures for granting retired status on the roster of ~~ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament~~ shall be developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.
- b. If ~~an ordained minister of Word and Sacrament~~ who has been granted retired status resides at too great a distance from any congregation of this church to be able to sustain an active relationship with that congregation, or if there are no ELCA congregations in the vicinity, other than a congregation previously served, the bishop of the synod in which the ~~ordained minister of Word and Sacrament~~ is listed on the roster may grant permission for the ~~ordained minister of Word and Sacrament~~ to hold membership in a congregation ~~or parish~~ of a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

**7.41.108. Disability.** ~~Ordained in~~ Ministers of Word and Sacrament may be designated as disabled and continue to be listed on the roster of ~~ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament~~ of this church, upon endorsement by the synodical bishop, by action of the Synod Council in the synod in which the ~~ordained minister of Word and Sacrament~~ is listed on the roster.

- a. The policies and procedures for designation of disability on the roster of ~~ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament~~ shall be developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.
- b. If ~~an ordained minister of Word and Sacrament~~ who has been granted disabled status resides at too great a distance from any congregation of this church to be able to sustain an active relationship with that congregation, or if there are no ELCA congregations in the vicinity, other than a congregation previously served, the bishop of the synod in which the ~~ordained minister of Word and Sacrament~~ is listed on the roster may grant permission for the ~~ordained minister of Word and Sacrament~~ to hold membership in a congregation ~~or parish~~ of a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

**7.41.109. Retention of Roster Records.** When ~~an ordained minister of Word and Sacrament~~ resigns or is removed from ~~that the~~ roster of this church, the roster record shall be retained by the secretary of this church, and the synodical bishop shall invite the person at the time of resignation or removal to provide, annually, appropriate current information for the roster record.

**7.42. Each ~~pastor person~~ on the roster of ~~ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament~~ of this church shall be related to that synod:**

- a. to which the congregation issuing the call to the ~~ordained minister of Word and Sacrament~~ is related;
- b. which issues a letter of call to the ~~ordained minister of Word and Sacrament~~;

- c. on whose roster the **ordained minister of Word and Sacrament** was listed at the time of the issuance of a letter of call from the Church Council;
  - d. on whose roster the **ordained minister of Word and Sacrament**, if a seminary teacher or administrator, was assigned by the seminary board, subject to approval by the synodical bishop and Synod Council of each affected synod, to promote proportionate representation of faculty and administration in each synod of its region;
  - e. on whose roster the **ordained minister of Word and Sacrament** was listed at the time of the issuance of a call to federal chaplaincy or on the roster of the synod of current address, if approved by the synodical bishop and received by the Synod Council;
  - f. in which the **ordained minister of Word and Sacrament**, upon receiving a call from this church, serves as a deployed staff person or on the roster of one of the synods to which the **ordained minister of Word and Sacrament** is deployed;
  - g. on whose roster the **ordained minister of Word and Sacrament** was listed when placed on leave from call;
  - h. on whose roster the **ordained minister of Word and Sacrament**, if designated as disabled, was listed when last called or the synod of current address, upon application by the **ordained minister of Word and Sacrament** for transfer and the mutual agreement of the synodical bishops involved after consultation with and approval by the secretary of this church; or
  - i. on whose roster the **ordained minister of Word and Sacrament**, if granted retired status, was listed when last called or the synod of current address, upon application by the **ordained minister of Word and Sacrament** for transfer and the mutual agreement of the synodical bishops involved after consultation with and approval by the secretary of this church.
- 7.42.01. If the service of **an ordained minister of Word and Sacrament** who receives and accepts a letter of call from this church, under 7.42.c., would be enhanced through transfer of roster status from the previous synod of roster to the synod of current address, such a transfer may be authorized upon mutual agreement of the synodical bishops involved after consultation with and approval by the secretary of this church.
- 7.42.02. In unusual circumstances, the transfer of **an ordained minister of Word and Sacrament** who is on leave from call may be authorized upon mutual agreement of the synodical bishops involved after consultation with and approval by the secretary of this church.
- 7.42.03. In certain circumstances for the sake of the ministry and mission needs of this church, the transfer of **an ordained minister of Word and Sacrament** serving under call in the churchwide organization may be authorized, at the initiative of the presiding bishop of this church, upon mutual agreement of the synodical bishops involved in such a transfer after consultation with and approval by the secretary of this church.
- 7.43. A letter of call issued by a Synod Council or the Church Council to **an ordained minister of Word and Sacrament** of this church shall be either co-terminus with, or not longer than, the duration of the service or employment for which the call was issued. With the exception of persons designated as employees of a synod or the churchwide organization, such a call does not imply any employment relationship or contractual obligation in regard to employment on the part of the Synod Council or Church Council issuing the call. The recipient of such a call remains subject to this church's standards and discipline for **ordained ministry of Word and Sacrament**, as contained in this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions and in the policy and procedure documents of this church.

- 7.43.01.** When the Synod Council or the Church Council, as the calling source, determines that the service or employment no longer fulfills the criteria under which a call was issued, the Synod Council or the Church Council shall vacate the call and direct that the individual be placed on leave from call or, if such leave status is not granted, the individual shall be removed from the roster of ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament.
- 7.43.02.** Ordained mMinisters of Word and Sacrament previously under call to the churchwide organization or to a synod shall respect the integrity of the ministry in which they no longer serve and shall not interfere with or exercise the functions of the office or position in which they no longer serve unless invited to do so by the presiding bishop or Church Council in the churchwide organization or, in the synods, by the bishop or the Synod Council.
- 7.44.** **Each synod shall maintain a roster containing the names of those ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament who are related to it on the basis of 7.42. of this constitution.**
- 7.44.A136.** **Sources of Calls for Ordained Ministers of Word and Sacrament**
- a. *Principles for Sources of Calls*
- 1) A “call” is an action by expressions of this church, as specified in the “Table of Sources of Calls for Ordained Ministers of Word and Sacrament,” through which a person is asked to serve in a specified ministry. Such an action is attested in a “letter of call.”
  - 2) Interdependence within the body of this church suggests that any action of one of its entities affects other entities. Therefore, interdependence is expressed in all calls extended within this church.
  - 3) A call expresses a relationship between this church and the person called involving mutual service, support, accountability, supervision, and discipline.
  - 4) A letter of call is issued by that expression of this church authorized to do so which is most directly involved in accountability for the specified ministry.
  - 5) Decisions on calls for ministries in unusual circumstances not otherwise provided for but deemed to be in the interests of this church’s care of the Gospel are referred to the Conference of Bishops for recommendation to the appropriate calling body.
- b. *Table of Sources of Calls for Ordained Ministers of Word and Sacrament*

Setting	Calling Body
1.0 Congregational ministry	
1.1 Single congregation	Congregation meeting
1.11 Pastor	
1.12 Senior Pastor	
1.13 Associate/assistant pastor	
1.14 Co-pastor	
1.15 Shared-time pastor	
1.2 Multiple-congregation parish	Congregation meetings, acting on a common proposal
1.21 Pastor	<u>One of the participating congregations</u>
1.22 Other pastoral arrangements	<u>One of the participating congregations</u>



1.3	Coalition and cluster ministry	Synod Council
1.4	Congregations beyond ELCA	
1.41	Independent Lutheran congregation	Synod Council
1.42	Overseas independent Lutheran congregation	Church Council upon request of appropriate churchwide unit
1.43	Other	Synod Council or Church Council
1.5	Interim pastor	Synod Council
1.6	Pastor in a congregation under development	Synod Council
2.0	Synodical ministry	
2.1	Bishop	Synod Assembly
2.2	Assistant to bishop	Synod Council
2.3	Shared staff by two or more synods	Synod Council of one of the participating synods
2.4	Synod staff partially supported by grants from churchwide units	Synod Council
3.0	Regional ministry	
3.1	Staff	Church Council
3.2	Shared synodical-churchwide staff	Church Council
4.0	Churchwide ministry	
4.1	Presiding bishop and secretary	Churchwide Assembly
4.2	Treasurer	Church Council
4.3	Staff of the churchwide organization Presiding bishop's staff	Church Council
4.4	Office staff	Church Council
4.5	Unit executive director	Church Council
4.6	Other churchwide unit staff	Church Council

- 5.0 *Chaplaincy and institutional ministry*
  - 5.1 *Institution/agency related or unrelated to a synod*      *Synod Council*
  - 5.2 *Institution/agency related more to than one synod*      *Synod Council of one of the synods*
  - 5.3 *ELCA-related institution/agency*      *Church Council upon request of appropriate churchwide unit*
  - 5.4 *Federal agency/institution*      *Church Council*
  - 5.5 *Military*      *Church Council*
- 6.0 *Campus ministry*
  - 6.1 *Staff*      *Synod Council*
- 7.0 *Church camp Outdoor ministry*
  - 7.1 *Staff*      *Synod Council*
- 8.0 *Ecumenical ministry*
  - 8.1 *Related to a synod*      *Synod Council*
  - 8.2 *Related to more than one synod*      *Synod Council of one of the synods*
  - 8.3 *National/international organization*      *Church Council*
- 9.0 *Inter-Lutheran ministry*
  - 9.1 *Related to a synod*      *Synod Council*
  - 9.2 *Related to more than one synod*      *Synod Council of one of the synods*
  - 9.3 *National/International*      *Church Council*
- 10.0 *Educational ministry*
  - 10.1 *ELCA-related seminary chaplain/faculty/administrator*      *Church Council upon request of appropriate churchwide unit*
  - 10.2 *Chaplain/faculty/administrator of seminary unrelated to ELCA*      *Church Council upon request of appropriate churchwide unit*
  - 10.3 *ELCA-related college chaplain/faculty/administrator*      *Synod Council of the synod in which college is located*
  - 10.4 *Chaplain/faculty/administrator of a college unrelated to ELCA*      *Synod Council of the synod in which college is located*

10.5	<i>ELCA-related school chaplain/faculty/administrator</i>	<i>Congregation of which the school is a part or, if related to several congregations, Synod Council of the synod in which the school is located</i>
10.6	<i>Chaplain/faculty of a school unrelated to ELCA</i>	<i>Synod Council of the synod in which school is located</i>
10.7	<i>Director/staff of a continuing education center related to a churchwide unit</i>	<i>Synod Council in which the main office of center is located upon the request of appropriate churchwide unit</i>
11.0	<i>Missionary ministry</i>	
11.1	<i>Outside United States</i>	<i>Church Council upon request of appropriate churchwide unit</i>
11.2	<i>Within United States</i>	<i>Church Council upon request of appropriate churchwide unit</i>
12.0	<i>Other</i>	
12.1	<i>Non-stipendiary service under call</i>	<i>Synod Council upon approval by the Conference of Bishops</i>
12.2	<i>Unusual ministries (as in conjunction with occupations and in approved situations not otherwise specified)</i>	<i>Synod Council or Church Council upon recommendation by the Conference of Bishops</i>

7.45. In keeping with the historic discipline and practice of the Lutheran church and to be true to a sacred trust inherent in the nature of the pastoral office, no **ordained minister of Word and Sacrament** of this church shall divulge any confidential disclosure received in the course of the care of souls or otherwise in a professional capacity, nor testify concerning conduct observed by the **ordained minister of Word and Sacrament** while working in a pastoral capacity, except with the express permission of the person who has given confidential information to the **ordained minister of Word and Sacrament** or who was observed by the **ordained minister of Word and Sacrament**, or if the person intends great harm to self or others.

7.46. The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between **an ordained 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 death or, following consultation with the synodical bishop for the following reasons:

...

- 6) resignation or removal of the pastor from the roster of **ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament** of this church;

...

- 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 **ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament** 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 **ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament** 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 and the pastor shall be listed on the **clergy roster of ministers of Word and Sacrament** as disabled. Upon removal of the disability and 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.

...

7.47. **Ordained m**~~Ministers of Word and Sacrament of this church~~ shall be subject to discipline as set forth in Chapter 20 of this constitution ~~and bylaws~~.

7.47.01. No person who belongs to any organization other than the Church which claims to possess in its teachings and ceremonies that which the Lord has given solely to the Church shall be **ordained** ~~called and received onto the roster of ministers of Word and Sacrament~~ or otherwise received into the ministry of this church, nor shall any person so **ordained** ~~called and received onto the roster of ministers of Word and Sacrament~~ or otherwise received by this church be retained in its ministry who subsequently joins such an organization. ~~Violation of this rule shall make such minister subject to discipline.~~

7.50. **OFFICIAL ROSTERS OF LAYPERSONS MINISTRY OF WORD AND SERVICE**

7.51. ~~This church may establish rosters of laypersons on which the names may be listed of those who qualify for such according to the bylaws and continuing resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.~~

**This church calls and receives onto the roster qualified persons to provide a ministry of Word and Service, exemplifying the life of Christ-like service to all persons and creation: nurturing, healing, leading, advocating dignity and justice, and equipping the whole people of God for their life of witness and service within and beyond the congregation for the sake of God's mission in the world.**

~~7.51.01. The standards of acceptance and continuance on the lay rosters of this church as defined herein shall be included in the bylaws.~~

~~7.51.02. Under constitutional provision 7.51., those persons previously rostered as commissioned church staff (The American Lutheran Church), deaconesses (The Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches), deaconesses (The American Lutheran Church), deacons (The Association~~

of Evangelical Lutheran Churches), lay professional leaders (the Lutheran Church in America), and commissioned teachers (The Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches) shall be retained as associates in ministry of this church (except for removals in accord with the governing documents, criteria, policies, and procedures of this church) in the recognized category of ministry of their previous church body for as long as they are in good standing according to the standards, criteria, policies, and procedures of this church. Accountability for specific calls shall be exercised according to the policies and procedures of this church. Such persons may resign from the roster or may elect to be rostered in another ELCA category by meeting the appropriate criteria established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and by relinquishing their previous roster category.

**7.51.03. Associates in Ministry.** This church shall maintain a lay roster of associates in ministry of those commissioned—according to the standards, criteria, policies, and procedures of this church—for such service within the life of this church in positions of Word and service on behalf of all of God’s people. Associates in ministry are to be faithful to Jesus Christ, knowledgeable of the Word of God and the Confessions of this church, respectful of the people of God, and responsive to needs in a changing world as they serve in congregations and other ministry settings. The roster of associates in ministry, in addition to those listed in bylaw 7.51.02., shall be composed of:

- a. those certified during the period of January 1, 1988, through September 1, 1993, as associates in ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and
- b. those who are approved, subsequent to September 1, 1993, as associates in ministry in this church according to policies and procedures developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council;
- c. Upon receipt and acceptance of a valid, regularly issued letter of call, a newly approved candidate shall be commissioned, according to the proper service orders of this church, as an associate in ministry;

Accountability for specific calls shall be exercised according to the policies and procedures of this church. Such persons may resign from the roster or may elect to be rostered in another ELCA category by meeting the appropriate criteria established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and by relinquishing their previous roster category.

**7.51.04. Deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.** This church shall maintain a lay roster of the deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America of those consecrated—according to the standards, criteria, policies, and procedures of this church—for such service within the life of this church in positions of Word and service on behalf of all of God’s people. Deaconesses are to be faithful to Jesus Christ, knowledgeable of the Word of God and the Confessions of this church, respectful of the people of God, and responsive to needs in a changing world. They are to be theologically trained to serve in congregations and other ministry settings;

- a. A newly approved candidate for this roster shall be consecrated, according to the proper service orders of this church, as a deaconess of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;
- b. As used herein, references to deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America mean members of the Deaconess Community of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America listed on this church’s official rosters of laypersons as deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;
- c. Unless otherwise specified, all constitutional provisions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions regarding associates in ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in



America, except for the service order of consecration as a deaconess of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, shall apply to those on the lay roster of this church as deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

**7.51.05. Diaconal Ministers.** This church shall establish and maintain a lay roster of diaconal ministers of those consecrated—according to the standards, criteria, policies, and procedures of this church—for service on behalf of this church in positions of Word and service that exemplify the servant life and that seek to equip and motivate others to live it. Diaconal ministers are to be faithful to Jesus Christ, knowledgeable of the Word of God and the Confessions of this church, respectful of the people of God, and responsive to needs in a changing world. Such diaconal ministers shall seek in a great variety of ways to empower, equip, and support all the baptized people of God in the ministry of Jesus Christ and the mission of God in the world.

a. Upon approval as a candidate for the lay roster of diaconal ministers, and upon receipt and acceptance of a valid, regularly issued letter of call, the candidate shall be consecrated, according to the service orders of this church, as a lay diaconal minister.

b. All constitutional provisions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions regarding associates in ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall apply to those on the lay roster of diaconal ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

**7.52. The standards of acceptance and continuance as associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers of this church shall be included in the bylaws.**

**A minister of Word and Service of this church shall be a person whose commitment to Christ, soundness in the faith, aptness to serve, teach, and witness, and educational qualifications have been examined and approved in the manner prescribed in the documents of this church; who has been properly called and received onto the roster; who accepts and adheres to the Confession of Faith of this church; who is diligent and faithful in the exercise of ministry; and whose life and conduct are above reproach. A minister of Word and Service shall comply with this church's constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions.**

**7.52.10. Standards for the Official Rosters of Laypersons**

**7.52.11.** Associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers shall be governed by the following standards, policies, and procedures:

a. **Basic Standards.** Persons approved and continued as associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers of this church shall satisfactorily meet and maintain the following, as defined by this church in its governing documents and in policies developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council:

1) commitment to Christ;

2) acceptance of and adherence to the Confession of Faith of this church;

3) willingness and ability to serve in response to the needs of this church;

4) academic and practical qualifications for the position, including leadership abilities and competence in interpersonal relationships;

5) commitment to lead a life worthy of the Gospel of Christ and in so doing to be an example in faithful service and holy living;

6) receipt and acceptance of a letter of call; and

7) membership in a congregation of this church.

**b. Preparation and Approval of an Associate in Ministry.** A candidate for approval and commissioning as an associate in ministry of this church shall have;

- 1) membership in a congregation of this church and registration by its pastor and council of the candidate with the appropriate synodical candidacy committee;
- 2) been granted entrance to candidacy by and under the guidance and supervision of the appropriate synodical candidacy committee for at least a year before being approved for call by the committee;
- 3) completed the academic and practical preparation for the work for which approved according to criteria and procedures established by the appropriate churchwide unit;
- 4) been examined and approved by the appropriate synodical candidacy committee according to criteria, policies, and procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit after consultation with the Conference of Bishops and adoption by the Church Council;
- 5) received and accepted a properly issued and attested letter of call.

**c. Preparation and Approval of a Deaconess of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.** A candidate for approval and consecration as a deaconess of this church shall have;

- 1) membership in a congregation of this church and registration by its pastor and council of the candidate with the appropriate synodical candidacy committee;
- 2) been granted entrance to candidacy by and under the guidance and supervision of the synodical candidacy committee for at least a year before being approved by the synodical candidacy committee for call;
- 3) completed the academic and practical preparation for the work for which approved according to criteria and procedures established by the appropriate churchwide unit;
- 4) been examined and approved by the synodical candidacy committee according to criteria, policies, and procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit after consultation with the Deaconess Community of the ELCA and the Conference of Bishops and adoption by the Church Council;
- 5) completed the required formation component, as defined by the appropriate churchwide unit, in the preparation program for service as a deaconess of this church;
- 6) been recommended for call by the bishop of the synod to which the candidate has been assigned in accordance with procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council;
- 7) received and accepted a properly issued and attested letter of call.

**d. Preparation and Approval of a Diaconal Minister.** A candidate for approval and consecration as a diaconal minister of this church shall have;

- 1) membership in a congregation of this church and registration by its pastor and council of the candidate with the appropriate synodical candidacy committee;
- 2) been granted entrance to candidacy by and under the guidance and supervision of the synodical candidacy committee for at least a year before being approved by the synodical candidacy committee for call;
- 3) demonstrated competence in at least one area of specialization or expertise according to guidelines established by the appropriate churchwide unit;
- 4) completed a first theological degree from an accredited theological school in North America;

- 5) completed approved work in Lutheran studies as defined by the appropriate churchwide unit;
  - 6) completed the required formation component in the preparation program for Lutheran diaconal ministry as defined by the appropriate churchwide unit;
  - 7) completed an approved internship or practical preparation as defined by the appropriate churchwide unit;
  - 8) been examined and approved by the appropriate synodical candidacy committee according to criteria, policies, and procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit after consultation with the Conference of Bishops, and adoption by the Church Council;
  - 9) been recommended for call by the bishop of the synod to which the candidate has been assigned in accordance with procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council;
  - 10) received and accepted a properly issued and attested letter of call.
- 7.52.12. Approval under Other Circumstances.** A candidate may, for reasons of age or prior experience, be granted approval under criteria and procedures which permit certain equivalencies as defined by the appropriate churchwide unit.
- 7.52.13. Reinstatement.** A person seeking reinstatement as an associate in ministry, whether having previously served in this church or in one of its predecessor bodies, a deaconess of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, or a diaconal minister of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be endorsed by the pastor and council of the congregation of this church of which such a person is a member, and interviewed, examined, and approved for reinstatement by the synodical candidacy committee under criteria and procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council. In this process, the committee shall review the circumstances related to the termination of earlier service together with subsequent developments. The person is reinstated after receiving and accepting a letter of call in this church.
- a. Any person removed from a lay roster that existed on December 31, 1987, as cited herein, who seeks to return to active lay roster status must apply for acceptance to a roster of this church under the standards, criteria, policies, and procedures that apply to the official rosters of laypersons, as identified in 7.51.03.b. This same requirement shall apply to those certified during the period of January 1, 1988, through September 1, 1993, as associates in ministry of this church.
  - b. A person on the roster of a previous church body or a person on the roster of associates in ministry of this church, who was so certified during the period between January 1, 1988, and September 1, 1993, shall relinquish such a roster category upon being received and accepted on another roster of this church.
- 7.52.14. Maintenance of Lay Rosters.** Each synod shall maintain a lay roster or rosters containing the names of those related to the synod as members of its congregations who have been approved as associates in ministry, deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and diaconal ministers—according to the bylaws and continuing resolutions of this church—for inclusion on such a roster or rosters.
- a. To promote proportionate representation of the rostered faculty and administration in each synod related directly to a seminary of this church, an associate in ministry, a deaconess, or a diaconal minister, if a seminary teacher or administrator, shall be assigned to the

- roster of a synod by the seminary board, subject to approval by the synodical bishop and Synod Council of the affected synod:
- b. For the sake of the ministry and mission needs of this church, an associate in ministry, a deaconess, or a diaconal minister, serving under call in the churchwide organization, may be assigned to a synod, at the initiative of the presiding bishop of this church, upon mutual agreement of the synodical bishops involved after consultation with and approval by the secretary of this church.
  - c. An associate in ministry, a deaconess, or a diaconal minister, if granted retired or disability status on the roster, may be authorized to transfer from the synod where last rostered to the synod of current address, upon application for transfer and the mutual agreement of the synodical bishops involved after consultation with and approval by the secretary of this church.
  - d. In unusual circumstances, the transfer of an associate in ministry, a deaconess, or a diaconal minister who is on leave from call may be authorized upon mutual agreement of the synodical bishops involved after consultation with and approval by the secretary of this church.
- 7.52.15.** The secretary of this church shall maintain the lay rosters of associates in ministry, deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and diaconal ministers on which shall be listed the names of those who qualify according to the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this church.
- 7.52.20.** **Service as Rostered Laypersons**
- 7.52.21.** **Service under Call.** An associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister of this church shall serve under a letter of call properly extended by a congregation, synod, or the churchwide organization.
- a. A call may be extended either for indefinite or stated periods of time by the appropriate calling body for service in a congregation, synod, or churchwide unit, in an institution or agency of this church, or in another setting in a category of work as provided by continuing resolution 7.52.A13.
  - b. Regular, valid calls in this church shall be in accord with criteria, policies, and procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.
  - c. An associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister serving under call to a congregation shall be a member of that congregation. In a parish of multiple congregations, an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister shall be a member of one of the congregations being served.
- 7.52.22.** **On Leave from Call.** An associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister of this church, serving under a regularly issued letter of call, who leaves the work of that call without accepting another regularly issued letter of call, may be retained on the roster of associates in ministry, deaconesses, or diaconal ministers of this church, upon endorsement by the synodical bishop, by action of the Synod Council in the synod of which a member, under policy developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.
- a. Normative Pattern: By annual action of the Synod Council in the synod of which a member, upon endorsement by the synodical bishop, an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister who is without a current letter of call may be retained on the roster of associates in ministry, deaconesses, or diaconal ministers of this church for a maximum of three years, beginning at the completion of an active call.

- b. Study Leave: By annual action of the Synod Council in the synod of which a member, with the approval of the synodical bishop and in consultation with the appropriate churchwide unit, an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister engaged in graduate study appropriate for service in this church may be retained on the roster of associates in ministry, deaconesses, or diaconal ministers of this church for a maximum of six years.
  - c. Family Leave: An associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister who has been in active service under call for at least three years may request leave for family responsibilities. By annual action of the Synod Council in the synod of which a member, upon endorsement by the synodical bishop, such a rostered layperson who is without a current letter of call and who requests leave for the birth or care of a child or children of the rostered layperson or the care of an immediate family member (child, spouse, or parent) with a serious health condition may be retained on the roster of associates in ministry, deaconesses, or diaconal ministers of this church—under policy developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council—for a maximum of six years, beginning at the completion of an active call.
  - d. Exception to these limits for the purpose of serving the needs of this church may be granted in accordance with established policy of this church by the Synod Council in the synod of current roster after having received approval by the Conference of Bishops.
- 7.52.23. Issuance and Termination of the Call of an Associate in Ministry, Deaconess, or Diaconal Minister:**
- a. A letter of call to an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister of this church shall be issued in keeping with this church's constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions as well as policies regarding such calls developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and approved by the Church Council. In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of the congregation, the synodical bishop, following appropriate consultation, will recommend a course of action to the pastor, lay rostered person, and the congregation. If they agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action shall be taken by the synod. If any party fails to assent, the congregation may dismiss the associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister under criteria, policies, and procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.
  - b. A letter of call issued by a Synod Council or the Church Council to an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister of this church shall be either co-terminus with, or not longer than the duration of, the service or employment for which the call was issued. With the exception of persons designated as employees of a synod or the churchwide organization, such a call does not imply any employment relationship or contractual obligation in regard to employment on the part of the Synod Council or Church Council issuing the call. The recipient of such a call remains subject to this church's standards and discipline for associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers, as contained in this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions and in the policy and procedure documents of this church.
  - c. When the Synod Council or the Church Council, as the calling source, determines that the service or employment no longer fulfills the criteria under which a call was issued, the Synod Council or the Church Council shall vacate the call and direct that the individual



be placed on leave from call or, if such leave status is not granted, the individual shall be removed from the roster of associates in ministry, deaconesses, or diaconal ministers.

**7.52.24. Retirement.** Associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers may retire upon attainment of age 60, or after 30 years on a roster of this church or one of its predecessor bodies, and continue to be listed on the roster of associates in ministry, deaconesses, or diaconal ministers of this church, upon endorsement by the synodical bishop, by action of the Synod Council in the synod in which the associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister is listed on the roster.

a. The policies and procedures for granting retired status on the official rosters of laypersons shall be developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.

b. If an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister who has been granted retired status resides at too great a distance from any congregation of this church to be able to sustain an active relationship with that congregation, the bishop of the synod in which the associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister is listed on the roster may grant permission for the individual to hold membership in a congregation or parish of a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

**7.52.25. Disability.** Associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers may be designated as disabled, and continue to be listed on the roster of associates in ministry, deaconesses, or diaconal ministers of this church, upon endorsement by the synodical bishop, by action of the Synod Council in the synod in which the associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister is listed on the roster.

a. The policies and procedures for designation of disability on the official rosters of laypersons shall be developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.

b. If an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister who has been granted disabled status resides at too great a distance from any congregation of this church to be able to sustain an active relationship with that congregation, the bishop of the synod in which the associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister is listed on the roster may grant permission for the individual to hold membership in a congregation or parish of a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

**7.52.26. Retention of Roster Records.** When an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister resigns or is removed from the roster of this church, the roster record shall be retained by the secretary of this church, and the synodical bishop shall invite the person at the time of resignation or removal to provide, annually, appropriate current information for the roster record.

**7.52.27. Non-Stipendiary Service Under Call.** When necessary for the mission needs of this church, a letter of call may be issued by the Synod Council—according to criteria, policies, and procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council—to an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister for non-stipendiary service after the Synod Council has sought and received approval by the Conference of Bishops. A call to non-stipendiary service is to be reviewed at least annually by the Synod Council and continued only as warranted for the ministry needs of this church. Such a call may be terminated by the Synod Council when it is deemed to be fulfilling no longer the mission needs of this church.

- 7.53.** Persons on the lay rosters of this church as defined herein shall be subject to discipline as set forth in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.
- 7.53.** The standards for acceptance and continuance of ministers of Word and Service of this church shall be set forth in the bylaws.
- 7.54.** The secretary of this church shall maintain a roster containing the names of ministers of Word and Service who qualify on the basis of constitutional provisions 7.52., 7.53., and 7.61., and related bylaws.
- 7.54.01.** Ministers of Word and Service shall be known as deacons.
- 7.54.A16.** Those persons rostered in predecessor church bodies as commissioned church staff (The American Lutheran Church), deaconesses (The Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches), deaconesses (The American Lutheran Church), deacons (The Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches), lay professional leaders (the Lutheran Church in America), and commissioned teachers (The Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches) shall be retained as deacons of this church (except for removals in accord with the governing documents, criteria, policies, and procedures of this church). Accountability for specific calls shall be exercised according to the policies and procedures of this church.
- 7.54.B16.** Those persons previously rostered as associates in ministry, deaconesses, or diaconal ministers in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be retained as deacons of this church (except for removals in accord with the governing documents, criteria, policies, and procedures of this church). Accountability for specific calls shall be exercised according to the policies and procedures of this church.
- 7.60.** **LICENSURE AND SYNODICALLY AUTHORIZED MINISTRY**
- 7.61.01.** When need exists to render Word and Sacrament ministry for a congregation or ministry of this church where it is not possible to provide appropriate ordained pastoral leadership, the synodical bishop—acting with the consent of the congregation or ministry, in consultation with the Synod Council, and in accord with standards and qualifications developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and approved by the Church Council—may authorize a person who is a member of a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to offer this ministry. Such an individual shall be supervised by a pastor appointed by the synodical bishop; such service shall be rendered during its duration under the sacramental authority of the bishop as the synod’s pastor. Such an individual will be trained and licensed to fulfill this ministry for a specified period of time and in a given location only. Authorization, remuneration, direct supervision, and accountability are to be determined by the appropriate synodical leadership according to churchwide standards and qualifications for this type of ministry. Authorization for such service shall be reviewed annually and renewed only when a demonstrated need remains for its continuation.
- 7.61.02.** When needed to provide for diaconal ministry as part of a congregation or ministry of this church where it is not possible for such ministry to be provided by appropriately rostered lay ministry, the synodical bishop— acting with the consent of the congregation or ministry, in consultation with the Synod Council, and in accord with standards and qualifications developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and approved by the Church Council—may authorize a non-rostered person who is a member of a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to offer such non-sacramental ministry. Such an individual shall be supervised by an ordained minister appointed by the

synodical bishop and shall be trained and authorized to fulfill a particular ministry for a specific period of time in a given location only. Authorization, remuneration, direct supervision, and accountability are to be determined by the appropriate synodical leadership according to churchwide standards and qualifications for this type of ministry. Authorization for such service shall be reviewed annually and renewed only when a demonstrated need remains for its continuation.

**7.60. STANDARDS FOR MINISTERS OF WORD AND SERVICE**

**7.61. In accordance with the description stated in 7.52, ministers of Word and Service shall be governed by the following standards, policies, and procedures:**

**7.61.01. Basic Standards.** Persons admitted to and continued in the ministry of Word and Service of this church shall satisfactorily meet and maintain the following, as defined by this church's constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions and in policies developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council:

- a. commitment to Christ;
- b. acceptance of and adherence to the Confession of Faith of this church;
- c. willingness and ability to serve in response to the needs of this church;
- d. academic and practical qualifications for ministry, including leadership abilities and competence in interpersonal relationships;
- e. commitment to lead a life worthy of the Gospel of Christ and in so doing to be an example in faithful service and holy living;
- f. receipt and acceptance of a letter of call; and
- g. membership in a congregation of this church.

**7.61.02. Responsibilities.** Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, every minister of Word and Service shall:

- a. Be rooted in the Word of God, for proclamation and service;
- b. Advocate a prophetic diakonia that commits itself to risk-taking and innovative service on the frontiers of the Church's outreach, giving particular attention to the suffering places in God's world;
- c. Speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world, witnessing to the realm of God in the 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 the ELCA and its wider ministry of the gospel, and advocate for the work of all expressions of this church; and
- i. Identify and encourage qualified persons to prepare for ministry of the gospel.

**7.61.03. Preparation and Approval.** Except as provided in 7.61.04., a candidate who is to be called and received onto the roster as a minister of Word and Service shall have:

- a. membership in a congregation of this church and registration, by its pastor and council, of the candidate with the candidacy committee;
- b. been granted entrance to candidacy by and under the guidance and supervision of the appropriate committee for at least a year before being approved for call;

- c. completed the academic and practical preparation according to criteria and procedures established by the appropriate churchwide unit, after consultation with the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council;
- d. been examined and approved by the appropriate committee according to criteria, policies, and procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, after consultation with the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council;
- e. been recommended to a congregation or other entity by the bishop of the synod to which the candidate has been assigned for first call in accordance with the procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council; and
- f. received and accepted a properly issued and attested letter of call.

**7.61.04. Approval under Other Circumstances.** A candidate may, for reasons of age or prior experience, be granted approval under criteria and procedures which permit certain equivalencies as defined by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.

**7.61.05. Reinstatement.** A person seeking reinstatement as a minister of Word and Service shall be registered by the pastor and council of the congregation of which such a person is a member with the candidacy committee of the synod in which the person was last rostered or, upon mutual agreement of the synodical bishops involved, after consultation with and approval by the secretary of this church, with the candidacy committee of the synod of current residence. The person then shall be interviewed, examined, and approved for reinstatement by the candidacy committee under criteria, policies, and procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council. In this process, the committee shall review the circumstances related to the termination of earlier service together with subsequent developments. The person is reinstated after receiving and accepting a letter of call to serve as a minister of Word and Service in this church.

**7.61.06. On Leave from Call.** A minister of Word and Service of this church, serving under a regularly issued letter of call, who leaves the work of that ministry without accepting another regularly issued letter of call, may be retained on the roster of ministers of Word and Service of this church, upon endorsement by the synodical bishop, by action of the Synod Council in the synod of which the minister of Word and Service is a member, under policy developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.

- a. Normative Pattern: By annual action of the Synod Council in the synod of which a member, upon endorsement by the synodical bishop, a minister of Word and Service who is without a current letter of call may be retained on the roster of ministers of Word and Service of this church for a maximum of three years, beginning at the completion of an active call.
- b. Study Leave: By annual action of the Synod Council in the synod of which a member, with the approval of the synodical bishop and in consultation with the appropriate churchwide unit a minister of Word and Service engaged in graduate study, in a field of study that will enhance service in the ministry of Word and Service in this church, may be retained on the roster of ministers of Word and Service of this church for a maximum of six years.
- c. Family Leave: A minister of Word and Service who has been in active service under call for at least three years may request leave for family responsibilities. By annual action of the Synod Council in the synod of which a member, upon endorsement by the synodical

bishop, such a minister of Word and Service who is without a current letter of call and who requests leave for the birth or care of a child or children of the minister of Word and Service or the care of an immediate family member (child, spouse, or parent) with a serious health condition may be retained on the roster of ministers of Word and Service of this church—under policy developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council—for a maximum of six years, beginning at the completion of an active call.

- d. Exception to these limits for the purpose of serving the needs of this church may be granted in accordance with established policy of this church by the Synod Council in the synod of current roster after having received approval by the Conference of Bishops.

**7.61.A16.** *Any person removed from the roster of ministers of Word and Service that existed on December 31, 1987, as cited herein, who seeks to return to active roster status must apply for acceptance to a roster of this church under the standards, criteria, policies, and procedures that apply to the official roster of ministers of Word and Service. This same requirement shall apply to those certified during the period of January 1, 1988, through September 1, 1993, as associates in ministry of this church.*

**7.61.B16.** *A person on the roster of a previous church body or a person on the roster of associates in ministry of this church, who was so certified during the period between January 1, 1988, and September 1, 1993, shall relinquish such a roster category upon being received and accepted on another roster of this church.*

**7.70. CALLS FOR MINISTERS OF WORD AND SERVICE**

**7.71. Letters of Call.** Letters of call to ministers of Word and Service of this church or properly approved candidates for this church's roster of ministers of Word and Service shall be issued in keeping with this church's constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions as well as policies regarding such calls developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and approved by the Church Council.

**7.71.01. Service under Call.** A minister of Word and Service of this church shall serve under a letter of call properly extended by a congregation, the Synod Council, the Synod Assembly, the Church Council, or the Churchwide Assembly.

- a. Calls may be extended either for stated periods of time and for shared-time ministry by the appropriate calling body under criteria recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council for service in a congregation, synod, or churchwide unit, in an institution or agency of this church, or in another setting in a category of work as provided by continuing resolution 7.74.A16.

- b. A minister of Word and Service serving under call to a congregation shall be a member of that congregation. In a parish of multiple congregations, a minister of Word and Service shall be a member of one of the congregations being served.

**7.71.02. Non-Stipendiary Service Under Call.** When it is deemed necessary for the mission needs of this church, a letter of call may be issued by the Synod Council— according to criteria, policies, and procedures recommended by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council—to a minister of Word and Service for non-stipendiary service after the Synod Council has sought and received approval by the Conference of Bishops. A call to non-stipendiary service is to be reviewed at least annually by the Synod Council and continued only as warranted for the ministry needs of this



church. Such a call may be terminated by the Synod Council when it is deemed to be fulfilling no longer the mission needs of this church.

**7.71.03. Calls in Predecessor Church Bodies.** Accountability for specific calls to service extended in predecessor church bodies shall be exercised according to the policies and procedures of this church.

**7.71.04. Retirement.** Ministers of Word and Service may retire upon attainment of age 60, or after 30 years on a roster of this church or one of its predecessor bodies, and continue to be listed on the roster of ministers of Word and Service of this church, upon endorsement by the synodical bishop, by action of the Synod Council in the synod in which the minister of Word and Service is listed on the roster.

a. The policies and procedures for granting retired status on the roster of ministers of Word and Service shall be developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.

b. If a minister of Word and Service who has been granted retired status resides at too great a distance from any congregation of this church to be able to sustain an active relationship with that congregation, or if there are no ELCA congregations in the vicinity besides the congregation previously served, the bishop of the synod in which the minister of Word and Service is listed on the roster may grant permission for the minister of Word and Service to hold membership in a congregation or parish of a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

**7.71.05. Disability.** Ministers of Word and Service may be designated as disabled, and continue to be listed on the roster of ministers of Word and Service of this church, upon endorsement by the synodical bishop, by action of the Synod Council in the synod in which the minister of Word and Service is listed on the roster.

a. The policies and procedures for designation of disability on the official roster of ministers of Word and Service shall be developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.

b. If a minister of Word and Service who has been granted disabled status resides at too great a distance from any congregation of this church to be able to sustain an active relationship with that congregation, or if there are no ELCA congregations in the vicinity besides the congregation previously served, the bishop of the synod in which the minister of Word and Service is listed on the roster may grant permission for the individual to hold membership in a congregation of a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

**7.71.06. Retention of Roster Records.** When a minister of Word and Service resigns or is removed from the roster of this church, the roster record shall be retained by the secretary of this church, and the synodical bishop shall invite the person at the time of resignation or removal to provide, annually, appropriate current information for the roster record.

**7.72. Each person on the roster of ministers of Word and Service of this church shall be related to that synod:**

a. to which the congregation issuing the call to the minister of Word and Service is related;

b. which issues a letter of call to the minister of Word and Service;

c. on whose roster the minister of Word and Service was listed at the time of the issuance of a letter of call from the Church Council;

- d. on whose roster the minister of Word and Service, if a seminary teacher or administrator, was assigned by the seminary board, subject to approval by the synodical bishop and Synod Council of each affected synod, to promote proportionate representation of faculty and administration in each synod of its region;
- e. in which the minister of Word and Service, upon receiving a call from this church, serves as a deployed staff person or on the roster of one of the synods to which the minister of Word and Service is deployed;
- f. on whose roster the minister of Word and Service was listed when placed on leave from call;
- g. on whose roster the minister of Word and Service, if designated as disabled, was listed when last called, or the synod of current address, upon application by the minister of Word and Service for transfer and the mutual agreement of the synodical bishops involved after consultation with and approval by the secretary of this church; or
- h. on whose roster the minister of Word and Service, if granted retired status, was listed when last called, or the synod of current address, upon application by the minister of Word and Service for transfer and the mutual agreement of the synodical bishops involved after consultation with and approval by the secretary of this church.

**7.72.01.** If the service of a minister of Word and Service who receives and accepts a letter of call from this church, under 7.72.c., would be enhanced through transfer of roster status from the previous synod of roster to the synod of current address, such a transfer may be authorized upon mutual agreement of the synodical bishops involved after consultation with and approval by the secretary of this church.

**7.72.02.** In unusual circumstances, the transfer of a minister of Word and Service who is on leave from call may be authorized upon mutual agreement of the synodical bishops involved after consultation with and approval by the secretary of this church.

**7.72.03.** In certain circumstances for the sake of the ministry and mission needs of this church, the transfer of a minister of Word and Service serving under call in the churchwide organization may be authorized, at the initiative of the presiding bishop of this church, upon mutual agreement of the synodical bishops involved in such a transfer after consultation with and approval by the secretary of this church.

**7.73.** A letter of call issued by a Synod Council or the Church Council to a minister of Word and Service of this church shall be either co-terminus with, or not longer than, the duration of the service or employment for which the call was issued. With the exception of persons designated as employees of a synod or the churchwide organization, such a call does not imply any employment relationship or contractual obligation in regard to employment on the part of the Synod Council or Church Council issuing the call. The recipient of such a call remains subject to this church's standards and discipline for ministry of Word and Service, as contained in this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions and in the policy and procedure documents of this church.

**7.73.01.** When the Synod Council or the Church Council, as the calling source, determines that the service or employment no longer fulfills the criteria under which a call was issued, the Synod Council or the Church Council shall vacate the call and direct that the individual be placed on leave from call or, if such leave status is not granted, the individual shall be removed from the roster of ministers of Word and Service.

**7.73.02.** Ministers of Word and Service previously under call to the churchwide organization or to a synod shall respect the integrity of the ministry in which they no longer serve and shall not interfere with or exercise the functions of the office or position in which they no longer serve unless invited to do so by the presiding bishop or Church Council in the churchwide organization or, in the synods, by the bishop or the Synod Council.

**7.74.** Each synod shall maintain a roster containing the names of those ministers of Word and Service who are related to it on the basis of 7.72. of this constitution.

**7.52.A13. Sources of Calls for Associates in Ministry, Deaconesses, and Diaconal Ministers**

a. The principles governing sources of calls for ordained ministers shall, as appropriate, also govern sources of letters of call for associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

b. Table of Sources of Call for Associates in Ministry, Deaconesses, and Diaconal Ministers

**7.74.A16. Sources of Calls for Ministers of Word and Service**

a. Principles for Sources of Calls

1) A “call” is an action by expressions of this church, as specified in the “Table of Sources of Calls for Ministers of Word and Service,” through which a person is asked to serve in a specified ministry. Such an action is attested in a “letter of call.”

2) Interdependence within the body of this church suggests that any action of one of its entities affects other entities. Therefore, interdependence is expressed in all calls extended within this church.

3) A call expresses a relationship between this church and the person called involving mutual service, support, accountability, supervision, and discipline.

4) A letter of call is issued by that expression of this church authorized to do so which is most directly involved in accountability for the specified ministry.

5) Decisions on calls for ministries in unusual circumstances not otherwise provided for but deemed to be in the interests of this church’s care of the Gospel are referred to the Conference of Bishops for recommendation to the appropriate calling body.

b. Table of Sources of Call for Ministers of Word and Service

Setting	Calling Body
1.0 Congregational ministry	
1.1 Single congregation	Congregation meeting
1.2 Multiple-congregation parish	Congregation meetings, acting on a common proposal, with one of the participating congregations issuing the call
1.3 Coalition and cluster ministry	Synod Council
1.4 <del>Other</del> Congregations beyond the ELCA	
1.41 Independent Lutheran congregation	Synod Council
1.42 Other	Synod Council

2.0	Synodical ministry	<del>Synod Council</del>
2.1	Assistant to the Bishop	<del>Synod Council</del>
2.2	Shared staff of two or more synods	<del>Synod Council</del>
2.3	Staff partially supported by grants from churchwide units	<del>Synod Council</del>
3.0	Regional ministry	<del>Church Council</del>
3.1	Staff	<del>Church Council</del>
3.2	Shared synodical-churchwide staff	<del>Church Council</del>
4.0	Churchwide ministry	
4.1	Officer's staff Secretary	<del>Church Council</del> <del>Churchwide Assembly</del>
4.2	Unit executive director Treasurer	Church Council
4.3	Other churchwide unit staff Staff of the churchwide organization	Church Council
5.0	<del>Social ministry institutions</del> <del>Institutional ministry</del>	
5.1	Institution/agency related or unrelated to a synod	Synod Council
5.2	Institution/agency related more to than one synod	Synod Council of one of the synods
5.3	ELCA-related institution/agency	Church Council upon request of appropriate churchwide unit
5.4	Other	Church Council
6.0	Campus ministry	
6.1	Staff	Synod Council
7.0	<del>Church camp Outdoor</del> ministry	
7.1	Staff	Synod Council
8.0	Ecumenical ministry	
8.1	Related to a synod	Synod Council
8.2	Related to more than one synod	Synod Council of one of the synods
8.3	National/international organization	Church Council

9.0	Inter-Lutheran ministry	
9.1	Related to a synod	Synod Council
9.2	Related to more than one synod	Synod Council of one of the synods
9.3	National/International	Church Council
10.0	Educational ministry	
10.1	ELCA-related seminary	Church Council upon request of appropriate churchwide unit
10.2	Seminary unrelated to ELCA	Church Council upon request of appropriate churchwide unit
10.3	ELCA-related college	Synod Council of the synod in which college is located
10.4	College unrelated to ELCA	Synod Council of the synod in which college is located
10.5	ELCA-related school	Congregation of which the school is a part or, if related to several congregations, Synod Council of the synod in which the school is located
10.6	School unrelated to ELCA	Synod Council of the synod in which school is located
10.7	Director/staff of a continuing education center related to a churchwide unit	Synod Council in which the center's main office of center is located upon the request of appropriate churchwide unit
11.0	Missionary ministry	
11.1	Outside United States	Church Council upon request of appropriate churchwide unit
11.2	Within United States	Church Council upon request of appropriate churchwide unit
12.0	Other	
12.1	Non-stipendiary service under call	Synod Council upon approval by the Conference of Bishops



12.2	<i>Unusual ministries (as in conjunction with occupations and in approved situations not otherwise specified)</i>	<i>Synod Council or Church Council upon recommendation by the Conference of Bishops</i>
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**7.75.**

**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 death or following consultation with the synodical 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 to which they have been called effectively in that congregation in view of local conditions;**
  - 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 deacon under paragraph a.4) above, or ineffective conduct of the 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 non-rostered person, 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 non-rostered person.**
- 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 as disabled. Upon removal of the disability and 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.
- e. If either party fails to assent to the recommendations of the bishop's committee concerning the minister of Word and Service's '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 majority 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 simple 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 discipline, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action in accordance with the provisions of this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions.

**7.76.** Ministers of Word and Service of this church shall be subject to discipline as set forth in Chapter 20 of this constitution.

**7.76.01.** No person who belongs to any organization other than the Church which claims to possess in its teachings and ceremonies that which the Lord has given solely to the Church shall be called and received onto the roster of ministers of Word and Service or otherwise received into the ministry of this church, nor shall any person so called and received onto the roster of ministers of Word and Service or otherwise received by this church be retained in its ministry who subsequently joins such an organization.

## Chapter 20.

### CONSULTATION, DISCIPLINE, APPEALS, AND ADJUDICATION

**20.10.** CONSULTATION AND DISCIPLINE

**20.11.** There shall be set forth in the bylaws a process of discipline governing officers, ~~ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament, ministers of Word and Service, diaconal ministers, associates in ministry, deaconesses,~~ congregations, and members of congregations. Except as provided in 20.18. or 20.19., such process shall assure due process and due protection for the accused, other parties, and this church. Since synods have responsibility for admittance of persons into the ~~ordained ministry of this church or onto other rosters rostered ministries~~ of this church and have oversight of pastoral and congregational relationships, the disciplinary process shall be a responsibility of the synod on behalf of this church.

- 20.17. None of the provisions of this chapter is intended nor shall be construed to limit the authority of a Synod Council to ~~remove~~ determine roster status, under the bylaws of this church, ~~from the rosters of this church an ordained of a minister or other person~~ who is without regular call ~~and not retired~~, for any reason, even though such reason might also be the basis for disciplinary proceedings under this chapter.
- 20.20. ~~ORDAINED MINISTERS~~ The Committee on Appeals shall establish definitions and guidelines, subject to approval by the Church Council, to enable clear and uniform application of the grounds for discipline of officers, rostered ministers, congregations, and members of congregations.
- 20.21. The disciplinary process for ministers of Word and Sacrament shall be set forth in the bylaws.
- 20.21.01. ~~Ordained m~~ Ministers of Word and Sacrament shall be subject to discipline for:
- preaching and teaching in conflict with the faith confessed by this church;
  - conduct incompatible with the character of the ministerial office;
  - willfully disregarding or violating the functions and standards established by this church for the office of ministry of Word and Sacrament;
  - willfully disregarding the provisions of the constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions; or
  - willfully failing to comply with the requirements ordered by a discipline hearing committee under 20.23.08.
- 20.21.02. The disciplinary actions which may be imposed are:
- private censure and admonition by the bishop of the synod;
  - suspension from the office and functions of the ordained ministry of Word and Sacrament in this church for a designated period or until there is satisfactory evidence of repentance and amendment; or
  - removal from the ~~ordained ministry~~ roster of ministers of Word and Sacrament of this church.
- 20.21.03. Charges against ~~an ordained~~ minister of Word and Sacrament which could lead to discipline must be specific and in writing, subscribed to by the accuser(s), and be made by one or more of the following:
- at least two-thirds of the members of the congregation's council, submitted to the synodical bishop;
  - at least one-third of the voting members of the congregation, submitted to the synodical bishop;
  - at least two-thirds of the members of the governing body to which the ordained minister of Word and Sacrament, if not a parish-congregational pastor, is accountable, submitted to the synodical bishop;
  - at least 10 ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament or ministers of Word and Service of the synod on whose roster the accused ordained minister of Word and Sacrament is listed, submitted to the synodical bishop;
  - the synodical bishop; or
  - the presiding bishop of this church, but only with respect to an accused who is a synodical bishop (or who was a synodical bishop at any time during the 12 months preceding the filing of written charges), submitted to the secretary of this church.
- 20.21.04. When there are indications that a cause for discipline may exist and before charges are made, efforts shall be made by the bishop of the synod to resolve the situation by consultation; for

assistance in these efforts, the bishop may utilize either a consultation panel or an advisory panel as herein provided:

- a. When requested by the synodical bishop, a consultation panel consisting of five persons (three ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament and two laypersons) appointed from the members of the Consultation Committee of the synod by the synodical bishop, or, at the request of the synodical bishop, by the Synod Council's Executive Committee or other committee authorized to do so by the Synod Council, shall assist the synodical bishop in efforts to resolve a situation by consultation.
- b. When requested by the synodical bishop, an advisory panel consisting of five persons (three ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament and two laypersons) appointed by the synodical bishop shall assist the synodical bishop in efforts to resolve a situation by consultation.

**20.21.05.** If appointed, a consultation panel or advisory panel shall advise the synodical bishop as to whether or not the bishop should bring charges or may make other recommendation for resolution of the controversy that would not involve proceedings before a discipline hearing committee. To these ends, the panel may meet with complaining witnesses as well as with the concerned ordained minister of Word and Sacrament. If requested by the synodical bishop, members of the panel also may assist, as representatives of the accuser, in the presentation of evidence and examination of witnesses before a discipline hearing committee.

**20.21.11.** The Churchwide Committee on Discipline shall consist of 24–36 members, half of whom should be ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament and half of whom should be laypersons, elected by the Churchwide Assembly for a term of six years. Each member will serve until a successor is elected, without consecutive re-election, and will serve as needed on a discipline hearing committee in any of the synods in this church.

**20.21.12.** The accused shall have the privilege of selecting two persons (one clergy minister of Word and Sacrament and one layperson) and their alternates of the six persons from the churchwide Committee on Discipline to serve on a discipline hearing committee. The remaining four persons (two clergy minister of Word and Sacrament and two laypersons) and their alternates, or six, if the accused does not exercise the privilege, and their alternates shall be selected by the Executive Committee of the Church Council.

**20.21.23.** If there are indications that a cause for discipline exists or if in the course of the proceedings it should become apparent to the bishop of the synod that the pastoral office cannot be conducted effectively in the congregation(s) being served by the ordained minister of Word and Sacrament due to local conditions or that local conditions may be adversely affected by the continued service by the ordained minister pastor, the bishop of the synod may temporarily suspend the pastor from service in the congregation(s) without prejudice and with pay provided through a joint synodical and churchwide fund and with housing provided by the congregation(s).

**20.21.24.** If there are indications that a cause for discipline exists or if in the course of proceedings it becomes apparent to the bishop of the synod that the circumstances require, the bishop of the synod may temporarily suspend an ordained minister of Word and Sacrament serving under letter of call issued other than by a congregation from the office and functions of ordained ministry of Word and Sacrament without prejudice and without affecting compensation and housing.

- 20.22.** ~~LAY ROSTERED MINISTERS~~ **The disciplinary process for ministers of Word and Service shall be set forth in the bylaws.**
- 20.22.01.** ~~Laypersons on official rosters~~ **Ministers of Word and Service** shall be subject to discipline for:
- confessing and teaching in conflict with the faith confessed by this church;
  - conduct incompatible with the ~~standards for the rostered ministries of this church~~ **character of the ministerial office**;
  - willfully disregarding or violating the functions and standards established by this church for ~~the lay roster or rosters~~ **ministers of Word and Service**;
  - willfully disregarding the provisions of the constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions; or
  - willfully failing to comply with the requirements ordered by a discipline hearing committee under 20.23.08.
- 20.22.02.** The disciplinary actions that may be imposed are:
- private censure and admonition by the bishop of the synod;
  - suspension from the role and functions of ~~an associate in ministry, a deaconess, or a diaconal minister of Word and Service~~ **for a designated period or until there is satisfactory evidence of repentance and amendment**; or
  - removal from the ~~official roster for laypersons of ministers of Word and Service~~ **of this church**.
- 20.22.03.** Charges against a ~~layperson on an official roster~~ **minister of Word and Service** of this church that could lead to discipline must be specific and in writing, subscribed to by the accuser(s), and be made by one or more of the following:
- at least two-thirds of the members of the Congregation Council of the congregation in which the ~~layperson~~ **minister of Word and Service** is serving, submitted to the synodical bishop;
  - at least one-third of the voting members of the congregation in which the ~~layperson~~ **minister of Word and Service** is serving, submitted to the synodical bishop;
  - at least two-thirds of the members of the governing body to which the ~~layperson~~ **minister of Word and Service** is accountable, submitted to the synodical bishop;
  - at least 10 ~~ordained ministers or laypersons on official~~ **ministers of Word and Sacrament or ministers of Word and Service on the** rosters of the synod on whose roster the accused ~~layperson~~ **minister of Word and Service** is listed, submitted to the synodical bishop; or
  - the synodical bishop.
- 20.22.04.** When there are indications that a cause for discipline exists, efforts shall be made by the bishop of the synod to resolve the situation by consultation in the same manner as set forth above for ~~ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament~~ **in 20.21.04. through 20.21.06.**
- 20.22.05.** If those efforts fail, the procedures for discipline shall be the same as that set forth above for ~~ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament~~ **in 20.21.07. through 20.21.22.**
- 20.22.06.** If there are indications that a cause for discipline exists or if in the course of the proceedings it should become apparent to the bishop of the synod that the role and function of ~~the associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal~~ **a minister of Word and Service** cannot be conducted effectively in the congregation(s) being served by ~~a rostered layperson~~ **the minister of Word and Service** due to local conditions or that local conditions may be adversely affected by the continued service by ~~a rostered layperson~~ **the minister of Word and Service**, the bishop of the synod may temporarily suspend ~~a rostered layperson~~ **the minister of Word and Service** from service in the congregation(s) without prejudice and with pay provided through a joint churchwide-synodical-congregation fund.

- 20.22.07. If there are indications that a cause for discipline exists or if in the course of proceedings it becomes apparent to the bishop of the synod that the circumstances require, the bishop of the synod may temporarily suspend a ~~rostered layperson~~ **minister of Word and Service** serving under letter of call issued other than by a congregation from the office and functions of a ~~rostered layperson~~ **minister of Word and Service** without prejudice and without affecting compensation.
- 20.23. ~~LIMITED DISCIPLINE~~ **A process for limited discipline of rostered ministers shall be set forth in the bylaws.**
- 20.23.01. Where the written charges specify that the accuser will not seek, ~~in the case of an ordained minister, removal from the ordained ministry of this church or suspension from the office and functions of the ordained ministry in this church for a period exceeding three months, or, in the case of a layperson on one of the rosters of this church, the rostered minister's removal from such roster the ministry of this church or suspension from the office/role and functions of a person on such roster the ministry of this church~~ for a period not exceeding three months, 20.23.01. through 20.23.09. shall apply to the exclusion of 20.21.08. through 20.21.24. and 20.22.05. through 20.22.07.
- 20.23.08. The discipline hearing committee shall conclude its meeting(s) and render its decision in writing within 45 days of the commencement of the meeting for which written notice was given under 20.23.06. The written decision shall be in two parts:
- ...
- b. Determination. In this part, the committee shall state whether, based upon the facts that it has found, it believes discipline should be imposed and if so, which one or more of the following should be imposed:
- 1) private censure and admonition by the synodical bishop.
  - 2) suspension for a period not exceeding three months from the ~~office and functions of the ordained ministry in the case of an ordained minister or from the /role and functions of a rostered layperson in the case of a layperson on a roster of ministry in this church.~~
- ...
- 20.30. **CONGREGATIONS**
- 20.31. **The disciplinary process for congregations shall be set forth in the bylaws.**
- 20.31.02. The disciplinary actions which may be imposed are:
- a. censure and admonition by the bishop of the synod;
  - b. suspension from this church for a designated period, the consequences of such suspension being the loss of voting rights of any member (including ~~ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament~~ **ministers of Word and Service**) of the congregation at synod or churchwide assemblies, the loss of the right to petition, and the forfeiture of eligibility by any member of the congregation to serve on any council, board, committee, or other group of this church, any of its synods, or any other subdivision thereof;
- ...
- 20.31.04. When there are indications that a cause for discipline exists, efforts shall be made by the bishop of the synod to resolve the situation by consultation in the same manner as set forth above for ~~ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament~~ in 20.21.04. and 20.21.05.



**20.31.05.** If those efforts fail, the procedures for discipline shall be the same as that set forth above for ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament in 20.21.07. through 20.21.22.

**20.40. MEMBERS OF CONGREGATIONS**

**20.41.** The disciplinary process for members of congregations shall be set forth in the bylaws.

**20.41.04.** If the counseling, censure and admonitions pursuant to bylaw 20.41.02.a. and b. do not result in repentance and amendment of life, charges against the accused member(s) that are specific and in writing may be prepared by the Congregation Council, signed, and submitted to the vice president of the synod. The vice president shall select from the synod's Consultation Committee a panel of five members (three lay persons and two clergy ministers of Word and Sacrament). A copy of the written charges shall be provided to consultation panel and the accused member(s). The consultation panel, after requesting a written reply to the charges from the accused member(s), shall consider the matter and seek a resolution by means of investigation, consultation, mediation, or whatever other means may seem appropriate.

**20.50. RECALL OR DISMISSAL**

**20.51.** A process for the recall or dismissal of officers shall be set forth in the bylaws.

**20.51.** [provision to become bylaw]

**20.51.01.** The recall or dismissal of the presiding bishop, vice president, or secretary of this church and the vacating of office may be effected:

- a. for willful disregard or violation of the constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions;
- b. for such physical or mental disability as renders the officer incapable of performing the duties of office; or
- c. for such conduct as would subject the officer to disciplinary action as an ordained rostered minister or as a member of a congregation of this church.

**20.52.** [provision to become bylaw]

**20.51.02.** Proceedings for the recall or dismissal of such an officer shall be instituted by petition by:

- a. the Church Council on a vote of at least two-thirds of its elected members; or
- b. the Churchwide Assembly on a vote of at least two-thirds of its members.

The petition shall be filed with the chair of the Committee on Appeals and shall set forth the specific charge or charges.

**20.51.03.** Notice of a decision by the Committee on Appeals that the charges have been sustained shall be given to the accused person, the Church Council shall be notified of the entry of such judgment, and the office shall be vacated.

**20.52.A+16. Recall or Dismissal of an Churchwide Officer**

- a. *The petition for recall or dismissal described in 20.52. 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, except if the subject of the petition is the secretary, the petition shall be in care of the presiding bishop of this church at the same address).*
- b. *In the case of alleged physical or mental incapacity of the officer,*
  - 1) *with respect to the officer the procedures outlined in 13.63. shall first be followed, and if such officer does not accept the decision of the Church Council, the Church Council may proceed to petition for proceedings for recall or dismissal.*
  - 2) *in the event of such petition, four members of the Committee on Appeals, designated by the committee chair and consisting of two ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament and two laypersons, shall*

- a) *investigate such conditions in person;*
  - b) *seek competent medical testimony;*
  - c) *seek the counsel and advice of the other officers of this church; and*
  - d) *submit a written report of their findings to the other members of the Committee on Appeals.*
- 3) *the members of the Committee on Appeals, other than those who investigated the conditions and other than those who are disqualified, shall review the findings of the investigation committee and by an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of those present and voting may adopt the findings and grant the petition.*
- c. *If the officer is an ordained minister of Word and Sacrament, grounds for recall or dismissal include those set forth in 20.21.01. and as defined under the process described in 20.71.11. and 20.71.12. 20.20. as grounds for discipline of ordained minister. If the officer is a minister of Word and Service, grounds for recall or dismissal include those set forth in 20.22.01. and as defined under the process described in 20.20. as grounds for discipline. If the officer is a layperson, grounds for recall or dismissal include those set forth in 20.41.01. and as defined under the process described in 20.20. as grounds for discipline.*
- d. *In the case of alleged 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 20.21.16., except to the extent that those rules are in conflict with 20.51., 20.52., 20.53., or with the provisions of this continuing resolution; 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.*
- e. *Upon the filing of a written petition, the Executive Committee of the Church Council may temporarily suspend the officer from service without prejudice, but with continuation of compensation, including benefits, if the officer is a salaried employee. Appeals from such temporary suspension shall be provided in 13.63.*

**20.53.** ***Notice of a decision by the Committee on Appeals that the charges have been sustained shall be given to the accused person, the Church Council shall be notified of the entry of such judgment, and the office shall be vacated.***

**20.53.11.** *The Church Council shall appoint three members from the Committee on Appeals who shall recommend a similar process for the recall or dismissal of an officer of a synod, which process shall become operative when ratified by the Church Council.*

**20.53.A11.** ***Recall or Dismissal of a Synod Officer***

- a. *The recall or dismissal of the bishop, vice president, secretary, or treasurer of a synod of this church and the vacating of office may be effected:*
  - 1) *for willful disregard or violation of the constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions;*
  - 2) *for such physical or mental disability as renders the officer incapable of performing the duties of office; or*
  - 3) *for such conduct as would subject the officer to disciplinary action as an ordained minister of Word and Sacrament or as a member of a congregation of this church.*

- b. Proceedings for the recall or dismissal of a synodical 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) at least 10 synodical bishops; or
  - 4) the presiding bishop of this church.
- 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.
- c. Proceedings for the recall or dismissal of an officer of a synod, other than the synodical 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; or
  - 3) the synodical bishop.
- 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. In the case of alleged physical or mental incapacity of an officer of a synod,
- 1) the procedures outlined in ¶S8.56. shall first be followed, and if such officer does not accept the decision of the Synod Council, the Synod Council may proceed to petition for proceedings for recall or dismissal;
  - 2) four members of the Committee on Appeals, designated by the committee chair and consisting of two ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament and two laypersons, shall
    - a) investigate such conditions in person;
    - b) seek competent medical testimony;
    - c) seek the counsel and advice of the presiding bishop of this church if such officer is the synodical bishop;
    - d) seek the counsel and advice of the synodical bishop if such officer is the vice president, secretary, or treasurer of the synod; and
    - e) submit a written report of their findings to the other members of the Committee on Appeals.
  - 3) the members of the Committee on Appeals, other than those who investigated the conditions and other than those who are disqualified, shall review the findings of the investigation committee and by an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of those present and voting shall adopt the findings and grant the petition.
- e. If the synod officer is an ordained minister of Word and Sacrament, grounds for recall or dismissal include those set forth in 20.21.01. and as defined under the process described in 20.71.11. and 20.71.12. for discipline of ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament.
- f. If the synod officer is a layperson, grounds for recall or dismissal include those set forth in 20.41.01.

- g. *If the case of alleged 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) *if the proceedings were instituted by the presiding bishop of this church, the synodical bishop, or at least 10 other synodical bishops, the petitioner shall first meet with the Executive Committee of the Synod Council in which the officer serves. The Executive Committee shall function as a consultation panel to give advice to the petitioner;*
  - 2) *if as a result of the consultation the petition is not filed, no further proceedings shall be required;*
  - 3) *if as a result of the consultation the petition is filed or if the proceedings were instituted by the Synod Assembly or the Synod Council, 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 20.21.16. except to the extent that those rules are in conflict with the provisions of this continuing resolution; and*
  - 4) *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.*
- h. *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. Appeals from such temporary suspension shall be provided in ¶S8.56.*
- i. *Written notice of a decision by the Committee on Appeals that the charges have been sustained shall be given to the affected officer. The Synod Council shall be notified of such decision and the office shall be vacated if the charges have been sustained.*

**20.60. COMMITTEE ON APPEALS**

**20.61.** There shall be a Committee on Appeals to which may be referred appeals from disciplinary proceedings and petitions for the recall of an officer. The Church Council shall appoint three members from the Committee on Appeals who shall recommend rules of procedure for the performance of its duties. The rules shall become effective when ratified by the Church Council.

**20.62.** **The Committee on Appeals shall be comprised of six ministers of Word and Sacrament and six laypersons, elected by the Churchwide Assembly for a term of six years, without consecutive re-election.**

**20.62.A16.** *In the event that the term of any member of the Committee on Appeals expires before that member's successor is elected, the Church Council may elect an individual in the same category—minister of Word and Sacrament or layperson—to serve on the Committee until the next Churchwide Assembly. A member elected by the Church Council who serves less than one-half of a term shall be eligible for election to a full term by the Churchwide Assembly.*

**20.63.** **The Committee on Appeals shall elect its own officers.**

**20.64.** **The decision of a discipline hearing committee may be appealed to the Committee on Appeals by:**

- a. **the accuser(s) who brought charges upon which a discipline hearing committee has acted;**
- b. **a minister of Word and Sacrament upon whom discipline has been imposed by a discipline hearing committee;**

- c. a minister of Word and Service upon whom discipline has been imposed by a discipline hearing committee; or
- d. a congregation upon whom discipline has been imposed by a discipline hearing committee.

*[Update the numbering of subsequent provisions, bylaws and continuing resolutions in Chapter 20.]*

- 20.625.02.** When the Committee on Appeals has decided to reverse or set aside the decision of the discipline hearing committee, the Committee on Appeals shall proceed as follows:
- a. If the Committee on Appeals has determined that one of the conditions listed in 20.625.01.a.1) or 20.625.01.a.2) exists, the Committee on Appeals may return the matter to the discipline hearing committee for further proceedings or render its own decision, which shall be final and unappealable.
  - b. If the Committee on Appeals has determined that the condition listed in 20.625.01.a.3) exists, it shall render its own decision, which shall be final and unappealable.
  - c. If the Committee on Appeals has determined that one of the conditions listed in 20.625.01.b., 20.625.01.c., or 20.625.01.d. exists, it shall return the matter to the discipline hearing committee for further proceedings.

**20.63.** The decision of a discipline hearing committee may be appealed to the Committee on Appeals by:

- a. the accuser(s) who brought charges upon which a discipline hearing committee has acted;
- b. an ordained minister upon whom discipline has been imposed by a discipline hearing committee;
- c. a congregation upon whom discipline has been imposed by a discipline hearing committee; or
- d. other persons on the official rosters of this church upon whom discipline has been imposed by a discipline hearing committee.

**20.64.** The Committee on Appeals shall be comprised of six ordained ministers and six laypersons, elected by the Churchwide Assembly for a term of six years, without consecutive re-election.

**20.64.A13.** In the event that the term of any member of the Committee on Appeals expires before that member's successor is elected, the Church Council may elect an individual in the same category—ordained minister or layperson—to serve on the Committee until the next Churchwide Assembly. A member elected by the Church Council who serves less than one-half of a term shall be eligible for election to a full term by the Churchwide Assembly.

**20.65.** The Committee on Appeals shall elect its own officers.

**20.66.** Decisions of the Committee on Appeals shall be final; an affirmative vote by at least two-thirds of those present and voting shall be necessary to render a decision or opinion. Each decision or opinion shall be reported as soon as practical in writing to the parties concerned, and a summary of action taken shall be reported to the Churchwide Assembly.

**20.70.** DEFINITIONS AND GUIDELINES

**20.71.11.** The Committee on Appeals shall establish definitions and guidelines, subject to approval by the Church Council, to enable clear and uniform application of the grounds for discipline in each of the above categories.

**20.71.12.** The Committee on Appeals shall present to the Church Council for consideration and recommendation a process and definitions, as required in bylaw 20.71.11.

**20.870.** ADJUDICATION

**20.871.** The presiding bishop and the Executive Committee of the Church Council shall be available to give counsel when disputes arise within this church.

**20.872.** When there is disagreement on a substantive issue among churchwide units or between or among synods of this church that cannot be resolved by the parties, the aggrieved party or parties may appeal to the presiding bishop and the Executive Committee of the Church Council for consultation. If this consultation fails to resolve the issue, a petition may be addressed by the parties to the Church Council requesting it to mediate resolve the matter.

**20.873.** When a component or beneficiary of a churchwide unit or office has a disagreement on a substantive issue which it cannot resolve with the board of its within the unit or office, it may address an appeal to the presiding bishop and the Executive Committee of the Church Council. In this case, the decision of the Executive Committee shall prevail, except that upon the motion of a member of the Church Council, the decision shall be referred to the Church Council for final action.

**20.874.** When there is disagreement on a substantive issue between a synod or synods and the churchwide organization that cannot be resolved by the parties, the aggrieved party or parties may appeal to the Committee on Appeals for consultation and adjudication. If this appeal fails to resolve the issue, a petition may be addressed by the parties to the Churchwide Assembly, whose decision shall be final.

**20.875.** When there is disagreement among factions within a congregation on a substantive issue which cannot be resolved by the parties, members of a congregation shall have access to the synodical bishop for consultation after informing the chair of the Congregation Council of their intent. If the consultation fails to resolve the issue(s), the Consultation Committee of the synod shall consider the matter. If the Consultation Committee of the synod shall fail to resolve the issue(s), the matter shall be referred to the Synod Council, whose decision shall be final.

## CONSTITUTION FOR SYNODS

### Chapter 14.

#### ~~ORDAINED MINISTERS AND LAY~~ ROSTERED MINISTERS

##### **S14.10.** Ministers of Word and Sacrament

**†S14.011.** The time and place of the ordination of those persons properly called to congregations or extra parish non-congregational service of this synod shall be authorized by the bishop of this synod.

**†S14.012.** Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,

a. Every ordained minister of Word and Sacrament shall:

...

4) provide pastoral care;

5) seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel;

6) impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through distribution of its communications and publications;

7) witness to the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation and abroad; and

58) 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 ordained minister pastor with a congregational call shall, within the congregation:

1) offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead;



- 2) ~~supervise~~ relate to all schools and organizations of the congregation;
- 3) install regularly elected members of the Congregation Council; and
- 4) with the council, administer discipline;

~~c. Every pastor shall:~~

- 1) strive to extend the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation, and abroad;
- 2) seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel;
- 3) impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through distribution of its periodicals and other publications; and
- 4) endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the ELCA churchwide organization and of this ELCA synod.

*[Update the numbering of subsequent provisions in Chapter 14.]*

**S14.015.** Each ordained 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.

†**S14.116.** When a congregation of this church desires to call a pastor or a candidate for the pastoral office in the ordained ministry of Word and Sacrament of this church:

...

- 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 majority ballot 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.

...

**S14.127.** No ordained minister of Word and Sacrament shall accept a call without first conferring with the bishop of this synod. An ordained minister of Word and Sacrament shall respond with an answer of acceptance or declination to a letter of call within 30 days of receipt of such call. In exceptional circumstances with the approval of the bishop of this synod and the chair of the Congregation Council of the congregation issuing the call, an additional 15 days may be granted to respond to a letter of call.

†**S14.138.** 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 death or, following consultation with the synodical bishop, for the following reasons:

...

- 6) resignation or removal of the pastor from the roster of ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament of this church;

...

- 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 ordained-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 ordained-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 and the pastor shall be listed on the clergy roster as disabled. When the pastorate is declared vacant, the Synod Council shall list the pastor on the roster of ministers of Word and Sacrament as disabled. Upon removal of the disability and 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.

- ...
- 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 majority 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 simple majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee recommended termination of the call.

...

**†S14.149.** Ordained mMinisters 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.

**†S14.1521.** 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 field of labor call, or
- b. the issuance of a certificate of dismissal or transfer approval of a request for change in roster status.

**†S14.1622.** The pastor shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to a former congregation before:

- a. installation in another field of labor call, or
- b. the issuance of a certificate of dismissal or transfer approval of a request for change in roster status.

**†S14.1723.** 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 ordained-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.

**†S14.1824.** With the approval of the synodical 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 **†S14.1318**, a congregation may call a pastor for a specific term.

Details of such calls shall be in writing setting forth the purpose and conditions involved. Prior to the completion of a term, the bishop of this synod or a representative of the bishop shall meet with the pastor and representatives of the congregation for a review of the call. Such call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of ~~†S14.13~~<sup>†S14.18</sup>.

**S14.215.** All ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament under a call shall attend meetings of the Synod Assembly, and the pastors of congregations shall also attend the meetings of the conference, cluster, coalition, or other area subdivision to which the congregation belongs.

**S14.30. Official Rosters of Laypersons Ministers of Word and Service**

~~†S14.31.~~ The provisions in the churchwide documents and such provisions as may be developed by the appropriate churchwide unit governing associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers of this church shall apply in this synod.

- ~~a.~~ When a congregation of this synod desires to call an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister or a candidate for these official rosters of laypersons of this church:
  - ~~1)~~ Such a congregation of this synod shall consult the synodical bishop before taking any steps leading to extending such a call;
  - ~~2)~~ Issuance of such a letter of call shall be in accord with criteria, policies, and procedures developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;
  - ~~3)~~ When the congregation has voted to issue a call to an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister, the letter of call shall be submitted to the bishop of this synod for the bishop's signature;
- ~~b.~~ An associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister shall confer with the bishop of this synod before accepting a call within this synod;
- ~~c.~~ The call of a congregation, when accepted by an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment which, except in the case of the death of the individual, shall be terminated only following consultation with the synodical bishop in accordance with policy developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;
- ~~d.~~ Associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers on the roster of this synod who are serving under call shall attend meetings of the Synod Assembly.

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

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

- a. Be rooted in the Word of God, for proclamation and service;
- b. Advocate a prophetic diakonia that commits itself to risk-taking and innovative service on the frontiers of the Church's outreach, giving particular attention to the suffering places in God's world;
- c. Speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world, witnessing to the realm of God in the 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 the ELCA and its wider ministry of the gospel, and advocate for the work of all expressions of this church; and
- i. Identify and encourage qualified persons to prepare for ministry of the gospel.
- S14.33.** The minister of Word and Service shall become a member of the congregation upon receipt and acceptance of the letter of call. In a parish of multiple congregations, the minister of Word and Service shall hold membership in one of the congregations.
- S14.34.** Each minister of Word and Service on the roster of this synod shall submit a report of his or her ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.
- †S14.41.** When a congregation of this church desires to call a minister of Word and Service or a candidate for the ministry of Word and Service of this church:
  - a. Each congregation of this synod shall consult the bishop of this synod before taking any steps leading to the extending of a call to a prospective minister of Word and Service.
  - b. For issuance of a letter of call to a minister of Word and Service or candidate by a congregation of this synod in accord with ELCA 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.
- S14.42.** No minister of Word and Service shall accept a call without first conferring with the bishop of this synod. A minister of Word and Service shall respond with an answer of acceptance or declination to a letter of call within 30 days of receipt of such call. In exceptional circumstances with the approval of the bishop of this synod and the chair of the Congregation Council of the congregation issuing the call, an additional 15 days may be granted to respond to a letter of call.
- †S14.43.**
  - 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 death or, following consultation with the synodical 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;
    - 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 ministry of Word and Service 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 as disabled. Upon removal of the disability and 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 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.
- 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 synodical bishop expressed in writing, which sets forth a clear statement of the purpose to be served by such a departure from the normal rule of permanency of the call as expressed in †S14.43., a congregation may call a minister of Word and Service for a specific term. Details of such calls shall be in writing setting forth the purpose and conditions involved. Prior to the completion of a term, the bishop of this synod or a representative of the bishop shall meet with the minister of Word and Service and representatives of the congregation for a review of the call. Such call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of †S14.43.

**S14.47.** All ministers of Word and Service under a call shall attend meetings of the Synod Assembly, and the ministers of Word and Service of congregations shall also attend the meetings of the conference, cluster, coalition, or other area subdivision to which the congregation belongs.

## MODEL CONSTITUTION FOR CONGREGATIONS

### Chapter 9.

#### **THE PASTOR ROSTERED MINISTER**

- \*C9.01. Authority to call a pastor shall be in this congregation by at least a two-thirds ~~majority ballot~~ vote of ~~voting~~ members present and voting at a meeting legally called for that purpose. Before a call is issued, the officers, or a committee elected by [this congregation][the Congregation Council] to recommend the call, shall seek the advice and help of the bishop of the synod.
- \*C9.02. Only a member of the ~~clergy roster of ministers of Word and Sacrament~~ of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or a candidate for the roster of ~~ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament~~ who has been recommended for the congregation by the synodical bishop may be called as a pastor of this congregation.
- \*C9.03. Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,
- a. Every ~~ordained minister of Word and Sacrament~~ shall:  
...
    - 4) provide pastoral care;
    - 5) seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel;
    - 6) impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through distribution of its communications and publications;
    - 7) witness to the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation and abroad; and
    - 58) 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 ~~ordained minister pastor~~ with a congregational call shall, within the congregation:  
...
    - 3) install regularly elected members of the Congregation Council; and
    - 4) with the council, administer discipline;
  - ~~c. Every pastor shall:~~  
~~1) strive to extend the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation, and abroad;~~  
~~2) seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel;~~  
~~3) impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through distribution of its periodicals and other publications; and~~  
~~45) endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the ELCA churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and of the (insert name of synod) Synod of the ELCA.~~
- \*C9.05. The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between a minister of Word and Sacrament and this congregation shall be as follows:
- a. The call of ~~a this~~ congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment, which shall be terminated only by death or, following consultation with the synodical bishop, for the following reasons:  
...
    - 6) resignation or removal of the pastor from the roster of ~~ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament~~ of this church;



- ...
- 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 ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament 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 ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament and one layperson.
- ...
- 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 majority 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 simple 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 discipline, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action in accordance with the provisions of this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions.

**\*C9.07.** During the period of service, an interim pastor shall have the rights and duties in the congregation of a regularly called pastor and may delegate the same in part to a supply pastor with the consent of the bishop of the synod and this congregation or Congregation Council. The interim pastor and any ordained pastor rostered minister providing assistance shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a pastor. Unless previously agreed upon by the Synod Council, an interim pastor is not available for a regular call to the congregation served.

**C9.20.** — **Ecumenical pastoral ministry**

**C9.21.**

**C9.15.** Under special circumstances, subject to the approval of the synodical bishop and the concurrence of this congregation, an ordained minister of Word and Sacrament of a church body with which the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America officially has established a relationship of full communion may serve temporarily as pastor of this congregation under a contract between the congregation and the ordained minister pastor in a form proposed by the synodical bishop and approved by the congregation.

**\*C9.21.** Authority to call a minister of Word and Service shall be in this congregation by at least a two-thirds vote of voting members present and voting at a meeting legally called for that purpose. Before a call is issued, the officers, or a committee elected by [this congregation][the Congregation Council] to recommend the call, shall seek the advice and help of the bishop of the synod.

**\*C9.22.** Only a member of the roster of ministers of Word and Service of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or a candidate for the roster of ministers of Word and Service who has been recommended for this congregation by the synodical bishop may be called as a deacon of this congregation.

**\*C9.23.** Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, every minister of Word and Service shall:

- a. Be rooted in the Word of God, for proclamation and service;
- b. Advocate a prophetic diakonia that commits itself to risk-taking and innovative service on the frontiers of the Church's outreach, giving particular attention to the suffering places in God's world;
- c. Speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world, witnessing to the realm of God in the 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 the ELCA and its wider ministry of the gospel, and advocate for the work of all expressions of this church; and
- i. Identify and encourage qualified persons to prepare for ministry of the gospel.

**\*C9.24.** The specific duties of the deacon, compensation, and other matters pertaining to the service of the deacon shall be included in a letter of call, which shall be attested by the bishop of the synod.

**\*C9.25.** 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 deacon, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment, which shall be terminated only by death or, following consultation with the synodical 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 deacon, 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 ministry of Word and Service effectively in this congregation in view of local conditions;
  - 4) physical disability or mental incapacity of the deacon;
  - 5) suspension of the deacon through discipline for more than three months;
  - 6) resignation or removal of the deacon from the roster of ministers of Word and Service of this church;
  - 7) termination of the relationship between this church and this congregation;
  - 8) dissolution of this congregation or the termination of a parish arrangement; or
  - 9) suspension of this congregation through discipline for more than six months.
- b. When allegations of physical disability or mental incapacity of the deacon under paragraph a.4) above, or ineffective conduct of the office of minister of Word and Service 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 this 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

deacon's condition. When a disability or incapacity is evident to the committee, the bishop of this synod may declare the office vacant and the deacon shall be listed on the roster of ministers of Word and Service as disabled. Upon removal of the disability and the restoration of the deacon to health, the bishop shall take steps to enable the deacon 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 this 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 deacon and then to this congregation. The recommendations of the bishop's committee must address whether the deacon'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 this congregation and by the deacon, if appropriate. If the deacon 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 deacon's call, this congregation may dismiss the deacon only at a legally called meeting after consultation with the bishop, either (a) by a two-thirds majority 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 simple 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 discipline, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action in accordance with the provisions of this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions.

**\*C9.26.** The deacon shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to a former congregation before:

- a. installation in another field of labor, or
- b. the issuance of a certificate of dismissal or transfer.

**\*C9.27.** When a deacon is called to serve in company with another rostered minister or other rostered ministers, the privileges and responsibilities of each rostered minister shall be specified in documents to accompany the call and to be drafted in consultation involving the rostered ministers, the Congregation Council, and the bishop of the synod. As occasion requires, the documents may be revised through a similar consultation.

**\*C9.28.** With the approval of the bishop of the synod, this congregation may depart from \*C9.25.a. and call a deacon 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 or a designated representative of the bishop shall meet with the deacon and representatives of this congregation for a review of the call. Such a call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of \*C9.25.a.

**\*C9.29.** The deacon shall become a member of this congregation upon receipt and acceptance of the letter of call. In a parish of multiple congregations, the deacon shall hold membership in one of the congregations.

**\*C9.31.** The deacon(s) 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.

