



July 28 – August 2  
PHOENIX, ARIZONA



## Recommended for Assembly Action

## Two-Thirds Vote Required

To adopt the “Rules of Organization and Procedure” for the 2025 Churchwide Assembly (exclusive of quoted and highlighted constitutional provisions and bylaws that are already in force).

## Rules of Organization and Procedure

### Introduction

These “Rules of Organization and Procedure” serve many purposes. First, they bring together in one place all the provisions of the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions, as well as “standing” rules that describe the composition, functions, and responsibilities of the Churchwide Assembly. Constitutional provisions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions are highlighted in purple for convenience.

Bylaw 12.31.09, in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* specifies that parliamentary procedures shall be in accordance with *Robert’s Rules of Order*, latest edition, “unless otherwise ordered by the assembly.” Experience from past churchwide assemblies has demonstrated that plenary discussion and the conduct of the assembly’s business are best served by modifying certain parliamentary rules of *Robert’s Rules of Order*. These modifications, as well as numerous other procedural matters not covered by *Robert’s Rules of Order*, are a second purpose of these rules.

A third purpose is to adopt as part of the Rules of Organization and Procedure provisions from continuing resolutions related to the assembly. When adopted, a two-thirds vote will be required for their amendment or suspension as pertaining to business at this assembly.

At this Churchwide Assembly, most voting members will access the *Bulletin of Reports*, including these rules, electronically by means of a tablet equipped with a custom application (the ELCA Churchwide Assembly Guide). This application will allow submission of resolutions, motions, nominations, and certain notices electronically. (These documents may be submitted on paper forms only if the electronic submission system is not functional.) The procedure for electronic submission is described in Part Seven of these rules.

Adoption of these rules will follow the procedure required by *Robert’s Rules of Order*. The Church Council’s recommendation to adopt will be the main motion before the assembly.

### Outline

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## **PART ONE: AUTHORITY AND DUTIES**

### ***Authority of the Churchwide Assembly***

The legislative function of the churchwide organization shall be fulfilled by the Churchwide Assembly as described in Chapter 12 of this Constitution. (ELCA churchwide constitutional provision 11.31.).

The Churchwide Assembly shall be the highest legislative authority of the churchwide organization and shall deal with all matters which are necessary in pursuit of the purposes and functions of this church. The powers of the Churchwide Assembly are limited only by the provisions of the Articles of Incorporation, this constitution and bylaws, and the assembly's own resolutions (ELCA 12.11.).

Any matter for which adoption by a vote of two-thirds of those voting in a prior Churchwide Assembly was required by the constitution or bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall require a two-thirds vote to be amended or repealed by a subsequent Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 12.12.).

### ***Duties of the Churchwide Assembly***

The Churchwide Assembly shall:

- a. Review the work of the churchwide officers, and for this purpose require and receive reports from them and act on business proposed by them.
- b. Review the work of the churchwide units, and for this purpose require and receive reports from them and act on business proposed by them.
- c. Receive and consider proposals from synod assemblies.
- d. Establish churchwide policy.
- e. Adopt a budget for the churchwide organization.
- f. Elect officers, board members, and other persons as provided in the constitution or bylaws.
- g. Establish churchwide units to carry out the functions of the churchwide organization.
- h. Have the sole authority to amend the constitution and bylaws.
- i. Fulfill other functions as required in the constitution and bylaws.
- j. Conduct such other business as necessary to further the purposes and functions of the churchwide organization (ELCA 12.21.).

### ***Assembly Presiding Officer***

The presiding bishop shall ... preside at the Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 13.21.c.).

The vice president shall be a layperson who shall serve ..., in the event the presiding bishop is unable to do so, as chair of the Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 13.31.).

### ***Assembly Secretary***

The secretary shall be responsible for the minutes and records of the Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 13.41.02.a.).

### ***Notice of Meeting***

The secretary shall give notice of the time and place of each regular assembly by publication thereof at least 60 days in advance on this church's website and in this church's periodical (ELCA 12.31.02.).

Notice shall be provided to all voting members or voting members-elect not more than 30 days or less than 10 days in advance of any meeting. Notice may be provided electronically for voting members or voting members-elect who have provided email addresses, unless the voting member or voting member-elect has requested that written notice be mailed (ELCA 12.31.02.).

### ***Agenda***

The secretary shall ..., in collaboration with the presiding bishop ... provide for the preparation of the agenda for the Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 13.41.02.h.).

### ***Program and Worship***

The arrangements for agenda, program, and worship shall be under the supervision of the presiding bishop (ELCA 12.31.04.).

### ***Arrangements***

Logistical arrangements for churchwide assemblies shall be made by the secretary or by an assembly manager working under the secretary's supervision. Such committees as may be necessary to facilitate the planning for and operation of the assembly may be established by the secretary in consultation with the presiding bishop (ELCA 12.31.05.).

## **PART TWO: MEMBERS OF THE ASSEMBLY**

### ***Assembly Voting Members***

Each synod shall elect one voting member of the Churchwide Assembly for every 6,000 baptized members in the synod. In addition, each synod shall elect one voting member for every 50 congregations in the synod. The synod bishop, who is *ex officio* a member of the Churchwide Assembly, shall be included in the number of voting members so determined. Unless otherwise determined by the synod, the synod vice president shall serve as an *ex officio* member of the Churchwide Assembly and be included in the number of the synod's voting members. The voting members elected by each synod shall comply with the principles of organization, commitment to inclusiveness, and interdependence as specified in Chapter 5 of this Constitution.

In addition, each synod shall elect one additional voting member who is a youth or young adult at the time of the election and one additional voting member who is a person of color or a person whose primary language is other than English .... The secretary shall notify each synod of the number of assembly members it is to elect (ELCA 12.41.11.).

The officers of the churchwide organization, the members of the Church Council, and the bishops of the synods shall serve as *ex officio* members of the Churchwide Assembly. Unless otherwise determined by a synod, the synod vice presidents shall also serve as *ex officio* members of the Churchwide Assembly. *Ex officio* members shall have voice and vote. (ELCA 12.41.16.).

The total allocated number of voting members at the 2025 Churchwide Assembly is 845.

### ***Eligibility to Serve as Voting Member***

Each voting member of the Churchwide Assembly shall be a voting member of a congregation of this church. Any such voting member (except a rostered minister ...) shall cease to be a member of the assembly if no longer a voting member of a congregation of this church within the synod from which elected (ELCA 12.41.13.).

### ***Certification of Voting Members***

The secretary of each synod shall submit to the secretary of this church at least nine months before each regular Churchwide Assembly a certified list of the voting members elected by the Synod Assembly (ELCA 12.41.12.).

### ***Seating of Alternate Voting Members***

If a voting member elected by the Synod Assembly is unable to serve, the name of an eligible person chosen by the Synod Council shall be submitted by the secretary of the synod to the secretary of this church. If a vacancy occurs or exists within 30 days or less of the convening of the Churchwide Assembly or during the meeting of the Churchwide Assembly, the synod bishop may submit the name of an eligible person to the secretary of this church. The individual whose name is submitted to the secretary of this church shall be registered and seated by the Credentials Committee as a voting member from the synod (ELCA 12.41.12.).

### ***Inclusive Representation***

Except as otherwise provided in this constitution and bylaws, the appropriate office or unit of the churchwide organization, through the Church Council, shall establish processes that will ensure that at least 60 percent of the members of its assemblies... shall be laypersons; that, as nearly as possible, at least 45 percent of the lay members of these assemblies ... shall be women and, as nearly as possible, at least 45 percent shall be men, and that the representation of rostered ministers shall include both men and women. At least 10 percent of the members of these assemblies ... shall be persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English (ELCA 5.01.e.).

It is the goal of this church that at least 10 percent of the voting members of the Churchwide Assembly ... be youth and young adults. The Church Council shall establish a plan for implementing this goal. For purposes of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA*, the term "youth" means a voting member of a congregation who has not reached the age of 18 at the time of election or appointment for service. The term "young adult" means a voting member of a congregation between the ages of 18 and 30 at the time of election or appointment for service (ELCA 5.01.E19.).

Persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English means African American, African Caribbean, African Descent, African National, Black, Arab and Middle Eastern, Asian, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, South Asian, Latin(-o, -a, -é, -x), Hispanic, American Indian, Indigenous, and Alaska Native people, as well as multi- and bi-racial people. (ELCA 5.01.J24.a.).

For purposes of the representational principles set forth in 5.01.e. and f., the percentage of laypersons that is not allocated to women or men may be allocated to persons who identify as gender non-binary, gender fluid, genderqueer, transgender, women, men, or other gender identities. (ELCA 5.01.G24.).

### ***Additional Voting Members Provided***

The Church Council may allocate up to 10 additional voting members among synods, but no single synod may be allocated more than two additional voting members (ELCA 12.41.11.).

Additional voting members have been allocated by the Church Council as follows:

<u>Synod</u>	<u>Additional Members</u>
<b>Alaska (1A)</b> .....	2
<b>Arkansas-Oklahoma (4C)</b> .....	2
<b>Slovak Zion (7G)</b> .....	2
<b>West Virginia-Western Maryland (8H)</b> .....	1
<b>Caribbean (9F)</b> .....	2

### ***Assembly Properly Constituted***

Each assembly... of the churchwide organization ... shall be conclusively presumed to have been properly constituted, and neither the method of selection nor the composition of any such assembly... may be challenged in a court of law by any person or be used as the basis of a challenge in a court of law to the validity or effect of any action taken or authorized by any such assembly .... (ELCA 5.01.j.).

### ***Advisory Members***

Executive directors of units of the churchwide organization, the executive for administration, and other persons from the churchwide organization designated by the presiding bishop shall serve as advisory members of the Churchwide Assembly. The Church Council also may designate other persons as advisory members of the Churchwide Assembly. Advisory members shall have voice but not vote (ELCA 12.41.17.).

### ***Other Non-Voting Members***

Other categories of non-voting members may be established by the Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 12.41.18.).

Presidents of the colleges, universities, and seminaries of this church, unless elected as voting members of the assembly, shall have voice but not vote (ELCA 12.41.A89.).

A representative of the faculty of each seminary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be appointed by the president of each seminary to serve as a seminary faculty resource person .... In addition, a teaching theologian who is a member of a congregation of this church and who is teaching at a college or university of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may be appointed by the steering committee of the Association of Teaching Theologians in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to serve as a faculty resource person. Faculty resource persons shall have voice, if so granted in the assembly's rules, but not vote in plenary sessions of the assembly (ELCA 12.41.B07.).

### ***Continuation of Ex Officio Members***

If the term of office of an *ex-officio* member of the Churchwide Assembly ends during a Churchwide Assembly, such person shall nevertheless remain an *ex-officio* member of the Churchwide Assembly, and shall not be replaced in that capacity, until the conclusion of the Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 12.41.D24.).

An individual whose term of office as a bishop of a synod commences within one month of the assembly, unless elected as a voting member of the assembly, shall have the privilege of seat and voice, but not vote, during the assembly.

### ***Resource Members***

Resource members shall be persons recommended by the presiding bishop of this church or by the Church Council who, because of their position or expertise, can contribute to the work of the Churchwide Assembly. Resource members shall have voice only with respect to matters within their areas of expertise. Resource persons shall not have vote.

### ***Congregation Observers***

Each congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may register with the secretary of this church one congregation observer for the Churchwide Assembly prior to May 31 in the year of a Churchwide Assembly.... Such observers shall have neither voice nor vote in plenary sessions of the assembly (ELCA 12.41.C25.).

### ***Official Visitors***

Official visitors shall be persons invited by the presiding bishop of this church or the Church Council to address the Churchwide Assembly. They shall not have vote.

### ***Access to Seating***

A person will be admitted to restricted seating areas only upon display of proper credentials.

### ***Assembly Costs***

The churchwide organization shall be responsible for the costs of the Churchwide Assembly, including reasonable costs for travel, housing, and board for voting and advisory members (ELCA 12.31.06.).

## **PART THREE: QUORUM AND PROCEDURE**

### ***Quorum***

At least one-half of all persons elected as voting members must be present at a meeting to constitute a quorum for the legal conduct of business. If such a quorum is not present, those voting members present may adjourn the meeting to another time and place, provided that only those persons eligible to vote at the original meeting may vote at the adjourned meeting (ELCA 12.31.07.).

### ***Absence of Members***

Members shall not absent themselves from any session of the assembly without valid excuse, under penalty of forfeiture of the meal allowance for the day of absence and proportionate reimbursement of travel expenses.

### ***Parliamentary Procedure***

The Churchwide Assembly shall use parliamentary procedures in accordance with *Robert's Rules of Order*, latest edition, unless otherwise ordered by the assembly (ELCA 12.31.09.).

Note: The 12th edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*, is, therefore, the governing parliamentary law of this church, except as otherwise provided.

No motion shall be out of order because of conflict with federal, state, or local constitutions or laws.

### ***Proxy and Absentee Voting Precluded***

Proxy and absentee voting shall not be permitted at a Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 12.31.08.).

### ***Obtaining the Floor***

In plenary sessions of the Churchwide Assembly, voting members, including *ex officio* members, have prior right to obtain the floor, unless the chair determines that it is in the best interests of the assembly to call upon an advisory member, a resource member, or another individual with voice.

### ***Questions of Personal Privilege***

Questions of personal privilege that are not urgent and do not relate to the assembly as a whole are out of order. (Questions of privilege that relate to the assembly as a whole include such concerns as problems with acoustics, voting devices, lighting, and emergencies.) Other requests for time in plenary for questions of personal privilege (e.g., personal announcements, comments on matters not on the agenda, reflections on the meaning of votes after they are taken) must be submitted electronically to the secretary's assistant. The chair may, at the chair's sole discretion, allow such matters to be addressed at a later time.

### ***Speeches***

Unless otherwise determined by a majority vote of the assembly, all speeches during discussion shall be limited to two minutes. A signal shall be given one minute before the speaker's time ends. A second signal shall be given one minute later, and the speaker shall then sit down.

After four people have spoken in a row on the same side of the motion before the assembly and if no one has risen to speak on the other side of the motion, debate will automatically be considered closed and the question will move to a vote.

### ***Alternating Speeches***

Insofar as is possible during discussion, a speaker on one side of the question shall be followed by a speaker on the other side.

To facilitate alternating speeches, assembly members seeking recognition at the floor microphones shall approach the appropriate microphone. If you wish to speak in favor of the pending motion, go to a microphone marked green. If you wish to speak against the pending motion, go to a microphone marked red.

### ***Purpose and Use of “White Paper”***

A white paper, provided in the registration packet of voting members, is to be used to identify a member who wishes to raise a Point of Order.

### ***Motion***

Except when authorized to interrupt a speaker by *Robert’s Rules of Order*, voting members seeking to bring a motion or offer an amendment shall line up at any microphone and await recognition by the chair.

### ***Motion to Rescind or Amend Something Previously Adopted at This Assembly***

A two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting shall be required to rescind or to amend something previously adopted during this Churchwide Assembly. This rule does not apply to constitutional or bylaw amendments previously adopted by this assembly. (See PART FIFTEEN: Amendments to Governing Documents *below*.)

### ***Suspending or Revising the Rules***

After the adoption of the Rules of Organization and Procedure and any amendments thereto offered prior to the adoption of the Rules, any further amendment to, revision in, or suspension of the Rules shall always require a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting.

### ***Moving the Previous Question***

A member who has spoken on the pending question(s) may not call for a vote on the question(s).

A motion to end debate by moving the previous question shall apply only to the immediately preceding motion; a motion to end debate on all matters on the floor or more than the immediately pending question is not in order.

### ***Applause***

In the give-and-take of debate on issues before the Churchwide Assembly, members of the assembly and visitors shall refrain from applause.

### ***Departing from Agenda***

With the consent of a majority of the voting members, the chair shall have the authority to call items of business before the assembly in whatever order the chair considers most expedient for the conduct of the assembly’s business.

A motion to alter the agenda shall require a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting.

### ***Unfinished Business***

Upon adjournment of the Churchwide Assembly, all remaining unfinished items of business shall be referred to the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for disposition.

### ***Audit of Credentials Report***

At the request of the chair of the Credentials Committee or of the assembly, the chair may order an audit of the report of the Credentials Committee. When so ordered, the Credentials Committee will provide the bishop of each synod with a list of the registered voting members from such synod. Each bishop (or other voting member duly appointed by the bishop) shall then make appropriate corrections on such list and certify the accuracy of the list with such corrections as may be indicated. Each bishop (or other voting member duly appointed by the bishop) shall promptly return the certified list to the chair of the Credentials Committee. The accuracy of the list of voting members of the Church Council shall be certified by the vice president of the ELCA.

## **PART FOUR: COMMITTEES OF THE ASSEMBLY**

### ***Mandated Committees***

The Churchwide Assembly shall have a Reference and Counsel Committee, a Memorials Committee, a Nominating Committee, and an Elections Committee (ELCA 12.51.).

### ***Reference and Counsel Committee***

A Reference and Counsel Committee, appointed by the Church Council, shall review all proposed changes or additions to the constitution and bylaws and other items submitted that are not germane to items contained in the stated agenda of the assembly (ELCA 12.51.01.).

### ***Memorials Committee***

A Memorials Committee, appointed by the Church Council, shall review memorials from synod assemblies and make appropriate recommendations for assembly action (ELCA 12.51.02.).



### ***Nominating Committee***

A Nominating Committee, elected by the Churchwide Assembly, shall nominate at least one person for each position for which an election will be held by the Churchwide Assembly in accordance with Chapter 19 of this constitution (ELCA 12.51.03.).

The Church Council shall place in nomination the names of two persons for each position [on the Nominating Committee] (ELCA 19.11.01.).

### ***Elections Committee***

An Elections Committee, appointed by the Church Council, shall be responsible for the conduct and supervision of elections. (ELCA 12.51.04.)

In the election of a presiding bishop, vice president, or secretary, the Elections Committee shall report the results of any balloting by announcing the number of votes received by each nominee and the names of those nominees qualified to remain on the next ballot or the name of the nominee who is elected.

The Elections Committee shall report the results of balloting in other elections by announcing the name of the person elected or by announcing the names of nominees qualified to remain on the ballot. Vote totals shall be reported to the secretary of this church and recorded in the minutes of the assembly. Based on the report of the Elections Committee, the chair shall declare elected those who received the required number of votes.

A report showing the results of a ballot shall be distributed to the voting members concurrently with, or as soon as practical after, the announced report of the Elections Committee.

### ***Credentials Committee***

The Credentials Committee shall oversee the registration of voting members and shall report periodically to the Churchwide Assembly the number of voting members registered.

### ***Churchwide Assembly Planning Committee***

The Churchwide Assembly Planning Committee shall assist officers of this church in planning the agenda, program, worship, and arrangements at the Churchwide Assembly.

### ***Other Committees***

The Churchwide Assembly may authorize such other committees as it deems necessary (ELCA 12.51.).

Such committees as may be necessary to facilitate the planning for and operation of the assembly may be established by the secretary in consultation with the presiding bishop (ELCA 12.31.05.).

### ***Ad Hoc Committees***

Such committees as may be necessary to facilitate the organization and consideration of business before the assembly may be established by the presiding bishop in consultation with the secretary.

### ***Additional Appointments***

Additional officials or committees (e.g., sergeants-at-arms, parliamentarians, tellers, pages, etc.) of the Churchwide Assembly shall be appointed by the presiding bishop.

## **PART FIVE: VOTING PROCEDURES**

### ***Voting by Electronic Device***

Voting generally shall occur through use of a wireless electronic device at each voting member's seat.

There will be a voting device at the place of each voting member. The device should remain there throughout the assembly when not being used for voting. Devices must not be removed from the table by voting members. Devices are to be left at the table at the end of the day for recharging and maintenance, and will be returned to the table prior to the next plenary session. A voting device must not be used by anyone except the voting member to whom it has been assigned.

Synod bishops (or their designees) will check at the end of every plenary session to ensure that all voting devices are in place.

Voting members must be seated at the table that contains their assigned voting device in order to cast a vote.

Voting by electronic device shall be in accordance with instructions from the chair or the Elections Committee. The chair will announce when voting is to begin.

Once the voting period has begun and voting members have registered their vote, confirmation will appear on the device's screen. If this message is not received, the synod bishop or a member of the Elections Committee should be notified immediately.

At any time prior to the announcement that the voting period has ended, voting members may change their minds and register a different vote. A second vote will cancel the first vote. Confirmation of the second vote will be sent.

Periodically during the assembly, a test vote may be taken to ensure that all devices are in working order.

If a voting device is inoperable or lost, or if a voting member for any reason cannot use the voting device, the voting member should notify the secretary's assistant (seated next to the podium) or a member of the Elections Committee (stationed around the plenary hall).

### ***Various Other Methods of Voting***

As directed by the chair, voting also may take place by voice, by show of hands using the green paper or red paper, by standing, or by written ballot. Each voting member's registration packet contains a green paper and a red paper to be used if the chair so directs.

Any member who because of physical limitation cannot raise a hand or stand to vote should contact the Elections Committee for assistance.

### ***Division of the House***

When a division of the house is ordered, the vote shall be by electronic device, by standing vote, or by written ballot as directed by the chair. No division of the house is in order when a vote has been taken by electronic device, by a counted standing vote, or by written ballot.

## **PART SIX: RELATION OF ASSEMBLY TO CHURCH COUNCIL AND CHURCHWIDE UNITS**

### ***Relationship to Church Council***

The Church Council shall exercise interim legislative authority and shall serve as the board of directors of the churchwide organization (ELCA 14.11.).

"Interim legislative authority" is defined to mean that between meetings of the churchwide assemblies, the Church Council may exercise the authority of the Churchwide Assembly, including dealing with all matters which are necessary in pursuit of the purposes and functions of this church, so long as:

- a. the actions of the Church Council do not conflict with the actions of and policies established by the Churchwide Assembly; provided, however, that nothing in this constitution and bylaws precludes the Church Council from establishing policies concerning areas where the Churchwide Assembly has not acted; and
- b. the Church Council is not precluded by the Articles of Incorporation or this constitution and bylaws from taking action on the matter (ELCA 14.13.).

### ***Responsibilities of Church Council***

The Church Council shall act on the policies proposed by churchwide units, when requested by the presiding bishop or the churchwide unit. The Church Council shall ensure that the actions of the Churchwide Assembly are implemented by the applicable unit or office (ELCA 14.21.01.).

The Church Council shall review all recommendations from churchwide units for possible consideration by the Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 14.21.03.).

The Church Council, upon recommendation of the presiding bishop, shall submit budget proposals for approval by the Churchwide Assembly and authorize expenditures within the parameters of approved budgets (ELCA 14.21.05.).

The Church Council shall arrange the process for all elections as specified in this constitution and bylaws for churchwide units to assure conformity with established criteria (ELCA 14.21.22.).

The Church Council shall report its actions to the Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 14.21.07.).

### ***Status of Church Council Recommendations***

The recommendation of the Church Council with respect to any proposal by a churchwide unit or any other matter shall be treated as a motion made and seconded, unless the Church Council shall otherwise determine.

### ***Relationship to Churchwide Units***

Each unit shall report to the Churchwide Assembly and will report to the Church Council in the interim. The policies, procedures, and operation of each unit shall be reviewed by the Church Council in order to assure conformity with the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions and with Churchwide Assembly actions (ELCA 16.12. and 14.21.01.; see also 17.20.05., 17.20.A21.e., 17.30.03., 17.40.02. and 17.50.03.).



### ***Relationship to the Board of Pensions (also known as Portico Benefit Services)***

The Churchwide Assembly shall:

- a. approve amendments to the ELCA Philosophy of Benefits that have been referred by the Church Council; and
- b. refer any amendments to the ELCA Philosophy of Benefits initiated by the Churchwide Assembly to the Board of Pensions for recommendation before final action by the Church Council, assuring that no amendment shall abridge the rights of sponsored members in the ELCA Retirement Plan (ELCA 17.20.01.).

The Church Council shall ... refer, as it deems appropriate, proposed amendments to the ELCA Philosophy of Benefits to the Churchwide Assembly for final action (ELCA 17.20.02.e.).

The Board of Pensions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America—also known as Portico Benefit Services—shall ... manage and operate the Pension and Other Benefits Program for this church and plans for other non-profit organizations having a formal affiliation with a church or a religious organization, and invest the assets according to fiduciary standards set forth in the plans and trusts (ELCA 17.20.A21.a.).

The Board of Pensions shall ... report to the Churchwide Assembly through the Church Council, with the Church Council making comments on all board actions needing approval of the Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 17.20.A21.f.).

## **PART SEVEN: RESOLUTIONS, MOTIONS, AND NOTICES**

### ***Submission of Resolutions and Motions***

Substantive resolutions or motions, or amendments to either, must be presented using an electronic form to the secretary of this church or the secretary's assistant before the established deadline or, if applicable, immediately after being moved. Paper forms will be used only if the electronic form is not functional. The electronic form provided for this purpose is available in the Churchwide Assembly Guide; if needed, paper forms will be available from the secretary's assistant. Other forms also are available in the Churchwide Assembly Guide. The method for electronically submitting resolutions and motions is described below. Questions about the process of submitting resolutions may be submitted to the parliamentarian or the secretary.

### ***Nature of Resolutions and Motions***

► **Germane Resolutions and Motions:** A germane resolution or motion is one closely related to or having bearing on the matter before the assembly. A resolution or motion that is germane to the matter before the assembly may be offered when in order by any voting member from the floor by going to a microphone and being recognized by the chair. Nothing in this provision is intended to modify established deadlines. (*See PART EIGHTEEN: Deadlines below.*)

► **Non-Germane Resolutions and Motions:** Any resolution or motion not germane to the matter before the Churchwide Assembly or on the assembly agenda must be submitted to the secretary of this church or the secretary's assistant electronically (or on a paper form if the electronic form is not functional) prior to the established deadline. (*See PART EIGHTEEN: Deadlines below.*) Each resolution or motion must be supported by one other voting member. At least 24 hours must elapse before such resolution may be considered in plenary session. The secretary shall refer any such resolution to the Reference and Counsel Committee, which may:

- (a) Recommend approval;
- (b) Recommend referral to a unit or office of this church;
- (c) Recommend a substitute motion to the assembly; or
- (d) Recommend that the assembly decline to approve the resolution or motion.

► **Same or Similar Subjects:** The Reference and Counsel Committee may group together in a single recommendation resolutions or motions on the same or similar subjects. A resolution or motion on the same subject as a recommendation already on the agenda of the assembly, such as a memorial, will not be submitted to the assembly for separate action by the Reference and Counsel Committee. The chair of the committee will inform the voting member of the committee's decision.

► **Beyond Deadline for Submission:** Any resolution or motion not germane to the matter before the Churchwide Assembly or on the assembly agenda that a voting member submits because of circumstances that develop during the assembly and that cannot be submitted to the secretary of this church or the secretary's assistant prior to the established deadline (*see PART EIGHTEEN: Deadlines below*) must be submitted to the secretary or the secretary's assistant electronically (or on a paper form if the electronic form is not functional) and be supported by one other voting member. The secretary shall refer such resolutions or motions to the Reference and Counsel Committee, which may:

- (a) Decline to refer the resolution or motion to the assembly;
- (b) Recommend approval;
- (c) Recommend referral to a unit or office of this church;

- (d) Recommend a substitute motion to the assembly; or
- (e) Recommend that the assembly decline to approve the resolution or motion.

Consideration of a resolution or motion submitted beyond the deadline will require the assembly to suspend the rules prior to presentation of the matter to voting members by the Reference and Counsel Committee.

► **On Societal Issues:** In its recommendation, the Reference and Counsel Committee, following consultation with the Office of the Presiding Bishop, shall inform the Churchwide Assembly when a resolution or motion requires action on a societal issue for which this church does not have an established social policy. Should such resolution or motion be adopted by the Churchwide Assembly, the matter shall be referred to the Office of the Presiding Bishop, which shall bring to the next regular meeting of the Church Council a plan for appropriate implementation.

► **Budget Expectations:** Resolutions with budget expectations should follow the process referenced in PART FOURTEEN.

### ***Substitute Motions***

When a substitute motion is made, secondary amendments may be offered first to the original motion. After all secondary amendments to the original motion have been disposed of, secondary amendments to the substitute motion may be offered. When all amendments to the substitute motion have been disposed of, the vote shall be taken on whether the substitute motion is to be substituted as the original motion or rejected.

### ***Electronic Submission***

Whenever authorized by these rules, resolutions, motions, amendments, nominations, or notices may be submitted electronically through the Churchwide Assembly Guide by completing the applicable form located in the “Forms” tab, identifying the supporting voting member(s), as required, and transmitting it to the secretary’s assistant by pressing the “Submit” button at the end of the form. An email response will be sent acknowledging receipt. If an electronic submission is improper or if additional information is necessary, the voting member will receive follow-up notification by email.

## **PART EIGHT: MEMORIALS FROM SYNOD ASSEMBLIES**

### ***Definition of Memorials***

Memorials are proposals for action involving broad policy issues submitted by synod assemblies to the churchwide organization. Memorials from synod assemblies are reviewed by the Memorials Committee, which makes appropriate recommendations for assembly action. The committee’s review of the memorial shall include information about the financial and personnel implications if adopted. The committee may consult with the Budget and Finance Committee of the Church Council when preparing its recommendations.

### ***Status of Committee’s Recommendations***

When the Memorials Committee has recommended the passage of a memorial considered by the committee, the committee’s recommendation and text of the memorial recommended for passage shall be the main motion before the assembly.

When the Memorials Committee has recommended the adoption of a substitute recommendation for the memorial on a subject, the committee’s recommendation shall be the main motion before the assembly.

When the Memorials Committee has recommended referral of a memorial, the committee’s recommendation shall be the main motion before the assembly.

When the Memorials Committee has recommended that the assembly decline a memorial without the committee making any other recommendation related to the same or closely related subject, the memorial, if then moved by a voting member from the synod originating the memorial and seconded, shall be the main motion, and the committee’s recommendation shall be received as information.

### ***En Bloc Resolution in Response to Certain Memorials***

Responses to synod memorials, as recommended by the Memorials Committee in a report distributed to assembly members prior to, or at, the first business session of the assembly, may be approved by *en bloc*<sup>1</sup> resolutions when so proposed by the Memorials Committee.

Voting members who desire the assembly to discuss a synod memorial or the Memorials Committee’s response that is proposed for *en bloc* consideration may request that it be removed from a proposed *en bloc* resolution, provided the member’s request is supported by 10 other voting members. Such request shall be made in accordance with the

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<sup>1</sup> Adoption of several motions by a single assembly resolution; sometimes known as a “consent calendar” or an “omnibus” bill or resolution.

following paragraph. The assembly then will consider and vote separately on the proposed response of the Memorials Committee. After such removals, *en bloc* resolutions shall be voted upon without amendments or debate.

►**Separate Consideration:** To call for such separate consideration, a voting member must submit notification on the memorials form electronically (or on a paper form if the electronic form is not functional) to the secretary of this church or the secretary's assistant prior to the established deadline (*see* PART EIGHTEEN: Deadlines *below*). The form is available in the ELCA Churchwide Assembly Guide, and paper forms will be available, if needed, from the secretary's assistant.

### ***Substitute Proposal***

With respect to any recommendation made by the Memorials Committee in a report distributed to the assembly members prior to or at the first business session of the assembly, a voting member of the assembly may offer a substitute motion to the committee's recommendation only if such member has given notice electronically (or on a paper form if the electronic form is not functional) by the established deadline, provided the request is supported by 10 other voting members. For such notice, a voting member who desires to offer a substitute to the recommendation of the Memorials Committee must complete the memorials form and submit it to the secretary of this church or the secretary's assistant prior to the established deadline and provided the request is supported by 10 other voting members. (*See* PART EIGHTEEN: Deadlines *below*.) In addition, the text of the proposed substitute shall be submitted on a Motion Form electronically (or on a paper form if the electronic form is not functional) to the secretary or the secretary's assistant.

Consultation with at least one of the co-chairs of the Memorials Committee is required when a substitute will be moved and is recommended when any other amendment will be proposed to the response recommended by the Memorials Committee.

### ***Recommendation on Same Matter***

A voting member's resolution or motion dealing with the same or similar matter as a subject being reported by the Memorials Committee cannot be considered prior to the Memorials Committee's recommendation and motion with respect to that matter. This rule does not apply to a resolution or motion that proposes an amendment to a constitutional provision, bylaw, or continuing resolution.

## **PART NINE: RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE REFERENCE AND COUNSEL COMMITTEE**

### ***Status of Committee's Recommendations***

When the Reference and Counsel Committee has recommended the approval of a resolution or motion considered by the committee, the committee's recommendation and text of the resolution or motion recommended for passage shall be the main motion before the assembly.

When the Reference and Counsel Committee has recommended the adoption of a substitute recommendation for the resolution(s) or motion(s) on a subject, the committee's recommendation shall be the main motion before the assembly.

When the Reference and Counsel Committee has recommended referral of a resolution or motion, the committee's recommendation shall be the main motion before the assembly.

When the Reference and Counsel Committee has recommended that the assembly decline a proposed resolution or motion without the committee making any other recommendation related to the same or a closely related subject, the voting member's resolution or motion, if then moved by that voting member and seconded, shall be the main motion and the committee's recommendation shall be received as information.

## **PART TEN: VOTES ON AND AMENDMENTS TO SOCIAL STATEMENTS AND RELATED ACTIONS**

### ***Definition of Social Statements***

Social statements are major documents addressing significant social issues. They meet the criteria of and are prepared in accordance with "Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns," adopted by the Churchwide Assembly in 1997 and amended by the Church Council most recently in 2018.

### ***Deadline for Submission***

Any amendment to a social statement, or to recommendations or resolutions concerning a social statement, must be submitted electronically (or on a paper form if the electronic form is not functional) to the secretary of this church or the secretary's assistant prior to the established deadline. (*See* PART EIGHTEEN: Deadlines *below*).

Voting members who submit amendments may be requested to meet with the staff of the unit that developed the statement.

If in the opinion of the chair of the assembly the amendments to a social statement, or to recommendations or resolutions concerning a social statement, are either too voluminous or too complex for the assembly to consider

expeditiously, all amendments may be referred by the chair to either the Reference and Counsel Committee or to an *ad hoc* committee appointed by the chair for its recommendations for the consideration of the statement or recommendations or resolutions and the proposed amendments by the assembly.

If a voting member wishes to offer a substantive amendment that was not submitted prior to the deadline, the assembly, by a majority vote, may consent to the consideration of such an amendment.

#### ***Vote to Adopt Social Statements***

A social statement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be developed pursuant to a policy approved by the Church Council, following consultation with the Conference of Bishops. The text of a proposed social statement shall be reviewed by the Conference of Bishops and approved and recommended to the assembly by the Church Council. A proposed social statement shall require for adoption a vote of two-thirds of those voting members present and voting in a Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 12.12.01.).

A two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting in the Churchwide Assembly shall be required for adoption of a social statement.

#### ***Vote to Amend or Repeal***

Any matter for which adoption by a vote of two-thirds of those voting in a prior Churchwide Assembly was required by the constitution or bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall require a two-thirds vote to be amended or repealed by a subsequent Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 12.12.).

#### ***Reconsideration of Social Statement***

In accordance with the “Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns,” Churchwide Assemblies may reconsider previously adopted social statements. Such reconsideration may involve either a revision or removal of the statement. This may be done in two ways:

1. A Churchwide Assembly, by a two-thirds vote, may call for the reconsideration of a social statement at the next assembly. Subsequent to such a vote, the social statement shall be referred to the Office of the Presiding Bishop for re-study. The proposed change and the reasons for it shall be made available to this church with an official notice of such proposed action to be sent to the synods by the secretary of this church at least three months prior to the Churchwide Assembly at which it will be considered. A two-thirds vote of the assembly shall be required to revise or remove the social statement.
2. The Church Council, by a two-thirds vote of its voting members, may ask the Churchwide Assembly to reconsider a social statement. Such Church Council action must be taken no later than at the Church Council meeting in the autumn prior to the assembly. The proposed change and the reasons for it shall then be made available to this church with an official notice of such proposed action to be sent to the synods by the secretary of this church at least three months prior to the Churchwide Assembly. A two-thirds vote of the assembly shall be required to reconsider the statement and also to revise or remove it. Both actions may occur at the same assembly.

#### ***Vote to Adopt Certain Recommendations or Resolutions from a Social Statement Task Force Requiring Amendment of Constitutional Provisions or Bylaws***

A two-thirds vote of the voting members of the Churchwide Assembly present and voting shall be required to adopt recommendations or resolutions originating from or relating to the subject of a social statement task force report or amendments or substitute motions related to such recommendations or resolutions that require amendment of a constitutional provision or bylaw for implementation.

### **PART ELEVEN: VOTES ON PROPOSALS FOR CHURCH-TO-CHURCH AGREEMENTS**

This church may establish official church-to-church relationships and agreements. Establishment of such official relationships and agreements shall require a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting in a Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 8.61.).

Each church body votes on a relationship of full communion using the same resolution. Amendments to a resolution establishing full communion, therefore, are not in order.

## **PART TWELVE: NOMINATIONS**

### ***Nominations Desk***

Nominations from the floor at the Churchwide Assembly shall be made at the Nominations Desk, which shall be maintained under the supervision of the secretary of this church (ELCA 19.11.A24.a.).

A nomination from the floor shall be made by using the form provided by the secretary of this church. Nomination forms may be obtained from the Nominations Desk at times prescribed in the assembly's Rules of Organization and Procedure (ELCA 19.11.A24.b.).

Nominations may be submitted electronically prior to the established deadline (*see* PART EIGHTEEN: Deadlines *below*) or on a paper form to the Nominations Desk at the times described below if the electronic submission system is not functional.

Information and additional forms may be obtained from the Nominations Desk on Monday, July 28, from 1:00 p.m. to 9:15 p.m. and Tuesday, July 29, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The deadline for floor nominations is 12:15 p.m. on Tuesday, July 29.

### ***Congregational Membership***

Each nominee for an elected position in the churchwide organization and each nominee for a position on the board of a separately incorporated ministry elected by the Churchwide Assembly shall be a voting member of a congregation of this church, unless otherwise specified in the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this church (ELCA 19.04.).

### ***Term Limit***

Elections shall be for one six-year term, without consecutive reelection, with approximately one-half of the members of the Church Council and of each board or committee elected each triennium, unless otherwise specified in this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions (ELCA 19.03.).

### ***Nominations Form***

The required form to be used in making nominations from the floor shall include the nominee's name, address, phone number, congregation or synod-authorized worshipping community membership, synod membership, information that enables compliance with the principles of organization as specified in Chapter 5 of this constitution, and such other information as the secretary of this church shall require (ELCA 19.11.A24.c.).

The nomination form for the common ballot is available in the Churchwide Assembly Guide. Paper forms may be used if the electronic submission system is not functional and will be available, if needed, at the Nominations Desk at the times described above.

For purposes of nomination procedures, "synod membership" is defined ... as follows:

- a. A layperson shall be recorded in the synod that includes the congregation in which such a person holds voting membership, with the recognition that such a person shall reside within the territory of the synod or in an area immediately adjacent to the territory in the case of border areas.
- b. A rostered minister shall be recorded in the synod on whose roster such a minister's name is maintained. (ELCA 19.11.A24.d.; ELCA 19.04.02.).

### ***Making Floor Nominations***

Floor nominations for the Church Council, the Nominating Committee, or other committee or board to be elected by the Churchwide Assembly require, in addition to the nominator, the documented support of at least 20 other voting members (ELCA 19.11.B21.a.).

A nomination from the floor for any position (other than presiding bishop, vice president, and secretary) shall be made by filing the completed nomination form with the Nominations Desk at times prescribed in the assembly's Rules of Organization and Procedure (ELCA 19.11.B21.b.).

Floor nominations for the board of trustees of each of the separately incorporated ministries identified in Chapter 17 of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* require, in addition to the nominator, the written support of at least 20 other voting members.

Nominations from the floor for any position (other than presiding bishop, vice president, secretary) shall be made by filing the completed prescribed form electronically before the established deadline (*see* PART EIGHTEEN: Deadlines *below*) or on a paper form with the Nominations Desk if the electronic submission system is not functional. The Nominations Desk is open on Monday, July 28 from 1:00 p.m. to 9:15 p.m. and Tuesday, July 29 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The deadline for floor nominations is 12:15 p.m. on Tuesday, July 29.



Nominations will be considered made in the order in which filed at the Nominations Desk (ELCA 19.11.B21.c.).

### ***For Boards and Committees: Restrictions on Nominations***

Except as otherwise provided, the Nominating Committee shall nominate two persons for each council or committee position ... for which an election will be held by the Churchwide Assembly. Nominations from the floor, where permitted in the nomination process, shall be presented in the specific category named by the Nominating Committee and shall therefore meet the same criteria as the persons against whom the nominee is nominated. In the materials provided in advance to each member of the assembly, the Nominating Committee shall set forth the specific criteria applicable to each category that must be met by persons nominated from the floor (ELCA 19.11.02.).

The Church Council shall endeavor to ensure that every synod has at least one person serving on the Church Council or churchwide boards, committees, task forces, or other groups. Among those persons elected by the assembly, excluding the officers, no more than two persons from any one synod shall serve on the Church Council or any one board, committee, task force, or other group (ELCA 19.11.05.).

Nominations from the floor for positions on boards or committees shall comply with criteria and restrictions established by the Nominating Committee and set forth in materials provided to each voting member of the assembly (ELCA 19.11.C21.a.).

See Section VIII—Report of the Nominating Committee—of the *Bulletin of Reports* for details on restrictions.

A former full-time or part-time employee shall not be eligible for three years subsequent to such employment for nomination or election to the board of a separately incorporated ministry or committee related to the churchwide unit or office in which the employee served (ELCA 19.06.A22.).

So long as the number of incumbent members from a given synod serving on a board or committee with terms not expiring plus the number of positions on the same board or committee to which individuals from the same synod already have been nominated (whether by the Nominating Committee or from the floor) total less than the maximum number of two individuals from the same synod who may serve on that board or committee, an individual from the same synod may be nominated for another position on that board or committee, provided other criteria and restrictions are met. Individuals from the same synod may be nominated for a position on a board or committee to which individuals from the same synod already have been nominated, provided other criteria and restrictions are met (ELCA 19.11.C21.b.).

### ***For Church Council: Restrictions on Nominations***

The members of the Church Council, except the chair of the Conference of Bishops and the treasurer of this church, shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly.

- a. In preparation for the Churchwide Assembly, the Church Council shall determine how this church's commitment to inclusive representation will affect the next election to the Church Council. For 32 of the council members, the Nominating Committee shall invite each eligible synod to submit suggested nominees and shall then nominate persons who fulfill the categories assigned by the Church Council. With respect to the other nominees, the Church Council shall review its size and composition and take into consideration the experience and expertise of existing members and synod nominees as well as the needs of the council in seeking to fulfill its duties and responsibilities. Based upon this analysis, the Church Council shall instruct the Nominating Committee to provide nominations in specific categories for the remaining positions up to 13.
- b. Excluding the churchwide officers and the chair of the Conference of Bishops, there shall not be more than two members of the Church Council from a synod. The Church Council shall have at least two members from each region.
- c. No synod bishop, with the exception of the chair of the Conference of Bishops, shall serve as a voting member of the Church Council.
- d. The terms of office of persons elected to regular terms on the Church Council by the Churchwide Assembly shall begin at the conclusion of the Churchwide Assembly at which such persons were elected (ELCA 19.02.).

Except as otherwise provided, the Nominating Committee shall nominate two persons for each council or committee position, according to the process described in continuing resolutions, for which an election will be held by the Churchwide Assembly. Nominations from the floor, where permitted in the nomination process, shall be presented in the specific category named by the Nominating Committee and shall therefore meet the same criteria as the persons against whom the nominee is nominated. In the materials provided in advance to each member of the assembly, the Nominating Committee shall set forth the specific criteria applicable to each category that must be met by persons nominated from the floor (ELCA 19.11.02.).



Nominations for positions on the Church Council shall comply with criteria and restrictions established by the Church Council and Nominating Committee and set forth in materials provided to each voting member of the assembly (ELCA 19.11.D21.).

On behalf of the Nominating Committee, the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America—in the year preceding each regular meeting of the Churchwide Assembly—shall solicit from eligible synods on a rotating basis the names of two persons in specified categories, in keeping with the principles of organization as specified in Chapter 5 of this constitution, for possible election to the Church Council. Upon their nomination by the assemblies of the respective synods, the names of the two persons shall be presented to the Nominating Committee for submission to the Churchwide Assembly. In the event that any nominee withdraws or is disqualified from possible service, the Nominating Committee shall request that the nominee's synod provide a replacement name. In the event that the vacancy occurs subsequent to the preparation of the report of the Nominating Committee to the Churchwide Assembly, a floor nomination shall be provided from the same synod as the original nominee. Except as provided herein, no floor nominations for positions on the Church Council shall be permitted at the Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 19.02.A24.).

See Section VIII—Report of the Nominating Committee—of the *Bulletin of Reports* for details on restrictions.

#### ***For Nominating Committee: Restrictions on Nominations***

The Church Council shall place in nomination the names of two persons for each position. The committee shall consist of at least one member but no more than three members from any region. Nominations from the floor shall also be permitted, but each floor nomination shall be presented in the specific category named by the Church Council and shall therefore meet the same criteria as the persons against whom the nominee is nominated. In the materials provided in advance to each member of the assembly, the Church Council shall set forth the specific criteria applicable to each category that must be met by persons nominated from the floor (ELCA 19.11.01.).

Nominations from the floor for positions on the Nominating Committee shall comply with criteria and restrictions established by the Church Council and set forth in materials provided to each voting member of the assembly (ELCA 19.11.E21.a.).

So long as the number of incumbent members from a given region serving on the Nominating Committee with terms not expiring plus the number of Nominating Committee positions to which individuals from the same region have already been nominated (whether by the Church Council or from the floor) total less than the maximum number of three individuals from the same region who may serve on the Nominating Committee, an individual from the same region may be nominated for another Nominating Committee position, provided other criteria and restrictions are met. Provided other criteria and restrictions are met, individuals may be nominated for a Nominating Committee position for which someone from the same region has already been nominated (ELCA 19.11.E21.b.).

### **PART THIRTEEN: ELECTION PROCEDURES**

#### ***Election Procedures Utilizing the Common Ballot***

The common ballot is used in those elections when the ecclesiastical or nominating ballot is not used (ELCA 19.11.F24.a.).

In each case in which there are floor nominations, there shall be a preliminary ballot that shall include the names of the nominees presented by the Nominating Committee or the Church Council, and the person or persons nominated from the floor, where permitted. The names of the two persons receiving the highest number of votes cast shall be placed on the final ballot (ELCA 19.11.04.).

Each ticket for which an election is held will be considered a separate ballot (ELCA 19.11.F24.b.).

A voting member may vote for only one nominee on each ticket (ELCA 19.11.F24.c.).

Failure to vote for a nominee for every ticket does not invalidate a ballot for the tickets for which a nominee is marked (ELCA 19.11.F24.d.).

Ballots must be marked in accordance with the instructions presented in plenary session (ELCA 19.11.F24.e.).

Unless otherwise ordered by the assembly, polls for the first common ballot close at the time designated in the assembly's Rules of Organization and Procedure (ELCA 19.11.F24.f.).

(See PART EIGHTEEN: Deadlines *below*.)

On the second ballot, the polls will remain open for a reasonable time, as determined by the chair, to permit members to record their votes (ELCA 19.11.F24.g.).

(See PART EIGHTEEN: Deadlines *below*.)

On the second ballot, the first position on each ticket shall be given to the nominee who received the greatest number of votes on the first ballot. If two nominees are tied for the highest number of votes, their respective positions shall be in alphabetical order (ELCA 19.11.F24.h.).

### ***Majority Required for Election***

In all elections by the Churchwide Assembly, other than for the presiding bishop, vice president, and secretary, a majority of the votes cast on the first ballot shall be necessary for election. If an election does not occur on the first ballot, the names of the two persons receiving the highest number of votes cast shall be placed on the second ballot. On the second ballot, a majority of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election (ELCA 19.05.02.).

### ***Breaking Ties***

On the first common ballot, the blank ballots of the treasurer and vice president shall be held by the chair of the Elections Committee to be presented to the treasurer for vote only in those elections where a tie would otherwise exist, and to be presented to the vice president for vote only in those elections to break a tie remaining after the ballot of the treasurer has been counted (ELCA 19.11.G21.b.).

On the second common ballot, the marked ballot of the treasurer shall be held by the chair of the Elections Committee and shall be counted only where necessary to break a tie that would otherwise exist (ELCA 19.11.G21.c.).

## **PART FOURTEEN: BUDGET PROPOSALS**

### ***Budget Procedures***

The presiding bishop shall ... provide for the preparation of the budget for the churchwide organization (ELCA 13.21.f.).

At the direction of the presiding bishop, the executive for administration shall ... develop the budget for the churchwide organization and report to the Church Council and the Churchwide Assembly through the Budget and Finance Committee of the Church Council with regard to the preparation of the budget (ELCA 15.12.A22.d.).

A Budget and Finance Committee shall be composed of members of the Church Council elected by the council. The treasurer of this church shall serve as an *ex officio* member of the committee. This committee shall have staff services provided by the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Office of the Treasurer. The committee shall prepare and present a comprehensive budget to the Church Council for its consideration and presentation to the Churchwide Assembly. The committee shall relate to the work of the Office of the Treasurer (ELCA 14.41.A15.).

The Church Council, upon recommendation of the presiding bishop, shall submit budget proposals for approval by the Churchwide Assembly and authorize expenditures within the parameters of approved budgets (ELCA 14.21.05.).

The Churchwide Assembly shall ... adopt a budget for the churchwide organization (ELCA 12.21.e.).

Each synod shall remit to the churchwide organization a percentage or amount of all donor-unrestricted receipts contributed to it by the congregations of the synod. The actual percentage or amount shall be determined through individual consultations with each synod. Consultations may recognize and include receipts other than unrestricted receipts in establishing and reporting the synod's remittance to the churchwide organization (ELCA 10.71.).

Proposed amendments to the budget must be submitted to the secretary of this church or the secretary's assistant electronically (or on a paper form if the electronic form is not functional) prior to the established deadline. (*See* PART EIGHTEEN: Deadlines *below*.) Each amendment must be supported by one other voting member. The secretary shall refer such proposed amendments to the Budget and Finance Committee. During the consideration of the budget by the assembly, the Budget and Finance Committee shall report on the implications of each proposed amendment.

Any amendment to the budget that increases a current program proposal of, or adds a current program proposal to, a churchwide unit must include a corresponding decrease in some other current program proposal of the same or another churchwide unit(s) and/or increase in revenues. Any amendment to the budget that proposes an increase in revenues shall require an affirmative vote by at least two-thirds of those present and voting.

The assembly may refer to the Church Council for final action any amendment to the budget that has been presented in accordance with these Rules of Organization and Procedure. Such referral shall not preclude the assembly from acting on other budget amendments or from adopting the budget.

### ***Appropriations***

When a motion calling for an appropriation comes before the Churchwide Assembly from any source other than the Church Council or a memorial from a synod, it shall be referred at once to the Reference and Counsel Committee. The Reference and Counsel Committee shall refer the proposed appropriation to the Budget and Finance Committee of the Church Council. The Budget and Finance Committee may consult with the churchwide unit(s) affected by the proposed appropriation. The Budget and Finance Committee may conclude that it cannot evaluate adequately the proposed appropriation prior to assembly adjournment and may request that the Church Council be designated to

receive the evaluation later and to determine whether or not the proposed appropriation shall be authorized. The findings of the Budget and Finance Committee shall be forwarded to the Reference and Counsel Committee, which shall then make its recommendation to the Churchwide Assembly. If the report of the Reference and Counsel Committee is negative, a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting shall be required for adoption.

A proposed appropriation that originates with a synod through a memorial will be handled in the same way as in this preceding rule, except that reference shall be to the Memorials Committee rather than to the Reference and Counsel Committee.

### ***New Studies or Research Proposals***

Each proposal by a voting member for a study or research project shall be made as a main motion and shall be referred to the Reference and Counsel Committee. The Reference and Counsel Committee shall refer the proposal to the Office of the Secretary, which, in consultation with the churchwide unit to which the proposal is directed, will seek to determine the purpose, relationship to existing studies and research projects or current programs, potential value, overall costs including staff requirements, and availability of budget and staff. The Office of the Secretary may conclude that it cannot evaluate adequately the proposal prior to assembly adjournment and request that the Church Council be designated to receive the evaluation at a later time and determine whether or not the study or research project should be initiated. The findings of the Office of the Secretary shall be submitted to the Reference and Counsel Committee, which may make its recommendation to the assembly. If the recommendation calls for a new appropriation, the matter also shall be referred at once to the Budget and Finance Committee for consideration and report to the Reference and Counsel Committee. If the report of the Reference and Counsel Committee is negative, a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting shall be required for adoption.

A proposal that originates with a synod through a memorial shall be handled the same way, except that reference shall be to the Memorials Committee, rather than to the Reference and Counsel Committee.

### ***Process for Initiation or Reconsideration of Social Statements***

The process for initiating the preparation of a social statement or commencing a revision or removal of a social statement adopted at a prior Churchwide Assembly shall be governed by the document, “Policies and Procedures for Addressing Social Concerns,” which was adopted by the 1997 Churchwide Assembly (CA97.05.21) and revised by the Church Council in 2006 (CC06.11.51), 2011 (CC11.04.28), and 2018 (CC18.11.23o).

## **PART FIFTEEN: AMENDMENTS TO GOVERNING DOCUMENTS**

### ***Constitutional Amendments***

This constitution may be amended only through either of the following procedures:

- a. The Church Council may propose an amendment, with an official notice to be sent to the synods at least six months prior to the next regular meeting of the Churchwide Assembly. The adoption of such an amendment shall require a two-thirds vote of the members of the next regular meeting of the Churchwide Assembly present and voting.
- b. An amendment may be proposed by 25 or more members of the Churchwide Assembly. The proposed amendment shall be referred to the Committee of Reference and Counsel for its recommendation, following which it shall come before the assembly. If such an amendment is approved by a two-thirds vote of members present and voting, such an amendment shall become effective only if adopted by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at the next regular Churchwide Assembly (ELCA 22.11.).

A constitutional amendment may be proposed only by a main motion.

A proposed constitutional amendment must be submitted electronically (or on a paper form if the electronic form is not functional) to the secretary of this church or the secretary’s assistant prior to the established deadline. (See PART EIGHTEEN: Deadlines *below*.)

### ***Bylaw Amendments***

Bylaws not in conflict with this constitution may be adopted or amended at any regular meeting of the Churchwide Assembly when presented in writing by the Church Council or by at least 15 members of the assembly. An amendment proposed by at least 15 members of the assembly shall immediately be submitted to the Committee of Reference and Counsel for its recommendation. An amendment may not be placed before the assembly for action sooner than the day following its presentation to the assembly unless it has been presented in writing by the Church Council and sent with an official notice to the synods at least six months prior to the next regular meeting of the Churchwide Assembly. A two-thirds vote of the members present and voting shall be necessary for adoption (ELCA 22.21.).

A bylaw amendment may be proposed only by a main motion.

A proposed bylaw amendment must be submitted electronically (or on a paper form if the electronic form is not functional) to the secretary of this church or the secretary's assistant prior to the established deadline. (See PART EIGHTEEN: Deadlines *below*.) The secretary first shall report to the assembly any bylaw amendments so submitted and the amendments then shall be referred to the Reference and Counsel Committee.

Any floor amendment that is to be offered to a bylaw amendment proposed by the Church Council must be submitted in accordance with the requirement for bylaw amendments that are proposed by voting members.

### ***Continuing Resolutions***

Continuing resolutions not in conflict with the constitution or bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may be adopted or amended by a majority vote of the Churchwide Assembly or by a two-thirds vote of the Church Council. Such continuing resolutions become effective immediately upon adoption. Matters related to the administrative functions of the churchwide organization shall be set forth in the continuing resolutions (ELCA 22.31.).

Should the conference, committee, or board in question disagree with the action of the Church Council in amending a continuing resolution, it may appeal the decision to the Churchwide Assembly. (See ELCA 10.81.03.)

A continuing resolution amendment may be proposed only by a main motion.

A proposed continuing resolution amendment must be submitted electronically (or on a paper form if the electronic form is not functional) to the secretary of this church or the secretary's assistant prior to the established deadline. (See PART EIGHTEEN: Deadlines *below*.)

### ***Amendments to the Constitution for Synods***

The *Constitution for Synods* contains mandatory provisions that incorporate and record therein provisions of the constitution and bylaws of this church. Amendments shall be made in accordance with the required provisions in Chapter 18 of the *Constitution for Synods*. Non-mandatory provisions shall not be inconsistent with the constitution and bylaws of this church (ELCA 10.13.).

An amendment to the *Constitution for Synods* may be proposed only by a main motion.

A proposed amendment to the *Constitution for Synods* must be submitted electronically (or on a paper form if the electronic form is not functional) to the secretary of this church or the secretary's assistant prior to the established deadline. (See PART EIGHTEEN: Deadlines *below*.)

### ***Amendments to the Model Constitution for Congregations***

A *Model Constitution for Congregations* shall be provided by this church. Amendments to the *Model Constitution for Congregations* shall be made in the same manner as prescribed in Chapter 22 for amendments of the bylaws of this church (ELCA 9.53.02.).

An amendment to the *Model Constitution for Congregations* may be proposed only by a main motion.

A proposed amendment to the *Model Constitution for Congregations* must be submitted electronically (or on a paper form if the electronic form is not functional) to the secretary of this church or the secretary's assistant prior to the established deadline. (See PART EIGHTEEN: Deadlines *below*.)

### ***En Bloc Resolution for Amendments to Governing Documents***

Amendments to the constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions as recommended by the Church Council in a report distributed to assembly members prior to, or at, the first business session of the assembly, may be approved by *en bloc* resolutions when so proposed by the Church Council.

Voting members who desire the assembly to discuss a particular amendment that is included in the *en bloc* resolutions may request that the particular amendment be removed from the proposed *en bloc* resolutions, provided the member's request is supported by 10 other voting members. Such request shall be made in accordance with the following paragraph. The assembly then will consider and vote separately on the particular proposed amendment. After removals, the *en bloc* resolutions shall be voted upon without amendment or debate.

To call for such separate consideration, a voting member, with the support of 10 other voting members, must submit notification electronically (or on a paper form if the electronic form is not functional) to the secretary of this church or the secretary's assistant prior to the established deadline (see PART EIGHTEEN: Deadlines *below*).

Notice shall be given by the secretary of this church to the assembly of which constitutional provisions or bylaw proposals have been removed from the *en bloc* resolutions by specific voting members.

### ***Vote to Adopt Certain Recommendations from Reports***

A two-thirds vote of the voting members of the Churchwide Assembly present and voting shall be required to adopt recommendations from any report that requires amendment of a constitutional provision or bylaw of this church for implementation.

### ***Reconsideration or Rescission Prohibited***

After the adoption by the assembly of a constitutional or bylaw amendment, a motion for reconsideration or a motion to rescind or amend such action is not in order.

## **PART SIXTEEN: ELECTIONS OF OFFICERS**

### ***Election Procedures***

Set forth hereafter are the procedures for the elections of the presiding bishop, the vice president, and the secretary, whether or not there will be an election at this assembly for any of these positions. Elections are required because of completion of the specified term for a position or when a vacancy otherwise occurs.

### ***Background Checks and Screening***

Background checks and screening shall be required and completed for persons nominated as churchwide officers prior to their election, if possible, or as soon as practical after their election. The specific procedures and timing of background checks and screening shall be determined by the Church Council (ELCA 19.01.B09.).

The Protocol for Churchwide Officer Background Checks and Screening and the forms which the nominees need to complete, including a Biographical Information Form, a Disclosure Form, and a Background Check Disclosure and Release Information Form, are available.

### ***Restrictions on Nominations for Officers***

The officers shall be the presiding bishop, vice president, secretary, and treasurer. Each officer shall be a voting member of a congregation of this church (ELCA 13.11.).

The presiding bishop shall be a minister of Word and Sacrament of this church (ELCA 13.21.).

The presiding bishop shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly to a six-year term and serve until a successor takes office (ELCA 13.22.).

The presiding bishop shall be a full-time, salaried position (ELCA 13.22.02.).

The vice president shall be a layperson (ELCA 13.31.).

The vice president shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly to a six-year term and serve until a successor takes office (ELCA 13.32.).

The vice president may perform such other tasks for the benefit of this church as the Church Council directs, and may be compensated as the Church Council determines (ELCA 13.32.02.).

The secretary shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly to a six-year term and serve until a successor takes office (ELCA 13.42.).

The secretary shall be a full-time, salaried position (ELCA 13.42.02.).

The secretary may be either a rostered minister or a lay person.

### ***Ecclesiastical Ballot Defined***

An “ecclesiastical ballot” for the election of officers (other than treasurer) of the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is an election process:

- a. in which on the first ballot the name of any eligible individual may be submitted for nomination by a voting member of the assembly;
- b. through which the possibility of election to office exists on any ballot by achievement of the required number of votes cast by voting members of the assembly applicable to a particular ballot;
- c. that precludes spoken floor nominations but allows nomination of persons not in attendance at the meeting;
- d. in which those casting ballots have primary responsibility to nominate persons willing to serve if elected;
- e. in which the first ballot is the nominating ballot if no election occurs on the first ballot;
- f. in which the first ballot defines the total slate of nominees for possible election on a subsequent ballot, with no additional nominations;
- g. in which each synod bishop will seek to inform nominees from that synod that they have been nominated and that they may withdraw if they do not seek election;
- h. that allows, after the reporting of the first ballot, the persons nominated to withdraw their names prior to the casting of the second ballot;



- i. in which any name appearing on the second ballot may not be subsequently withdrawn;
- j. that does not preclude an assembly's adoption of rules that permit, at a defined point in the election process and for a defined period of time, speeches to the assembly by nominees or their representatives and/or a question-and-answer forum in which the nominees or their representatives participate; and
- k. in which the number of names that appear on any ballot subsequent to the second ballot shall be determined in accordance with provisions of the governing documents. (ELCA 19.01.C19.).

### ***Election Procedures Utilizing the Ecclesiastical Ballot***

- a. The chair will announce what type of voting system is to be used for the election.
- b. On the first ballot for each office being selected by ecclesiastical or nominating ballot, both the first and last names of a nominee should be used. Members should endeavor to use correct spelling and should provide any additional accurate information identifying the nominee, such as title, position, synod, congregation, or residence.
- c. A member may vote for only one nominee on each ballot.
- d. Ballots should not be marked prior to the time the chair advises the voting members to do so.
- e. When the results of the first ballot are presented, the chair of the assembly will announce when and how persons nominated may withdraw their names prior to the casting of the second ballot.
- f. On the second and subsequent ballots, the first position on each ballot shall be given to the nominee who received the greatest number of votes on the immediately preceding ballot, with the remaining positions assigned to the other nominees in descending order of the number of votes received on the immediately preceding ballot. If two or more nominees were tied with the same number of votes on the immediately preceding ballot, their respective positions shall be in alphabetical order.
- g. On each ticket, the polls will remain open for a reasonable time, as determined by the chair, to permit voting members to record their votes (ELCA 19.01.D24.).

### ***Election of the Presiding Bishop***

In a year when the presiding bishop, vice president, or secretary shall be elected, those who will serve as voting members of the upcoming Churchwide Assembly shall be invited to identify the names of up to three persons per office who might be considered for election as presiding bishop, vice president, or secretary. Names shall be submitted to the Office of the Secretary at least four months prior to the assembly. The Office of the Secretary shall contact those persons identified and request biographical information. At least 30 days prior to the Churchwide Assembly, the biographical information received from those persons open to consideration shall be distributed to the voting members (ELCA 19.01.A24.).

The presiding bishop shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly by ecclesiastical ballot. The election shall proceed without oral nominations. If the first ballot for presiding bishop does not result in an election, it shall be considered a nominating ballot. On the first ballot, three-fourths of the votes cast shall be required for election. Thereafter only such votes as are cast for persons who received votes on the first or nominating ballot shall be valid. On the second ballot, three-fourths of the votes cast shall be required for election. On the third ballot, the voting shall be limited to the seven persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the second ballot, and two-thirds of the votes cast shall be required for election. On the fourth ballot, voting shall be limited to the three persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the previous ballot, and 60 percent of the votes cast shall elect. On subsequent ballots, voting shall be limited to the two persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the previous ballot, and a majority of the votes cast shall elect (ELCA 19.01.02.).

Names pre-identified and posted on the assembly website or through the Churchwide Assembly Guide prior to the assembly shall be removed from the site and the application following the adoption of these rules. The biographical information shall be provided for the top seven nominees plus ties after the second ballot.

Those wishing to withdraw and not let their names go to the second ballot may do so in paper form to the Nominations/Elections desk in the registration area, electronically via email ([nominations@elca.org](mailto:nominations@elca.org)), or by phone in the hearing of two members of the elections committee. The deadline for withdrawing is Tuesday, July 29, at 12:15 p.m.

If there is no election on the second ballot, the seven nominees receiving the greatest numbers of votes on the second ballot (plus ties in the final qualifying position) shall complete the Biographical Information Form, Disclosure Form, and Background Check Disclosure and Release Information Form approved by the Executive Committee of the Church Council. Nominees shall receive instructions on how to complete these forms.

Prior to the third ballot for presiding bishop, biographical data will be distributed for the seven nominees receiving the greatest numbers of votes on the second ballot (plus ties in the final qualifying position).



All nominees will be present for the following forums or be permitted to address the assembly by remote communication.

Prior to the third ballot for presiding bishop, the seven nominees receiving the greatest numbers of votes on the second ballot (plus ties in the final qualifying position) will be invited to address the assembly, with each speech limited to four minutes. If any such person is not present at the assembly and is unable to address the assembly by remote communication, the bishop of the synod of such person's roster shall, in consultation with such person, if possible, designate an alternate to speak on behalf of such person.

Prior to the fourth ballot for presiding bishop, the three nominees receiving the greatest numbers of votes on the third ballot (plus ties in the final qualifying position) are invited to respond to questions. Voting members may submit questions electronically to the secretary of this church or to the secretary's assistant by the deadline of Tuesday, July 29 at 12:15 p.m. From the questions submitted, the Executive Committee of the Church Council, excluding the presiding bishop and nominees, shall select a sample of questions and determine the process to be followed. The question-and-answer period shall be moderated by an individual appointed by the Executive Committee of the Church Council. Each of the nominees shall be asked questions in rotating order, and each response shall be no longer than two minutes. Nominees are required to use their time to respond to the question asked and may not use their time to present on matters not related to the question.

### ***Election of the Vice President***

The vice president shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly by ecclesiastical ballot. The election shall proceed without oral nominations. If the first ballot for vice president does not result in an election, it shall be considered a nominating ballot. On the first ballot, three-fourths of the votes cast shall be required for election. Thereafter only such votes as are cast for persons who received votes on the first or nominating ballot shall be valid. On the second ballot, three-fourths of the votes cast shall be required for election. On the third ballot, the voting shall be limited to the seven persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the second ballot and two-thirds of the votes cast shall be necessary for election. On the fourth ballot, voting shall be limited to the three persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the previous ballot and 60 percent of the votes cast shall elect. On subsequent ballots, voting shall be limited to the two persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the previous ballot and a majority of votes cast shall elect (ELCA 19.01.03.).

Those wishing to withdraw and not let their names go to the second ballot may do so in paper form to the Nominations/Elections desk in the registration area, electronically via email ([nominations@elca.org](mailto:nominations@elca.org)), or by phone in the hearing of two members of the elections committee.

If there is no election on the second ballot, the seven nominees receiving the greatest numbers of votes on the second ballot (plus ties in the final qualifying position) who received the greatest number of votes on the second ballot shall complete the Biographical Information Form, Disclosure Form, and Background Check Disclosure and Release Information Form approved by the Executive Committee of the Church Council. Nominees shall receive instructions on how to complete these forms.

Prior to the third ballot for vice president, biographical data will be distributed for the seven nominees receiving the greatest numbers of votes on the second ballot (plus ties in the final qualifying position).

All nominees will be present for the following forums or be permitted to address the assembly by remote communication.

Prior to the third ballot for vice president, the seven nominees receiving the greatest numbers of votes on the second ballot (plus ties in the final qualifying position) will be invited to address the assembly, with each speech limited to four minutes. If any such person is not present at the assembly and is unable to address the assembly by remote communication, the bishop of the synod of such person's congregation membership shall, in consultation with such person, if possible, designate an alternate to speak on behalf of such person.

Prior to the fourth ballot for vice president, each of the three nominees receiving the greatest numbers of votes on the third ballot (plus ties in the final qualifying position) will be asked in rotating order to respond to three questions determined by the Executive Committee of the Church Council, excluding the vice president and nominees. Each nominee's response to each question shall be limited to two minutes. Nominees are required to use their time to respond to the question asked and may not use their time to present on matters not related to the question.

### ***Election of the Secretary***

In a year when the presiding bishop, vice president, or secretary shall be elected, those who will serve as voting members of the upcoming Churchwide Assembly shall be invited to identify the names of up to three persons per office who might be considered for election as presiding bishop, vice president, or secretary. Names shall be submitted to the Office of the Secretary at least four months prior to the assembly. The Office of the Secretary shall contact those persons

identified and request biographical information. At least 30 days prior to the Churchwide Assembly, the biographical information received from those persons open to consideration shall be distributed to the voting members (ELCA 19.01.A24.).

The secretary shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly by ecclesiastical ballot. The election shall proceed without oral nominations. If the first ballot for secretary does not result in an election, it shall be considered a nominating ballot. On the first ballot, three-fourths of the votes cast shall be required for election. Thereafter only such votes as are cast for persons who received votes on the first or nominating ballot shall be valid. On the second ballot, three-fourths of the votes cast shall be required for election. On the third ballot, the voting shall be limited to the seven persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the second ballot and two-thirds of the votes cast shall be necessary for election. On the fourth ballot, voting shall be limited to the three persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the previous ballot and 60 percent of the votes cast shall elect. On subsequent ballots, voting shall be limited to the two persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of votes on the previous ballot and a majority of the votes cast shall elect (ELCA 19.01.04.).

Names pre-identified and posted on the assembly website or through the Churchwide Assembly Guide prior to the assembly shall be removed from the site and the application following the adoption of these rules. The biographical information shall be provided for the seven nominees receiving the greatest numbers of votes on the second ballot (plus ties in the final qualifying position).

Those wishing to withdraw and not let their names go to the second ballot may do so in paper form to the Nominations/Elections desk in the registration area, electronically via email (nominations@elca.org), or by phone in the hearing of two members of the elections committee. The deadline for withdrawing is Thursday, July 31, at 12:15 p.m.

If there is no election on the second ballot, the seven nominees receiving the greatest numbers of votes on the second ballot (plus ties in the final qualifying position) shall complete the Biographical Information Form, Disclosure Form, and Background Check Disclosure and Release Information Form approved by the Executive Committee of the Church Council. Nominees shall receive instructions on how to complete these forms.

Prior to the third ballot for secretary, biographical data will be distributed for the seven nominees receiving the greatest numbers of votes on the second ballot (plus ties in the final qualifying position).

All nominees will be present for the following forums or be permitted to address the assembly by remote communication.

Prior to the third ballot for secretary, the seven nominees receiving the greatest numbers of votes on the second ballot (plus ties in the final qualifying position) will be invited to address the assembly, with each speech limited to four minutes. If any such person is not present at the assembly and is unable to address the assembly by remote communication, the bishop of the synod of such person's congregation membership shall, in consultation with such person, if possible, designate an alternate to speak on behalf of such person.

Prior to the fourth ballot for secretary, each of the three nominees receiving the greatest numbers of votes on the third ballot (plus ties in the final qualifying position) will be asked in rotating order to respond to three questions determined by the Executive Committee of the Church Council, excluding the secretary and nominees. Each nominee's response to each question shall be limited to two minutes. Nominees are required to use their time to respond to the question asked and may not use their time to present on matters not related to the question.

### ***Majority Required for Election***

On the final ballot for the election of presiding bishop, vice president, and secretary of this church, when only two names appear on the ballot, a majority of the legal votes cast is necessary for election.

### ***Breaking Ties***

On the ballot for the election of the presiding bishop, vice president, and secretary, when only two names appear, the marked ballot of the treasurer shall be held by the chair of the Elections Committee and shall be counted only where necessary to break a tie that would otherwise exist (ELCA 19.11.G21.a.).

## **PART SEVENTEEN: STATUS OF REPORTS**

### ***Assembly Reports***

At least 20 days prior to an assembly the secretary shall prepare and distribute to each congregation and to the voting members-elect a bulletin of reports. Distribution to congregations may be accomplished by posting the report on the website of this church (ELCA 12.31.03.).

### ***Reports of the Presiding Bishop and Secretary of This Church***

Following presentation, the presiding bishop's report and the secretary's report shall be referred to the Reference and Counsel Committee.

### ***Status of Reports***

All reports published in the bulletin of reports shall be treated as having been received by the assembly without formal vote.

### ***Distribution of Materials***

Materials may be distributed on the floor of the assembly only with the written consent of the secretary of this church. In cases where the secretary does not consent, appeal may be made to the Reference and Counsel Committee. That committee's decision shall be final.

## **PART EIGHTEEN: DEADLINES**

### ***Monday, July 28, 2025***

- 9:15 p.m.** Separate consideration (removal from *en bloc*) of responses to synod memorials  
Substitute responses to synod memorials  
Separate consideration (removal from *en bloc*) 2025 archival of certain social policy resolutions  
Separate consideration (removal from *en bloc*) of the constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions  
Proposed changes to the amendments to the constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions  
Proposed amendments from the floor to the constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions

### ***Tuesday, July 29, 2025***

- 12:15 p.m.** **Nominations from the floor**  
**Proposed amendments to the Recommended Proposed Social Statement on Faith and Civic Life: Seeking the Well-being of All and implementing resolutions**  
Withdrawal from ballot for presiding bishop  
Questions for presiding bishop question-and-answer forum
- 6:15 p.m.** Proposed amendments to 2026–2028 budget proposal

### ***Wednesday, July 30, 2025***

- 10:45 a.m.** Non-germane resolutions  
Proposed amendments to Recommended Proposed Edited Social Statement on *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* (2009)
- 1:45 p.m.** First Common Ballot

### ***Thursday, July 31, 2025***

- 12:15 p.m.** Withdrawal from ballot for secretary

## **PART NINETEEN: ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

Use of computers and other electronic devices, such as cellphones (in texting mode only), smart phones, tablets, and other wireless electronic communication devices is allowed in the plenary hall during assembly sessions, provided that such devices are in a silent mode and do not disturb voting members. Speaking on any device is prohibited in the plenary hall during assembly sessions. Members and others are expected to be courteous and respectful and are encouraged to leave the hall if they intend to engage in communication activities that are not related to the work of the assembly. Use of computers and other electronic devices is precluded during worship.

Members and others using ELCA-issued electronic equipment shall ensure that such equipment is used for assembly purposes only and in a manner that is consistent with good stewardship and the mission and ministry of this church. Use of such equipment and related technology is contingent upon agreement to the terms and conditions of the use agreement.

## **PART TWENTY: OTHER MATTERS**

### ***College Corporation Meetings***

The voting members of the Churchwide Assembly also constitute the voting members of certain college corporations that hold meetings as part of the agenda of the assembly. The assembly will recess to conduct the corporation meeting(s) and reconvene at the conclusion of the corporation meeting(s) or at the beginning of the next scheduled session of the assembly. Quorum requirements for college corporation meetings are specified in the

governing documents of each college. The quorum requirement for the Churchwide Assembly does not apply to college corporation meetings.