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

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

**2000 Minneapolis Area Synod Assembly**
**May 20, 2000**
**and**
**1999 Churchwide Assembly of the**
**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**
**effective January 1, 2001**
**and**
**2001 Minneapolis Area Synod Assembly**
**effective May 31, 2001**
**and**
**2001 Churchwide Assembly of the**
**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**
**September 5, 2001**
**and**
**2002 Minneapolis Area Synod Assembly**
**effective June 6, 2002**
**and**
**2003 Churchwide Assembly of the**
**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**
**effective September 2, 2003**
**and**
**2003 Minneapolis Area Synod Assembly**
**effective February 24, 2004**
**and**
**2006 Minneapolis Area Synod Assembly**
**effective April 29, 2006**
**and**
**2007 Churchwide Assembly of the**
**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**
**effective August 11, 2007**
**and**
**2009 Churchwide Assembly of the**
**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**
**effective August 23, 2009**
**and**
**2011 Minneapolis Area Synod Assembly**
**effective May 7, 2011**
**and**
**2011 Churchwide Assembly of the**
**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**
**effective September 16, 2011**
**and**
**2012 Minneapolis Area Synod Assembly**
**effective February 18, 2012**

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## CODIFICATION EXPLANATION

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

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

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

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

## Chapter 1.
## NAME AND INCORPORATION

**† S1.01.** **The name of this synod shall be Minneapolis Area Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.**

**† S1.02.** **For the purposes of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws, the Minneapolis Area Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is hereafter designated as "this synod" or "the synod."**

**† S1.11.** **This synod shall be incorporated. Amendments to the Articles of Incorporation of this synod shall be submitted to the Church Council for ratification before filing.**

**† S1.21.** **The seal of this synod is a cross with three united flames emanating from the base of the cross and three entwined circles beside the cross. The name of this synod and the year of its constituting convention form the circular outer edge of the seal.**

## Chapter 2.
## STATUS

**† S2.01.** **This synod possesses the powers conferred upon it, and accepts the duties and responsibilities assigned to it, in the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, which are recognized as having governing force in the life of this synod.**

**† S2.02.** **The name Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA or "this church") as used herein refers in general references to this whole church, including its three expressions – congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization. The name Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is also the name of the corporation of the churchwide organization to which specific references may be made herein.**

**†S2.03.** **No provision of this constitution shall be inconsistent with the constitution and bylaws of this church.**

## Chapter 3.
## TERRITORY

**† S3.01.** **The territory of this synod, as determined by the Churchwide Assembly, shall be: the counties of Anoka, Carver, Hennepin, Isanti, Scott, Sherburne (part), Wright (part), in the state of Minnesota.**

**† S3.02.** **"Determined by the Churchwide Assembly," as stipulated by †S3.01. is understood to include the reported changes in synod relationship made by any congregation in a border area agreed under ELCA bylaws 10.01.11. and 10.02.02.**

## Chapter 4.
## CONFESSION OF FAITH

**† S4.01.** **This synod confesses the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.**

**† S4.02.** **This synod confesses Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and the Gospel as the power of God for the salvation of all who believe.**

- **a.** **Jesus Christ is the Word of God incarnate, through whom everything was made and through whose life, death, and resurrection God fashions a new creation.**
- **b.** **The proclamation of God's message to us as both Law and Gospel is the Word of God, revealing judgment and mercy through word and deed, beginning with the Word in creation, continuing in the history of Israel, and centering in all its fullness in the person and work of Jesus Christ.**
- **c.** **The canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the written Word of God. Inspired by God's Spirit speaking through their authors, they record and announce God's revelation centering in Jesus Christ. Through them God's Spirit speaks to us to create and sustain Christian faith and fellowship for service in the world.**

**† S4.03.** **This synod accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life.**

**† S4.04.** **This synod accepts the Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds as true declarations of the faith of this synod.**

**† S4.05.** **This synod accepts the Unaltered Augsburg Confession as a true witness to the Gospel, acknowledging as one with it in faith and doctrine all churches that likewise accept the teachings of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession.**

**† S4.06.** **This synod accepts the other confessional writings in the Book of Concord, namely, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles and the Treatise, the Small Catechism, the Large Catechism, and the Formula of Concord, as further valid interpretations of the faith of the Church.**

**† S4.07.** **This synod confesses the Gospel, recorded in the Holy Scriptures and confessed in the ecumenical creeds and Lutheran confessional writings, as the power of God to create and sustain the Church for God's mission in the world.**

## Chapter 5.
## NATURE OF THE CHURCH

**† S5.01.** **All power in the Church belongs to our Lord Jesus Christ, its head. All actions of this synod are to be carried out under his rule and authority.**

**† S5.02.** **The Church exists both as an inclusive fellowship and as local congregations gathered for worship and Christian service. Congregations find their fulfillment in the universal community of the Church, and the universal Church exists in and through congregations. This church, therefore, derives its character and powers both from the sanction and representation of its congregations and from its inherent nature as an expression of the broader fellowship of the faithful. In length, it acknowledges itself to be in the historic continuity of the communion of saints; in breadth, it expresses the fellowship of believers and congregations in our day.**

## Chapter 6.
## STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

**† S6.01.** **The Church is a people created by God in Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, called and sent to bear witness to God's creative, redeeming, and sanctifying activity in the world.**

**† S6.02.** **To participate in God's mission, this synod as a part of the Church shall:**

**a.** **Proclaim God's saving Gospel of justification by grace for Christ's sake through faith alone, according to the apostolic witness in the Holy Scripture, preserving and transmitting the Gospel faithfully to future generations.**

**b.** **Carry out Christ's Great Commission by reaching out to all people to bring them to faith in Christ and by doing all ministry with a global awareness consistent with the understanding of God as Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier of all.**

**c.** **Serve in response to God's love to meet human needs, caring for the sick and the aged, advocating dignity and justice for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, and standing with the poor and powerless, and committing itself to their needs.**

**d.** **Worship God in proclamation of the Word and administration of the sacraments and through lives of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, witness, and service.**

**e.** **Nurture its members in the Word of God so as to grow in faith and hope and love, to see daily life as the primary setting for the exercise of their Christian calling, and to use the gifts of the Spirit for their life together and for their calling in the world.**

**f.** **Manifest the unity given to the people of God by living together in the love of Christ and by joining with other Christians in prayer and action to express and preserve the unity which the Spirit gives.**

**† S6.03.** **To fulfill these purposes, this synod, in partnership with the churchwide organization, shall bear primary responsibility for the oversight of the life and mission of this church in the territory of this synod. In fulfillment of this role this synod shall:**

**a.** **Provide for the pastoral care of congregations, ordained ministers, associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers of this church in this synod, including:**

**1)** **approving candidates for the ordained ministry in cooperation with the appropriate seminaries of this church, which may be done through multi-synodical committees;**

**2)** **authorizing ordinations and ordaining on behalf of this**

**church;**

**3) approving associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers of this church, which may be done through multi-synodical committees;**

**4) authorizing the commissioning of associates in ministry, the consecration of deaconesses, and the consecration of diaconal ministers of this church; and**

**5) consulting in the calling process for ordained ministers, associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers.**

**b. Provide for leadership recruitment, preparation, and support in accordance with churchwide standards and policies, including:**

**1) nurturing and supporting congregations and lay leaders;**

**2) seeking and recruiting qualified candidates for the rostered ministries of this church;**

**3) making provision for pastoral care, call or appointment review, and guidance;**

**4) encouraging and supporting persons on the rosters of this church in stewardship of their abilities, care of self, and pursuit of continuing education to undergird their effectiveness of service; and**

**5) supporting recruitment of leaders for this church's colleges, universities, seminaries, and social ministry organizations.**

**c. Provide for discipline of congregations, ordained ministers, and persons on the official lay roster; as well as for termination of call, appointment, adjudication, and appeals consistent with the procedures in Chapter 20 of the constitution of the churchwide organization.**

**d. Foster organizations for youth, women, and men, and organizations for language or ethnic communities.**

**e. Plan for the mission of this church in this synod, initiating and developing policy and implementing programs, consistent with churchwide policy, including:**

**1) ecumenical guidance and encouragement;**

**2) development of new ministries, redevelopment of existing ministries, and support and assistance in the conclusion, if necessary, of a particular ministry;**

**3) leadership and encouragement of congregations in their evangelism efforts;**

**4) development of relationships to and participation in planning for the mission of social ministry organizations and ministries;**

**5) encouragement of financial support for the work of this church by individuals and congregations;**

**6) provision for resources for congregational life;**

**7) assistance to the members of its congregations in carrying out their ministries in the world; and**

**8) interpretation of social statements in a manner consistent with the interpretation given by the churchwide unit which assisted in the development of the statement, and suggestion of social study issues through (a) Synod Assembly memorials to the Churchwide Assembly or (b) resolutions for referral from the Synod Assembly through the Synod Council to the Church Council and (c) Synod Council resolutions addressed to the Church Council or for referral to a unit of the churchwide organization through the Church Council's Executive Committee.**

**f. Promote interdependent relationships among congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization, and enter into partnership with other synods in the region.**

**g. Participate in churchwide programs and develop support for the ministry of the churchwide organization.**

**h. Foster the grouping of congregations in conferences, clusters, coalitions, or other area subdivisions for mission purposes.**

**i. Support relationships with and provide partnership funding on behalf of colleges, universities, and campus ministries.**

**j. Foster relationships with and provide partnership funding on behalf of social ministry organizations.**

**k. Maintain relationships with and provide partnership funding on behalf of seminaries and continuing education centers.**

**l. Foster supporting relationships with camps and other outdoor ministries.**

**m. Foster supporting relationships with preschools, elementary schools, and secondary schools operated by congregations of this synod.**

**n. Interpret the work of this church to congregations and to the public.**

**o. Respond to human need, work for justice and peace, care for the sick and the suffering, and participate responsibly in society.**

**p. Provide for archives in conjunction with other synods.**

**q. Cooperate with other synods and the churchwide organization in creating, using, and supporting regions to carry out those functions of this synod which can best be done cooperatively with other synods and the churchwide organization.**

**r. Elect members of the Churchwide Assembly in accordance with bylaw 12.41.11. of the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical**

**Lutheran Church in America and according to procedures specified in the bylaws of this constitution.**

S6.03.01. This synod acknowledges its responsibility to provide spiritual guidance and leadership resource to Augsburg College. It is further acknowledged that this synod is responsible for electing persons to the Governing Membership of Augsburg College and, in partnership with the ELCA, providing financial support to church higher education of ELCA.

This synod shall elect 29 persons to the Governing Membership. The Synod Assembly shall elect 20 persons and the Synod Council shall elect nine persons. Election shall be for a two-year term.

S6.03.02. This synod acknowledges its responsibility to provide spiritual guidance and leadership resource to the Board of Social Ministry. It is further acknowledged that this synod is responsible for electing persons to the Board of Social Ministry and reviewing and approving all changes in the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws of the Board of Social Ministry.

The Synod Assembly shall elect five persons to the Board of Social Ministry. The terms shall be for three years. No one shall serve more than two consecutive terms.

S6.03.03. This synod acknowledges its responsibility to provide spiritual guidance and leadership resource to Lutheran Social Service. It is further acknowledged that this synod is responsible for electing persons to the Board of Directors of Lutheran Social Service.

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

S6.03.04. This synod acknowledges its responsibility to provide spiritual guidance and leadership resource to Luther Seminary. It is further acknowledged that this synod is responsible for electing two persons to the Board of Luther Seminary and, in partnership with the ELCA, providing financial support to theological education of the ELCA. This synod shall elect two persons to the Board of Luther Seminary. The term shall be three years. No one shall serve more than two consecutive terms.

S6.03.05. This synod acknowledges its responsibility to provide spiritual guidance and leadership resource to Lutheran Campus Ministry. It is further acknowledged that this synod is responsible for electing persons to the Board of Lutheran Campus Ministry and, in partnership with the ELCA, providing financial support to Lutheran Campus Ministry.

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

than two consecutive terms.

S6.03.06. This synod acknowledges its responsibility to provide spiritual guidance and leadership resource to the Minnesota Council of Churches. It is further acknowledged that it is the responsibility of this synod to appoint representatives to the Board of Minnesota Council of Churches.

**† S6.04. Except as otherwise provided in this constitution and bylaws, the Synod Council shall establish processes that will ensure that at least 60% of the members of the synod assemblies, councils, committees, boards, and other organizational units shall be laypersons; and that, as nearly as possible, 50% of the lay members of assemblies, councils, committees, boards, or other organizational units shall be female and 50% shall be male; and that, where possible, the representation of ordained ministers shall be both male and female. This synod shall establish processes that will enable it to reach a minimum goal that 10% of its assemblies, councils, committees, boards, or other organizational units be persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English.**

† S6.04.A01. *It is the goal of this synod that 10% of the membership of synod assemblies, councils, committees, boards and/or other organizational units be persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English.*

**†S6.04.B09. It is the goal of this synod that at least 10% of the voting members of the Synod Assembly, Synod Council, committees, and organizational units of this synod be youth and young adults. The Synod Council shall establish a plan for implementing this goal. For purposes of the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this synod, the term "youth" means a voting member of a congregation who has not reached the age of 18 at the time of election or appointment for service. The term "young adult" means a voting member of a congregation between the ages of 18 and 30 at the time of election or appointment for service.**

**† S6.05. Each assembly, council, committee, board, commission, task force, or other body of this synod or any synodical units shall be conclusively presumed to have been properly constituted, and neither the method of selection nor the composition of any such assembly, council, committee, board, commission, task force, or other body may be challenged in a court of law by any person or be used as the basis of a challenge in a court of law to the validity or effect of any action taken or authorized by any such assembly, council, committee, board, commission, task force, or other body.**

**†S6.06. References herein to the nature of the relationship between the three expressions of this church – congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization – as being interdependent or as being in a partnership relationship describe the mutual responsibility of these expressions in God's mission and the fulfillment of the purposes of this church as described in this chapter, and do not imply or describe the creation of**

**partnerships, co-ventures, agencies, or other legal relationships recognized in civil law.**

## Chapter 7.
## SYNOD ASSEMBLY

**† S7.01.** **This synod shall have a Synod Assembly, which shall be its highest legislative authority. The powers of the Synod Assembly are limited only by the provisions in the Articles of Incorporation, this constitution and bylaws, the assembly's own resolutions, and the constitutions and bylaws of this church.**

**† S7.11.** **A regular meeting of the Synod Assembly shall be held at least biennially.**

**S7.12.** **Special meetings of the Synod Assembly may be called by the bishop with the consent of the Synod Council, and shall be called by the bishop at the request of one-fifth of the voting members of the Synod Assembly.**

**a.** **The notice of each special meeting shall define the purpose for which it is to be held. The scope of actions to be taken at such a special meeting shall be limited to the subject matter(s) described in the notice.**

**b.** **If the special meeting of the Synod Assembly is required for the purpose of electing a successor bishop because of death, resignation, or inability to serve, the special meeting shall be called by the Synod Council after consultation with the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.**

**S7.13.** **Notice of the time and place of all meetings of the Synod Assembly shall be given by the secretary of this synod.**

**S7.14.** **One-half of the members of the Synod Assembly shall constitute a quorum.**

**† S7.21.** **The membership of the Synod Assembly, of which at least 60% of the voting membership shall be composed of laypersons, shall be constituted as follows:**

**a.** **All ordained ministers under call on the roster of this synod in attendance at this Synod Assembly shall be voting members.**

**b.** **All associates in ministry, deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and diaconal ministers, under call, on the official lay rosters of this synod shall have both voice and vote as lay voting members in the Synod Assembly, in addition to the voting membership of lay members of congregations provided in item †S7.21.c.**

**c.** **A minimum of one lay member elected by each congregation with fewer than 175 baptized members and a minimum of two lay members elected by each congregation with 175 or more baptized**

**members related to this synod, normally one of whom shall be male and one of whom shall be female, shall be voting members. The Synod Council shall establish a formula to provide additional lay representation from congregations on the basis of the number of baptized members in the congregation. The Synod Council shall seek to ensure that, as nearly as possible, 50 percent of the lay members of the assembly shall be female and 50 percent shall be male. Additional members from each congregation normally shall be equally divided between male and female.**

**d. Voting membership shall include the officers of this synod.**

**S7.22. The synod may establish processes that permit retired ordained ministers , retired associates in ministry, retired deaconesses, and retired diaconal ministers on the roster of this synod to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with †S7.21.c. above. The synod may establish processes that permit ordained ministers, associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers who are on leave from call, or those designated as disabled, on the roster of the synod to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with †S7.21.c. above. If the synod does not establish processes to permit the rostered leaders specified above to serve as voting members, they shall have voice but not vote in the meetings of the Synod Assembly.**

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

**S7.23.1 Retired ordained ministers on the roster of this synod shall, in caucus, elect 10% of their number to be voting members of the Synod Assembly prior to the first business session of each regular and special meeting of the Synod Assembly; all others shall be advisory members with voice but not vote.**

**S7.24. Ordained ministers under call on the roster of this synod shall remain as members of the Synod Assembly so long as they remain under call and so long as their names appear on the roster of ordained ministers of this synod. Associates in ministry, deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and diaconal ministers of this church serving under call on the roster of this synod shall remain as members of the Synod Assembly so long as they remain under call and so long as their names appear on the official lay roster of this synod. Lay members of the Synod Assembly representing congregations shall continue as such until replaced by the election of new members or until they have been**

**disqualified by termination of membership. Normally, congregations will hold elections prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.**

**† S7.25.** **Except as otherwise provided in this constitution or in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,* each voting member of the Synod Assembly shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod.**

**S7.26.** **This synod may establish processes through the Synod Council that permit representatives of mission settings with the intent of becoming recognized congregations and authorized worshiping communities of the synod, which have been authorized under ELCA bylaw 10.02.03., to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with †S7.2l.**

**S7.27.** **This synod may establish processes through the Synod Council to grant an ordained minister from a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and establish by the Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America the privilege of both voice and vote in the Synod Assembly during the period of that ordained minister's service in a congregation of this church.**

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

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

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

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

## Chapter 8.
## OFFICERS

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

**S8.10.** **Bishop**

**† S8.11.** **The bishop shall be elected by the Synod Assembly. The bishop shall be a pastor who is an ordained minister of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.**

**† S8.12.** **As this synod's pastor, the bishop shall be an ordained minister of Word and Sacrament who shall:**

- **a.** **Preach, teach, and administer the sacraments in accord with the Confession of Faith of this church.**
- **b.** **Have primary responsibility for the ministry of Word and Sacrament in this synod and its congregations, providing pastoral care and leadership for this synod, its congregations, its ordained ministers, and its other rostered leaders.**
- **c.** **Exercise solely this church's power to ordain (or provide for the ordination by another synodical bishop of) approved candidates who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested letter of call for the office of ordained ministry (and as provided in the bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.)**
- **d.** **Commission (or provide for the commissioning of) approved candidates who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested letter of call for service as associates in ministry; consecrate (or provide for the consecration of) approved candidates who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested letter of call for service as deaconesses of the ELCA; and consecrate (or provide for the consecration of) approved candidates who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested letter of call for service as diaconal ministers of this church.**
- **e.** **Attest letters of call for persons called to serve congregations in the synod, letters of call for persons called by the Synod Council, and letters of call for persons on the roster of this synod called by the Church Council.**
- **f.** **Install (or provide for the installation of):**
  - **1)** **the pastors of all congregations of this synod:**
  - **2)** **ordained ministers called to extraparish service within this synod; and**
  - **3)** **persons serving in the other rostered ministries within this synod.**
- **g.** **Exercise leadership in the mission of this church and in so doing:**

**1) Interpret and advocate the mission and theology of the whole church;**

**2) Lead in fostering support for and commitment to the mission of this church within this synod;**

**3) Coordinate the use of the resources available to this synod as it seeks to promote the health of this church's life and witness in the areas served by this synod;**

**4) Submit a report to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly concerning the synod's life and work; and**

**5) Advise and counsel this synod's related institutions and organizations.**

**h. Practice leadership in strengthening the unity of the Church and in so doing:**

**l) Exercise oversight of the preaching, teaching, and administration of the sacraments within this synod in accord with the Confession of Faith of this church;**

**2) Be responsible for administering the constitutionally established processes for the resolution of controversies and for the discipline of ordained ministers, other rostered leaders, and congregations of this synod;**

**3) Be the chief ecumenical officer of this synod;**

**4) Consult regularly with other synodical bishops and the Conference of Bishops;**

**5) Foster awareness of other churches throughout the Lutheran world communion and, where appropriate, engage in contact with leaders of those churches;**

**6) Cultivate communion in faith and mission with appropriate Christian judicatory leaders functioning within the territory of this synod; and**

**7) Be ex officio a member of the Churchwide Assembly.**

**i. Oversee and administer the work of this synod and in so doing:**

**l) Serve as the president of the synod corporation and be the chief executive and administrative officer of this synod, who is authorized and empowered, in the name of this synod, to sign deeds or other instruments and to affix the seal of this synod;**

**2) Preside at all meetings of the Synod Assembly and provide for the preparation of the agenda for the Synod Assembly, Synod Council, and the council's Executive Committee;**

**3) Ensure that the constitution and bylaws of the synod and of the churchwide organization are duly observed within this synod, and that the actions of the synod in conformity therewith are carried into effect;**

**4) Exercise supervision over the work of the other officers;**

**5) Coordinate the work of all synodical staff members;**

**6) Appoint all committees for which provision is not**

**otherwise made;**

**7) Be a member of all committees and any other organizational units of the synod, except as otherwise provided in this constitution;**

**8) Provide for preparation and maintenance of synodical rosters containing:**

**a) the names and addresses of all ordained ministers of this synod and a record of the calls under which they are serving or the date on which they become retired or disabled; and**

**b) the names and addresses of all other rostered persons of this synod and a record of the positions to which they have been called or the date on which they become retired or disabled;**

**9) Annually bring to the attention of the Synod Council the names of all rostered persons on leave from call or engaged in approved graduate study in conformity with the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this church and pursuant to prior action of this synod through the Synod Council;**

**10) Provide for prompt reporting to the secretary of this church of:**

**a) additions to and subtractions from the rosters of this synod and the register of congregations;**

**b) the issuance of certificates of transfer for rostered persons in good standing who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested, regular letter of call under the jurisdiction of another synod; and**

**c) the entrance of the names of such persons for whom proper certificates of transfer have been received;**

**11) Provide for preparation and maintenance of a register of the congregations of this synod and the names of the laypersons who have been elected to represent them; and**

**12) Appoint a statistician of the synod, secure the parochial reports of the congregations, and make the reports available to the secretary of this church for collation, analysis, and distribution of the statistical summaries to this synod and the other synods of this church.**

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

**† S8.15. The presiding bishop of this church, or the appointee of the presiding**

**bishop, shall install into office, in accord with the policy and approved rite of this church, each newly elected synod bishop.**

**†S8.16. Conflicts of Interest**

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

**a. Whenever a synodical bishop determines that a matter of the kind described in †S8.16.01.b. may require his or her determination or action with respect to a related individual as defined in †S8.16.01.c., the synodical bishop shall withdraw from personal involvement in such matter and shall so notify the presiding bishop. The presiding bishop shall then appoint another synodical bishop from the same region to handle the matter to conclusion. In dealing with such matter, the appointed bishop shall exercise all of the functions and authority to the same extent as if the appointed bishop were the elected bishop of the withdrawing bishop's synod.**

**b. Matters include any proceedings under Chapter 20, proceedings under provision 7.46. of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* (†S14.13.), candidacy, reinstatement, and similar matters where determinations or actions by the synodical bishop could change, limit, restrict, approve, authorize, or deny the related individual's ministry on one of the official rosters of this church.**

**c. A related individual is one who, with respect to the synodical bishop, is a spouse, parent, son, daughter, sibling, uncle, aunt, niece, nephew, grandparent, grandchild, or in-law (parent, son, daughter, or sibling of a spouse, spouse of a sibling, or the parent or sibling of the spouse of a sibling).**

**S8.20. Vice president**

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

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

**S8.23. In the event of the death, resignation, or disability of the bishop, the vice president, after consultation with the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, shall convene the Synod Council to arrange for the conduct of the duties of the bishop until a new bishop shall be elected or, in the case of temporary disability, until the bishop resumes full performance of the duties of the office.**

**S8.30. Secretary**

**† S8.31.** **The secretary shall be elected by the Synod Assembly. The secretary shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod. The secretary may be either a layperson or an ordained minister.**

**† S8.32.** **The secretary shall:**

**a.** **Keep the minutes of all meetings of the Synod Assembly and Synod Council, be responsible for the printing and distribution of such minutes, and perform such other duties as this synod may from time to time direct.**

**b.** **Be authorized and empowered, in the name of this synod, to attest all instruments which require the same, and which are signed and sealed by the bishop.**

**c.** **In consultation with the bishop, classify and arrange all important papers and documents and deposit them in the archives of this synod.**

**d.** **Submit to the secretary of this church at least nine months before each regular Churchwide Assembly a certified list of the voting members elected by the Synod Assembly.**

**S8.40.** **Treasurer**

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

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

**a.** **Management of the monies and accounts of this synod, its deeds, mortgages, contracts, evidences of claims and revenues, and trust funds, holding the same at all times subject to the order of this synod.**

**b.** **Investment of funds upon the authorization of the Synod Council.**

**c.** **Receipt and acknowledgement of offerings, contributions, and bequests made to this synod, collecting interest and income from its invested funds, and paying regular appropriations and orders on the several accounts as approved and directed by the Synod Council. The treasurer shall transmit each month to the treasurer of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America the funds received by this synod for the general work of this church.**

**d.** **Maintenance of a regular account with each congregation of this synod and informing the congregation, at least quarterly, of the status of this account.**

**e.** **Rendering at each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly a full, detailed, and duly audited report of receipts and disbursements**

**in the several accounts of this synod for the preceding fiscal year, together with the tabulation, for record and publication in the minutes, of the contributions from the congregations.**

**f. Obtaining a fidelity bond in the amount determined by the Synod Council for persons handling synod funds, which bond shall be in the custody of the secretary. The premium for the bond shall be paid by this synod. Fidelity coverage provided by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be deemed a fulfillment of this requirement.**

**S8.50. General Provisions**

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

**a. The bishop of this synod shall be elected to a term of six years and may be reelected.**

**b. The vice president and secretary of this synod shall be elected to a term of four years and may be reelected.**

**c. The treasurer of this synod shall be [elected] [appointed] to a four year term and may be reelected or reappointed.**

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

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

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

**† S8.54. Should the bishop die, resign, or be unable to serve, the vice president, after consultation with the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, shall convene the Synod Council to arrange for the appropriate care of the responsibilities of the bishop until an election of a new bishop can be held or, in the case of temporary disability, until the bishop is able to serve again. Such arrangements may include the appointment by the Synod Council of an interim bishop, who during the vacancy or period of disability shall possess all of the powers and authority of a regularly elected bishop. The term of the successor bishop, elected by the next Synod Assembly or a special meeting of the Synod Assembly called for the purpose of election, shall be six years with the subsequent election to take place at the Synod Assembly closest to the expiration of such a term and with the starting date of a successor term**

**to be governed by constitutional provision S8.52.**

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

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

**† S8.57.** **The recall or dismissal of an officer may be effected in accordance with the procedure established by the Committee on Appeals of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.**

**† S8.58.** **If the bishop is to be temporarily absent from the synod for an extended period, the bishop, with the consent of the Synod Council, may appoint as acting bishop for such period an ordained minister of this church. Except as limited by action of the Synod Council, an acting bishop shall possess all of the powers and authority of a regularly elected bishop other than authority to ordain or to authorize the ordination of properly approved candidates for ordination.**

## Chapter 9.
## NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

**† S9.01.** **The Synod Assembly shall elect such officers of this synod and such other persons as the constitution and bylaws may require, according to procedures set forth in the bylaws.**

**S9.02.** **In all elections by the Synod Assembly, other than for the bishop, a majority of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election.**

**S9.03.** **There shall be a Nominating Committee consisting of 11 members who shall be elected by each of the conferences to serve for each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly. Additional nominations may be made from the floor for all elections for which nominations are made by the Nominating Committee.**

S9.03.01. The Nominating Committee shall consist of 11 members elected by the conferences of this synod for two-year terms. In the spirit of inclusivity and with attention to the principles stated in †S6.04 of this constitution, each conference shall elect one member to the Nominating Committee in alternate years, according to the following schedule:

a. In even-numbered years, the following six conferences shall elect one member for a two-year term: Bloomington, Central, Northern, Northwest Hennepin, Southwest, and Western Parks and Lakes Conferences.

b. In odd-numbered years each of the following five conferences shall elect one member for a two-year term: Crosstown, North Minneapolis, Northwest, South Minneapolis, and 394 Corridor North Conferences.

S9.03.02. The Nominating Committee shall make nominations for elections by the Synod Assembly under †S9.01. In addition, the committee shall make nominations for elections by the Synod Council under †S10.02 and provide other resourcing recommendations and support requested by the Synod Council. The Nominating Committee shall perform its work in accordance with the principles and goals of inclusivity set out in †S6.04 of this constitution.

**S9.04.** **The bishop shall be elected by the Synod Assembly by the following procedure:**

**a. There shall be a Bishop Election Committee consisting of seven members who are nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected by the Synod Council to oversee the election process outlined in the constitution and bylaws.**

**b. Nominations for bishop may be made as follows:**

**1) Each Conference Assembly shall nominate up to three persons for Bishop. Those Conference Assemblies shall be held at least 60 days prior to the Synod Assembly. Each of the nominees shall be contacted by the Synod Vice-President to determine willingness to be a candidate for bishop. All persons responding affirmatively to be a candidate shall submit background information using a uniform format to the synod office at least 45 days prior to the Synod Assembly. The background information shall be sent to all voting members at least 30 days prior to the Synod Assembly.**

**2) There shall be a Nominating Ballot for nominations from the floor of the Synod Assembly. Each voting member of the Synod Assembly may nominate one person for bishop during the nomination process at the Synod Assembly by completing the Bishop Nominating Ballot Form provided by the Bishop Election Committee. The Nominating Ballot includes a space to nominate any ordained person in addition to all the names of persons nominated from the Conference Assemblies.**

**3) The names of persons nominated for bishop according to paragraphs 1) and 2) above, shall be announced to the Synod Assembly without indication of number of nominations.**

**c. The balloting shall be as follows:**

**1) First ballot. The first ballot shall be limited to the persons nominated according to paragraph b., above. Three-fourths of the votes cast shall be necessary for election on the first ballot.**

**2) Second ballot. The second ballot shall be limited to the seven persons (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of votes on the first ballot. Three-fourths of the votes cast shall be necessary for election on the second ballot.**

**3) Third ballot. The third ballot shall be limited to the five persons (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of votes on the second ballot. Two-thirds of the votes cast shall be necessary for election on the third ballot.**

**4) Fourth ballot. The fourth ballot shall be limited to the three persons (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of votes on the third ballot. Two-thirds of the votes cast shall be necessary for election on the fourth ballot.**

**5) Fifth and subsequent ballots. The fifth and subsequent ballots shall be limited to the two persons (plus ties) who**

**receive the greatest number of votes on the fourth or previous ballot. A majority of the votes cast shall be necessary for election on the fifth or subsequent ballot.**

**d. During an election of a bishop, a nominee may withdraw his or her name from any ballot prior to the vote on that ballot. If a nominee withdraws from a ballot, the name of the person who received the greatest number of votes on the previous ballot without qualifying for the ballot will be added, so that the ballot contains the number of names specified in S9.04.c.**

**e. During the balloting process, and according to a schedule outlined in the bylaws, printed information about nominees shall be made available to voting members and opportunity to address the Synod Assembly shall be offered to nominees for the office of bishop.**

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

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

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

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

(a) prepare information explaining the nomination and election procedure to congregations and distribute the information, to each of the congregations within this synod; and

(b) prepare information explaining the nomination and election procedure to voting members of each conference assembly and the Synod Assembly and distribute the information to each voting member.

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

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

Assembly, as provided in S9.04.03.

b. The committee shall have final authority for matters pertaining to the election outlined in S9.04. and S9.04.0l. through .03.

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

a. Prior to the second ballot, printed information about the seven nominees (plus ties) whose names will appear on the ballot shall be made available to voting members, and each of the nominees, or a speaker designated by an absent nominee, shall be invited to address the Synod Assembly.

l) The Bishop Election Committee shall provide each nominee with a Nominee Information Form to be completed by the nominee and returned to the committee for copying and distribution as soon as possible after the first ballot.

2) Each of the seven nominees (plus ties) shall be invited to address the entire Synod Assembly for five minutes. If a nominee is absent from the assembly, the nominee may address the assembly by telephone or television, if possible. Alternatively, the nominee may designate someone to speak for the nominee.

b. Prior to the third ballot, each of the five nominees (plus ties) whose names will appear on the ballot shall be invited to participate in a question-and-answer session in front of the entire Synod Assembly.

l) The session shall be approximately one-and-a-half hours in duration.

2) The session shall be conducted by an impartial moderator appointed by the Bishop Election Committee. The moderator shall ask questions of the nominees and monitor their responses in a fair manner. The moderator may be assisted by a person selected by the moderator or, if the moderator prefers, by the committee.

3) Voting members may submit written questions to be asked by the moderator by sending them to the moderator.

4) The moderator, assisted by the committee, shall select questions to be asked of the nominees from among questions submitted by voting members and questions they judge to be in the widest interest of the Synod Assembly.

5) The nominees shall appear at the question-and-answer session together.

6) At the conclusion of the session, each nominee shall be given opportunity to address the entire Synod Assembly with a summary statement not to exceed five minutes.

7) If a nominee is absent from the Synod Assembly, the nominee may participate in the session by telephone or television, if possible.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**S9.11. The Synod Council shall elect or appoint representatives to the steering committee of its region.**

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

## Chapter 10
## SYNOD COUNCIL

**† S10.01. The Synod Council consisting of the four officers of this synod, 10 to 24 other members, and at least one youth and at least one young adult, shall be elected by the Synod Assembly.**

**a. Each person elected to the Synod Council shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod, with the exception of ordained ministers on the roster of this synod who reside outside the territory of this synod. The process for election and the term of office when not otherwise provided shall be specified in the bylaws. A member of the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, unless otherwise elected as a voting member of the Synod Council, may serve as an advisory member of the Synod Council with voice but not vote.**

**b. The term of office of members of the Synod Council, with the exception of the officers and the youth member, shall be two years.**

S10.01.01. The Synod Council shall consist of the following:

the four elected officers of this synod (bishop, vice president, secretary, treasurer);

eleven persons, one nominated by each conference, elected by the Synod Assembly;

two youth elected by the Synod Assembly,

a. The youth members shall be 14-17 years of age or entering grade 10, 11, or 12 at the time of election.

b. Each youth member shall be elected to a two year term No youth member shall serve more than two consecutive terms.

c. It shall be encouraged that one youth member shall be elected at each Synod Assembly (staggered terms).

d. Each youth member shall be a voting member of the Synod Council, and

ten at-large persons elected by the Synod Assembly, each of whom will serve as a co-chair of one of the five Tables of the synod.

S10.01.02. Persons elected to the Synod Council from the conferences shall be elected for two-year terms in accordance with provisions specified by the Synod Council in the interest of providing appropriate membership balance and rotation.

S10.01.03. The youth member shall be 14-17 years of age or entering grade 10, 11 or 12 at the time of election.

S10.01.04. The at-large members of the Synod Council shall consist of five laypersons and five clergy persons. They shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected by the Synod Assembly to serve on the Synod Council. Each at-large member shall be a co-chair of one of the five Tables of this synod.

S10.01.05 The term of each member of the Synod Council shall begin at the close of the Assembly at which he or she is elected.

S10.01.06. No Synod Council member may serve more than two consecutive terms.

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

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

**a. Exercise trusteeship responsibilities on behalf of this synod.**

**b. Recommend program goals and budgets to the regular meetings of the Synod Assembly.**

**c. Carry out the resolutions of the Synod Assembly.**

**d. Provide for an annual review of the roster of ordained ministers and of other official rosters, receive and act upon appropriate recommendations regarding those persons whose status is subject to reconsideration and action under the constitution and bylaws of the ELCA, and make a report to the Synod Assembly of the Synod Council's actions in this regard.**

**e. Issue letters of call to ordained ministers and letters of call to associates in ministry, deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and diaconal ministers as authorized by Chapter 7 of the constitution and bylaws of the ELCA.**

**f. Fill vacancies until the next regular meeting of the Synod Assembly except as may otherwise be provided in the constitution or bylaws of this synod, and determine the fact of the incapacity of an officer of this synod.**

**g. Report its actions to the regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.**

**h. Perform such other functions as are set forth in the bylaws of this synod, or as may be delegated to it by the Synod Assembly.**

**i. Participate in moral, ethical, and theological discourse as part of the process of creating vision for the life of this synod.**

**j. Make provision for supervising and evaluating the work of the**

**various activities performed by boards and committees within the synod structure.**

**k. Issue letters of call to authorized assistants to the bishop upon nomination of the bishop.**

**l. Establish procedures for the review and approval of all requests for and disbursements of churchwide funding.**

**S10.04. Any proposal to appropriate funds, whether by amendment to the budget or otherwise, which is presented to a meeting of the Synod Assembly without the approval of the Synod Council shall require a two-thirds vote for adoption.**

**S10.05. No elected member of the Synod Council shall receive compensation for such service.**

**S10.06. If a member of the Synod Council ceases to meet the requirements of the position to which she or he was elected, the office filled by such member shall at once become vacant.**

**S10.07. The composition of the Synod Council, the number of its members, and the manner of their selection, as well as the organization of the Synod Council, its additional duties and responsibilities, and the number of meetings to be held each year shall be as set forth in the bylaws.**

**S10.07.01. To the extent permitted by state law, meetings of the Synod Council and its committees may be held electronically or by telephone conference, and notice of all meetings may be provided electronically.**

S10.07.02. There shall be five Tables to work with the Synod Council to carry out the mission of this synod.

a. The name and purpose of each Table shall be specified in the bylaws.

b. Each Table shall perform such functions as are set forth in the bylaws of this synod, or as may be delegated to it by the Synod Council.

c. Each table shall report its actions to the regular meetings of the Synod Council.

S10.07.03. Each Table shall be led by co-chairs elected by the Synod Assembly.

a. Each co-chair shall be elected to a two-year term. No co-chair shall serve more than two consecutive terms.

b. The term of each co-chair shall begin at the close of the Assembly at which he or she is elected.

c. Each co-chair shall be a voting member of the Synod Council.

S10.07.04. Each Table shall consist of 9 to 17 members elected by the Synod Assembly.

a. Each member shall be elected to a two-year term. No member shall serve more than two consecutive terms.

b. The term of each member shall begin at the close of the Assembly at which he or she is elected.

c. The co-chairs of each Table or the Bishop may invite persons to meet regularly with that Table as guests or partners with voice but not vote.

d. The Bishop may appoint to each Table an advisory person with voice but not vote.

S10.07.05. The names and purposes of the Tables of this synod shall be as follows:

a. LEADERSHIP TABLE. This Table shall be dedicated to the unity of the congregations and the leaders of this synod; to facilitating networking among rostered and congregational leaders; to encouraging extensive sharing and mutual support in service to the ministry of Jesus Christ.

b. PARTNERSHIP TABLE. This Table shall be a catalyst for partnering connections between the congregations in this synod, the ecumenical church and the many co-ministries and agencies seeking the common good of the whole community in the light of the Gospel of Christ.

c. MISSION TABLE. This Table shall work to Make Christ Known in our towns, villages, neighborhoods and metropolitan community; to grow congregations numerically, spiritually and in discipleship; in *community* and *partnership* to proclaim Jesus Christ; to transform lives, congregations and communities.

d. GLOBAL COMPANION TABLE. This table shall work to strengthen this Synod's ties with its Companion Synod globally. This Table shall also encourage congregational relationships with global companions and provide resourcing opportunities for congregations wishing to be involved in global outreach.

e. UNITE TABLE. This Table shall be a catalyst for racial transformation within the Minneapolis Area Synod. It will facilitate a process for the synod to identify and implement goals, strategies and tactics for:
   1. increasing racial diversity,
   2. addressing institutionalized racism within synod structures, andmeasuring and evaluating progress (goals) and effectiveness (strategies & tactics).

S10.07.06. The Synod Council will continue to oversee, review and evaluate the Table structure.

## Chapter 11.
## COMMITTEES

**† S11.01.** **There shall be an Executive Committee, a Consultation Committee, a Committee on Discipline, a Mutual Ministry Committee, and such other committees as this synod may from time to time determine. The duties and functions of such committees, or any other organizational units created by this synod, and the composition and organizational structure of such units, shall be as set forth in this constitution or in the bylaws or continuing resolutions, and shall be subject to any applicable provisions or requirements of the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.**

S11.01.01. The officers of this synod and three persons elected for a one-year term by the Synod Council from its membership at its first meeting following the Synod Assembly shall constitute the Executive Committee of the Synod Council. This committee shall have the power and authority of the Synod Council between meetings of the council. Its activities shall be reported and reviewed at the succeeding meeting of the Synod Council.

S11.01.02. The Candidacy Committee of this synod shall consist of 24 members, including 23 persons nominated by the Bishop and elected by the Executive Committee for a term of five years and one staff person assigned to the Committee by the Bishop with voice but not vote. No elected member shall serve more than two consecutive terms. The Candidacy Committee shall elect a member of the Committee to serve as chair for a term of three years. No chair may serve more than two consecutive terms. The Candidacy Committee shall elect a member of the Committee to serve as secretary for a term of three years. No secretary may serve more than two consecutive terms. The functions of the Candidacy Committee are set forth in the Candidacy Manual of the Division for Ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

**† S11.02.** **The Consultation Committee of this synod shall consist of at least six persons and not more than 12 persons, of whom half shall be ordained ministers and half shall be laypersons, who shall each be elected by the Synod Assembly for a term of six years without consecutive reelection. The functions of the Consultation Committee are set forth in Chapter 20 of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* and in Chapter 17 of this constitution. The size of the Consultation Committee, in accord with this provision, shall be defined in this synod's bylaws.**

**† S11.03.** **The Committee on Discipline of this synod shall consist of twelve persons of whom six shall be ordained ministers and six shall be laypersons, who shall each be elected by the Synod Assembly for a term of six years without consecutive reelection.**

**a.** **The functions of the Committee on Discipline of this synod are set forth in Chapter 20 of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.***

**b.** **The terms of committee members shall be staggered so that the terms of four committee members (two clergy and two lay) expire every two years.**

**c.** **The Synod Council shall fill vacancies on the Committee on Discipline for any unexpired term. (During the 1999-2001 biennium, in order to implement such staggered terms for a 12-member committee, the Synod Council may designate terms and may transfer members from the Consultation Committee to the Committee on Discipline consistent with models prepared by the secretary of this church. This parenthetical implementation sentence shall expire at the conclusion of the 2001 Churchwide Assembly.)**

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

**S11.05.** **The Committee on Ecumenism shall consist of six persons appointed by the Synod Council for a term of three years, renewable one time. Three shall be ordained ministers and three shall be laypersons. The functions of the Committee on Ecumenism shall be to advise the bishop on ways to strengthen ecumenical relationships within the territory of the synod, to assist congregations in the development of ecumenical relationships, and to maintain a relationship with the ecumenical agencies within the territory of the synod.**

**S11.10.** **General Provisions**

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

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

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

S12.01.01. There shall be eleven conferences. Conference boundaries shall be established by the Synod Assembly or the Synod Council.

S12.01.02. The conferences and their congregations shall be as follows:

ELCA - MINNEAPOLIS AREA SYNOD CONFERENCES

<u>BLOOMINGTON CONFERENCE</u>

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

<u>CENTRAL CONFERENCE</u>

Augustana Lutheran Church of Minneapolis
Bethany Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
Bread of Life Lutheran Church for the Deaf, Minneapolis
Calvary Evangelical Lutheran Church of Minneapolis
Central Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
El Milagro/The Miracle, Minneapolis
Grace University Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
Lake of the Isles Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
Messiah Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
Mount Olive Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
Norwegian Lutheran Memorial Church, Minneapolis
Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
Salem English Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
Trinity Lutheran Congregation, Minneapolis
University Lutheran Church of Hope, Minneapolis
Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, Minneapolis

CROSSTOWN CONFERENCE

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

NORTH MINNEAPOLIS CONFERENCE

Christ English Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, Minneapolis
First Lutheran Church Columbia Heights
Gethsemane Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
Gustavus Adolphus Evangelical Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
Jordan New Life Community Church, Minneapolis
Luther Memorial Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
Mercy Seat Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
Mount Carmel Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
Nativity Lutheran Church, St. Anthony
Northeast Community Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
Our Savior Evangelical Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
River of Life Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
St. Olaf Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
St. Timothy Lutheran Church, Columbia Heights

NORTHERN CONFERENCE

Braham Evangelical Lutheran Church, Braham
Cambridge Evangelical Lutheran Church, Cambridge
Faith Lutheran Church, Isanti
Glen Cary Lutheran Church, Ham Lake
Long Lake Lutheran Church, Isanti
New Life! Lutheran Church, Oak Grove
Our Saviour’s Evangelical Lutheran Church of East Bethel
Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church, Dalbo
Siloa Evangelical Lutheran Church, Braham
St. Andrew Lutheran Church, East Bethel

NORTHWEST CONFERENCE

Advent Lutheran Church, Anoka
Alleluia! Lutheran Church, St. Michael
Christ Lutheran Church of Blaine
Cross of Hope Lutheran Church, Ramsey
Elk River Lutheran Church ELCA, Elk River

Faith Lutheran Church of Coon Rapids
Grace Lutheran Church, Andover
Lord of Life Lutheran Church, Ramsey
Peace Lutheran Church of Coon Rapids
Resurrection Lutheran Church Monticello
Saron Lutheran Church, Big Lake
Servant of Christ Lutheran Church, Champlin
Spirit of Joy Lutheran Church, Buffalo
St. John Lutheran Church, Zimmerman
St. Philip's Lutheran Church of Fridley
Sudanese Lutheran Church, Anoka
Trinity Lutheran Church, Monticello
Word of Peace Lutheran Church, Rogers
Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, Anoka
Zion Lutheran Church, Buffalo

NORTHWEST HENNEPIN CONFERENCE

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

SOUTH MINNEAPOLIS CONFERENCE

Bethany Evangelical Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
Bethel Evangelical Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
Christ Church Lutheran, Minneapolis
Diamond Lake Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
Jacob's Well, Minneapolis
Lake Nokomis Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
Lutheran Church of Christ the Redeemer, Minneapolis
Minnehaha Communion Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
Mount Olivet Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
Nokomis Heights Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
Our Redeemer Oromo Evangelical Church, Minneapolis

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
St. Peder's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Minneapolis

SOUTHWEST CONFERENCE

All Saints Lutheran Church, Norwood Young America
Cross of Peace Evangelical Lutheran Church, Shakopee
Crown of Glory Lutheran Church, Chaska
East Union Lutheran Church, Carver
Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, Henderson
Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church, Waconia
Family of Christ Lutheran Church, Chanhassen
Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, New Prague
Hope Lutheran Church of Jordan
Immanuel Lutheran Church, Eden Prairie
Prairie Lutheran Church, Eden Prairie
River of Joy Lutheran Church, Prior Lake
Saint Mary Magdalene Lutheran Church, Savage
Shepherd of the Lake Lutheran Church, Prior Lake
St. Andrew Lutheran Church, Eden Prairie
St. John Lutheran Church, Belle Plaine
St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Shakopee
Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, Watertown
West Union Lutheran Church, Carver

WESTERN PARKS AND LAKES CONFERENCE

All Saints Lutheran Church, Minnetonka
Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Reformation, St. Louis Park
Gethsemane Lutheran Church of Hopkins
Good Shepherd Evangelical Lutheran Church, Wayzata
Minnetonka Lutheran Church, Minnetonka
Mount Calvary Lutheran Church, Excelsior
Prince of Peace Evangelical Lutheran Church, St. Louis Park
Spirit of Christ Community Lutheran Church, St. Louis Park
St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Mound
St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Minnetonka
Westwood Lutheran Church, St. Louis Park
Wooddale Lutheran Church, St. Louis Park

394 CORRIDOR NORTH CONFERENCE

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

Saint Barnabas Lutheran Church, Plymouth
Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, Long Lake

S12.01.03. There shall be a conference assembly which meets at least once a year at least 60 days prior to the Synod Assembly. Voting members to the conference assembly shall be all rostered leaders under call. In addition, each Congregation shall be entitled to the same number of voting members to the conference assembly as it has to the Synod Assembly. Whenever possible the same voting members will attend both assemblies. The selection of the voting members shall be made in accordance with the guidelines set forth in †S6.04.

The conference assembly shall be responsible for:

a. The election of a dean and a chair;

b. The nomination of a synod council member and the election of a synod nominating committee member and such other officers for the conference as are specified below;

c. Acting on any matters placed before it by the conference cabinet, a congregation, or delegates;

d. Preparation of voting members for participation in the Synod Assembly;

e. Acting on proposals and resolutions relative to the mission, service and positions of the church for consideration by the Synod Council and Synod Assembly;

f. Fostering interdependent relationships among the congregations, institutions within its boundaries, synod and churchwide units.

S12.01.04. There shall be a conference dean who shall function in such a manner as to stay in regular contact with clergy, associates in ministry, deaconesses, diaconal ministers, other church ministry staff, and laity within the conference, calling them together for such things as study and fellowship. The dean may appoint a "program chair" to coordinate the frequent meetings of the clergy, associates in ministry, deaconesses, diaconal ministers, and other church ministry staff. The dean shall be an ordained minister. The dean shall be elected by ecclesiastical ballot by the Conference Assembly for a three-year term to begin at the close of the next Synod Assembly. No dean shall serve more than two consecutive terms.

The eleven conference deans shall meet periodically with the bishop for the purpose of discussing issues and needs of the church.

S12.01.05. There shall be a conference chair who serves in matters of administration and program in consultation with the dean. The chair shall be a layperson and shall preside at the conference assembly and the conference cabinet. The chair shall be elected by the conference assembly for a three-year term to begin at the close of the next Synod Assembly. No chair shall serve more than two consecutive terms.

S12.01.06. There may be a conference secretary to assist in the administration of the conference and provide official minutes of the conference cabinet and assembly meetings. The secretary may be either lay or clergy. The secretary may be elected for a three-year term beginning in the year following the election of the conference chair and may be elected for a second consecutive term.

S12.01.07. There shall be a conference cabinet which consists of the dean, the chair, the secretary, synod council member, synod nominating committee member and, when appropriate, the conference secretary, the program chair and members of conference congregations serving on boards and committees of synod. Congregations not already represented may be invited to appoint a lay or clergy person to the cabinet.

The cabinet may meet from time to time between meetings of the conference assembly in order to:

a. Implement the program approved by the assembly;

b. Serve as conference nominating committee;

c. Develop plans and strategies for mission within the conference boundaries;

d. Encourage congregations to form coalitions/clusters for the implementation of mission;

e. Propose vehicles for moral, ethical and theological dialogue among laity, clergy, associates in ministry, deaconesses, diaconal ministers, and other church professionals.

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

S12.02.01. Members of the Region 3 Steering Committee shall be appointed according to the Region 3 Orders of Governance and the rotation for representation defined by the Steering Committee.

## Chapter 13.
## CONGREGATIONS

**† S13.01.** **Each congregation, except those certified as congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America by the uniting churches, prior to being listed in the register of congregations of this synod, shall adopt the Model Constitution for Congregations or one acceptable to this synod, which is not in contradiction to the constitution and bylaws of the ELCA.**

**a.** **New congregations. A congregation newly formed by this church and any congregation seeking recognition and reception by this church shall:**

**1)** **Accept the criteria for recognition and reception as a congregation of this church, fulfill the functions of the congregation, and accept the governance provisions as provided in Chapter 9 of the ELCA constitution and bylaws.**

**2)** **Adopt governing documents that include fully and without alterations the Preamble, Chapter 1, where applicable, and all required provisions of Chapters 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 15, 16, 17, 18, and 19 in the Model Constitution for Congregations consistent with requirements of the constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this church. Bylaws and continuing resolutions, appropriate for inclusion in these chapters and not in conflict with these required provisions in the Model Constitution for Congregations, the constitution of this synod, or the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, may be adopted as described in Chapters 16 and 18 of the Model Constitution for Congregations.**

**3)** **Accept the commitments expected of all congregations of the ELCA as stated in †C6.01., †C6.02., and †C6.03., of the Model Constitution for Congregations.**

**b.** **Congregations from another church body. If a congregation is a member of another church body, the leaders of the congregation first should consult with the appropriate authorities of that church body before taking action to leave its current church body. After such consultation, leaders of the congregation should make contact with the ELCA synod bishop or staff where the congregation is located.**

**c.** **Recognition and reception. Recognition and reception into this church of transferring or independent congregations by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is based on the judgment of the synod and action by the synod through the**

**Synod Council and Synod Assembly. The synod bishop shall provide for prompt reporting of such additions to the secretary of this church for addition to the register of congregations.**

**† S13.02.** **It shall be the responsibility of each congregation of this synod annually to choose from among its voting members laypersons to serve as members of the Synod Assembly as well as persons to represent it at meetings of any conference, cluster, coalition, or other area subdivision of which it is a member. The number of persons to be elected by each congregation and other qualifications shall be as prescribed in guidelines established by this synod.**

**S13.11.** **When a pastor or when an associate in ministry, deaconess of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, or diaconal minister of this church resigns, the Congregation Council shall receive the letter of resignation, report it to the congregation, and at once notify the bishop of this synod.**

**S13.12.** **A congregation under financial obligation to its former pastor or associate in ministry, deaconess of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, or diaconal minister of this church shall make satisfactory settlement of the obligation before calling a successor.**

**†S13.19.** **A congregation considering a relocation shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located and the appropriate program unit of the churchwide organization before any steps are taken leading to such action. The approval of the Synod Council shall be received before any such action is effected**.

**†S13.20.** **A congregation considering development of an additional site to be used regularly for worship shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located and the appropriate program unit of the churchwide organization before any steps are taken leading to such action.**

**S13.21.** **The alignment of congregations in pastoral charges, and all alterations in any alignment, shall be subject to approval by the Synod Assembly or by the Synod Council.**

**† S13.22.** **Each congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America within the territory of this synod, except those which are in partnership with the Slovak Zion Synod, shall establish and maintain a relationship with this synod.**

**† S13.23.** **Provision 9.71. of the ELCA constitution shall govern the relationship of this synod and a congregation of this synod regarding the property of the congregation. This synod may transfer or convey property to a**

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

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

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

**S13.30.** **Discipline**

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

**†S13.40.** **Synodically Authorized Worshiping Communities**

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

## Chapter 14.
## ORDAINED MINISTERS AND LAY ROSTERED MINISTERS

**† S14.01.** **The time and place of the ordination of those persons properly called to congregations or extra-parish service of this synod shall be authorized by the bishop of this synod.**

**† S14.02.** **Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,**

**a.** **Every ordained minister shall:**
- **1)** **preach the Word;**
- **2)** **administer the sacraments;**
- **3)** **conduct public worship;**
- **4)** **provide pastoral care; and**
- **5)** **speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world.**

**b.** **Each ordained minister with a congregational call shall, within the congregation:**
- **1)** **offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead;**
- **2)** **supervise all schools and organizations of the congregation;**
- **3)** **install regularly elected members of the Congregation Council; and**
- **4)** **with the council, administer discipline.**

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

**S14.03.** **The pastor (a) shall keep accurate parochial records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from the congregation, (b) shall submit a summary of such statistics annually to this synod, and (c) shall become a member of the congregation upon receipt and acceptance of the letter of call. In a parish of multiple congregations, the pastor shall hold membership in one of the congregations.**

**S14.04.** **Whenever members of a congregation move to such a distance that**

**regular attendance at its services becomes impractical, it shall be the duty of the pastor to commend them, upon their consent, to the pastoral care of a Lutheran congregation nearer to their place of residence.**

**S14.05.** **Each ordained minister on the roster of this synod shall submit a report of his or her ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.**

**† S14.11.** **When a congregation of this church desires to call a pastor or a candidate for the pastoral office in the ordained ministry of this church:**

**a.** **Each congregation of this synod shall consult the bishop of this synod before taking any steps leading to the extending of a call to a prospective pastor.**

**b.** **For issuance of a letter of call to a pastor or pastoral candidate by a congregation of this synod in accord with ELCA constitutional provision 7.41., a two-thirds majority ballot vote shall be required of members of the congregation present and voting at a meeting regularly called for the purpose of issuing such a call.**

**c.** **When the congregation has voted to issue a call to a prospective pastor, the letter of call shall be submitted to the bishop of this synod for the bishop's signature.**

**S14.12.** **No ordained minister shall accept a call without first conferring with the bishop of this synod. An ordained minister shall respond with an answer of acceptance or declination to a letter of call within 30 days of receipt of such call. In exceptional circumstances with the approval of the bishop of this synod and the chair of the Congregation Council of the congregation issuing the call, an additional 15 days may be granted to respond to a letter of call.**

**† S14.13.** **a.** **The call of a congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment which, except in the case of the death of the pastor, shall be terminated only following consultation with the synodical bishop and for the following reasons:**

**1)** **mutual agreement to terminate the call or the completion of a call for a specific term;**

**2)** **resignation of the pastor, which shall become effective, unless otherwise agreed, 30 days after the date on which it was submitted;**

**3)** **inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in that congregation in view of local conditions, without reflection on the competence or the moral and spiritual character of the pastor;**

**4) the physical or mental incapacity of the pastor;**

**5) disqualification of the pastor through discipline on grounds of doctrine, morality, or continued neglect of duty;**

**6) the dissolution of the congregation or the termination of a parish arrangement; or**

**7) suspension of the congregation as a result of discipline proceedings.**

**b. When allegations of physical or mental incapacity of the pastor or ineffective conduct of the pastoral office have come to the attention of the bishop of this synod, the bishop in his or her sole discretion may, or when such allegations have been brought to this synod's attention by an official recital of allegations by the Congregation Council or by a petition signed by at least one-third of the voting members of the congregation, the bishop shall, investigate such conditions personally in company with a committee of two ordained ministers and one layperson.**

**c. In case of alleged physical or mental incapacity competent medical testimony shall be obtained. When such disability is evident, the bishop of this synod with the advice of the committee shall declare the pastorate vacant. Upon the restoration of a disabled pastor to health, the bishop of this synod shall take steps to enable the pastor to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another field of labor.**

**d. In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of the congregation, all concerned persons shall be heard, after which the bishop of this synod together with the committee described in †S14.13.b. shall decide on the course of action to be recommended to the pastor and the congregation. If they agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action shall be taken by this synod. If either party fails to assent, the congregation may dismiss the pastor at a legally called meeting after consultation with the bishop, either (a) by two-thirds majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee did not recommend termination of the call, or (b) by a simple majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee recommended termination of the call.**

**e. If, in the course of proceedings described in †S14.13.d., the committee concludes that there may be grounds for disciplinary action, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action to the synodical bishop who may bring charges, in accordance with the provisions of the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the constitution of this synod.**

**f.** **If, following the appointment of the committee described in †S14.13.b. or d., it should become apparent that the pastoral office cannot be conducted effectively in the congregation(s) being served by the ordained minister due to local conditions, the bishop of this synod may temporarily suspend the pastor from service in the congregation(s) without prejudice and with pay provided through a joint synodical and churchwide fund and with housing provided by the congregation(s).**

**S14.14.** **Ordained ministers shall respect the integrity of the ministry of congregations which they do not serve and shall not exercise ministerial functions therein unless invited to do so by the pastor, or if there is no duly called pastor, then by the interim pastor in consultation with the Congregation Council.**

**S14.15.** **The parochial records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members transferred or dismissed, members who have become inactive, or members excluded from the congregation shall be kept accurately and permanently. They shall remain the property of each congregation. At the time of the closure of a congregation, such records shall be sent to the regional archives. The secretary of the congregation shall attest to the bishop of this synod that such records have been placed in his or her hands in good order by a departing pastor before:**

**a.** **installation in another field of labor, or**

**b.** **the issuance of a certificate of dismissal or transfer.**

**S14.16.** **The pastor shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to a former congregation before:**

**a.** **installation in another field of labor, or**

**b.** **the issuance of a certificate of dismissal or transfer.**

**S14.17.** **During service to a congregation, an interim pastor shall have the rights and duties in the congregation of a regularly called pastor. The interim pastor may delegate the same in part to an interim supply pastor with the consent of the bishop of this synod. The interim pastor and any ordained ministers who may assist shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a pastor. Upon completion of service, the interim pastor shall certify to the bishop of this synod that the parochial records, for the period for which the interim pastor was responsible, are in order.**

**S14.18.** **With the approval of the synodical bishop expressed in writing, which sets forth a clear statement of the purpose to be served by such a departure from the normal rule of permanency of the call as expressed in †S14.13., a congregation may call a pastor for a specific term. Details of such calls shall be in writing setting forth the purpose and conditions involved. Prior to the completion of a term, the bishop of this synod or a**

**representative of the bishop shall meet with the pastor and representatives of the congregation for a review of the call. Such call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of †S14.13.**

**S14.21.** **All ordained ministers under a call shall attend meetings of the Synod Assembly, and the pastors of congregations shall also attend the meetings of the conference, cluster, coalition, or other area subdivision to which the congregation belongs.**

**S14.30.** **Official Rosters of Laypersons**

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

**a.** **When a congregation of this synod desires to call an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister or a candidate for these official rosters of laypersons of this church:**

**1)** **Such a congregation of this synod shall consult the synodical bishop before taking any step leading to extending such a call.**

**2)** **Issuance of such a letter of call shall be in accord with criteria, policies, and procedures developed by the Division for Ministry, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.**

**3)** **When the congregation has voted to issue a call to an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister the letter of call shall be submitted to the bishop of this synod for the bishop's signature.**

**b.** **An associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister shall confer with the bishop of this synod before accepting a call within this synod.**

**c.** **The call of a congregation, when accepted by an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment which, except in the case of the death of the individual, shall be terminated only following consultation with the synodical bishop in accordance with policy developed by the Division for Ministry, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.**

**d.** **Associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers on the roster of this synod who are serving under call shall attend meetings of the Synod Assembly.**

## Chapter 15.
## FINANCIAL MATTERS

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

**† S15.11.** **Since the congregations, synods, and churchwide organization are interdependent units that share responsibly in God's mission, all share in the responsibility to develop, implement, and strengthen the financial support program of the whole church. The gifts and offerings of the members of ELCA are given to support all parts of this church and thus partnership in this church should be evidenced in determining each part's share of the gifts and offerings. Therefore:**

**a.** **The mission of this church beyond the congregation is to be supported by such a proportionate share of each congregation's annual budget as each congregation determines. This synod shall develop guidelines for determining "proportionate share," and shall consult with congregational leaders to assist each congregation in making its determination.**

**b.** **This synod shall receive the proportionate share of the mission support from its congregations, and shall transmit that percentage of each congregation's mission support as determined by the Churchwide Assembly to the treasurer of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.**

**† S15.12.** **The annual budget of this synod shall reflect the entire range of its own activities and its commitment to partnership funding with other synods and the churchwide organization. Unless an exception is granted upon the request of this synod by the Church Council, each budget shall include the percentage of congregational mission support assigned to it by the Churchwide Assembly.**

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

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

**S15.21.** **No appeal to congregations of this or any other synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for the raising of funds shall be conducted**

**by congregations or organizations related to or affiliated with this synod without the consent of the Synod Assembly or the Synod Council.**

**† S15.31.** **This synod shall arrange to have an annual audit of its financial records conducted by a certified public accountant firm selected by the Synod Council. The audited annual financial report shall be submitted by this synod to the churchwide Office of the Treasurer and to the congregations of this synod. The financial reports shall be in the format approved from time to time by the Office of the Treasurer.**

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

## Chapter 16.
## INDEMNIFICATION

**† S16.01.** **Subject to the limitations and duties imposed by law, each person who is or was made or threatened to be made a party to any proceeding by reason of the present or former capacity of that person as a Synod Council member, officer, employee, or committee member of this synod shall be indemnified against all costs and expenses incurred by that person in connection with the proceeding. Indemnification of any person by reason of that person's capacity as a director, officer, employee, or committee member of any other organization, regardless of its form or relationship to this synod, is subject to the provisions of section †S16.02.**

**a. The term "proceeding" means a threatened, pending, or completed lawsuit, whether civil or criminal, an administrative or investigative matter, arbitration, mediation, alternative dispute resolution, or any other similar legal or governmental action. Except as otherwise required by law, the term proceeding" does not include (a) any action by this synod against the individual seeking indemnification, or (b) subject to †16.04., a disciplinary hearing or related process described in Chapter 20 of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.***

**b. The term "indemnification" includes reimbursement and advances of costs and expenses for judgments, penalties, fines, settlements, excise taxes, reasonable attorneys' fees, disbursements, and similar required expenditures.**

**† S16.02.** **Whenever a person who, while a Synod Council member, officer, committee member, or employee of this synod, is or was serving at the request of this synod (or whose duties in that position involve or involved service in the capacity of) a director, officer, partner, trustee, employee, or agent of another organization, is or was made or threatened to be made a party to a proceeding by reason of such capacity, then such person shall be entitled to indemnification only if (a) the Synod Council has established a process for determining whether a person serving in the capacity described in this section shall be entitled to indemnification in any specific case, and (b) that process has been applied in making a specific determination that such person is entitled to indemnification.**

**† S16.03.** **This synod may purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of itself or any person entitled to indemnification pursuant to this chapter against any liability asserted against and incurred by this synod or by such other person in or arising from a capacity described in section †S16.01. or section †16.03.**

**† S16.04.** **When written charges against an ordained minister or a layperson on an official roster of this church are made in disciplinary proceedings under Chapter 20 of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* by the synodical bishop or**

**when written charges against a congregation are made in disciplinary proceedings by the Synod Council or the synodical bishop, and the discipline hearing committee determines that no discipline shall be imposed, then if such determination is not reversed or set aside on appeal, indemnification shall be made by the synod to the accused for reasonable attorney's fees and other reasonable expenses related to the defense of the charges. The determination of the reasonableness of such fees and expenses shall be decided by the Synod Council.**

## Chapter 17.
## ADJUDICATION

**† S17.01.** **The synodical bishop and the Executive Committee of the Synod Council shall be available to give counsel when disputes arise within this synod.**

**† S17.02.** **The synodical bishop and the Executive Committee of the Synod Council shall receive expressions of concern from ordained ministers, associates in ministry or other persons on the official lay rosters of this church, congregations, and organizations within this synod; provide a forum in which the parties concerned can seek to work out matters causing distress or conflict; and make appropriate recommendations for their resolution. When the matter at issue cannot be resolved in this manner, the prescribed procedures for investigation, decision, appeal, and adjudication shall be followed. Allegations or charges that could lead to the discipline of an ordained minister or a person on the official lay rosters of this church shall not be addressed by the Executive Committee but shall be resolved through the disciplinary process set forth in the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.**

**† S17.03.** **When there is disagreement among units of this synod on a substantive issue that cannot be resolved by the parties, the aggrieved party or parties may appeal to the synodical bishop and the Executive Committee of the Synod Council for a consultation. If this consultation fails to resolve the issue, a petition may be addressed by the parties to the Synod Council requesting it to arbitrate the issue. The decision of the Synod Council shall be final.**

**† S17.04.** **When a component or beneficiary of a synod has a disagreement on a substantive issue that it cannot resolve, it may address an appeal to the synodical bishop and the Executive Committee of the Synod Council. In this case the decision of the Executive Committee shall prevail, except that upon the motion of a member of the Synod Council, the decision shall be referred to the Synod Council for final action.**

**† S17.10.** **Adjudication in a Congregation**

**† S17.11.** **When there is disagreement among factions within a congregation on a substantive issue that cannot be resolved by the parties, members of a congregation shall have access to the synodical bishop for consultation after informing the chair of the Congregation Council of their intent. If the consultation fails to resolve the issue(s), the Consultation Committee of this synod shall consider the matter. If the Consultation Committee of this synod shall fail to resolve the issue(s), the matter shall be referred to the Synod Council, whose decision shall be final.**

## Chapter 18.
## AMENDMENTS, BYLAWS, AND CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

**† S18.10. Amendments to Constitution**

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

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

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

**a. An amendment may be adopted by a two-thirds vote at a regular meeting of the Synod Assembly after having been presented in writing at the previous regular meeting of the Synod Assembly over the signatures of at least 25 members and been approved by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting at such regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.**

**b. The Synod Council may propose an amendment, with notice to be sent to the congregations of this synod at least six months prior to the next regular meeting of the Synod Assembly. Such an amendment shall require for adoption a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting at such a regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.**

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

**† S18.20. Amendments to Bylaws**

**† S18.21. This synod may adopt bylaws not in conflict with this constitution nor with the constitution and bylaws of the churchwide organization. This synod may amend its bylaws at any meeting of the Synod Assembly by a two-thirds vote of voting members of the assembly present and voting.**

**Newly adopted bylaws and amendments to existing bylaws shall be reported to the secretary of this church.**

**† S18.30. Amendments to Continuing Resolutions**

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