

CONSTITUTION, BYLAWS, AND POLICIES

EASTERN WASHINGTON - IDAHO SYNOD OF THE ELCA

Adopted by the 1987 Constituting Convention of the Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod
As Amended through 2013 by the Churchwide Assembly



Updated June 2016

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**CONSTITUTION, BYLAWS, AND POLICIES OF
THE EASTERN WASHINGTON-IDAHO SYNOD OF THE ELCA**

† Required Provisions

1 Required provisions in the Model Constitution for Synods adopted by the 1999, 2003, 2005, 2007 2009, and 2013
2 Churchwide Assembly were entered upon notification from the Secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
3 Where appropriate, provisions were renumbered to reflect the required changes.
4
5

Chapter 1. NAME AND INCORPORATION

- 6
7
8 †S1.01. The name of this synod as determined by the Churchwide Assembly, shall be the Eastern Washington-Idaho
9 Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
10
11 †S1.02. For the purposes of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws, the Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod of
12 the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is hereafter designated as "this synod" or "the synod".
13
14 †S1.11. This synod shall be incorporated. Amendments to the articles of incorporation of this synod shall be
15 submitted to the Church Council for ratification before filing.
16
17 †S1.21. The seal of this synod is to include a cross superimposed over a representation of the geography of this synod
18 and a banner surrounding the whole on which is inscribed "Eastern Washington- Idaho Synod, The ELCA."
19
20

Chapter 2. STATUS

- 21
22
23 †S2.01. This synod possesses the powers conferred upon it, and accepts the duties and responsibilities assigned to it,
24 in the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,
25 which are recognized as having governing force in the life of this synod.
26
27 †S2.02. The name Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA or "this church") as used herein refers in
28 general references to this whole church, including its three expressions—congregations, synods, and the
29 churchwide organization. The name Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is also the name of the
30 corporation of the churchwide organization to which specific references may be made herein.
31
32 †S2.02. No provision of this constitution shall be inconsistent with the constitution and bylaws of this church.
33
34

Chapter 3. TERRITORY

- 35
36
37 †S3.01. The territory of this synod, as determined by the Churchwide Assembly, shall be: The state of IDAHO; the
38 counties of Adams, Asotin, Benton, Chelan, Columbia, Douglas, Ferry, Franklin, Garfield, Grant, Kittitas,
39 Klickitat, Lincoln, Okanogan, Pend Oreille, Spokane, Stevens, Walla Walla, Whitman, Yakima in the state of
40 WASHINGTON.
41
42 †S3.02. "Determined by the Churchwide Assembly," as stipulated by †S3.01., is understood to include the reported
43 changes in synod relationship made by any congregation in a border area agreed under ELCA bylaw
44 10.01.11. and 10.02.02.
45
46

Chapter 4. CONFESSION OF FAITH

- 47
48
49 †S4.01. This synod confesses the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
50
51 †S4.02. This synod confesses Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and the Gospel as the power of God for the salvation of
52 all who believe.
53
54 a. Jesus Christ is the Word of God incarnate, through whom everything was made and through whose life,

1 death, and resurrection God fashions a new creation.

- 2
- 3 b. The proclamation of God's message to us as both Law and Gospel is the Word of God, revealing
- 4 judgment and mercy through word and deed, beginning with the Word in creation, continuing in the
- 5 history of Israel, and centering in all its fullness in the person and work of Jesus Christ.
- 6
- 7 c. The canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the written Word of God. Inspired by
- 8 God's Spirit speaking through their authors, they record and announce God's revelation centering in Jesus
- 9 Christ. Through them God's Spirit speaks to us to create and sustain Christian faith and fellowship for
- 10 service in the world.

11

12 †S4.03. This synod accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and

13 the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life.

14

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

16 synod.

17

18 †S4.05. This synod accepts the Unaltered Augsburg Confession as a true witness to the Gospel, acknowledging as one

19 with it in faith and doctrine all churches that likewise accept the teachings of the Unaltered Augsburg

20 Confession.

21

22 †S4.06. This synod accepts the other confessional writings in the Book of Concord, namely, the Apology of the

23 Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles and the Treatise, the Small Catechism, the Large Catechism, and

24 the Formula of Concord, as further valid interpretations of the faith of the Church.

25

26 †S4.07. This synod confesses the Gospel, recorded in the Holy Scriptures and confessed in the ecumenical creeds and

27 Lutheran confessional writings, as the power of God to create and sustain the Church for God's mission in the

28 world.

29

30

31 **Chapter 5. NATURE OF THE CHURCH**

32

33 †S5.01. All power in the Church belongs to our Lord Jesus Christ, its head. All actions of this synod are to be carried

34 out under his rule and authority.

35

36 †S5.02. The Church exists both as an inclusive fellowship and as local congregations gathered for worship and

37 Christian service. Congregations find their fulfillment in the universal community of the Church, and the

38 universal Church exists in and through congregations. This church, therefore, derives its character and

39 powers both from the sanction and representation of its congregations and from its inherent nature as an

40 expression of the broader fellowship of the faithful. In length, it acknowledges itself to be in the historic

41 continuity of the communion of saints; in breadth, it expresses the fellowship of believers and congregations

42 in our day.

43

44

45 **Chapter 6. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

46

47 †S6.01. The Church is a people created by God in Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, called and sent to bear

48 witness to God's creative, redeeming, and sanctifying activity in the world.

49

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

- 51
- 52 a. Proclaim God's saving Gospel of justification by grace for Christ's sake through faith alone, according to
- 53 the apostolic witness in the Holy Scripture, preserving and transmitting the Gospel faithfully to future
- 54 generations.
- 55
- 56 b. Carry out Christ's Great Commission by reaching out to all people to bring them to faith in Christ and by

1 doing all ministry with a global awareness consistent with the understanding of God as Creator,
2 Redeemer, and Sanctifier of all.

- 3 c. Serve in response to God's love to meet human needs, caring for the sick and the aged, advocating
4 dignity and justice for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, and standing
5 with the poor and powerless, and committing itself to their needs.
- 6 d. Worship God in proclamation of the Word and administration of the sacraments and through lives of
7 prayer, praise, thanksgiving, witness, and service.
- 8 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
9 primary setting for the exercise of their Christian calling, and to use the gifts of the Spirit for their life
10 together and for their calling in the world.
- 11 f. Manifest the unity given to the people of God by living together in the love of Christ and by joining with
12 other Christians in prayer and action to express and preserve the unity which the Spirit gives.

13
14 †S6.03. Each synod, in partnership with the churchwide organization, shall bear primary responsibility for the
15 oversight of the life and mission of this church in its territory. In fulfillment of this role and consistent with
16 policies and procedures of this church, the synod shall:

- 17 a. Provide for pastoral care of congregations and rostered leaders in the synod;
- 18 b. Plan for, facilitate, and nurture the mission of this church through congregations;
- 19 c. Strengthen interdependent relationships among congregations, synods, and the churchwide
20 organization, and foster relationships with agencies and institutions affiliated with or related to this
21 church as well as ecumenical partners.
- 22 d. Interpret the work of this church to congregations and to the public on the territory of the synod.

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

- 25 a. providing for pastoral care of congregations, ordained ministers, associates in ministry,
26 deaconesses, and diaconal ministers in the synod, including:
 - 27 1) approving candidates for the ordained ministry in cooperation with the appropriate seminaries
28 of this church, which may be done through multi-synodical committees;
 - 29 2) authorizing ordinations and ordaining on behalf of this church;
 - 30 3) approving associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers, which may be done
31 through multi-synodical committees;
 - 32 4) authorizing the commissioning of associates in ministry, the consecration of deaconesses, and
33 the consecration of diaconal ministers of this church; and
 - 34 5) consulting in the calling process for ordained ministers, associates in ministry, deaconesses,
35 and diaconal ministers.
- 36 b. providing for leadership recruitment, preparation, and support in accordance with churchwide
37 standards and policies, including:
 - 38 1) nurturing and supporting congregations and lay leaders;
 - 39 2) seeking and recruiting qualified candidates for the rostered ministries of this church;
 - 40 3) making provision for pastoral care, call review, and guidance;
 - 41 4) encouraging and supporting persons on the rosters of this church in stewardship of their
42 abilities, care of self, and pursuit of continuing education to undergird their effectiveness of
43 service; and
 - 44 5) supporting recruitment of leaders for this church's colleges, universities, seminaries, and social
45 ministry organizations.
- 46 c. providing for discipline of congregations, ordained ministers, and persons on the official lay
47 rosters; as well as for termination of call, appointment, adjudication, and appeals consistent with
48 Chapter 20 of this constitution.
- 49 d. providing for archives in conjunction with other synods.

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

- 52 a. developing of new ministries, redevelopment of existing ministries, and support and assistance in
53 the conclusion, if necessary, of a particular ministry;
- 54 b. leading and encouraging of congregations in their evangelism efforts;
- 55 c. assisting members of its congregations in carrying out their ministries in the world;
- 56 d. encouraging congregations to respond to human need, work for justice and peace, care for the sick

- and the suffering, and participate responsibly in society;
- e. providing resources for congregational life;
- f. grouping congregations in conferences, clusters, coalitions, or other area subdivisions for mission purposes.

†S6.03.03. In strengthening interdependent relationships among congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization, and in fostering relationships with agencies and institutions affiliated with or related to this church as well as with ecumenical partners, the responsibilities of the synod include the following:

- a. promoting interdependent relationships among congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization, and entering into partnership with other synods in the region;
- b. fostering organizations for youth, women, and men, and organizations for language or ethnic communities;
- c. developing relationships with social ministry organizations and ministries, participating in their mission planning, and providing partnership funding;
- d. supporting relationships with and providing partnership funding on behalf of colleges, universities, and campus ministries;
- e. maintaining relationships with and providing partnership funding on behalf of seminaries and continuing education centers;
- f. fostering supporting relationships with camps and other outdoor ministries;
- g. fostering supporting relationships with preschools, elementary schools, and secondary schools operated by congregations of the synod;
- h. fostering relationships with ecumenical and global partners;
- i. cooperating with other synods and the churchwide organization in creating, using, and supporting regions to carry out those functions of the synod which can best be done cooperatively with other synods and the churchwide organization.

†S6.03.04. In interpreting the work of this church on the territory of the synod, the responsibilities of the synod include the following:

- a. encouraging financial support for the work of this church by individuals and congregations;
- b. participating in churchwide programs;
- c. interpreting social statements in a manner consistent with the interpretation given by the churchwide unit or office which assisted in the development of the statement, and suggestion of social study issues;
- d. providing ecumenical guidance and encouragement.

†S6.04. Except as otherwise provided in this constitution and bylaws, the Synod Council shall establish processes that will ensure that at least 60 percent of the members of the synod assemblies, councils, committees, boards, and other organizational units shall be laypersons; and that, as nearly as possible, 50 percent of the lay members of assemblies, councils, committees, boards, or other organizational units shall be female and 50 percent 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 percent of its assemblies, councils, committees, boards, or other organizational units be persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English.

S6.04.01 In making appointments to committees, boards, councils or other organizational units of the synod whose members are appointed, the appointing authority shall consider the provisions of †S6.04 and shall attempt to assure that each such organizational unit includes at least 10 percent 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 percent of the membership of synod assemblies, councils, committees, boards and/or other organizational units be persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English.

†S6.04.B09. It is the goal of this synod that at least 10 percent of the voting members of the Synod Assembly, Synod Council, committees, and organizational units of this synod be youth and young adults. The Synod Council shall establish a plan for implementing this goal. For purposes of the constitution, bylaws, and continuing

1 resolutions of this synod, the term “youth” means a voting member of a congregation who has not reached the
2 age of 18 at the time of election or appointment for service. The term “young adult” means a voting member
3 of a congregation between the ages of 18 and 30 at the time of election or appointment for service.
4

5 †S6.05. Each assembly, council, committee, board, commission, task force, or other body of this synod or any
6 synodical units shall be conclusively presumed to have been properly constituted, and neither the method of
7 selection nor the composition of any such assembly, council, committee, board, commission, task force, or
8 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
9 of law to the validity or effect of any action taken or authorized by any such assembly, council, committee,
10 board, commission, task force, or other body.
11

12 †S6.06. References herein to the nature of the relationship between the three expressions of this
13 church—congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization—as being interdependent or as being in a
14 partnership relationship describe the mutual responsibility of these expressions in God’s mission and the
15 fulfillment of the purposes of this church as described in this chapter, and do not imply or describe the
16 creation of partnerships, co-ventures, agencies, or other legal relationships recognized in civil law.
17

18 CHAPTER 7. SYNOD ASSEMBLY

19
20 †S7.01. This synod shall have a Synod Assembly, which shall be its highest legislative authority. The powers of the
21 Synod Assembly are limited only by the provisions in the Articles of Incorporation, this constitution and
22 bylaws, the assembly’s own resolutions, and the constitutions and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church
23 in America.
24

25 P7.01.A Synod Event Finances Approximately eighteen (18) months before the event date(s), this Synod will provide
26 the local planning committees of Synod Festivals, Assemblies, and Bishops' Convocations with access to a
27 \$2,000 seed money restricted fund accessible by vouchers submitted through the Region 1 Financial Services
28 Office.
29

- 30 a. Prior to accessing these funds, the name of the planning group’s treasurer, with his/her address, phone
31 number(s), and a sample signature, should be submitted to the Synod Bishop, Synod Treasurer, and the
32 Region 1 FSO.
- 33 b. These funds should be treated as a loan to be repaid after the event, not as Income of the event.
- 34 c. All income and/or registration fees must be deposited through the Region 1 FSO and the bills of the
35 event must be paid through vouchers submitted to the Region 1 FSO. This process eliminates the use of
36 local bank accounts and allows auditing of the financial activity of the event in the consolidated Synod
37 Audit.
38

39 Planning committees are expected to set registration charges at a level that will match estimated expenses if
40 all participants meet early registration deadlines. Any funds remaining after the event and the \$2,000 "loan"
41 repayment will be placed in a restricted fund to assist in covering possible shortfalls in future events or to be
42 used by action of the Synod Council.
43

44 The planning group treasurer should submit a final written report of the finances of the event to the Synod
45 Treasurer and Bishop within six months of the event. SC98.06.16.
46

47 P7.01.B Assembly Displays (See Appendix 9)

48
49 P7.01.C Policy on Forums and Hearings at Synod Assembly (See Appendix 14)

50
51 P7.01.D Policy Regarding the Use of Audio-Visual Presentations During Debate (See Appendix 15)

52
53 S7.01.01. The Synod Assembly shall provide for the overall review of the ministry and work of this synod.
54

55 S7.01.02. The Synod Assembly shall adopt a budget for the ministry and work of this synod.
56

- 1 **S7.01.03.** The Synod Assembly shall hold elections for the officers, synod council, and other elected committee
2 positions as defined within the bylaws.
3
- 4 **S7.01.04.** The Synod Assembly may initiate and enact appropriate resolutions addressing the ministry and work of this
5 synod, its related region, and the churchwide expression of the ELCA.
6
- 7 **S7.01.05.** The Synod Assembly may serve as a forum for the concerns of the congregations and people of this synod.
8
- 9 **S7.01.06.** The Synod Assembly shall elect voting members to the Churchwide Assembly based on criteria provided by
10 the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
11
- 12 **S7.01.07.** The Synod Assembly shall conduct such other business as necessary to further the purposes and functions of
13 this synod.
14
- 15 **S7.01.08.** The Synod Assembly shall adopt such Assembly Rules as are necessary for the orderly accomplishment of its
16 duties.
17
- 18 **S7.01.A04** There shall be a Reference and Counsel Committee and three layperson and two members of the clergy,
19 appointed by the Executive Committee of the Synod Council. This committee shall review any resolution to
20 be included in the pre-assembly report for grammar, consistency with established rules and governing
21 documents, and common sense/understandability by voting members. It may also recommend to the bishop
22 special orders for hearing of representatives (voting members). The committee shall also review and present
23 its recommendations on any matter referred to it by the Assembly or the Bishop. During meetings of the
24 Synod Assembly it shall assist voting members and committees with the formulation and/or rewording of
25 resolutions for submission to the Assembly. SC0401.16
26
- 27 †**S7.11.** A regular meeting of the Synod Assembly shall be held at least biennially.
28
- 29 **S7.11.01.** The Synod Assembly shall meet annually on dates established by the Synod Council.
30
- 31 **S7.11.02.** The Synod Assembly may meet at other times as provided for in S7.12.
32
- 33 **S7.12.** Special meetings of the Synod Assembly may be called by the bishop with the consent of the Synod Council,
34 and shall be called by the bishop at the request of one-fifth of the voting members of the Synod Assembly.
35
- 36 a. The notice of each special meeting shall define the purpose for which it is to be held. The scope of
37 actions to be taken at such a special meeting shall be limited to the subject matter(s) described in the
38 notice.
39
- 40 b. If the special meeting of the Synod Assembly is required for the purpose of electing a successor bishop
41 because of death, resignation, or inability to serve, the special meeting shall be called by the Synod
42 Council after consultation with the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
43
- 44 **S7.12.01.** Special meetings of the Synod Assembly shall be announced no less than 30 days prior to such Assembly.
45
- 46 **S7.13.** Notice of the time and place of all meetings of the Synod Assembly shall be given by the secretary of this
47 synod.
48
- 49 **S7.13.01.** Notice shall be mailed no less than 90 days prior to the beginning of the regular Synod Assembly.
50
- 51 **S7.13.02.** A Pre-Assembly Report shall be sent to the congregations of this synod no less than 30 days prior to regular
52 meetings of the Synod Assembly, and 14 days prior to special meetings of the Synod Assembly.
53
- 54 **P7.13.02.A** Distribution of Assembly Minutes The minutes of each Synod Assembly shall be distributed to each
55 congregation and to each rostered individual. SC93.09.21
56
- 56 **P7.13.02.B** Review of Assembly Actions The Synod Secretary and two Synod Council members shall be appointed to a

1 task group after each Synod Assembly for the purpose of reviewing Assembly actions and bringing to the
2 attention of the Bishop, the officers, the Synod Council, or other persons or units, any action which may be
3 required. S90.05.22
4

5 **S7.14.** A majority of the registered members of the Synod Assembly shall constitute a quorum.
6

7 †**S7.21.** The membership of the Synod Assembly, of which at least 60 percent of the voting membership shall be
8 composed of lay persons, shall be constituted as follows:

- 9 a. All ordained ministers under call on the roster of this synod in attendance at the Synod Assembly shall be
10 voting members.
- 11 b. All associates in ministry, deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and diaconal
12 ministers, under call, on the official lay rosters of this synod shall have both voice and vote as lay voting
13 members in the Synod Assembly, in addition to the voting membership of lay members of congregations
14 provided in item †S7.21.c.
- 15 c. A minimum of one lay member elected by each congregation with fewer than 175 baptized members and
16 a minimum of two lay members elected by each congregation with 175 or more baptized members
17 related to this synod, normally one of whom shall be male and one of whom shall be female, shall be
18 voting members. The Synod Council shall establish a formula to provide additional lay representation
19 from congregations on the basis of the number of baptized members in the congregation. The Synod
20 Council shall seek to ensure that, as nearly as possible, 50 percent of the lay members of the assembly
21 shall be female and 50 percent shall be male. Additional members from each congregation normally
22 shall be equally divided between male and female.
- 23 d. Voting membership shall include the officers of this synod.
24

25 †**S7.21.01.** Voting members shall begin serving with the opening of a regular Synod Assembly and shall continue
26 serving until voting members are seated at the next regular Synod Assembly.
27

28
29 **P7.21.A** Congregational Lay Voting Member Representation at Synod Assembly Congregational lay voting member
30 representation at Synod Assemblies shall be as follows:

- 31 1. Baptized members 1-500 - two lay voting members
- 32 2. Baptized members 501-1000 - allow an additional lay voting member (total three lay voting members)
- 33 3. Baptized members above 1000 - allow two additional lay voting members (total four lay voting
34 members) SC91.02.27
35

36 **S7.22.** The synod may establish processes that permit retired ordained ministers, retired associates in ministry,
37 retired deaconesses, and retired diaconal ministers on the roster of this synod to serve as voting members of
38 the Synod Assembly, consistent with †S7.21.c. above. The synod may establish processes that permit
39 ordained ministers, associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers who are on leave from call, or
40 those designated as disabled, on the roster of the synod to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly,
41 consistent with †S7.21.c. above. If the synod does not establish processes to permit the rostered leaders
42 specified above to serve as voting members, they shall have voice but not vote in the meetings of the Synod
43 Assembly.
44

45 **S7.22.01.** Retired rostered persons on the rosters of this Synod in attendance at the Synod Assembly may have voice
46 and vote.
47

48 **S7.23.** The presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and such other official representatives
49 of this church as may be designated from time to time by the Church Council shall have voice but not vote in
50 the meetings of the Synod Assembly. Like privileges shall be accorded to those additional persons whom the
51 Synod Assembly or the Synod Council shall from time to time designate.
52

53 **S7.24.** Ordained ministers under call on the roster of this synod shall remain as members of the Synod Assembly so
54 long as they remain under call and so long as their names appear on the roster of ordained ministers of this
55 synod. Associates in ministry, deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and diaconal
56 ministers of this church serving under call on the roster of this synod shall remain as members of the Synod

1 Assembly so long as they remain under call and so long as their names appear on the official lay roster of this
2 synod. Lay members of the Synod Assembly representing congregations shall continue as such until replaced
3 by the election of new members or until they have been disqualified by termination of membership.
4 Normally, congregations will hold elections prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.
5

6 †S7.25. Except as otherwise provided in this constitution or in the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions
7 of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, each voting member of the Synod Assembly shall be a
8 voting member of a congregation of this synod.
9

10 S7.26. This synod may establish processes through the Synod Council that permit representatives of congregations
11 under development and authorized worshiping communities of the synod, which have been authorized under
12 ELCA bylaw 10.02.03., to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with †S7.21.
13

14 S7.27. Duly elected voting members of the Synod Council who are not otherwise voting members of the Synod
15 Assembly under †S7.21. shall be granted the privilege of both voice and vote as members of the Synod
16 Assembly.
17

18 †S7.31. Proxy and absentee voting shall not be permitted in the transaction of any business of this synod.
19

20 S7.32. Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of the Synod Assembly.
21

22 S7.33. "Ex-officio" as used herein means membership with full rights of voice and vote unless otherwise expressly
23 limited.
24
25

26 CHAPTER 8. OFFICERS

27

28 †S8.01. The officers of this synod shall be a bishop, a vice-president, a secretary, and a treasurer.
29

30 S8.10. **Bishop**

31
32 †S8.11. The bishop shall be elected by the Synod Assembly. The bishop shall be a pastor who is an ordained minister
33 of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
34

35 †S8.12. As this synod's pastor, the bishop shall be an ordained minister of Word and Sacrament who shall:
36

- 37 a. Preach, teach, and administer the sacraments in accord with the Confession of Faith of this church.
- 38
- 39 b. Have primary responsibility for the ministry of Word and Sacrament in this synod and its congregations,
40 providing pastoral care and leadership for this synod, its congregations, its ordained ministers, and its
41 other rostered leaders.
- 42 c. Exercise solely this church's power to ordain (or provide for the ordination by another synodical bishop
43 of) approved candidates who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested letter of call for
44 the office of ordained ministry (and as provided in the bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in
45 America).
- 46 d. Commission (or provide for the commissioning of) approved candidates who have received and accepted
47 a properly issued, duly attested letter of call for service as associates in ministry; consecrate (or provide
48 for the consecration of) approved candidates who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly
49 attested letter of call for service as deaconesses; and consecrate (or provide for the consecration of)
50 approved candidates who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested letter of call for
51 service as diaconal ministers of this church.
- 52 e. Attest letters of call for persons called to serve congregations in the synod, letters of call for persons
53 called by the Synod Council, and letters of call for persons on the rosters of this synod called by the
54 Church Council.
- 55 f. Install (or provide for the installation of):
56 1) the pastors of all congregations of this synod;

- 1 2) ordained ministers called to extra parish service within this synod; and
- 2 3) persons serving in the other rostered ministries within this synod.
- 3 g. Exercise leadership in the mission of this church and in so doing:
- 4 1) Interpret and advocate the mission and theology of the whole church;
- 5 2) Lead in fostering support for and commitment to the mission of this church within this synod;
- 6 3) Coordinate the use of the resources available to this synod as it seeks to promote the health of this
- 7 church's life and witness in the areas served by this synod;
- 8 4) Submit a report to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly concerning the synod's life and
- 9 work; and
- 10 5) Advise and counsel this synod's related institutions and organizations.
- 11 h. Practice leadership in strengthening the unity of the Church and in so doing:
- 12 1) Exercise oversight of the preaching, teaching, and administration of the sacraments within this synod
- 13 in accord with the Confession of Faith of this church;
- 14 2) Be responsible for administering the constitutionally established processes for the resolution of
- 15 controversies and for the discipline of ordained ministers, other rostered leaders, and congregations
- 16 of this synod.
- 17 3) Be the chief ecumenical officer of this synod.
- 18 4) Consult regularly with other synodical bishops and the Conference of Bishops;
- 19 5) Foster awareness of other churches throughout the Lutheran world communion and, where
- 20 appropriate, engage in contact with leaders of those churches;
- 21 6) Cultivate communion in faith and mission with appropriate Christian judicatory leaders functioning
- 22 within the territory of this synod; and
- 23 7) Be ex officio a member of the Churchwide Assembly.
- 24 i. Oversee and administer the work of this synod and in so doing:
- 25 1) Serve as the president of the synod corporation and be the chief executive and administrative officer
- 26 of this synod, who is authorized and empowered, in the name of this synod, to sign deeds or other
- 27 instruments and to affix the seal of this synod;
- 28 2) Preside at all meetings of the Synod Assembly and provide for the preparation of the agenda for the
- 29 Synod Assembly, Synod Council, and the council's Executive Committee;
- 30 3) Ensure that the constitution and bylaws of the synod and of the churchwide organization are duly
- 31 observed within this synod, and that the actions of the synod in conformity therewith are carried into
- 32 effect;
- 33 4) Exercise supervision over the work of the other officers;
- 34 5) Coordinate the work of all synodical staff members;
- 35 6) Appoint all committees for which provision is not otherwise made;
- 36 7) Be a member of all committees and any other organizational units of the synod, except as otherwise
- 37 provided in this constitution;
- 38 8) Provide for preparation and maintenance of synodical rosters containing:
- 39 a) the names and addresses of all ordained ministers of this synod and a record of the calls under
- 40 which they are serving or the date on which they become retired or disabled; and
- 41 b) the names and addresses of all other rostered persons of this synod and a record of the positions
- 42 to which they have been called or the date on which they become retired or disabled;
- 43 9) Annually bring to the attention of the Synod Council the names of all rostered persons on leave from
- 44 call or engaged in approved graduate study in conformity with the constitution, bylaws, and
- 45 continuing resolutions of this church and pursuant to prior action of this synod through the Synod
- 46 Council;
- 47 10) Provide for prompt reporting to the secretary of this church of:
- 48 a) additions to and subtractions from the rosters of this synod and the register of congregations;
- 49 b) the issuance of certificates of transfer for rostered persons in good standing who have received
- 50 and accepted a properly issued, duly attested, regular letter of call under the jurisdiction of
- 51 another synod; and
- 52 c) the entrance of the names of such persons for whom proper certificates of transfer have been
- 53 received;
- 54 11) Provide for preparation and maintenance of a register of the congregations of this synod and the
- 55 names of the laypersons who have been elected to represent them; and
- 56 12) Appoint a statistician of the synod, who shall secure the parochial reports of the congregations and

1 make the reports available to the secretary of this church for collation, analysis, and distribution of
2 the statistical summaries to this synod and the other synods of this church.
3

4 **P8.12.A** Chemical Dependencies (See Appendix 5)

5
6 **P8.12.B** The Synod shall cover the expenses for the spouse of the Bishop at these events: Assembly, Festival,
7 Bishop's Convocation, Regional Pastoral Conference, Regional Bishops Meetings, Churchwide Assemblies,
8 Spring Conference of Bishops, and other events specifically requested and approved by the Synod Council or
9 Executive Committee. SC97.10.06

10
11 †**S8.13.** The synodical bishop may appoint an attorney, admitted to the bar within the territory of the synod or the
12 state where the synod is located, to be Synod Attorney. The appointment must be approved by the Synod
13 Council and reported to the Synod Assembly and to the ELCA secretary. The appointment continues until
14 resignation or until a successor is appointed. The Synod Attorney provides legal advice and counsel to the
15 synodical officers and the Synod Council. The Synod Attorney is expected to be familiar with the
16 governing documents and policies of the synod and, as necessary, to attend meetings of the Synod Council.
17 The Synod Attorney serves without salary but may be retained and compensated for specific legal services
18 requested by the synod.
19

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

21
22 †**S8.15.** The presiding bishop of this church, or appointee of the presiding bishop, shall install into office, in accord
23 with the policy and approved rite of this church, each newly elected synod bishop.
24

25 †**S8.16.** **Conflicts of Interest**

26
27 †**S8.16.01.** The following procedures shall govern matters of potential conflicts of interest for synodical bishops:

- 28
29 a. Whenever a synodical bishop determines that a matter of the kind described in †S8.16.01.b. may require
30 his or her determination or action with respect to a related individual as defined in †S8.16.01.c., the
31 synodical bishop shall withdraw from personal involvement in such matter and shall so notify the
32 presiding bishop. The presiding bishop shall then appoint another synodical bishop from the same region
33 to handle the matter to conclusion. In dealing with such matter, the appointed bishop shall exercise all of
34 the functions and authority to the same extent as if the appointed bishop were the elected bishop of the
35 withdrawing bishop's synod.
36
37 b. Matters include any proceedings under Chapter 20, proceedings under provision 7.46. of the
38 *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*
39 (†S14.13.), candidacy, reinstatement, and similar matters where determinations or actions by the
40 synodical bishop could change, limit, restrict, approve, authorize, or deny the related individual's
41 ministry on one of the official rosters of this church.
42
43 c. A related individual is one who, with respect to the synodical bishop, is a spouse, parent, son, daughter,
44 sibling, uncle, aunt, niece, nephew, grandparent, grandchild, including corresponding members of
45 blended families and in-laws (parent, son, daughter, or sibling of a spouse, spouse of a sibling, or the
46 parent or sibling of the spouse of a sibling).
47
48

49 **S8.20.** **Vice President**

50
51 †**S8.21.** The vice president shall be elected by the Synod Assembly. The vice president shall be a layperson. The vice
52 president shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod. The vice president shall not receive a
53 salary for the performance of the duties of the office.
54

55 **S8.22.** The vice president shall chair the Synod Council.
56

- 1 **P8.22.A** Synod Vice-President to Churchwide Assembly The Synod Vice-President is an ex-officio voting member to
2 the Churchwide Assembly. SC05.09.11
3
- 4 **S8.23.** In the event of the death, resignation, or disability of the bishop, the vice president, after consultation with the
5 presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, shall convene the Synod Council to arrange
6 for the conduct of the duties of the bishop until a new bishop shall be elected or, in the case of temporary
7 disability, until the bishop resumes full performance of the duties of the office.
8
- 9 **S8.30. Secretary**
- 10
- 11 †**S8.31.** The secretary shall be elected by the Synod Assembly. The secretary shall be a voting member of a
12 congregation of this synod. The secretary may be either a layperson or an ordained minister.
13
- 14 †**S8.32.** The secretary shall:
- 15
- 16 a. Keep the minutes of all meetings of the Synod Assembly and Synod Council, be responsible for the
17 printing and distribution of such minutes, and perform such other duties as this synod may from time to
18 time direct.
- 19 b. Be authorized and empowered, in the name of this synod, to attest all instruments which require the
20 same, and which are signed and sealed by the bishop.
- 21 c. In consultation with the bishop, classify and arrange all important papers and documents and deposit
22 them in the archives of this synod.
- 23 d. Submit to the secretary of this church at least nine months before each regular Churchwide Assembly a
24 certified list of the voting members elected by the Synod Assembly.
25
- 26 **S8.40. Treasurer**
- 27
- 28 †**S8.41.** The treasurer may be elected by the Synod Assembly or may be appointed by the Synod Council. The
29 treasurer shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod. The treasurer may be either a layperson
30 or an ordained minister.
31
- 32 **S8.42.** The treasurer shall provide and be accountable for:
- 33
- 34 a. Management of the monies and accounts of this synod, its deeds, mortgages, contracts, evidences of
35 claims and revenues, and trust funds, holding the same at all times subject to the order of this synod.
- 36 b. Investment of funds upon the authorization of the Synod Council.
- 37 c. Receipt and acknowledgement of offerings, contributions, and bequests made to this synod, collecting
38 interest and income from its invested funds, and paying regular appropriations and orders on the several
39 accounts as approved and directed by the Synod Council. The treasurer shall transmit each month to the
40 treasurer of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America the funds received by this synod for the general
41 work of this church.
- 42 d. Maintenance of a regular account with each congregation of this synod and informing the congregation,
43 at least quarterly, of the status of this account.
- 44 e. Rendering at each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly a full, detailed, and duly audited report of
45 receipts and disbursements in the several accounts of this synod for the preceding fiscal year, together
46 with the tabulation, for record and publication in the minutes, of the contributions from the
47 congregations.
- 48 f. Obtaining a fidelity bond in the amount determined by the Synod Council for persons handling synod
49 funds, which bond shall be in the custody of the secretary. The premium for the bond shall be paid by
50 this synod. Fidelity coverage provided by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be deemed a
51 fulfillment of this requirement.
52
- 53 **S8.50. General Provisions**
- 54
- 55 †**S8.51.** The terms of office of the officers of this synod shall be:
56

- 1 a. The bishop of this synod shall be elected to a term of six years and may be reelected.
2 b. The vice president; and secretary, of this synod shall be elected to a term of four years and may be
3 reelected.
4 c. The treasurer of this synod shall be [elected] [appointed] to a four-year term and may be reelected or
5 reappointed.
6

7
8 **S8.52.** The terms of the officers shall begin on the first day of the third month following election or, in special
9 circumstances, at a time designated by the Synod Council.

10
11 †**S8.53.** Each officer shall be a voting member in a congregation of this synod, except that the bishop need not be a
12 member of a congregation of this synod at the time of election.

13
14 †**S8.54.** Should the bishop die, resign, or be unable to serve, the vice president, after consultation with the presiding
15 bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, shall convene the Synod Council to arrange for the
16 appropriate care of the responsibilities of the bishop until an election of a new bishop can be held or, in the
17 case of temporary disability, until the bishop is able to serve again. Such arrangements may include the
18 appointment by the Synod Council of an interim bishop, who during the vacancy or period of disability shall
19 possess all of the powers and authority of a regularly elected bishop. The term of the successor bishop,
20 elected by the next Synod Assembly or a special meeting of the Synod Assembly called for the purpose of
21 election, shall be six years, with the subsequent election to take place at the assembly closest to the expiration
22 of such a term and with the starting date of a successor term to be governed by constitutional provision S8.52.
23

24 **S8.55.** Should the vice president, secretary, or treasurer die, resign, or be unable to serve, the bishop, with the
25 approval of the Executive Committee of the Synod Council, shall arrange for the appropriate care of the
26 responsibilities of the officer until an election of a new officer can be held or, in the case of temporary
27 disability, until the officer is able to serve again. The term of successor officer, elected by the next Synod
28 Assembly, shall be four years.
29

30 †**S8.56.** The Executive Committee of the Synod Council shall determine whether an officer is unable to serve; the
31 officer may appeal the decision of the Executive Committee by requesting a hearing before the Synod
32 Council. A meeting to determine the ability of an officer to serve shall be called upon the request of at least
33 three members of the Executive Committee and prior written notice of the meeting shall be given to the
34 officer in question at least ten calendar days prior to the meeting.
35

36 †**S8.57.** The recall or dismissal of an officer may be effected in accordance with the procedure established by the
37 Committee on Appeals of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
38

39 †**S8.58.** If the bishop is to be temporarily absent from the synod for an extended period, the bishop, with the consent
40 of the Synod Council, may appoint as acting bishop for such period an ordained minister of this church.
41 Except as limited by action of the Synod Council, an acting bishop shall possess all of the powers and
42 authority of a regularly elected bishop other than authority to ordain or to authorize the ordination of properly
43 approved candidates for ordination.
44

45 46 47 **Chapter 9. NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS**

48
49 †**S9.01.** The Synod Assembly shall elect such officers of this synod and such other persons as the constitution and
50 bylaws may require, according to procedures set forth in the bylaws.
51

52 **S9.01.01** When the nominating body is unable to nominate the number of persons designated in these bylaws for any
53 position, the Synod Assembly shall have authority to suspend the rules for that requirement for that position
54 for the current election.
55

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

- 1 necessary for election.
2
- 3 **S9.03.** The Nominating Committee shall provide nominations for all elected and appointed Synod Council and
4 committee positions.
5
- 6 **S9.03.01.** The Nominating Committee shall insure with regard to the Synod Council, that in addition to the provisions
7 of †S6.04, all clusters of this synod shall be represented by at least one person. Each cluster shall nominate
8 one person for their cluster representative position on the Synod Council, provided the cluster has a Synod
9 approved constitution and the nomination is made during a duly called meeting of the cluster. When such a
10 nomination is made, there shall be no further nominations made for their cluster representative position.
11
- 12 **P9.03.01.A** Synod Council Congregation Representation No Congregation shall have more than two representatives on
13 the Synod Council. SC99.06.
14
- 15
- 16 **S9.03.02.** The designation lay male or female or clergy will alternate among those cluster representatives being elected
17 the same year.
18
- 19 **S9.03.03.** The designation for cluster representatives shall alternate as follows: lay male - lay female - clergy - lay
20 male...
21
- 22 **S9.03.04.** Each congregation and/or cluster shall have the right to submit nominations for any available position. Such
23 nominations shall be submitted to the Nominating Committee.
24
- 25 **P9.03.04.A** Churchwide Assembly Nominations In order to provide the broadest representation of the people and
26 congregations of the synod, no more than one member per congregation may be elected as a voting member
27 to the Churchwide Assembly. If more than one person in a congregation is nominated for the position of
28 voting member to the Churchwide Assembly, the person who receives a majority of votes shall be elected, the
29 name(s) of the other person(s) shall be removed from any subsequent ballots. SC99.09.
30
- 31 **S9.03.05.** Additional nominations may be made from the floor of the Assembly for all elections for which nominations
32 are made by the Nominating Committee.
33
- 34 **S9.04.** The bishop shall be elected by the Synod Assembly from among those nominated in the following manner:
35 a. Each cluster may submit up to three names of those whom they wish to nominate for the office of bishop
36 and shall submit written vitae for each nominee, said vitae to adhere to a format established by the
37 elections committee; names of said nominees and their vitae shall then be published in the voting
38 members' pre-assembly packet.
39 b. Three-fourths of the votes cast shall be necessary for election on the first ballot.
40 c. The second ballot shall be limited to the seven persons (plus ties) who received the greatest number of
41 votes on the first ballot, and two-thirds of the votes cast shall be necessary for election.
42 d. The third ballot shall be limited to the three persons (plus ties) who received the greatest number of votes
43 on the second ballot, and 60 percent of the votes cast shall be necessary for election.
44 e. Prior to the casting of the third ballot, the three or more persons to appear on the ballot, if they are
45 present, shall be invited to address the Assembly.
46 f. On subsequent ballots a majority of the votes cast shall be necessary for election. These ballots shall be
47 limited to the two persons (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of votes on the previous ballot.
48
- 49 **S9.05.** The Nominating Committee shall nominate at least one person for vice president; additional nominations may
50 be made from the floor.
51
- 52 **S9.06.** The Synod Council shall nominate at least one person for secretary; additional nominations may be made
53 from the floor.
54
- 55 **P9.06.A** Officer Nominations Process for the Synod Council nomination of Synod Treasurer and Synod Secretary, or
56 an officer resigning from the Synod Council.

1. the first ballot shall be a nominating ballot, with prior permission of the nominee required, and having written biographical information available
2. the second ballot shall include all names that resulted from the first ballot, and will be listed without ranking or number of votes received on the first ballot
3. on the second ballot votes will be cast for two persons
4. election of the two nominees shall be by majority
5. if only one person received a majority vote, that person shall be one of the nominees
6. remaining names will be narrowed by one on each subsequent ballot until a majority is received.
7. the two persons receiving majority votes shall be presented to the Synod Assembly, without ranking or number of votes cast, as the nominees from the Synod Council. SC91.02.22

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 votes, but not elected by a majority of the votes cast on a preceding ballot, shall be entered on the next ballot to the number of two for each vacancy unfilled.

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

†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 the synod, 10 to 24 other members, and at least one youth and at least one young adult, shall be elected by the Synod Assembly.

- a. Each person elected to the Synod Council shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod, with the exception of 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 six years.

P10.01.A Conflict of Interest Statement A conflict of interest statement for Synod officers, Synod staff, and Synod Council members has been adopted. S88.09.34

1. All Council Members, Officers, and Staff of the Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod, shall avoid any conflict between their own respective individual interests and the interest of the Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod, in any and all actions taken by them on behalf of the Synod.
2. In the event any Council Member, Officer, or Staff of the Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod, shall have any direct or indirect interest in or relationship with any individual or organization which proposes to enter into any transaction with the Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod, for the sale, purchase, lease, or rental of property, or to render or employ services, personal or otherwise, such Council Member, Officer or Staff shall forthwith give the Synod Council of the Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod, notice of such interest or relationship and shall thereafter refrain from attempting to affect its decision to participate or not to participate in such transaction. Minutes of appropriate meetings should reflect that such disclosure was made, and that such Council Member or Officer was not counted for the purpose of determining a quorum.
3. The foregoing requirements, however, should not be construed to prevent a Council Member or Officer

- 1 from briefly stating his/her position in the matter, nor from answering pertinent questions of other
2 Council Members, Officers, or Staff. Such personal knowledge may be of assistance to the other Council
3 Members, Officers, or Staff, in reaching their decision.
- 4 4. A copy of this statement shall be furnished each Council Member, Officer, and Staff who is presently
5 serving the Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod, or who may hereafter become associated with the Eastern
6 Washington-Idaho Synod.
- 7 5. This policy is to be reviewed annually for the information and guidance of Council Members, Officers,
8 and Staff. Any new Council Members, Officers, or Staff shall be advised of the policy upon undertaking
9 the duties of such office. SC97.01.17
- 10
- 11 **P10.01.B** Synod Council Partial Terms A Synod Council member who serves for two years or less is eligible for
12 election to a subsequent full term on the Synod Council. Those who have served more than two years shall
13 be ineligible for election. S90.11.15
- 14
- 15 **P10.01.C** Synod Council Youth Term of Office The person elected to the Synod Council youth position shall be a
16 voting member of their home congregation and be less than nineteen years of age at the time of election and
17 will be elected to a two-year term.
- 18
- 19 **P10.01.D** Church Council Member Expenses Members of this Synod who serve on the Church Council of the ELCA
20 will be granted all of the rights, invitations, and reimbursement which are allowed to Synod members.
21 S90.09.16
- 22
- 23 **S10.01.01.** In addition to the officers and one youth representative, there shall be 24 members of the Synod Council, 12
24 of whom shall be representatives of their respective clusters and 12 of whom shall be members at large.
- 25
- 26 **P10.01.01.A** Synod Council Congregation Representation In order to provide the broadest representation of the people and
27 congregations of the Synod, the membership of the Synod Council shall not include two members of the same
28 immediate family or household. If more than one person in a family or household is nominated for the Synod
29 Council, the person to receive the greatest number of votes shall be elected, the name(s) of the other person(s)
30 shall be removed from any subsequent ballots.
- 31
- 32 **S10.01.02.** Four new members of the Synod Council shall be elected at the annual Synod Assembly.
- 33
- 34 †**S10.02.** The Synod Council shall be the board of directors of this synod and shall serve as its interim legislative
35 authority between meetings of the Synod Assembly. It may make decisions which are not in conflict with
36 actions taken by the Synod Assembly or which are not precluded by provisions of this constitution or the
37 constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- 38
- 39 **P10.02.A** Personnel Policies A copy of the ELCA Personnel Policies may be obtained from the Synod office or a Synod
40 Officer. SC97.01.17
- 41
- 42 **P10.02.B** Liaison Representatives at Synod Council Meetings When the Synod Council affords participation in its
43 meetings to a liaison from any organization, the liaison shall have "voice" but not "vote" at such meetings,
44 and the expenses of the liaison will be reimbursed, if at all, by the organization represented. S90.05.35
- 45
- 46 **P10.02.C** Representation at Synod/Region/Churchwide Events All persons representing the synod who attend events at
47 Synod/Region/Churchwide expense are expected to present a written report to the next Synod Council
48 meeting. SC93.03.05
- 49
- 50 **S10.03.** The functions of the Synod Council shall be to:
- 51
- 52 a. Exercise trusteeship responsibilities on behalf of this synod.
- 53 b. Recommend program goals and budgets to the regular meetings of the Synod Assembly.
- 54 c. Carry out the resolutions of the Synod Assembly. See P7.13.02.B
- 55 d. Provide for an annual review of the roster of ordained ministers and of other official rosters, receive and
56 act upon appropriate recommendations regarding those persons whose status is subject to reconsideration

- 1 and action under the constitution and bylaws of the ELCA, and make a report to the Synod Assembly of
2 the Synod Council's actions in this regard.
- 3 e. Issue letters of call to ordained ministers and letters of call to associates in ministry, deaconesses, and
4 diaconal ministers as authorized by Chapter 7 of the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran
5 Church in America.
- 6 f. Fill vacancies until the next regular meeting of the Synod Assembly except as may otherwise be provided
7 in the constitution or bylaws of this synod, and determine the fact of the incapacity of an officer of this
8 synod.
- 9 g. Report its actions to the regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.
- 10 h. Perform such other functions as are set forth in the bylaws of this synod, or as may be delegated to it by
11 the Synod Assembly.
- 12
- 13 **P10.03.A** Synod Council members are encouraged to visit congregations, councils or clusters of the Synod; making
14 themselves visible or giving temple talks in order to acquaint congregations with the work of the Synod or
15 answering questions. Announcements that council members are available for such visits shall appear in
16 Synod publications. S88.09.35
- 17
- 18 **P10.03.B** Agendas and Reports to be Printed in Advance Agendas, and where possible reports, are to be provided to
19 the Synod Council members prior to meetings either electronically or by hardcopy.
- 20
- 21 **S10.03.01.** The Synod Council shall, in cooperation with the bishop and other appropriate ELCA structures, develop,
22 adopt and periodically review a Call Process for use in this synod. Such a Call Process shall include policies,
23 procedures and such guidelines as are deemed appropriate.
- 24
- 25 **S10.04.** Any proposal to appropriate funds, whether by amendment to the budget or otherwise, which is presented to a
26 meeting of the Synod Assembly without the approval of the Synod Council shall require a two-thirds vote for
27 adoption.
- 28
- 29 **S10.05.** No elected member of the Synod Council shall receive compensation for such service.
- 30
- 31 **S10.06.** If a member of the Synod Council ceases to meet the requirements of the position to which she or he was, the
32 office filled by such member shall at once become vacant.
- 33
- 34 **P10.06.A** Synod Council Meeting Attendance It is the policy of the Synod Council that any member who has two
35 consecutive unexcused absences will receive a letter reminding them of the requirements of a Synod Council
36 Member. If a member has three unexcused absences within a year, that synod council member will be asked
37 to resign.
- 38
- 39 **S10.06.01.** When such a vacancy occurs for a cluster representative, the Synod Council shall name a replacement from
40 the same cluster. When such a vacancy occurs for an at-large representative, the Synod Council may name a
41 replacement from any cluster.
- 42
- 43 **S10.06.02.** When such a vacancy occurs for the youth representative, the Synod Council shall appoint a replacement to
44 fill the position until the next regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.
- 45
- 46 **S10.07.** The composition of the Synod Council, the number of its members, and the manner of their selection, as well
47 as the organization of the Synod Council, its additional duties and responsibilities, and the number of
48 meetings to be held each year shall be as set forth in the bylaws.
- 49
- 50 **S10.07.01.** The Synod Council shall meet at least three times per year. To the extent permitted by state law, an action
51 required or permitted to be taken at a meeting of the Synod Council and its committees may be taken
52 electronically or by telephone conference.
- 53
- 54 **S10.08.** A majority of the Synod Council shall constitute a quorum.
- 55
- 56

Chapter 11. COMMITTEES
(names of other organizational units)

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- †**S11.01.** There shall be an Executive Committee, a Consultation Committee, a Committee on Discipline, a Mutual Ministry Committee, an Audit Committee, and such other committees as this synod may from time to time determine. The duties and functions of such committees, or any other organizational units created by this synod, and the composition and organizational structure of such units, shall be as set forth in the bylaws 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 Executive Committee shall consist of the elected officers of the Synod and in addition, there shall be two at-large members from the membership of the Synod Council, elected by the Synod Council for a term of two years. There shall also be one alternate Executive Committee member elected by the Synod Council.
- P11.01.01.A** Availability of Executive Committee Minutes Minutes of Synod Executive Committee meetings shall be made available to Synod Council members. S88.09.21
- P11.01.01.B** Executive Committee Authority The Executive Committee is authorized to act on behalf of the Synod between the meetings of Synod Council. All actions taken on behalf of the Synod Council by the Executive Committee will be brought to the next Synod Council meeting for review. (policy 5.5)
- P11.01.01.C** Executive Committee Acting as Personnel Committee The Executive Committee shall act as the Personnel Committee for the Synod Staff. They shall serve in an evaluative capacity, and advocate on behalf of its staff for salary and benefits, as needed.
- S11.01.02.** Five members of the Executive Committee shall constitute a quorum.
- †**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 lay persons, 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 and 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 bylaw.
- S11.02.01.** There shall be eight members of the Consultation Committee, four members shall be clergy, two shall be lay female, and two shall be lay male.
- †**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 lay persons, 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 expire every two years.
 - c. The Synod Council shall fill vacancies on the Committee on Discipline for any unexpired term.
- †**S11.04.** The Mutual Ministry Committee shall be appointed by the Executive Committee of the Synod Council to provide support and counsel to the bishop.
- S11.04.01.** The Mutual Ministry Committee shall seek to give encouragement by its concern for the spiritual, emotional and physical well-being of the bishop of this synod.
- S11.04.02.** There shall be five members on the Mutual Ministry Committee, three of whom shall be selected by the bishop and two (2) of whom shall be selected by the Executive Committee of the Synod Council and

1 appointed by the Synod Council.
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3 **S11.04.03.** Appointment to the Mutual Ministry Committee shall be for six years and be coterminous with the term of the
4 bishop. Consecutive appointments shall be permitted.
5

6 **P11.04.03.A** Mutual Ministry Committees for Synod Staff
7

- 8 1. This synod affirms the need for a safe place of confidentiality for the expression of our staff's concerns,
9 for nurturing their spirituality, their prayer and confession/absolution, and personal visioning. We further
10 affirm their need for self-care of each of our staff, and this committee's need to advocate for it.
11
- 12 2. Due to the nature of these support committees, the members of our staff need to select their own
13 members, notifying the Executive Committee only of the membership and their phone numbers. Each
14 committee will discover and discern its own function and be convened as needed by its staff member, or
15 by any of its members on their behalf.
16

17 †**S11.05.** The Audit Committee of this synod shall consist of three to six persons, none of whom are members of the
18 synod staff. Up to half of the committee members may be Synod Council members. The Audit Committee
19 members shall be elected by the Synod Council for a term of three years and be eligible for re-election to a
20 second consecutive three-year term. The terms of the Audit Committee members shall be staggered. The
21 Audit Committee shall be responsible for assisting the Synod Council in fulfilling its general oversight of the
22 synod's accounting, financial reporting, internal control systems, and external audit processes as provided in
23 †S15.31.
24

25 **S11.05.A** It shall be the responsibility of all committees or any other organizational structures to regularly report on
26 their work to the Synod Council and to the Synod Assembly.
27

28 **P11.05.B** Synod Council members are encouraged to serve on a synod-wide committee or task group as they are able.
29

30 **P11.05.C** Standing Committee Chairs The Standing Committee Chairs will be scheduled to attend one meeting per year
31 at council expense to present a report. Chairs are welcome to attend all other synod council meetings at
32 committee expense.
33

34 **S11.06.** This synod shall have a Finance Committee.
35

36 **S11.06.01.** The Finance Committee shall consist of up to five persons appointed by the Synod Council. Terms and duties
37 shall be determined by the Synod Council.
38

39 **S11.07.** This synod may have programmatic committees.
40

41 **P11.07.A** Programmatic Committees
42

- 43 1. This synod may have the following programmatic committees: Congregational Life, Global Mission,
44 Multicultural Inclusivity, Outreach, Professional Ministry, Social Ministry, Youth Ministry and others as
45 determined by the Synod Council.
- 46 2. Committee members shall be appointed by the Synod Council. Terms and duties as assigned by the
47 Synod Council.
- 48 3. There may be a Congregational Life Committee. This committee would provide leadership in the areas
49 of education, evangelism, leadership training, stewardship, volunteer ministries, and worship.
- 50 4. There may be a Global Mission Committee. This committee would provide leadership in the areas of the
51 Companion Synod, global mission advocacy, global ministry events, and world hunger.
- 52 5. There may be an Outreach Committee. This committee would provide leadership in strategic planning
53 and development of new congregations and congregations in transitional communities, area/cluster
54 ministry development, resource development, urban and rural ministry, multicultural ministry, and shall
55 assist the deployed Division for Outreach staff in these programmatic areas.
56
6. There may be a Professional Ministry Committee. This committee would provide leadership in the areas

- of ELCA colleges, universities and seminaries, and training and event planning for rostered persons. A member of this committee would also relate to the Candidacy and Mobility Committee of this synod.
7. There may be a Social Ministry Committee. This committee would provide leadership in the area of congregational social ministries, social ministry agencies which relate to the synod, public policy, and social statements.
 8. There may be a Youth Ministry Committee. This committee would provide leadership in youth ministry planning and coordination in partnership with the Synod Lutheran Youth Organization board members and regional staff with responsibilities for youth ministry. SC93.09.20 (policy 2.17)

S11.08. This synod shall have a Nominating Committee.

S11.08.01. The Nominating Committee shall consist of five persons, appointed by the Synod Council to one six year term and shall not be eligible for consecutive re-appointment.

S11.09. This synod shall have a Constitution Review Committee.

S11.09.01. The duties of the Constitution Review Committee shall be conducted by two Review Panels, a Congregation Constitution Review Panel and a Synod Constitution Review Panel.

S11.09.02. A Congregation Constitution Review panel shall review all congregation constitutions and bylaws with subsequent changes submitted to the synod. The panel shall make a written response to the congregation within 120 days stating its recommendation that the Synod Council approve or disapprove the constitution or change(s) and the reasons for the recommendations. This panel shall consist of five members appointed by the Synod Council.

S11.09.03. A Synod Constitution Review Panel shall review the Synod Constitution and Bylaws for amendment and clarification. At the request of the Synod Council, the Panel shall draft constitution and bylaw recommendations for action by the Synod Council and the Synod Assembly. This Panel shall consist of five members appointed by the Synod Council, two of whom shall be members of the Synod Council.

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.

S11.04.A87 The Synod Council shall be responsible to prepare, determine and monitor a process to meet the provisions of S11.11.

**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. This synod shall have clusters arranged as determined by the Synod Council. A congregation may request a transfer from one cluster to another by submitting a written request to the Synod Council along with a letter from the cluster the congregation is in and a letter from the cluster the congregation wants to join stating the clusters' positions on the transfer.

- 1 **S12.01.02.** There shall be a meeting of each cluster of this synod prior to the regular meetings of the Synod Assembly for
 2 the purposes of fellowship, fostering interdependent relationships among congregations and for conversation
 3 about matters coming before the Synod Assembly.
 4
- 5 **S12.01.03.** Meetings of the clusters noted in S12.01.02 shall include, but not be limited to, voting members elected to the
 6 Synod Assembly by the congregations of the cluster.
 7
- 8 **S12.01.04.** A cluster, as defined by the Synod, is an organizational unit and as such, is subject to †S6.04.
 9
- 10 **S12.01.05.** Clusters may have a constitution which shall be approved by the Synod Council.
 11
- 12 **S12.01.06.** Clusters may have an operating budget which may be reviewed by the Synod Council.
 13
- 14 **S12.01.07.** The purpose of a cluster shall include:
 15
- 16 a. fostering interdependent relationships among congregations for mission purposes:
 17 1) promoting the proclamation of the gospel;
 18 2) providing the opportunities for strengthening the spiritual life of clergy and laity;
 19 3) enabling participation in program planning for worship, learning, witness, service, stewardship, and
 20 advocacy by implementing conferences, retreats, fellowship, study, and training events;
 21
 - 22 4) deliberating on the faith and life of the church.
 - 23 b. developing relationships with other religious and secular organizations dedicated to advocating justice
 24 and providing services to meet human needs.
 - 25 c. seeking to facilitate communication between the congregations of the cluster and the synod.
 - 26 d. providing a forum for conversation about matters coming before the Synod Assembly.
 - 27 e. submitting nominations for any available synod position to the Synod Nominating Committee.
 28
- 29 **S12.01.A87** The Synod Council shall be responsible to review the purposes and functions of clusters and to assist the
 30 clusters in the development of their common and interdependent ministry.
 31
- 32 **S12.10. Cluster Deans**
- 33
- 34 **S12.11.01.** This synod shall have cluster deans who shall be selected by and shall serve according to guidelines
 35 established by the bishop in conversation with the Synod Council and the clusters; and whose duties shall be
 36 those noted in this constitution and its bylaws.
- 37 **S12.11.02.** In addition to the rights and duties assigned elsewhere in this Constitution and its Bylaws, the dean shall:
 38
- 39 a. Assist the bishop, as requested, with appropriate duties such as ordinations, installations, dedications,
 40 anniversaries, and the like;
 - 41 b. Serve, when necessary, as one of the persons described in †S14.13.b;
 - 42 c. Assist the bishop, where appropriate, with consultations for the Call Process in congregations of the
 43 cluster;
 - 44 d. Serve the needs of the cluster and synod as, from time to time, may be determined by the bishop.
 - 45 e. Serve a term at the pleasure of the bishop.
 46
- 47 **P12.11.02.A** Cluster Deans' Expenses The expenses of Cluster Deans when acting on behalf of the Synod as directed by
 48 the Bishop shall be paid by the Synod. S90.05.20
 49
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51 Chapter 13. CONGREGATIONS

- 52
- 53 †S13.01. Each congregation, except those certified as congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America by
 54 the uniting churches, prior to being listed in the register of congregations of this synod, shall adopt the Model
 55 Constitution for Congregations or one acceptable to this synod, which is not in contradiction to the
 56 constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

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- 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 provisions of Chapter 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 15, 16, 17, 18, and 19 in the *Model Constitution for Congregations* consistent with requirements of the constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this church. Bylaws and continuing resolutions, appropriate for inclusion in these chapters and not in conflict with these required provisions in the *Model Constitution for Congregations*, the constitution of this synod, or the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, may be adopted as described in Chapters 16 and 18 of the Model Constitution for Congregations.
 - 3) Accept the commitments expected of all congregations of the ELCA as stated in *C6.01., *C6.02., and *C6.03., of the Model Constitution for Congregations.
- b. Congregations from another church body. If a congregation is a member of another church body, the leaders of the congregation first should consult with the appropriate authorities of that church body before taking action to leave its current church body. After such consultation, leaders of the congregation should make contact with the ELCA synod bishop or staff where the congregation is located.
- c. Recognition and reception. Recognition and reception into this church of transferring or independent congregations by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is based on the judgment of the synod and action by the synod through the Synod Council and Synod Assembly. The synod bishop shall provide for prompt reporting of such additions to the secretary of this church for addition to the register of congregations.

†S13.02. It shall be the responsibility of each congregation of this synod to 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 an associate in ministry, deaconess, or diaconal minister resigns, the Congregation Council shall receive the letter of resignation, report it to the congregation, and at once notify the bishop of this synod.

P13.11.A Call and Termination of Rostered Lay Persons (See Appendix 8)

S13.11.01. Recognizing the inherent interdependence of congregations and synod, congregations of this synod shall follow the provisions of the Call Process adopted for this synod.

P13.11.01.A Interim Ineligible for a Call A congregation may not issue a Call to its interim pastor during his/her active service in that role, or within three years of the termination thereof. S90.05.36

P13.11.01.B Guidelines for the Call Process of the Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod (See Appendix 1)

P13.11.01.C The Affirmative Call (See Appendix 2)

P13.11.01.D Guidelines for Calling an Assistant, Associate, or Co-Pastor (See Appendix 3)

P13.11.01.E Guide for Congregations in Transition Interim Ministry (See Appendix 6)

P13.11.01.F Agreement for Interim Ministry (See Appendix 7)

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P13.11.01.G Call and Termination of Rostered Lay Persons (See Appendix 8)

P13.11.01.H "Transition Minister" Designation (See Appendix 12)

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

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

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

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

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

†**S13.23.** Provision 9.71. of the ELCA constitution shall govern the relationship of this synod and a congregation of this synod regarding the property of the congregation. This synod may transfer or convey property to a congregation of the synod, subject to restrictions accepted by the congregation, including provision that if the Synod Council, in its sole and exclusive discretion, determines (1) that the property is not being used to serve the mission and ministry needs of this church, or (2) that the congregation has transferred, encumbered, mortgaged, or in any way burdened or impaired any right, title, or interest in the property without the prior approval of the Synod Council, then title to the property shall revert to the synod, and the congregation, upon written demand, shall reconvey the property to the synod.

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

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

S13.30. Discipline

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

S13.40. Synodically Authorized Worshiping Communities

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

1 **Chapter 14. ORDAINED MINISTERS AND LAY ROSTERED MINISTERS**

2
3 †S14.01. The time and place of the ordination of those persons properly called to congregations or extra parish service
4 of this synod shall be authorized by the bishop of this synod.

5
6 †S14.02. Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,

7
8 a. Every ordained minister shall:

- 9 1) preach the Word;
10 2) administer the sacraments;
11 3) conduct public worship;
12 4) provide pastoral care; and
13 5) speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and
14 proclaiming God's love for the world.

15
16 b. Each ordained minister with a congregational call shall, within the congregation:

- 17 1) offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead;
18 2) supervise all schools and organizations of the congregation;
19 3) install regularly elected members of the Congregation Council; and
20 4) with the council, administer discipline.

21
22 c. Every pastor shall:

- 23
24 1) strive to extend the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation, and abroad;
25 2) seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel;
26 3) impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through distribution of its periodicals and
27 other publications; and
28 4) endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the ELCA churchwide
29 organization and of this ELCA synod.

30
31 S14.02.01. Ordained ministers under call shall normally attend an Annual Pastors' Conference sponsored for purposes of
32 worship, renewal, attention to pastoral concerns and fellowship.

33
34 P14.02.01.A Attendance of Ordained Ministers at Synod Events The Executive Committee shall be notified of unexcused
35 absences of Pastors at Pastoral Conferences, Synod Assemblies, and Synod Gatherings. S97.01.17

36
37 P14.02.01.B Policy on Copyright Infringement and Plagiarism (See Appendix 11)

38
39 S14.02.02. Organization of and planning for the Annual Pastors' Conference shall be the responsibility of a committee
40 elected from the roster of this synod by the members of the roster.

41
42 S14.02.03. Attendance at the Annual Pastors' Conference shall be in addition to, and not considered a part of, continuing
43 education time provided by congregations in their Letter of Call.

44
45 S14.02.04. Ordained ministers under call shall normally attend any Festival Gatherings called by the Synod Council.

46
47 P14.02.04A Attendance of Ordained Ministers at Synod Events The Executive Committee shall be notified of unexcused
48 absences of Pastors at Pastoral Conferences, Synod Assemblies, and Synod Gatherings. S90.05.33

49
50 P14.02.04B Synod Sabbatical Policy (See Appendix 10)

51
52 S14.03. The pastor (a) shall keep accurate parochial records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials,
53 communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from the congregation, (b) shall
54 submit a summary of such statistics annually to this synod, (c) shall become a member of the congregation
55 upon receipt and acceptance of the letter of call. In a parish of multiple congregations, the pastor shall hold
56 membership in one of the congregations.

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- 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.
- P14.11.A** Disclosure of Potential Liability In situations where there is a potential liability for the Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod, or its congregations or its institutions, because of the history and/or background of a clergy person, a full disclosure of the circumstances/history regarding such a person shall be made to a congregation or institution prior to their consideration for appointment or Call. S90.05.18 Guidelines Background Checks for Candidacy (See Appendix 13)
- P14.11.B** Interim Ineligible for a Call A congregation may not issue a Call to its interim pastor during his/her active service in that role, or within three years of the termination thereof. S90.05.36
- 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 shall be terminated only by death or, 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, no later than 30 days after the date on which it was submitted;
 - 3) inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in that congregation in view of local conditions;
 - 4) physical disability or mental incapacity of the pastor;
 - 5) suspension of the pastor through discipline for more than three months;
 - 6) resignation or removal of the pastor from the roster of ordained ministers of this church;
 - 7) termination of the relationship between this church and the congregation;
 - 8) dissolution of the congregation or the termination of a parish arrangement; or
 - 9) suspension of the congregation through discipline for more than six months.
 - b. When allegations of physical disability or mental incapacity of the pastor under paragraph a.4) above, or ineffective conduct of the pastoral office under paragraph a.3) above, have come to the attention of the bishop of this synod,
 - 1) the bishop in his or her sole discretion may investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two ordained ministers and one layperson, or
 - 2) when such allegations have been brought to the synod's attention by an official recital of allegations by the congregation council or by a petition signed by at least one-third of the voting members of the

1 congregation, the bishop personally shall investigate such conditions together with a committee of two
2 ordained ministers and one layperson.
3

- 4 c. In case of alleged physical disability or mental incapacity under paragraph a.4) above, the bishop's
5 committee shall obtain and document competent medical opinion concerning the pastor's condition.
6 When a disability or incapacity is evident to the committee, the bishop of this synod may declare the
7 pastorate vacant and the pastor shall be listed on the clergy roster as disabled. Upon removal of the
8 disability and restoration of the pastor to health, the bishop shall take steps to enable the pastor to resume
9 the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another appropriate call.
10
- 11 d. In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of the congregation under
12 paragraph a.3) above, the bishop's committee shall endeavor to hear from, all concerned persons, after
13 which the bishop together with the committee shall present their recommendations first to the pastor and
14 then to the congregation. The recommendations of the bishop's committee must address whether the
15 pastor's call should come to an end and, if so, may suggest appropriate severance arrangements. The
16 committee may also propose other actions that should be undertaken by the congregation and by the
17 pastor, if appropriate. If the pastor and congregation agree to carry out such recommendations, no
18 further action need be taken by the synod.
19
- 20 e. If either party fails to assent, to the recommendations of the bishop's committee concerning the pastor's
21 call, the congregation may dismiss the pastor only at a legally called meeting after consultation with the
22 bishop, either (a) by a two-thirds majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the
23 bishop and the committee did not recommend termination of the call, or (b) by a simple majority vote of
24 the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee recommended termination of
25 the call.
26
- 27 f. If, in the course of proceedings described in paragraph c. or paragraph d. above the bishop's committee
28 concludes that there may be grounds for disciplinary action, the committee shall make recommendations
29 concerning disciplinary action, in accordance with the provisions of this church's constitution bylaws,
30 and continuing resolutions.

31 **P14.13.A** Process for Termination of Pastoral Calls (See Appendix 4)

32
33 **P14.13.B** Retirement Announcements The Synod Council recommends that pastors announce their impending
34 retirements to their congregations not less than three months nor more than six months before the selected
35 retirement date. SC93.03.02
36

37 **P14.13.C** Chemical Dependencies (See Appendix 5)

38
39 **P14.13.D** Policy Regarding Sexual Misconduct (See Appendix 16)

40
41 †S14.14. Ordained ministers shall respect the integrity of the ministry of congregations which they do not serve and
42 shall not exercise ministerial functions therein unless invited to do so by the pastor, or if there is no duly
43 called pastor, then by the interim pastor in consultation with the Congregation Council.
44

45 †S14.15. The parochial records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received,
46 members transferred or dismissed, members who have become inactive, or members excluded from the
47 congregation shall be kept accurately and permanently, They shall remain the property of each congregation.
48 At the time of the closure of a congregation, such records shall be sent to the regional archives. The elected
49 secretary of the congregation shall attest to the bishop of this synod that such records have been placed in his
50 or her hands in good order by a departing pastor before:
51

- 52 a. installation in another field of labor, or
53 b. the issuance of a certificate of dismissal or transfer.
54

55 †S14.16. The pastor shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to a former congregation before:
56

- 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 normally attend meetings of the Synod Assembly and Festival Gatherings, and the pastors of congregations shall also attend the meetings of the conference, cluster, coalition, or other area subdivision to which the congregation belongs.

P14.21.A Attendance of Ordained Ministers at Synod Events The Executive Committee shall be notified of unexcused absences of Pastors at Pastoral Conferences, Synod Assemblies, and Synod Gatherings. S90.05.33

S14.30. Official Rosters of Laypersons

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

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

P14.31.A Call and Termination of Rostered Lay Persons (See Appendix 8)

P14.31.B Policy on Copyright Infringement and Plagiarism (See Appendix 11)

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 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America 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.

S15.11.01. Endowment funds, whose purpose, governance, and operational procedures shall be defined by special resolution adopted by the Synod at its biennial business meetings, may be established.

†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.

P15.12.A Funding Requests All agencies and committees funded by the Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod shall be notified by the Finance Committee of a deadline date (October 1). Funding requests received after the deadline or increases to the preliminary proposed budget adopted at the next Synod Council meeting after the deadline date shall be presented to the Finance Committee before the Synod Council adopts the final budget. Any disagreement with the Finance Committee's budget proposal for any committee or agency shall be made in writing to the Synod Council prior to the biennial business Assembly. The text of the policy will be publicized in the next Synod "Cross Connection". SC97.01.17

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.

P15.13.A Registration at Synod Assemblies Synod Council members and members of this synod who serve on the Church Council of the ELCA, who are not voting members from their own congregations shall be provided registration and room and board at Synod Assemblies. SC94.05

P15.13.B Funding Discretionary Categories This Synod shall provide funding in "discretionary" categories up to a percentage of adopted line items, with such a percentage determined by comparing receipts to date with adopted budget to date. Funding at levels reduced from such percentage is always possible. S88.09.03

P15.13.C Disbursement Policy The Synod Council will validate changes to disbursement policies. We have made our Churchwide disbursement a priority. We, therefore, recognize that the Synod may enter into deficit spending. If deficit spending is imminent, questions concerning which agencies will receive disbursement may require timely Council action. The Council grants the Treasurer freedom to make adjustments pending Council approval. SC97.01.17

P15.13.D Reimbursement of Expenses Synod officers, Synod staff, Synod Council members, and members of all Synod committees and task groups shall be reimbursed by the Synod for travel costs and meals, but not for housing where free housing has been provided, while conducting authorized Synod business. Exceptions to

1 this policy may be allowed only by vote of the Synod Council. S90.05.25

2
3 SC91.02.20 changed a portion of the above policy regarding housing: That we provide "double occupancy" to
4 Synod Council members and Synod Committee members attending to the business of the Synod.
5 SC91.02.20

6
7 Mileage reimbursement will be equal to the current IRS mileage rates.

8
9 **P15.13.E** Travel from Outside the Synod When a Synod Council member or a member of a Synod Committee or Task
10 Group who is temporarily out of the geographical area of the Synod, and who travels from there to a Synod
11 meeting, shall be reimbursed, if at all, only up to the value of transportation from the person's home to the
12 meeting location. S90.11.17

13
14 **S15.13.01.** Approval of the Synod Assembly shall be required when total upward adjustments to the adopted budget
15 exceed 10 percent of the synod's share of congregational benevolence or when upward adjustments to
16 individual items within the adopted budget exceed 20 percent of that budget item.

17
18 **S15.13.02.** The Synod Council shall determine means of accountability for organizations, groups and institutions
19 receiving financial support from this synod. The Synod Council may require appropriate presence and vote
20 on governing boards of such organizations, groups and institutions when financial support exceeds 3 percent
21 of the synod's share of congregational benevolence.

22
23 **P15.13.02.A** Moneys from Youth Events Any moneys raised from future Synod Youth events shall be placed in a
24 restricted fund to be released only for this synod's youth programming. S89.02.31 (Policy amended 6/98
25 Synod Council Meeting)

26
27 **S15.14.** Except when such procedure would jeopardize current operations, a reserve amounting to no more than 16
28 percent of the sum of the amounts scheduled in the next year's budget for regular distribution to synodical
29 causes shall be carried forward annually for disbursement in the following year in the interest of making
30 possible a more even flow of income to such causes. The exact number of dollars to be held in reserve shall
31 be determined by the Synod Council.

32
33 **P15.14.A** Use of Restricted Funds for Cash Flow

- 34
35 a. When the Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod can realistically expect that funds needed for current
36 operations and payment of support to agencies shown in the budget will be available within the Fiscal
37 Year, expenditures can be made by using funds in the "Restricted Cash Flow" line item. These funds
38 must be replaced prior to the end of the Fiscal Year. This action may be taken at the discretion of the
39 Synod Treasurer who must clearly detail the need and the proposed schedule of fund reimbursement at
40 the next Executive Committee and Synod Council meetings.
- 41 b. When the Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod experiences one-time, unpredictable financial needs of an
42 emergency nature where no other funding is available, expenditures can be made by using funds in the
43 "Restricted Cash Flow" line item. Unpredictable financial needs is a subject for discussion and
44 development of alternatives by the Executive Committee, but approval of proposals is an action of the
45 Council. The telephone will be used to gather votes on alternatives.
- 46 c. Any other decisions to change the balance of the "Restricted Cash Flow" line item must be approved by a
47 majority vote of the Synod Council. SC97.01.17

48
49 **S15.21.** No appeal to congregations of this or any other synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for the
50 raising of funds shall be conducted by congregations or organizations related to or affiliated with this synod
51 without the consent of the Synod Assembly or the Synod Council.

52
53 **P15.21.A** Fund Appeals The Synod Council will approve such fund appeals only when:

- 54
55 a) the organization is one whose philosophies or activities we can endorse;
56 b) the proposed project to be funded is worth doing;

1 c) the Synod will not be asked to carry out any portion of the fund appeal. S90.05.12
2

3 **S15.21.01.** Appeals for normal operating budgets of such congregations or organizations shall be approved by the Synod
4 Council, and indication of such approval shall be included when such appeals are made.
5

6 **S15.21.02.** Appeals noted in S15.21.01 shall be reviewed at least every five years, with renewal of such approval
7 required at the time of such a review.
8

9 **S15.21.03.** Major fund appeals, or fund appeals for capital improvements, shall be approved by the Synod Council and
10 indication of such approval shall be included when such appeals are made.
11

12 †**S15.31.** This synod shall arrange to have an annual audit of its financial records conducted by a certified public
13 accountant firm recommended by the synod Audit Committee and approved ~~selected~~ by the Synod Council.
14 The audited annual financial report shall be submitted by this synod to the churchwide Office of the Treasurer
15 and to the congregations of this synod. The financial reports shall be in the format approved from time to
16 time by the Office of the Treasurer.
17

18 †**S15.32.** This synod shall maintain adequate, continuous insurance coverage in accordance with standards
19 recommended by the churchwide organization. Insurance programs offered or endorsed by the churchwide
20 organization shall be deemed to fulfill this obligation
21

22 **S15.40** **General Provisions**

23 **S15.41** Restricted Funds

24
25
26
27
28 **P15.41.A** Moellering Estate Guidelines for Moellering Estate:

- 29
30 1. The funds will be placed in the ELCA Mission Loan Fund with interest available to the Outreach
31 Committee as a supplement to the Synod's line item: "New Ministry Seed 1-608-02104".
32
33 2. Interest and, if warranted, principal, to be used to fund new mission and ministry in keeping with the
34 Synod's mission strategy and donor intent.
35
36 3. Any interest disbursement from the Moellering Estate will be made by the Outreach Committee. Any
37 disbursement of principal funds must have approval from the Synod Council. S90.05.06
38

39 **P15.41.B** Use of Restricted Funds for Cash Flow (See P15.14A)

40
41 **P15.41.C** Sale of Synod Assets The Synod may receive property or funds given or willed to it, or it may inherit land,
42 buildings or other assets when a congregation within the Synod disbands. When this occurs, the following
43 guidelines shall apply.
44

- 45 1. When the Synod receives land, buildings or other real or personal property, a Project Group shall be
46 appointed by the Bishop to determine the disposition of the property. The Project Group may
47 recommend that the property be:
48
49 a) sold;
50 b) distributed to other ministries for their use;
51 c) kept by the Synod for future use in ministry
52

53 The Project Group shall include a representative of the Bishop's office, a representative of the Synod
54 Council, a representative of the Finance Committee, a representative of the Congregational Life
55 Committee, and the Synod Treasurer as an ex officio member. Other group representatives may be
56 appointed to the Project Group at the discretion of the Bishop.

1
2 The Project Group will consult with the local congregations and ministries to discover local concerns as
3 it makes its recommendation for the disposition of the property. The Project Group shall present its
4 recommendation to the Synod Council for ratification.
5

- 6
7 2. When undesignated (SC0009.05) funds are received by the Synod, either directly or from the sale of
8 property received by the Synod, these funds shall be placed in a specially designated Synod Mission
9 Fund, which will be used by the Synod to extend the mission of the Church. The funds may be used
10 either to help develop new mission congregations or to support existing congregations facing special
11 needs or challenges. Ministries being so supported may, but need not, be located within the Synod.

12 Any congregation, cluster, Synod Committee, or other recognized group within the Synod may make a
13 recommendation to the Synod Council as to how such funds shall be used. The Synod Council shall
14 make a final determination. SC92.05.27
15

16 **P15.41.D** Transfer of Funds by Committees to Restricted Accounts Committee budgets are intended to finance
17 committee activity in the year for which the funds are budgeted. These funds are not to be set aside or
18 transferred to restricted accounts for future year's programs without approval by the Synod Council.
19 SC95.03.17
20

21 **S15.50** Administrative Provisions
22

23 **P15.50.A** Airline Travel at Synod Expense Any travel incentives earned through airline mileage clubs may be retained
24 for personal use. Reservations for specific airlines cannot be made to gain incentive mileage credits via
25 inappropriate routes or use of other than lowest fare available tickets. SC93.09.23
26

27
28 **P15.50.B** Use of Synod Mailing Lists Synod mailing lists, in their appropriate format, may be provided to affiliated
29 groups or individuals at the discretion of the Synod staff, provided that those groups or individuals pay the
30 administrative cost. Affiliated groups or individuals are defined as anyone recognized by the ELCA
31 Churchwide, or the Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod. This includes groups or individuals associated with
32 the ELCA and our purposes and mission. Mailing lists may
33 not be used for commercial purposes. Use of the mailing list for fund raising efforts must have the prior
34 approval of the Synod Council. S90.05.37 (policy 5.3)
35

36 **P15.50.C** Use of Synod Vehicles The Synod vehicle(s) will be used by Synod personnel only. S90.05.29
37

38 **S15.60** Fund Appeals by Synod
39

40 **P15.61.A** Future Fund-Raising Appeals Future fund-raising appeals shall include designation of those persons
41 responsible for determining the use of funds raised in case the amount received is short of or exceeds the goal.
42 SC93.09.16
43

44 45 **Chapter 16. INDEMNIFICATION**

46
47 †**S16.01.** Subject to the limitations and duties imposed by law, each person who is or was made or threatened to be
48 made a party to any proceeding by reason of the present or former capacity of that person as a Synod Council
49 member, officer, employee or committee member of this synod shall be indemnified against all costs and
50 expenses incurred by that person in connection with the proceeding. Indemnification of any person by reason
51 of that person's capacity as a director, officer, employee, or committee member of any other organization,
52 regardless of its form or relationship to this synod, is subject to the provisions of section †S16.02.

- 53 a. The term "proceeding" means a threatened, pending, or completed lawsuit, whether civil or criminal, an
54 administrative or investigative matter, arbitration, mediation, alternative dispute resolution, or any other
55 similar legal or governmental action. Except as otherwise required by law, the term "proceeding" does not
56 include (a) any action by this synod against the individual seeking

1 indemnification, or (b) subject to †16.04., a disciplinary hearing or related process described in
2 Chapter 20 of the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran
3 Church in America.
4

5 b. The term “indemnification” includes reimbursement and advances of costs and expenses for
6 judgments, penalties, fines, settlements, excise taxes, reasonable attorneys’ fees, disbursements, and
7 similar required expenditures.
8

9 †S16.02. Whenever a person who, while a Synod Council member, officer, committee member, or employee of this
10 synod, is or was serving at the request of this synod as (or whose duties in that position involve or involved
11 service in the capacity of) a director, officer, partner, trustee, employee, or agent of another organization, is or
12 was made or threatened to be made a party to a proceeding by reason of such capacity, then such person shall
13 be entitled to indemnification only if (a) the Synod Council has established a process for determining whether
14 a person serving in the capacity described in this section shall be entitled to indemnification in any specific
15 case, and (b) that process has been applied in making a specific determination that such person is entitled to
16 indemnification.
17

18 †S16.03. This synod may purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of itself or any person entitled to indemnification
19 pursuant to this chapter against any liability asserted against and incurred by this synod or by such other
20 person in or arising from a capacity described in section †S16.01. or section †S16.02.
21

22 †S16.04. When written charges against an ordained minister or a layperson on an official roster of this church are made
23 in disciplinary proceedings under Chapter 20 of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the*
24 *Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* by the synodical bishop or when written charges against a
25 congregation are made in disciplinary proceedings by the Synod Council or the synodical bishop, and the
26 discipline hearing committee determines that no discipline shall be imposed, the if such determination is not
27 reversed or set aside on appeal indemnification shall be made by the synod to the accused for reasonable
28 attorney's fees and other reasonable expenses related to the defense of the charges. The determination of the
29 reasonableness of such fees and expenses shall be decided by the Synod Council.
30

31 Chapter 17. ADJUDICATION

32
33 †S17.01. The synodical bishop and the Executive Committee of the Synod Council shall be available to give counsel
34 when disputes arise within this synod.
35

36 †S17.02. The synodical bishop and the Executive Committee of the Synod Council shall receive expressions of
37 concern from ordained ministers, associates in ministry or other persons on the official lay rosters of this
38 church, congregations, and organizations within this synod; provide a forum in which the parties concerned
39 can seek to work out matters causing distress or conflict; and make appropriate recommendations for their
40 resolution. When the matter at issue cannot be resolved in this manner, the prescribed procedures for
41 investigation, decision, appeal, and adjudication shall be followed. Allegations or charges that could lead to
42 the discipline of an ordained minister or a person on the official lay rosters of this church, shall not be
43 addressed by the Executive Committee but shall be resolved through the disciplinary process set forth in the
44 Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
45

46 †S17.03. When there is disagreement among units of this synod on a substantive issue that cannot be resolved by the
47 parties, the aggrieved party or parties may appeal to the synodical bishop and the Executive Committee of the
48 Synod Council for a consultation. If this consultation fails to resolve the issue, a petition may be addressed
49 by the parties to the Synod Council requesting it to arbitrate the issue. The decision of the Synod Council
50 shall be final.
51

52 †S17.04. When a component or beneficiary of a synod has a disagreement on a substantive issue that it cannot resolve,
53 it may address an appeal to the synodical bishop and the Executive Committee of the Synod Council. In this
54 case the decision of the Executive Committee shall prevail, except that upon the motion of a member of the
55 Synod Council, the decision shall be referred to the Synod Council for final action.
56

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

2
3 †S17.11. When there is disagreement among factions within a congregation on a substantive issue that cannot be
4 resolved by the parties, members of a congregation shall have access to the synodical bishop for consultation
5 after informing the chair of the Congregation Council of their intent. If the consultation fails to resolve the
6 issue(s), the Consultation Committee of this synod shall consider the matter. If the Consultation Committee
7 of this synod shall fail to resolve the issue(s), the matter shall be referred to the Synod Council, whose
8 decision shall be final.
9

10
11 **Chapter 18. AMENDMENTS, BYLAWS, AND CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS**

12
13 †S18.10. **Amendments to Constitution**

14
15 †S18.11. Certain sections of this constitution incorporate and record therein required provisions of the constitution and
16 bylaws of this church. If such provisions are amended by the Churchwide Assembly, corresponding
17 amendments shall be introduced at once into this constitution by the secretary of this synod upon receipt of
18 formal certification thereof from the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
19

20 †S18.12. Whenever the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America officially informs this synod that the
21 Churchwide Assembly has amended the Constitution for Synods, this constitution may be amended to reflect
22 any such amendment by a simple majority vote at any subsequent meeting of the Synod Assembly without
23 presentation at a prior Synod Assembly. An amendment that is identical to a provision of the Constitution for
24 Synods shall be deemed to have been ratified upon its adoption by this synod. The Church Council, through
25 the secretary of this church, shall be given prompt notification of its adoption.
26

27 †S18.13. Other amendments to this constitution may be adopted by this synod through either of the following
28 procedures:
29

- 30 a. An amendment may be adopted by a two-thirds vote at a regular meeting of the Synod Assembly after
31 having been presented in writing at the previous regular meeting of the Synod Assembly over the
32 signatures of at least 70 members and been approved by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present
33 and voting at such a regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.
- 34 b. The Synod Council may propose an amendment, with notice to be sent to the congregations of this synod
35 at least six months prior to the next regular meeting of the Synod Assembly. Such an amendment shall
36 require for adoption a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting at such a regular meeting
37 of the Synod Assembly.
38

39 All such amendments shall become effective upon ratification by the Churchwide Assembly or by the Church
40 Council.
41

42 S18.13.01. The Synod Council may also prepare and submit to the Synod Assembly for action appropriate amendments
43 to this Constitution. Such amendments shall be subject to the provisions of †S18.11., †S18.12., and †S18.13.
44

45 †S18.20. **Amendments to Bylaws**

46
47 †S18.21. This synod may adopt bylaws not in conflict with this constitution nor with the constitution and bylaws of the
48 churchwide organization. This synod may amend its bylaws at any meeting of the Synod Assembly by a two-
49 thirds vote of voting members of the assembly present and voting. Newly adopted bylaws and amendments
50 to existing bylaws shall be reported to the secretary of this church.
51

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

53
54 †S18.31. This synod may adopt continuing resolutions not in conflict with this constitution or its bylaws or the
55 constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of the churchwide organization. Such continuing resolutions
56 may be adopted or amended by a majority vote of the Synod Assembly or by a two-thirds vote of Synod

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2
3

Council. Newly adopted continuing resolutions and amendments to existing continuing resolutions shall be reported to the secretary of this church.

APPENDICES

1. GUIDELINES FOR THE CALL PROCESS EASTERN WASHINGTON-IDAHO SYNOD Approved by Synod Council 10-9-98

1. When a vacancy occurs, the congregation members shall prayerfully begin the call process. The congregational president shall notify the Bishop. The council and parish leadership shall attend to whatever emotions (i.e., grief, loss, guilt, anger, relief) the congregation and its members may be experiencing. Partnership congregations shall also notify the Mission Director of Division for Outreach Region 1, whose assistance and concurrence are required in the issuing of a new call.
2. The council shall call a congregational meeting for a synod representative to explain the call process, and shall send the Bishop's letter to congregation.
3. The council shall arrange with the Bishop's office for interim pastoral services.
4. The council shall review their present compensation package and their ability to adequately support a pastor. Congregations are expected to compensate according to synod guidelines. A review of financial stewardship by the entire congregation may be in order.
5. The congregation is encouraged to choose a "Mission and Life" task group that will work closely with the Interim Pastor, examine the opportunities for the congregation's mission and complete a congregational self study, sharing the results with the congregation's members.
6. The congregation shall elect a representative call committee according to the provisions for such a committee in their constitution.
7. If a "Mission and Life" task group is not formed, the call committee shall conduct a congregational self-study, with special attention being given to the mission of the congregation. The last two pages should be shared as a survey with as many members as possible.
8. The committee shall send a summary of this self-study to the Bishop, with a copy to the Cluster Dean, including objective demographic material about the congregation and community.
9. The council may provide an opportunity for the congregation to nominate candidates by use of a form provided in the church office.
10. The Bishop's office (and candidacy committee when possible) shall gather appropriate mobility information on each candidate, secure permission from each candidate's bishop, and review all prospective candidates. This process normally takes four to six weeks. The Bishop or his/her representative shall then present to the congregation call committee a list of 2-3 persons whom they believe match the congregation's stated needs and who have indicated they would be open to seriously considering a call to the congregation.¹ The bishop's office will offer explanation to the call committee of all persons nominated by the congregation who are not included among the 2-3 candidates presented by the bishop's office.
11. A representative from the synod office will go over each name with the committee, verbally sharing as

¹ Because of the need for individuals to be considered regionally and church-wide, an agreement has been reached that an individual's name can only be considered by one congregation at a time. (The two exceptions to this agreement are: a) seminary assignees and b) persons Without Call.) This means that when a congregation is reviewing 1-3 candidates, all other synods in the Region will be informed and these individuals will not be available for consideration until their names are released by the congregation considering him or her.

1 much information as is available and stating why they feel this person would fit the congregation's stated
2 needs.
3

- 4 12. If the call committee believes the names submitted do not match the needs of the congregation, they may
5 be returned and 2-3 additional names will be provided.
6
- 7 13. At this point the prospective candidate or candidates will be contacted for additional information and
8 interviewed on site. This pre-call on-site visit shall be held, at the congregation's expense, with both
9 pastor and spouse present when possible. A visit around the community would also be helpful. The
10 congregation should also meet the candidate at a reception, coffee hour, potluck or other informal time.
11 The Synod office will provide guidance for this on-site visit.
12
- 13 14. If the committee does not feel that the individual(s) met through an on-site visit meet the needs of the
14 congregation, they shall return the name(s) and request further names for consideration.
15
- 16 15. If the Call Committee feels that one of the candidates met through an on-site visit meets the needs of the
17 congregation and is their selection for pastor of the congregation, then a call meeting will be arranged
18 according to the congregation's constitution, announced (usually two Sundays prior to the chosen date)
19 and held with a designated representative of the Bishop present. Only one name will be considered by
20 the congregation. Written ballots will be used in electing a pastor. Absentee ballots are not allowed. A
21 report of the results of the vote and meeting shall be sent to the Synod office together with data needed
22 for issuing of the call. (See Call Document.) A joint call meeting shall be held in the case of a two-point
23 or multiple parish.
24
- 25 16. The Letter of Call shall be signed by two authorized congregational representatives and sent to the Synod
26 office for attestation by the Bishop, who will send it on to the candidate.²
27
- 28 17. The call committee will promptly notify the other individuals not called about the outcome of the
29 meeting.
30
- 31 18. Normally a pastor should make his/her decision within three weeks.
32
- 33 19. In the event the pastor does not accept the call, the call committee shall continue the process beginning
34 again at step 9.
35
- 36 20. In the case of a call for an associate or co-pastor, the call shall "normally" be co-terminus with that of the
37 lead or other co-pastor.
38
- 39 21. The council together with the pastor and bishop shall make plans for the pastor's installation as soon after
40 the acceptance of the call as possible. The Call Committee or another task group appointed by the
41 council may be charged with the tasks of helping the new pastor settle into the community; i.e. finding a
42 doctor, bank, schools, etc.
43

44
45 Addendum: when calling an Assistant, Associate, Co-Pastor, Associate in Ministry, Deaconess or Diaconal
46 minister, the current lead pastor has veto power in the selection process.
47
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49

50 2. **THE AFFIRMATIVE CALL**

² Congregations calling first-call pastors are expected to participate with their pastor in the ELCA "First Call Theological Education" program. The program calls for additional continuing education time for the pastor and a congregational financial commitment of approximately \$250.

1
2 Purpose: This document is intended to offer guidance to call committees and synod staff as they work
3 together in the important matter of calling pastors and Associates in Ministry. Its intent is to insure that every
4 call process results ultimately in "the affirmative call", that is, a call free of inappropriate discrimination,
5 unlawful bias or unjust relationships with candidates.
6

7 Areas of Concern: The vast majority of call committee members approach their task with a high commitment
8 to fairness. They seek to be faithful representatives of the congregation that has chosen them to serve. They
9 are likewise fair-minded and seek to serve the best interest of all who might be considered for the ministry
10 position. Call committees recognize the many gifts for ministry among the great variety of persons God calls
11 into service--from new seminary graduates to pastors with decades of experience to Associates in Ministry,
12 both male and female. Congregations are willing to grow and experience new leadership.
13

14 Nevertheless, some problem areas remain. They include:

- 15 1. Age discrimination: Pastors and AIMs above a certain age or within a few years of retirement find they
16 may not be considered for a particular call because of their age. At the other end of the scale, younger
17 persons may be dismissed as too youthful.
18
- 19 2. Gender discrimination: This most greatly, if not exclusively, adversely affects female pastors, seminary
20 graduates and associates. Twenty years after the ELCA's predecessor churches saw the wisdom of
21 ordaining women, it is still heard from time to time: "Our congregation is not ready for a woman pastor".
22
- 23 3. Marital status: Some congregations or members within a congregation cling to their personal image of
24 the "ideal pastor". Often, this includes marital status and family situations. Inappropriate discrimination
25 is most often experienced by single pastors (including those who have never married, as well as those
26 who have known the painful realities of divorce or death of a spouse). Another form of discrimination
27 also can occur, that being a congregation's expectation for a pastor's spouse and/or family. Unless stated
28 otherwise, a congregation extends a Call to an ordained pastor and not his or her spouse or family. The
29 involvement of a pastor's spouse and family in the life of a congregation should not determine whether a
30 Call is issued.
31
- 32 4. Racial/ethnic discrimination: While the church, in its official statements, has championed racial justice,
33 we are not immune from inappropriate discrimination based upon a candidate's racial or ethnic
34 background. The ministry of the Lutheran church has been enriched in recent years by the response of
35 persons of color and many languages to the call. Yet, these sisters and brothers sometimes face
36 discrimination.
37
- 38 5. Physical attributes or conditions: A recent article in "The Lutheran" told the story of a blind pastor's
39 ministry. Many congregations have been blessed through the years by the ministry of persons who are
40 sometimes labeled as "disabled" or "handicapped". Nevertheless, there have been instances where a
41 candidate's physical condition was the basis of inappropriate discrimination. Personal and physical needs
42 (as, for example, a health requirement to live in a particular climate) may be appropriate considerations
43 in recommendation for call.
44
45

46 Principles: The Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod seeks to be guided by the highest principles of justice,
47 fairness and openness in its relationship with congregations calling pastors or Associates in Ministry. While
48 the church is bound by the same legal constraints as all other employers, it is our desire to avoid legalism and
49 strive toward even higher Biblical principles of fairness and justice than are reflected in the civil codes of the
50 United States.
51

52 Guidelines and Policies:

- 53 1. While they are first and foremost Christian communities and gatherings of the people of God,
54 congregations are also legal corporations and employers. They are bound in the same way as all
55 employers by federal, state and local laws in matters of "non-discriminatory hiring" etc. The only
56 appropriate exception is in matters of religious belief!

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2. While age discrimination in and of itself is always inappropriate (and illegal), in some cases expected tenure is an appropriate consideration. The congregation that has experienced several short term pastorates of two-three years, for example, may determine at the outset of a call process that the congregation can best be served by a relatively long-term pastorate of at least seven-ten years. That determination may result in candidates nearing retirement not being considered. Even so, the congregation will be expected to not simply assume a pastor's retirement at age 65, for example; they will be encouraged to enter into conversation with older candidates to determine whether mutual agreements concerning tenure may be worked out.
 3. Statements such as, "we're not ready for a woman" or "our congregation wouldn't accept a person of color" will be regarded as honest expressions of feelings. Such feelings, while genuine, simply cannot govern the conduct of a call process. The only appropriate criteria for recommendation of candidates by Synod staff, and their consideration by a call committee, are those which relate to educational background, ministerial experience and a positive matching of parish needs with pastoral gifts. Where strong sentiments are felt by members in a congregation, this should be shared openly with the synod staff person. Every effort will be made to provide educational resources to assist persons in gaining understanding of the ELCA's beliefs and practices relating to ordained and lay ministry.
 4. While discrimination on the basis of marital status or family circumstances is inappropriate (and illegal), call committees and synod staff are to be concerned for the holistic needs of pastoral candidates. Therefore, the synod's pastoral profile forms give opportunity for the candidates to state their family situation in addition to educational and ministerial experience. Many times, the congregation and synod are asked by candidates to offer assistance in exploring opportunities for employment of a spouse in the area, etc. In some cases, size of parsonage or resources available for housing allowance will affect candidate recommendation by the bishop's office. In all such situations, the considerations shall be openly discussed with prospective candidates. In most ministry situations residence in the local community where the congregation is located is recognized as an essential component for effective ministry. Such a determination shall be arrived at in consultation between a call committee and synod staff, and made known to all prospective candidates in advance of recommendations to the congregation.
 5. Occasional acts of inappropriate discrimination shall be dealt with in an evangelical spirit of "guidance and counsel". Pastors or AIMs who feel they have suffered discrimination should discuss their situation with the Bishop or the Bishop's Assistant. Incidents of discrimination against candidates may be shared with future candidates; such knowledge is relevant to their consideration of a potential call and will involve issues that need to be addressed in future ministry in that place. SC92.05.05

39 **3. GUIDELINES FOR CALLING AN ASSISTANT, ASSOCIATE, OR CO-PASTOR**

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Team ministry pastorates provide a unique style of pastoral ministry. To function effectively as a team, pastors must be able to fully share their ministry with one another, and members and leaders of a congregation must be able to consciously support such a concept. A team ministry, whether that be with an Assistant, Associate or Co-Pastor, requires pastors to forgo personal or individual acclaim for the good of the whole ministry.

47 Before entering into a team ministry, those considering it need to:

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- a. Assess the strength of their individual personalities;
 - b. Discover whether work styles are compatible;
 - c. Review their theological understandings and commitments to the faith and to the ministry;
 - d. Consider family willingness to support such a ministry;
 - e. Agree on a specific process for regular assessment by a third party of this team relationship;
 - f. Commit to writing a "working agreement" subject to regular review and revision, which clearly delineates an equality of both responsibility and compensation;
 - g. Make clear and specific plans as to how to terminate the team relationship if it becomes unworkable, without causing damage to the congregation.

1
2 It is the Synod's recommendation that a "third party" consultant not connected with the congregation or either
3 pastor, be engaged to facilitate items a-g above. This person will meet with all parties, alone and together, for
4 the purpose of helping assess the potential compatibility of these individuals. Psychological tools may be
5 used in such an assessment. This assessment would be undertaken before any commitments are made by
6 those exploring a team ministry. When there appears to be the potential for a compatible match as outlined
7 above, the consultant will help the parties put their expectations and understandings in writing. If a call is
8 extended and accepted, the consultant will, at an agreed time (normally within three months), meet a second
9 time, individually and together, with the persons involved in the agreement to assess how the understandings
10 and expectations are working, and to see if there are any adjustments that need to be made. After a second
11 three months, the consultant will again meet with the parties to assess how the agreement is working. A third
12 meeting will be held in six months, a fourth and fifth meeting in six-month intervals, and a sixth at the end of
13 the third year. Costs for the consultant's services will be borne by the congregation/calling body.

14
15 When it has been decided at a properly called meeting that a congregation wishes to enter into a team
16 ministry involving two or more rostered individuals:

- 17 1. The chairperson of the congregation will advise the Synod office.
- 18 2. A special meeting of the council will be called so that the Bishop or his/her assistant can talk through the
19 concept and the process.
- 20 3. A representative Call Committee of seven to nine persons is to be elected by the congregation.
- 21 4. The Call Committee, together with the Congregation Council and the pastor already serving the
22 congregation, shall agree on the gifts of the persons to be considered.
- 23 5. Names may be submitted from the congregation to the Synod office through the Call Committee.
- 24 6. The Synod office, in consultation with the other Synod Bishops and the congregation's present pastor,
25 will gather a list of prospective candidates.
- 26 7. The present pastor, in consultation with the Synod, and with the concurrence of the Synod, will make
27 initial contact with these persons to determine the compatibility and suitability for working with him/her
28 in such a team ministry. (See items a-g and notes on the consultation process above.)
- 29 8. The Synod, in consultation with the present pastor, and with the concurrence of the present pastor, will
30 present a list of suitable candidates and their accompanying data to the Call Committee. It is important
31 that the present pastor or the Call Committee have the right to veto on any candidate. It is also important
32 to note that the final decision of the Call Committee members will be made by written ballot.
- 33 9. The Call Committee will carefully review the candidates, narrowing the list to two or three. The
34 Committee will promptly notify those candidates released from consideration and will copy the Synod
35 office on all correspondence. (If, in the opinion of the Call Committee, none seem suitable, the process
36 will begin again at #5 above.)
- 37 10. When two or three acceptable candidates have been selected, arrangements will be made with each for an
38 on-site visit. (See consultation process outlined above. Initial meetings with the consultant and each
39 potential candidate are advisable to determine the potential for compatibility. At this point the Call
40 Committee will meet with candidates and be advised about
41
42 the consultant's and pastor's evaluation of each candidate. The Call Committee may then invite potential
43 candidates to meet with the committee and the candidates may also be invited to meet with the
44 congregation.)* The Synod office may provide guidance for such a visit. If at this point a suitable
45 candidate is not found, the process will begin again at #5.

- 1 11. Following the on-site visits, the Call Committee together with the pastor may make its selection by
2 written ballot, and will present only one candidate to the congregation for consideration.
3
- 4 12. A Call Meeting will be arranged according to the congregation's constitution, announced (usually two
5 Sundays prior to the chosen date), and held with a designated representative of the Bishop present. Only
6 one name will be considered by the congregation. Written ballots will be used in electing to call an
7 Assistant, Associate, or Co-Pastor, or in electing to call an Associate in Ministry (AIM). Absentee
8 ballots are not allowed. A 2/3 majority is required for election. A report of the results of the vote and
9 meeting shall be sent to the Synod office, together with data needed for issuing the call.
10
- 11 13. All Calls for Assistant, Associate, or Co-Pastors will follow the Synod's policy on co-terminus calls
12 (formerly item 4.7 in the Synod Policy Manual):
13
 - 14 a. A call for an Assistant, Associate, or Co-Pastor, or the call of an Associate in Ministry will not be
15 approved by the Synod Bishop unless co-terminus provisions, or lack thereof, are clearly stated.
16
 - 17 b. Assistant, Associate, or Co-Pastors with co-terminus calls are not to be considered as candidates for
18 the other ordained position in the team unless the original call to the Assistant, Associate, or Co-
19 Pastor was extended with the explicit provision to allow such candidacy.
20
 - 21 c. Congregations may terminate the calls of Assistant, Associate, or Co-Pastors or the calls of
22 Associates in Ministry with co-terminus calls immediately upon the departure of the other ordained
23 position in the team, and after consultation with the Synod Bishop, in accordance with Section
24 S14.13.a.1 of the Synod Constitution, unless the original call states otherwise.
25
 - 26 d. Congregations may extend the Call of the present Assistant, Associate, or Co-Pastor, or the call of
27 the present AIM in order to provide for congregational ministry until the installation of the new
28 pastor.
29
 - 30 e. All existing multiple staff Calls/Appointments of this Synod shall work toward compliance of this
31 policy as new Calls are issued.
32
- 33 14. A compensation package for the assistant, associate, or co-pastor shall be determined, using Synod
34 guidelines and the worksheet provided by the Synod. This compensation package will be included on the
35 Letter of Call. The completed Letter of Call shall be signed by two authorized congregational
36 representatives and sent to the Synod office for attestation by the Bishop, who then sends it on to the
37 candidate.
38
- 39 15. The Call Committee will promptly notify the other individual not called about the outcome of the
40 meeting.
41
- 42 16. Normally the candidate should make his/her decision within three weeks.
43
- 44 17. In the event that the candidate does not accept the call, the Call Committee shall continue the process,
45 returning to #5 above.
46
- 47 18. In the event the candidate for Assistant, Associate, or Co-Pastor accepts the Call (or the AIM accepts the
48 call), the Council together with the other pastor and the Bishop, shall make plans for his/her installation
49 as soon after the acceptance of the Call as possible. SC94.02.14
50

51 ADDENDUM: Because of the need for individuals to be considered regionally and churchwide, an
52 agreement has been reached that an individual's name can only be considered (at the point of an on-site visit)
53 by one congregation at a time. (The two exceptions to this agreement are: 1) seminary assignees, and 2)
54 pastors or AIMS without Call.) This means that when a congregation has selected one or two candidates, all
55 other synods in the Region will be informed, and these individuals will not be available for consideration
56 until their names are released by the congregation currently considering him/her.

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3 **4. PROCESS FOR TERMINATION OF PASTORAL CALLS (also see Synod Constitution †S14.13)**
4

- 5 1. When a congregation contacts the Bishop's office with allegations concerning its pastor, there shall be a
6 consultation period of not less than six months (to allow time for investigation and possible resolution of
7 the difficulties) before the congregation may terminate the pastor's call. The six month period shall
8 commence upon receipt by the Bishop's office of a written list of concerns, complaints, or
9 dissatisfactions from the congregation.
10
11 2. The Synod Bishop's involvement with the pastor and the congregation will normally include the following:
12 a. a conversation with the pastor regarding the effectiveness of his/her ministry and his/her readiness to
13 move;
14 b. the appointment of a peer council chosen by the pastor in consultation with the Synod Bishop;
15 c. a Bible study with the congregation on Biblical counsel regarding the resolution of problems (e.g.,
16 Matthew 18:15-22; Galatians 6:1-5; Leviticus 19:15-18; Luke 7:1-4);
17 d. the appointment of a consultation committee in accordance with S14.13.b of the Synod Constitution.
18 When this committee visits the congregation it shall meet first alone with the pastor, and, if married
19 the spouse; second with the congregational leadership as a group; and third, with individuals from
20 the congregation who desire to be heard.
21
22 3. The consultation committee shall make recommendations for resolving the difficulties. These shall be
23 discussed thoroughly with the pastor and the congregational leadership. If either the pastor or the
24 congregation fails to agree to the recommendations of the committee, the congregation may, when the six
25 month consultation period is ended, dismiss the pastor by a two-thirds vote in accordance with †S14.13.d
26 of the Synod Constitution.
27
28 4. If the pastor and congregation agree to the recommendations of the consultation committee, there shall be
29 a resolution period of at least six months, commencing on the date the recommendations are accepted.
30 During this period the Synod Bishop may:
31 a. require a congregational self-study on pastoral needs;
32 b. arrange visits for the pastor and family with the regional Consultation for Clergy;
33 c. keep in close touch with the congregation and the pastor to determine whether modifications in the
34 recommendations for resolution are necessary, or whether the resolution period shall be extended.
35 (A resolution period may be extended upon agreement by the Synod Bishop, the pastor, and the
36 congregation.)
37
38 5. When the resolution period ends the congregation decides whether to continue or terminate the call. A
39 two-thirds vote is required to terminate the call in accordance with †S14.13.d.
40
41 6. If the call is terminated the Synod Bishop shall:
42 a. negotiate with the congregation for severance pay, not to exceed six months full salary, housing,
43 pension, and medical benefits;
44 b. consult with the pastor regarding future calls.
45
46 7. Following termination of the call the pastor shall depart from the parish and the parsonage within 30
47 days, or as agreed upon with the Synod Bishop and the congregation.
48
49 8. Following termination of the call the Synod Bishop shall arrange for the provision of pastoral skills in
50 healing for the congregation during the interim period and call process.
51
52 9. If the call is not terminated the Synod Bishop shall hold a formal worship service of healing in the
53 congregation. SC93.09.25
54
55

56 **5. CHEMICAL DEPENDENCIES**

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2 "Chemical Dependencies" are the inappropriate use of legal or illegal substances that create a physical or
3 psychological dependence for usage that inhibits, harms or disrupts the individual and his relationships and/or
4 functioning with mental health, work, family, colleagues, parishioners, and friends. The Eastern Washington-
5 Idaho Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America recognizes that we have a special responsibility
6 to chemically dependent clergy, other church professionals, and their families. The following is a way for the
7 church to assist these people:
8

- 9 1. In the pastoral role as Bishop, and in the Bishop's responsibility for the pastoral care of the clergy and
10 other church professionals, the Bishop is responsible to the Synod Council for the well being of clergy
11 and other church professionals. The Bishop will work together with one or more chemical dependency
12 counselors, appointed by the Synod Executive Committee.
13
- 14 2. A chemically dependent person may seek advice or assistance voluntarily without fear of punitive action.
15 Family, friends, and/or colleagues may discreetly initiate help for the chemically dependent person
16 without fear of punitive action as well.
17
- 18 3. Once chemical dependency is recognized, it is essential that there be a strong, firm, and compassionate
19 confrontation regarding the reality of the person's situation. This shall be done by the appointed
20 chemical dependency professional(s). This person will work with the Bishop and others selected to
21 assist. It is essential that the family be involved in the program. Others who may help, include the
22 congregational council chairperson, colleagues, and friends. The most effective, loving way to help
23 chemically dependent persons is to establish for the individual a system of accountability. The system
24 may include one or all of these: attending a 12 step program, having a 12 step sponsor, conducting
25 unannounced urine analysis and/or breathalyzer tests, and attending a relapse support group. The person
26 in treatment must agree to an evaluation. The person in treatment must authorize a limited release from
27 the therapist to the Bishop relating to the progress of the treatment.
28
- 29 4. Following evaluation, all possibilities of treatment and support should be considered. These may include
30 alcoholism dependency treatment centers (both in- and out-patient), twelve-step groups, as well as other
31 appropriate resources. For "After Care" treatment the individual would be accountable to the Chemical
32 Dependency professional for periodic monitoring. Full disclosure to the employer or potential employer
33 is a necessary step for the "recovering" person.
34
- 35 5. Congregational councils and other employers should give reasonable sick leave in the event the
36 clergy/church professional is in treatment on an in-patient basis and/or as indicated by treatment
37 recommendations.
38
- 39 6. The cost of treatment for clergy and church professionals is supported by the ELCA Medical and Dental
40 Benefits plan, where applicable.
41
- 42 7. The Bishop shall work with the congregation/employer and the individual to determine the appropriate
43 actions relating to continuation of a call and/or presence on the clergy roster.
44
- 45 8. The recovering person who has repented and asked for forgiveness will have equal opportunity in future
46 placement.
47
- 48 9. The policy of re-employment need not, however, be applied to chemically dependent persons who refuse
49 treatment.
50

51 Nothing in this policy is intended to limit the role or responsibilities of the Bishop under Chapter 14 of the
52 Synod Constitution, or the duties and responsibilities of congregations under their constitutions. SC97.01.17
53

54
55 **6. GUIDE FOR CONGREGATIONS IN TRANSITION**
56

1 Life is a series of transitions from birth to death. At best, transitions though painful, can provide individuals
2 and communities a time of reflection, vision, and opportunity to effect creative change. At worst, transitions
3 can be disruptive and discouraging, leaving individuals and/or communities drained of spirit or hope. In all
4 instances, transitions are made easier if there is a system of nurture and support in place to assist, coach,
5 mentor, or advise the individual and/or community through the time of transition. For individuals this
6 support and nurture may come from parents, friends, partners and/or colleagues. For communities this
7 support and nurture is more formalized and may be provided by someone who is appointed, elected, or hired
8 to assist the community in transition.
9

10 When a pastor leaves a congregation for whatever reason, the congregation experiences a loss. This loss
11 when acknowledged, can best be worked through during the time of transition before a new pastor is call and
12 installed. An Interim Pastor (IP) selected by the Bishop in consultation with the church council, will provide
13 the support and nurture needed during the transition by assisting, coaching, mentoring and/or advising the
14 congregation during its transition period.
15

16 **PARTNERSHIP AND INTERDEPENDENCE IN THE CHURCH**

17
18 The basis for interim ministry stems from a variety of biblical texts. Take note of Acts 11:27-30, Romans
19 15:25-31 and 2 Corinthians 8-9, all referring to interdependence and the offering of gifts from one
20 congregation to another. The body of Christ texts, 1 Corinthians 12:12-27 and Ephesians 4:4-16, also point to
21 the unity among Christians and the variety of gifts given to each for the good of all. The constitution of the
22 ELCA states:
23

24 The Church exists both as an inclusive fellowship and as local congregations gathered
25 for worship and Christian service. Congregations find their fulfillment in the universal
26 community of the Church, and the universal Church exists in and through congregations.
27 This church, therefore, derives its character and powers both from the sanction and
28 representation of its congregations and from its inherent nature as an expression of the
29 broader fellowship of the faithful. In length, it acknowledges itself to be in the historic
30 continuity of the communion of saints; in breadth, it expresses the fellowship of believers
31 and congregations in our day. (3.02.)
32

33 It is in the spirit of interdependence and partnership that interim ministry takes place. When a pastor leaves a
34 congregation, the congregation's relationship to the other congregations in the synod (and region), and the
35 Bishop's pastoral relationship to the congregations in need come to the fore. All become partners together
36 with the ELCA in providing on-going ministry, discovering mission opportunities, and working through
37 interim issues. In this context we see that the gifts of all are needed and appreciated.
38

39 **PRESENT UNDERSTANDING OF INTERIM MINISTRY**

40
41 Given the historical perspective on ministry and the fact that the church has evolved into an organizational
42 structure that requires its leadership to be called and sent into Word and Sacrament ministry to congregations,
43 interim ministry can best be classified as a specialized ministry in that structure.
44

45 **THE PURPOSE OF INTERIM MINISTRY**

46
47
48 The purpose of Interim Ministry is to provide congregations with the time needed to review their past history,
49 and adjust to the loss of a pastor. This often includes time to resolve feelings of grief and uncertainty for the
50 future, in the case of a pastor who died while in office, or in the case of a long term pastorate that terminated
51 either when that pastor accepted another call to a different congregation or retired. In the case of a conflicted
52 congregation whose disagreements resulted in the resignation of the pastor, time to heal is also needed. The
53 same may be true for the short-term pastorate in which significant relationships in the congregation failed to
54 materialize, and the congregation feels a sense of failure. Ultimately interim ministry prepares congregations
55 to enter into a new relationship and begin new challenges in ministry by providing an effective closure to the
56 past. Interim Ministry assumes that the congregation and the former pastor (if that person remains in the

1 congregation) will relinquish all pastoral acts to the interim pastor.
2

3 **THE INTERIM PASTOR** 4

5 Though Interim Ministry is a specialization in ministry, the Interim Pastor always comes from the ranks of
6 the ordained clergy. He/she may be retired, on leave from call, or a person who is a transitionist by gifts,
7 choice, and training.
8

9 General Characteristics of the Interim Pastor 10

11 The Interim Pastor:

- 12 • has met all of the requirements for call to the ordained ministry of the ELCA.
- 13 • has skills in group dynamics and group behavior.
- 14 • has skills, abilities, and the temperament to deal with conflict situations which manifest themselves in
15 power struggles and/or subversive techniques within the congregation's life.
- 16 • has the ability to work within a given time frame.
- 17 • has a healthy ego which helps him/her to patiently foster the time and process a congregation needs to
18 strengthen their relations among one another, with the synod, and to the pastoral office and those who
19 will serve them in the future.
- 20 • is trained to center on the tasks of interim ministry designed to lead the congregation toward the goal of
21 calling its next pastor.
- 22 • understands that he/she is acting on behalf of, by the authority of, and is accountable to the Synod
23 Bishop.
24

25 **THE TASKS OF INTERIM MINISTRY** 26

- 27 1. The Interim Pastor shall encourage the congregation to review its history. There are various ways to do
28 this:
 - 29 a. Assist the congregation in determining what it wants to keep from its past, and what it wants to leave
30 in the past.
 - 31 b. To aid the congregation in identifying and addressing issues from their past, recurring from
32 generation to generation, and perpetuating destructive cycles of conflict or non-growth. The Interim
33 Pastor may ask, "What are the issues which give this congregation its unique or peculiar
34 personality?"
 - 35 c. Ask the questions which will help the congregation focus on its objectives. This will include a
36 review of the congregation's understanding of their mission statement. "What has been meaningful
37 in the congregation's development?"
 - 38 d. He/she may work with the Synod Office in securing such research tools as a systems or
39 communications inventory.
 - 40 e. What are the feelings of the membership of the congregation about the previous pastor's ministry?
41 The Interim Pastor may review the "Exit Interview" of that former pastor with members of the "Exit
42 Interview" team.
43
- 44 2. The Interim Pastor shall help the congregation to acknowledge that there will be change in lay and
45 pastoral relationships as a result of any pastoral change. The congregation will be encouraged to see
46 change not as a threat but positively, even if the advantage of some changes are not immediately
47 recognized.
48
- 49 3. The Interim Pastor may on occasion be an enabler of positive changes among the lay leadership.
50
- 51 4. The Interim Pastor in his/her own personal style of ministry opens the possibilities for the congregation
52 to accept and welcome other styles of pastoral ministry by:
 - 53 a. addressing the questions of what style of ministry the congregation is seeking,
 - 54 b. demythologizing the "perfect pastor" concept, and
 - 55 c. assisting the congregation in developing an awareness of its own style and gifts within its lay
56 membership that are needed for its future health.

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- 56
5. The Interim Pastor shall guide the congregation in discovering and developing this current identity through establishing a congregational mission statement, or a review of their present statement. This can be done by answering the following questions:
 - a. How is our mission area (our parish, our community) different today from times past?
 - b. What is our mission in the days ahead?
 - c. What are our strengths/weaknesses "right now" and how do we plan to address them in the future?
 - d. What kind of leader do we want to assist us in our mission? What kinds of gifts and abilities must this leader possess to help us carry out our mission by making use of our strengths and strengthening our weaknesses?
6. The Interim Pastor shall assist the Call Committee in guiding the congregation through the Call Process.
 - a. The Interim Pastor is a representative of the larger church, called by the Synod or selected by the Bishop to serve in specialized ministry providing denominational linkage to the congregation during the congregation interim time and Call Process.
 - b. The Interim Pastor will assist the congregation with resources to define its special needs, enabling the completion of the ELCA Congregational Profile and other parts of the Synod Call Process.
 - c. The Interim Pastor may, at the discretion of the Bishop, guide the Call Committee in planning an on-site visit process with prospective pastors. The objective of this planning would be so that the Call Committee and the prospective pastor have ample time and resources for questions and answers that give them a helpful depth of knowledge to make informed decisions. (see Guidelines for an On-Site Visit Between a Call Committee and a Prospective Pastor", available from the Synod Office.)

THE PROCESS OF SELECTION TO INTERIM MINISTRY

1. When a pastoral vacancy occurs, the Synodical Bishop's Office is informed by the congregational leadership.
2. The Bishop or his/her representative consults with the congregational leadership to determine the needs during the interim (see "Interim Ministry Guide" and "Information to Inform this Ministry during Transition" available from the Synod Office.) The Bishop will also attend to other pressing issues; i.e., the possible presence of the former pastor in the community, immediate conflict, etc.
3. The Bishop selects and recommends a pastor from his/her interim pastor list who can best serve the congregation during the time of transition.
4. Once the Interim Pastor has been selected in consultation with the congregation's council, an Agreement for Interim Ministry is developed among the Bishop, the congregational leadership, and the Interim Pastor. This agreement includes:
 - a. Mutual covenanting of Interim Pastor and congregation to fulfill the goals of the congregation and stay within the guidelines of the constitution and bylaws of the congregation and the ELCA.
 - b. The Interim Pastor's duties, including, when necessary, the working relationship of the Interim Pastor with the congregation's staff.
 - c. The congregation's responsibilities, including financial compensation (salary, housing and benefits), to the Interim Pastor.
 - d. The Synod's responsibilities to the congregation and the Interim Pastor.
 - e. A time-frame in which the Interim Ministry will be completed.
5. The Interim Pastor will be in close contact with the Synod Office and the congregational leadership throughout the interim. He/she will provide written reports on the progress of the ministry during the interim.
6. The Interim Pastor will not be a candidate for permanent Call to the congregation he/she is serving as Interim Pastor. Exceptions may be considered by the Bishop in consultation with the Interim Pastor and the leadership of the congregation prior to signing the "Agreement for Interim Ministry".

7. The congregation will be asked to support the Interim Pastor in some specific ways including:
 - a. time necessary for participation in local text studies, Cluster and Synod meetings, local community events/programs, and continuing education,
 - b. support of his/her days off, hobbies, and recreation time, and
 - c. in the case of a remote interim in which the Interim Pastor is required to move away from his/her family, regularly scheduled times for him/her to return home for visits and attending to family responsibilities. This may include one Sunday per month away from the congregation at his/her expense.

7. **AGREEMENT OF INTERIM MINISTRY**

Date _____
 _____ Lutheran Church Rev. _____

This agreement is for the Interim Ministry of Reverend _____ to be performed at _____ Lutheran Church in _____ and is agreed to be the Congregation Council of _____ Lutheran Church, the Reverend _____, and the Office of the Bishop of the Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod.

The Interim Pastor shall provide an ongoing Gospel ministry of Word and Sacrament according to the teaching and practices of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. To this end he/she shall have all the rights, privileges, and responsibilities of a regularly called pastor. His/her responsibilities shall include the general pastoral duties of the congregation such as worship, visiting the sick and shut-in, baptisms, funerals, etc. He/she shall also be responsible for providing pastoral ministry to assist the congregation during its transition between regularly called pastors. The Interim Pastor shall be responsible to the Office of the Bishop and to the Congregation Council, both of whom may provide guidance in his/her ministry. To this end all regular meetings of the Congregation Council shall provide opportunity for review of the interim ministry of the congregation and the Interim Pastor.

The Interim Pastor may not be considered a candidate for the regularly called pastoral office.

Since this is a specialized ministry, the Congregation Council together with the Bishop's office shall assist the Interim Pastor in determining priorities for this ministry.

The Interim Pastor shall continue to participate in the local clergy support network.

Vacation time shall be earned at the rate of four weeks annually and shall be pro-rated according to the length of service.

The Interim Pastor may, with the Congregation Council's permission, be absent one Sunday per month, in which case he/she will arrange and pay for a substitute.

At the beginning of the new calendar year, the financial terms of this agreement shall be revised according to the guidelines of the Synod.

This agreement shall be terminated when a regularly called pastor assumes office or upon thirty days notice with the approval of any two of the parties involved.

 Congregation Council Interim Pastor Bishop _____

1
2
3 **FINANCIAL FACTORS**

4
5 \$ _____ (Annual) Salary at the rate of \$ _____ per month.
6 \$ _____ Housing
7 \$ _____ Utilities (All, including basic rate of telephone in housing.)
8 \$ _____ Car reimbursement (Annual) at the rate of \$ _____ per month.
9 \$ _____ Pension/Major Medical-Dental Plan.
10 \$ _____ Travel from _____ to _____ and return, plus food and lodging enroute, if and
11 when necessary.
12

13
14 **AGREEMENT FOR INTERIM MINISTRY**

15
16 Date _____
17 _____ Lutheran Church Rev. _____
18 _____
19 _____
20

21 This agreement is for the Interim Ministry of Reverend _____ to be performed at
22 _____ Lutheran Church in _____ and is agreed to be the
23 Congregation Council of _____ Lutheran Church, the
24 Reverend _____, and the Office of the Bishop of the Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod.
25

26 The Interim Pastor shall provide an ongoing Gospel ministry of Word and Sacrament according to the
27 teaching and practices of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. To this end he/she shall have all the
28 rights, privileges, and responsibilities of a regularly called pastor. His/her responsibilities shall include the
29 general pastoral duties of the congregation such as worship, visiting the sick and shut-in, baptisms, funerals,
30 etc. He/she shall also be responsible for providing pastoral ministry to assist the congregation during its
31 transition between regularly called pastors. The Interim Pastor shall be responsible to the Office of the
32 Bishop and to the Congregation Council, both of whom may provide guidance in his/her ministry. To this
33 end all regular meetings of the Congregation Council shall provide opportunity for review of the interim
34 ministry of the congregation and the Interim Pastor.
35

36 The Interim Pastor may not be considered a candidate for the regularly called pastoral office.

37
38 Since this is a specialized ministry, the Congregation Council together with the Bishop's office shall assist the
39 Interim Pastor in determining priorities for this ministry.
40

41 The Interim Pastor shall continue to participate in the local clergy support network.
42

43 Vacation time shall be earned at the rate of four weeks annually and shall be pro-rated according to the length
44 of service.
45

46 The Interim Pastor may, with the Congregation Council's permission, be absent one Sunday per month, in
47 which case he/she will arrange and pay for a substitute.
48

49 At the beginning of the new calendar year, the financial terms of this agreement shall be revised according to
50 the guidelines of the Synod.
51

52
53 This agreement shall be terminated when a regularly called pastor assumes office or upon thirty days notice
54 with the approval of any two of the parties involved.
55
56 _____

Congregation Council Interim Pastor Bishop
.....

FINANCIAL FACTORS

- \$ _____ (Annual) Salary at the rate of \$ _____ per month.
- \$ _____ Housing
- \$ _____ Utilities (All, including basic rate of telephone in housing.)
- \$ _____ Car reimbursement (Annual) at the rate of \$ _____ per month.
- \$ _____ Pension/Major Medical-Dental Plan.

In the case of a remote interim pastorate,
\$ _____ Travel from _____ to _____ and return, plus food and lodging enroute, _____ days per month for the remote interim pastor to visit his/her spouse and/or family in their home.

_____ days paid "transition time" following this interim ministry to enable the interim pastor to readjust to his/her family environment before entering into another interim ministry (5-7 days is suggested for a 9 month interim, 1 day per month served in addition for interim ministries longer than 9 months).

Congregations should provide housing and utilities for the Interim Pastor in the community in which the interim ministry is located. In addition for remote interim pastorates the congregation should designate a housing allowance that can be used for the Interim Pastor's permanent housing needs.*

\$ _____ per month housing and utilities for the Interim Pastor's permanent residence.

* For more information, see Tax Planning for Clergy by Manfred Holck, Jr., 1993 edition, "Traveling Evangelists", pp.15-16.

8. CALL AND TERMINATION OF ROSTERED LAY PERSONS

1. Each congregation of this synod shall consult the bishop of this synod before taking any steps leading to the extending of a call to an associate in ministry, a Deaconess of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, or a diaconal minister listed on this church's official rosters of laypersons or an approved candidate for such rosters.
2. A congregational call to an associate in ministry, a Deaconess of the ELCA, or a diaconal minister may then be extended following a two-thirds majority vote of members present and voting at a meeting regularly called for that purpose (ELCA 7.52.A93). When the congregation has voted to issue a call to an associate in ministry, a Deaconess of the ELCA, or a diaconal minister, the letter of call shall be submitted to the bishop of this synod for the bishop's signature.
3. No associate in ministry, Deaconess of the ELCA, or diaconal minister shall seek or accept a letter of call without first conferring with the bishop of the synod. An associate in ministry, a Deaconess of the ELCA, or a diaconal minister shall respond with an answer of acceptance or declination to a letter of call within 30 days of receipt of such call.
4. A letter of call from a congregation, when accepted by an associate in ministry, a Deaconess of the ELCA, or a diaconal minister and attested by the synodical bishop, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment which shall be terminated only following consultation with the synodical bishop.
5. In the case of alleged local difficulties which imperil the effective functioning of the congregation, following appropriate consultation involving all parties, the synodical bishop will recommend a course of action to the pastor, the associate in ministry, Deaconess of the ELCA, or diaconal minister serving under call, and the congregation. If they agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action shall be taken by the synod. If any party fails to assent, the congregation council, after meeting and full consultation with the synodical bishop, may dismiss the associate in ministry, Deaconess of the ELCA, or diaconal minister by a two-thirds majority vote of the voting members present at a duly called meeting. SC94.09.03

1
2 **9. ASSEMBLY DISPLAYS (Adopted by the Synod Council January 19, 2001)**
3

4 The purpose of Synod Assembly displays is to educate and inform those in attendance. Only **non-profit** and
5 **not for profit** agencies and organizations will be allocated display space at assemblies of this synod. The
6 synod upholds freedom of expression in opinions and ideas that relate to the mission of the ELCA as set forth
7 in the constitution and bylaws of the Synod.
8

9 Guidelines to secure display space are as follows:

- 10
11 1. Display tables or spaces are available to all agencies and organizations of the ELCA based on the number
12 of tables the display area will accommodate.
13 2. Tables and spaces will be secured on a reservation policy of first request.
14 3. Location of tables and spaces in the display area will be decided by a random drawing to allocate
15 positions to the organizations and agencies that have secured a reservation.
16 4. Other religious agencies that are connected with and support the work of the ELCA, such as National and
17 World Council of Churches, and ecumenical organizations, are accepted after the request deadline for
18 ELCA-affiliated agencies and organizations if tables or spaces are available.
19 5. Requests from commercial enterprises will generally be denied to protect the non-profit status of the
20 synod. Rare exceptions may be granted if the Synod Assembly Display Sub-Committee determines that
21 the enterprise will not impinge upon the synod's non-profit status.
22 6. Displays that do not relate to the mission and purpose of this synod will be denied space, as will any
23 which are offensive in nature, or inflammatory in purpose, as decided by the sub-committee.
24

25 The decision process for granting display space is as follows:

- 26
27 1. The Synod Assembly Display Sub-Committee will solicit displays from the appropriate agencies and
28 organizations.
29 2. Reservation requests will be received until a deadline determined by the sub-committee.
30 3. The sub-committee will review the requests according to the above guidelines.
31 4. Organizations and agencies will be notified of acceptance or rejection and spaces will be allocated
32 through a random drawing done by the sub-committee.
33
34 5. Appeals concerning decisions of the display sub-committee may be made to the Synod Assembly
35 Planning Committee first, and after that to the Synod Staff.
36

37 **10. A RESOLUTION ON SYNOD SABBATICAL POLICY**
38 **from The Eastern Washington - Idaho Synod Professional Ministry Committee**
39 **Adopted by the Synod Council September 21, 2001 (SC0109.04)**
40

41 WHEREAS the gift of rest and the Sabbath was graciously given by God in creation; and
42

43 WHEREAS the Visions and Expectations documents of the ELCA recognize that the demands of ministry
44 can lead to neglect of proper nutrition, exercise, time for recreation and that the congregation, agency or
45 institution the minister serves, needs to respect the need of rostered ministers to have adequate time for self-
46 care; and
47

48 WHEREAS the Visions and Expectations documents of the ELCA also recognize the importance of life-long
49 growth and learning and that the congregation or whatever agency or institution the minister serves, provides
50 time and assistance for such education and growth; and
51

52 WHEREAS in most cases rostered ministers serving in a call for a long-tenure (more than seven years)
53 promotes health and mission growth in the congregation; and
54

55 WHEREAS scheduled time away in addition to regular vacation and continuing education for renewal and/or
56 study promotes all of the benefits of a long-tenured call while lessening the drawbacks of long-tenure; and
57

1 WHEREAS scheduled time away in addition to regular vacation and continuing education for renewal and/or
2 study brings new energy to the minister-parishioner relationship without the disruption of a change of call;
3 therefore
4

5 RESOLVED that this Synod agrees to and implement the following policy: All rostered ministers (Pastors,
6 Diaconal Ministers, Deaconesses and Associates in Ministry) shall be eligible every seven years of rostered
7 service (after serving at least four years in his/her present call) for a sabbatical of not less than three months.
8 The congregation shall support the sabbatical through prayer, and by providing, 1) interim pastoral service, 2)
9 ongoing compensation and benefits for the rostered staff person, 3) financial support for specific plans in the
10 Sabbatical, and 4) the regular, annual vacation and continuing education time and benefits in addition to
11 sabbatical time and benefits. The Synodical Professional Ministry Committee will provide resources to help
12 congregations, agencies or institutions develop their own sabbatical policies and procedures and offer help in
13 interpreting sabbatical plans to their members; and
14

15 RESOLVED that Synod Council members along with the Professional Ministry Committee support and work
16 toward the development of sabbatical policies in each congregation, agency or institution of this Synod.
17

18 **11. POLICY ON COPYRIGHT INFRINGEMENT AND PLAGIARISM**
19 **Adopted by the Synod Council January 23, 2004 (SC0401.09)**
20

21 In that copyright infringement and plagiarism are both forms of stealing, i.e., claiming for oneself what
22 rightfully belongs to another, it is this Synod's policy that the Synod, its member congregations, and all who
23 serve on our behalf should:
24

- 25 A. Comply with the laws governing the use of copyrighted material, including securing permission for its
26 use, payment of appropriate licensing fees, and making appropriate notation of said permission for use;
27 and
28
29 B. Comply with reasonable academic standards regarding the summarization, paraphrasing, and/or quoting
30 of another author's work, whether in whole or in part, and provide appropriate citation when using
31 sources, providing such citations orally for oral presentations, and in appropriate written form for printed
32 work.
33

34 **12. "TRANSITION MINISTER" DESIGNATION**
35 **Adopted by the Synod Council April 21, 2005 (SC0504.04)**
36

37 "A Transition Minister may be appointed by the bishop, with the concurrence of the congregation council, in
38 those instances where special circumstances suggest it is better to allow such a pastor to do transition work
39 and stand for the call of the congregation at the end of a set period."
40

41 Definitions:

42 Transition Minister: A minister, appointed by the bishop with the concurrence of the congregation council,
43 who will do transition tasks and be eligible for the full call of the congregation.
44

45 "Appointed...with the concurrence": A transition minister is appointed by the bishop in the same way that an
46 interim pastor is appointed by the bishop, i.e. "selected in consultation with the congregation's council." See
47 Appendix 6, Process of selection to Interim Ministry, synod policy manual (#4, p. 47).
48

49 "Special circumstances:"

50 Examples:

51 --Where rapid turnover of interim or regularly called pastors leaves the congregation vulnerable and
52 exhausted. In such case a regular call process may push the congregation beyond its capacities or work
53 hurtful delay.

54 --Where misconduct by the previous pastor suggests that the congregation needs multiple year and
55 exceptional ministry by a specialist.

56 --where exceptional needs by the pastor (health concerns, family issues are examples) or the congregation
57 (survival of the ministry, for example) are present.
58

1 The bishop and the assistant to the bishop for call processes would be given discretion to use the category of
2 Transition Minister when particular circumstances are persuasive to the Executive Committee of the Synod
3 Council.
4

5 The Executive Committee will be sensitive to this exception to the call process:

6 --That it not be used in cases where an appearance of favoritism is present;

7 --That it not be used more frequently than necessary since it may look like an “appointment” process instead
8 of a “call” process;

9 --That it potentially removes congregations from call process when other pastors have interest in those calls
10 and expect full and open call processes.

11 “better to allow:”

12 An exception to the normal call process should only be allowed when there is a clear advantage for the
13 mission and ministry of the congregation.

14 “stand for the call at the end of a set period:”

15 If an agreement for a Transition Minister is reached, a schedule for the transition work will be developed. At
16 the end of that work period, the congregation and pastor will normally take a break from one another for a
17 month or more. During this time the call committee of the congregation will reach a decision on whether to
18 present the Transition Minister’s name to the congregation for call. The call may be for an open term or it
19 may be for a term call. The decision to call should be made on the normal basis i.e. whether the minister has
20 the right skills and gifts to match the congregation’s needs as defined by their prayers and their profile. No
21 other candidates will be considered. If the call committee nominates the Transition Minister, the
22 congregation schedules a call meeting and votes in the normal pattern.
23

24 If the call is issued, the Transition Minister has the regular time period (four weeks) to respond. If the call is
25 issued and accepted, the Transition Minister is installed and becomes the regularly called pastor of the
26 congregation.
27

28 If the call committee does not present the Transition Minister’s name for call, or if the congregation declines
29 to call the Transition Minister, the Transition Minister may continue to serve the congregation as an Interim
30 Pastor while they are in call process.
31

32 If the Transition Minister is issued the call but turns it back, the transition minister either completes specified,
33 pre-determined tasks, or resigns, in conversation with the congregation’s council.
34

35 **13. GUIDELINES BACKGROUND CHECKS FOR CANDIDACY**
36 **Adopted by the Synod Council September 24, 2005 (SC0509.09)**
37

38 This synod values the safety of its members and all those served by this church. It also values those who are
39 rostered leaders of this church. In order to help make congregations, as well as other ministry settings, safe
40 places, it is common for religious organizations to make use of information now available through
41 background checks as part of a comprehensive candidacy process. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in
42 America (ELCA) requires background checks on all persons who have not completed entrance into the
43 candidacy process of this church. Effective February 1, 2005, the Eastern Washington - Idaho Synod
44 conducts background checks on all persons seeking to be candidates and rostered leaders in the ELCA,
45 including those who have already been approved for entrance as candidates.
46

47 What follows are general guidelines for candidacy background checks. The synod seeks to apply these
48 guidelines uniformly to all candidates.
49

50 • **CONTEXT OF BACKGROUND CHECK** -- The background checks are placed in the context of the
51 entire candidacy process and become only one piece of information used in this process. Background
52 checks are not infallible records of a person’s previous conduct or misconduct. The Candidacy
53 Committee uses all components of the candidacy process to assess and discern a person’s potential for
54 ministry.
55

56 • **TYPES OF CHECKS** -- Background checks cover at least a seven-year period. Areas covered in the
57 check include, but are not limited to:
58 - criminal history database search

- county record criminal check
- credit report check
- social security trace
- motor vehicle check

- **ADDITIONAL CHECKS** -- The Synod Candidacy Committee may add other types of checks if it is reasonable to do so. The committee is not bound to use exactly the same checks for all applicants for candidacy. If background checks other than those listed above, will be done, the applicant will be notified.
- **WHO RECEIVES REPORTS** -- Background check reports are sent directly to the Bishop's designee, normally the staff person working with the candidacy process. Information is used for candidacy purposes only. If there are questions or concerns about something in the report, the staff person may share details with the Chair of the Candidacy Committee or the Chair's designee. A summary of the report is given to the Candidacy Committee members and, upon member request, the committee may view the entire report. The Release of Information Form in the candidate's application permits the committee to share pertinent information with partners in the candidacy process. Reports are not shared with others unless written authorization is provided by the candidate.
- **MAINTAINING RECORDS** -- Reports for candidates that are approved are maintained by the Office of the Bishop and stored in the synod's confidential files for a minimum of fifty years, as directed by the ELCA. Reports for those who are denied or who withdraw from the process are kept for ten years.
- **NEGATIVE FINDINGS** – Depending on the kind of negative finding, the presence of a concern does not automatically result in denial of a person's entrance into or continuation in the candidacy process. This is especially true if the person has voluntarily revealed this part of his or her history. Various factors are taken into consideration when evaluating and reviewing one's background. Such factors may include:
 - The nature and seriousness of the offense
 - The circumstances under which the offense occurred
 - The age of the person at the time of the offense, and how much time has passed since the offense occurred
 - Societal conditions that may have contributed to the nature of the offense
 - The probability that the person will repeat the offense
 - The person's commitment to rehabilitation, restitution, and reconciliation.
- **NOTIFICATION OF NEGATIVE INFORMATION DISCOVERED** – When information is received that, if accurate, could result in denial of a person's entrance into candidacy, the information is shared with the person. If, after reviewing the report, the person believes the information is inaccurate, he or she will normally be put in contact with the company doing the background check to challenge the findings. The applicant will be given a reasonable amount of time to dispute the information in the report and have the records corrected.
- **DELIBERATE FALSE REPORTING** – Deliberately giving the Candidacy Committee false or misleading information, or deliberately withholding information of an important nature, will, except in special circumstances, result in denial of entrance to or continuation in the candidacy process.
- **COPY OF REPORT FOR APPLICANT** – Upon request, the applicant for candidacy may obtain a copy of his or her background check report.
- **TIME LIMIT ON AUTHORIZATION FOR BACKGROUND CHECK**– Background checks may be done for candidacy purposes only, unless the candidate provides written direction otherwise. Information may be accessed any time during the candidacy process, until a candidate has accepted a letter of call or until termination of the candidacy process.

For more information, please contact the Office of the Bishop.
September, 2005

14. **POLICY ON FORUMS AND HEARINGS AT SYNOD ASSEMBLY**

1 **Adopted by the Synod Council September 24, 2005 (SC0509.10)**

2
3 WHEREAS our Synod's Constitution states in S7.01.05 that "The Synod Assembly may serve as a forum for
4 the concerns of the congregations and people of this synod."; and

5
6 WHEREAS our synod's geography greatly limits the opportunities for synod-wide conversations on matters
7 of mutual interest and concern; and

8
9 WHEREAS the opportunity to schedule and convene such forums and hearings should be equally available to
10 all within our synod;

11
12 THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the following policy be adopted:

- 13
14 1. This synod shall provide opportunities for workshops concerning the assembly theme; hearings related to
15 business items before the assembly; and forums concerning matters of mutual interest and concern in
16 conjunction with the Synod Assembly to the extent that time and space allow; and
17 2. Any person, congregation, or organization related to the mission or purpose of this synod may submit to
18 the Assembly Committee a request for a time and space for a workshop, hearing or forum in conjunction
19 with the synod assembly; and
20 3. Any person or organization not specifically related to the mission or purpose of this synod may request
21 time and space for a workshop, hearing or forum only with the prior consent of the Executive Committee
22 of the Synod Council; and
23 4. The Assembly Committee shall provide an appropriate timeline for submitting such requests; and
24 5. Priority shall be given in scheduling workshops, hearings and forums based on the timeliness of the
25 request and its relevance to the ministry of the ELCA, the synod and the assembly; and finally
26 6. Any extraordinary expenses related to the conducting of a workshop, hearing or forum shall be the
27 responsibility of the individuals or organizations convening the workshop, hearing or forum.
28

29 **15. SYNOD ASSEMBLY POLICY REGARDING THE USE OF AUDIO-VISUAL PRESENTATIONS**
30 **Adopted by the Synod Council September 23, 2006 (SC06.09.03)**
31 **Amended by the Synod Council September 21, 2007 (SC07.09.05)**
32

33 Any audio-visual (or other screening device) presentation to be used at a Synod Assembly must be pre-
34 arranged with the Synod Assembly Committee-Technical Chair.
35

36 An audio-visual (or other screening device) presentation promoting an Assembly resolution may be presented
37 only if pre-arranged with the Synod Assembly Committee -- Technical Chair and may not run more than 3:30
38 minutes and will be received as a "speaker" in the normal rotation of debate. An audio-visual presentation
39 may serve as the initial "speaking" to a matter, subject to the time restriction above.
40

41 **16. STATEMENT OF POLICY REGARDING SEXUAL MISCONDUCT BY MEMBERS OF THE**
42 **CLERGY, ASSOCIATES IN MINISTRY, DEACONESSES AND DIACONAL MINISTERS**
43 **Adopted by the Synod Council May 4, 1995 (95.05 SC 07)**
44

45 The Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod ("Synod") of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
46 ("ELCA") is committed to preventing sexual misconduct within the Church and to responding with justice
47 and compassion when such misconduct occurs. This Statement of Policy describes how the Synod will act
48 upon these commitments.
49

50
51 I. INTRODUCTION
52

53 A. DEFINITIONS
54

55 1. "SEXUAL MISCONDUCT"

1 Federal and state law make distinctions among various types of sexual misconduct, such as "sexual
2 harassment," "sexual abuse," and "sexual assault." Similarly, the governing documents of the ELCA
3 define various types of sexual misconduct and how the offender may be disciplined. Some type of
4 sexual misconduct may provide grounds for discipline but may not be unlawful, while other types
5 may be unlawful but may not provide grounds for discipline.
6

7 These distinctions should not concern a person who is troubled about the sexual conduct of a pastor
8 or associate in ministry. The Synod is concerned about all types of sexual misconduct by these
9 professionals, regardless of whether or how the misconduct is characterized by the law or by the
10 governing documents of the ELCA. Any sexual misconduct committed by one of these professionals
11 should be reported to the bishop, including, but not limited to, any sexual contact between the
12 professional and a congregant, counselee, employee, or volunteer.
13

14 It should be noted that the Synod may not be able to assume primary responsibility for addressing all
15 allegations of sexual misconduct. For example, if a pastor who is under call to a congregation is
16 accused of sexually harassing another of the congregation's employees, civil law may require that the
17 congregation take timely and appropriate action and may prevent the Synod from interfering in the
18 situation.
19

20 2. "COMPLAINANT."

21 As used in this Statement of Policy, "complainant" means a person who reports sexual misconduct to
22 the Synod. This Statement of Policy will assume that the complainant is also the victim of the
23 alleged sexual misconduct.
24

25 3. "PASTOR" OR "CLERGY."

26 As used in the Statement of Policy, "pastors" and "clergy" include ordained ministers, associates in
27 ministry, deaconesses and diaconal ministers rostered in this Synod. This Statement of Policy will
28 assume that the pastor, associate in ministry, deaconess or diaconal minister who is accused of sexual
29 misconduct is listed on the roster of this Synod.
30

31
32
33 4. "BISHOP."

34 As used in this Statement of Policy, "bishop" includes the person currently serving as bishop, his or
35 her designee(s), or members of the Synod staff.
36

37 B. THE ROLE OF CONGREGATIONS
38

39 The Synod and its member congregations have different responsibilities and thus different roles to play
40 in preventing and responding to reports of clergy sexual misconduct.
41

42 Each ELCA congregation calls its own pastor, determines its pastor's duties and responsibilities,
43 supervises its pastor's day-to-day ministry, and decides whether to terminate its pastor's call. The Synod
44 has neither the authority nor the ability to make those decisions. Obviously, then, the Synod cannot be a
45 safe place unless every one of its member congregations shares its commitment to ending clergy sexual
46 misconduct.
47

48 The Synod's role is essentially twofold. First, the bishop is responsible for providing pastoral care and
49 leadership to the Synod's congregations and pastors. Reports of clergy sexual misconduct invariably
50 create an acute need for such care and leadership. Second, pastors who commit sexual misconduct may
51 be disciplined -- that is, they may be suspended or removed from the clergy roster of the ELCA. The

1 bishop is primarily responsible for overseeing the preliminary or consultation stage of the disciplinary
2 process and for initiating the formal stage of the disciplinary process.

3
4 The Statement of Policy is the Synod's, and therefore it says little about the role played by congregations
5 in preventing and responding to reports of clergy sexual misconduct. This should not obscure the fact
6 that congregations also have a vital role to play. The Synod strongly urges its member congregations to
7 develop their own sexual misconduct policies.

8 9 C. DISCLAIMERS

- 10
11 1. Every report of clergy sexual misconduct involves unique people and unique circumstances. This
12 Statement of Policy merely describes the general approach that the Synod will follow in responding
13 to reports of clergy sexual misconduct. It will not be appropriate or even possible for the Synod to
14 follow this approach in every case. The Synod reserves the right to depart from this Statement of
15 Policy at any time and for any reason.
- 16
17 2. When the Synod provides pastoral care and leadership in the wake of clergy sexual misconduct, it is
18 performing acts of ministry. The freedom of the Synod to decide for itself how God has called it to
19 minister to those harmed by sexual misconduct is a precious one that is constitutionally protected
20 from governmental interference. The same is true of the Synod's freedom to decide who will be on
21 its clergy roster, and of the freedom of each congregation to decide who will preach and teach from
22 its pulpit. Nothing in this Statement of Policy is intended to diminish these freedoms in any respect
23 or to create any legal rights or responsibilities.
- 24
25 3. In every sexual misconduct case, the bishop and his or her staff will attempt to provide pastoral care
26 to the victim of the misconduct, the victim's family, the pastor who committed the misconduct, the
27 pastor's family, the members of the pastor's congregation, the pastor's colleagues, and others.
28 However, the bishop and the bishop's staff cannot themselves function as a pastor, counselor,
29 advocate, attorney, or other "fiduciary" to any of these people. The ultimate responsibility of the
30 bishop and his or her staff is to the Synod, and not to any individual within the Synod. If a conflict
31 arises between what is in the Synod's interests and what is in the interests of someone else, the bishop
32 and the bishop's staff are obligated to act on the Synod's behalf.

33 II. SYNOD POLICY

34
35 *An ELCA Strategy for Responding to Sexual Abuse in the Church* (Nov. 1992) recommended that nine
36 elements be included in any synodical policy regarding clergy sexual misconduct. This Synod has decided to
37 incorporate those nine elements as follows:

38 39 A. ADEQUATE PREPARATION

40
41 The Synod is committed to preventing clergy sexual misconduct in the following ways:

42
43 First, the Synod will not tolerate clergy sexual misconduct. The Synod will make that clear in
44 educational opportunities that it provides, in the manner in which it responds to reports of clergy sexual
45 misconduct, in discussions that it has with seminarians and others who seek to join its clergy roster, and
46 in its public and private statements regarding this issue. The Synod will provide a copy of this policy to
47 each person on its roster.

48
49 Second, the Synod will provide ongoing educational opportunities regarding clergy sexual misconduct
50 for pastors, congregations, and others. Those efforts will focus on such subjects as the dynamics of

1 clergy sexual misconduct and the impact of such misconduct on its victims. The Synod strongly urges its
2 pastors and congregations to take advantages of these educational opportunities.

3
4 Finally, the bishop and the bishop's staff will continue to take advantage of educational opportunities that
5 are available to them. The Synod recognizes that society generally and churches particularly have much
6 to learn about clergy sexual misconduct. As the Synod's understanding of this problem changes, its
7 Statement of Policy and educational efforts will change as well.

8
9 These preventative efforts are intended to complement similar efforts that have been or will be made by
10 the Synod's member congregations, by the churchwide organization, by ELCA seminaries, and by other
11 entities affiliated with the ELCA.

12 13 B. INITIAL CONTACT - FIRST RESPONSE

14
15 Even the best preventative measures cannot completely eliminate clergy sexual misconduct. The Synod
16 must always be prepared to respond to reports of misconduct. The more open it is to receiving such
17 reports, the more often clergy sexual misconduct will be reported.

18
19 Anyone who knows or suspects that a pastor may have been involved in sexual misconduct should report
20 that knowledge or suspicion to the bishop or an assistant to the bishop. The names, addresses, and
21 telephone numbers of the bishop and his or her assistants are attached to this Statement of Policy. If a
22 complainant is uncomfortable about contacting the bishop or an assistant to the bishop, then the
23 complainant should contact one of the other people listed in the attachment. Those people -- who include
24 men and women, clergy and laypersons, Lutherans and non-Lutherans -- have agreed to be available to
25 receive reports of sexual misconduct from complainants who are uncomfortable contacting the bishop
26 directly. However, it must be stressed that these people are acting on behalf of the Synod, and any
27 information that they are given will be shared with the bishop (unless it is the bishop who is being
28 accused of sexual misconduct, in which case the bishop of the ELCA will be contacted).

29
30 A contact may be made with the bishop or other authorized person by mail, by telephone, or in person.
31 The complainant need not identify herself or himself when she or he first contacts the Synod. The
32 complainant may anonymously ask questions about how the Synod would respond to a particular
33 complaint of misconduct. However, the Synod can do little about a report of sexual misconduct until the
34 complainant identifies herself or himself and the pastor involved in the misconduct.

35
36 The bishop or other person contacted by the complainant will (1) assure the complainant that the Synod
37 does not tolerate sexual misconduct and takes seriously all reports of such misconduct; (2) explain the
38 Synod's process for responding to reports of sexual misconduct and offer to provide a copy of this
39 Statement of Policy; (3) answer the complainant's questions about the policies and procedures of the
40 Synod; (4) express care and concern for the complainant; (5) when the complainant is anonymous,
41 encourage the complainant to identify herself or himself and the pastor involved in the misconduct.

42
43 The bishop or other person contacted by the complainant will also offer to provide the complainant with
44 a list of advocates who are available to provide support and to help interpret the Synod's policies and
45 procedures. This list will include advocates who are affiliated with the ELCA and advocates who are
46 not. The complainant will be invited to contact an advocate and to be accompanied by that advocate
47 through the reporting, investigative, and, if necessary, disciplinary processes. If the complainant
48 requests, the Synod will contact an advocate for her or him. The complainant is welcome to use an
49 advocate who does not appear on the list -- such as a friend or family member -- or to decline to use an
50 advocate.

1
2 Promptly after a report of clergy sexual misconduct has been received from an identified complainant,
3 the bishop and/or bishop's designee will interview the complainant in person or, if that is not possible, by
4 telephone. In this and all meetings with Synod personnel, the complainant may be accompanied by a
5 friend, family member, support person, or advocate of her or his choice. The bishop or bishop's designee
6 will ask the complainant to provide as much information about the sexual misconduct as the complainant
7 is comfortable sharing. The complainant may be asked to reduce the information to writing or to sign a
8 written statement prepared by the Synod. The bishop or bishop's designee will also ask the complainant
9 what she or he is seeking in coming forward. The complainant will be given a copy of this Statement of
10 Policy if she or he has not already received it.

11
12 The bishop or bishop's designee will discuss with the complainant how she or he feels about the
13 possibility that her or his identity may become known to the accused or others. Insofar as possible, the
14 Synod will respect the wishes of the complainant regarding confidentiality. However, at some point, the
15 Synod may be required by civil law or by the governing documents of the ELCA to disclose the identity
16 of the complainant. Also, in unusual circumstances, the fact that the bishop or bishop's designee is
17 responsible to the Synod may require that he or she act contrary to the wishes of the complainant.
18 Finally, the identity of the complainant may become known despite the best efforts of the Synod to
19 protect it. The Synod cannot guarantee confidentiality to a complainant.

20
21 If the bishop or bishop's designee learns that a child or vulnerable adult may have been sexually abused,
22 the bishop or bishop's designee may be legally required to report that information to law enforcement
23 authorities. If possible, the complainant will be notified before such a report is made.

24
25 The bishop or bishop's designee will discuss with the complainant her or his needs for pastoral care
26 and/or professional counseling. If the complainant requests, the bishop or bishop's designee will help to
27 put the complainant in touch with persons who can provide such care and/or counseling. Under no
28 circumstances will any employee of the Synod function as the complainant's advocate, pastor, or
29 counselor.

30
31 The bishop or bishop's designee will appoint a contact person within the Synod. That contact person
32 (who may be the bishop or bishop's designee) will keep in regular contact with the complainant and will
33 inform the complainant of significant developments. That contact person will also be available to
34 respond to the complainant's questions and concerns about the process.

35 36 C. INITIAL INVESTIGATION OF THE COMPLAINT

37
38 After interviewing the complainant, the bishop and/or bishop's designee will carefully review the
39 information provided by the complainant. If the report appears credible and involves sexual misconduct
40 for which the pastor might be disciplined, the bishop or bishop's designee may conduct a preliminary
41 investigation to determine whether information exists either supporting or contradicting the report. This
42 preliminary investigation may include (1) further discussions with the complainant; (2) a review of the
43 records of the Synod, another ELCA synod, the ELCA, or an entity affiliated with the ELCA; and/or (3)
44 interviews of former bishops of the pastor, those who served as assistants to former bishops of the pastor,
45 pastors who succeeded the pastor at congregations that he or she served, pastors who served on the same
46 staff with the pastor at congregations that he or she served, pastors who presently serve on the same staff
47 with the pastor, respected members of congregations that the pastor served, respected members of the
48 congregation that the pastor now serves, friends of the pastor, or friends, family members, pastors, or
49 counselors of the complainant.

1 This preliminary investigation will be conducted as quickly and as discreetly as is possible under the
2 circumstances. All of those contacted will be asked to keep the contact in strictest confidence. If the
3 Synod or a discipline hearing committee later determines that the pastor did not commit sexual
4 misconduct, that conclusion will be communicated to those who were contacted by the Synod in the
5 course of its preliminary investigation.
6

7 D. CONVERSATION WITH THE PASTOR 8

9 The bishop will usually meet with the pastor after the preliminary investigation is concluded. (The
10 bishop may be accompanied by the bishop's designee or another person.) In some cases -- such as when
11 the pastor is aware of the complainant's report or when the pastor may pose an immediate danger to
12 members of his or her congregation -- the bishop or bishop's designee may meet with the pastor
13 immediately after or perhaps even before meeting with the complainant. If the bishop meets alone with
14 the pastor, the bishop will clarify that the meeting is not confidential, and that the bishop may disclose
15 anything that he or she is told.
16

17 At their meeting, the bishop will provide the pastor with information regarding the complaint and ask the
18 pastor to respond. The bishop may ask the pastor to reduce his or her response to writing. The bishop
19 will also (1) assure the pastor that, while the Synod does not tolerate sexual misconduct, the Synod will
20 give any pastor who denies an allegation of sexual misconduct a full and fair opportunity to contest it; (2)
21 explain the Synod's process for responding to reports of sexual misconduct and provide a copy of this
22 Statement of Policy; (3) answer the pastor's questions about the policies and procedures of the Synod; (4)
23 express care and concern for the pastor; (5) strongly discourage the pastor from having any contact with
24 the complainant, either directly or indirectly, unless the contact is initiated or requested by the
25 complainant; and (6) invite the pastor to contact an advocate and to be accompanied by that advocate
26 through the investigative, and, if necessary, disciplinary processes. If the pastor requests, the Synod will
27 assist the pastor in finding an advocate. The pastor may decline to use an advocate.
28

29 Depending upon the circumstances, the bishop may ask the pastor to voluntarily agree to certain
30 restrictions upon his or her ministry -- such as agreeing not to have contact with children -- until the
31 investigation and/or disciplinary proceedings are concluded. If the pastor refuses, the bishop may ask the
32 congregation to impose the restrictions upon the pastor. The bishop may also ask the pastor to take a
33 leave of absence -- either with or without pay -- until the investigation and/or disciplinary proceedings
34 are concluded. If the pastor refuses, the bishop may ask the congregation to place the pastor on
35 involuntary leave of absence, or, in extreme circumstances, the bishop may temporarily suspend the
36 pastor without prejudice. Finally, the bishop may ask the pastor to resign his or her call or from the
37 clergy roster of the ELCA. The bishop cannot force the pastor to resign. Only a discipline hearing
38 committee can remove the pastor from the clergy roster.
39

40 The bishop or bishop's designee will discuss with the pastor his or her needs for pastoral care or
41 professional counseling. If the pastor requests, the bishop or bishop's designee will help to put the pastor
42 in touch with persons who can provide such care or counseling. Under no circumstances will any
43 employee of the Synod function as the pastor's advocate, pastor, or counselor.
44

45 The bishop or bishop's designee will appoint a contact person within the Synod. That contact person
46 (who may be the bishop or bishop's designee) will keep in regular contact with the pastor and will inform
47 the pastor of significant developments. That contact person will also be available to respond to the
48 pastor's questions and concerns about the process.
49

50 E. ASSESS THE INFORMATION

1
2 The bishop will carefully review the information provided by the complainant, discovered during the
3 preliminary investigation, and provided by the pastor. The bishop will then decide upon a course of
4 action. Among options available to the bishop are the following: no further action; further investigation;
5 requesting the pastor to undergo a psychodiagnostic evaluation; requesting the pastor's congregation to
6 take some action; convening a consultation or advisory panel; or initiating the formal disciplinary
7 process.

8 9 F. CONSULTATION OR ADVISORY PANEL

10
11 Reports of sexual misconduct often present a bishop with a difficult decision. For example, a bishop
12 may be confronted with "one person's word against another's" -- that is, a situation in which both the
13 complainant's report and the pastor's denial of the report appear credible, and no one but the complainant
14 and the pastor can know for certain who is being truthful.

15
16 To assist him or her in making these difficult decisions, a bishop may, at his or her sole discretion,
17 appoint a consultation or advisory panel. The function of a consultation or advisory panel is described at
18 length in Sections 20.21.04 to 20.21.06 of the Constitution and Bylaws of the ELCA (Sept. 1993 edition)
19 and Section D of *Rules Governing Disciplinary Proceedings Against an Ordained Minister, a Rostered*
20 *Layperson, or a Congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* (Dec. 5, 1993). Both of
21 these documents are available from the Synod.

22
23 Essentially, a consultation or advisory panel is a small group of clergy and laypersons who are asked to
24 recommend a course of action to the bishop. Before making that recommendation, the panel may
25 interview the complainant, the pastor, the bishop, the bishop's designee, and/or others. If possible, the
26 panel will seek to resolve the controversy through recommendations that are pastoral and therapeutic and
27 that will eliminate the need for disciplinary proceedings if they are accepted by all concerned. If such a
28 resolution does not appear possible, the panel will advise the bishop whether it believes that the
29 disciplinary process should be initiated.

30 31 32 G. FORMAL HEARING

33
34 The disciplinary process is the process by which the ELCA determines if a pastor should be suspended or
35 removed from its clergy roster. The process is governed by Chapter 20 of the Constitution and Bylaws
36 of the ELCA and by the Rules Governing Disciplinary Proceedings.

37
38 A pastor may be disciplined by committing "conduct incompatible with the character of the ministerial
39 office," which is defined in *Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline of Ordained Ministers* (Dec. 5,
40 1993) to include "adultery, promiscuity, the sexual abuse of another, or the misuse of counseling
41 relationships for sexual favors." *Definitions and Guidelines* is attached to this policy.

42
43 A bishop may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a pastor by filing written charges setting forth the
44 offense that the pastor is accused of committing -- e.g., "the sexual abuse of another" -- and the alleged
45 facts supporting the charge -- e.g., the name of the person that the pastor is alleged to have abused and
46 the date, place, time, and other circumstances of the alleged abuse.

47
48 A committee of twelve persons is appointed to hold a hearing on the charges. The hearing resembles a
49 court trial. The bishop presents testimony and other evidence in support of the charges, and then the
50 pastor presents testimony and other evidence in opposition to the charges. The governing documents of

1 the ELCA provide for certain rights for the bishop, the pastor, and the complaining witnesses. A bishop
2 generally will not initiate formal disciplinary proceedings unless the complainant agrees to testify against
3 the pastor.
4

5 Following the hearing, the discipline hearing committee decides whether the charges are true, and, if so,
6 what discipline should be imposed. The options available are private censure and admonition,
7 suspension from the clergy roster of the ELCA for a designated period of time or until the pastor
8 complies with specified conditions, or removal from the clergy roster. The discipline hearing
9 committee's decision is generally made about three months after charges are filed.
10

11 H. DISCLOSURE

12

13 Except in unusual circumstances, the bishop will disclose all serious allegations of clergy sexual
14 misconduct. (Rostered persons other than the Synod bishop not directly involved in the case in question
15 are expected to refrain from disclosing details of the case). Although disclosure can increase the short
16 term pain caused by clergy sexual misconduct, experience has demonstrated that proper disclosure by the
17 bishop speeds the healing of the primary and secondary victims of the misconduct, empowers unknown
18 victims to come forward and seek help, protects others from being victimized by the same pastor, and
19 demonstrates the commitment of the Church to deal openly and honestly with the problem.
20

21
22 Decisions regarding who will make what disclosure to whom and when will vary from case to case. In
23 general, though, the Synod will abide by the following guidelines:
24

- 25 1. Disclosure of clergy sexual misconduct will be made to the leadership of the pastor's congregation,
26 the members of the pastor's congregation, the members of the pastor's family, and other pastors
27 within the Synod.
28
- 29 2. Disclosure will be made if (1) the pastor admits to committing sexual misconduct; (2) the pastor
30 resigns his or her call or from the clergy roster of the ELCA after being accused of sexual
31 misconduct; (3) the pastor is placed on leave of absence or temporarily suspended in response to an
32 allegation of sexual misconduct; (4) the pastor is suspended or removed from the clergy roster as a
33 result of formal disciplinary proceedings; or (5) secular legal proceedings (civil or criminal) are
34 initiated against the pastor.
35
- 36 3. The bishop will first disclose to the leaders of the pastor's congregation at a meeting of the officers
37 and/or the congregation council. The bishop will then work closely with the leaders regarding
38 appropriate disclosure to the members of the congregation. Disclosure to the members will usually
39 be made by one or more of the leaders and/or by the bishop.
40
- 41 4. To protect the privacy of those harmed by the pastor, only the following will be disclosed: (1) the
42 fact that the pastor has been accused of, admitted to, or been found guilty of committing sexual
43 misconduct; (2) the gender of the complainant; (3) whether the complainant was an adult or a minor
44 at the time of the misconduct; and (4) whether the complainant was a member of the pastor's
45 congregation or a person to whom the pastor was providing pastoral care. Disclosure will almost
46 never include the name of the complainant or facts from which she or he could readily be identified.
47 If the pastor has denied the allegations, that fact will also be disclosed.
48

1 5. Persons who believe that they have been harmed (directly or indirectly) by the pastor will be invited
2 to contact the leaders of the congregation, the Synod, or others who have agreed to be available to
3 those persons.

4
5 I. FOLLOW-UP

6
7 The bishop will work with congregations and others to help ensure that care and support are available to
8 those harmed by clergy sexual misconduct. As noted above, the Synod cannot provide this care itself,
9 but it will assist the primary and secondary victims of sexual misconduct to find human and material
10 resources that might help them on their journey to healing.

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MODEL CLUSTER CONSTITUTION

Chapter 1. Name

The name of this organization shall be _____
Cluster of the Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Chapter 2. Statement of Purpose

The purpose of the cluster shall include:

- (A) fostering interdependent relationships among congregations for mission purposes:
 - 1. promoting the proclamation of the gospel;
 - 2. providing the opportunities for strengthening the spiritual life of clergy and laity;
 - 3. enabling participation in program planning for worship, learning, witness, service, stewardship, and advocacy by implementing conferences, retreats, fellowship, study, and training events;
 - 4. deliberating on the faith and life of the church;
- (B) developing relationships with other religious and secular organizations dedicated to advocating justice and providing services to meet human needs;
- (C) seeking to facilitate communication between the congregations of the cluster and the synod;
- (D) providing a forum for conversation about matters coming before the Synod Assembly;
- (E) submitting nominations for any available synod position to the synod Nominating Committee.

Chapter 3. Membership

Membership of this cluster will be those churches as determined by the Synod Constitution, Bylaws and Synod Council, and will include Lutheran agencies within the cluster area. Changes in cluster arrangement can be facilitated using the Synod Constitution Bylaw S12.01.01.

Chapter 4. Cluster Meetings

- (A) The cluster shall meet prior to the regular meeting of the Synod Assembly for the purpose of fellowship, fostering interdependent relationships among congregations and for conversation about matters coming before the Synod Assembly.
- (B) The cluster may meet as necessary to carry out the clusters purpose and for the election of the officers.
- (C) The cluster meetings shall be called by the Executive Committee of the cluster.
- (D) The congregations shall be notified of the date, time and place of the cluster meeting at least 30 days in advance by the cluster Secretary and the agendum shall be mailed to all congregations at least 15 days in advance of the meeting.
- (E) The Quorum of this cluster shall be two-thirds of the congregations represented within the cluster.
- (F) Three members from each congregation may be designated as cluster voting members.

Chapter 5. Officers

The officers of this cluster shall be a president, secretary and treasurer and other officers as deemed necessary.

- (A) Each officer shall be a voting member of a congregation of this cluster.
- (B) The officers shall be elected by the cluster and shall serve for three years. (The terms of the officers shall be staggered.)
- (C) No officer shall hold more than one office at a time. No elected officer shall be eligible to serve more than two full consecutive terms in the same office.
- (D) The makeup of officers of the cluster shall conform to the †S6.04 section of the synod constitution. Therefore, one officer of the cluster shall be a lay female, one a lay male, and the other clergy.

1
2
3 Chapter 6. Duties
4

5 The duties of the officers shall include:
6

- 7 (A) the president will preside over the cluster meetings;
8 (B) the secretary shall keep the minutes of any cluster meeting and provide the necessary reports to the
9 synod council;
10 (C) the treasurer shall keep the records of all financial matters, provide the necessary reports to the
11 synod council and manage all monies and accounts of the cluster.
12

13
14 Chapter 7. Committees
15

16 The cluster shall have an executive, mission and nominations committees and may have other committees as needed
17 to carry out the cluster purposes.
18

- 19 (A) The executive committee shall consist of the cluster officers, dean and synod council cluster
20 representative.
21 (1) The executive committee shall establish the agenda for cluster meetings and exercise interim
22 authority on behalf of the cluster between its meetings.
23 (2) Appoint members to the committees of the cluster.
24 (B) The mission committee will be responsible for establishing missions and for such mission activities
25 as educational workshops on various topics. They will serve as a resource for materials and persons
26 from the synod and region for congregational use. The committee may be comprised of up to one
27 representative from each congregation using section †S6.04 of the synod constitution as a guideline.
28 The chairperson is to report to the executive committee and the cluster.
29 (C) The nominating committee will secure nominations for officers of the cluster and officers and
30 positions needed for the next Synod Assembly elections. The chairperson is to report to the
31 executive committee and the cluster.
32

33
34 Chapter 8. Operating Funds
35

36 The cluster may assess dues from cluster congregations to finance mailing and duplicating costs. All workshop and
37 seminar costs are to be paid by a preregistration fee. No more than a free balance of \$500 may be carried over into a
38 new calendar year without the permission of the synod council. Distribution of an excess balance may be distributed
39 as local benevolence within the cluster.
40

41
42 Chapter 9. Amendments
43

44 This constitution and its bylaws may be amended at any regular meeting of the cluster by a two-thirds majority vote
45 of the voting members present at such meeting provided that such proposed amendments shall have been submitted
46 to the member congregations by the secretary at least 30 days in advance of the meeting. All changes approved by
47 the cluster must also be approved by the synod council.