

CONSTITUTION, BYLAWS, AND CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS
of the
SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
2013c Version

CODIFICATION EXPLANATION

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

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

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

Major sections are designated as chapters. The chapters are numbered 1 through 19. The chapter designation becomes the first number in the codification sequence and is followed by a period.

Constitutional provisions are codified with two sets of numbers, the chapter number and a two-digit number preceding the second period in the codification.

Bylaw provisions are codified with three sets of numbers, the chapter number, the related constitutional provision number, and a two-digit number.

Continuing resolutions also are codified with three sets of numbers except that the third set is preceded by a capital letter. Thus, a continuing resolution might be numbered 16, to designate the chapter; 16.11. to designate the subject matter within the chapter; and the third set might be numbered A91. in the codification 16.11.A91. to indicate by the "A" that it is the first continuing resolution regarding that subject and by the "91" that it was adopted in 1991.

Provisions in the Constitution for Synods are prefaced with "S", and those in the Model Constitution for Congregations with "C".

In these governing documents, with the exception of the "Restated Articles of Incorporation," "Church" with a capital letter is used in references to the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. In references to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the words "church" and "this church" in lower case letters are employed.

Required provisions are designated by a bold-faced dagger, “†”. Such required provisions:

- (1) may only be adopted or amended by the Churchwide Assembly;
- (2) may not be altered or amended by the Synod Assembly; and
- (3) are to be introduced “at once” into the synod’s constitution upon notification of the amendment or adoption of the provision (†S18.12.).

CONSTITUTION, BYLAWS AND CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS
Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod -- ELCA

Chapter 1.

NAME AND INCORPORATION

- †S1.01. **The name of this synod, as determined by the Churchwide Assembly, shall be the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America hereafter designated as “this synod” or “the synod.”**
- †S1.02. **For the purpose of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws, the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is hereafter designated as “this synod.”**
- †S1.11 **This synod shall be incorporated.**
- S1.12. **Amendments to the articles of incorporation of this synod shall be submitted to the Church Council for ratification before filing.**
- †S1.21. **The seal of this synod is a cross and three entwined circles beside the cross. The name of this synod forms the circular outer edge of the seal.**

Chapter 2.

STATUS

- †S2.01. **This synod possesses the powers conferred upon it, and accepts the duties and responsibilities assigned to it, in the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, which are recognized as having governing force in the life of this synod.**
- †S2.02. **The name Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA or “this church”) as used herein refers in general references to this whole church, including its three expressions – congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization. The name Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is also the name of the corporation of the churchwide organization to which specific references may be made herein.**
- †S2.03 **No provision of this constitution shall be inconsistent with the constitution and bylaws of this church.**

Chapter 3.

TERRITORY

- †S3.01. **The territory of this synod, as determined by Churchwide Assembly, shall be the counties of Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery and Philadelphia in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.**

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

Chapter 4.

CONFESSION OF FAITH

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Chapter 5

NATURE OF THE CHURCH

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

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

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

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

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

- a. Proclaim God’s saving Gospel of justification by grace for Christ’s sake through faith alone, according to the apostolic witness in the Holy Scripture, preserving and transmitting the Gospel faithfully to future generations.**
- b. Carry out Christ’s Great Commission by reaching out to all people to bring them to faith in Christ and by doing all ministry with a global awareness consistent with the understanding of God as Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier of all.**
- c. Serve in response to God’s love to meet human needs, caring for the sick and the aged, advocating dignity and justice for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, and standing with the poor and powerless, and committing itself to their needs.**
- d. Worship God in proclamation of the Word and administration of the sacraments and through lives of prayer, praise,**

thanksgiving, witness, and service.

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

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

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

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

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

- a. providing for pastoral care of congregations, ordained ministers, associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers in the synod, including:**
 - 1) approving candidates for the ordained ministry in cooperation with the appropriate seminaries of this church, which may be done through multi-synodical committees;**
 - 2) authorizing ordinations and ordaining on behalf of this church;**
 - 3) approving associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers, which may be done through multi-synodical committees;**
 - 4) authorizing the commissioning of associates in ministry, the consecration of deaconesses, and the consecration of diaconal ministers of this church; and**
 - 5) consulting in the calling process for ordained ministers, associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers.**
- b. providing for leadership recruitment, preparation, and support in accordance with churchwide standards and policies, including:**
 - 1) nurturing and supporting congregations and lay leaders;**

- 2) seeking and recruiting qualified candidates for the rostered ministries of this church;
 - 3) making provision for pastoral care, call review, and guidance;
 - 4) encouraging and supporting persons on the rosters of this church in stewardship of their abilities, care of self, and pursuit of continuing education to undergird their effectiveness of service; and
 - 5) supporting recruitment of leaders for this church's colleges, universities, seminaries, and social ministry organizations.
- c. providing for discipline of congregations, ordained ministers, and persons on the official lay rosters; as well as for termination of call, appointment, adjudication, and appeals consistent with Chapter 20 of this constitution.
 - d. providing for archives in conjunction with other synods.

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

- a. developing of new ministries, redevelopment of existing ministries, and support and assistance in the conclusion, if necessary, of a particular ministry;
- b. leading and encouraging of congregations in their evangelism efforts;
- c. assisting members of its congregations in carrying out their ministries in the world;
- d. encouraging congregations to respond to human need, work for justice and peace, care for the sick and the suffering, and participate responsibly in society;
- e. providing resources for congregational life;
- f. grouping congregations in conferences, clusters, coalitions, or other area subdivisions for mission purposes.

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

- a. promoting interdependent relationships among congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization, and entering into 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.

S6.03.11. The synod shall encourage the development and support of educational and social ministries according to the provisions of the ELCA.

S6.03.12 The synod shall relate to Muhlenberg College through financial contributions and election of board members. The synod shall relate to Gettysburg College through election of a board member.

S6.03.13. The synod shall relate to Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia and to Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg through financial support and election of board members.

S6.03.14 The synod shall encourage support of all social ministry organizations on its territory, which are affiliated by the Division for Social Ministry Organizations of the ELCA. The synod shall serve the function of a corporate member for:

Artman Lutheran Home
 Lutheran Children and Family Services of Eastern Pennsylvania
 Lutheran Home at Germantown
 Lutheran Housing and Development Corporation
 Lutheran Retirement Homes, Inc.
 Lutheran Social Mission Society of Philadelphia
 The Mary J. Drexel Home as long as these social ministry organizations are affiliated with the synod.

- S6.03.15** The synod shall relate to the Eastern Pennsylvania Lutheran Camp Corporation through financial support and appointment or election of board members.
- S6.03.16.** The synod shall relate to the Lutheran Campus Ministry of Southeast Pennsylvania, incorporated through financial support and appointment or election of board members.
- S6.03.17.** The synod shall relate to the Lutheran Archives Center at Philadelphia through financial support and appointment by the bishop of an archivist who shall represent the synod on the board of the Lutheran Archives Center at Philadelphia.
- †S6.04.** **Except as otherwise provided in this constitution and bylaws, the Synod Council shall establish processes that will ensure that at least 60% of the members of the synod assemblies, councils, committees, boards, and other organizational units shall be laypersons; and that, as nearly as possible, 50% of the lay members of assemblies, councils, committees, boards, or other organizational units shall be female and 50% shall be male; and that, where possible, the representation of ordained ministers shall be both male and female. This synod shall establish processes that will enable it to reach a minimum goal that 10% of its assemblies, councils, committees, boards, or other organizational units be persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English.**
- †S6.04.A01.** *It is the goal of this synod that 10% of the membership of synod assemblies, councils, committees, boards and/or other organizational units be persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English.*
- †S6.04.B09.** *It is the goal of this synod that at least 10 percent of the voting members of the Synod Assembly, Synod Council, committees, and organizational units of this synod be youth and young adults. The Synod Council shall establish a plan for implementing this goal. For purposes of the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this synod, the term “youth” means a voting member of a congregation who has not reached the age of 18 at the time of election or appointment for service. The term “young adult” means a voting member of a congregation between the ages of 18 and 30 at the time of election or appointment for service.*
- S6.04.C02.** *It is the additional intention of this synod to increase from 10% to 20% the representation of persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English who serve on the above mentioned synodical bodies.*
- S6.04.D10.** *The Synod Assembly shall elect two Synod Council youth representatives, one female and one male, and two Synod Council young adult representatives, one female and one male. At least one of the youth and young adult*

representatives shall be a person of color and/or person whose primary language is other than English. The terms of the two youth representatives shall be two years and staggered so that one of the terms expires every year. The youth representatives may serve two consecutive terms if eligible. The terms of the young adult representatives shall be three years. The young adult representatives may serve two consecutive terms if eligible. Those nominated for the youth and young adult representative positions and not elected shall be added to the nominees for the Synod Council “at large” positions.

S6.04.E10. *The synod’s Lutheran Youth Organization may appoint or elect a non-voting Synod Council representative if desired.*

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

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

Chapter 7

SYNOD ASSEMBLY

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

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

S7.11.10. **A regular meeting of the Synod Assembly shall be held annually.**

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

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

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

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

S7.13.10. Notice of the time and place of the regular meeting or of an adjourned meeting of the Synod Assembly shall be sent by the secretary not less than four weeks preceding the meeting. Notice of the time and place of a special meeting shall be sent by the secretary not less than two weeks preceding the meeting.

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

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

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

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

c. A minimum of one lay member elected by each congregation with fewer than 175 baptized members and a minimum of two lay members elected by each congregation with 175 or more baptized members related to this synod, normally one of whom shall be male and one of whom shall be female, shall be voting members. The Synod Council shall establish a formula to provide additional lay representation from congregations on the basis of the number of baptized members in the congregation. The Synod Council shall seek to ensure that, as nearly as possible, 50 percent of the lay members of the assembly shall be female and 50 percent shall be male. Additional members from each congregation normally shall be equally divided between male and female.

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

- †S7.21.01. Voting members shall begin serving with the opening of a regular Synod Assembly and shall continue serving until voting members are seated at the next regular Synod Assembly.
- S7.21.11 In addition to the congregation's election of voting member(s) of the Synod Assembly as established by S7.21.c, each congregation may elect one additional voting member of the Synod Assembly who shall be a voting member of the congregation up to the age of 25.
- S7.22. Retired ordained ministers on the roster of the synod in attendance at the synod Assembly may serve as voting members of this synod consistent with 7.21 above, and as specified in the bylaws.**
- S7.22.10. Retired ordained ministers, retired associates in ministry, retired deaconesses, and retired diaconal ministers who have indicated to the bishop their willingness and availability to serve in the synod and whose intent meets with the concurrence of the bishop shall be permitted to vote at meetings of the Synod Assembly.
- S7.22.11 In establishing a formula pursuant to Chapter 7.21.c of the Constitution, the number of retired ordained ministers permitted to vote at meetings of the Synod Assembly shall be a factor in determining the number of additional lay representatives necessary to comprise at least 60% of the membership of the Synod Assembly.
- S7.23. The presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and such other official representatives of this church as may be designated from time to time by the Church Council shall also have voice but not vote in the meetings of the Synod Assembly. Like privileges shall be accorded to those additional persons whom the Synod Assembly or Synod Council shall from time to time designate.**
- S7.24. Ordained ministers under call, or on leave from call but available for call, as determined by the Office of the Bishop, on the roster of this synod shall remain as members of the Synod Assembly so long as they remain under call, or on leave from call but available for call, as determined by the Office of the Bishop, and so long as their names appear on the roster of ordained ministers of this synod. Associates in ministry, deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and diaconal ministers of this church serving under call, or on leave from but available for call, as determined by the Office of the Bishop, on the roster of this synod shall remain as members of the Synod Assembly so long as they remain under call, or on leave from call but available for call, as determined by the**

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

- †S7.25. Except as otherwise provided in this constitution or in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, each voting member of the Synod Assembly shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod.**
- S7.26. This synod may establish processes through the Synod Council that permit representatives of mission settings formed with the intent of becoming chartered congregations and authorized worshiping communities of the synod, which have been authorized under ELCA bylaw 10.02.03., to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with +S7.21. 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.**
- S7.27. This synod may establish processes through the Synod Council to grant an ordained minister from a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by the Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America the privilege of both voice and vote in the Synod Assembly during the period of that ordained minister's service in a congregation of this church.**
- S7.28 Duly elected voting members of the Synod Council who are not otherwise voting members of the Synod Assembly under +S7.21. shall be granted the privilege of both voice and vote as members of the Synod Assembly.**
- S7.29 All ordained ministers, on leave from call but available for call, as determined by the Office of the Bishop, on the roster of this synod in attendance at the Synod Assembly shall be voting members. All associates in ministry, deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and diaconal ministers, on leave from call but available for call, as determined by the Office of the Bishop, on the official lay rosters of this synod shall have both voice and vote as lay voting members in the Synod Assembly, in addition to the voting membership of lay members of congregations as provided in item S7.21.c.**

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

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

S7.32.10. At any time during a meeting, the Synod Assembly may resolve to go into executive session, in which case only the voting body shall be present.

S7.32.A01 *The Synod Assembly shall be governed by the following Rules of Procedure:*

1. Rule Regarding Distribution

The distribution of any materials that do not come to the Assembly through regular reports, synod committees, agencies, institutions, or Synod Council must be approved by the Committee on Reference and Counsel. Therefore, no materials may be distributed to the Assembly without the prior approval of Reference and Counsel.

2. Rule Regarding Resolutions Not Meeting the Deadline for Reference and Counsel

The assembly, by a two-thirds vote, may grant permission for consideration of a resolution that a voting member wishes to bring to the floor, but which has not met the imposed deadline of the Reference and Counsel Committee.

3. Rules Regarding Floor Nominations

- a. For all positions to be elected at this assembly, nominations from the floor shall be made at the time of the first report of the Nominating Committee during the first business session of the Synod Assembly. After the nominations have been closed no further nominations shall be accepted.*
- b. As nominations are made from the floor, the nominator must present a typed or printed biography to the synod secretary on the special form provided immediately after the report of the Nominating Committee.*
- c. In accordance with +S6.04 of the Synod Constitution, at least 10% of the representation on the Synod Council, ELCA Assembly voting membership, and other elected boards is required to be persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English. In the event such representation is not accomplished through normal voting procedures, the nominated person of color or whose primary language is other than English and who has the*

next highest number of votes shall supersede the elected individual with the least number of votes.

4. Rules for Dealing with Memorials and/or Resolutions Submitted to the Committee on Reference and Counsel

- (1) The deadline for submitting memorials and/or resolutions to the Committee on Reference and Counsel shall be one month before the opening of the Synod Assembly.*
- (2) The Committee on Reference and Counsel shall publish all memorials and/or resolutions, submitted by the deadline, at the synod website no later than two weeks before the opening of the Synod Assembly.*
- (3) The Committee on Reference and Counsel shall make available to Synod Assembly voting members when they register at the Synod Assembly hard copies of all memorials and/or resolutions, submitted to the committee by the deadline, and the committee's recommendations.*

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

**Chapter 8
OFFICERS**

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

S8.10. Bishop

†S.8.11. The bishop shall be elected by the Synod Assembly. The bishop shall be a pastor who is an ordained minister of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

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

a. Preach, teach, and administer the sacraments in accord with the Confession of Faith of this church.

b. Have primary responsibility for the ministry of Word and Sacrament in this synod and its congregations, providing pastoral care and leadership for this synod, its congregations, its ordained ministers, and its other rostered leaders.

c. Exercise solely this church's power to ordain (or provide for the

ordination by another synodical bishop of) approved candidates who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested letter of call for the office of ordained ministry (and as provided in the bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America):

d. Commission (or provide for the commissioning of) approved candidates who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested letter of call for service as associates in ministry; consecrate (or provide for the consecration of) approved candidates who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested letter of call for service as deaconesses; and consecrate (or provide for the consecration of) approved candidates who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested letter of call for service as diaconal ministers of this church.

e. Attest letters of call for persons called to serve congregations in the synod, letters of call for persons called by the Synod Council, and letters of call for persons on the rosters of this synod called by the Church Council.

f. Install (or provide for the installation of):

1) the pastors of all congregations in this synod;

2) ordained ministers called to extraparish service within this synod; and

3) persons serving in the other rostered ministries within this synod.

g. Exercise leadership in the mission of this church and in so doing:

1) Interpret and advocate the mission and theology of the whole church.

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

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

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

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

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

doing:

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

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

3) Be the chief ecumenical officer of this synod;

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

5) Coordinate the work of all synodical staff members;

6) Appoint all committees for which provision is not otherwise made.

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

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

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

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

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

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

a) addition to and subtractions from the rosters of this synod and the register of congregations.

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

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

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

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

†S8.13. The synodical bishop may appoint an attorney, admitted to the bar within the territory of the synod or the state where the synod is located, to be Synod Attorney. The appointment must be approved by the Synod Council and reported to the Synod Assembly and to the ELCA secretary. The appointment continues until resignation or until a successor is appointed. The Synod

Attorney provides legal advice and counsel to the synodical officers and the Synod Council. The Synod Attorney is expected to be familiar with the governing documents and policies of the synod and, as necessary, to attend meetings of the Synod Council. The Synod Attorney serves without salary but may be retained and compensated for specific legal services requested by the synod.

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

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

†S8.16 Conflicts of Interest

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

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

S8.20. Vice-president

- †S8.21. **The vice-president shall be elected by the Synod Assembly, the vice-president shall be a layperson. The vice-president shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod. The vice-president shall not receive a salary for the performance of the duties of the office.**
- S8.21.01. The vice president may serve no more than three terms consecutively.
- S8.22. **The vice-president shall chair the Synod Council.**
- S8.22.01 The vice-president shall be an ex-officio voting member from the Synod to the Churchwide Assembly. In the event that the vice-president is unable to attend the Churchwide Assembly an additional nominee for the appropriate lay panel shall be made by the Nominating Committee.
- S8.23. **In the event of the death, resignation, or disability of the bishop, the vice-president, after consultation with the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, shall convene the Synod Council to arrange for the conduct of duties of the bishop until a new bishop shall be elected or, in the case temporary disability, until the bishop resumes full performances of the duties of the office.**
- S8.30. **Secretary**
- †S8.31. **The secretary shall be elected by the Synod Assembly. The secretary shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod. The secretary may either be a layperson or an ordained minister.**
- †S8.32 **The secretary shall:**
- a. **Keep the minutes of all meetings of the Synod Assembly and Synod Council, be responsible for the printing and distribution of such minutes, and perform such other duties as this synod may from time to time direct.**
 - b. **Be authorized and empowered, in the name of this synod, to attest all instruments which require the same, and which are signed and sealed by the bishop.**
 - c. **In consultation with the bishop, classify and arrange all important papers and documents and deposit them in the archives of this synod.**
 - d. **Submit to the secretary of this church at least nine months before each regular Churchwide Assembly a certified list of the voting members elected by the Synod Assembly.**
- S.8.40. **Treasurer**

†S.8.41 **The treasurer may be elected by the Synod Assembly or may be appointed by the Synod Council. The treasurer shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod. The treasurer may be either a layperson or an ordained minister.**

S8.41.01. **The Synod Council shall appoint the treasurer.**

S.8.42. **The treasurer shall provide and be accountable for**

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

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

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

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

e. Rendering at each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly a full, detailed, and duly audited report of receipts and disbursements in the several accounts of this synod for the preceding fiscal year, together with the tabulation, for record and publication in the minutes, of the contributions from the congregations.

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

S8.50. **General Provisions**

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

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

b. The vice-president and secretary of this synod shall be elected to a term of four years and may be re-elected, except as otherwise provided for in the bylaws.

c. The treasurer of this synod shall be elected to a four-year term and may be reelected.

S8.52. The terms of the officers shall begin on the first day of the second month following election or, in special circumstances, at a time designated by the Synod Council, except as otherwise provided for in the bylaws.

S8.52.01. In the event of the unavailability of any officer which results in the election or appointment of new officer, the term of office of that new officer shall commence at the close of the synod assembly at which she or he had been elected, and such officer shall have complete authority as otherwise provided for in the constitution or in these bylaws. The term of office for the new treasurer shall commence at the close of the synod council meeting at which she or he had been elected, and such treasurer shall have complete authority as otherwise provided for in the constitution or in these bylaws.

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

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

S8.55. Should the vice-president, secretary, or treasurer, die, resign, or be unable to serve, the bishop, with the approval of the Executive Committee of the Synod Council, shall arrange for the appropriate care of the responsibilities of the officer until an election of a new officer can be held or, in the case of temporary disability, until the officer is able to serve

again. The term of the successor officer, elected by the next Synod Assembly, shall be four years.

- †S8.56. The Executive Committee of the Synod Council shall determine whether an officer is unable to serve; the officer may appeal the decision of the Executive Committee by requesting a hearing before the Synod Council. A meeting to determine the ability of an officer to serve shall be called upon the request of at least three members of the Executive Committee and prior written notice of the meeting shall be given to the office in question at least ten calendar days prior to the meeting.
- †S8.57. The recall or dismissal of an officer may be effect in accordance with the procedures established by the Committee on Appeals of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- †S8.58. If the bishop is to be temporarily absent from the synod for an extended period, the bishop, with the consent of the Synod Council, may appoint as acting bishop for such period an ordained minister of this church. Except as limited by action of the Synod Council, an acting bishop shall possess all of the powers and authority of a regularly elected bishop other than authority to ordain or to authorize the ordination of properly approved candidates for ordination.

Chapter 9

NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

- †S9.01. The Synod Assembly shall elect such officers of this synod and such other persons as the constitution and bylaws may require, according to procedures set forth in the bylaws.
- S9.02. In all elections by the Synod Assembly, other than for the bishop, a majority of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election.
- S9.02.01. All elections shall be by ballot, except in those categories where no contest exists, in which case the bishop shall direct the secretary to declare the nominees to be elected.
- S9.02.02. No ballot for an ineligible person shall be counted as a vote cast in any election.
- S9.03. There shall be a Nominating Committee which shall be appointed by the Synod Council to serve for each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly in accordance with the bylaws. Additional nominations may be made from the floor for all elections for which nominations are made by the Nominating Committee.

S9.03.01.

Nominating Committee.

a. The Synod Council shall appoint a Nominating Committee. The committee shall be composed of members of the Synod Council and others with the goal of having representation from each conference.

b. For positions to be filled by election, the committee shall present nominations to the Synod Assembly and to the Synod Council, except in such instances as are specifically distinguished herein or in the Constitution and Bylaws of the ELCA. The term of office for committee members shall be no more than one year, beginning with the meeting of the Synod Council at which they are appointed. The committee shall be appointed not later than the second regular meeting of the Synod Council following the Synod Assembly.

S9.04.

The bishop shall be elected by the Synod Assembly by ecclesiastical ballot. Three-fourths of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election on the first ballot. If no one is elected, the first ballot shall be considered the nominating ballot. Three-fourths of the legal votes cast on the second ballot shall be necessary for election. The third ballot shall be limited to the seven persons (plus ties) who received the greatest number of legal votes on the second ballot, and who are willing to serve if elected. Two-thirds of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election. The fourth ballot shall be limited to the three persons (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of legal votes on the third ballot, and 60% of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election. On subsequent ballots a majority of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election. These ballots shall be limited to the two persons (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of legal votes on the previous ballot.

S9.04A94

1) Following the first ballot, reasonable efforts shall be made to contact nominees in order to determine their willingness to serve. The assembly shall be informed of those efforts as well as the responses of the nominees.

2) For the purpose of S9.04 of the Synod Constitution, a nominee shall be presumed willing to serve unless he or she has expressed an unwillingness to do so.

3) When reasonable efforts have been made to contact a nominee, but have been unsuccessful, it shall be assumed that the nominee is willing to serve.

4) No nominee willing to serve shall be a member of the contacting group.

5) Biographical information about the nominees included on the third ballot shall be distributed to voting members of the assembly prior to that ballot.

6) At a plenary session prior to the fourth ballot, the agenda shall include a forum at which nominees shall be permitted to respond to written questions

posed by voting members to the Committee on Elections.

7) Prior to the fifth ballot, the agenda shall include time for nominees to address the assembly for up to five minutes each.

8) Implementation of these rules of procedure shall be the responsibility of the Committee on Elections unless otherwise delegated by the Synod Council.

- S9.05. The Nominating Committee shall nominate at least one person for Vice President only if there is an incumbent; otherwise the Nominating Committee shall nominate at least two persons for Vice President. Additional nominations may be made from the floor.**
- S9.06. The Synod Council shall nominate at least one person for Secretary only if there is an incumbent; otherwise the Synod Council shall nominate at least two persons for Secretary. Additional nominations may be made from the floor.**
- S9.07. If the treasurer is elected, the Synod Council shall nominate at least one person for treasurer only if there is an incumbent; otherwise the Synod Council shall nominate at least two persons for Treasurer. Additional nominations may be made from the floor.**
- S9.08. In all elections except those by ecclesiastical ballot, the names of the persons receiving the highest number of legal votes, but not elected by a majority of legal votes cast on the first ballot, shall be entered on each subsequent ballot up to the number of two for every vacancy unfilled. On any ballot when only two names appear, a majority of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election.**
- S9.08.01. Synod Council**
- a. The nominating and election process for the 24 persons, not including the four officers of this Synod and the two youth and the two young adult representatives, elected as members of Synod Council shall proceed in a manner that will assure that at least three members so elected will be persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English, nine of the 24 elected members shall be ordained ministers and 15 shall be lay persons. Terms for members other than the youth member shall be for three years and shall be arranged so that the terms of three ordained ministers, three conferences and two at-large lay members expire each year. None of the 24 elected members shall be eligible to serve for more than two terms consecutively. Terms of office for the youth members shall be two years, and for the young adult members, three years, subject to a two-term limitation.
 - b. Representatives of congregations in each conference shall meet prior to the

annual meeting of the Synod Assembly and shall nominate at least one lay person from their conference for the Synod Council, one nominee per conference to be elected by the assembly at the annual meeting. These lay seats assigned to conferences shall alternate every six years (or two terms) between male and female Council members. The Nominating Committee shall receive these nominations from the conferences to include in its reports. Voting members at the annual meeting of the assembly may nominate from the floor persons from the assigned conferences for election to the Synod Council.

c. The Nominating Committee shall nominate at least one person for each clergy seat and lay at-large seat. Geographic consideration shall be given in proposing nominees, as well as the need to assure an adequate number of persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English. Balloting for the conference lay positions shall be completed before balloting for at-large positions begins. Nominees not elected to represent conferences shall be added to the at-large ballots. Balloting for at-large lay members shall be by male and female panels; each year a male and female at-large lay representative shall be elected.

d. No nomination for Synod Council shall be made if that nominee's congregation already has a member on the Synod Council or if a member of a congregation has already been nominated, provided, however, that no nominee shall be ineligible if the Synod Council member from that congregation is an officer of this Synod and/or one of them is a Synod Council youth or young adult member. The Synod Council may make exceptions to this requirement in order to promote greater diversity and/or inclusivity.

S9.08.02. Nominations and elections for voting members to the Churchwide Assembly, for members of the Committee on Consultation, and the Committee on Discipline shall be by panels of laymen, laywomen and clergy. The number of persons elected by the synod to those positions and their terms shall be as specified in the bylaws of the ELCA.

S9.08.03. Each Board of an agency or institution related to the synod, whose membership is elected in whole or in part by the Synod Assembly or the Synod Council, may nominate one or more persons for each vacancy on its Board. Such nominations shall be submitted to the Synod Assembly or Synod Council, as appropriate, by the Nominating Committee, together with other nominees, as the Synod Institution Agreement permits.

S9.08.04 The Synod Council shall elect members to the boards of the Gettysburg Seminary, the Philadelphia Seminary, Gettysburg College and Muhlenberg College according to procedures established with each of the institutions.

- S9.08.05.** Members of the boards of Social Ministry Organizations shall be elected according to the requirements of those organizations governing documents.
- S9.09.** **The result of each ballot in every election shall be announced in detail to the assembly.**
- S9.09.01.** The report of the Nominating Committee shall be printed in the bulletin of reports for the meeting of the Synod Assembly at which its nominees are to be submitted. Its report shall indicate the congregation of membership for each nominee and the source of the nomination. In addition, those nominees who are persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English shall be specifically designated.
- S9.09.02** The ballot preparation for use in synod elections shall list the nominees for each position in chance order.
- †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 their 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 three years.**
- S10.01.01.** Membership. The Synod Council shall consist of 32 members: four officers (as set forth in 8.01. of the Synod Constitution), two youth (a youth is defined as a voting member of a congregation who has not reached the age of 18 at the time of election or appointment to service), two young adults (voting members of a congregation between the ages of 18 and 30 at the time of election or appointment for service), and 24 other members (nine clergy and 15 lay members). The Synod Council shall consist of no more than one member of

the same congregation at the same time, provided, however, that two or three members of the same congregation may serve on the Synod Council concurrently if one of them is either an officer of this synod and/or one of them is a Synod Council youth or young adult member.

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

S10.03. The function of this Synod Council shall be to:

- a. Exercise trusteeship responsibilities on behalf of this synod.**
- b. Recommend program goals and budgets to the regular meetings of the Synod Assembly.**
- c. Carry out the resolutions of the Synod Assembly.**
- d. Provide for an annual review of the roster of ordained ministers and of other official rosters, receive and act upon appropriate recommendations regarding those persons whose status is subject to reconsideration and action under the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and make a report to the Synod Assembly of the Synod Council's actions in this regard.**
- e. Issue letters of call to ordained ministers and letters of call to associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers as authorized by Chapter 7 of the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.**
- f. Fill vacancies until the next regular meeting of the Synod Assembly except as may otherwise be provided in the constitution or bylaws of this synod, and determine the fact of the incapacity of an office of this synod.**
- g. Report its actions to the regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.**
- h. Perform such other functions as are set forth in the bylaws of this synod or as may be delegated to it by the Synod Assembly.**

S10.03.01. Should a member of the Synod Council resign or lose his or her membership on the Synod Council, the Synod Council shall elect, by majority vote, a successor who shall serve until the unexpired term is completed. A Synod Council member, who has been elected by the Synod Council to fill an unexpired term, is eligible to be elected for two consecutive terms after the

unexpired term has ended if the unexpired term is less than one-and-one-half years.

- S10.04. Any proposal to appropriate funds, whether by amendments to the budget or otherwise, which is presented to a meeting of the Synod Assembly without the approval of the Synod Council shall require a two-thirds vote for adoption.**
- S10.05. No elected member of the Synod Council shall receive compensation for such service.**
- S10.05.01.** With the exception of the bishop, no member of the Synod Council shall be an employee of this synod, nor shall any member receive remuneration for services rendered to the synod (other than honoraria).
- S10.06. If a member of the Synod Council ceases to meet the requirements of the position to which she or her was elected, the office by such member shall at once become vacant.**
- S10.06.01.** With the exception of the bishop, any member of the Synod Council who fails to attend more than one-half of the regular meetings of the Synod Council, with or without excuse, during the twelve (12) month period commencing with the month in which the first absence occurs, shall automatically lose his or her membership on the Synod Council, without any action by the Synod Council.
- S10.07. The composition of the Synod Council, the number of its members, and the manner of their selection, as well as the organization of the Synod Council, its additional duties and responsibilities, and the number of meetings to be held each year shall be set forth in the bylaws.**
- S10.07.01.** Meetings. The Synod Council shall have at least four stated meetings annually. Special meetings may be called by the bishop, the vice-president or at the request of at least ten members of the Synod Council. A majority of the members of the Synod Council shall constitute a quorum. To the extent permitted by state law, meetings of the Synod Council and its committees may be held electronically or by telephone conference, and notice of all meetings may be provided electronically.
- S10.07.02.** Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall consist of the four officers of the synod in addition to three other members of the Synod Council who shall be elected annually by the Synod Council at its first stated meeting after the annual meeting of the Synod Assembly. In addition to its functions as set forth in the constitution, it shall assume such responsibilities and perform such duties, either on behalf of the Synod Council or otherwise, as

the Synod Council may from time to time direct. It shall submit reports of its activities to the Synod Council.

S10.07.03. Council Committees. The Synod Council shall, from time to time, establish standing committees which it deems necessary or desirable to assist it in performing its responsibilities. The vice-president, in consultation with the bishop, shall make all committee appointments, except the Executive Committee, subject to the approval of Synod Council.

S10.07.11. Conflict of Interest. Any possible conflict of interest on the part of any member shall be disclosed, in writing, to the council annually.

a. Any member having a possible conflict of interest in any transaction being considered at a council meeting shall not be counted in determining the quorum for the meeting and shall not vote or use personal influence to affect the vote concerning such transaction.

b. All new members shall be advised promptly of the requirements of this section

Chapter 11 COMMITTEES

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

S11.01.01. Each committee, unless otherwise specified, shall be appointed by the bishop and the vice-president. Appointees shall serve for terms of three years and shall serve for no more than two consecutive terms. Appointees shall be chosen in order to maximize diversity, continuity and skill within each committee. Service to the completion of an unexpired term shall be counted as service to a full term. In order to provide continuity, approximately one-third of the first members shall be appointed to a one-year term, approximately one-third to a two-year term and the rest to a three-year term. Service of an initial term of less than three years shall not be counted as service to a full term. The successors of all appointees so designated shall be appointed for three-year terms. Appointees to fill vacancies occurring shall serve to the end of the vacant term.

- S11.01.02.** The Consultation Committee and the Committee on Discipline shall be elected by the Synod Assembly and shall function in accordance with the bylaws of the ELCA, Chapter 18 and Chapter 19.
- S11.01.03.** The committees of the synod which are appointed by the bishop and the vice-president, along with a description of their responsibilities, shall be contained in continuing resolutions.
- S11.01.A98.** *Mutual Ministry Committee. This committee shall seek to give encouragement by its concern for the spiritual, emotional and physical well-being of the bishop. Members shall be elected from among Synod Council by the council.*
- S11.01.B98.** *Committees on Ministry. Appropriate committees shall be established to fulfill the responsibilities entrusted to this synod in the areas of candidacy of persons for the ordained ministry and associates in ministry according to procedures established by the Division for Ministry of the ELCA, and with regard to support of the ministries of the whole people of God, including recognition and support of the ministry of lay persons, ordained persons and associates in ministry.*
- S11.01.I98.** *Committee on Youth Ministry. The Youth Ministry Committee exists to equip adult youth workers through opportunities in training, faith development, networking, and fellowship, and to provide support for the synod's youth ministry staff.*
- S11.01.J98.** *Global Missions Committee. The committee shall oversee and coordinate the sharing of information concerning the work of global missions of the Church and encourage local congregations to be involved in the work of global missions.*
- S11.01.20.** Other committees may be established from time to time as approved by the Synod Council.
- †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, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and in Chapter 17 of this constitution. The size of the Consultation Committee, in accord with this provision, shall be defined in this synod's bylaws.**
- †S11.03.** **The Committee on Discipline of this synod shall consist of 12 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 (two clergy and two lay) expire every two years.
- c. The Synod Council shall fill vacancies on the Committee on Discipline for any unexpired term.

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

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

S11.10 General Provisions

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

Chapter 12

CONFERENCES, CLUSTERS, COALITIONS, OR OTHER AREA SUBDIVISIONS

†S12.01. This synod may establish conferences, clusters, coalitions, area subdivisions, and networks as appropriate within its territory and in collaboration with other synods and 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.** The word “conference” shall refer to the territories of this synod within which congregations are located, and within which social ministry organization and church institutions may be located. The term “conference” shall also define this synod’s groupings for mission purposes prescribed in Synod Constitution 6.03(h) and Chapter 12, there referred to as “conferences, clusters or coalitions.”
- S12.01.02.** The synod shall be divided into nine conferences in accordance with Chapter 12 of the synod constitution in order to foster interdependent relationships among congregations, institutions and synodical and churchwide units for mission purposes.
- S.12.01.03** Each conference shall develop a comprehensive plan for mission and ministry and shall assist member congregations in preparing annual ministry plans.
- S12.01.04.** Any congregation may request reassignment to another conference, which request will be granted if approved by Synod Council.
- S12.01.05.** Each conference shall meet in full assembly at least one time per year. Each conference shall be responsible for developing a plan for fair representation of rostered leaders, lay members of congregations, institutions, and agencies on the territory of the conference.
- S12.01.11.** Each conference in assembly shall elect a dean who shall be a pastor under call serving within the territory of the conference. The quorum for the conference assembly at which the dean is to be elected shall consist of a majority of the congregations in the conference. The conference shall seek to assure that the representational principles stated in **+S6.04., +S6.04.A01., +S6.04.B09., and S6.04.C2.** are fulfilled. If there is no quorum for the conference assembly at which the dean is to be elected, the dean shall be appointed by the bishop of this synod in consultation with the Committee of Deans. If the conference does not call a conference assembly for the election of the dean, the bishop of this synod shall call the conference assembly.
- S12.01.12.** The interim pastors rostered in this synod in assembly shall elect a dean, who shall be an interim pastor under call by the Synod Council, or actively seeking placement for an interim call, serving within the territory of this synod. The term of

is the Dean of Interim Ministry shall be the same as specified in S12.01.12. It
with the understood that the Dean of Interim Ministry advises, assists, and confers
and Bishop of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod as specified in S12.01.13
Ministry, the relates to, consults with, and convenes the Interim Ministry gatherings of this
synod. In the event of a vacancy in the office of the Dean of Interim
interim pastors rostered in this synod in assembly shall elect a dean for a new
three-year term.

S12.01.13. The term of office for each dean shall be three years, and a dean may serve no more than two consecutive terms. In the event of a vacancy in the office of the dean, the bishop of this synod may appoint an interim dean to serve until an election can be held at the next meeting of the Conference Assembly.

S12.01.14. The deans of the conferences shall constitute a committee of deans which may be convened by the bishop from time to time in order to advise and assist the bishop and to confer with the bishop as to the needs of the church on the territory of the several conferences.

S12.01.21. A lay person shall be elected by each Conference Assembly to chair the assembly and to chair the Conference Executive Committee.

S12.01.22. The term of office for the person elected to chair the assembly and the Conference Executive Committee shall be three years, and such person may serve no more than two consecutive terms. In the event of a vacancy, the Conference Executive Committee may appoint a person to serve until an election can be held at the next meeting of the Conference Assembly.

S12.01.41. Conference Committees. Each conference shall have an Executive Committee to lead and to oversee the work of the conference, to appoint persons to each committee, and to monitor each mission concern. The committee shall be elected by the Conference Assembly and shall include the dean and the chairperson. The Conference Executive Committee shall consist of no more than one member of the same congregation at the same time, provided, however, that at its discretion the conference may provide that two members of the same congregation may serve on the Executive Committee concurrently if one of them is either the dean or the chairperson. Each conference shall determine the number of members, the terms of office, the method for filling vacancies, and the time of election of members of the committee.

S12.01.42. Other committees may be designated as the need and the ability to organize them arise.

Chapter 13
CONGREGATIONS

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

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

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

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

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

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

c. Recognition and reception. Recognition and reception into this church of transferring or independent congregations by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is based on the judgment of the synod and action by the synod through the Synod Council and Synod Assembly. The synod bishop shall provide for prompt reporting of such additions to the secretary of this church for addition to the register of congregations.

- †S13.02. **It shall be the responsibility of each congregation of this synod annually to choose from among its voting members laypersons to serve as members of the Synod Assembly as well as person to represent in at meetings of any conference, cluster, coalition, or other area subdivision of which it is a member. The number of persons to be elected by each congregation and other qualifications shall be as prescribed in guidelines established by this synod.**
- S13.11. **When a pastor or when an associate in ministry, deaconess, 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.**
- S.13.12. **A congregation under financial obligations to its former pastor or 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 (where a pastor is under call to multiple congregations), and all alterations in any such 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 is 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 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.

Chapter 14

ORDAINED MINISTERS AND LAY ROSTERED MINISTERS

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

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

a. Every ordained minister shall:

- 1) preach the Word;
- 2) administer the sacraments;
- 3) conduct public worship;
- 4) provide pastoral care; and

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

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

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

2) supervise all schools and organizations of the congregation;

3) install regularly elected members of the Congregation Council; and

4) with the council administer discipline.

c. Every pastor shall:

1) strive to extend the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation, and abroad;

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

3) impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through distribution of its periodicals and other publications; and

4) endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to work of the ELCA churchwide organization and of this synod.

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

S14.04. Whenever members of a congregation move to such a distance that regular attendance at its services becomes impractical, it shall be the duty of the pastor to commend them 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. a. Each congregation of this synod shall consult the bishop of this synod before taking any steps leading to and/or the extending of a call to a prospective pastor.
- b. For issuance of a letter of call to a pastor or pastoral candidate by a congregation of this synod in accord with ELCA constitutional provision 7.41., a two-thirds majority ballot vote shall be required of members of the congregation present and voting at a meeting regularly called for the purpose of issuing such a call.
- c. When the congregation has voted to issue a call to a prospective pastor, the letter of call shall be submitted to the bishop of this synod for the bishop's signature.
- S14.12. No ordained minister shall accept a call without first conferring the bishop of this synod. An ordained minister shall respond with an answer of acceptance or declination to a letter of a call within thirty days or receipt of such call. In exceptional circumstances with the approval of the bishop of this synod and the chair of the Congregation Council of the congregation issuing the call, an additional fifteen days may be granted to respond to a letter of call.
- †S14.13. 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 congregation, the bishop personally shall investigate such conditions together with a committee of two ordained ministers and one layperson.**

c. In case of alleged physical disability or mental incapacity under paragraph a.4) above, the bishop's committee shall obtain and document competent medical opinion concerning the pastor's condition. When a disability or incapacity is evident to the committee, the bishop of this synod may declare the pastorate vacant and the pastor shall be listed on the clergy roster as disabled. Upon removal of the disability and the restoration of the pastor to health, the bishop shall take steps to enable the pastor to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another appropriate call.

d. In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of the congregation under paragraph a.3) above, the bishop's committee shall endeavor to hear from , all concerned persons, after which the bishop together with the committee shall present their recommendations first to the pastor and then to the congregation. The recommendations of the bishop's committee must address whether the pastor's call should come to an end and, if so, may suggest appropriate severance arrangements. The committee may also propose other actions that should be undertaken by the congregation and by the pastor, if appropriate. If the pastor and congregation agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action need be taken by the synod.

e. If either party fails to assent to the recommendations of the bishop's committee concerning the pastor's call, the congregation may dismiss the pastor only at a legally called meeting after consultation with the bishop, either (a) by a two-thirds majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee did not recommend termination of the call, or (b) by a simple majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee recommended termination of the call.

f. If, in the course of proceedings described in paragraph c. or paragraph d. above, the bishop's committee concludes that there may be grounds for disciplinary action, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action in accordance with the provisions of the this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions.

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

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

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

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

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

†S14.17. During service to a congregation, an interim pastor shall have the rights and duties in the congregation of a regularly called pastor. The interim pastor may delegate the same in part to an interim a 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

14.13., a congregation may call a pastor for specific term of years. Details of such calls shall be in writing setting forth the purpose and conditions involved. Prior to the completion of a term, the bishop of this synod or a representative of the bishop shall meet with the pastor and representatives of the congregations for a review of the call. Such call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of 14.13.

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

S14.22 The provisions in the churchwide documents and such provisions as may be developed by the appropriate churchwide unit governing associates in ministry shall apply in this synod.

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 lay persons 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 Division of Ministry, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

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

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

c. The call of a congregation, when accepted by an associate in ministry, deaconess or diaconal minister, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment which, except in the case of the death of the

individual, shall be terminated only following consultation with the synodical bishop in accordance with policy developed by the Division for Ministry, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

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

Chapter 15

FINANCIAL MATTERS

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

†S15.11 Since the congregations, synods, and churchwide organizations are interdependent units that share responsibility 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 the 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.

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

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

- S15.14.** Except when such procedure would jeopardize current operations, a reserve amounting to no more than 16% of the sum of the amounts scheduled in the next year's for regular distribution to synodical causes shall be carried forward annually for disbursements in the following year in the interest of making possible a more even flow of income to such causes. The exact number of dollars to be held in reserve shall be determined by the Synod Council.
- S15.21.** No appeal to a congregation of this or any other synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for the raising of funds shall be conducted by other congregations or organizations related to or affiliated with this synod without the consent of the Synod Assembly or the Synod Council.
- †S15.31.** This synod shall arrange to have an annual audit of its financial records conducted by a certified public accountant firm recommended by the synod Audit Committee and approved by the Synod Council. The audited annual financial report shall be submitted by this synod to the churchwide Office of the Treasurer and to the congregations of this synod. The financial reports shall be in the format approved from time to time by the churchwide Office of the Treasurer.
- S15.32** This synod shall maintain adequate, continuous insurance coverage in accordance with standards recommended by the churchwide organization. Insurance programs offered or endorsed by the churchwide organization shall be deemed to fulfill this obligation.

Chapter 16

INDEMNIFICATION

- †S16.01.** Subject to the limitations and duties imposed by law, each person who is or was made or threatened to be made a party to any proceeding by reason of the present or former capacity of that person as a Synod Council member, officer, employee, or committee member of this synod shall be indemnified against all costs and expenses incurred by that person in connection with the proceeding. Indemnification of any person by reason of that person's capacity as a director, officer, employee, or committee member of any organization, regardless of its form or relationship to this synod, is subject to the provisions of section +S16.02.
- a. The term "proceeding" means a threatened, pending, or completed lawsuit, whether civil or criminal, an administrative or investigative matter, arbitration, mediation, alternative dispute resolution, or any other similar legal or governmental action. Except as otherwise required by law, the term "proceeding" does not include (a) any action by this synod against the individual seeking indemnification, or (b) subject to

+S16.04., a disciplinary hearing or related process described in Chapter 20 of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.*

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

S16.01.01 No member of the Synod Council shall be personally liable for monetary damages as such for any action taken, or any failure to take action, unless that member has breached or failed to perform the duties of his or her office under the guidelines set forth in Section 8363 of the Directors’ Liability Act of Pennsylvania, Act No. 145 of November 28, 1986, herein fully incorporated reference (relating to standard of care and justifiable reliance), and unless such breach or failure to perform constitutes self-dealing, willful misconduct, or recklessness.

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

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

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

charges. The determination of the reasonableness of such fees and expenses shall be decided by the Synod Council.

Chapter 17

ADJUDICATION

- †S17.01. The synodical bishop and the Executive Committee of this synod shall be available to give counsel when disputes arise within this synod.
- †S17.02. The synodical bishop and the Executive Committee of the Synod Council shall receive expressions of concern from ordained ministers, associates in ministry or other persons on the official lay rosters of this church, congregations, and organizations within this synod; provide a forum in which the parties concerned can seek to work out matters causing distress or conflict; and make appropriate recommendations for their resolution. When the matter at issue cannot be resolved in this manner, the prescribed procedures for investigation, decision, appeal, and adjudication shall be followed. Allegations or charges that could lead to the discipline of an ordained minister or a person on the official lay roster of this church shall not be addressed by the Executive Committee but shall be resolved through the disciplinary process set forth in the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- †S17.03. When there is disagreement among units of this synod on a substantive issue that cannot be resolved by the parties, the aggrieved party or parties may appeal to the synodical bishop and the Executive Committee of the Synod Council for a consultation. If this consultation fails to resolve the issue, a petition may be addressed by the parties to the Synod Council requesting it to arbitrate the issue. The decision of the Synod Council shall be final.
- †S17.04. When a component or beneficiary of a synod has a disagreement on a substantive issue that it cannot resolve it may address an appeal to the synodical bishop and the Executive Committee of the Synod Council. In this case the decision of the Executive Committee shall prevail, except that upon the motion of a member of the Synod Council, the decision shall be referred to the Synod Council for final action.
- S17.10. Adjudication in a Congregation.
- †S17.11. When there is a disagreement among actions within a congregation on a substantive issue that cannot be resolved by the parties, members of a congregation shall have access to the synodical bishop for consultation after informing the chair of the Congregation Council of the intent. If the

consultation fails to resolve the issue(s), the Consultation Committee of this synod shall consider the matter. If the Consultation Committee of this synod shall fail to resolve the issue(s), the matter shall be referred to the Synod Council, whose decision shall be final.

Chapter 18

AMENDMENTS, BYLAWS AND CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

- †S18.10. **Amendments to the Constitution.**
- †S18.11. **Certain sections of this constitution incorporate and record therein required provisions of the constitution and bylaws of this church. If such provisions are amended by the Churchwide Assembly, corresponding amendments shall be introduced at once to this constitution by the secretary of this synod upon receipt of formal certification thereof from the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.**
- †S18.12. **Whenever the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America officially informs the synod that the Churchwide Assembly has amended the constitution for synods, this constitution may be amended to reflect any such amendment by a simple majority vote at any subsequent meeting of the Synod Assembly without presentation at a prior Synod Assembly. An amendment that is identical to a provision of the Constitution for Synods shall be deemed to have been ratified upon its adoption by this synod. The Church Council, through the secretary of this church, shall be given prompt notification of its adoption.**
- †S18.13. **Other amendments to this constitution may be adopted by this synod through either of the following procedures:**
- a. **An amendment may be adopted by two-thirds vote at a regular meeting of the Synod Assembly after having been presented in writing at the previous regular meeting of the Synod Assembly over the signatures of at least fifteen members and having been approved by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting at such a regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.**
 - b. **The Synod Council may propose an amendment, with notice to be sent to the congregations of this synod at least six months prior to the next regular meeting of the Synod Assembly. Such an amendment shall require for adoption a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting at such a regular meeting of the Synod Assembly. All such amendments shall become effective upon ratification by the Churchwide Assembly or by the Church Council.**

†S18.20. **Amendments to Bylaws.**

†S18.21. **This synod may adopt bylaws not in conflict with this constitution or with the constitution and bylaws of the churchwide organization. This synod may amend its bylaws at any meeting of the Synod Assembly by a two-thirds vote of voting members of the Synod Assembly present and voting. Newly adopted bylaws and amendments to existing bylaws shall be reported to the secretary of this church.**

S18.21.01. The words and phrases used in the bylaws shall have the meanings attributed to them in the constitution unless a different meaning clearly appears from a particular context or from a specific definition set forth in this chapter.

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

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

Chapter 19

CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS OF PREDECESSOR SYNODS

S19.00A87 *This synod shall function in accord with the following Standing Resolutions of predecessor synods of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod with the understanding that the Synod Council shall review the resolutions and make recommendations to the 1988 Synod Assembly as to their continuance or amendment. (All references to Executive Board to be understood to mean Synod Council).*

a. Resolved, that no meeting, whether formal or informal, of the members of council of a congregation or conference, without reasonable notice to its pastor or vice-pastor, shall have any validity and that it be ruled wholly improper for any council member knowingly to attend such a meeting. (1962)

c. Resolved, that the bishop shall be empowered and have discretion to provide legal assistance and/or bail for pastors and members of congregations who for reason of Christian concern for human rights, eschewing violence, are subject to arrest and/or incarceration. (1964)

Secretary's Notes:

Updated June 24, 2004; Amended May 5, 2006; April 18, 2008; May 12, 2008; October 26, 2009; and May 7, 2010. RAM

Required provisions adopted by the 2011 Churchwide Assembly added, January 4, 2012.
RAM

Amendments approved by the 2012 Synod Assembly added, May 14, 2012. RAM

Amendments by deletion to continuing resolutions (S11.01.C98, S11.01.D98, S11.01.E98, S11.01.F98, S11.01.G98, S11.01.H98, S14.90.A87, and S19.00.A87.b), approved by the Synod Council on December 6, 2012, added, December 10, 2012. RAM

Amendments approved by the 2013 Synod Assembly added, May 5, 2013 and May 15, 2013.
RAM

Required provisions adopted by the 2013 Churchwide Assembly added, January 30, 2014.
RAM