

S9.04.B17

Process for preparing the Synod for the election of a Bishop

When there is an election for a bishop where there is no incumbent, this synod shall use a three-stage process which will allow for those who will be voting members to the Synod Assembly at which a bishop will be elected to consider both the needs of the synod and persons who might exhibit the gifts to serve as bishop. This process shall begin the year prior to such election and conclude with the ecclesiastical ballot for bishop at the appointed Assembly. This process will not be required in the event of a special election for a bishop. The teams for this process shall be appointed by the Executive Committee in consultation with the Bishop and approved by the Synod Council. The teams shall be chaired by laypersons.

- A. Stage One. A Transition Team shall develop a Synodical Mission Profile. Included in such a Mission Profile might be the latest demographics and vitality indicators of the congregations on the territory of the synod, updated demographic information on the rostered leaders serving in the synod, and an assessment of the hoped for direction of the synod and its ministry. This Synodical Mission Profile shall be completed by December 1st of the year prior to the election and made available upon completion.*

- B. Stage Two. A Discernment Team shall develop a prayer-filled process for conversation and discernment across the synod. This process shall include ways to discuss the gifts for ministry that might be helpful to advance the Synodical Mission Profile and how to identify persons who might possess these gifts. The structure for this prayerful conversation shall include consideration of:
 - 1) how persons with gifts for this ministry might be identified, e.g., who might raise up names, by what authority, and by what mechanism;*
 - 2) how the names of those persons might be brought forward for discussion, e.g., through conference meetings, cluster meetings, or synod-wide gatherings;*
 - 3) how the conversations about those brought forward might be structured so that their gifts for ministry might be explored;*
 - 4) how these conversations might be shared across the synod for the edification of the whole.**

The process for these conversations shall be completed and shared by the time the Synodical Mission Profile is completed. These conversations shall begin after the completion of the Synodical Mission Profile and be completed at least one month prior to the election.

- C. Stage Three. The Committee on Bishop Elections shall oversee the process of ecclesiastical ballot as specified in S9.04. No names raised in stage two of this process shall be on the ballot at the start of the Assembly. Any names to be placed in nomination shall be made from the floor of the Assembly on the first ballot.*