Constitutional Provisions – Role and duties of the Bishop

Chapter 8.
OFFICERS

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

S8.10. Bishop

†S8.11. The bishop shall be elected by the Synod Assembly. The bishop shall be a minister of Word and Sacrament of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

†S8.12. As this synod’s pastor, the bishop 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 ministers of Word and Sacrament, and its ministers of Word and Service.

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 ministry of Word and Sacrament (and as provided in the bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America).

d. 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 ministers of Word and Service 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) rostered ministers whose calls the bishop has attested.

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 of this church;

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

   3) Be the chief ecumenical officer of this synod;

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

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

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

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

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

   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 meetings of the Synod Assembly and provide for the preparation of the agenda for the Synod Assembly, Synod Council and the council’s Executive Committee;

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

   4) Exercise supervision over the work of the other officers;
5) Coordinate the work of all synodical staff members;

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

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

8) Provide for preparation and maintenance of synodical rosters containing the names and addresses of all rostered 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;

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

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

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

   b) the issuance of certificates of transfer for rostered ministers 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 synodical 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 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.)