



## Rules of Organization and Procedure for the 2023 Oregon Synod Assembly

### **Authority**

The authority for the assembly comes from the *Oregon Synod Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions*, Chapter 7. Synod Assembly.

†S7.01. This synod shall have a Synod Assembly, which shall be its highest legislative authority.

†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.

### **Members of the Assembly**

#### 1. *Lay Voting Membership*

1.1. The lay voting members shall be at least 60% of the assembly's total voting membership (†S6.04. and †S7.21.).

1.2. Two voting members shall be allowed per congregation of the Oregon Synod, ELCA. Congregations are reminded of the organizing principle of the ELCA requiring "that at least 45 percent of the lay members of assemblies, councils, committees, boards, or other organizational units shall be women and at least 45 percent shall be men" (†S6.04. and

†S7.21.). We encourage you to elect members who do not identify as women or men (gender expansive), to comprise the additional 10%.

- 1.3. A congregation of 500 baptized members and above may have an additional voting member for each 500 members or fraction thereof. (500-999=1 additional voting member; 1,000-1,499=2; 1,500-1,999=3; 2,000-2,499=4.) Additional members from each congregation shall be equally divided between women, men or gender expansive. Baptized membership statistics to be used are those of 2020 parochial report figures (see accompanying list for membership numbers). Congregations that have not filed a parochial report for 2021 will be allowed 2 lay voting members regardless of the number of baptized members they have.
- 1.4. Voting members selected based on paragraphs 1.2. and 1.3. above are classified as *Congregation Lay Voting Member*. *Congregation Lay Voting Members* that have registered for the assembly shall be included in the quorum count.
- 1.5. Representatives from authorized worshiping communities and mission settings of the synod as provided in ELCA Bylaw 10.02.03. (developing ministries in the territory of the synod) are voting members of the Synod Assembly consistent with S7.26.01.
- 1.6. Synod Authorized Lay Ministers (SALMs) who have been authorized by the Bishop to perform clerical duties in an Oregon Synod congregation are voting members of the Synod Assembly.
- 1.7. In addition to voting members allowed by membership numbers, each congregation will be allowed up to two *Additional Voting Members* in

each of the below categories:

- a) Adult members of the congregation and who are persons of color or whose primary language is other than English. Congregations are reminded of the organizing principle of the ELCA in which it is the goal that 10% of the Synod Assembly will consist of people of color or whose primary language isn't English.
- b) Youth or young adult. The term "youth" means a voting member of a congregation who has not reached the age of 18 at the time they are elected. The term "young adult" means a voting member of a congregation between the ages of 18 and 30 at the time they are elected.
- c) Individuals that self-identify as LGBTQIA+.

1.8. *Additional Voting Members* as described above in paragraph 1.7 are optional. *Additional Voting Members* that have registered for the assembly shall be included in the quorum count.

1.9. Synod Council members shall be voting members of the assembly.

1.10. Lay members of the synod executive staff can be voting members of the assembly if they are elected as voting members of an Oregon Synod congregation.

1.11. Costs of all voting members shall be borne by the congregation, institution, mission development or organization that the voting member represents.

2. *Rostered Ministers (Pastors and Deacons) Voting Membership*

- 2.1. *Rostered Minister* voting members shall not be more than 40% of the Assembly's total membership in accordance with †S7.21. Rostered ministers (pastors and deacons) must be on the roster of the Oregon Synod, ELCA as of April 27, 2023. A rostered minister under a call in a congregation of the synod or under call by the synod is a voting member of the assembly.
- 2.2. A retired minister serving as interim/transition or bridge pastor under letter of agreement with a congregation is a voting member of the Assembly.
- 2.3. Those rostered ministers of the ELCA who are under call to the Oregon Synod, and who serve agencies and institutions located in the Oregon Synod as of April 27, 2023 are *Rostered Minister* voting members of the assembly.
- 2.4. Rostered ministers from a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by the ELCA Churchwide Assembly and are in rostered minister service within a congregation of the Oregon Synod will be given the privilege of voice and vote in the Synod Assembly. (S7.27.)
- 2.5. Retired rostered, on leave from call and disability roster ministers may serve as voting members only if their inclusion does not exceed the 40% total of item 2.1 above (S7.22.01.).
- 2.6. Registration for retired, on leave from call and disability roster ministers will be April 28, 2023 through May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023 after the number of lay voting members who have registered for the Assembly is known. There may be none or a limited number of registration slots available. To be

eligible for registration the minister must have completed at least one of the following in the last year; submitted a rostered leader report to the Bishop's Office in 2023 (before April 27<sup>th</sup>) or attended Bishop's Convocation in 2022. The registration link will be sent to all retired, on leave from call and disability status leaders on our email list and made available on the Oregon Synod website. Registration will be filled on a first come, first served basis and will be closed when full.

- 2.7. *Rostered Minister* voting members shall be members of an ELCA or full communion partner congregation within the boundaries of the Oregon Synod.
- 2.8. No rostered minister on leave from call, retired, on disability status, or serving a social ministry organization shall serve as a lay voting member.

### 3. *Other Membership*

- 3.1. The presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and the official representatives of the ELCA shall have voice, but not vote, at this assembly. (†S7.23.) Like privileges shall be accorded to those additional persons whom the Synod Assembly or the Synod Council shall designate, including the parliamentarian and visiting bishops.

## **Credentials**

A *Credentials Committee* of three to five persons shall be appointed and have responsibility for voting members' credentials and attendance status.

## **Rules of the Assembly**

1. Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary

procedure of this Assembly.(S7.32)

2. All reports published in the Participant Guide shall be received by the assembly without vote. The Participant Guide (including agenda and nominees for open positions that will be voted on) will be posted on the Oregon Synod website and will be emailed to voting members prior to the Assembly.
3. The chair shall have the authority to call items of business before the Assembly in whatever order they deem expedient for the conduct of Assembly business.
4. Every voting member is required to register prior to the Assembly, by the determined due date. Regular registration will open on March 8th, 2023 and close at 10pm April 27th, 2023. Please be sure your congregations voting members, including lay members, pastors, and deacons are registered prior to the closing deadline because **registration will not be allowed after the closing date and time.** Registration for *Retired Minister* voting members will be open from April 28<sup>th</sup>-May 5<sup>th</sup> (or until available slots are filled).
5. Only voting members, designated guests, and assembly support personnel will be allowed to join the assembly.
6. If a congregation needs to switch to an alternate voting member the synod office must be notified of the change no later than May 5th, 2023 at 10:00 pm. Voting membership is not transferable to an alternate or other person after that time and date.
7. We will be electing persons to the Synod Council and committees. If you wish to be considered for a position or to recommend someone else to the Nominations Committee you may fill out a nominations form found on the Synod website. The nomination form will be available beginning March 8,

2023. To have your bio information available to voters, the form needs to be submitted by April,1 2023.

8. Nominations from the floor are allowed once the Assembly has begun and may be made under the following rules.
  - a. The nominator must have the approval of the nominee before submitting the person's name. It is permissible to nominate yourself.
  - b. The nominator must submit the bio information for the nominee, using the form provided, to the synod representative by 11 am, May 20, 2023.
  - c. If the bio is not received by the time and date noted the nominee's name will not appear on the ballot and cannot be written in during the vote.
9. The minutes of the Synod Assembly shall be submitted by the Synod Secretary of the Oregon Synod to the Synod Council at its next regular meeting, or as soon as possible. The Synod Council shall examine the minutes with care, make corrections as needed and approve the minutes of the Synod Assembly. The minutes will then be submitted to the Churchwide Organization by the Secretary.

### **Additional Rules for On-line Assembly**

1. Due to the decision of the Synod Assembly voting body in 2022, the next two years of Synod Assembly will take place online. Each registered voting member will receive an email with instructions on how to join each session after registering. A poll will be taken at the beginning of each session to determine whether a quorum is present to do business and whether the makeup of the Assembly complies with †S6.04 of the Synod Constitution.
2. To participate as a voting member in assembly will require:

- a. A computer or similar device (not phone) with a stable internet connection.
  - b. Zoom program (video conferencing) installed on the computer (in advance of event)
  - c. A unique email address to use for registration, attendance and voting.
  - d. A webcam (optional) and microphone, previously tested to ensure a clear audio/visual connection to the video conferencing software
  - e. Each voting member needs to be able to connect individually on their own device (not sharing their screen with another voting member)
  - f. No one other than the voting member is authorized to vote or otherwise communicate with the assembly on the voting member's device .
3. A voting member who wishes to raise a parliamentary question should type a message to the parliamentarian using the chat feature in Zoom or as otherwise designated by the chair.
  4. All meeting participants will be muted. To address the assembly (obtain the floor), use the "raise hand" feature of Zoom, found by clicking on "reactions" at the bottom of the screen. Once a person has electronically raised their hand, they may be contacted by one of the support personnel asking whether they wish to speak for or against the motion, amend a motion, or introduce a parliamentary motion that is in order (in which case the motion should be identified). Once the chair has recognized the person, they will be invited to un-mute. When finished speaking, you will be muted again.
  5. The chair will try to alternate between speakers that are for or opposed to a motion. If three speakers in a row have spoken in favor of a motion, or if three persons in a row have spoken in opposition to a motion, the chair



may end discussion whether or not there are additional members wishing to speak and call for a vote on the pending motion.

6. Each speaker, after being recognized by the chair, shall state their name, congregation (and/or institution), and whether they are speaking for or in opposition to a motion, or whether they intend to bring a motion before speaking. No person shall speak longer than three minutes. The speaker will be given a 1 minute warning by the timekeeper. No person shall speak more than twice on the same subject, unless the voting members, by a majority vote, waive the provisions of this rule. A person may not speak in favor of or in opposition to a motion or pending matter and thereafter bring a motion. This rule shall not apply to messages and reports by the agencies and officers of this synod or to guest speakers to whom special time has been allotted.
7. All motions or proposed amendments to motions before the Assembly must be submitted to the secretary in writing using the chat feature of Zoom. A motion to add an expense item to the budget will be considered out of order.
8. All proposed amendments to a motion or resolution must be presented in written form, with the changes clearly identified. Please use strike through for wording to be deleted and underline for wording being added. Proposed amendments must be typed or copied in the chat , or as otherwise instructed by the chair.
9. The chat feature shall not be used except as provided in these rules or as instructed by the chair.

10. You may be asked to vote using yes or no functions of Zoom, by responding to Zoom polls, or by using a ballot submitted through the chat box. It will be considered out-of-order to request a written ballot on votes that are taken by using the yes or no features of Zoom.
11. All voting members are highly encouraged to attend a Voting Member Orientation Session in advance of the event to become familiar with the Zoom platform and practice voting procedures.
12. As a contingency for technical difficulties there will be a Help Desk available during the Assembly. Contacts will be listed in the Participant Guide.

### **Resolutions and Memorials**

The Synod Council shall be responsible for processing resolutions and memorials for consideration at the synod or churchwide assemblies.

(S10.07.05.i.)

Synod Council shall appoint a Reference and Counsel Committee for the Synod Assembly consisting of seven members, which shall review all submitted memorials and resolutions using determined criteria, and proposed changes or additions to the constitution and bylaws and other items submitted which are not germane to items contained in the stated agenda of the assembly. (S10.07.05.m.)

1. Any person or group considering submitting a resolution or memorial to the assembly should **first** contact Bishop Caesar as early as possible to ensure the assembly is the best place for the chosen topic.
2. Resolutions may be submitted by: congregations of this synod, current Assembly voting members, the Synod Council, and committees of the

synod.

3. Resolutions and memorials will be accepted for consideration if received by 10:00 pm April 1st, 2023. For resolutions submitted by this date, there will be an optional two week review period until 10:00 pm on April 15. Submitted resolutions or memorials will be considered in final form at that time. Resolutions received after April 1st will not be accepted for consideration unless two thirds (2/3) of the Reference and Council Committee or the Synod Council shall determine that the resolution will not have a fiscal impact, and is 1) of overriding importance, or 2) addresses a previously accepted resolution.
4. All resolutions requiring expenditure of funds shall contain an estimate of fiscal impact. Any proposal to appropriate funds, whether by amendment to the budget or otherwise, which is presented to a meeting of the Synod Assembly without the approval of the Synod Council shall require a two-thirds vote for adoption. (S10.04)
5. All resolutions will be evaluated using the following criteria:
  - a. Does the proposed resolution address a synod purpose (as listed in Chapter 7 of the Oregon Synod Constitution), ministry, administrative matter, or other issue affecting the Oregon Synod?
  - b. Is action on the resolution necessary to the business of the synod (rather than merely bringing the Assembly's attention to an issue, organization, or an event)?
  - c. Is the action sought by the resolution consistent with the Oregon Synod constitution, bylaws and other governing documents?
  - d. Is the form of the resolution appropriate and clearly drafted?
  - e. Are the statements in the resolution accurate and necessary to

an understanding of the resolution?

6. In evaluating resolutions, the Synod Council or the Reference and Counsel Committee may interview the sponsor(s) and other interested persons or otherwise seek relevant information. The sponsor of a resolution may request and shall be given the opportunity to discuss it with the Synod Council or the Reference and Counsel Committee.
7. The reviewing body shall adopt a recommendation for each accepted resolution by majority vote and report that recommendation to the Oregon Synod Assembly. The recommendation will be one of the following:
  - a. CONSIDER. The resolution complies with the criteria in 3. above.
  - b. REFER. The Reference and Counsel committee moves that the resolution should be forwarded for consideration or correction to a specified agency, institution, or group without approval or disapproval by the Assembly. The resolution fails to comply with the criteria in 3. above but may be corrected for further Assembly consideration or acted on by another body. Reasons for this recommendation will be reported to the Assembly with the recommendation.
  - c. DO NOT CONSIDER. The committee moves that the resolution not be considered. The resolution fails to comply with the criteria in 3. above, and in the opinion of the committee will not be corrected by reference to another body. Reasons for this recommendation will be reported to the Assembly with the recommendation.
8. Acceptance and/or recommendation will be communicated to the sponsor of each resolution prior to the assembly. The sponsor may

appeal the committee's decision(s) to the Synod Council in writing, stating the action or recommendation sought with reasons for such request. The results of the Synod Council's action (or inaction due to an inability to meet or form a quorum) will be reported to the sponsor before the conclusion of the assembly.

9. It is the role of the Reference and Counsel Committee to approve any distribution of materials to the assembly's voting membership that does not come from the Synod Council.