

## Recommended Changes to the Southeast Michigan Synod Constitution

### I. Changes Recommended following Churchwide Assembly.

The following were recommended changes to Synod Constitutions following approval at the 2025 Churchwide Assembly.

On April 18, 2026, Synod Council voted to recommend the following changes:

Additions are underlined; deletions are ~~struck through~~; all changes are **highlighted**.

Chapter 7.

SYNOD ASSEMBLY

- S7.26.** This synod may establish processes through the Synod Council that permit **persons currently serving as Synod-Authorized Ministers and/or** lay representatives of authorized worshiping communities **and/or outreach ministries** of the synod, which have been authorized under ELCA bylaw 10.01.04., to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with †S7.21.

Chapter 9.

NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

- 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 receive the greatest number of legal votes **(including ties in the final qualifying position)** on the second ballot, and 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 **(including ties in the final qualifying position)** on the third ballot, and 60 percent 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 **(including ties in the final qualifying position)** on the previous ballot.

Chapter 10.

SYNOD COUNCIL

**S10.05.** ~~No e~~Elected members of the Synod Council shall not receive compensation solely for ~~such their~~ service as council members.

**S10.06.** No person related to a synod staff member shall be eligible for nomination to or membership on the Synod Council [or the following synod committees:  
\_\_\_\_\_]. For this purpose, a related individual is one who, with respect to the synod employee, 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).

**S10.0607.** If a member of the Synod Council ceases to meet . . . .

**S10.0708.** The composition of the Synod Council . . . .

**S10.0809.** *Robert's Rules of Order*, latest edition, shall govern . . . .

Chapter 13.

CONGREGATIONS

**S13.40.** **Synod-authorized Worshiping Communities and Outreach Ministries**

**S13.41.** Authorized worshiping ~~Worshiping~~ communities and outreach ministries, authorized by the synod and 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.

## II. Changes Recommended by Synod Council

The following was proposed to assist in Synod Council transitions.

On April 18, 2026, Synod Council voted to recommend the following changes:

Additions are underlined; deletions are ~~struck through~~; all changes are **highlighted**.

- S8.01.01. The Synod Council may, from time to time appoint an assistant secretary and /or an assistant treasurer. The term of office shall not exceed four years and there shall be no term limits. The assistant secretary and assistant treasurer shall be voting members of a congregation of this synod. The assistant secretary and assistant treasurer may be either a layperson or an ordained minister. **The assistant secretary and assistant treasurer will be members of the Synod Council with voice and vote, and members of the Synod Council Executive Committee.**
- S11.01.02. The Executive Committee shall consist of the bishop, the other officers of the synod, **including the assistant secretary and assistant treasurer**, and such additional members of the Synod Council as the Council shall elect from time to time. A majority of the members of the Executive Committee shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting thereof and, except as otherwise provided by law or these bylaws, the act of a majority of the members of the Executive Committee present at any meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the Executive Committee. The secretary of the synod shall be the secretary of the Executive Committee. Except as otherwise directed by the Synod Council, the Executive Committee shall have and may exercise, between meetings of the Synod Council, all of the power of the Synod Council in the management of the affairs of the synod, including the power to authorize the seal of the synod to be affixed to all papers which may require it, in such manner as the Executive Committee shall deem to be in the best interests of the synod. The Executive Committee shall have the power to act as such, within its powers and rules, notwithstanding the failure of the Synod Council at any time and for any reason to appoint as members of the Executive Committee all of those officers and other persons designated to serve thereon by the provisions of the first sentence of this S11.01.02.

The following was proposed to Synod Council to update the Conferences the Synod to accurately reflect the congregations of the Southeast Michigan Synod.

On April 18, 2026, Synod Council voted to recommend the following changes:

Additions are underlined; deletions are ~~struck through~~; all changes are **highlighted**.

S10.01.01. All authority of this synod between meetings of the Synod Assembly shall be exercised by or under the direction of the Synod Council in a manner consistent with the ELCA's and this synod's constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions. The Synod Council shall consist of four (4) officers of this synod; ~~eleven (11)~~ **nine (9)** conference representatives (one from each conference); one (1) youth member (not yet 18 at the time of election); and one (1) young adult member (between 18 and 30 at the time of election) and ~~three (3)~~ **four (4)** at-large members appointed by the Synod Council to ensure the proper balances as described in S6.04 of this constitution. Top priority for the at-large appointments to Synod Council shall be given to an African American, Asian, Hispanic, Native American or per S6.04. Total council membership shall be ~~twenty (20)~~ **nineteen (19)**.

S10.01.02. At each Synod Assembly, members shall be elected from the appropriate conferences of the ~~eleven (11)~~ **nine (9)** conferences as designated below. Members of the Synod Council shall continue to serve until the term to which they were elected expires. At the ~~2014~~ **2027** Synod Assembly and every 3 years thereafter a representative shall be elected for conferences ~~6, 7 & 8~~ **3, 4, & 9**. At the ~~2015~~ **2028** Synod Assembly and every 3 years thereafter, a representative shall be elected for conference ~~3, 9 & 11~~ **1, 2, & 5**. At the ~~2016~~ **2029** Synod Assembly and every 3 years thereafter a representative shall be elected for conferences ~~1, 4, 5 & 10~~ **6, 7 & 8**.

The members elected or appointed to succeed those members whose terms expire shall become members of the Synod Council at the close of such meeting and shall hold office until the close of the third regular meeting of the Synod Assembly after their election and until their successors have been elected. Members of the Synod Council who have served one full term may succeed themselves once.

The youth member and young adult member shall be elected for two (2) year terms and may succeed themselves once.