

CONSTITUTION
BYLAWS
CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS
SOUTH CAROLINA SYNOD
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

(as amended through September 2009)

CONTENTS

		Page Number
Chapter 1.	Name and Incorporation	2
Chapter 2.	Status	2
Chapter 3.	Territory	2
Chapter 4.	Confession of Faith	3
Chapter 5.	Nature of the Church	3
Chapter 6.	Statement of Purpose	4
Chapter 7.	Synod Assembly	7
Chapter 8.	Officers	11
S8.10.	Bishop	11
S8.20.	Vice President	14
S8.30.	Secretary	14
S8.40.	Treasurer	14
S8.50.	General Provisions	15
Chapter 9.	Nominations and Elections	16
Chapter 10.	Synod Council	19
Chapter 11.	Committees, Commissions, and Ministry Teams	22
Chapter 12.	Conferences, Clusters, and Coalitions, or Other Area Subdivisions	25
Chapter 13.	Congregations	31
Chapter 14.	Ordained Ministers and Lay Rostered Ministers	33
Chapter 15.	Financial Matters	37
Chapter 16.	Indemnification	38
Chapter 17.	Adjudication	39
Chapter 18.	Amendments, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions	40

KEY: †Provisions common to all synods of the ELCA.
All constitutional provisions are in bold face type.
 All bylaw material is printed in light face type.
All continuing resolutions are printed in italic type

CONSTITUTION, BYLAWS, AND CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

SOUTH CAROLINA SYNOD

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

**Chapter 1.
NAME AND INCORPORATION**

- †S1.01. **The name of this synod shall be South Carolina Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.**
- †S1.02. **For the purposes of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws, the South Carolina Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is hereafter designated as "this synod" or "the synod."**
- †S1.11. **This synod shall be incorporated. 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 encircled with a Latin inscription, whose translation is "the sword of the Spirit is the Word of God," Eph. 6:17, and "be wise and harmless," Matt. 10:16. The center of the seal contains a figure of a dove, the symbol of peace. An olive branch is suspended from the mouth of the dove and overlays an open Bible, which carries the word "PAX". Beneath the Bible is the figure of a serpent signifying that the archenemy of God and creation is overcome. Luther's coat of arms, in miniature, completes the symbolism of the seal. The outer edge contains the wording "South Carolina Synod -- Evangelical Lutheran Church in America."**

**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 (ELCA or "this church"), which are recognized as having governing force in the life of this synod.**
- †S2.02. **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 the Churchwide Assembly, shall be the state of South Carolina.**

- †S3.02. "Determined by the Churchwide Assembly," as stipulated by †3.01., 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.
- 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.
 - 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.
 - 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 fulfill-

ment 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 and 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.

Chapter 6.

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. To fulfill these purposes, this synod, in partnership with the churchwide organization, shall bear primary responsibility for the oversight of the life and mission of this church in the territory of this synod. In fulfillment of this role, this synod shall:
- a. Provide for the pastoral care of congregations, ordained ministers, associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers of this church in this 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 of this church, which may be done through multi-synodical committees;
 - 4) authorizing the commissioning of associates in ministry, the conse-

- cration 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. Provide 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 or appointment 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. Provide 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 the procedures established by this church in Chapter 20 of the ELCA constitution and by-laws.
 - d. Foster organizations for youth, women, and men, and organizations for language or ethnic communities.
 - e. Plan for the mission of this church in this synod, initiating and developing policy and implementing programs, consistent with churchwide policy, including:
 - 1) ecumenical guidance and encouragement;
 - 2) development of new ministries, redevelopment of existing ministries, and support and assistance in the conclusion, if necessary, of a particular ministry;
 - 3) leadership and encouragement of congregations in their evangelism efforts;
 - 4) development of relationships to and participation in planning for the mission of social ministry organizations and ministries;
 - 5) encouragement of financial support for the work of this church by individuals and congregations;
 - 6) provision for resources for congregational life;
 - 7) assistance to the members of its congregations in carrying out their ministries in the world; and
 - 8) interpretation of social statements in a manner consistent with the interpretation given by the churchwide unit which assisted in the development of the statement, and suggestion of social study issues through (a) Synod Assembly memorials to the Churchwide Assembly or (b) resolutions for referral from the Synod Assembly through the Synod Council to the Church Council and (c) Synod Council resolutions addressed to the Church Council or for referral to a unit of the churchwide organization through the Church Council's Executive Committee.
 - f. Promote interdependent relationships among congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization, and enter into partnership with other synods in the region.
 - g. Participate in churchwide programs and develop support for the ministry of the churchwide organization.
 - h. Foster the grouping of congregations in conferences, clusters, coalitions,

or other area subdivisions for mission purposes.

- i. Support relationships with and provide partnership funding on behalf of colleges, universities, and campus ministries.
- j. Foster relationships with and provide partnership funding on behalf of social ministry organizations.
- k. Maintain relationships with and provide partnership funding on behalf of seminaries and continuing education centers.
- l. Foster supporting relationships with camps and other outdoor ministries.
- m. Foster supporting relationships with preschools, elementary schools, and secondary schools operated by congregations of this synod.
- n. Interpret the work of this church to congregations and to the public.
- o. Respond to human need, work for justice and peace, care for the sick and the suffering, and participate responsibly in society.
- p. Provide for archives in conjunction with other synods.
- q. Cooperate with other synods and the churchwide organization in creating, using, and supporting regions to carry out those functions of this synod which can best be done cooperatively with other synods and the churchwide organization.
- r. Elect members of the Churchwide Assembly in accordance with bylaw 12.41.11. of the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and according to procedures specified in the bylaws of this constitution.

S6.03.10. Agencies and Institutions

S6.03.11. This synod has a relationship with the institutions listed below. In harmony with their charters, the Synod Assembly shall elect or the Synod Council shall ratify members of Boards of Trustees, according to the plans set forth in the constitutions and bylaws of the respective institutions.

- a. South Carolina Lutheran Retreat Centers, Inc., Batesburg-Leesville, SC
- b. Lutheran Family Services in the Carolinas, Inc., Raleigh, NC
- c. Lutheran Homes of South Carolina, Inc., Columbia, SC
- d. Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, Columbia, SC
- e. Lutheridge/Lutherock Ministries, Inc., Arden, NC
- f. Newberry College, Newberry, SC

S6.03.12. The institutions related to this synod shall make an annual report to the assembly.

†S6.04. **Except as otherwise provided in this constitution and bylaws, the Synod Council shall establish processes that will ensure that at least 60 percent of the members of the synod assemblies, councils, committees, boards, and other organizational units shall be laypersons; and that, as nearly as possible, 50 percent of the lay members of assemblies, councils, committees, boards, or other organizational units shall be female and 50 percent 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 percent 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 percent 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.**
- †S6.05. **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 a challenge in a 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.**

**Chapter 7.
SYNOD ASSEMBLY**

- †S7.01. **This synod shall have a 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 constitutions and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.**
- S7.01.01. The following committees shall be appointed by the bishop from the voting members of the Synod Assembly at least 30 days prior to the meeting of the assembly:
- a. Committee of Reference and Counsel. The duties of the Committee of Reference and Counsel shall be to report to the assembly with its recommendations all resolutions submitted to it. Resolutions of a general character which are not germane to pending questions or reports shall be submitted on no more than one page of 8 ½ x 11 inch paper to the synodical secretary no later than 15 days prior to the formal opening of the assembly. The committee shall provide copies of all resolutions to the voting members of the assembly. Other duties of the committee shall be to recommend special orders for the hearing of representatives, to grant or deny permission to distribute printed matter not issuing from the office of the secretary, and to give such assistance to the bishop as the bishop may desire in the course of the assembly.
 - b. Committee on Conduct of Elections. The duties of the Committee on Conduct of Elections shall be to distribute and collect at the direction of the bishop ballots for all elections, to supervise the tellers in the counting of ballots, to report the results of all elections to the assembly, and to give such assistance to the bishop as the bishop may desire in the course of the assembly.
- †S7.11. **A regular meeting of the Synod Assembly shall be held at least biennially.**
- S7.11.01. The Synod Assembly shall meet annually. The time and place shall be fixed by the assembly before adjournment or by the Synod Council.

- S7.11.02. Voting members shall attend meetings of the assembly.
- S7.11.03. The secretary shall distribute the *Bulletin of Reports* for the Synod Assembly to the voting members at least 15 days before each regular assembly.
- S7.11.04. At the regular annual meeting, the Synod Assembly shall approve a budget for the following fiscal year.
- 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 required for the purpose of electing a successor bishop because of death, resignation, or inability to serve, the special meeting shall be called by the presiding bishop of the ELCA in cooperation with the Synod Council.**
- S7.13. Notice of the time and place of all meetings of the Synod Assembly shall be given by the secretary of this synod.
- S7.14. One-half of the voting members registered for 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 laypersons, 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. Each congregation shall certify to the synodical secretary at least 30 days before the assembly the names of the regular and alternate voting members elected by the congregation. Any changes in lay voting members must be certified to the synodical secretary before the beginning of each business session.
- S7.21.A07. *Each congregation of this synod shall be entitled to at least two lay voting mem-*

bers. Each congregation having 300 to 649 baptized members shall be entitled to one additional lay voting member. Each congregation having 650 to 999 baptized members shall be entitled to two additional lay voting members. Each congregation having 1000 or more baptized members shall be entitled to three additional lay voting members. Baptized members shall be based on the annual congregational report of each congregation for the year preceding the assembly.

Each congregation of this synod shall be entitled to one additional lay voting member who is under the age of thirty at the time of the assembly.

- S7.22. This synod may establish processes that permit retired ordained ministers, retired associates in ministry, retired deaconesses, and retired diaconal ministers on the roster of this synod to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with †S7.21.c. above. The synod may establish processes that permit ordained ministers, associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers who are on leave from call, or those designated as disabled, on the roster of the synod to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with †S7.21.c. above. If the synod does not establish processes to permit the rostered leaders specified above to serve as voting members, they shall have voice but not vote in the meetings of the Synod Assembly.**
- S7.22.01. All retired ordained ministers, retired associates in ministry, retired deaconesses, and retired diaconal ministers on the rosters of this synod in attendance at the Synod Assembly who have complied with the provisions of S14.05. shall be voting members. The bishop shall certify to the secretary at least 30 days before the assembly those retired ordained ministers, retired associates in ministry, retired deaconesses, and retired diaconal ministers who are eligible to be voting members.
- 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 the Synod Council shall from time to time designate.**
- S7.23.01. All ordained ministers on leave from call but serving as interim pastors under appointment to a congregation who are on the roster of this synod in attendance at the Synod Assembly and who have complied with the provisions of S14.05. shall be voting members. All ordained ministers on the roster of other synods but serving as interim pastors under appointment to a congregation of this synod in attendance at the Synod Assembly shall have voice and vote. The bishop shall certify to the secretary at least 30 days before the assembly those ordained ministers on leave from call but serving as interim pastors under appointment to a congregation who are eligible to be voting members and those ministers who are on the roster of other synods but serving as interim pastors under appointment to a congregation of this synod who are eligible to have voice and vote.
- S7.24. Ordained ministers under call on the roster of this synod shall remain as members of the Synod Assembly as long as they remain under call 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 on the roster of this synod shall remain as members of the Synod Assembly so long as they remain under call and so long as their names appear on the official**

lay roster of this synod. Retired ordained ministers, retired associates in ministry, retired deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and retired diaconal ministers of this church, in accord with the requirements of S14.05., shall remain as members of the Synod Assembly so long as their names appear on the official rosters of this synod. Lay members of the 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 recognized 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.
- S7.26.A06. *Each authorized worshiping community of this synod and each mission setting formed with the intent of becoming a chartered congregation of this synod shall be entitled to two lay voting members, one of whom shall be male and one of whom shall be female.*
- 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 synod.
- S7.27.01. 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 in attendance at the Synod Assembly who has complied with the provisions of S14.05. shall be granted 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 synod. The bishop shall certify to the secretary at least 30 days before assembly those ordained ministers 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, serving in an ELCA congregation of this synod who are eligible to be voting members.
- 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.
- †S7.31. 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.A87. *The following rules of procedure shall be in force at meetings of the Synod Assembly:*
- a. *Unless otherwise determined by vote of the assembly, all speeches in general discussion shall be limited to five minutes and no member shall be permitted to speak the second time on the same subject when others desire to speak.*
 - b. *A resolution of a general character which is not germane to the pending question or report shall be given by the proposer to a Committee of Reference and Counsel.*
 - c. *All reports published in the Bulletin of Reports shall be received as information by the assembly by virtue of that fact without vote.*
 - d. *All other reports shall be in writing and in such form as the assembly or the Synod Council may determine.*
 - e. *The minutes of each assembly shall be submitted to the Synod Council for approval.*
 - f. *The bishop and secretary shall, after making any necessary corrections therein, certify two copies of the printed minutes of each assembly as the official protocol of said assembly, and shall submit the same to the next regular assembly for approval and deposit in the archives.*
 - g. *Holy Communion shall be administered at each assembly.*

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**
- †S8.11. **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 of this synod;
 - 2) ordained ministers called to extraparish service within this church; 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 of 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 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 this synod and of the churchwide organization are duly observed within this synod, and that the actions of this 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 and bylaws 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 a certificate 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 this 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.

- S8.12.01. The bishop shall approve the nature of and personnel appointed for general religious services or public meetings sponsored by this synod.
- S8.12.A87. *The bishop shall submit a written report, printed in the Bulletin of Reports, to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly. In addition to this report concerning this synod's life and work, the bishop shall make an oral report to the Synod Assembly presenting a vision of the mission and ministry of this synod.*
- S8.14. The bishop may have such assistants as this synod shall from time to time authorize.**
- S8.14.01. There shall be two assistants to the bishop elected by the Synod Council on nomination by the bishop. The assistants may be recalled or dismissed on proper notice by action of the Synod Council. It shall set the term of office and responsibilities.
- †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, or in-law (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 this office.

S8.22. The vice president shall chair the Synod Council.

S8.23. In the event of the death, resignation, or disability of the bishop, the vice president shall convene the Synod Council to arrange for the conduct of the duties of the bishop until a new bishop shall be elected or, in the case of temporary disability, until the bishop resumes full performance 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 be either 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.

S8.32.01. The secretary shall be responsible for the preparation, printing, and distribution of the *Bulletin of Reports* for the meetings of the Synod Assembly.

S8.40. Treasurer

†S8.41. The treasurer shall be elected by the Synod Assembly. The treasurer shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod. The treasurer may be either a layperson or an ordained minister.

S8.42. 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 this synod and informing the congregation, 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. Obtaining a fidelity bond in the amount determined by the Synod Council for persons handling synod funds, which bond shall be in the custody of the secretary. The premium for the bond 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 to a term of six years and may be reelected.
- b. The vice president, secretary, and treasurer of this synod shall be

elected to a term of six years and may be reelected.

- S8.52. The terms of the officers shall begin on the first day of the third month following election.
- †S8.53. Each officer shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod, except that the bishop need not be a member of a congregation of this synod at the time of election.
- †S8.54. Should the bishop die, resign, or be unable to serve, the vice president 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 six 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 officer in question at least ten calendar days prior to the meeting.
- †S8.57. The recall or dismissal of an officer may be effected in accordance with the procedure 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.

- S9.01.A08. *The Synod Council Executive Committee shall provide for background checks for persons nominated for synodical office prior to the Synod Assembly at which the election will take place or as soon as possible after the Synod Assembly for newly elected officers nominated from the floor who were not identified as nominees prior to the assembly. The process shall be as follows:*
- a. *Prior to the Synod Assembly appropriate notice of the background check requirement and protocol will be provided to voting members, potential nominees, and others as directed by the Synod Council.*
 - b. *Nominees and newly elected officers are required to provide written consent to a background check and all information necessary to complete a background check, which should be completed prior to the Synod Assembly with respect to nominees and prior to installation for newly elected officers, if possible.*
 - c. *The Synod Council's Executive Committee shall designate one Executive Committee or Synod Council member to obtain the background checks.*
 - d. *All background checks for nominees and newly elected officers will entail a criminal background check. A financial background check will be completed for nominees for treasurer. The Executive Committee shall decide whether additional types of background checks are appropriate for each officer position.*
 - e. *The background check results shall be provided to that nominee or elected officer and to the Synod Council's Executive Committee. Further disclosure of the results may be determined by the Executive Committee.*
 - f. *The Executive Committee may adopt other procedures or protocols as are necessary to provide for background checks for nominees and newly elected synodical officers and shall report such actions to the Synod Council.*
- 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.**
- S9.03. There shall be a Nominating Committee consisting of at least seven persons and not more than 12 persons who shall be appointed by the Synod Council to serve for each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly. Additional nominations may be made from the floor for all elections for which nominations are made by the Nominating Committee. The size of the Nominating Committee, in accord with this provision, shall be defined in this synod's continuing resolutions.**
- S9.03.01. The Synod Assembly shall elect voting members of the Churchwide Assembly of the ELCA on the basis approved by that body. The Nominating Committee of this synod shall nominate twice the number of nominees for the places to be filled. In its nominations the committee shall seek to have equitable representation by the various geographic areas of this synod. After the regular voting members have been elected, the ordained ministers, lay women, and lay men nominees receiving the next highest number of votes respectively shall constitute the alternates. If any

voting member be unable to attend the assembly, they shall inform the bishop of this synod who shall fill all vacancies from the alternates in the order of the votes received.

- S9.03.02. The Nominating Committee shall strive to ensure that all persons nominated for any position possess the necessary competence and experience for the position. The committee shall, insofar as possible, insure that all geographic areas of this synod are represented among the nominees.
- S9.03.03. Any nominations from the floor shall meet the same criteria as required for the position for which nominated.
- S9.03.04. Terms of service for members of the Synod Council and for persons elected by this synod to boards of trustees of the institutions to which this synod is related shall be limited to two consecutive terms of three years each. Terms of service begin at the conclusion of the Synod Assembly at which they are elected. Terms of service end at the Synod Assembly at which their successors are elected. Should the constitution of any institution or agency specify a term of office for board members other than three years, the constitution of the institution shall take precedence over this bylaw as far as length of term is concerned. In computing eligibility for continued membership on the Synod Council, boards on which the synod is entitled to representation, or other organizational units where applicable, at the conclusion of a full term, service which preceded such term without interruption shall be disregarded if its duration was shorter than half a term.
- S9.03.05. Any qualified person shall be eligible for election to and simultaneous service on one board and one committee. No person, except the bishop of synod, shall be eligible to serve simultaneously on two elective boards. No elected member of the Synod Council shall serve simultaneously on any other elective board or committee.
- S9.03.06. The Nominating Committee shall prepare a ballot in accord with †S6.04. for Synod Council elections to assure Synod Council membership includes:
- a. at least one male and one female persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English; and
 - b. nine geographic seats in accord with S9.03.02.; S12.01.20.; S12.01.21.; and S12.01.22. with three persons serving from each of the three geographic areas. A rotating basis for the election of lay males, lay females, and clergy from each of the three areas shall be established for the Synod Council members elected from the areas with one lay male, one lay female and one clergy elected each year; and
 - c. nine at-large seats open to persons from across the territory of the South Carolina Synod, including one lay male, one lay female, and one clergy to be elected each year; and one youth serving a two-year term.
- S9.03.A06. *The Nominating Committee shall consist of nine persons from the conferences and three persons from the geographical areas of this synod as described in S12.01.20., S12.01.21., and S12.01.22. Each of the nine conferences shall have one person on the committee. At least one of the twelve persons shall be a member of the Synod Council. The Synod Council shall appoint the chair of the nominating committee. Members of the nominating committee shall serve two-year terms. In order to have continuity on the committee from year to year, the terms of one-half of the twelve members shall expire each year. The committee's report shall be included in the Bulletin of Reports for the Synod Assembly. It shall nomi-*

nate two persons for each vacancy to be filled by election except the officers of this synod.

- 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 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 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 on the previous ballot.**
- S9.04.A94.* *An "ecclesiastical ballot" is an election process:*
- a. In which on the first ballot the name of any eligible individual may be submitted for nomination by a voting member of the assembly;*
 - b. Through which the possibility of election to office exists on any ballot by achievement of the required number of votes cast by voting members of the assembly applicable to a particular ballot;*
 - c. That precludes spoken floor nominations;*
 - d. In which the first ballot is the nominating ballot if no election occurs on the first ballot;*
 - e. In which the first ballot defines the total slate of nominees for possible election on a subsequent ballot, with no additional nominations permitted;*
 - f. That does not preclude, after the reporting of the first ballot, the right of persons nominated to withdraw their names prior to the casting of the second ballot;*
 - g. In which any name appearing on the second ballot may not be subsequently withdrawn;*
 - h. That does not preclude an assembly's adoption of rules that permit, at a defined point in the election process and for a defined period of time, speeches to the assembly by nominees or their representatives and/or a question-and-answer forum in which the nominees or their representatives participate; and*
 - i. In which the number of names that appear on any ballot subsequent to the second ballot shall be determined in accordance with provisions of the governing documents (or, if the governing documents are silent, in accordance with rules adopted by the assembly).*
- S9.05.** **The vice president shall be elected by the Synod Assembly by ecclesiastical ballot as specified in S9.04.**
- S9.06.** **The secretary shall be elected by the Synod Assembly by ecclesiastical ballot as specified in S9.04.**
- S9.07.** **The Synod Council shall nominate two persons for treasurer; additional nominations may be made from the floor.**
- S9.08.** **All elections shall be by ballot. In all elections, other than for the bishop, vice president and the secretary, the names of the persons receiving the highest**

number of legal votes, but not elected by a majority of the legal votes cast on a preceding ballot, shall be entered on the next ballot to the number of two for each vacancy unfilled. On any ballot when only two names appear, a majority of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election.

- S9.09.** The result of each ballot in every election shall be announced in detail to the assembly.
- S9.11.** The Synod Council shall elect representatives to the steering committee of its region.
- S9.11.01. The Synod Council, in consultation with the other synods in the region, will establish the number of representatives to the steering committee and the length of their respective terms.
- †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 this 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 the 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.
- †S10.02. 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 in conflict with actions taken by the Synod Assembly or which are not precluded by the provisions of this constitution or the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- S10.03. The functions of the 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 the 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 officer of this synod.
- f. Report its actions to the regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.
- g. 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.

- S10.04.** 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.
- S10.05.** No elected member of the Synod Council shall receive compensation for such service.
- S10.06.** If a member of the Synod Council ceases to be a member in good standing on a roster of this synod, if an ordained minister, or to be a voting member of a congregation of this synod, if a layperson, the office filled by such member shall at once become vacant.
- S10.06.01. If a member is absent without excuse from two successive regular meetings of the council, the office filled by such member shall at once become vacant.
- 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 as set forth in the bylaws.
- S10.07.01. The Synod Council shall consist of the four officers of this synod; 20 members elected to three-year terms, including at least one male and one female persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English; and one youth elected to a two-year term. The terms of one-third of the 20 members, as nearly as possible, shall expire each year.
- S10.07.A94. The youth member of the council shall be in school grades 8-11 at the time of election and shall be eligible for only one two-year term. Should the youth member resign or be unable to serve, the Synod Council may appoint a youth to fill the vacancy until the next regular Synod Assembly. The term of the youth member elected by that Synod Assembly shall be two years. Time served by appointment shall not count as part of the two-year term.*
- S10.07.02. If a person moves from the geographic area in which he or she was elected the person may serve until a replacement is elected at the next Synod Assembly. The vacancy shall be filled subject to the limitations of bylaw S9.03.04.
- S10.07.03. The Synod Council shall appoint the necessary committees for the proper function of its duties.

- S10.07.04. The Synod Council shall establish a Commission on Inclusiveness, in accordance with S11.01.02. and specify its responsibilities.
- S10.07.05. The Synod Council shall establish a Commission for Communications, in accordance with S11.01.03. and specify its responsibilities.
- S10.07.06. The Synod Council shall have a least three stated meetings annually. Special meetings may be called by the bishop or the vice president. A majority of the members of the council shall constitute a quorum.
- S10.07.07. The assistants to the bishop shall be accorded the privilege of the floor, without vote, at the meetings of the Synod Council except when it shall declare itself in executive session. Other persons may be accorded the privilege of the floor, without vote, at meetings of the Synod Council except when it shall declare itself in executive session.
- S10.07.08. Other duties and functions of the Synod Council shall be to:
- a. Promote the interests of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - b. Supervise and coordinate the work of the several agencies of this synod.
 - c. Elect staff officials, if and when such positions are created by the Synod Assembly and arrange for their proper induction into office.
 - d. Determine, when necessary, the time and place for each meeting of the Synod Assembly.
 - e. Set the salaries of the bishop and staff officials, and other employees of this synod.
 - f. Elect the representatives of this synod who are to serve, in addition to the bishop ex-officio, on the governing bodies of inter-church agencies to which this synod is related.
 - g. Institute and oversee a system of personnel practices applicable to all synodical staff officials and other employees.
 - h. Make an annual examination of all investments and securities held by this synod.
 - i. Supervise and regulate the *South Carolina Lutheran* (or its successor) and other official publications of this synod, including the selection of personnel and terms of office.
 - j. Provide communication and coordination between the region and this synod and its agencies, institutions, and congregations.
 - k. Arrange the process for all elections and appointments of this synod to assure conformity with established criteria of the ELCA.
- S10.08. The South Carolina Synod shall have an fund that is administered for purposes defined in the bylaws under the authority of the Synod Council.**
- S10.08.01. The South Carolina Synod Mission Endowment Fund, established as provided in S10.08., shall be invested in accord with the "General Statement of South Carolina Synod Investment Policies," as adopted by the Synod Council.
- S10.08.02. An Endowment Grant Committee for the South Carolina Synod Mission Endowment Fund shall consist of the bishop of the South Carolina Synod or his or her appointee, the treasurer of this synod, and five members elected by the Synod Assembly. Two of the elected members shall be lay women, two shall be lay men and one shall be an ordained minister on the roster of this synod. The term of office for the five persons elected by the Synod Assembly to membership on this committee shall be three years; individuals so chosen may not serve more than two consecutive full terms. The ex officio and elected members of the committee

shall elect a chairperson from the committee's membership.

- a. The members of the Endowment Grant Committee shall not receive compensation for their duties.
- b. The Endowment Grant Committee shall be responsible to the South Carolina Synod through the Synod Council and shall provide annually a report of disbursements to the Synod Assembly.
- c. The Endowment Grant Committee shall meet at least annually and provide the means, dates, and deadlines for grant requests, review such requests, and make recommendations for disbursements to the Synod Council through the synod's Finance Committee.

S10.08.03. No more than five percent (5%) of the Mission Endowment Fund may be distributed in any given year and of this amount, up to fifty percent (50%) may be granted for mission development within the South Carolina Synod and up to fifty percent (50%) may be granted for special expressions of God's love in the world. These grants shall not be used to support operational expenses of the synod or any other entity.

Chapter 11. COMMITTEES, COMMISSIONS AND MINISTRY TEAMS

- †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. The Executive Committee shall consist of the officers of this synod and two members of the Synod Council elected by the council. The members at large shall be elected annually at the first meeting of the council following the Synod Assembly. The Executive Committee shall perform those functions assigned to it by the Synod Council.
- S11.01.02. The Commission on Inclusiveness shall consist of not less than six persons and not more than nine persons appointed by the Synod Council, one of whom shall be a member of the council. These appointments shall be made annually for a maximum of six consecutive years of service. The council shall annually appoint the chair of the commission.
- S11.01.03. The Commission for Communications shall consist of not less than six persons and not more than nine persons appointed by the Synod Council, one of whom shall be a member of the council. These appointments shall be made annually for a maximum of six consecutive years of service. The council shall annually appoint the chair of the commission.
- S11.01.10. Ministry Teams
- S11.01.11. This synod shall have ministry teams to initiate, implement, and oversee the programs and priorities of this synod receiving direction and counsel from the Synod

Assembly and the Synod Council. These teams are responsible for developing a vision for ministry, implementing this vision, coordinating the ministry and administering funds.

- S11.01.12. Each ministry team shall consist of not less than six persons and not more than fifteen persons appointed annually by the Synod Council, one of whom shall be a member of the council. These appointments shall be made annually for a maximum of six consecutive years of service. The council shall appoint annually the chair of each ministry team.
- S11.01.13. Each conference shall be represented by at least one person on either the Nominating Committee, one of the commissions, or one of the ministry teams.
- S11.01.14. Each commission and each ministry team shall submit a comprehensive report of its activities to each regular Synod Assembly with such recommendations as it may desire.
- S11.01.15. This synod shall have the following Ministry Teams:
- a. Ministry Team for Congregational Life
 - b. Ministry Team for Outreach
 - c. Ministry Team for Rostered Leaders
- S11.01.A09. Ministry Team for Congregational Life*
- a. *This team shall journey with people so that together we are empowered and equipped to do God's work in the world.*
 - b. *This team, with God's help and guidance, shall equip congregations of this synod to grow deeper in discipleship practices and participate more fully in God's healing and reconciling mission in the world.*
 - c. *This team shall strive to develop and provide resource connections to enhance discipleship formation for all ages and stages.*
 - d. *This team shall consist of the chairpersons of its continuing committees and not less than three members-at-large appointed by the Synod Council, one of whom shall be a member of council. The convener(s) and the recorder of the ministry team shall be chosen by the Synod Council.*
- S11.01.B87. Ministry Team for Outreach*
- a. *This team shall implement the priorities and programs established by the Synod Assembly and the Synod Council in the areas of church extension, global ministries/world hunger, church in society, special care ministries, ecumenical agencies, and campus ministry.*
 - b. *This team shall endeavor to foster and cultivate a missionary spirit in the congregations of this synod. It shall make an annual inventory of synodical mission needs and opportunities.*
 - c. *This team shall endeavor to provide pastoral care for persons not normally cared for by a parish ministry and to develop ministries to persons with special needs.*
 - d. *This team shall have the responsibility of studying and making recommendations to the Synod Council and the Synod Assembly concerning issues of a social or public character that are within the scope of this synod's concern.*
 - e. *This team shall assist this church's ministry in Lutheran and non-Lutheran institutions of higher education on the synodical territory.*
- S11.01.C01. Ministry Team for Rostered Leaders*
- a. *This team shall implement the priorities and programs established by the*

Synod Assembly and the Synod Council in all areas concerning rostered leaders including preparation, examining, continuing education, support, and counseling.

- b. This team shall be responsible to seek out and enlist prospective candidates for church occupations and to endorse for admission to and continuance in theological seminaries those candidates whom it deems qualified.*
- c. In cooperation with the appropriate seminaries of this church, this team shall be responsible for the examination of candidates for ordination or for reception from other Lutheran church bodies and to present recommendations to the Synod Assembly or to the Synod Council concerning such applicants.*
- d. This team shall give guidance to ordained ministers, associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers on the rosters of this synod in making continuing education choices. It shall publicize and develop continuing education resources and opportunities for the professional leaders of this synod.*
- e. This team shall annually recommend to the Synod Assembly for approval compensation guidelines for rostered leaders of this synod. This team shall assist congregations of this synod by providing these approved recommended minimum compensation guidelines.*

†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.

S11.02.01. The Consultation Committee of this synod shall consist of 12 persons.

†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 laypersons, 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.

S11.04.01. The Mutual Ministry Committee shall consist of one ordained minister and two laypersons who are members of the Synod Council. This committee shall seek to give encouragement by its concern for the spiritual, emotional, and physical well-being of the staff of this synod. It will offer support when they are experiencing personal or pastoral stress. It will allow for open communication concerning atti-

tudes and conditions within this synod.

†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 rostered in synods other than synod of residence, 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 shall establish conferences, clusters, coalitions, or other area subdivisions within its territory as specified in the bylaws. The purpose of such groupings shall be to foster interdependent relationships among congregations, institutions, and synodical and churchwide units for mission purposes.**

S12.01.10. Conferences

S12.01.11. The congregations of this synod shall be organized into conferences as identified in S12.01.D06. In addition to fostering interdependent relationships each conference shall:

- a. be a source of inspiration for the members of the congregations of the conference. This may be accomplished through special worship services, rallies, speakers, opportunities for music and the arts, and other inspirational events.
- b. provide for the exchange of information. This may be accomplished through discussions related to community issues or through discussions with or presentations by the synod staff, ministry teams, commissions, and synod or churchwide institutions or agencies.
- c. promote fellowship among members of the congregations in the conference through a variety of conference events.
- d. provide for educational events such as workshops, schools of religion, or groups which study scripture, theology, social issues, etc.
- e. where desirable, form associations for the ordained ministers and/or other rostered leaders within the conference. The purposes of these associations shall be fellowship and continuing education.

S12.01.12. Each conference shall have at least annually a Conference Assembly and hold

other meetings as necessary. The time and place of said meetings shall be determined by the convener. Notice of any conference meetings shall be given to all congregations and rostered leaders of the conference not less than 30 days prior to said meeting.

- S12.01.13. Each conference shall elect a dean from the list of ordained ministers within the conference. The dean shall be elected by ecclesiastical ballot at the annual Conference Assembly. The dean shall be elected for a term of two years and shall serve no more than two terms consecutively. The dean shall be viewed as an extension of the Office of the Bishop assisting the bishop in providing care to the congregations, and rostered leaders within the conference. The dean may also serve as the convener of the conference. In the event of a vacancy in the office of the dean, the bishop shall appoint a dean *pro tempore* who shall serve until the next assembly of the conference. The dean shall be reimbursed for expenses from the Office of the Bishop.
- S12.01.14. The conference deans and not more than two other ordained ministers appointed by the bishop shall form a Cabinet of Deans who shall serve in an advisory capacity to the bishop.
- S12.01.15. Each conference shall have a Conference Council chosen as described in S12.01.17. The purpose of the council is to carry out the functions of the conference as described in S12.01.11. The council shall elect a convener, who shall be the dean of the conference or a lay person within the conference. The convener shall preside at the annual Conference Assembly, other meetings of the conference, and the Conference Council meetings. Other officers may be chosen from among the members of the council as deemed necessary to maintain records of the conference and council proceedings and to announce the programs/events of the conference.
- S12.01.16. Members of the council, the convener, and any other officers chosen shall be elected to two-year terms. They shall be eligible for one re-election. In the event of a vacancy in the office of convener, the dean shall convene a meeting of the council which shall elect a convener for the remainder of the term.
- S12.01.17. The Conference Council shall be elected at the annual Conference Assembly at which each congregation shall have three voting members. The voting members from each congregation shall be the pastor (one pastor from multiple clergy staff), one lay woman, and one lay man chosen by the Congregation Council. This annual assembly shall be held in September, October, or November of each year. The convener of the conference shall preside at the annual assembly.
- S12.01.18. The Conference Council shall consist of the dean and from nine to 15 other members. The total membership shall be at least 60 percent lay persons; and as nearly as possible 50 percent of the lay members shall be female and 50 percent shall be male. Vacancies on the Conference Council shall be filled by the council for the remainder of the term.
- S12.01.A01. *The Office of the Bishop defines the ministry expectations and responsibilities of the conference dean as follows:*
- a. *the dean will provide pastoral care to rostered leaders and congregations within the conference, normally, but not exclusively, at the request of the Office of the Bishop;*
 - b. *the dean will serve as a member of the Cabinet of Deans which serves in an*

advisory capacity to the Office of the Bishop and would be expected to attend two meetings a year;

- c. the dean would extend a personal welcome to rostered leaders new to the conference, offer a ministry of hospitality, and give support and recognition to rostered leaders leaving the conference;*
- d. the dean may be requested to help congregations on the front end of the call process by conducting an exit interview with the outgoing pastor and helping the congregation with a self study process.*
- e. the dean will serve as disaster response coordinator within the conference.*

S12.01.B97. A Congregation Council may apply to the Synod Council for transfer to a different conference provided that the Conference Council of the conference to which a congregation wishes to transfer, also approves the transfer.

S12.01.C97. With approval of two-thirds of the Congregation Councils within the affected conference(s), conferences may apply to the Synod Council to merge or to divide into two or more conferences.

S12.01.D07. The congregations, authorized worshiping communities, and congregations under development of this synod shall be organized into the following conferences and geographic areas in accord with S12.01.20., S12.01.21., and S12.01.22.

CENTRAL AREA

Midlands

*Blythewood, St. Andrew
Blythewood, St. Mark
Camden, St. Timothy
Columbia, Ascension
Columbia, Christ the King
Columbia, Christus Victor
Columbia, Ebenezer
Columbia, Gethsemane
Columbia, Good Shepherd
Columbia, Incarnation
Columbia, Living Springs
Columbia, Redeemer
Columbia, Reformation
Columbia, Resurrection
Columbia, St. Andrew
Columbia, St. Luke
Columbia, St. Michael
Columbia, St. Paul
Hartsville, Our Shepherd
Irmo, Bethlehem
Sumter, St. James*

Congregations under development

*Blythewood, Breath of Life
Columbia/West Columbia, Manantial de Vida (Spring of Life)*

Saxe Gotha

*Cayce, Transfiguration
Lexington, Bethany*

Lexington, Nazareth
Lexington, Pilgrim
Lexington, Pisgah
Lexington, Providence
Lexington, St. James
Lexington, St. John
Lexington, St. Matthew
Lexington, St. Peter
Lexington, St. Stephen
Lexington, Zion
Pelion, Holy Trinity
Pelion, St. John
Swansea, Good Shepherd
Swansea, Sandy Run
West Columbia, Emmanuel
West Columbia, Faith
West Columbia, Mt. Hermon
West Columbia, Mt. Tabor
West Columbia, Our Saviour
West Columbia, St. David

Congregation under development

West Columbia, Cristo Rey (Christ the King)

Western

Aiken, St. Paul
Batesburg, Faith
Batesburg, St. Peter
Gilbert, Grace
Gilbert, St. Paul
Graniteville, St. James
Johnston, Mt. Calvary
Johnston, St. John
Leesville, Bethlehem
Leesville, Cedar Grove
Leesville, Enon
Leesville, Mt. Hebron
Leesville, St. James
Leesville, Union
Leesville, Wittenberg
North Augusta, Holy Trinity
Prosperity, Corinth
Prosperity, St. Mark
Saluda, Good Hope
Saluda, Mt. Pleasant
Saluda, Trinity

EASTERN AREA

Amelia

Beaufort, St. John
Bluffton, Lord of Life
Cameron, Resurrection
Cameron, St. Matthew

Ehrhardt, Ehrhardt Memorial
Ehrhardt, Mt. Pleasant
Ellore, Trinity
Fairfax, St. Nicholas
Fairfax, Trinity
Hilton Head Island, Christ
Lone Star, Pine Grove
Orangeburg, Orangeburg
Vance, Hope
Walterboro, Good Shepherd

Coastal

Charleston, Holy Spirit
Charleston, Martin Luther
Charleston, Redeemer
Charleston, St. Barnabas
Charleston, St. Johannes
Charleston, St. John
Charleston, St. Matthew
Charleston Heights, Peace
Goose Creek, St. Timothy
Hanahan, Messiah
Isle of Palms, St. Mark
Johns Island, Faith
Moncks Corner, St. Michael
Mount Pleasant, All Saints
Mount Pleasant, St. Paul
North Charleston, Advent
Summerville, St. Luke

Epiphany

Conway, Christ the Servant
Florence, Cross and Crown
Florence, St. Luke
Garden City, Shepherd of the Sea
Georgetown, Trinity
Myrtle Beach, St. Philip
North Myrtle Beach, King of Glory
Pawleys Island, St. Peter

NORTHERN AREA

Foothills

Anderson, Holy Trinity
Clemson, University
Easley, St. Matthias
Greenville, Christ the King
Greenville, Our Saviour
Greenville, St. Michael
Greenville, Trinity
Greenwood, Immanuel
Greer, Redeemer
Laurens, Atonement
McCormick, Lutheran Church by the Lake

Mauldin, Messiah
Walhalla, St. John

Authorized Worshiping Community
Pickens, Faith

Heartland

Chapin, Mt. Olivet
Chapin, Mt. Horeb
Chapin, St. Jacob
Chapin, St. Peter
Chapin, St. Thomas
Clinton, St. John
Irmo, St. John
Little Mountain, Holy Trinity
Little Mountain, Mt. Tabor
Newberry, Beth Eden
Newberry, Bethany
Newberry, Colony
Newberry, Faith
Newberry, Mayer Memorial
Newberry, Redeemer
Newberry, St. James
Newberry, St. Philip
Newberry, Summer Memorial
Peak, Mt. Hermon
Pomaria, Bethlehem
Pomaria, Pomaria
Pomaria, St. John
Pomaria, St. Matthew
Pomaria, St. Paul
Prosperity, Bachman Chapel
Prosperity, Grace
Prosperity, Macedonia
Prosperity, Mt. Olivet
Prosperity, Mt. Pilgrim
Prosperity, St. Luke
Silverstreet, Silverstreet
White Rock, Bethel
Whitmire, St. Timothy

Upstate

Boiling Springs, Springs of Grace
Fort Mill, Lake Wylie
Lancaster, Reformation
Moore, Joy
Rock Hill, Epiphany
Rock Hill, Grace
Spartanburg, Holy Communion
Spartanburg, St. John
Union, Augsburg
York, Abiding Presence

Congregation under development

*Indian Land, Crossroads*Authorized Worshiping Community
Gaffney, Circle of Grace

- S12.01.20. Geographic areas
- S12.01.21. There shall be three geographic areas: Northern Area (Foothills, Upstate, and Heartland Conferences); the Central Area (Midlands, Saxe Gotha, and Western Conferences) and the Eastern Area (Coastal, Amelia, and Epiphany Conferences).
- S12.01.22. The geographic areas shall be established for the purpose of Synod Council elections and other appropriate purposes.

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 this constitution and the constitution 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 Chapters 16 and 18 of the Model Constitution for 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 this synod and action by this 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.

- S13.01.01. Each congregation within this synod shall file an approved constitution based on the Model Constitution for Congregations or one acceptable to this synod and any subsequent changes to its constitution with the synod for review to ascertain that all of its provisions are in agreement with the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and with the constitution and bylaws of this synod.
- S13.01.02. All proposed changes in the constitution or incorporation documents of each congregation shall be referred to the Synod Council. The Synod Council shall approve or disapprove of the proposed changes within 120 days of receipt thereof, and shall notify the congregation of its decision. In the absence of a decision, the proposed changes shall be considered approved.
- S13.01.03. Each congregation shall be incorporated.
- †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 persons to represent it 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.**
- S13.12. **A congregation under financial obligation 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 program 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 program unit of the churchwide organization before any steps are taken leading to such action.**
- S13.21. **The alignment of congregations in pastoral charges, and all alterations in any 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, than 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 has 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 a 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.**
- S13.40. **Synodically Authorized Worshiping Communities**
- S13.41. **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.**

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 ELCA churchwide organization and of this ELCA synod.

- S14.03.** The pastor (a) shall keep accurate parochial records of all 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 become 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, upon their consent, to the pastoral care of a Lutheran congregation nearer to their place of residence.
- S14.05.** Each ordained minister, associate in ministry, deaconess of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and diaconal minister, on the rosters of this synod shall submit a report of his or her ministry to the bishop of this synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.
- †S14.11.** When a congregation of this church desires to call a pastor or a candidate for the pastoral office in the ordained ministry of this church:
- a. Each congregation of this synod shall consult the bishop of this synod before taking any steps leading to 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 with the bishop of this synod. An ordained minister shall respond with an answer of acceptance or declination to a letter of call within 30 days of 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 15 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, except in the case of the death of the pastor, shall be terminated only 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, 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, without reflection on the competence or the moral and spiritual character of the pastor;
 - 4) the physical or mental incapacity of the pastor;
 - 5) disqualification of the pastor through discipline on grounds of doctrine, morality, or continued neglect of duty;
 - 6) the dissolution of the congregation or the termination of a parish arrangement; or
 - 7) suspension of the congregation as a result of discipline proceedings.
 - b. When allegations of physical or mental incapacity of the pastor or ineffective conduct of the pastoral office have come to the attention of the bishop of this synod, the bishop in his or her sole discretion may, or when such allegations have been brought to this 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 shall, investigate such conditions personally in company with a committee of two ordained ministers and one layperson.
 - c. In case of alleged physical or mental incapacity competent medical testimony shall be obtained. When such disability is evident, the bishop of this synod with the advice of the committee shall declare the pastorate vacant. Upon the restoration of a disabled pastor to health, the bishop of this synod shall take steps to enable the pastor to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another field of labor.
 - d. In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of the congregation, all concerned persons shall be heard, after which the bishop of this synod together with the committee described in †S14.13.b. shall decide on the course of action to be recommended to the pastor and the congregation. If they agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action shall be taken by this synod. If either party fails to assent, the congregation may dismiss the pastor 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.
 - e. If, in the course of proceedings described in †S14.13.d., the committee concludes that there may be grounds for disciplinary action, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action to

the synodical bishop who may bring charges, in accordance with the provisions of the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the constitution of this synod.

- f. If, following the appointment of the committee described in †S14.13.b. or d., it should become apparent that the pastoral office cannot be conducted effectively in the congregation(s) being served by the ordained minister due to local conditions, the bishop of this synod may temporarily suspend the pastor from service in the congregation(s) without prejudice and with pay provided through a joint synodical and churchwide fund and with housing provided by the congregation(s).
- †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 each congregation shall be kept in a separate book which shall remain its property. The secretary of the congregation shall attest to the bishop of this synod that such records have been placed in his or 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 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 †S14.13., a congregation may call a pastor for a specific term. Details of such calls shall be in writing setting forth the purpose and conditions involved. At least 60 days 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 congregation for a review of the call. Such call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of †S14.13.
- 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 congregation belongs.
- S14.30. Official Rosters of Laypersons

- †S14.31. **The provisions in the churchwide documents and such provisions as may be developed by the Division for Ministry 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 laypersons 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 for 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. **Associates 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 organization are interdependent units that share responsibly 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.**
- S15.11.01. **The Synod Council through its Finance Committee shall assign proportionate shares to congregations in order fully to fund the synod budget approved in assembly.**

- S15.11.02. Each congregation which contributes the full amount of its proportionate share may designate the churchwide or synodical programs which would benefit from any additional contributions.
- †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 percent of the sum of the amounts scheduled in the next year's budget for regular distribution to synodical causes shall be carried forward annually for disbursement 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 congregations of this or any other synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for the raising of funds shall be conducted by congregations or organizations related to or affiliated with this synod without the consent of the Synod Assembly or the Synod Council.**
- S15.21.A09. *Synodical Appeals*
- a. *That the Synod Council be consulted and their recommendation included in proposing plans to the assembly for a synodwide appeal;*
 - b. *That each request for a synodwide appeal be considered on its own merit and not necessarily in the order in which it is received;*
 - c. *That a one-year interval normally be maintained between appeals;*
 - d. *That it be understood that these guidelines do not apply to any appeal of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.*
- †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. **Except as otherwise provided in this constitution, indemnification of any**

person who is or was made or threatened to be made a party to any proceeding is prohibited. For purposes of this chapter, the term, "proceeding," means a threatened, pending or completed civil, criminal, administrative, arbitration, or investigative proceeding, including a proceeding in the right of this synod or any other organization. Except as otherwise required by law, (a) the term, "proceeding," does not include a proceeding by this synod and (b) indemnification for expenses incurred in a disciplinary hearing described in Chapter 20 of the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be permitted only as provided in †S16.05. For purposes of this chapter, the term, "indemnification," includes advances of expenses.

- †S16.02. To the full extent permitted from time to time 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 judgments, penalties, fines, settlements, excise taxes, and reasonable attorney's fees and disbursements 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 other organization, regardless of its form or relationship to this synod, is subject to the provisions of section †S16.03.
- †S16.03. 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 not be entitled to indemnification unless (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.
- †S16.04. 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 section †16.02. or section †16.03.
- †S16.05. When in proceedings under Chapter 20 of the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America written charges against an ordained minister or a layperson on an official roster of this church are made by the synodical bishop or written charges against a congregation are made by the Synod Council or the synodical bishop, and the discipline hearing committee determines that no discipline shall be imposed, and such determination is not reversed or set aside if an appeal is taken, then 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.

- †S17.01. The synodical bishop and the Executive Committee of the Synod Council 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 rosters 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 disagreement among factions 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 their 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 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 this church, corresponding amendments shall be introduced at once into 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 a 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 12 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 nor with the constitution and bylaws of this church. This synod may amend its bylaws at any meeting of the Synod Assembly by a two-thirds vote of voting members of the assembly present and voting. Newly adopted bylaws and amendments to existing bylaws shall be reported to the secretary of this church.**
- †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 and bylaws of this church. Such continuing resolutions may be adopted or amended by a majority vote of the Synod Assembly or by a two-thirds vote of Synod Council. Newly adopted continuing resolutions and amendments to existing continuing resolutions shall be reported to the secretary of this church.**

