



Metropolitan Chicago Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Rules of Organization and Procedure
2026 Metropolitan Chicago Synod Assembly

Introduction

These “Rules of Organization and Procedure” serve a number of purposes. First, they bring together in one place all of the provisions of the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions, as well as “standing” rules that describe the composition, functions, and responsibilities of the Synod Assembly. Constitutional provisions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions are highlighted in gray for convenience. Constitutional references preceded by a “†” are required, unalterable, constitutional provisions.

Synod Constitution S7.32 specifies that parliamentary procedures shall be in accordance with *Robert's Rules of Order*, latest edition, “unless otherwise ordered by the Assembly.” Experience from past Synod Assemblies has demonstrated that plenary discussion and the conduct of the Assembly’s business are best served by modifying certain parliamentary rules of *Robert's Rules of Order*. These modifications, as well as numerous other procedural matters not covered by *Robert's Rules of Order*, are a second purpose of these rules.

A third purpose is to adopt as part of the Rules of Organization and Procedure provisions from continuing resolutions related to the Assembly. When adopted, a two-thirds vote will be required for their amendment or suspension as pertaining to business at this Assembly. Adoption of these rules will follow the procedure required by *Robert's Rules of Order*. The Synod Council’s recommendation to adopt will be the main motion before the Assembly.

Outline

	Page
Part One: <i>Authority and Duties</i>	2
Part Two: <i>Members of Assembly</i>	3-4
Part Three: <i>Quorum and Procedure</i>	4-5
Part Four: <i>Committees of Assembly</i>	5-6
Part Five: <i>Voting Procedures</i>	7
Part Six: <i>Relation of Assembly to Synod Council</i>	7
Part Seven: <i>Resolutions and Motions</i>	7-8
Part Eight: <i>Recommendations of the Reference and Counsel Committee</i>	9
Part Nine: <i>Nominations</i>	9
Part Ten: <i>Election Procedures</i>	9-11
Part Eleven: <i>Status of Reports</i>	11
Part Twelve: <i>Deadlines</i>	11
Part Thirteen: <i>Hearings</i>	12
Part Fourteen: <i>Electronic Devices</i>	12

Recommended for Assembly Action

Two-Thirds Vote Required

It is moved to adopt the Rules of Organization and Procedure for the 2026 Metropolitan Chicago Synod Assembly (exclusive of quoted and highlighted constitutional provisions and bylaws that already are in force):

PART ONE: AUTHORITY AND DUTIES

Authority of the 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.

Duties of the Synod Assembly

The Synod Assembly shall:

- a) Review the work of the synod officers and for this purpose require and receive reports from them and act on business proposed by them.
- b) Review the work of teams and committees and for this purpose require and receive reports from them and act on business proposed by them.
- c) Adopt a budget for the synod organization.
- d) Elect officers, board members, and other people as provided in the constitution or bylaws.
- e) Have the sole authority to amend the constitution and bylaws.
- f) Fulfill other functions as required in the constitution and bylaws.
- g) Conduct such other business as necessary to further the purposes and functions of the synod.

Assembly Presiding Officer

†S8.12.i.2. As this synod's pastor, the bishop shall:
preside at all meetings of the Synod Assembly

The vice president shall serve as chair at the Synod Assembly in the event the bishop is unable to do so.

Synod 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.

Assembly 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 a rostered minister.

†S8.32. The secretary shall:
a. Keep the minutes of all meetings of the Synod Assembly ... be responsible for the distribution of such minutes, and perform such other duties as this synod may from time to time direct.

Notice of Meeting

†S7.11. A regular meeting of the Synod Assembly shall be held at least triennially.

S7.11.01. Frequency, time-of-year and place of Synod Assembly meetings. The time and place of the Synod Assembly shall be determined by the Synod Council. The time and place for the next regular assembly normally shall be announced 6 (six) months prior to the assembly.

S7.13. Notice of the time and place of all meetings of the Synod Assembly shall be given by the secretary of this synod, consistent with provision S7.11.01 and S7.12.

Agenda, Program and Worship

†S8.12.i.2. As this synod's pastor, the bishop shall:

Provide for the preparation of the agenda for the Synod Assembly.....

PART TWO: MEMBERS OF ASSEMBLY

Assembly Voting Members

†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 rostered ministers under call on the roster of this synod shall be voting members of the Synod Assembly.
- b. 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, typically one of whom shall be a man and one of whom shall be a woman, 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, at least 45 percent of the lay members of the assembly shall be women and, as nearly as possible, at least 45 percent shall be men.
- d. Voting membership shall include the officers of this synod.

S7.24. Ministers under call on the rosters 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 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.

S7.32. *Robert's Rules of Order*, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of the Synod Assembly, unless otherwise ordered by the assembly.

Additional Voting Members Provided

S7.21.A88 The membership of the Synod Assembly, in addition to the members indicated in †S7.21., shall include the retired minister of Word and Sacrament and ministers of Word and Service whose names appear on the rosters of this synod and who are elected by the Council to such membership.

S7.21.B04 The membership of the Assembly, in addition to the members indicated in †S7.21., shall include ministers of Word and Sacrament and ministers of Word and Service whose names appear on the roster of this synod and who are serving as interim minister under contract in a congregation of this synod at the time of the assembly.

S7.21.C21 The membership of the Synod Assembly, in addition to the members indicated in †S7.21., shall include those Ministers of Word and Sacrament and Ministers of Word and Service who have been granted disability status, or on leave from call status, on the roster of the synod may be elected by the Synod Council to such membership.

S7.21.D21 Retired rostered ministers, or those designated as disabled, or on leave from call, on the roster of the synod must indicate to the bishop's office their desire and intention to serve as voting

members of the Synod Assembly, normally no less than 60 days before the Synod Assembly is seated. Such persons may be elected to membership of the Synod Assembly by vote of the Synod Council where possible consistent with †S7.21.

S7.22. This synod may establish processes that permit retired rostered ministers, or those granted disability status, or on leave from call, on the roster of the synod to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with †S7.21.c. If the synod does not establish processes to permit the rostered ministers specified above to serve as voting members, they shall have voice but not vote in the meetings of the Synod Assembly.

S7.22.A22 The membership of the Synod Assembly, in addition to the members indicated in †S7.21., shall include those Ministers of Word and Sacrament and Ministers of Word and Service who have been granted disability status, or on leave from call status, on the roster of the synod may be elected by the Synod Council to such membership.

S7.22.B22 Retired rostered ministers, or those designated as disabled, or on leave from call, on the roster of the synod must indicate to the bishop's office their desire and intention to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, normally no less than 60 days before the Synod Assembly is seated. Such persons may be elected to membership of the Synod Assembly by vote of the Synod Council where possible consistent with †S7.21.

†S7.23. The presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and such other official representatives of the churchwide organization as may be designated by the presiding bishop shall 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.

S7.24. Ministers under call on the rosters 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 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.

S7.26. This synod may establish processes through the Synod Council that permit representatives of congregations under development 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.

S7.27. This synod may establish processes through the Synod Council to grant a minister of Word and Sacrament 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 minister's service in a congregation of this church.

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 the Synod Assembly.

Official Visitors

Official visitors shall be people invited by the bishop of this synod or the synod council to address the Assembly. They shall not have a vote.

Resource and Advisory Members

Resource and advisory members of the assembly may be called upon by the chair during any plenary session to respond to questions regarding a subject matter in which they hold a particular expertise. Unless otherwise elected to such membership, resource and advisory members do not hold voting membership in the assembly. While acting as a resource or advisory member, the member shall provide accurate information to the best of their ability, but refrain from stating opinions which might bias the ongoing debate on the floor of the assembly.

Access to Seating

Voting members will be admitted to restricted seating areas only upon display of proper credentials. Restricted seating area will be designated by the “bar” of the Assembly floor and will be explained at the beginning of the assembly.

PART THREE: QUORUM AND PROCEDURE

Quorum

S7.14. One-half of the members of the Synod Assembly shall constitute a quorum.

Obtaining the Floor

In plenary sessions of the Assembly, the voting members, including the *ex officio* members, have prior right to obtain the floor, unless the chair determines that it is in the best interests of the Assembly to call upon an advisory member, a resource member, or another individual with voice.

Questions of Personal Privilege

Questions of personal privilege are in order when they relate to the Synod Assembly, such as problems with acoustics, lighting, and emergencies. Questions of personal privilege that are not urgent and do not relate to the Synod Assembly are out of order.

Other requests for time in plenary for questions of personal privilege (e.g., personal announcements, comments on matters not on the agenda, reflections on the meaning of votes after they are taken) must be submitted in writing to the secretary. The chair may allow such matters to be addressed at a later time.

Speeches

Unless otherwise determined by a majority vote of the Assembly, all speeches during discussion shall be limited to two minutes. No voting member may speak a second time on any item on the floor unless everyone who wants to speak first has done so, unless the Assembly chair grants an exception. A signal

shall be given one minute before the speaker's time ends. A second signal shall be given 30 seconds later. A final signal shall be given 30 seconds later, and the speaker shall then sit down. The time limits on speakers and debate does not include time for language interpretation. Total time limits for speeches relating to resolutions will be established by the Synod Council in consultation with the Committee on Reference and Counsel.

Alternating Speeches

As far as is possible during discussion, a speaker on one side of the question shall be followed by a speaker on the other side. To facilitate alternating speeches, Assembly members awaiting recognition at the floor microphones shall approach the appropriate microphone marked as designated by the planning team. Should there be three (3) speeches on one side of debate without any on the other side of debate, debate on the matter shall end and the question shall come before the assembly for vote.

Purpose and Use of "White Microphone"

The "white microphone" is to be used to identify a member who wishes to offer an amendment to the pending matter, or some other motion that would be in order. Except when authorized to interrupt a speaker by *Robert's Rules of Order*, voting members seeking to bring a motion shall line up at any microphone and await recognition by the chair.

Suspending or Revising the Rules

After the adoption of the Rules of Organization and Procedure and any amendments thereto offered prior to the adoption of the Rules, any further amendment to, revision in, or suspension of the Rules shall always require for adoption a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting.

Moving the Previous Question

A member who has spoken on the pending question(s) may not move the previous question(s). A motion to end debate by moving the previous question shall apply only to the immediately preceding motion. A motion to end debate on all matters on the floor or more than the immediately pending question is not in order.

Applause

In the give-and-take of debate on issues before the Assembly, members of the Assembly and visitors shall refrain from applause and other signs of partisanship.

Departing from Agenda

With the consent of a majority of the voting members, the chair shall have the authority to call items of business before the Assembly in whatever order the chair considers most expedient for the conduct of the Assembly's business. A motion to alter the agenda shall require for adoption a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting.

Unfinished Business

Upon adjournment of the Assembly, all remaining unfinished items of business shall be referred to the Synod Council for disposition.

PART FOUR: COMMITTEES OF ASSEMBLY

Committees

S7.01.05. Synod Assembly committees and officials. The Synod Assembly shall have committees and officials as provided in this bylaw. Unless the bishop so requires, an Assembly committee or official need not make a formal report covering its or the official's activities.

Constitution Working Group

A Constitution Working Group, appointed by the Synod Council, shall review all proposed amendments or additions to the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions submitted to the Assembly.

Committee on Reference and Counsel

A Committee on Reference and Counsel, appointed by the Synod Council, shall review all proposed resolutions and memorials submitted to the Assembly.

The Committee on Reference and Counsel reviews, edits, and expedites memorials and resolutions coming to the Assembly. These resolutions and memorials, along with the committee's recommendations, are brought before the synod in Assembly for action.

Nominating Committee

A Nominating Committee shall nominate at least one person for each position for which an election will be held by the Assembly and for which a nominating procedure has not otherwise been designated in the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this synod.

Other Committees

The Council may authorize such other committees as it deems necessary to facilitate the planning for and operation of the Assembly in consultation with the bishop.

Elections Committee

The Elections Committee shall oversee the conduct of elections. The Elections Committee shall report the results of balloting in other elections by announcing the name of the person elected or by announcing the names of nominees qualified to remain on the ballot. Vote totals shall be reported to the secretary of the synod and recorded in the minutes of the Assembly. Based on the report of the Elections Committee, the chair shall declare elected those who received the required number of votes. A report showing the results of a ballot shall be distributed to the voting members concurrently with, or as soon as possible after, the announced report of the Elections Committee.

In the election for bishop, vice president, or secretary, the Elections Committee shall report the results of any balloting by announcing the number of votes received by each nominee and the names of those nominees qualified to remain on the next ballot or the name of the nominee who is elected.

Credentials Committee

The Credentials Committee shall oversee the registration of voting members and shall report periodically to the Assembly the number of voting members registered.

Assembly Planning Committee

The Assembly Planning Committee shall assist officers of this church in planning the agenda, program, worship, and arrangements at the Assembly.

Minutes Committee

The Minutes Committee shall review minutes of the Assembly prepared under the supervision of the secretary of the synod. The Minutes Committee shall review, make grammatical and spelling corrections, and recommend approval of the minutes to the secretary and Executive Committee of the Synod Council. The Executive Committee shall then have the authority to approve the minutes on behalf of the Assembly and shall deposit in the archives of this church the final copy of the Assembly's minutes.

Additional Appointments

Additional officials or committees (sergeants-at-arms, parliamentarians, chairs for hearings, etc.) of the Assembly shall be appointed by the bishop.

PART FIVE: VOTING PROCEDURES

Various Methods of Voting

As directed by the chair, voting may take place by voice, by show of hands, by standing, or by written ballot. Any member who because of physical limitation cannot raise their hand or stand to vote should contact the Elections Committee for assistance. In the case of voting with colored cards, cards should not be folded or torn. Each voting member's registration packet contains a paper ballot to be used if the chair so directs. If a paper ballot is called for by the chair, it should not be folded. The ballot will be collected at the voting member's table in accordance with instructions from the Elections Committee or from the chair.

Division of the House

When a division of the house is ordered, the vote shall be by standing vote, or by written ballot as directed by the chair. No division of the house is in order when a vote has been taken by a counted standing vote, or by written ballot.

En Bloc Voting

Amendments to the governing documents may be moved in blocs. Blocs are not debatable. Therefore, any item which a member of the assembly desires to debate must be pulled from the bloc in writing at the secretary's desk by the deadline on the day of the assembly.

PART SIX: RELATION OF ASSEMBLY TO SYNOD COUNCIL

Relationship to Synod Council

†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 that are not in conflict with actions taken by the Synod Assembly or that are not precluded by provisions of this constitution or the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Status of Synod Council Recommendations

The recommendation of the Council with respect to any proposal by a committee or any other matter shall be treated as a motion made and seconded, unless the Council shall otherwise determine.

PART SEVEN: RESOLUTIONS AND MOTIONS

Written Resolutions and Motions Required

Substantive resolutions or motions, or amendments to either, must be presented in writing to the secretary either before or immediately after being moved.

Nature of Resolutions and Motions

Council Resolutions and Reported Resolutions

S7.01.B22.b. Synod Council resolutions and reported resolutions

Council resolutions and reported resolutions shall be set forth in the Synod Assembly Report. Also, as in the Synod Council's view circumstances warrant, the Synod Council may present revised and additional Synod Council resolutions, and shall furnish each such revised Synod Council resolution and additional Synod Council resolution, if any, to this Synod Assembly in written form and at the earliest practicable time.

Form and Initial Processing of Additional Resolutions

An additional resolution shall be in written form and identified as such, be addressed to the bishop, include the signatures of the voting members or prospective voting members proposing it, and the name of the proposer's Congregation and the proposer's contact information. A prospective voting member may pre-submit an additional resolution prior to this Assembly in accordance with the deadlines set forth by the Council. If a prospective voting member does not register as a voting member on the first day of this Assembly, an additional resolution which was pre-submitted by that proposer will be discarded. The bishop shall resolve under the definition provided, any question as to the status of a matter as an additional resolution, and refer each additional resolution to the Committee on Reference and Counsel or, in case of a pre-submitted additional resolution, for the committee's attention when it convenes.

Germane Resolutions and Motions

A germane resolution or motion is one closely related to or having bearing on the matter before the Assembly. A resolution or motion that is germane to the matter before the Assembly may be offered when in order by any voting member from the floor by going to a microphone and being recognized by the chair.

Non-Germane Resolutions and Motions

Any resolution or motion not germane to the matter before the Assembly or on the Assembly agenda must be submitted to the secretary in writing prior to the established deadline. Each resolution or motion must be supported in writing by one other voting member. The secretary shall refer such resolution to the Committee on Reference and Counsel, which may:

- a) Recommend approval;
- b) Recommend referral to a unit or office of this church;
- c) Recommend a substitute motion to the Assembly; or
- d) Recommend that the Assembly decline the proposed resolution.

Same or Similar Subjects

The Committee on Reference and Counsel may group together in a single recommendation resolutions or motions on the same or similar subjects. A resolution or motion on the same subject as a recommendation already on the agenda of the Assembly will not be submitted to the Assembly for separate action by the Committee on Reference and Counsel. The chair of the committee will inform the voting member of the committee's decision.

Substitute Motions

When a substitute motion is made, secondary amendments may be offered first to the original motion. After all secondary amendments to the original motion have been disposed of, secondary amendments to the substitute motion may be offered. When all amendments to the substitute motion have been disposed of, the vote shall be taken on whether the substitute motion is to be substituted as the original motion or be rejected.

Beyond Deadline for Submission

Any resolution or motion not germane to the matter before the Assembly or on the Assembly agenda that a voting member submits because of circumstances that develop during the Assembly and that cannot be submitted to the secretary of this church or the secretary's deputy prior to the established deadline must be submitted to the secretary in writing and supported in writing by one other voting member. The secretary shall refer such resolution or motion to the Committee on Reference and Counsel, which may:

- a) Decline to refer the resolution or motion to the Assembly;
- b) Recommend approval;
- c) Recommend referral to a unit or office of this church;
- d) Recommend a substitute motion to the Assembly; or
- e) Recommend that the Assembly decline the proposed resolution or motion.

Consideration of a resolution or motion submitted beyond the deadline will require suspension of the rules prior to presentation of the matter to voting members by the Reference and Counsel Committee.

Resolutions Deemed Out of Order

Resolutions and Memorials which are out of order for distribution or action by the Assembly will be referred to the Synod Council (or Executive Committee) for action or referral to the appropriate team or staff member.

PART EIGHT: RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE ON REFERENCE AND COUNSEL

Status of Committee's Recommendations

When the Committee on Reference and Counsel has recommended the approval of a resolution or motion considered by the committee, the committee's recommendation and text of the resolution or motion recommended for passage shall be the main motion before the Assembly.

When the Committee on Reference and Counsel has recommended the adoption of a substitute recommendation for the resolution(s) or motion(s) on a subject, the committee's recommendation shall be the main motion before the Assembly.

When the Committee on Reference and Counsel has recommended referral of a resolution(s) or motion(s), the committee's recommendation shall be the main motion before the Assembly.

When the Committee on Reference and Counsel has recommended that the Assembly decline a proposed resolution or motion without the committee making any other recommendation related to the same or a closely related subject, the voting member's resolution or motion, if then moved by that voting member and seconded, shall be the main motion and the committee's recommendation shall be received as information.

PART NINE: NOMINATIONS (if needed)

Nominations Desk

Nominations from the floor at the Assembly shall be made at the Nominations Desk, which shall be maintained under the supervision of the secretary. A nomination from the floor shall be made by using the form provided by the secretary of this church. Nomination Forms may be obtained from the Nominations Desk or at the Metropolitan Chicago Synod website, under the Synod Assembly tab. The deadline for nominations from the floor is 9 a.m. on June 5, 2026.

Congregation Membership

With the exception of the office of bishop, each nominee for an elected position in the synod shall be a voting member of a congregation or Synod Authorized Worshipping Community of this synod.

Nominations Form

The required form to be used in making nominations from the floor shall include the nominee's name, address, phone number, gender, lay or clergy status, white or person of color or primary language other than English status, congregational membership, and affirmation of willingness to serve, if elected; the name, address, and membership of the voting member who is making the nomination; and such other information as the secretary shall require.

PART TEN: ELECTION PROCEDURES

†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. The Synod Assembly shall 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.

S9.01.02. Elections at regular Synod Assembly meetings. The elections described in S9.01.01. shall be held at regular meetings of the Synod Assembly.

Election Procedures Utilizing the Common Ballot

The common ballot is used in those elections when the ecclesiastical or nominating ballot is not used. Each ticket for which an election is held will be considered a separate ballot. A voting member may vote for only the number of nominees on each ticket as indicated by the Elections Committee. Failure to vote for a nominee for every ticket does not invalidate a ballot for the tickets for which a nominee is marked. Ballots must be marked in accordance with the instructions presented in the plenary session.

Majority Required for Election

In all elections by the Assembly, other than for the bishop, vice president, and secretary, a majority of the votes cast on the first ballot shall be necessary for election. If an election does not occur on the first ballot, the names of the two people receiving the highest number of votes cast shall be placed on the second ballot. On the second ballot, a majority of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election.

Ecclesiastical Ballot

Election of a Bishop

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.

Election of a Vice President

S9.05.01. Election of the Vice President shall proceed without oral nominations. The first ballot of the election, unless resulting in election, shall be the nominating ballot. On the first ballot, two-thirds of votes shall elect. On the second ballot, only votes for persons who received votes on the first ballot shall be valid, and a majority of votes shall elect. On the third ballot, voting shall be limited to the two persons (plus ties) who received the highest number of votes on the second ballot, and a majority of votes shall elect. A person may withdraw from the election prior to the voting on any ballot, and upon such withdrawal, votes for the person on a preceding ballot shall be deemed invalid as to a subsequent ballot. An invalid vote shall not be counted for any purpose.

Election of a Secretary

S9.06.01. Election of the Secretary shall proceed without oral nominations. The first ballot of the election, unless resulting in election, shall be the nominating ballot. On the first ballot, two-thirds of votes shall elect. On the second ballot, only votes for persons who received votes on the first ballot shall be valid, and a majority of votes shall elect. On the third ballot, voting shall be limited to the two persons (plus ties) who received the highest number of votes on the second ballot, and a majority of votes shall elect. A person may withdraw from the election prior to the voting on any ballot, and upon such withdrawal, votes for the person on a preceding ballot shall be deemed invalid as to a subsequent ballot. An invalid vote shall not be counted for any purpose.

Background Checks and Screening

Background checks and screening shall be required and completed for persons nominated as bishop, vice president, and secretary prior to election, if possible, or as soon as practical after their election. The Synod Council shall determine the specific procedures and timing of background checks and screening.

Ecclesiastical Ballot Defined

An “ecclesiastical ballot” for the election of officers (other than treasurer) of the synod 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 slates of nominees for 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 those nominated to withdraw their names prior to the casting of the second ballot;

- g) 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
- h) in which the number of names that appear on any ballot after the second ballot shall be determined in accordance with provisions of the governing documents.

PART ELEVEN: STATUS OF REPORTS

Assembly Reports

At least 20 days prior to an Assembly the secretary shall prepare and distribute the Book of Reports. Distribution to congregations may be accomplished by posting the report on the webpage of the synod.

Status of Reports

All reports published in the Book of Reports shall be treated as having been received by the Assembly without formal vote.

Distribution of Materials

Materials may be distributed on the floor of the Assembly only with the written consent of the secretary of this Assembly. In cases where the secretary does not consent, an appeal may be made to the Committee on Reference and Counsel. That committee's decision shall be final.

PART TWELVE: DEADLINES

The deadline for resolutions/memorials to be submitted to the Assembly for consideration is March 15, 2026.

Resolutions/memorials after this date must be submitted to the secretary of the synod, for a decision by the Committee on Reference and Counsel or the Synod Council regarding whether the resolution/memorial may be included in the 2026 Synod Assembly Agenda.

The deadline for nominations from the floor is 9 a.m. on June 5, 2026.

The deadline for voting member registration for the assembly is 9 a.m. on June 5, 2026.

PART THIRTEEN: PRE-EVENT HEARINGS

Certain proposals that are scheduled for Assembly action or information are the subject of pre-assembly hearings. Prospective voting members, advisory members, other members, resource members, official visitors, and other categories approved by the Synod Council or Committee on Reference and Counsel may attend with voice. Others may attend if space permits and shall not have voice. Hearings have no legislative authority. The chair of the hearing shall endeavor to maintain decorum and order and may call upon the assistance of sergeants-at-arms. As far as is possible during discussion, a speaker on one side of the question shall be followed by a speaker on the other side. It is the expectation of the Assembly that Prospective Voting Members wishing to speak to a resolution, memorial, or budget on the floor of the Assembly or make an amendment thereto attend the pre-assembly hearing to make their position known and allow time for the pre-amendment process in consultation with the Committee on Reference and Counsel.

PART FOURTEEN: ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Use of computers and other electronic devices, such as cell phones (in texting mode only), smart phones, tablets, and other wireless electronic communication devices is allowed in the plenary hall during Assembly sessions, provided that such devices are in a silent mode and do not disturb voting members. With the exception of translation devices, speaking on any device is prohibited in the plenary hall during Assembly sessions. Members and others are expected to be courteous and respectful and are encouraged to leave the hall if they intend to engage in communication activities that may disturb others or are not related to the work of the Assembly. Use of computers and other electronic devices for non-worship related purposes is precluded during worship.