

**PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE NEBRASKA SYNOD CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS  
AS APPROVED BY THE SYNOD COUNCIL, NOVEMBER 15, 2025**

**OFFICIAL NOTICE OF PROPOSED RECOMMENDED AMENDMENTS**

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Following are the recommendations of proposed amendments to the *Nebraska Synod ELCA Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions* that were approved by the team that reviewed the Nebraska Synod Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions, November 12, 2025, to be brought forth to the November 2025 Synod Council meeting. Additions are underlined. Deletions are ~~struck through~~ in the text.

Note: Constitution provisions are codified with two sets of numbers. Bylaw provisions are codified with three sets of numbers.

**Section 1: Provisions Reclassified from Required to Non-Required** (as approved by the Churchwide Assembly, August 2025, and recommended by the team that reviewed the Nebraska Synod Constitution and Bylaws.

**CHAPTER 1.**

**NAME AND INCORPORATION**

~~†S1.21. The seal of this synod is the seal of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America with the words Nebraska Synod inscribed on the inside circle.~~

Rationale: Because corporate seals are no longer in frequent use, the recommendation is to make this a non-required provision. (CWA) Since it is no longer a required provision, we recommend removing the provision.

**CHAPTER 9.**

**NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS**

†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.

Rationale: Recommend making this a non-required provision to allow for situations where the person receiving the highest number of votes could be elected. (CWA)

**CHAPTER 11.**

**COMMITTEES AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL UNITS**

†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.

Rationale: This provision is being made non-required. (CWA)

**Section 2: Amendments to Non-Required Provisions** (as approved by the Churchwide Assembly, August 2025, and recommended by the team that reviewed the Nebraska Synod Constitution and Bylaws.

**CHAPTER 7.**

**SYNOD ASSEMBLY**

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

Rationale: This would allow synod-authorized ministers (SAMs) or representatives of synod-authorized worshiping communities or outreach ministries to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly. (CWA)

**S9.04.** The bishop shall be elected by the Synod Assembly by ecclesiastical ballot. Three-fourths of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election on the first ballot. If no one is elected, the first ballot shall be considered the nominating ballot. Three-fourths of the legal votes cast on the second ballot shall be necessary for election. The third ballot shall be limited to the seven persons ~~(plus ties)~~ who receive the greatest number of legal votes (including ties in the final qualifying position) on the second ballot, and two-thirds of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election. The fourth ballot shall be limited to the three persons ~~(plus ties)~~ who receive the greatest number of legal votes (including ties in the final qualifying position) on the third ballot, and 60 percent of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election. On subsequent ballots a majority of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election. These ballots shall be limited to the two persons ~~(plus ties)~~ who receive the greatest number of legal votes (including ties in the final qualifying position) on the previous ballot.

Rationale: Clarification of election process in the event of tie votes. (CWA)

**CHAPTER 10.**

**SYNOD COUNCIL**

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

Rationale: Clarification, and establishment of the possibility that elected Synod Council members may receive compensation for other services provided to the synod. (CWA)

**S10.06.** No person related to a synod staff member shall be eligible for nomination to or membership on the Synod Council. For this purpose, a related individual is one who, with respect to the synod employee, is a spouse, parent, son, daughter, sibling, uncle, aunt, niece, nephew, grandparent, grandchild, including corresponding members of blended families and in-laws (parent, son, daughter, or sibling of a spouse, spouse of a sibling, or the parent or sibling of the spouse of a sibling).

Rationale: For purposes of avoiding conflicts of interest, this provision allows synods to define where relatives of synod staff may or may not serve. (CWA)

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

Rationale: Renumbering. (CWA)

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

Rationale: Renumbering. (CWA)

## **CHAPTER 13. CONGREGATIONS**

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

Rationale: See explanation for 13.41 below. (CWA)

**S13.41.** ~~Authorized worshiping~~ Worshipping communities and outreach ministries, authorized by the synod and acknowledged under criteria, policies, and procedures approved by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, shall accept and adhere to the Confession of Faith and Statement of Purpose of this church, shall be served by leadership under the criteria of this church, and shall be subject to the discipline of this church.

Rationale: This amendment reflects a change in terminology when referring to authorized worshiping communities and extends the synods' authority to acknowledge authorized outreach ministries as well. (CWA)

### **Section 3: Amendments to Non-Required Provisions** (as recommended by the team that reviewed the Nebraska Synod Constitution and Bylaws)

## **CHAPTER 7. SYNOD ASSEMBLY**

**S7.11.01.** The time and place of the Synod Assembly shall be determined by the Synod Council. The time and place of the next regular assembly ~~normally~~ shall be announced at least six months prior to the assembly to each congregation and to all whose names appear on the roster of this synod.

Rationale: Provide better clarity. The announcement of the Synod Assembly needs to happen before approaching deadlines, i.e. the deadline for Resolution submission.

**S7.13.01.** No more than fifty nor less than ten days in advance, the secretary shall give additional public notice of the time and place of each regular assembly ~~to each congregation and to all whose names appear on the roster of this synod.~~

Rationale: See explanation for 7.11.01 above.

**S7.41.20. ~~Resolutions,~~ Reference and Counsel Committee**

Rationale: In reviewing the title of this committee used by the Churchwide Assembly and other organizations within the ELCA, it was felt consistent language should be used.

**S7.41.21.** ~~A Resolutions,~~ The Reference and Counsel Committee shall be appointed by the Synod Council with representation from mission cluster units in such a way as to assure geographical participation from across the synod.

Rationale: See explanation for 7.41.20 above.

**S7.41.22.** Resolutions are to be submitted to the Synod Council Secretary 90 days prior to the Synod Assembly. The ~~Resolutions,~~ Reference and Counsel Committee shall review and make recommendations to the Synod Council regarding each resolution. After review by the Synod Council, these resolutions shall be published in the preassembly report with the Synod Council opinions. Late resolutions, submitted after the 90-day deadline, are to be submitted to the ~~Resolutions,~~ Reference and Counsel Committee before a deadline established by the Synod Assembly. Late resolutions will be brought to the Assembly and require a majority two-third vote to be considered on the floor ~~and a two-thirds majority vote for passage.~~

Rationale: Following the example of the Churchwide Assembly, we specified the resolutions are to be submitted to the secretary and not the Synod Council as a whole. Language was updated for clarification and consistency. In the usual practice, if a two-thirds vote is to be used, it should be applied to the question of consideration, which is a suspension of a rule. A two-thirds vote should not be applied to the adoption of the resolution, unless the content of the resolution calls for it.

**S7.41.23.** ~~Individual assembly~~ Any voting member ~~members,~~ congregations, mission cluster units, the Synod Council, and Synod committees may submit resolutions ~~through the Council as stated in S7.41.22.~~ before the preassembly deadline. Only assembly voting members and the Synod Council may submit resolutions after the preassembly deadline.

Rationale: Language was updated for clarification and consistency.

## CHAPTER 8.

### OFFICERS

- S8.22.** The vice president shall: ~~chair the Synod Council.~~
- Chair the Synod Council meetings.
  - Submit written reports to the Synod Council.
  - Submit a written report to the Synod Assembly.

Rationale: Written reports are the responsibility of the vice president, and it was felt the provision should be expanded to follow the example of both the secretary and treasurer which have some of their responsibilities in the constitution.

## CHAPTER 10.

### SYNOD COUNCIL

- S10.01.11.** The term of office of the youth member of the Synod Council shall be two years. This person shall be fourteen to seventeen years of age or entering grades ten to twelve at the time of ~~his or her~~ their election. The Nominating Committee shall provide two nominees for the youth position.

Rationale: Updated for language consistency with other provisions.

- S10.06.** If a member of the Synod Council ceases to meet the requirements of the position to which ~~she or he~~ they was were elected, the office filled by such member shall at once become vacant.

Rationale: Updated for language consistency with other provisions.

- S10.09.** Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of all meetings of the Synod Council.

Rationale: This provision is in the model synod constitution, and the team felt it should be added to the Nebraska Synod Constitution and Bylaws.

- S10.11.01.** Election of the Synod Council Executive Committee shall be by ballot. The three people with the highest number of votes elected shall be declared members of the Executive Committee. A run-off ballot will be cast in case of any ties.

Rationale: The Synod Council has historically passed a resolution to suspend the rules so the three Executive Committee members could be elected by the greatest number of votes received instead of by majority votes.

**CHAPTER 11.**

**COMMITTEES AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL UNITS**

**S11.63.12.** This committee appointed by the bishop shall have no more than eight members. ~~The term shall be two years with approximately one-half appointed annually. No person shall be eligible to serve more than two consecutive terms.~~

Rationale: This committee is appointed by the bishop, and it was felt their appointment should not end due to term limits if the bishop wanted the individual to continue serving.