



Allegheny Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

*Go Tell it
in the Mountains*

2024 SYNOD ASSEMBLY

36th Annual Assembly • June 15, 2024 • Altoona, PA

BULLETIN OF REPORTS



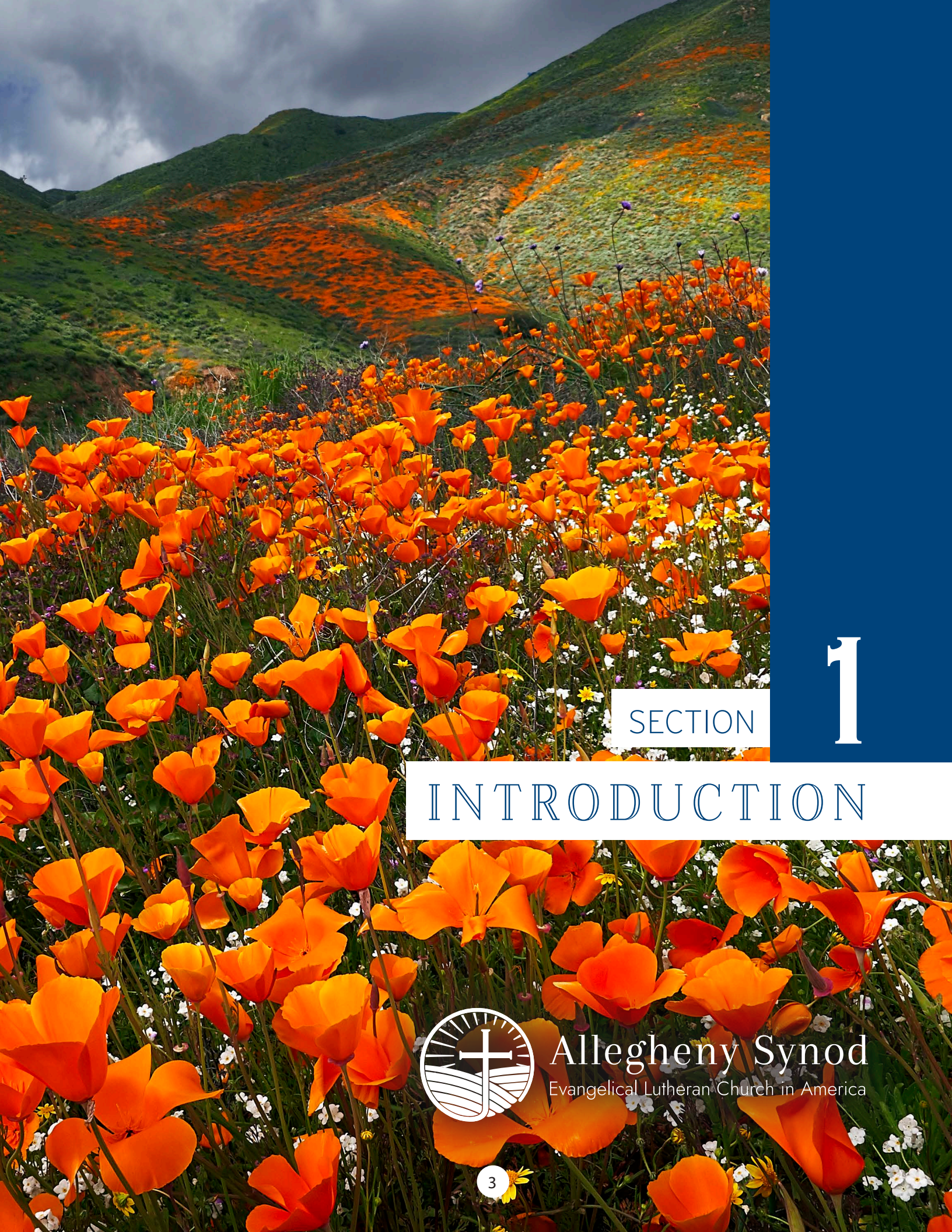
Allegheny Synod

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

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SECTION

1

INTRODUCTION



Allegheny Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

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2024 Allegheny Synod AGENDA

June 15, 2024

- 8:30 am** Opening of Assembly
Morning Prayer
Welcome
2023 Minutes Adopt
Adopt Agenda
Report of Registration
Rules and Procedural Items
Voice and Vote for UCC Pastors and Vicars
Introductions
- 9:20 am** Plenary 1
Report of the Treasurer including Budget Amendment and
Compensation Manual update
Prayer and First Ballot
Report of the Vice President, Ann Ferry
Report of the Secretary, David Finney
Report of the Bishop
Report of the Assistant to the Bishop
Report of the DEM
- Noon** LUNCH
- 1:00 pm** Plenary 2
Report of the First Ballot
Second Ballot
ELCA Synod Assembly Video
Report of Second Ballot
Tend: A Bible Podcast presentation (Bible Study)
Go Tell It In The Mountains Report
Partner Presentations
Report of Second Ballot
- 3: 45 pm** Brief Afternoon Worship with Closing of the Assembly

*Proposed Agenda
4/29/24*

2024 Rules of Procedure for Synod Assembly

The Bishop, chair of the Assembly, shall designate which sections of the auditorium, if any, are reserved for voting members. Microphones will be located in the aisles of these sections for the use of voting members. Visitors shall sit in the sections designated by the chair.

The privilege of voice and vote is extended to all Ministers of Word and Sacrament and Ministers of Word and Service on the roster of the Allegheny Synod, members of Synod Council, and Voting Members from congregations.

The privilege of seat and voice are given to: The Presiding Bishop of the ELCA and any other official representative of the church, recognized lay professional leaders, non-voting members of task forces and committees in connection with their reports, committee chairpersons, representatives of institutions and agencies related to this Synod, representatives of the Allegheny Synodical Women's Organization, Lutheran Men in Mission, and youth of this Synod.

Alternate voting members and visitors are welcome to the Assembly. They shall be seated in sections of the auditorium as directed by the chair of the Assembly. They may be permitted to speak only by a two-thirds vote of the Assembly. They are not permitted to vote.

Those addressing the chair should use a microphone and should state their name and home congregation.

In all plenary sessions, speeches from the floor shall be limited to three minutes. No person shall speak more than twice on the same questions, except by consent of the Assembly. This rule shall not apply to persons presenting a report nor when direct questions are posed to specific individuals for clarification.

All motions, other than routine ones, shall be written in advance by the mover on a form provided for that purpose, signed, and sent to the secretary's desk prior to its presentation. No motion shall be debated on the floor until a written copy is in the hands of the chair.

When there is much discussion on any motion for and against, the chair will recognize alternately persons making pro and con statements.

Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, shall be the governing parliamentary law of this Assembly, except as otherwise provided in the Synod's Constitution and Bylaws. A parliamentarian will be appointed to rule on procedure.

Election Procedure:

IN ALL ELECTIONS:

A majority of the votes cast is needed for election. The names of the persons receiving the highest number of votes, but not elected by a majority of votes cast on the preceding ballot, shall be entered on the next ballot-two in number for each vacancy. For election of Bishop see Synod Constitution S9.04.

Report:

The results of each ballot in every election shall be announced in detail to the Assembly.

1. When constitutional changes are required provisions from the ELCA, the Synod secretary may change the constitution immediately upon formal certification from the Secretary for the Church.
2. When the Churchwide Assembly of the ELCA has amended the model constitution for synods, amendment of the constitution of the Allegheny Synod may reflect such changes by simple majority vote.
3. Other amendments to the Synod Constitution may be adopted by a two-thirds vote at a regular meeting of the Synod Assembly after movement and presentation in writing, with ten signatures at a prior Assembly.

Officers elected at the June Assembly will assume legal responsibility for their office on September 1 following the election.

continued

A Committee on Reference and Counsel shall be appointed by the chair at the opening session of the Assembly. The committee:

- A. Shall receive resolution not germane to matters before the Assembly.
 1. The committee shall review those resolutions and transmit them to the Assembly with one of the following recommendations:
 - that the Assembly consider the resolution. If the committee recommends that the Assembly consider the resolution, the committee may also recommend:
 - that the Assembly pass the resolution;
 - that the Assembly defeat the resolution;
 - that the Assembly amend the resolution in a specified manner.
 - that the Assembly refer the resolution to the Synod Council, a committee of the synod, or some other defined group for its consideration;
 - that the Assembly does not consider the resolution.
 2. shall state its reasons for its recommendations if it recommends anything other than that the Assembly considers the resolution.
 3. Shall determine if a resolution submitted after the pre-assembly deadline is of imminent concern.

Resolutions of imminent concern would include any resolutions pertaining to issues which call for attention or action prior to the next regularly scheduled assembly of this synod.

- B. May edit resolutions and the committee may combine similar resolutions to expedite the work of the assembly, but the committee shall not change the substance of any resolution.
- C. May consult with the author of a resolution and encourage them to take action that would not bring the resolution to the assembly.
- D. In consultation with the chair, shall recommend the order in which resolutions are transmitted to the assembly. Whenever possible, resolutions of a similar nature should be presented consecutively.
- E. May recommend that a resolution be considered as a special order.
- F. May grant or deny permission to distribute printed matter not introduced on the floor of the assembly.
- G. Shall give assistance to the chair as requested by the chair during the assembly.

Anyone wishing to distribute printed matter not introduced on the floor as part of a report to the assembly or as part of the business of the assembly must receive the approval of the Committee on Reference and Counsel before distributing the material.

Proposed amendments to the 2024 Rules of Procedure for Synod Assembly

One of the first matters of business each year at the beginning of Synod Assembly is to Adopt the Rules of Procedure. The previous Secretary of the ELCA Wm Chris Boerger wrote recommendations for adoption of two additions to the Rules of Procedure, both of which are routinely adopted at Churchwide Assembly. A two-thirds (2/3) vote to adopt rules is required, as these items are changes to or additions to Robert's Rules of Order.

- 1. 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.

- 2. 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.

We would ask you to consider both of these articles, as we vote on their adoption at the beginning of the 2024 Synod Assembly.



SECTION

2

WHO'S WHO



Allegheny Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Allegheny Synod Office Staff

Bossler, Mrs. Michelle

Office Manager
814-942-1042 Ext 21
michelle.bossler@alleghenysynod.com

Lebo, Bishop Paula J.

Bishop
814-942-1042 Ext 23
office@alleghenysynod.com

Shock, The Rev. Kevin Shock

Director for Evangelical Mission/Assistant to the Bishop
814-942-1042 Ext 22
kevin.shock@alleghenysynod.com

Spotts, Ms. Sue Ellen

Director for Evangelical Mission
570-898-0255
Sueellen.spotts@elca.org

Allegheny Synod Officers

Ferry, Ms. Ann

Synod Vice President
office@alleghenysynod.com

Finney, Mr. David

Synod Secretary
synodsec814@gmail.com

Nihoff, Mrs. Paula

Synod Treasurer
office@alleghenysynod.com

Congregations of the Allegheny Synod — ELCA

BEDFORD CONFERENCE

Cedar Grove Lutheran Church (201526)

c/o Karen Brambley
107 E. Mattie Road
Breezewood, PA 15533-3751
OFFICE 814-784-5905
ESTABLISHED 1876
In Transition

Christ Lutheran Church (201542)

PO Box 63
Buffalo Mills, PA 15534
OFFICE 814-842-6462
Facebook: Christ Lutheran Madley
ESTABLISHED 1805
Penny Koontz
Vicar

Messiah Lutheran Church (201538)

c/o Gary Sellers
214 Crestview Avenue
Bedford, PA 15522
OFFICE 814-276-3070
stclairsville-lutheranparish.net
ESTABLISHED 1790
David Wright
Pastor

Mt. Olive Lutheran Church (201543)

551 Greenbriar Lane
Buffalo Mills, PA 15534-8856
OFFICE 814-733-2740
pduppstadt@centurylink.net
ESTABLISHED 1824
Penny Koontz
Vicar

Mt. Pleasant Lutheran Church (201529)

c/o Mr. Ivan Smith Jr.
302 E. Mattie Road
Breezewood, PA 15533-8502
OFFICE 814-735-3272
ESTABLISHED 1854
In Transition

Mt. Zion Lutheran Church (201527)

16651 Lincoln Highway
Breezewood, PA 15533
OFFICE 814-735-4884
ESTABLISHED 1835
Judith Simonson
Covenant Pastor

Providence Lutheran Church (201533)

c/o Sue Rose
7737 Bedford Valley Road
Bedford, PA 15522-1391
OFFICE 814-623-9359
ESTABLISHED 1835
Judith Simonson
Vacancy Pastor

St. Peter Lutheran Church (Schellsburg) (201541)

175 Graybill Road
Osterburg, PA 16667-9307
OFFICE 814-276-3070
stclairsville-lutheranparish.net
ESTABLISHED 1819
David Wright
Pastor

Zion Lutheran Church (201530)

c/o Robbie Roland, President
RR 1019 Five Forks Road
Clearville, PA 15535
OFFICE 814-458-2623
ESTABLISHED 1889
In Transition

Zion Lutheran Church (201531)

110 W. Main Street
Everett, PA 15537
OFFICE 814-276-3458
kathycpopp@gmail.com
ESTABLISHED 1842
Kathy Popp
Pastor

BLAIR-HUNTINGDON CONFERENCE

Bethany Lutheran Church (100931)

200 Third Avenue
Altoona, PA 16602-3928
OFFICE 814-944-7560
bethanyelca@atlanticbbn.net
BethanyLutheranChurch.net
ESTABLISHED 1893
J. Andrew McCaffery
Pastor

Cassville Lutheran Church (801225)

c/o Kathie Ramsey
17740 New Fording Rd.
Todd, PA 16685
OFFICE
ESTABLISHED 1806
In Transition

Christ Lutheran Church (800942)

c/o Ms. Brenda Marriner
4088 Evergreen Rd.
Claysburg, PA 16625-7910
OFFICE 814-239-5948
ESTABLISHED 1848
Amanda McCaffery
Vacancy Pastor

Evangelical Lutheran Church (800944)

PO Box 337 • 1200 Fourth Avenue
Duncansville, PA 16635-0337
OFFICE 814-695-0508
dvilleluth@atlanticbbn.net
duncansvillelutheran.com
ESTABLISHED 1846
In Transition

Evangelical Newry Lutheran Church (800952)

PO Box 397 • Newry, PA 16665
OFFICE 814-317-5287
amy4gnlutheran@gmail.com
gnlutheran.org
ESTABLISHED 1801
Marty Jo Invin-Stellabotte
Pastor

First English Lutheran Church (100956)

17 W. 13th Street
Tyrone, PA 16686-1603
OFFICE 814-684-1430
FirstEnglishLutheranTyrone.org
ESTABLISHED 1872
Sharon Erb
Pastor

First Lutheran Church (100933)

1401 Twelfth Avenue • Altoona, PA 16601
OFFICE 814-942-3816
office@firstlutheranaltoona.org
firstlutheranaltoona.org
ESTABLISHED 1805
Barry Folmar
Pastor

Geeseytown Lutheran Church (800945)

462 Route 22 • Hollidaysburg, PA 16648-8470
OFFICE 814-317-5287
amy4gnlutheran@gmail.com • gnlutheran.org
ESTABLISHED 1883
Marty Jo Irvin-Stellabotte
Pastor

Grace Lutheran Church (100940)

1114 N. Cambria Street • Bellwood, PA 16617-1838
OFFICE 814-742-7501
gracelutheranbellwood@yahoo.com
ESTABLISHED 1876
Elizabeth Hess
Vacancy Pastor

Mt. Olivet Lutheran Church (100954)

c/o Darlene Shaffer
236 Reeds Lane • Altoona, PA 16601
OFFICE 814-943-2092
herbakoala@aol.com
ESTABLISHED 1897
In Transition

Mt. Zion Lutheran Church (101496)

PO Box 2 • Glasgow, PA 16639
OFFICE 814-687-4048
ESTABLISHED 1853
Christine Roe
Vacancy Pastor

Mt. Zion Lutheran Church (801226)

c/o Marilyn Powell
9132 Schoolhouse Hollow Rd. • Huntingdon, PA 16652
OFFICE 814-643-3209
mtzionlutheran1@gmail.com
ESTABLISHED 1850
In Transition

Salem Lutheran Church (100941)

c/o Ed Partner
2158 Antis Road • Altoona, PA 16601
OFFICE 814-949-2760
ESTABLISHED 1806
Nancy McCall
Lay Worship Leader

continued

St. James Evangelical Lutheran Church (801216)

525 Mifflin Street • Huntingdon, PA 16652
OFFICE 814-643-4790
stjameslutheran@verizon.net
ESTABLISHED 1804
Brandon Cian
Pastor

St. James Lutheran Church (100935)

1407 Eighth Avenue
Altoona, PA 16602-2407
OFFICE 814-944-6835
stjamesaltoona@gmail.com • StJamesAltoona.com
ESTABLISHED 1860
Drew McCaffery
Covenant Pastor

St. John Lutheran Church (100955)

548 Stevens Hill Road • Tyrone, PA 16686
OFFICE 814-515-2331
ESTABLISHED 1804
In Transition

St. John Lutheran Church (800948)

217 Plum Street • Williamsburg, PA 16693-1146
OFFICE 814-832-3329
wburgluthparish@hotmail.com
ESTABLISHED 1804
Tiffany Marvich
Pastor

St. Luke Lutheran Church (801229)

c/o Mr. John Taliff, Council President
100 South Jefferson St.
Mount Union, PA 17066
OFFICE 814-542-8250
ESTABLISHED 1903
In Transition

St. Luke Lutheran Church (800953)

403 E. Main Street, Roaring Spring, PA 16673-1303
OFFICE 814-224-4116
stluke401@gmail.com
ESTABLISHED 1851
Amanda McCaffery
Pastor

St. Matthew Lutheran Church (800949)

115 E. Penn Street • Martinsburg, PA 16662-1127
OFFICE 814-793-2413
stmatthewmartinsburg@gmail.com
stmatthewlc.com
ESTABLISHED 1832
Traci Marriott
Pastor

St. Matthew's Lutheran Church (801544)

PO Box 413 • James Creek, PA 16657
OFFICE 814-658-3883
ESTABLISHED 1802
Richard Henry
Covenant Pastor

St. Paul Lutheran Church (800943)

130 Mount Pleasant Street • East Freedom, PA 16637
OFFICE 814-695-7503
st.pauls_ef@yahoo.com
ESTABLISHED 1882
In Transition

St. Stephen's Lutheran Church (801218)

4214 McAlevey's Fort Road • Petersburg, PA 16669
OFFICE 814-238-2000
ESTABLISHED 1862
Evelyn Wald
Pastor

Trinity Lutheran Church, Juniata (100939)

408 N. 6th Street • Altoona, PA 16601-5857
OFFICE 814-943-3972
office@trinityaltoona.com
ESTABLISHED 1886
Elizabeth Hess
Pastor

Zion Lutheran Church (800947)

500 Allegheny Street
Hollidaysburg, PA 16648-2015
OFFICE 814-695-0091
office@zionhollidaysburg.org
ESTABLISHED 1803
David Bowman
Pastor

Zion Lutheran Church (801232)

PO Box 253
501 St. Peters Street
Petersburg, PA 16669-0253
OFFICE 814-669-4930
ESTABLISHED 1868
Richard Henry
Covenant Pastor

Zion Lutheran Church (800957)

217 Plum Street
Williamsburg, PA 16693-1146
OFFICE 814-832-3329
wburgluthparish@hotmail.com
ESTABLISHED 1798
Tiffany Marvich
Pastor

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CLEARFIELD CONFERENCE

Faith United Lutheran Church (307390)

511 Mcateer Street
Houtzdale, PA 16651-1201
OFFICE 814-378-5104
faithusec@verizon.net
ESTABLISHED 1883
Christine Roe
Pastor

First Lutheran Church (301504)

PO Box 377
215 Laurel Street
Philipsburg, PA 16866-0377
OFFICE 814-342-1673
dargar01@comcast.net
ESTABLISHED 1882
Christine Roe
Pastor

Grace Lutheran Church (301491)

406 Pine Street
Curwensville, PA 16833-1032
OFFICE 814-236-0590
ESTABLISHED 1899
In Transition

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church (307160)

PO Box 194
Lanse, PA 16849
OFFICE 814-281-3999
holyltrinitylanse@gmail.com
ESTABLISHED 1967
Vicki Beilfuss
Pastor

Olanta Lutheran Church (300950)

9455 Curwensville Tyrone Hwy.
Olanta, PA 16863-8104
OFFICE 814-236-0590
ESTABLISHED 1887
In Transition

Salem Lutheran Church (300951)

c/o Roxie A. Bloom
419 Spruce Street
Clearfield, PA 16830
OFFICE 814-236-0590
ESTABLISHED 1843
In Transition

Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church (301499)

PO Box 65
3637 Main Street
Karthaus, PA 16845
OFFICE 814-263-4505
ESTABLISHED 1854
Vicki Beilfuss
Pastor

St. John Lutheran Church (301489)

PO Box 1454
217 E. Pine Street
Clearfield, PA 16830
OFFICE 814-765-3251
stjohnlutheran217@atlanticbbn.net
ESTABLISHED 1850
In Transition

St. John Lutheran Church (Rockton) (301490)

PO Box 43
Luthersburg, PA 15848-0043
OFFICE 814-583-7552
stpeterstjohn@gmail.com
stjohn.rockton.tripod.com
ESTABLISHED 1875
In Transition

St. Peter Lutheran Church (301501)

PO Box 43
Luthersburg, PA 15848-0043
OFFICE 814-583-7552
stpeterstjohn@gmail.com
stpeters.luthersburg.tripod.com
ESTABLISHED 1840
In Transition

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JOHNSTOWN CONFERENCE

Christ Lutheran Church (401130)

337 Elknud Lane • Johnstown, PA 15905-2603
OFFICE 814-255-1395
christlutheranchurchjohnstown@gmail.com
ESTABLISHED 1942
In Transition

First Lutheran Church (401131)

415 Vine Street • Johnstown, PA 15901-1996
OFFICE 814-536-7521
firstlutheran@wpia.net • firstlutheran.info
ESTABLISHED 1830
Christy Harford
Vicar

First Lutheran Church (401141)

PO Box 245 • 906 Caldwell Avenue
Portage, PA 15946-0245
OFFICE 814-736-3662
ESTABLISHED 1872
In Transition

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church (430728)

514 Shady Lane • Windber, PA 15963-1324
OFFICE 814-467-4227
windberlutherans@verizon.net
ESTABLISHED 1913
Doug Knupp
Interim Pastor

Grace Lutheran Church (401132)

246 Chandler Avenue • Johnstown, PA 15906-2199
OFFICE 814-536-8298
glcjohnstown.org
ESTABLISHED 1892
Nancy Hoover
Pastor

Moxham Lutheran Church (401134)

500 Park Avenue • Johnstown, PA 15902-2616
OFFICE 814-539-8664
office@moxhamlutheran.org
moxhamlutheran.org
ESTABLISHED 1907
Rebecca West
Pastor

Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church (401133)

1000 Scalp Avenue • Johnstown, PA 15904-3035
OFFICE 814-266-4859
mtcalvary@mt-calvarylutheran.org
mt-calvarylutheran.org
ESTABLISHED 1944
In Transition

St. David's Lutheran Church (401129)

PO Box 427 • 401 N Main St
Davidsville, PA 15928
OFFICE 814-479-4110
secretary@stdavidslutheran.org
stdavidslutheran.org
ESTABLISHED 1839
Mark Fischer
Interim Pastor

St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church (401146)

PO Box 264 • Main & Croyle Streets
Summerhill, PA 15958-9999
OFFICE 814-264-4526
ESTABLISHED 1832
Jennifer Bobolsky
Vicar

St. Luke Lutheran Church (401139)

604 Cleveland Street
Lilly, PA 15938-1010
OFFICE 814-886-2222
ESTABLISHED 1873
In Transition

St. Paul's Luth. Church, Mundys Corner (401140)

3328 William Penn Avenue
Johnstown, PA 15909-9703
OFFICE 814-322-1307
stpaulsmc@atlanticbbn.net
stpaulsevluth-mc.com
ESTABLISHED 1858
Jennifer Bobolsky
Vicar

Trinity Lutheran Church (401145)

PO Box 156
121 Forest Hills Drive
Sidman, PA 15955-0156
OFFICE 814-487-7950
trinitylutheransidman@gmail.com
ESTABLISHED 1901
Claudia Plows
Vicar

Zion Lutheran Church (401137)

613 Locust Street
Johnstown, PA 15901-2174
OFFICE 814-535-2050
office@zionjohnstown.org
zionjohnstown.org
ESTABLISHED 1852
Michael Van Dyke
Pastor

continued

LAUREL HIGHLANDS CONFERENCE

Benscreek Lutheran Church (601128)

4459 Somerset Pike
Hollsopple, PA 15935-9334
OFFICE 814-479-7013
bensluth@atlanticbbn.net
ESTABLISHED 1897
Christy Harford
Vicar

Christ Casebeer Lutheran Church (601340)

10377 Somerset Pike
Somerset, PA 15501-7301
OFFICE 814-445-4935
casebeerchurch@gmail.com
ESTABLISHED 1845
Allen Stump
Vicar

Christ Lutheran Church (701364)

PO Box 127 • 104 Union Street
Salisbury, PA 15558-0127
OFFICE 301-276-1811
SalisburyLutheran.com
ESTABLISHED 1856
Tyler Graham
Pastor

Faith Lutheran Church (707233)

6567 Glades Pike
Somerset, PA 15501
OFFICE 814-443-3179
flc15501@gmail.com
FaithLutheranSomerset.org
ESTABLISHED 1839
Kathleen Stump
Pastor

Friedens Lutheran Church (601342)

131 S. Main Street
Friedens, PA 15541
OFFICE 814-445-4627
friedenslutheranchurch@gmail.com
friedenslutheranchurch.com
ESTABLISHED 1789
John Barichivich
Pastor

Graef's Lutheran Church (601339)

PO Box 38 • Cairnbrook, PA 15924-0038
OFFICE 814-754-1049
ESTABLISHED 1872
Jeffrey Bassette
Vacancy Pastor

Greenville Evangelical Lutheran Church (701365)

PO Box 127
104 Union Street
Salisbury, PA 15558-0127
OFFICE 814-662-9100
SalisburyLutheran.com
ESTABLISHED 1803
Tyler Graham
Pastor

Horner Lutheran Church (601372)

415 Horner Church Rd.
Stoystown, PA 15563
OFFICE 814-629-9619
hornerhoffman.org
ESTABLISHED 1835
Regina Holliday
Pastor

Laurel Trinity Lutheran Church (601550)

PO Box 185
Route 985
Jennerstown, PA 15547-0185
OFFICE 814-629-9288
laureltrinity1974@gmail.com
lutheransonline.com/laureltrinity
ESTABLISHED 1840
Allen Stump
Vicar

Messiah Evangelical Lutheran Church (701357)

PO Box 126
Rockwood, PA 15557-0126
OFFICE 814-926-2215
nclutheran@zoominternet.net
newcentervillelutheran.org
ESTABLISHED 1793
Ed DeVore
Vacancy Pastor
Josh Spangler
Vicar

Mt. Calvary Luth. Church-Lavansville (701353)

3093 Glades Pike
Somerset, PA 15501-8065
OFFICE 814-443-3965
lvbkoffice@yahoo.com
lvparish.com
ESTABLISHED 1846
Ed DeVore
Vacancy Pastor
Josh Spangler
Vicar

continued

Mt. Carmel Lutheran Church (701375)

218 Olinger Street
Meyersdale, PA 15552
OFFICE 814-634-9345
mtcarmel@mountainsaintslutheran.org
mountainsaintslutheran.org
ESTABLISHED 1840
Glenn Foster
Pastor

Mt. Tabor Lutheran Church (701344)

218 Olinger Street • Meyersdale, PA 15552
OFFICE 814-634-9345
mttabor@mountainsaintslutheran.org
mountainsaintslutheran.org
ESTABLISHED 1871
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Samuel Lutheran Church (701359)

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newcentervillelutheran.org
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Vacancy Pastor
Josh Spangler
Vicar

St. Andrew Lutheran Church (601352)

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ESTABLISHED 1903
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218 Olinger St. • Meyersdale, PA 15552
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stjohn@mountainsaintslutheran.org
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ESTABLISHED 1813
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St. John Lutheran Church (701366)

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SalisburyLutheran.com
ESTABLISHED 1789
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PO Box 130
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Vacancy Pastor

St. Michael Lutheran Church (701345)

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ESTABLISHED 1787
Robert Thomas
Lay Worship Leader

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Vicar

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Trinity Lutheran Church (701337)

PO Box 64
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ESTABLISHED 1870
In Transition

Trinity Lutheran Church (701370)

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Zion Hoffman Lutheran Church (601373)

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 hornerhoffman.org
 ESTABLISHED 1814
 In Transition

Zion Lutheran Church (701356)

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 Warriors Mark, PA 16877
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Gloria De Dios (531365)

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 ESTABLISHED 2020
 In Transition

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continued

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SECTION

3

REPORTS



Allegheny Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

REPORTS OF THE BISHOP & STAFF

BISHOP'S REPORT

2024 ALLEGHENY SYNOD ASSEMBLY



BISHOP PAULA LEBO

This past year, we were awarded a significant grant from the Lilly Endowment in their Compelling Preaching Initiative in partnership with the Northwestern PA Synod and the Upper Susquehanna Synod. The theme of our Assembly is the title of the proposal submitted for the grant: Go Tell It IN The Mountains. It is an exciting proposal to develop and distribute resources for preaching and faith formation throughout three synodical territories. The steering committee began it's work back in February and has been hard at work searching for a Director for the initiative as well as forming committees and preparing a needs assessment.

We welcomed Sue Ellen Spotts as the shared Director for Evangelical Mission (DEM) to the Allegheny Synod and the Upper Susquehanna Synod. Sue Ellen has been a gift to our staff and has undertaken the task of meeting with groups of congregations who are considering new models of ministry and possible realignment of partnerships.

We gave thanks for the work of our former treasurer, Bill Layton and welcomed Paula Nihoff to serve as the treasurer of the Allegheny Synod. The Synod Council unanimously approved of her appointment and she began her duties in January. We give thanks for her willingness to step into this role and pray for Bill as he enjoys retirement.

We celebrated together at ordinations of Laura Waltermire, Regina Holliday, Ted Williams and look forward to the upcoming ordination of Allen Stump. Pastor Laura graduated from Wartburg Seminary in Iowa and returned home to the Allegheny Synod, where she had

been a member of Messiah Lutheran in New Centerville. She was called to serve St. Mark in Pleasant Gap. Pastor Regina graduated from United Lutheran Seminary's Certificate in Theological Studies program and was called to serve Horner Lutheran Church in Somerset. Pastor Ted graduated from Luther Seminary and was called to Gatesburg and Pine Hall Lutheran Churches in the Nittany Conference. Vicar Allen graduated from United Lutheran Seminary's Certificate in Theological Studies program and is serving Christ Casebeer and Laurel Trinity Lutheran Churches in Somerset. We give thanks to God for the gifts of these pastors and look forward to the ways they will bless this Synod and this Church.

This past year we regretfully bid farewell to St. Paul Lutheran in Stoystown and St. John Lutheran in Sinking Valley as they made the decision to disaffiliate from the ELCA. We continue to pray that they will thrive in their new denominational home. As well, in the last year two rostered ministers requested to be removed from the roster of the ELCA. Pastor Brent Book and Pastor Kevin McNamara both sent requests to the Allegheny Synod Council requesting to be removed from the roster as they embark on other ventures. We continue to pray for them as they move in new directions.

One congregation made the difficult, but faithful choice to close. St. Luke, Rockwood ended its ministry as a congregation at the end of 2023. Their building and parsonage are now occupied with new residents. Deciding to close is never an easy task. I am thankful for the wise discernment of the congregation council at St. Luke.

Our hearts were broken when we learned of the deaths of Pastor Denise Arpino, Pastor Linda McElroy Thomas, Pastor Ed Harshbarger and Pastor Bob Kaltenbaugh. At each of their memorial services we were reminded of their dedicated lives of service to the Church and gave thanks for the ways each of them touched the lives of so many in this Synod and in others.

We continue to nurture the partnership we have with the Upper Susquehanna and Northwestern PA Synod for tri-Synodical learning for those interested in becoming lay worship leaders. Our Synod authorized six new lay worship leaders who were trained in this new model: Ben Hoffman (Shepherd of the Hills, Karthus), Christine Frazier (St. Peter's, Osterburg), Sally Shaulis, (Christ, Grantsville, MD), Marsha Hutzell (Evangelical, Greenville), Scott Lantz (Geeseytown-Newry Lutheran Parish) and Rick Focht (St. Luke, Roaring Spring). We give thanks for these new leaders and those who are in the process of being trained. If you feel the Holy Spirit calling you to a new kind of ministry in your congregation, be in contact for information about new classes that are forming.

I ended my term as the Region 8 Bishop liaison to the ELCA Church Council. Bishop Dunlop from the Lower Susquehanna Synod has assumed this role for our region. I continue to serve on the Region 8 Steering Committee. The Committee meets annually and looks for ways that we can share resources and support each other in the work we are called to do individually and in partnership. The staff members of the Allegheny, Southwestern PA and Northwestern PA Synods met together to discuss how we might do ministry across Synod lines.

I serve on the board of our partner ministries, Allegheny Lutheran Social Ministries and Camp Sequanota. I give thanks for the dedicated leadership of both of those organizations and for the ways they contribute to our life together. Allegheny Lutheran Social Ministries welcomed Mr. Chris Reighard to serve as their CEO. Chris has a long history with the organization as the Chief Financial Officer and has stepped into his new role with enthusiasm.

Camp Sequanota staff and a group of leaders in our Synod have partnered to form the Faith Formation Team. This team has been actively engaging youth and young

adults for retreats, youth events, mission trips and other opportunities to nurture their faith. They worked together to write The Book which has been a wonderful addition to the devotional life of our Synod. Work has begun on the next edition of The Book as the Team plans for another synod youth event.

Our Allegheny Synod Office will be moving in the coming months to The Lutheran Home in Hollidaysburg—one of our partner ministries. Our phone number and e-mail addresses will remain the same. As we embark on this new journey, we look forward to expanding our care for creation by digitizing our files and moving toward a mostly electronic way of supporting you and your ministries.

I am deeply grateful for Pastor Kevin, Michelle and Sue Ellen and the gifts they share with our Synod. I look forward to the ways we will become more focused on our mission to invite people to love one another and live into the gracious welcome of our Lord.

+Bishop Paula

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT TO THE BISHOP

2024 ALLEGHENY SYNOD ASSEMBLY



REV. KEVIN T. SHOCK

As I looked over my reports for the previous two assemblies, I realize that change and adaptation are constant in our shared ministry. The truth is really that change is a constant and that adaptation is a healthy way to deal with change. Most days I pray that adaptation were more constant in the church, but I also give thanks for even the small ways that Spirit-led adaptation is happening in the Allegheny Synod. Last year Synod Assembly, in collaboration with the Upper Susquehanna Synod Assembly, voted to adapt for the sake of better meeting our ministry needs in this region. That vote led to the hiring of our shared DEM, Sue Ellen, and the opportunity for me to move fully into the Assistant to the Bishop role.

Last year my report included much commentary as to how I was continuing, along with Bishop Paula, to define responsibilities and priorities as DEM and Assistant to the Bishop. Since last year my responsibilities have become more defined, yet I have still spent much time learning the specifics of those responsibilities. I spend much more time working with candidates for ministry and filling out paperwork for the Candidacy Committee on their behalf. I also work more closely with the mobility process, which means that I also work more closely with congregations and parishes that are going through the transition process. In addition I work on leadership ministries for the Synod. In ongoing conversation with Bishop Paula and our clergy I am learning how best to support pastors and deacons on our roster, and yet we are also realizing that this role means equipping and training lay leaders for various ministries in congregations and beyond throughout our Synod. I pray that the work I do holds up to the standard set in my title, that engaging in this ministry in our Synod assists Bishop Paula and allows her more freedom to engage in ministries and initiatives that will help us to grow together, to adapt more readily, and to invite people to love one another in the name of Jesus Christ. I am grateful for the working relationship that Bishop Paula, Sue Ellen, Michelle, and I share. Even when the things we rely on for our ministry feel less certain and as our church body makes movement into uncharted territory, I feel consistently supported, affirmed, and challenged in my ministry, thanks primarily to the staff in the Office of the Bishop.

I am also grateful for the people in congregations and ministries throughout, and in partnership with, the Allegheny Synod who are working toward adaptive ministry. The big-letter-C Change that we have been talking about, and around, for the past three decades or more is no longer on the horizon. We are wading through the thick of it right now. Some parts of the church of Christ do their best to continue faithfully in the way that they have done ministry for as long as they can remember. Other people in the church are recognizing that the way they have been traversing faithfully for generations is no longer as effective at inviting people into Christ's presence or engaging people into the various ministries we have been given by the grace of God in Christ. With the Spirit's help and with our partnership and accompaniment in the Office of the Bishop they are seeking the Way of Jesus as it flows through their community. They are finding new responsibilities and priorities, not just for their current or future pastor or lay leader to do, but for them to take ownership of themselves.

One thing that brings me some joy and humor in this ministry is that the people who apologize for "bothering" me with their many phone calls and text notifications are always the people who are looking to traverse the new way that the Spirit is laying out before them. Their communication is never a bother to me. It is evidence of the Spirit speaking to more than just one person and of their willingness to engage in the partnership of ministry.

I end this report with a simple request: "bother" me more. Although we may have fooled ourselves into believing at one time that we have ministry figured out, we are still figuring it out together. It's not just the Office of the Bishop or pastors or deacons or this Synod Assembly who have been given this task of figuring ministry out; it's all of us in the body of Christ. That means it's both people who are in our congregations and the people who Jesus is in the process of calling into our congregations. "Bother" me more, and "bother" one another more, so with the Holy Spirit we can work on figuring out ministry together.

In the peace of Christ,

The Rev. Kevin T. Shock
Assistant to the Bishop

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR FOR EVANGELICAL MISSION

2024 ALLEGHENY SYNOD ASSEMBLY

*"I am about to do a new thing;
now it springs forth; do you not perceive it?"*

—ISAIAH 43:19

This verse from Isaiah has sprung to mind more than once since I began this position as Director for Evangelical Mission. There are many new things at work.

This position is new to me, though I spent time prior to this involved in congregational vitality ministry in Maryland.

Though the Allegheny Synod has had DEMs for many years, it is new to share the position with the Upper Susquehanna Synod.

There are a lot of new names for me to learn; new people and congregations to meet; new roads to travel...and a new camp to get to know (I love our Lutheran camps!).

But the new thing which causes both excitement and trepidation for me is the changing shape of the church. For those of us who grew up in or have been long time members of the church, the experience has very specific elements and expectations. We gather on Sunday, in a building (usually with pews, sometimes with chairs), to follow a liturgy, led by a pastor. The offerings which we collect from the members provide the finances for upkeep of the building; salary for the pastor; support of program, service projects, and supplies. We have traditions that we anticipate each year and remember fondly through the years. And through the seasons of life, the church anchors us.

Until now.

Now, for many of us, the pews are sparsely filled on a Sunday. We may not even have enough people for Sunday School classes. Perhaps we haven't had our own pastor—or any pastor at all—for quite a while. If we have a pastor, they are often called on to assist other congregations without one. Not only have our young people left the area and started lives in other places, our retired members are also leaving the area. Even if we seem stable or are growing,

what is emerging doesn't look—or sometimes feel—like the church we have always known. New things are at work, but they can feel strange and discomfiting. It is not easy to perceive the presence of God in the midst of it all.

Into this landscape we can hear the words from Joshua 1:9, "Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go." How the church looks may be changing, but God's promise to be present with us has not changed. Most of my life I have heard Christians described as "*in, not of the world.*" If people are not filling the walls of our buildings, we might ask where they are, what Good News they need to hear, and then take it to them. We need to be brave and bold as we explore Christian mission "*of, not necessarily in the church (building).*"

That's what excites me, as your DEM. Perceiving and exploring with you new ways to take the Good News of Christ's love into the world. Our anchor has always been the Gospel, not the buildings in which we gathered to hear it. I am excited to be among you, and to work alongside you in the evangelical mission into which we are baptized and called.

Recently, a friend shared a prayer of Fr. Pedro Arrupe, a twentieth century Jesuit priest. I have found insight and encouragement in its words, and so I share it with you:

*"Grant me, O Lord, to see everything
now with new eyes,
to discern and test the spirits
that help me read the signs of the times,
to relish the things that are yours and
to communicate them to others."*

In thanksgiving for the opportunity to be in mission with you, in the new thing which God is doing in the Allegheny Synod.

Sue Ellen

SYNOD SNAPSHOTS



Photo details on page 60.



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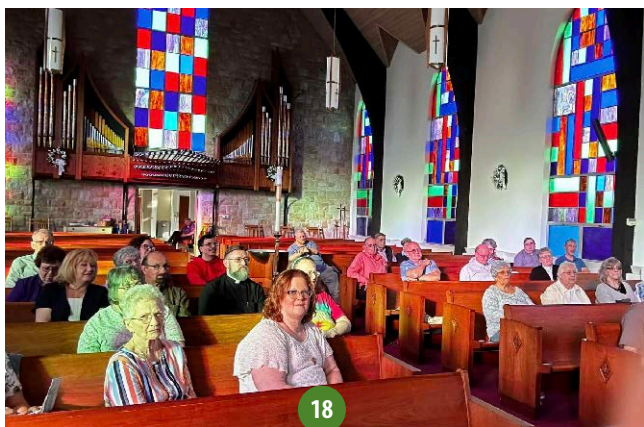
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REPORTS OF THE ELCA

Report of the Presiding Bishop



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

*"We have known and believe
the love that God has for us.
God is love,
and those who abide in love
abide in God,
and God abides in them"*

(1 JOHN 4:16).

Dear friends in Christ,

Thank you for your faithful and continuing partnership as we work together to help people discover the difference God's grace and love in Christ make for all people and creation.

Because God's grace and love have made a difference in our daily lives, we want others to experience that same love and acceptance. There are many in our communities who feel alone and are searching for love and connection. Sometimes we feel at a loss to know how to make a difference — what do we say, what can we do, how do we share God's love?

You share this love every day. When you invite others to join in your faith community, to worship, to participate in service activities, to pray together, to share their story — these are all ways our neighbors experience the love of God in community.

There are examples of God's love throughout our church as we work for healing, peace and justice to make a difference in the lives of those around us.

The Spirit is calling us to move together as one church to share the grace and love we experience every day. May God bless your time together.

In Christ,



The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton
Presiding Bishop

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ELCA Foundation

Updates from the ELCA Foundation | Synod Assemblies 2024

The ELCA Foundation doesn't just envision a future; it's building one where intentional generosity and stewardship have allowed the mission and ministry of the ELCA to grow beyond our expectations. Our goal is to create a vibrant culture where intentional giving fuels the expansion of the ELCA's work in the US and around the world.

We're on a mission to grow ELCA ministries by empowering individuals, congregations, synods, and other entities with the tools they need to maximize their financial potential.

But what does that mean for you?

Imagine having a trusted partner who not only helps you navigate the complexities of gift planning and administration but also provides expert guidance on how to invest in the future of your ministry. That's where the ELCA Foundation steps in.

Whether you're considering leaving a legacy through an endowment, navigating estate planning, or exploring creative ways to support your congregation, we're here to make the process seamless and straightforward. Best of all, our gift planning services are completely free for you and your ministry.

Ready to take the next step in growing your congregation's culture of giving? Connect with your local ELCA Foundation representative today and discover how together we can make a lasting impact. Visit Foundation.ELCA.org to get started.

2023 AT A GLANCE

Our gift planning network walked alongside **203 donors/families** in developing their gift plans, which resulted in **\$62.5 million** in future planned-gift commitments. **More than \$17 million** of this will go to provide direct support to individual ELCA congregations.

The network generated **\$116.3 million** in total gifts and investment assets. This includes new planned-gift commitments, **\$8.8 million in current gifts**, including funded trusts, gift annuities and individual endowments, and **\$45 million in new assets** invested in the Ministry Growth Fund.

CONTACT YOUR REGIONAL GIFT PLANNER:

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REPORTS OF THE SYNOD COUNCIL

Report of Synod Council Actions

July 2023 – May 2024

July 2023

Upon motion by Gary Gable, seconded by Pr. Marty Jo

- **SC23.07.01** - to adopt the agenda for today's meeting... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Pr. Ralph Hamer, seconded by Gary Gable

- **SC23.07.02** - to adopt the minutes of the May 2023 Synod Council meeting as presented... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Pr. Ralph Hamer, seconded by Timothy Albright

- **SC23.07.03** – that Gary Gable be elected (*as per SC23.01.01*) to the Executive Committee for the remainder of his second 3-year synod council term (*thru June 2024*)... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Pr. Nancy Hoover, seconded by Pr. Amanda McCaffrey

- **SC23.07.04** – to adopt the wording for the following **Statements**... the motion is adopted
 - **Mission Statement** – *Inviting People to Love One Another*
 - **Vision Statement** – *All Creation Living in Harmony with Christ*

September 2023

Upon motion by Michele Peese, seconded by Joyce Long

- **SC23.09.01** - to adopt the agenda for today's meeting... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Andrea Paul, seconded by Tim Albright

- **SC23.09.02** - to adopt the minutes of the July 2023 Synod Council meeting as presented... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Pr. Ralph Hamer, seconded by Joyce Long

- **SC23.09.03** – that the Rev. Jamie Olson be granted *On Leave from Call* status, effective August 27, 2023... the motion is adopted

November 2023

Upon motion by Gary Gable, seconded by Tim Albright

- **SC23.11.01** - to adopt the agenda for today's meeting... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Andrea Paul, seconded by Pr. Marty Jo Irvin-Stellabotte

- **SC23.11.02** - to adopt the minutes of the September 2023 Synod Council meeting as presented... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Pr. Nancy Hoover, seconded by Tim Albright

continued

- **SC23.11.03** – that the sum of \$16,000 be distributed to those eligible seminarians & leaders identified by the Office of the Bishop, as per continuing resolution **S15.40.A18**... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Andrea Paul, seconded by Joyce Long

- **SC23.11.04** - to appoint Paula Nihoff to a 4-year term as Treasurer of the Allegheny Synod, effective January 1, 2024... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Bishop Paula Schmitt, seconded by Pr. Ralph Hamer

- **SC23.11.05** – that the Rev. Kevin McNamara be granted Retired status on the rosters of the Allegheny Synod & the ELCA effective November 15, 2023... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Bishop Paula Schmitt, seconded by Pr. Amanda McCaffery

- **SC23.11.06.** – to affirm the call of Sue Ellen Spotts as shared Director of Evangelical Mission of the Allegheny Synod & the Upper Susquehanna Synod... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Bishop Paula Schmitt, seconded by Gary Gable

- **SC23.11.07** – to extend a call to the Rev. Kevin Shock, to serve as full-time Assistant to the Bishop of the Allegheny Synod, coterminous with the term of Bishop Paula Schmitt... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Bishop Paula Schmitt, seconded by Pr. Ralph Hamer

- **SC23.12.08** – the affirm the second vote of St. Paul, Buckstown to terminate their relationship with the ELCA... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Bishop Paula Schmitt, seconded by Tim Albright

- **SC23.11.09** - approve Portico Benefits Gold+ plan for all Rostered Ministers of the Allegheny Synod & the Synod Staff... the motion is adopted

January 2024

Upon motion by Gary Gable, seconded by Michele Peese

- **SC24.01.01** - to adopt the agenda for today's meeting... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Tim Albright, seconded by Pr. Ralph Hamer

- **SC24.01.02** - to adopt the minutes of the November 2023 Synod Council meeting as presented... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Pr. Becky Horn, seconded by Gary Gable

- **SC24.01.03** – that Bishop Paula Schmitt, William Layton, Ann Ferry & Paula Nihoff be approved as signers for the Allegheny Synod checking account for 2024

Upon motion by Pr. Amanda McCaffrey, seconded by Tim Albright

- **SC24.01.04** – to approve the algorithm for defined compensation for Synod Staff ((base salary + years of experience) x premium for synod office) + SS offset = Defined Compensation.... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Bishop Paula, seconded by Pr. Amanda McCaffrey

- **SC24.01.05** – to approve the Articles of Agreement for Laurel Mountain Lutherans, the Salisbury Parish & to approve the bylaws for Brush Valley Fusion of Faith... the motion is adopted

March 2024

Upon motion by Gary Gable, seconded by Timothy Albright

- **SC24.03.01** – to adopt the agenda for today's meeting... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Pr. Amanda McCaffrey, seconded by Michele Peese

- **SC24.03.02** – to adopt the minutes of the January 2024 Synod Council meeting as amended... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Pr. Becky Horn, seconded by Pr. Amanda McCaffrey

- **SC24.03.03** – The Allegheny Synod authorizes the following ministries that are continuing as Synod Authorized Worshiping Communities in 2024... the motion is adopted
 - Gloria De Dios – Pr. Paul Tomkiel, leader
 - Grace Delivered
 - United Lutheran Seminary
 - Global Refuge
 - The ELCA Foundation

Upon motion by Pr. Amanda McCaffrey, seconded by Pr. Marty Jo Irvin-Stellabotte

- **SC24.03.04** – to remove the Rev. Kevin McNamara from the roster of the ELCA at his request, effective March 16, 2024... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Timothy Albright, seconded by Pr. Amanda McCaffrey

- **SC24.03.05** – that the Allegheny Synod Office will relocate to the Lutheran Home at Hollidaysburg (ALSM)... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Pr. Amanda McCaffrey, seconded by Joyce Long

- **SC24.03.06** – to adopt the proposed Investment Policy Statement (parts 1-10 inclusive) & convey this document to the 2024 Synod Assembly... the motion is adopted

May 2024

Upon motion by Tim Albright, second by Pr. Marty Jo Irvin-Stellabotte

- **SC24.05.01** – to adopt the agenda for today's meeting... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Gary Gable, seconded by Pr. Amanda McCaffery

- **SC24.05.02** – to adopt the minutes of the March 2024 Synod Council meeting... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Tim Albright, seconded by Gary Gable

- **SC24.05.03** – to amend the proposed 2024-25 synod budget relative to Synod mission support levels, the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Bishop Lebo, seconded by Tim Albright

- **SC24.05.04** – to convey the Compensation & Benefits Manual to the 2024 Synod Assembly, along with the recommendation to adopt ... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Gary Gable, seconded by Tim Albright

- **SC24.05.05** – to convey the 2025-26 Fiscal Year Budget to the 2024 Synod Assembly along with the recommendation to adopt ... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Bishop Lebo, seconded by Pr. Amanda McCaffery

- **SC24.05.06** – to remove the Rev. Brent Book from the roster of the ELCA at his request, effective June 16, 2024.

Upon motion by Andrea Paul, seconded by Pr. Marty Jo Irvin-Stellabotte

- **SC24.05.07** – to approve the pastoral roster & the congregational roster... the motion is adopted.

2024 Report of the Secretary of the Allegheny Synod

Dave Finney

I greet you all on the occasion of my final Allegheny Synod Assembly.

My three sequential terms have spanned 2012–2016, 2016–2021, 2021–2024.

During the last 12-years, the Allegheny Synod has been dutifully served by...

- 3 Bishops – Bishop Pile, Bishop Rhyne, Bishop Lebo
- 4 VPs – Spence Garvin, Sam Clapper, Gary Gable, Ann Ferry
- 4 Treasurers – Todd Hammaker, Vicki Hrivnak, Bill Layton, Paula Nihoff
- 1 Secretary – Dave Finney

Being the longest serving officer of the Allegheny Synod in this modern era, I have been grateful for your support during this historic span and I am pleased to embrace the status of *Tenure*, along with all of the rights and privileges appertaining thereto.

My wife Michelle and I moved to Johnstown in 2006, to better care for my parents, Pastor Dave & Betty Lou Finney. Pastor passed away in July of 2012, Betty Lou passed away in March of 2016 and my younger sister Betsy unexpectedly passed away in January of 2017. So the family I came home to be with and care for have all passed from this life.

Later this summer, I will be retiring from the University of Pittsburgh–Johnstown. Michelle & I will be moving to Taylor County in northern West Virginia, to begin our new lives with Michelle's large extended family.

Lutherans are few and far-between in the hills and valleys of West Virginia. There is only one ELCA congregation in Morgantown, one in Fairmont and one in Clarksburg. Despite the shortage of Lutherans, I'm looking forward to beginning my retirement life with family and new friends found in the West Virginia/Western Maryland Synod 8H.

I will miss my church family at St. David's and I will miss seeing all of your smiling faces every year in June.

Godspeed friends... thank you for all of the wonderful memories.

Dave Finney, MBA/MPPM
Secretary, Allegheny Synod-ELCA
SynodSec814@gmail.com

Minutes of the 35th Allegheny Synod Assembly

June 17, 2023
Blair County Convention Center
Christ Unites Us

Welcome

Bishop Paula Schmitt opened the 34th Allegheny Synod Assembly at 8:42 AM

Report of Registration/Quorum

Delegate Count

Clergy	50
Deacon	1
Vicars.....	4
Laity	
Male.....	37
Female.....	61
Officers	4
Synod Council	3
Total Delegate Count ¹	160
Visitors.....	23
Total Present.....	183

Adoption of the 2022 Minutes, the Agenda & the Rules

Upon motion by Gary Gable, seconded by Dr. Jim Lakso

- **SA23.06.01** - to adopt the minutes of the 2022 Allegheny Synod Assembly as presented... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Bishop Schmitt, seconded by Pr. Bob Way

- **SA23.06.02** – to adopt the agenda for the 2023 Allegheny Synod Assembly... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Pr. Ralph Hamer, seconded by Pr. David Bowman

- **SA23.06.03** – to adopt the Rules of Procedure for the Allegheny Synod Assembly ... the motion is adopted (2023 *Bulletin of Reports* - pages 7 & 8)

1 In accordance with provision **57.14** of the Allegheny Synod Constitution, a quorum is deemed to be present

continued

Upon motion by Vice President Ann Ferry, seconded by Pr. Paul Tomkiel

- **SA23.06.04** - To extend voice & vote for the 2023 Allegheny Synod Assembly, to the UCC clergy & the ELCA Vicars... the motion is adopted
 - UCC Pastor Julie Holm – St. Peter’s, Rebersburg
 - UCC Pastor Dick Henry – Zion, Petersburg & St. Matthew, Marklesburg
 - Vicar Penny Koontz – Mt. Olive, Fairhope & Christ, Buffalo Mills
 - Vicar Allen Stump – Christ Casebeer & Laurel Trinity, Jennerstown
 - Vicar Regina Holliday – Trinity & Horner, Somerset
 - Vicar Christy Harford – Trinity, Sidman
 - Vicar Ted Williams – St. Mark, Pleasant Gap

Introductions

- Mr. Chris Reighard – Interim CEO Allegheny Lutheran Social Ministries
- Kirsten Opalinski – ELCA manager for ecumenical and inter-religious relations
- Synod Officers – VP Ann Ferry, Treasurer Bill Layton, Secretary Dave Finney
- Attorney Mark D. Persun - Synod Assembly Parliamentarian
- Pr. Kevin Shock - Assistant to the Bishop/DEM
- Michelle Bossler - Allegheny Synod Office Manager
- Jeanne Fleegele - Assembly Committee Chair
- Pr. Ron Miller – Chair of Reference & Counsel Committee
- Pr. Will Osman & Bill Nihoff – IT

Report of the Synod Treasurer – Bill Layton

3 items (*2023 Bulletin of Reports, page 62 - 66*)

- The Completed Audit – we received an unqualified audit report (*this is a good thing*)
- The Budget Report is summarized into 4 separate columns
 - *Column 1*: To amend the current fiscal year budget (2023-24) by amending several calculation errors.
 - *Column 2*: To adopt the fiscal year 2024-25 proposed spending plan & to authorize the Synod Council to enter into conversation with the Upper Susquehanna Synod to call a shared Director of Evangelical Mission.
 - *If the vote is in the affirmative* – we will consider the 2024-25 proposed spending plan in *Column 4*.
 - *If the vote is in the negative* – we will consider the 2024-25 proposed spending plan in *Column 3*.
 - *See the end notes of these minutes for budget details*
- Compensation & Benefits Manual 2024 (*2023 Bulletin of Reports, page 69 - 87*)

continued

MINUTES OF THE 2023 ASSEMBLY OF THE ALLEGHENY SYNOD

The First Ballot – will consider nominations for Synod Council, the Discipline Committee, the Consultation committee & the Mission Endowment Committee.

Report of the First Ballot

Q1 – Synod Council (lay female) 3-year term, elect 1

- 156 number of valid ballots, 79 minimum to elect
 - Michele Peese – 156 votes (100%)
- Michele Peese is elected to a 3-year term on Synod Council

Q2 – Synod Council (lay male) 3-year term, elect 1

- 157 number of valid ballots, 79 minimum to elect
 - Timothy Albright – 157 votes (100%)
- Timothy Albright is elected to a 3-year term on Synod Council

Q3 – Synod Council (clergy) 3-year term, elect 1

- 157 number of valid ballots, 79 minimum to elect
 - Rev. Ralph Hamer – 157 votes (100%)
- Rev. Ralph Hamer is elected to a 3-year term on Synod Council

Q4 – Synod Council (lay male)- 2-year term, elect 1

- 156 number of valid ballots, 79 minimum to elect
 - Timothy Albright – 156 votes (100%)
- This ballot was vacated as Mr. Albright was elected on the Q2 ballot

Q5 – Consultation Committee (clergy male) 5-year term, elect 1

- 149 number of valid ballots, 75 minimum to elect
 - Rev. Ralph Hamer – 149 votes (100%)
- Rev. Ralph Hamer is elected to a 5-year term on the Consultation Committee

Q6 – Consultation Committee (clergy female) 3-year term, elect 1

- 157 number of valid ballots, 79 minimum to elect
 - Rev. Marty Jo Irvin-Stellabotte – 60 votes (38.22%)
 - Rev. Susan Williamson - 51 votes (32.48%)
 - Rev. Rebecca West – 46 votes (29.3%)
- There is no election, Rev. Irvin-Stellabotte & Rev. Williamson will advance to the second ballot

continued

Report of the Vice President

Ann Ferry conveyed a spoken message to the Assembly.

Report of the Synod Secretary –

Dave Finney (*2023 Bulletin of Reports, pages 47 - 51*)

Secretary Finney's report detailed the four (4) groups of Constitutional changes that the 2023 Synod Assembly will be considering on the Second Ballot, along with the motions adopted by the Synod Council, in order to convey these matters to the Synod Assembly.

Recommended Constitutional Changes from the 2022 Churchwide Assembly

Upon motion by Bishop Paula, seconded by Pr. Amanda McCaffrey

- **SC23.03.04** – that the **recommended changes** to the Allegheny Synod Constitution conveyed to us by the 2022 Churchwide Assembly in Columbus, OH be adopted by the Synod Council & conveyed to the 2023 Allegheny Synod Assembly along with a recommendation to adopt... a second to this motion is not required

Bishop Paula Schmitt's Recommendations for Bylaw Changes with regard to Chapter 11– Committees

(*Bulletin of Reports pg. 48*)

Upon motion by Pr. Becky Horn, second by Pr. Marty Jo Irvin-Stellabotte

- **SC23.02.05** – that the changes to Chapter 11 – Committees in the Allegheny Synod Constitution be adopted by the Synod Council & conveyed to the 2023 Allegheny Synod Assembly along with a recommendation to adopt... a second to this motion is not required

Bishop Paula Schmitt's Recommendations for Continuing Resolution Changes with Regard to Chapter 11– Committees

(*Bulletin of Reports pg. 49*)

Upon motion by Pr. Becky Horn, second by Pr. Marty Jo Irvin-Stellabotte

- **SC23.02.05** – that the changes to Chapter 11 – Committees in the Allegheny Synod Constitution be adopted by the Synod Council & conveyed to the 2023 Allegheny Synod Assembly along with a recommendation to adopt... a second to this motion is not required

Secretary Finney's Recommendation that Bylaw S10.01.05 Be Removed from the Synod Constitution

Upon motion by Secretary Dave Finney, seconded by Pr. Becky Horn

- **SC23.02.06** – that bylaw S10.01.05 be removed from the Synod Constitution as it contradicts required bylaw **†S6.04.01**.... the motion is adopted by the Synod Council & conveyed to the 2023 Allegheny Synod Assembly along with a recommendation to adopt – a second to this motion is not required

continued

Congregation Celebrations

225 years – St. John, Spring Mills

175 years – Christ, Claysburg

150 years – St. Luke, Lilly

125 years – Grace, State College

Rostered Minister Celebrations

5 years

† Pastor Amanda McCaffery - St. Luke, Roaring Spring

† Pastor Kathy Popp – Zion, Everett

† Pastor Nancy Hoover – Grace, Johnstown

10 years

† Pastor Jean Caudill – retired

25 years

† Pastor Sharon Erb – First English, Tyrone

30 years

† Pastor Brent Book – Zion, Boalsburg

† Pastor Glenn Foster – Mountain Saints Parish

35 years

† Pastor Donna Wolfinger – retired

† Pastor Ralph Hamer – serving a special call with ALSM

† Pastor Susan Mazer-Winger – retired

45 years

† Pastor Dennis Doebler – retired

† Pastor Ardelle Mason – retired

† Pastor George Mason Jr. – retired

† Pastor John Palko – retired

50 years

† Pastor Larry Louder – retired

60 years

† Pastor Karl Hommen – retired

continued

ELCA Report

The Allegheny Synod Assembly was pleased to welcome **Kristen Opalinski**, our ELCA representative. Kristen offered a Bible Study as well as a report from the ELCA.

Kristen is currently the manager for Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations at **ELCA**. She is a former Communications Officer at **Lutheran Communion in Southern Africa**. Kristen studied Studio Art and Graphic Design at Augsburg College, then went on to earn a Master of Arts in Religion; Religion/Conflict Transformation/Public Leadership at Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia.

Report of the Second Ballot

Q7 – Consultation Committee (clergy female) 3-year term, elect 1

- 156 number of valid ballots, 79 minimum to elect
 - Rev. Susan Williamson – 79 votes (50.64%)
 - Rev. Marty Jo Irvin-Stellabotte – 77 votes (49.36%)
- The Rev. Susan Williamson is elected to a 3-year term on the Consultation Committee

Q8 – Discipline Committee (lay female) 6-year term, elect 1

- 155 number of valid ballots, 78 minimum to elect
 - Denise Shimel – 155 votes (100%)
- Denise Shimel is elected to a 6-year term on the Discipline Committee

Q9 – Discipline Committee (clergy female) 5-year term, elect 2

- 159 number of valid ballots, 80 minimum to elect
 - Rev. Amanda McCaffery – 90 votes (56.6%)
 - Rev. Marty Jo Irvin-Stellabotte – 81 votes (50.94%)
 - Rev. Susan Williamson – 70 votes (44.03%)
 - Rev. Rebecca West – 58 votes (36.48%)
- The Rev. Amanda McCaffery & the Rev. Marth Jo Irvin-Stellabotte are elected to a 5-year term on the Discipline Committee

Q10 – To amend the current fiscal year 2023-24 spending plan (*Column 1*)

- 158 number of valid ballots, 80 minimum to adopt the motion
 - *Yes* - to amend the current fiscal year budget
 - 157 votes (99.37%)
 - *No* – not to amend the current fiscal year budget
 - 1 vote (0.63%)
- The motion to adopt changes to the current fiscal year budget is adopted

continued

MINUTES OF THE 2023 ASSEMBLY OF THE ALLEGHENY SYNOD

Q11 – To adopt the fiscal year 2024-25 proposed spending plan, (*Column 2*), and to authorize the Synod Council to enter into conversation with the Upper Susquehanna Synod to call a shared Director of Evangelical Mission.

- 82 number of valid ballots, 42 needed to adopt the motion
 - *If Yes* – Move to adopt fiscal year 2024-25 proposed spending plan (*Column 4*)
 - 74 votes (90.24%)
 - *If No* – Move to adopt fiscal year 2024-25 proposed spending plan (*Column 3*)
 - 8 votes (5.10%)
- The motion to authorize a conversation with the Upper Susquehanna Synod for a shared Director of Evangelical Mission & to move the motion (Q12) to adopt the fiscal year 2024-25 proposed spending plan (*Column 4*) is adopted

Q12 – To adopt fiscal year 2024-25 proposed spending plan (*Column 4*)

- 157 number of valid ballots, 79 needed to adopt the motion
 - *Yes* – 149 votes (94.9%)
 - *No* – 8 votes (5.10%)
- The motion to adopt the *Column 4* proposed spending plan 2024-25 is adopted

Q13 – To adopt the 2024 Compensation & Benefits Manual

- 154 number of valid ballots, 78 needed to adopt the 2024 Manual
 - *Yes* – 146 votes (94.81%)
 - *No* – 8 votes (5.19%)
- The motion to adopt the 2024 Compensation & Benefits Manual is adopted

Q14 – To adopt the recommended constitutional changes from the 2022 Churchwide Assembly, as conveyed by Synod Council motion **SC23.03.04**.

- 155 number of valid ballots, 78 (50%) needed to adopt these constitutional changes
 - *Yes* – 153 votes (98.71%)
 - *No* – 2 votes (1.29%)
- The motion to adopt the recommended constitutional changes is adopted

Q15 – To adopt the recommended *bylaw* changes to *Chapter 11 – Committees*, in the Allegheny Synod Constitution, as conveyed by Synod Council motion **SC23.02.05**.

- 156 number of valid ballots, 104.5 (67%) needed to adopt these constitutional changes
 - *Yes* – 149 votes (95.51%)
 - *No* – 7 votes (4.49%)
- The motion to adopt the recommended constitutional changes is adopted

continued

Q16 – To adopt the recommended *continuing resolution* changes to *Chapter 11 – Committees*, in the Allegheny Synod Constitution, as conveyed by Synod Council motion **SC23.02.05**.

- 155 number of valid ballots, 78 (50%) needed to adopt these constitutional changes
 - Yes – 147 votes (94.84%)
 - No – 8 votes (5.16%)
- The motion to adopt the recommended constitutional changes is adopted

Q17 – To adopt the recommendation to remove conflicting bylaw **S10.01.05**, from the Allegheny Synod Constitution, as conveyed by Synod Council motion **SC23.02.06**.

- 155 number of valid ballots, 103.8 (67%) needed to adopt this constitutional change
 - Yes – 154 votes (99.35%)
 - No – 1 vote (0.65%)
- The motion to adopt the recommended constitutional changes is adopted

Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton

Churchwide Synod Assembly Video (2023 *Bulletin of Reports*, page 40)

Bishop Schmitt's Report

(2023 *Bulletin of Reports*, pages 34-35)

- Making a pot from clay (Play Doh) by our own hands
- Be open to the transformation of our lives & in the lives of others

Rev. Kevin Shock DEM/Assistant to the Bishop Report

(2023 *Bulletin of Reports*, pages 36-37)

- What does congregational life look like in your faith community?
- Vitality = continuing to build relationship... with God & with our neighbors
- The Three Words → Love, Invite & Accept

ELCA Foundation

Sister Marianne Brock

- Sister Marianne is an ordained deacon in the ELCA.
 - Sister Mary Ann is not a catholic nun
- ELCA's gift planner for central PA

continued

MINUTES OF THE 2023 ASSEMBLY OF THE ALLEGHENY SYNOD

- ELCA Foundation...
 - A thriving ministry
 - To support & sustain ELCA ministries
- ELCA Ministry growth fund
 - Fund A – an investment vehicle for long term growth
 - Planned Giving – a thank you note to your past, a love note to your future

Report from Faith Formation

- The Weekend is coming, as is The Book (*distributed to the voting members*)
- December 8,9,10 @ St. James in Huntington for Jr. & Sr. High School students

Sequanota Lutheran Conference Center & Camp

There is a way forward... (*2023 Bulletin of Reports, pages 106-117*)

- Apply faith practices
- Value the natural world
- Integrate educational experience with others, to strength their sense of community
- Formulate an alternative vision for a more balanced life

Closing of the Assembly

Bishop Paula Schmitt declared the 35th Allegheny Synod Assembly closed at 4:41PM

Treasurer's Report

Fiscal year 2023-2024

I'd like to start my report by thanking the Synod Council for showing the trust in me to appoint me as Treasurer of your Allegheny Synod. I'd also to thank former Treasurer, Bill Layton. He has guided this transition to make it as simple as possible. His assistance has been very valuable and absolutely necessary. Even though I have been a member of the Synod's Finance Committee for more years than I can remember, the Treasurer position is much more complex. Bill has been available for me any and every time I have "bugged" him. Thank you, Bill, for being so gracious.

The results of fiscal year 2023-2024 are total income of \$906,784.06 and total expenses of \$882,083.37 leaving a net income of \$24,700.69. All monies received for designated activities has been delivered to those causes.

During the year it was discovered that a small calculation error occurred on the salary on the 2024-2025 budget. This will be presented for adoption by this assembly. The previous approved amount was \$81,925.00 for the Bishop and \$73,770.00 for the Assistant to the Bishop. The correct amounts should be \$83,002 for the Bishop and \$74,847 for the Assistant to the Bishop. The error occurred due to the number of years of service was shorted by 1 year for each and the amount for FICA insurance additional amount required. Also needed is your

approval to change the 2024-25 budgeted amount for DEM Payroll support from the ELCA previously approved at \$5,000.00, should be \$0. WE will not be receiving that money this year. In connection with that, the expense for Salary-DEM should be \$0.00 not \$43,850. Pastor Kevin salary expense replaces this expense.

Our investment accounts have been performing extremely well this past year. There was a reallocation into more secure type of accounts, and that has had a very positive affect on our return on investments. As I become more familiar with our various investments, I will make certain that our investments align with our investment policy. Our auditors have had no exceptions with our total portfolio.

I am known for attempting to make financial reports as understandable as possible for anyone, even for those who do not deal with reports on a regular basis. I hope you find my information easy to understand. My reports can also be found in this bulletin. I am available for any questions be emailing me at office@alleghenysynod.com.

Your Servant in Christ!

Paula Nihoff

Allegheny Synod

Actual 2022-2023 through Proposed Budget 2025-2026

Accounts	Actual YTD 2022-2023	Actual YTD 2023-2024	Budget 2024- 2025 (This Year) Approved	2025-2026 BUDGET Proposed
Revenues				
Synod Operations				
Synod Mission General & Admin				
Income, Mission Support				
052.4000.I - Mission Support	\$556,834.81	\$519,284.80	\$542,914.00	\$532,056.00
052.4050.I - Designated Mission Support	\$67,296.45	\$75,145.79	\$65,614.00	\$64,302.00
Total Income, Mission Support	\$624,131.26	\$594,430.59	\$608,528.00	\$596,358.00
Income Interest				
Total Income Interest	-\$125,167.09	\$173,321.20	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Designated Gifts, Synodical	\$127,613.10	\$162,664.17	\$0.00	\$0.00
Mission&Ministry Development				
052.4105.I - ELCA Funds - DEM	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$8,000.00
052.4106.I - ELCA Funds - DEM Payroll	\$40,468.08	\$30,958.08	\$0.00	\$0.00
052.4304.I - Bishop Discretionary Fund	\$5,180.00	\$5,050.00	\$0.00	
052.8600.I - Lutheran Letter Income	\$2,544.35	\$2,930.57	\$0.00	\$2,500.00
052.8700.I - DEM Support	\$0.00	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	
052.9214.I - Vitality and Innovation Grants Income	\$9,141.00	\$5,448.77	\$0.00	\$5,000.00
052.9450.I - Synod Leadership Team Income	\$475.00	\$7,305.00	\$0.00	
052.9801.I - Memorial Donation Income	\$1,013.50	\$0.00	\$0.00	
Total Mission&Ministry Development	\$68,821.93	\$62,692.42	\$10,000.00	\$15,500.00
Events, Synodical				
Total Synodical Events	\$37,063.23	\$53,405.01	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Revenues	\$732,462.43	\$1,046,513.39	\$618,528.00	\$646,858.00
Expenses				
Synod Operations				
ELCA Churchwide Mission Support				
Partner Ministry Support				

ACTUAL 2022-2023 THROUGH PROPOSED BUDGET 2025-2026

Accounts	Actual YTD 2022-2023	Actual YTD 2023-2024	Budget 2024- 2025 (This Year) Approved	2025-2026 BUDGET Proposed
001.9100.E - Mission Support - ELCA	\$250,442.03	\$240,299.05	\$192,200.00	\$186,220.00
Total Partner Ministry Support	\$250,442.03	\$240,299.05	\$228,676.00	\$186,220.00
Partners				
Partner Ministry Support				
054.9101.E - ALSM - Allegheny Luth Soc Mini	\$4,000.00	\$4,000.00	\$8,000.00	\$5,000.00
054.9102.E - United Lutheran Seminary	\$13,500.00	\$13,500.00	\$13,500.00	\$13,000.00
054.9103.E - Sequanota Center	\$28,500.00	\$33,500.00	\$33,500.00	\$35,000.00
054.9104.E - Penn State Campus Ministry	\$9,500.00	\$11,000.00	\$11,000.00	\$12,000.00
054.9107.E - LAMPA: Luth Advocacy Min Pa	\$1,078.00	\$1,078.00	\$1,078.00	\$2,000.00
054.9108.E - Shawnee Park Chaplancy	\$23.47	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Partner Ministry Support	\$56,601.47	\$63,078.00	\$67,078.00	\$67,000.00
Total ELCA Churchwide Mission Support	\$307,043.50	\$303,377.05	\$295,754.00	\$253,220.00
Designated Gifts - Synodical				
Total Designated Gifts - Synodical	\$145,529.82	\$152,123.91	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Partners	\$202,131.29	\$215,201.91	\$67,078.00	\$67,000.00
Total ELCA Churchwide Mission Support	\$452,573.32	\$455,500.96	\$295,754.00	\$320,220.00
Synod Mission General & Admin				
Salaries, Ordained				
052.7000.E - Salary - Bishop	\$72,690.75	\$74,936.25	\$78,204.00 **	\$81,548.00
052.7020.E - Salary - Ordained Asst	\$13,651.88	\$16,096.05	\$69,478.00 **	\$72,405.00
052.7021.E - Salary - DEM	\$44,820.71	\$50,628.14	\$0.00 **	\$0.00
052.7050.E - Salary Bishop SS Offset	\$5,531.79	\$5,936.74	\$5,983.00 **	\$6,238.00
052.7052.E - Salary - Asst. SS Offset	\$4,234.22	\$5,279.97	\$5,315.00 **	\$5,539.00
Total Salaries, Ordained	\$140,929.35	\$152,877.15	\$158,980.00 **	\$165,730.00
Salaries & Wages, Non Ordained				
052.7060.E - Salary - Office Manager	\$43,494.65	\$45,669.27	\$47,314.00	\$49,207.00
052.7080.E - Stipend - Synod Secretary	\$2,100.00	\$3,300.00	\$3,600.00	\$3,600.00
052.7082.E - Hourly - Housekeeping	\$1,859.50	\$2,081.25	\$2,000.00	\$0.00
052.7084.E - Stipend - Synod Treasurer	\$3,600.00	\$3,600.00	\$3,600.00	\$3,600.00
052.7085.E - Salary - Accrued PTO	\$14,231.70	\$3,896.85	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Salaries & Wages, Non Ordained	\$65,285.85	\$58,547.37	\$56,514.00	\$56,407.00
Employee Benefits				
052.7100.E - Pension	\$21,991.03	\$23,016.92	\$23,752.00	\$28,371.00
052.7110.E - Employee Health & Other Benefits	\$26,639.55	\$29,762.29	\$29,857.00	\$31,339.00
052.7131.E - Continuing Education	\$856.81	\$0.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,400.00

ACTUAL 2022-2023 THROUGH PROPOSED BUDGET 2025-2026

Accounts	Actual YTD 2022-2023	Actual YTD 2023-2024	Budget 2024- 2025 (This Year) Approved	2025-2026 BUDGET Proposed
Total Employee Benefits	\$49,487.39	\$52,779.21	\$54,609.00	\$61,110.00
Employer Expenses				
052.7200.E - FICA	\$3,325.07	\$3,493.74	\$3,480.00	\$3,764.00
052.8104.2 - Miscellaneous Employer Expenses	\$600.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Employer Expenses	\$3,925.07	\$3,493.74	\$3,480.00	\$3,764.00
General Expenses				
052.8102.E - Office Supplies	\$1,027.82	\$965.66	\$1,250.00	\$1,000.00
052.8300.E - Postage	\$834.54	\$1,321.26	\$900.00	\$1,400.00
052.9801.E - Memorials/Floral Tributes	\$50.00	\$0.00	\$100.00	\$100.00
052.9802.E - Hospitality	\$690.23	\$746.47	\$1,000.00	\$500.00
Total General Expenses	\$2,602.59	\$3,033.39	\$3,250.00	\$3,000.00
General Exp.-Personnel Related				
052.8650.E - Ministry Resources	\$501.83	\$401.60	\$600.00	\$500.00
052.8710.E - Staff Travel - Gas/Milea/Hotel&Toll	\$4,122.84	\$2,686.11	\$10,000.00	\$7,500.00
052.8715.E - Non-Staff Travel - Gas/Mile/Hotel&T	-\$140.25	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$500.00
052.8800.E - Vehicle Costs - Ins/Maint Only	\$141.03	\$0.00	\$500.00	\$500.00
052.9401.E - Memberships/Dues/Subscriptions	\$5,267.45	\$5,178.60	\$5,300.00	\$5,000.00
Total General Exp.-Personnel Related	\$9,892.90	\$8,266.31	\$16,400.00	\$14,000.00
Expenses, Council & Financial				
052.8005.E - Accounting Software	\$3,885.00	\$1,792.00	\$4,000.00	\$5,650.00
052.8006.E - Bank and CC Fees	\$11,195.94	\$8,392.51	\$10,000.00	\$8,000.00
052.8020.E - Audit Expense	\$4,250.00	\$4,400.00	\$4,500.00	\$4,500.00
052.9440.E - Synod Council Expenses (retreat Etc.)	\$680.00	\$1,404.32	\$1,350.00	\$1,750.00
052.9590.E - Depreciation & Amortization - Allowable	\$6,142.27	\$2,853.34	\$6,100.00	\$3,400.00
Total Expenses, Council & Financial	\$26,153.21	\$18,842.17	\$25,950.00	\$23,300.00
Administrative & Technology				
052.8001.E - Software & Computer Maintenance	\$3,907.46	\$3,752.69	\$4,000.00	\$2,500.00
052.8025.E - Accounting Services	\$8,220.00	\$8,520.00	\$8,640.00	\$8,700.00
052.8201.E - Utilities: Network Services Web	\$847.87	\$1,850.18	\$900.00	\$0.00
052.8500.E - Office Equipment (Copier Lease)	\$2,038.33	\$1,926.11	\$2,100.00	\$2,400.00
Total Administrative & Technology	\$15,013.66	\$16,048.98	\$15,640.00	\$13,600.00
Facility Expenses				
052.8103.E - General Supplies Facility	\$289.13	\$270.14	\$400.00	\$200.00
052.8200.E - Telephone & Cell Phone	\$2,416.12	\$3,005.89	\$3,000.00	\$2,500.00
052.8400.E - Electricity	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00	0
052.8410.E - Heat	\$720.00	\$720.00	\$720.00	0
052.8420.E - Sewer & Water	\$780.00	\$780.00	\$780.00	0

ACTUAL 2022-2023 THROUGH PROPOSED BUDGET 2025-2026

Accounts	Actual YTD 2022-2023	Actual YTD 2023-2024	Budget 2024- 2025 (This Year) Approved	2025-2026 BUDGET Proposed
052.8430.E - Rent	\$13,392.00	\$13,392.00	\$13,392.00	\$12,600.00
052.9300.E - Professional Insurance	\$4,975.59	\$5,075.45	\$5,000.00	\$5,500.00
Total Facility Expenses	\$24,072.84	\$24,743.48	\$24,792.00	\$20,800.00
Congregational & Ministry Supp				
052.4304.E - Bishop Discretionary - CY Withdraw	\$6,440.00	\$4,695.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
052.9430.E - Global Ministry Synod Team Expense	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$50.00	\$50.00
052.9420.E - Leadership Support	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$3,000.00
Total Congregational & Ministry Supp	\$6,440.00	\$4,695.00	\$50.00	\$3,050.00
Other Ministry Teams Expenses				
052.9433.E - Region 8	\$0.00	\$3,230.00	\$3,230.00	\$3,500.00
Total Other Ministry Teams Expenses	\$0.00	\$3,230.00	\$3,500.00	\$3,500.00
Mission & Ministry Development				
052.8600.E - The Lutheran Letter	\$3,900.00	\$4,500.00	\$4,500.00	\$4,500.00
052.8801.E - Rostered Leaders Day Events	\$540.00	\$100.00	\$1,000.00	\$500.00
052.9180.E - Candidacy Expenses	\$0.00	\$2,012.12	\$1,000.00	\$2,400.00
052.9210.E - First Call Theological Education	\$925.00	\$243.34	\$1,000.00	\$500.00
052.9214.E - Vitality and Innovation Grants	\$0.00	\$10,175.00	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
052.9450.E - Synod Leadership Team Expenses	\$20.00	\$1,580.98	\$5,000.00	\$3,000.00
052.9464.E - DEM Expenses	\$1,819.00	\$7,573.96	\$0.00	\$1,000.00
Total Mission & Ministry Development	\$7,204.00	\$26,185.40	\$17,500.00	\$16,900.00
Events, Synodical				
052.4201.E - Synod Assembly Expenses	\$10,217.27	\$11,890.13	\$4,000.00	\$3,500.00
052.4202.E - Lutheran Day - Lakemont Expenses	\$315.00	\$1,638.48	\$200.00	\$200.00
052.4204.E - Bishops Convo - Leaders Exp	\$15,431.44	\$13,502.15	\$3,000.00	\$5,500.00
052.4205.E - Youth Events Expense	\$18,173.08	\$25,759.45	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
052.4207.E - DYD Expenses	\$300.00	\$1,050.00	\$500.00	\$0.00
Total Events, Synodical	\$44,436.79	\$53,840.21	\$8,700.00	\$10,200.00
Total Synod Mission General & Admin	\$395,443.65	\$426,582.41	\$384,792.00	\$405,955.00
Total Synod Operations	\$848,016.97	\$882,083.37	\$676,546.00	\$726,175.00
Total Expenses	\$848,016.97	\$882,083.37	\$676,546.00	\$726,175.00
Net Total	-\$115,554.54	\$164,430.02	-\$58,018.00	-\$79,317.00

Photo Captions for photo pages 38–39

1. Bishop Paula and Pastor Kevin participated in an extraordinary service of rededication and unity at Brush Valley Fusion of Faith. Brush Valley Fusion of Faith is the merger of two UCC and one Lutheran congregation in the Nittany Conference. Three congregations have become one. This has been a journey of faithful discernment and prayer. These congregations now begin a new chapter in ministry together. We give thanks to God for their bold witness to unity and partnership.
2. Closing worship service for The Weekend Synod Youth Event. What an amazing time of singing, praying, and celebrating Jesus in Word and Sacrament! THANK YOU to Pastor Brandon Cian and the people of St. James in Huntingdon. They allowed us to take over their building, they changed their worship time so we could all worship together, they gave up their usual seats, and they did their best to sing different styles of music. They were incredibly gracious and hospitable to us and welcomed us as Jesus would. We are also extremely grateful to the planning team, the musicians, and the adult leaders for making a wonderful event for our youth.
3. Bishop Paula worshipped with the folks at Horner Lutheran Church this morning as they extended a call to Vicar Regina Holliday to be their next pastor. It was a good day for the Church. We congratulate Horner and Vicar Regina and look forward to her ordination (early March).
4. Pastor Mark Fischer, Interim at St. David's in Davidsville, has been leading Lutheran worship at FCI-Loretto for a few months. He coordinated a donation of 75 LBWs to replace the hymnals in poor condition at the prison. Thanks to Pastor Tyler Graham and Salisbury Lutheran Parish for the donation, and thanks to Pr. Fischer for his ministry among those in prison.
5. Pastor Kevin worshiped this morning at Redeemer Church in Chesapeake VA. His brother-in-law's brother, Eric, is the lead pastor there. This was Eric's last Sunday before taking a sabbatical over the summer.
6. Bishop Paula preached for the Easter Vigil at St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Altoona with Bishop Audrey Scanlan. It was a lovely evening of ecumenical partnership as we celebrated Christ's resurrection.
7. Josephine Marube being installed as deaconess at Kisii Lutheran mission. In attendance is KELC bishop, Diakonia Coordinator, Women coordinator and other invited guests.
8. Worship Gathering
9. Bishop Paula visited with Trinity, Sidman. It was a big day with a baptism and first communion celebration—glad to be with these folks for this happy day.
10. Bishop Paula celebrated Christmas Eve with the community at Mt. Calvary in Johnstown.
11. Congratulations to the ELCA's newest pastor, Regina Holliday. Regina was ordained at Horner Lutheran Church where she was called to serve as pastor. We give thanks to God for this new leader among us.
12. Pastor Traci Marriott, Pastor Brandon Cian and Pastor Drew McCaffrey participated in the 2024 Special Olympics Winter Games Polar Plunge today at Canoe Creek Star Park. Congratulations! Good work!
13. Trinity, Sidman, baptism and first communion celebration.
14. A good day for the church in our territory, Pastor Kevin and Bishop Paula were at Faith in Somerset to authorize five new lay worship leaders for our Synod. Front row from left: Rick Focht, Christine Frazier, Sally Shaulis, Marsha Hutzell, and Ben Hoffman. Pictured with these new leaders are their mentor/support pastors. We give thanks for the ways the gifts of these leaders will bless our Synod. If you or someone you know is interested in learning more about becoming a lay worship leader, contact the Allegheny Synod Office.
15. Pastor Kevin worshiped with the people of Zion Boalsburg, on their first Sunday after Pastor Brent Book retired. Pastor Kevin is grateful for their hospitality and eagerness to serve. Please pray for them and all of our congregations in transition.
16. Communion Celebration
17. Regina Holliday ordained at Horner Lutheran Church where she was called to serve as pastor.
- 18–19. April meeting: The Johnstown and Laurel Highlands Conferences met together for a combined conference meeting at St. David's Lutheran Church in Davidsville.
20. Your Allegheny Synod voting members to the Churchwide Assembly enjoying dinner out together.
21. The Weekend Synod Youth Event.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

2025 Compensation and Benefits Manual

A Tool for Ministry Budgeting in the Allegheny Synod, ELCA

This manual is intended as a tool for ministry sites and their ministers of Word and Sacrament or ministers of Word and Service to mutually plan and budget for the minister's compensation and benefits.

Predominantly we think of ministry in terms of a minister's efforts for members of the ministry on behalf of Jesus Christ. In the same way, the ministry of the laity includes care of the minister and the minister's family on behalf of Jesus Christ.

In many ministry settings, a specific team is tasked with primary concern for care of the minister and their family. One of the key tasks of such a team is to discuss annually with the minister a fair and equitable compensation package. Since the minister depends on the ministry employer to make ample provision for their financial needs, the minister should have the opportunity to discuss those needs in an open and supportive forum. This team is in a position to provide such a forum. The team can gather data from the minister about their financial needs and subsequently make recommendations to the Finance Committee, Council or Board, and/or Congregation for fair and equitable compensation.

There are reasons for the varieties of financial compensation packages within this Synod and the ELCA. Some ministries have full-time ministers while others have less than full-time ministerial service. Some have multiple ministers on staff. Some cooperatives have one minister serving multiple locations. Some ministers have additional education, training, or work experience prior to entering the ministry that benefits their ministry. It is the intention of the Synod to affirm the reality of different ministry arrangements while at the same time ensuring adequate and fair compensation.

This document attempts to provide flexibility in determining base salary by only specifying minimum amounts, in negotiating housing arrangements, and in providing components for some other benefits. Primary in all that is recommended here is the need for the minister and team members to discuss openly and honestly the subject of money and the minister's responsibilities and needs.

This document is not intended to serve as financial or tax advice. Ministry employers are responsible for following legal employment practices regarding compensation and taxation. Ministers are strongly encouraged to employ a qualified tax accountant and/or financial advisor to review their compensation and ensure compliance with tax codes.

Worksheet for Budgeting Minister's Compensation

Each amount is calculated individually on the indicated pages.

** Some items depend on type of housing compensation and/or medical plan.*

Salary & Housing

- A. Annual Base Salary (p 3)
- B. Furnishing Allowance (p 4)*
- C. Social Security Allowance (p 4-5) \$ _____

Benefits

- D. Portico Pension Contribution (p 5)
- E. Other Portico Benefits (p 6-7)
- F. Housing Equity Allowance (p 7)* + \$ _____

Professional Expenses

- G. Synod Assembly & Conference Expenses (p 8)
- H. Automobile Expense (p 8-9)
- I. Continuing Education (Etc.) Expenses (p 9)
- J. Business & Attire Expense (p 9-10)
- K. Leadership Development Expense (p 10)
- L. Medical Expense Reimbursement (p 11)* + \$ _____

Total paid to/for Minister by Employer = \$ _____

To Facilitate Minister's Required Vacation Compensation
(Budgeted by the Ministry, Not Paid to the Minister)

Estimated Supply Expense (p 11) + \$ _____

Total Budgeted Expense for Rostered Ministry = \$ _____

A. Annual Base Salary Compensation

Listed below are recommended *minimum* guidelines for use in developing the compensation package for Ministers of Word and Sacrament and Ministers of Word and Service. Each ministry setting requires unique responsibilities; adequate compensation is related but not limited to the expectations of the minister and the ministry they are serving. Ministry employers may choose to compensate ministers beyond the minimum guidelines for additional degrees, certifications, or years of other relevant professional experience.

- 1) Each year the Synod Finance Committee reviews current economic indicators to determine an appropriate starting salary. Starting salary for ministers ordained in 2024 increased 4% from 2023.
- 2) Salary is increased for each year of experience by \$500.

To Calculate years of experience, subtract the minister’s year of ordination from 2024.

2024 - _____ (Year of Ordination) = _____ Years of Experience

Base Salary with a Parsonage		\$42,401
Add Years of Experience x \$500	+ _____	
Minimum Salary with a Parsonage	= _____	

OR

Base Salary without a Parsonage		\$59,457
Add Years of Experience x \$500	+ _____	
Minimum Salary without a Parsonage	= _____	

AND

Compensation for additional degrees, certifications, years of other relevant professional experience		+ _____
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Base Salary A. \$ _____

B. Housing & Furnishing Allowance

A minister whose compensation does not include a parsonage may designate as housing allowance an amount of compensation which is excluded from their Federal taxable income up to the fair rental value of a furnished home plus utilities to the extent that the allowance is actually expended for housing. Qualifying Housing Allowance expenses include rent payments, principal and interest payments on mortgages, taxes, utilities, maintenance, insurance, furnishing, and landscaping. **For more information on housing allowance, the IRS provides this information: [Ministers' Compensation & Housing Allowance | Internal Revenue Service \(irs.gov\)](https://www.irs.gov/individuals/publications/p15454-01-12)**

For the purpose of including a housing allowance in calculating the Total Defined Compensation, Portico will add 30% to Base Salary for a minister whose compensation includes a parsonage.

A minister may receive a Furnishing Allowance. The Furnishing Allowance is excluded from Federal Income Tax to the extent that the allowance is actually expended for furnishing; however, the amount used is subject to Social Security Tax. The Furnishing Allowance is paid directly to the minister and is in addition to any maintenance and repair costs paid directly or reimbursed by the ministry employer.

Congregations which provide a parsonage for the called rostered minister will pay the parsonage's utilities in full each month. Utilities include electric, gas, oil, water, sewer, trash, internet, telephone (if a landline exists in the parsonage). If the rostered minister uses their personal cell phone for church business, a negotiated amount of reimbursement should be paid in addition to the parsonage utility costs. Billing for utilities for the parsonage should be registered in the name of the congregation and directed to the congregation's treasurer for payment.

Furnishing Allowance B. \$ _____

C. Social Security Allowance

For Social Security purposes, ministers are taxed as if they are self-employed. The current combined Social Security and Medicare tax is 15.3%. The Synod policy requires the ministry site to assume at least 50% of the combined Social Security and Medicare tax that the minister is required to pay or an equivalent amount if the minister had previously opted out of Social Security.

To calculate the compensation subject to Social Security Tax, add the Base Salary (A), 30% of Base Salary for ministers with a parsonage only, Furnishing Allowance (B), and any other allowances paid directly to the minister, excluding reimbursed expenses.

A. Base Salary	_____	
30% of A.	+ _____	(for ministers with a parsonage only)
B. Furnishing Allowance	+ _____	(if utilized)
Other Allowances	+ _____	
	= _____	(C1) Compensation Subject to SS Tax

2025 Compensation and Benefits Manual (continuation)

To calculate the Social Security Tax, multiply the minister's compensation (C1) x 15.3%.

C1 _____ x .153 = _____ (C2) Social Security Tax

To calculate the Social Security Allowance paid by the ministry employer, multiply the minister's Social Security Tax (C2) x at least 50% (more if the ministry employer chooses).

C2 _____ x .5 (or more) = _____ (C) Social Security Allowance

Social Security Allowance C. \$ _____

D. Portico Pension Contribution

Portico Benefits Services administrates pension benefits for the ELCA. The Synod policy encourages the ministry employer to contribute to the minister's pension fund at a rate of 12% of the Defined Compensation.

To calculate the Portico Defined Compensation, add the Base Salary (A), 30% of the Base Salary for ministers with a parsonage only, the Furnishing Allowance (B), and the Social Security Allowance (C).

A. Base Salary _____
30% of A + _____ (for ministers with a parsonage only)
B. Furnishing Allowance + _____
C. Social Security Allowance + _____
= _____ (D1) Portico Defined Compensation

To calculate the Pension Contribution paid by the ministry employer, multiply the minister's Portico Defined Compensation (D1) x 12%.

D1. _____ x .12 = _____ (D) Pension Contribution

Pension Contribution D. \$ _____

E. Other Portico-ELCA Benefits Contribution

Portico Benefit Services, the nonprofit benefit ministry of the ELCA, provides the benefit program for rostered ministers, lay employees, and their families. Portico provides health, dental, prescription drug, retirement, disability, and group life insurance benefits in one bundled program.* This program is designed to address the needs of rostered ministers and provide seamless benefits during change of call, leave from call, and other events unique to ministry. A bundled approach helps ensure rostered ministers and lay employees are protected against significant financial loss from a variety of risks. Through Portico, ministries in this synod and across the country pool their collective purchasing power to provide benefits in a cost-effective manner. For more information, see the [ELCA Philosophy of Benefits](#).

Congregations and plan members share the cost of benefits. Congregations are expected to support the well-being of their covered plan members by paying 100% of the cost of non-elective benefits. Plan members are expected to participate in the cost of utilizing the benefits (e.g., deductibles, coinsurance, and copays).

*A plan member may waive health coverage if they have access to valid medical insurance coverage through their spouse or another employer.

Current contribution rates for benefits are available on at EmployerLink.PorticoBenefits.org or by calling Portico at 800.352.2876.

ELCA Survivor Benefit

Basic group life insurance is offered through Securian is paid for by the congregation. **Rostered ministers may pay for additional coverage through Securian or supplemental insurance can be purchased by the rostered minister.**

ELCA Disability Benefits

When approved, the ELCA disability trust provides monthly income, retirement plan contribution, and health coverage. There are two types of disability benefits: short term and long term. Short term (60 days) compensation and benefits are paid by the congregation. Long term (over 60 days) disability benefits are paid by the ELCA's disability trust.

ELCA Retirement

The ELCA maintains a defined contribution retirement plan for rostered ministers. The Allegheny Synod encourages congregations to contribute a minimum of 12% of the rostered minister's defined compensation to the retirement plan. Members in the plan can also contribute pre-tax contributions through payroll deduction.

ELCA Health Benefit

The ELCA's health benefit plans cover the following areas: medical, dental, prescription coverage, tax advantage accounts (Flexible Spending and Health Savings Accounts) and wellness support. The ELCA Church Council has approved a balance of cost-sharing between congregations and plan members. Portico offers a choice of ELCA-Primary health benefit options that fit this approved balance: Gold+, and Silver+ with either Level A or B employer HSA contribution. Each fall, congregations should engage in conversation with their sponsored plan members to determine the option that best fits their needs, and then make their selection

2025 Compensation and Benefits Manual *(continuation)*

during annual enrollment. In 2024 the Allegheny synod council voted to recommend the Gold+ level.

Plan Choice _____

Cost of Plan _____

Portico Benefits E. \$ _____

F. Housing Equity Allowance (For Ministers with a Parsonage Only)

When a parsonage is furnished as part of the minister's compensation, the minister does not have the opportunity to build equity as a homeowner. The ministry employer may compensate for this lack of equity with a Housing Equity Allowance. Recommended Housing Equity Allowance Provisions:

1. The Housing Equity Allowance equals 3% of the minister's Defined Compensation.
2. The ministry employer pays this amount in monthly installments to a depository agreed to by the ministry employer and the minister.
3. Use of the funds is limited to the provision of housing whenever it is needed, specifically at the time of retirement, disability, or death, or when a congregation disposes of its parsonage.
4. Provisions are to be made for changing the depository when required by relocation of the minister, provided that the original contractual limitations for the use of the funds are maintained.

To calculate the Housing Equity Allowance paid by the ministry employer, multiply the Defined Compensation (D1) x 3%.

D1. _____ x .03 = _____ (F) Housing Equity Allowance

Housing Equity Allowance F. \$ _____

Professional Expenses

The IRS has made it difficult to itemize and deduct professional expenses. Therefore, it is recommended that the ministry employer reimburse professional expenses in full and budget accordingly for these anticipated costs, reviewing these allowances frequently. Professional expenses include:

- G. Synod Assembly and Conference Expenses
- H. Automobile Expenses
- I. Continuing Education, Book, Periodical, and Digital Resource Expenses
- J. Ministry-Related Business and Attire Expenses
- K. Leadership Development

Additional Professional Expenses unique to a ministry may be incurred and compensated.

G. Synod Assembly and Conference Expenses

All ministers are required to attend the annual Synod Assembly and Bishop’s Convocation, for which the ministry employer is required to pay registration, lodging, and meals for the minister while attending these events. Further, ministers may be expected to attend other Synod conferences or trainings, and the ministry employer is expected to pay those registration fees and expenses as well. Expenses for Synod Assembly, Convocation, and other Synod conferences or trainings are to be covered in addition to Continuing Education expenses.

Typical expenses for Synod Assembly and Bishop’s Convocation are \$300 each (\$600 total). Ministers in the first three years of their first call after graduation/ordination are required to attend First Call Theological Education (FCTE). FCTE incurs a fee of \$200/year for three years.

Synod Assembly & Conference Expenses G. \$ _____

H. Automobile Expenses

In most ministry settings, the minister will incur transportation costs that include fuel, repairs, insurance, tolls, etc. The IRS allows reimbursement of a specific amount per mile when a car is used for business purposes. American Automobile Association (AAA) and Department of Transportation studies indicate that the cost of operating automobiles is greater than the mileage reimbursement allowed by the IRS. The ministry employer should provide to the minister a travel allowance adequate to cover all costs. The Synod recommends three possible arrangements (in order of preference):

1. An employer-owned or leased car. The ministry employer owns or leases a car for the minister to use in the course of their duties; the employer pays the cost of fuel, **maintenance** and repairs.
2. Reimbursement to the minister for actual miles driven. The employer pays the leader for the use of their car based on an agreed upon amount per mile and in accordance with IRS regulations. **The IRS rate for 2024 is 67 cents per mile; this may change in 2025.** Amounts up to the IRS rate are not taxable; any amount paid in excess of the IRS rate is taxable compensation.
3. Pay the leader a flat rate for transportation. Having budgeted an amount for travel, the ministry employer pays the minister a regular amount, regardless of the miles driven by the leader. A flat rate travel compensation is considered taxable income, so an additional 15%-20% should be added to the allowance to account for the additional tax obligation of the minister.

Allowable mileage reimbursement guidelines from the IRS can be found in IRS Publication 463. Pages 18-21 discuss allowable reimbursement scenarios. It is the responsibility of the congregation council to clearly state from where mileage is calculated for reimbursement. When an agreement is reached, it should be included on the Definitions for Compensation page on pages 17-19 of this manual.

Automobile Expense H. \$ _____

I. Continuing Education, Book, Periodical, and Digital Resource Expenses

In order to update their skills and strengthen their ministry, the ELCA expects ministers to participate in at least 50 contact hours of Continuing Education (Life-Long Learning/ Professional Development) annually. Such activities are not vacations, and ministry employers shall provide both time and money to facilitate these learning opportunities.

2025 Compensation and Benefits Manual *(continuation)*

For the minister to keep abreast of developments in theology and ministry, expenses for books, periodicals, and digital resources are included with Continuing Education.

Like the Housing Equity Allowance, an account with a depository agreed to by the minister and the ministry employer should be established for Continuing Education. The Synod recommends the employer contribute at least \$700 and the minister at least \$300 annually.

Two weeks study leave, or its equivalent, is to be provided over and above vacation.

Continuing Education, Book, Periodical, Digital Resource Expenses I. \$ _____

J. Ministry Related Business and Attire Expenses

The IRS has made it difficult to itemize and deduct professional expenses. Therefore the Synod recommends the ministry employer reimburse in full professional expenses including, but not limited to, professional attire such as vestments and clerics, ministry use of personal technical resources (i.e. cell phone, computer), professional organization dues, and business entertainment.

Ministry Related Business and Attire Expense J. \$ _____

K. Leadership Development

Leadership Development is different than Continuing Education or vacation, which benefit the ministry but are for the minister's personal development, rest, and renewal. Leadership development benefits the ministry's well-being and growth. The Synod recommends that the ministry employer offer at least \$500 for Leadership Development which may include retreats, resources, coaching, or other education for the minister's development and growth.

Leadership Development Expense K. \$ _____

L. Flexible Spending Accounts/Medical Expense Reimbursement

(Premiums for Medical and Dental Benefits are not to be included here. See p. 5-6)

Health Flexible Spending Account (FSA)

A minister with Platinum+ or Gold+ plans may set aside an amount, pretax, to pay for eligible out of pocket health care expenses. The minister has access to the full amount of the FSA election starting January 1, even though contributions will be withheld from each paycheck throughout the plan year.

Health Savings Account (HSA)

A minister with Silver+ or Bronze+ may set aside pretax money to pay for eligible out of pocket health care expenses. The minister and employer can contribute and any earned wellness dollars are deposited here. For the calendar year 2022, an HSA accepts up to \$3650 per member or \$7300 per family, plus an additional \$1000 if age 55 or older. (Check allowed amounts for 2023 when available.)

Dependent (Day) Care Flexible Spending Account

A minister may set aside an amount, pretax, to pay for day care expenses incurred for the care of the minister's child(ren) or other eligible dependent to enable the minister to work.

Flexible Spending Accounts can be established through Portico Benefit Services.

2025 Compensation and Benefits Manual *(continuation)*

Flexible Spending Designation \$ _____ (made by the minister; not an additional budgeted item)

FSA, HSA, and Depend Care Account contributions are capped; check current allowed amounts.

Medical Expense Reimbursement

The leader may be reimbursed for copays or medical expenses not otherwise covered by insurance.

Medical Expense Reimbursement L. \$ _____

Pre-Tax Contribution

Contributions up to the amount permissible by the IRS are made to Portico Benefit Services and/or other approved depositories. The minister should contact Portico for details on the IRS annual limits for retirement plan contributions.

Pre-Tax Contribution \$ _____ (made by the minister; not an additional budgeted item)

Related Items

Vacation

Sabbath is a commandment of God; therefore, weekly time off and annual vacation are necessary for the minister's personal physical, mental, and spiritual health as well as for their leadership by example. The Synod requires a minimum of four weeks annual vacation, which includes four Sundays, and a minimum of one day off each week. Coverage should be arranged so that the minister is not "on call" during scheduled vacation time. The ministry employer may grant additional vacation time based on the length of service in the ministry.

Vacation of _____ weeks per year (including Sundays)

The 2024 rate for Sunday supply worship leadership will be \$135 for one service, PLUS \$50 for each additional service on the same day, PLUS mileage reimbursement at the 2024 IRS rate.

To budget for supply coverage of the minister's vacation, multiply the number of Sundays offered in vacation (minimum 4) x \$135 (+\$50 per additional service) + an estimate of mileage reimbursement.

Estimated Supply Expense \$ _____ (to be paid to supply leaders)

Leave of Absence

A leave of absence should be negotiated between the minister and ministry employer (council or board) at least 14 days prior to the leave request. If emergency leave is required in which the 14 day notice is not possible, the Executive Committee may grant the leave with the approval of the full council or board.

Sick Leave

Rostered ministers and congregation employees shall receive ten (10) days of paid sick leave per year. Illness of longer than two (2) months should be referred to Portico Benefits. Sick leave may accrue up to a maximum of thirty (30) working days. The decision to grant additional paid sick leave is at the discretion of the congregation council.

Family Leave

In the event of an illness in the immediate family (spouse, children, parents, brother, sister, grandparent, grandchildren, mother-in-law, father-in-law, or legal guardian) that requires the rostered minister or employee's presence, accrued sick leave may be utilized for this purpose.

Maternity/Paternity/Adoptive Leave

Leaves under this section are for the purpose of issues related to parenting, and may only be taken after six (6) months of full-time employment. Rostered ministers and employees who will be absent due to maternity/ paternity/adoptive leave are requested to provide as much advance notice as possible. Eight (8) weeks of paid maternity/paternity/adoptive leave are available to a rostered minister or an employee following the birth of a child or an adoption of a child less than one year old. Such leave must be taken within fifteen (15) weeks of the birth or adoption. If medically necessary, additional time may be requested. Rostered ministers and employees desiring additional leave, either prior to or following the birth of their child or adoption of their child less than one year old, may use accrued vacation or sick time to supplement time off with the approval of the congregation council. The rostered minister or employee agrees to return to work for a minimum of six (6) months after taking leave.

Vacation

Rostered ministers are granted four (4) weeks of paid vacation time including four (4) Sundays each year as a minimum guideline. Rostered ministers should notify the congregation council at least thirty (30) days in advance of vacation and make arrangements for the proper pastoral coverage while out of town. Additional vacation time may be granted to rostered ministers by the congregation council. Unused vacation time will be paid to the rostered minister upon resignation of call or separation from call. Full benefits will be paid through the end of unused vacation time at time of resignation or separation. Congregational employees are granted paid vacation time according to congregational guidelines.

Compassionate and Emergency Leave

In the event of a death in a rostered minister or employee's immediate family (spouse, children, parents, brother, sister, grandparent, grandchildren, mother-in-law, father-in-law, or legal guardian) five (5) days paid leave will be granted to attend the funeral and to deal with family affairs. Additional time may be granted by the congregation council.

Jury Duty

This synod recognizes an employee's legal and civic duty to serve if called to jury duty or subpoenaed as a witness. A rostered minister or employee who is required to serve as such will be entitled to full pay and benefits during the period of such service. Rostered ministers and employees are required to report to work when not required to be present in court, and to call in daily to report their status on returning to work.

Leave Without Pay

Leave without pay may be granted to a rostered minister or employee, for personal reasons, after due consideration has been given to the work requirements of the congregation. Leave without pay may be granted for a period of up to two (2) months. Such leaves of absence are granted by the congregation council only in consultation with the bishop and the Synod Council. The congregation will hold a rostered minister or employee's position open for the leave period, while on an approved leave without pay. If the rostered minister or employee is unable to return to work at the conclusion of the leave period, their position may or may not continue to be held open. This decision will be made, on a case-by-case basis, by the bishop in consultation with the

congregation council. If the individual has been on a leave without pay for medical reasons, a medical release from their physician to return to work must be submitted.

Disability Leave

This synod and its congregations are committed to accommodate qualified rostered ministers and employees with disabilities, to the extent it can do so without undue burden. If, for example, a qualified employee is temporarily disabled and provides the congregation a medical certification recommending leave, the congregation will provide unpaid leave as an accommodation to that employee if it can do so without undue burden. Requests for accommodation should be made in writing, and the rostered minister or employee will need to work with the bishop or his/her delegate to determine the appropriate accommodation and documentation needed. Long-term Disability claims are handled through Portico Benefit Services. See the Portico website for requirements for guidelines to apply. The ministry employer will pay full compensation for the eight week period until Portico Disability Benefits begin. Ministry employers may explore cost benefit of purchasing short-term disability insurance to cover that eight-week period. The Office of the Bishop will work with the congregation council to secure pastoral coverage during the period of disability.

Military Leave

Rostered ministers and regular full-time and regular part-time employees who perform military service will be granted leaves of absence for such service in compliance with state and federal laws. For purposes of this handbook, military service in the performance of duty on a voluntary or involuntary basis in the U.S. Armed forces, the Reserves, or the National Guard under competent authority, and includes active duty for training, inactive duty training, and full-time National Guard duty. Vacation or accrued sick time is not to be used for this leave. Rostered ministers or employees who are called to military service will be paid during their leave at a rate of 50% of their normal wages and benefits will be paid in full. Rostered ministers are asked to notify the congregation council and bishop and submit copies of military orders as soon as they become aware of the military obligation. Employees are asked to notify the pastor and congregation council as soon as they become aware of the military obligation and submit copies of military orders. An employee's eligibility for reinstatement after completion of military service is determined in accordance with applicable federal and state laws.

Sabbatical Leave

In January 2004, the Synod Council approved the following Sabbatical Guidelines:

Vision: Throughout Holy Scripture, from Genesis' beginnings to Jesus' ministry and the church's witness, accounts of holy activity are clearly set apart by rest, quiet places, and time for restoration. God has given us, God's people, the Sabbath pattern as a time of renewal, a time to be reminded of whose we are and what we are called to do, a time of rest that refreshes us for life.

In the lives of ministers of the Allegheny Synod, time apart from the regular responsibilities of ministry benefit both the ministry setting and the minister. Over an extended period, a Sabbatical, rest separate from the immediate expectations of congregational ministry, can renew a congregation and refresh a leader's sense of call for ministry. As the minister is released from the regular responsibilities of the call, it does not mean that congregational life is suspended. In fact, many congregations report that the Sabbatical was a time for growth and renewal.

Each Sabbatical will be unique. Sabbatical is clearly permission for a minister to be blessed by time away. In the church, as we discuss Sabbaticals for ministers, the challenge is for us to pursue its meaning for each Christian community. These guidelines are intended to help congregations and ministers create a mutual plan of rest and renewal for ministry.

Purpose, Rationale, and Expectations

We are familiar with the Sabbath, the seventh day of creation, when God rested. The word “Sabbatical” is derived from Sabbath, and is defined as a time reserved for rest, research, renewal, enrichment, learning, spiritual growth, travel, and strengthening of ministry gifts. Sabbaticals provide opportunities to see new directions, renew relationships, to begin new pursuits. Nourishing one’s soul and changing perspective requires a change in one’s space and place. Jesus spent forty days in the wilderness, after which his ministry set off on a new course.

Preparation for a Sabbatical is important, and openness to the movement of God’s Spirit in the life of people and minister is vital. A Sabbatical is arranged in consideration of the congregation’s ministry. It can be expected that while a minister is on Sabbatical, congregational life –worship, education, outreach, evangelism, etc., will continue. Sabbatical leave is not a vacation, nor is it only continuing education. While life-long learning and continuing education are vital for all, and ministers are expected to participate in regular opportunities to grow and be strengthened, the Sabbatical is an enriching component of ministry, which may include particular continuing education opportunities, but most likely will encompass more. Necessarily, the plans for a Sabbatical will be mutually detailed well in advance of departure.

Many congregations reflect that while their minister was away they learned new things about themselves and the ministry they share with one another. Thus, renewal of God’s people and minister occurs. Sabbaticals provide a means by which the congregation can minister to their leader. The Sabbatical may also bring into being a Sabbatical for the congregation, a time to rethink the “busyness” of congregational life, a time to reevaluate the congregation’s relationship with God, a time for the Holy Spirit to lead their ministry in new ways. Most importantly, the congregation gains a minister who returns to God’s calling with renewed vigor, insight, appreciation, and vision.

Ministers of the church in the Allegheny Synod need Sabbath time to break away from the stress and strain and the 24/7 nature of ministry. A Sabbatical gives a minister more than a time to study, learn, and rest. To keep the Sabbath is to renew one’s trust in God to provide by abstaining from those activities that provide material resources. A Sabbatical provides ministers time to be nurtured by God, reflect on their relationship with God. A Sabbatical gives the minister an opportunity to reflect on God’s call and discover the importance of who they are in the light of who God wants them to be.

Benefits of Sabbaticals

Sabbaticals provide a means for the congregation to gain new insight into mission and ministry and to minister to their called leader. A Sabbatical leave will benefit the congregation, the church leadership, and their shared ministry. A few of these benefits are listed below.

For the Ministry

An opportunity to show support for the minister and their family; a time to develop lay leadership by assuming some of the minister’s responsibilities; an opportunity for learning new ideas to enhance their ministry; renewed congregational leadership; opportunities for spiritual

growth; leadership stability, while not losing an effective and respected minister to burnout or a new call.

For the Ministry Leadership

A time to renew their energy and rediscover their zeal for ministry; an opportunity for learning new ideas to enhance their ministry; a time for prayer, rest, and renewing their relationship with God; a time to spend with family and friends to renew and strengthen relationships; an extended time for focused study and spiritual growth.

Mutual Benefits

Renewal of the covenant between the leader and the congregation; improved understanding of each other's perspective: the leader will experience more of life in the pew during the Sabbatical, and the lay leadership will come to a greater understating of how the congregation's ministry is renewed, revitalized, and stimulated; an opportunity for learning new ideas to enhance their ministry

Suggested Sabbatical Guidelines

A Sabbatical is encouraged for ministers of the Allegheny Synod after 5-7 years of service in the same setting, beginning after three years of First Call Theological Education.

The length of Sabbatical is encouraged to be a minimum of 3 months, though each Sabbatical may vary in length, depending on the covenant agreed upon by the congregation's council and the minister. It is strongly encouraged that the entire Sabbatical be taken continuously to allow for disengagement from pastoral responsibilities and duties.

Sabbatical time is not considered vacation time or continuing education time for the minister but a separate experience of renewal for continued ministry.

Planning for a Sabbatical can begin anytime. When possible, it is suggested that the discussion begin early in a ministry.

Final preparations are encouraged at least 6 months to a year in advance, including the writing of a covenant, which provides full compensation and benefits for the minister and outlines the vision and practical details of the Sabbatical.

A covenant designed by the congregation's council, or its designated representatives, and the minister is encouraged. The congregation's leadership usually does the final affirmation of the covenant. The time of planning of Sabbatical should focus on the vision and hopes for the Sabbatical time as well as practical arrangements regarding pastoral coverage and financial considerations for the congregation. Conversation with the synod can help facilitate this planning and implementation so that it is intentional and mutually beneficial for both the congregation and the minister.

As Sabbatical coverage for a congregation is discussed, there are resources within the synod to help in planning for pastoral coverage. Possibilities for Sundays include utilizing the gifts of retired pastors, worship led by authorized lay leaders of the synod, youth led worship services, hymn sings, etc. Coverage for pastoral care may be arranged in a variety of ways, including support from area pastors.

2025 Compensation and Benefits Manual *(continuation)*

It is expected that a minister will return to their call from the congregation after their Sabbatical. It is suggested that in the Sabbatical covenant this expectation is discerned between the congregation council and the minister, with at least one to two years of continued service after the Sabbatical being the norm.

Upon return from Sabbatical, the minister is encouraged to provide a reflection or report to the congregation about the Sabbatical experience. This can be flexible and creative in its form, yet, provide an opportunity for congregation and minister to learn from and explore the benefits of the Sabbatical time.

A comprehensive list of sabbatical resources, ideas, retreat centers, etc. are available at www.alleghenysynod.org or by contacting office@alleghenysynod.com or 814-942-1042

Worksheet: Estimate of Household Expenses

To calculate the percentage of salary to be designated as Housing Allowance for tax purposes

Housing Allowance for year extending from _____ 20__ to _____ 20__

Estimated expenses:

- A. Rent for leased property or payments on home purchase
(down payments, acquisition costs, mortgage payments of principal) \$ _____
- B. Garage rental (if not included in A) \$ _____
- C. Utilities *(gas, electricity, water, sewer, oil, telephone, trash removal, cable, internet, firewood or other heating fuel)* \$ _____
- D. Insurance
(homeowner's, fire, extended coverage, liability, contents, flood) \$ _____
- E. Repairs and maintenance \$ _____
- F. Furnishings and improvements \$ _____
- G. Interest and taxes (may want to itemize these separately) \$ _____
- H. Other housing expenses (list in detail)

If the minister is living in a parsonage and there is no landline, the congregation may pay a monthly stipend to help cover the cost of cell phone usage related to the church.

The congregation may provide internet at a parsonage. \$ _____

Total \$ _____

Congregational Council Action on Housing Allowance

To provide a record of Housing Allowance designation for tax and audit purposes

The _____ Committee advised the Council that under the tax laws an ordained minister of the gospel is not subject to Federal Income Tax with respect to the “rental allowance paid as part of compensation to the pastor used to rent or provide a home.” Where the minister owns a home, the amount of the Housing Allowance will be an amount equal to the fair rental value of the home, including furnishings and appliances, plus the cost of utilities.

The Council, after considering the statement of the Rev. _____ setting forth estimates of the amount expected to be spent to rent or otherwise provide a home during the period of _____ 20__ to _____ 20__ and in light of the Federal Income Tax law and of the established salary level, on motion duly made and seconded, adopted the following resolution:

Resolved that the Rev. _____ receive a Salary of \$ _____ and a Housing Allowance of \$ _____ for the period _____ 20__ to _____ 20__, to be so designated in the official records.

Respectfully submitted,

Secretary of Council

Notification of Housing Allowance by Congregation

To provide a record for the minister of the Housing Allowance designation for tax and audit purposes

Dear Rev. _____:

This is to advise you that at a meeting of the Congregation Council, held on _____ 20__, your Housing Allowance for the period _____ 20__ to _____ 20__ was officially designated and fixed in the amount of \$ _____.

Secretary of Council

NOTE: Retain the original of each of these agreements in the congregation files, send a copy to the Allegheny Synod Office, 918 Hickory Street, Hollidaysburg, PA 16686 and provide a copy to the pastor.

Definition of Compensation, Benefits and Responsibilities of the Pastor

Prepared by: _____

For the Reverend: _____

For the period of: _____ to _____

A. COMPENSATION

The congregation will provide the following annual compensation:

- 1. Base cash salary
Parsonage included \$ _____
Parsonage NOT included \$ _____
2. Social Security Allowance (1/2 of 15.3%) \$ _____
3. If parsonage is included:
Utilities allowance \$ _____
Furnishing allowance \$ _____
Housing equity allowance \$ _____

B. PENSION AND OTHER BENEFITS

The congregation will sponsor the pastor in the pension and other benefits program through Portico Benefit Services.

(Sponsorship includes health, pension, disability and life insurance. Health insurance is expected to be provided in full by the congregation for the pastor, spouse and family where applicable. If the health coverage is waived, a certificate of insurance must be provided to the Allegheny Synod Office. Full cost coverage is expected for this option.)

- ELCA Pension at _____ % (12% recommended) \$ _____
ELCA Health, Disability and Life Insurance \$ _____
Other insurance benefits \$ _____

C. EXPENSES

The congregation will provide the following expenses related to this pastor's ministry.

- 1. Automobile/travel/mileage allowance (IRS guideline for mileage recommended) \$ _____
2. Other professional expenses (See Compensation and Benefits manual) \$ _____
3. Official meetings of the Synod \$ _____
(i.e. Bishop's Convocation, Synod Assembly, First Call Theological Education, Synodical Committee meetings, etc.)

2025 Compensation and Benefits Manual (continuation)

- 4. Continuing Education \$ _____
(Minimum of \$700 from the congregation.)
- 5. Moving expenses \$ _____
- 6. Other expenses \$ _____

Please list: _____

D. AGREEMENT

- 1. Vacation time of _____ weeks per year including _____ Sundays.
- 2. Continuing Education time of _____ weeks per year. *(Recommended 2 weeks per year)*
- 3. Sick time of _____ days per year.
(Recommended 10 days per year. Congregation Council may decide whether time can be accumulated)
- 4. Participation in the First Call Theological Education event where applicable.
(Congregations calling a pastor in the first three years of ministry are expected to contribute \$300 per year for 3 years to help offset the cost of this event.)
- 5. Ongoing care through a Mutual Ministry Committee
- 6. Up to two months of continued salary, housing and other contributions to Portico Benefits in a 12-month period in the event the pastor is physically or mentally disabled and,
- 7. Where applicable, parental leave up to eight weeks with full salary, housing and benefits.

E. OTHER PROVISIONS

Special emphasis of the pastor and special encouragement and support from the congregation:

- 1. During this time period, the pastor will give special attention in ministry to the following:
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
- 2. The congregation will support the pastor in these emphasis' in the following ways:
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____

F. OTHER MATTERS

(Accountabilities, service on Synodical committees, work in church camps or other boards)

2025 Compensation and Benefits Manual *(continuation)*

We, the undersigned, certify that the necessary approvals of the congregation and congregation council have been granted for the provisions so set forth in this agreement.

Congregation President: _____
Print Sign

Congregation Secretary: _____
Print Sign

Date: _____

I certify and accept the above statement:

The Reverend _____

Date: _____

CONFERENCE REPORTS

Blair-Huntingdon Conference

2023-2024

This year was a time of transition and loss in our Conference. Retired pastor Rev. Denise Arpino, most recently having served Simpson-Temple in Altoona, died in July. Retired pastor Rev. Ed Harshbarger, most recently of St. Matthew Martinsburg, died in December. Rev. Jaime Olson concluded his call in Duncansville following twenty years of service.

Current and retired clergy met for text study most weeks at local coffee shops and restaurants as well as for Conference meetings at hosting congregations or at one of our area parks.

In July, Rev. Drew McCaffery led a group of youth and adult leaders from around the Synod to Florida to participate in relief efforts to areas of the Gulf Coast damaged by Hurricane Ian. Our Conference youth hosted a spaghetti dinner to raise funds toward travel expenses.

In August, thanks to the organizational work of Rev. Amanda McCaffery, we welcomed folks from across the Synod to Lutheran Day at the Curve in conjunction with “Faith Night” at PNG Field in Altoona.

In September, Rev. Amanda McCaffery, Rev. MartyJo Stellabotte, and I worked with several of the congregations at the southern end of the Conference on the ELCA’s Civic Life and Faith study and sent our feedback to the task force that is writing that social statement.

In October, our Conference youth hosted a Halloween costume party for residents of the Lutheran Home in Hollidaysburg. Activities included music, bingo, and party

games with refreshments.

In November, our Conference and ‘Chef’ Drew McCaffery welcomed rostered ministers and their guests to Pre-Thanksgiving Dinner Church, hosted at Bethany in Altoona; Rev. Kevin Shock presided.

In December, our Conference was honored to host The Weekend, the Synod’s first junior-senior high retreat since 2019. Over seventy youth, adult leaders, and volunteers were warmly welcomed by Rev. Brandon Cian and the congregation of St. James in Huntingdon, who graciously allowed us to “take over” their regular Sunday worship service. We look forward to returning this year to continue this important ministry.

In February, three of our Conference pastors braved the 40 degree lake, and two of our pastors utilized the common sense God gave them to lend support from the shore, at the annual Polar Plunge at Canoe Creek State Park to benefit Pennsylvania Special Olympics.

In April, the Conference planned a “Wacky” bowling party for all ages at Morrison’s Cove Park Lanes in Martinsburg as a fundraiser to benefit Lutheran Campus Ministries at Penn State.

We look forward to another year of doing ministry together in the heart of the Allegheny Synod.

Respectfully submitted,

The Rev. Traci A. Marriott, Dean
Pastor, St. Matthew Martinsburg
blairhuntingdonlutherans@gmail.com

Clearfield Conference

The Clearfield Conference includes nine congregations, four of which are in formal partnerships and five in informal partnerships. Rostered leaders are: The Rev. Christine Roe (First Faith Lutheran Cooperative), The Rev. Vicki Beilfuss (Holy Shepherd Parish), and The Rev. Robert Way (retired).

For First Faith Lutheran Cooperative and Holy Shepherd Parish, each co-op/parish continues to enjoy various ministries, faith growth opportunities and events both separately and as a parish. These two formal partnerships find much value in being in ministry together.

Ministry Highlights:

First Lutheran's "All God's Animals Pet Pantry" helps senior pet owners struggle to care for their beloved companions. "Lunch Bunch," a ministry of Shepherd of the Hills, is a monthly potluck for seniors that brings much joy to the participants.

With Pr. Way retiring in January, St. John, Clearfield is in transition discerning their future. Five other congregations in Luthersburg, Rockton, Olanta, and Curwensville are also without a called pastor. With help from lay leaders and pastors, both within the synod and ecumenically, these congregations are still able to worship and receive Holy Communion.

We are taking extra time as a conference to gather together to better know each other and envision new possibilities. At our Fall caucus in November, 76+ folks gathered for intentional conversation about who God is

calling us to be. In January, 80+ shared a potluck meal and then shared God's sacred meal in worship around the (very, very long) table. At the time of this writing, we are planning a gathering in April for intentional sharing our stories about life in ministry within each congregation and our hopes for the future.

Respectfully submitted,

The Rev. Vicki Beilfuss
Clearfield Conference Dean

Johnstown Conference

2023/2024 was a year of transition for a number of congregations. Three pastors left their calls to take calls in other synods and one pastor retired from his call.

- Pastor Mark Fischer resigned his call at First Lutheran, Portage and is currently serving as the interim pastor at St. David's Lutheran Church, Davidsville
- Pastors Faron Johnson, Julia Sprenkle, and Scott Klimke took calls in other synods.
- The Johnstown Conference welcomes Pastor Jim West as the interim pastor at Christ Lutheran, Westmont.
- Vicar Christy Harford has moved from Trinity, Sidman to serving First Lutheran, Johnstown and Benscreek Lutheran as she finishes her seminary classes and prepares to start her internship year at these two congregations.
- The conference welcomes Vicar Claudia Plows as vicar at Trinity, Sidman
- With the retirement of Pastor Kevin McNamara from St. Paul's Mundy Corner, seminary student Jennifer Bobolsky is serving at St. Paul Lutheran, Mundy's Corner and St. John's, Summerhill.

Currently, there are three congregations in the conference working on Mission Site Profiles: Good Shepherd in Windber, Mt. Calvary in Johnstown, and St. David's in Davidsville. As has been the case for the past several years, the number of churches looking to call a pastor are significantly more than the number of pastors seeking to change calls throughout the ELCA.

This spring Moxham Lutheran Church and Christ Lutheran, Westmont began exploring the possibility of becoming a parish. The two congregations have entered into a period of discernment and engagement to see if being in a parish arrangement is the best way forward for both congregations.

Since November, 2023, Pastor Mark Fischer has been leading worship monthly for the men at Federal Correctional Institution (FCI)-Loretto. In 2021, one of

the men at FCI-Loretto communicated with the Maryland Lutheran Prison Ministry program and requested to see if it would be possible to have Lutheran worship services at FCI-Loretto. They in turn contacted the Allegheny Synod. After waiting out the pandemic, the Allegheny Synod and FCI-Loretto began a partnership with the prison with Pastor Fischer volunteering his time to lead worship at the correctional institution. Approximately 65 or so men out of a population of 700 men come to the services which include the Sacrament of Holy Communion. In March, 2024, Pastor Fischer was asked if he would be willing to also lead worship at the camp at FCI-Loretto; this will begin in April, 2024. Chaplain Statler made Pastor Fischer aware of the need for new(er) hymnals as the ones at the prison were falling apart. Thanks to a donation from the Laurel Highlands Conference, 75 LBW hymnals were given to the prison ministry at FCI-Loretto.

At the Spring Caucus Meeting held April 16, 2024 Pastor Nancy Hoover was elected to serve as the conference dean through June, 2026.

Submitted,

Pastor Mark W. Fischer
Johnstown Conference Dean

Laurel Highlands Conference

Comprised of 26 churches, the Laurel Highlands Conference serves as a part of the Allegheny Synod within Somerset County, Pennsylvania and Grantsville, Maryland. Presently, 12 churches function as single-point parishes and 14 churches function through partnerships including (1) three-point parish and (2) four-point parishes.

Ordained clergy and vicars gather for monthly meetings hosted at various churches within the Conference. These meetings provide opportunity for worship, sharing of information and needs related to the Conference and Synod, and the mutual support and upbuilding of one another. Experiencing several vacancies within the Conference, ordained clergy often serve within their respective call and as vacancy pastors for sister churches. The Conference is also served through the sharing of talents and leadership by vicars and authorized lay worship leaders.

During the past year, the Conference has experienced the disaffiliation from the ELCA of St Paul Lutheran (Buckstown, PA) and the closure of St Luke Lutheran (Rockwood, PA), whose final Mass was held on November 5th, 2023. We mourn, with confidence in the promise of resurrection, the death of Rev Linda McElroy Thomas who entered the Church Triumphant on November 3rd, 2023. Vicar Christy Harford began serving at Benscreek Lutheran (Hollsopple, PA); Rev Regina Holliday was

ordained to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament and installed as pastor at Horner Lutheran (Stoystown, PA) on March 7th, 2024; and Vicar Allen Stump received a positive approval through candidacy and is currently in the call process while serving the churches of Christ Casebeer Lutheran (Somerset, PA) and Laurel Trinity Lutheran (Jennerstown, PA).

The churches of the Laurel Highlands Conference serve our neighbors through various ministries and partnerships. During the 2024 Lenten season, the churches joined together to share in an appeal to support the ministry of Opportunity Palestine. Through this appeal, God's people of the Laurel Highlands Conference contributed \$9,200 + to support our brothers and sisters in Christ, and neighbors, in Palestine and the Holy Land!

With thanksgiving to God for the invitation and faithfulness in the partnership of the Gospel, we rejoice in our Lord's promises while witnessing to the faith, grace, mercy, love, and hope that God's people and the leaders of the Church share throughout our communities and the world.

Respectfully submitted in the Peace of Christ +

The Rev Tyler J Graham, STS
Dean, Laurel Highlands Conference
Pastor, Salisbury Lutheran Parish

Nittany Conference

This year, the rostered leaders of the Nittany Conference have met monthly, either using Zoom or in person. These gatherings have offered the opportunity for worship and prayer together, idea and resource sharing, and collegial support. These gatherings have been well received by our colleagues and provide helpful opportunities to walk with each other and support our congregations and ministries navigate the challenges of ministry.

This year the Nittany Conference has welcomed Pastor Laura Waltermire who was called to serve St. Mark Evangelical Lutheran Church in Pleasant Gap. Pastor Waltermire is a graduate of Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa and is originally from Messiah Lutheran Church in Rockwood, PA.

We have bid farewell to Pastor Susan Williamson who served Pine Hall Lutheran Church in State College and

Gatesburg Lutheran Church in Warrior's Mark and has accepted a call to serve a congregation in the New England Synod. At this writing, Pine Hall and Gatesburg are in the call process. At the end of April, we Pastor Brent Book will retire from ministry after more than 25 years. He has been serving Zion Lutheran Church in Boalsburg. Zion Lutheran is beginning the call process in seeking their next pastor.

I am grateful for the opportunity to serve within the Nittany Conference and thank God for the people and leaders here.

In Christ,

Deacon Alicia Anderson
Nittany Conference Dean
Campus Minister with Lutheran Campus Ministry at Penn State

10 Things to Know about 1517 Media

Spring 2024

1. **All Creation Sings** continues to expand and provide new resources for your congregation to connect with each other, your community, and our world through worship and prayer. With the use of pew editions in your church; accompaniment options on piano, organ, and guitar; intergenerational activities and sessions with **Gather Together**; and **Kids Celebrate** booklets for the youngest in your church, you can help support the rhythms of the whole church year and give extra attention to themes of healing and wholeness, creation care, justice and peace, praise and lament. augsburgfortress.org/allcreationsings
2. The Spanish-language **Oye Mi Voz: Un Libro de Oraciones para la Prisión** joins the popular **Hear My Voice: A Prison Prayer Book** in supporting people in the criminal justice system and those who minister to them. This collaborative effort between the ELCA and Augsburg Fortress encourages all in the criminal justice system to spend time in prayer, trusting in God's never-failing love for them and the whole world. augsburgfortress.org/prison-ministry
3. Augsburg Fortress released the first two books in its new Mouth House series. Every synod staff and congregational call committee can benefit from reading **Call to Allyship: Preparing Your Congregation for Leaders of Color** edited by Rev. Angela T. !Khabeb and featuring authors of color from throughout the ELCA. **Ashes to Action: Finding Myself at the Intersection of the Minneapolis Uprising** by Shari Seifert makes an excellent group read. augsburgfortress.org/mouthhouse
4. 1517 Media was awarded \$1.25 million from Lilly Endowment Inc. through its Nurturing Children through Worship and Prayer initiative. Funding will support research and the development of new resources for children, families, church leaders, and congregational education. Look for more news about this new multi-year program, **Unbridled Presence**.
5. Augsburg Fortress continues to publish vibrant music to engage the worshiping assembly. Our new choral music features an exciting anthem by Nathan Zullinger, "**God You Spin the Whirling Planets.**" **Living in Wonder** is the final collection of Susan Palo Cherwien's hymn texts, featuring 21 new assembly songs. Our free **Summer 2024 Music Clinics** feature musicians extraordinaire David Cherwien and Mark Sedio. augsburgfortress.org/music/summer-music-clinics
6. **Sparkhouse Digital** continues to support early childhood programming, Sunday school, confirmation, and youth ministry. New mini camps, leader supports, and other activities are added quarterly! Subscribers can access **Digital Activity Kits** that help congregations provide resources for use in the home or as a supplement to in-person faith formation activities. sparkhousedigital.com
7. Sparkhouse continues to release books supporting youth and young adults in their faith journeys. **Unscheduled Grace: 40 Reflections and Prayers for College Students** by campus pastors Katie Fick and Matt Marohl accompanies students through the changes, challenges, and joys of college living. **Unearthing Us**, the third collection of poetry by Joe Davis, will release in July along with a facilitator guide by Rev. Jia Starr Brown. wearesparkhouse.org
8. Fortress Press publishes scholarship that matters in the academy, the church, and the community. Recent releases include **Our Trespasses: White Churches and the Taking of American Neighborhoods**, a timely examination of how race, geography, policy, and religion have created haunted landscapes and uncomfortable truths. Also of interest to churches are **Luther for Everyone: Who He Was and Why He Still Matters** and **Bonhoeffer for the Church: An Introduction**. fortresspress.com
9. Our Broadleaf Books imprint expands the mind, nourishes the soul, and cultivates the common good. Recent releases include **Trash: A Poor White Journey**—a personal look at economic divides—**Psalms of My People: A Story of Black Liberation as Told through Hip-Hop**, and **A Faith of Many Rooms: Inhabiting a More Spacious Christianity**. broadleafbooks.com
10. Our Beaming Books imprint sparks the imagination and equips kids and families to live full and flourishing lives, together. Recent releases include **What If I Can't Explain God?, I Love You Mucho Mucho**, and **Everyday Brave**. beamingbooks.com

Want to learn more? Follow us on social media, sign up for our free e-newsletters, and connect with us at the Youth Gathering and Music Clinics this summer!

To learn more about the five imprints of 1517 Media, scan here to watch a video that we created for the 2022 Churchwide Assembly.



Allegheny Lutheran Social Ministries (ALSM)

2024 Message to the Allegheny Synod, ELCA

Greetings and blessings to each of you from myself and the leadership of ALSM!

ALSM is the only regional faith-based not-for-profit organization offering services that span the generations. ALSM has been responding to the needs of our communities for over 75 years.

You may have noticed a few changes around ALSM. Change is inevitable, and exciting, and allows for new growth and opportunities. Some of these changes include:

- The administrative office has moved to the campus of The Lutheran Home at Hollidaysburg and the Logan building has been sold. Team members at ALSM's administrative office have been working remotely for some time now. The sale of this asset will allow us to be good stewards of our resources and focus on our ministry, programs, and communities.

The new administrative mailing address is:
916 Hickory Street, Hollidaysburg, PA 16648

- For the first time in more than 25 years, ALSM has no debt.
- We have refreshed our brand and will be launching a new website this summer to better serve our customers and prospective customers.
- We are maximizing our resources to recruit and retain the most qualified team members.

The ALSM Board of Trustees named me as President and CEO of ALSM after I served as interim CEO. I am excited to see our organization's vision and plans set into motion. We will continue to honor ALSM's tradition of providing quality care and support to those served while continually evolving our services and offerings. We have a great team at ALSM. The future is bright!

Our team and I are excited about these changes that enable ALSM to continue our tradition of providing exceptional services well into the future.

At the heart of our mission is the ability to provide benevolent care for those whose resources have been depleted through unexpected changes in circumstances as a resident. Each year, approximately individuals who reside in ALSM's senior living communities are provided these funds--totaling more than \$1.7 million--in order to be able to live as independently as possible. We are grateful that no one has been asked to leave because of lack of funds.

We are truly blessed to be able to serve the needs of people throughout eight counties in Central PA with the following programs and services:

- **Senior Communities** (The Lutheran Home at Hollidaysburg and The Oaks at Pleasant Gap)
- **Rental Assistance Senior Housing** (Lutheran Commons at Berlin Pike and Lutheran Commons at Pleasant Gap)
- **Children's Services** (Head Start, Early Head Start, Family Center, Growing Years Early Learning Centers, Kid Stop before-and-after programs and PRE-K Counts programs)



"To serve people through a ministry of love, compassion, and mercy in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ."

A few highlights from our programs and services include:

Senior Living Communities

- Volunteers are welcome on campus! We welcome you to become a volunteer. If you would like to discuss volunteer opportunities, please contact:

Hannah Myers – The Lutheran Home at Hollidaysburg, 814-696-4527

Sara Wright – The Oaks at Pleasant Gap, 814-359-2782

Blairmont Commons, Hickory Commons, and The Lutheran Home at Hollidaysburg

- Blairmont and Hickory Commons cottages offer residents a stress-free lifestyle. Exterior and interior maintenance is included in the cost, allowing residents the time to enjoy their favorite activities. The cottages are energy efficient and handicapped accessible so that residents may “age in place” in this secure neighborhood setting. These independent living residences attract individuals aged 55 and over. The waiting list for these cottages continues to grow.
- The bright and spacious apartments at Hillcrest are perched atop the famous “Double Dips” in historic Hollidaysburg, overlooking ALSM’s Hickory Commons campus. Small pets are welcome. Meal plans are available with dining room and to-go options. Monthly housekeeping is provided. One and two-bedroom apartments are available currently.
- The Lutheran Home continues to focus on individuals who require short-term rehab. Many times, persons who have suffered a stroke or are recovering from a broken limb or limb replacement surgery may benefit from therapy services in a nursing home setting. In addition, long-term care residents are also accepted.
- Short-term respite stays are available. Respite stays allow family caregivers to take a break from caregiving, tend to their own healthcare needs, go on vacation, or attend a family celebration such as a wedding or graduation.
- For more information or to schedule a tour, contact Jeremy Schrader at 814-696-4527.

The Oaks at Pleasant Gap

- The Oaks at Pleasant Gap campus continues to serve the needs of those who desire personal care services as well as independent living apartments and cottages.
- The final cottage cul-de-sac is under construction. Only two single cottage homes remain available to be reserved. For information or to schedule a tour of The Oaks, contact Peggy Brumbaugh at 814.359.2782.
- Short-term respite stays are available in personal care. Respite stays allow family caregivers to take a break from caregiving, tend to their own healthcare, go on vacation or attend a family celebration, for example a wedding or graduation.

Children’s Services

- Growing Years Early Learning Center and Kid Stop managers completed educational courses through the Keystone STARs program for continuous quality improvement. The centers have a rating of 3 STAR or higher out of 4 STARs. Those centers include Bedford and Johnstown Kid Stops and Growing Years in Bedford and Johnstown. PRE-K Counts is offered through Growing Years in Bedford and Johnstown.
- Head Start continued partnerships with the Intermediate Units 08 and 11 to provide inclusive preschool programming to children in Bedford and Fulton counties.
- Head Start continued collaborations with the Chestnut Ridge, Northern Bedford, and Central Fulton school districts for preschool programming.
- The Family Center of Bedford County serves families through home visits, monthly playgroups, fathers’ groups, and special events.

Lutheran Commons at Berlin Pike

- For those seniors who meet income guidelines, there is also a 32-unit apartment building, Lutheran Commons at Berlin Pike. For information on Lutheran Commons, call 814.696.4500 or 800.400.2285.

continued

Lutheran Commons at Pleasant Gap

- For those seniors who meet income guidelines, there is also a 14-unit apartment building, Lutheran Commons at Pleasant Gap. For information on Lutheran Commons, call 814.696.4500 or 800.400.2285.

We invite you to join us at this year's outing, scheduled for Monday, July 22 at Iron Masters Country Club. Last summer ALSM's annual golf outing raised more than \$42,000 for benevolent care. For more information, please contact the Advancement Office at 814-696-4516.

Please know we appreciate your prayerful and financial support and thank you for your partnership in our mission of serving people with love, compassion, and mercy in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

For more details on ALSM programs, I invite you to contact us by phone at 814-696-4500 or visit our website at www.alsm.org.

Together We Can Do Great Things!

Christopher Reighard
President/CEO

ALSM
916 Hickory Street
Hollidaysburg, PA 16648
814.696.4500 • 800.400.2285
www.alsm.org

Candidacy and Leadership Regions 7 and 8



Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America

Now there are varieties of gifts but the same Spirit, and there are varieties of services but the same Lord, and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. 1 Corinthians 12:4-6, NRSV

Friends in Christ, grace to you and peace as you gather in assembly.

When I talk with folks, I am sometimes asked what I do for my job. When I was a parish pastor, it was relatively easy to describe. Every day in parish ministry is different, but most people, even folks who are not church folks or who actively practice a different faith, have some understanding of worshiping communities and the people who lead those communities. It is not quite as easy to describe this ministry to community members or new candidacy partners. I usually say something like, “I work with people who want to become pastors or deacons. And, I work with the people *who interview the people* who want to be pastors or deacons in our church.”

The follow-up question might be: How do people *actually become* a deacon or pastor in the ELCA?

We trust that the Holy Spirit nudges candidates and guides discernment. A candidate will engage in education, practical experiences, and the candidacy process in their home synod. A synod candidacy committee meets confidentially to engage with candidates to interview, have discernment conversation, accompany, and assess readiness for ordination. The committee works with partners throughout the church—seminaries, synod and churchwide staff, home congregations, and candidates to accomplish this task on behalf of the whole church.

Committees listen to a sense of internal call that the candidate brings; are attentive for signs of an external

sense of call; vote to grant, postpone, or deny candidates at 3 main decision points; and wait to see if after a candidate is approved they will be extended a letter of call and the gift of ordination. You can read more about candidacy and this process at www.elca.org/Resources/Candidacy

Since my last report to you in 2023, Candidacy Committee partners were invited to participate in an online Candidacy Summit, “Called to Accompany and Called to Discern” across the ELCA. In 2024, there will be an opportunity for candidacy leaders from regions 7 & 8 to meet at United Lutheran Seminary for training and collaboration days.

Since 2022, the Candidacy Leadership Development Working Group (CLDWG) has been re-envisioning the entire candidacy process. The CLDWG has started to share possible candidacy changes with candidacy partners and is welcoming feedback. The hope is a new process will be voted on at the Churchwide Assembly in 2025. Please hold all partners in prayer as there becomes more clarity on the future of candidacy. You can learn more at: www.elca.org/Our-Work/Leadership/Candidacy-Leadership-Development

Thank you for your synod’s participation in this shared ministry and for the privilege to serve among you.

In Christ,

The Rev. A. Rebecca Resch (she/her)
Candidacy and Leadership Manager, Regions 7 & 8
becky.resch@elca.org

Region 7: ~ New Jersey Synod ~ New England Synod ~ Metropolitan New York Synod ~ Upstate New York Synod ~ Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod ~ Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod ~ Slovak Zion Synod ~

Region 8: ~ Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod ~ Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod ~ Allegheny Synod ~ Lower Susquehanna Synod ~ Upper Susquehanna Synod ~ Delaware-Maryland Synod ~ Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod ~ West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod ~

Lutheran Advocacy Ministry in Pennsylvania

Church Together in Pennsylvania for the Sake of the World God Loves

LAMPa Report to Allegheny Synod

In response to God's love in Jesus Christ, we advocate for wise and just public policies in Pennsylvania that promote the common good. Lutheran Advocacy Ministry in Pennsylvania is a shared ministry of seven Pennsylvania synods, ELCA Service and Justice, and Pennsylvania ELCA congregations, agencies and institutions. Through LAMPa, Lutherans called to be a part of God's healing and reconciling mission in the world are supported to voice their faith convictions in the public square with and on behalf of our most vulnerable neighbors and the world we share, while seeking to create a more just Commonwealth.

In 2024, LAMPa celebrates 45 years of advocacy ministry with gratitude for a legacy of community building and justice seeking while looking forward in hope for a more just world. Last year, our work supported and deepened your congregational efforts to address hunger, poverty, health care, civic engagement, housing security, care for creation, criminal justice reform, civil rights and safe communities. Our decades of advocacy on these issues have enabled us to lift up the needs of your ministries and communities to increase anti-hunger funding that supports the purchase of food in many of our community and congregational pantries and incentivizes innovation in the delivery of nutritious food to our state's seniors. Years of Lutheran engagement on child nutrition helped make permanent universal free school breakfast to give all students a healthy start to their day. In addition, our advocacy helped advance legislation to expand programs to alleviate the housing crisis and prevent homelessness, offer relief from burdensome medical debt, prevent and redress hate crimes, reduce gun-related violence and trauma, and stop discrimination in housing, employment and public accommodations.

In the past year, LAMPa was pleased to welcome the Rev. Erin Jones as our communications and advocacy engagement manager and Quentin Bernhard as our 2023-24 hunger advocacy fellow, which enabled us to launch four statewide service and justice networks to deepen the connection among ministries in every synod. LAMPa continues to education faithful advocates through our new website and e-news and connects them to the public witness of the wider church. We look forward to growing opportunities to support congregations adding advocacy to their day of service on "God's work. Our hands." Sunday. I continue to serve in consultation to the ELCA task force developing the social statement on Civic Life and Faith, and urge all to devote time to the newly released draft and to offer feedback.

I give thanks to God for you and for the support of our Allegheny Synod Policy Council representatives, Ms. Susan Barclay and the Rev. Rebecca Horn.

With deep gratitude for all of the ways in which you support LAMPa's ministry,

Tracey DePasquale
Director

Lutheran Campus Ministry at Penn State /Lutheran Student Community

Lutheran Campus Ministry brings Christ's healing to students in their time on campus and beyond. Students bear a wide variety of burdens and sorrows, even before they arrive on campus. Student life is as complicated and challenging as any other demanding context in our lives. There are family concerns, academic demands, social and friendship challenges, and uncertainty about finances and the future. As they gather with others for worship, discussion, service, or meals together, students encounter true community. They find that they are embraced by God and they are loved. In community, students discern the ways God will work through them in their careers, their activities, and their relationships to be part of bringing healing and hope to the world around them.

Lutheran Campus Ministry is YOUR presence on campus. We are at Penn State on behalf of the synod and the whole church. We walk with students through their years at the university, providing opportunities for them to make connections, grow as people of faith, and serve their neighbor. Lutheran Campus Ministry provides ongoing reminders of God's love and action in the world that touch individual students and the wider campus community as well.

Worshipping Community – Students gather for worship on campus with Lutheran Campus Ministry each week at the interfaith Pasquerilla Spiritual Center. In the midst of their demanding and busy schedules, students set aside time for worship together. Surrounded by peers, they use the ancient words of evening prayer as they sing, pray, share scripture and reflections, and encounter God in the middle of the campus. On Sundays, Deacon Alicia Anderson, Campus Minister, welcomes students at Grace Lutheran Church near campus, helping them feel at home and make connections within the more permanent worshipping community.

Community Connections – Students often grab a quick bite between classes, coursework, and other commitments, eating alone more often than not. Weekly group meals through LCM help them find authentic community within our campus ministry. As students spend time together for Thursday dinner or Sunday lunch, they talk about experiences from the week, sharing

struggles as well as successes. Students also connect with each other and build friendships at volunteer events, through discussions, and in worship. They truly share the journey together, supporting and caring for each other in the highs and lows of university life and the years that follow. Sharing challenges, laughing together, praying for each other, they embody the presence of God with and for one another.

Service and Learning – Students are eager to share their time and abilities to help others. Through service both on campus and off campus, they find the joy of helping while learning more about the complexities of need, generosity, and justice. They also learn about themselves while serving as God's hands in the local community and wider world.

Growing in Faith and Knowledge – Students seek safe places to ask questions about life and faith, as well as places where they can develop new understandings. Through informal conversations, discussion, events, campus-wide speakers, and one-on-one conversations with our campus minister, students explore questions and delve into the myriad of ways faith and daily life intersect. They discern how God is calling them to serve the needs of the world through their life's work, activities and interests, and relationships in their lives.

This past year – Grace Lutheran Church continues to be an important partner in ministry in State College. Students are part of the worshipping community each Sunday and are welcome to participate in the life of the congregation. Students are a vital part of vocal and instrumental music at Grace this year and have been participants in anti-hunger food distributions in partnership with the Central Pennsylvania Food Bank.

Campus Partnerships – Lutheran Campus Ministry and Lutheran Student Community maintain important connections with a variety of groups on campus. Our office in Pasquerilla Spiritual Center provides regular opportunities to work with the Center for Spiritual and Ethical Development in supporting students who are seeking pastoral care, and to partner on events and projects, including Interfaith Literacy Chats. Opportunities to volunteer at the Penn State Arboretum

allow students to serve the community while enjoying the beauty of God's creation. As student life continues to recover from the effects of Covid-19 shut-down and limitations afterward, we are exploring opportunities to resume partnerships with the Gender Equity Center and the Center for Sexual and Gender Diversity within Penn State Student Affairs.

Ecumenical and interfaith partnerships are valuable in our campus setting. We reach out with prayers, compassion, and collegiality to the Hillel Jewish community in these difficult months of violence in Gaza and Israel, knowing there are no easy answers. On Ash Wednesday, Campus Minister Alicia Anderson offered *Ashes to Go* for students between classes on the plaza outside Palmer Art Museum alongside the United Methodist and Presbyterian campus ministers. We continue to look at creating an Interfaith Fellowship that brings students from various faith backgrounds together to explore what it means to be a "person of faith" on campus.

Online Presence – Through weekly listserv messages, Instagram and Facebook posts, and our website, Lutheran Campus Ministry helps inform and engage people online. Students, alumni, parents, and supporters find reflection and prayer resources, see updates on events and opportunities, and can request prayers or one-on-one conversation. This year's *Praying thru Lent* series is our fourth Lenten program offered through social media, in addition to year-round weekly reflections, prayers, and other posts. Through social media, we inform, offer resources for spiritual growth and tell the story of how Lutheran Campus Ministry impacts students.

Fundraising Efforts – As Lutheran Campus Ministry continues adapting to decreased synodical support, congregational gifts and individual donations are vitally important. Using social media for *LCM IMPACT* and *Giving Tuesday* campaigns has helped increase our ministry's visibility and tell the story of Lutheran Campus Ministry. Your financial contributions, volunteer time, leadership skills, student referrals, regular prayers, and other forms of support help us continue to build our faith community and bring the good news of Jesus on campus.

We are grateful – We truly are grateful that the Allegheny Synod sees the vital need for Lutheran Campus Ministry at Penn State and our work on campus. Reaching out to young adults to foster and support their

faith is incredibly important. Providing a community that is centered on the Gospel of Jesus where questions are welcome, diversity is celebrated, and God's love is truly lived, is both life-giving and life-altering.

We invite your continued prayers for campus ministry and for students as they face the unique challenges of university life and growing into adulthood. Please pray especially for those who will graduate this year and those who will arrive on campus for their first year this fall.

Thank you for the important partnership we share in this ministry.

Peace,

Alicia Anderson, Campus Minister
Minister of Word and Service (ELCA Deacon)
Website: lutheranpennstate.org
Social Media on Facebook and Instagram:
[@lutheranpennstate](https://www.facebook.com/lutheranpennstate)

Site:

Weekly listserv for students at Penn State: [Sign Up Here](#)

Messages for Friends of Lutheran Campus Ministry: [Sign Up Here](#)

You Can Help Connect Students with Campus Ministry all across the country

Lutheran Campus Ministry serves more than 250 schools across the country, and we invite your help connecting students to campus ministry. Use this link to connect students with campus ministry on or near their college or university campus.

Visit the LuMin Network to find information about campus ministry at a particular school to share with students: luminelca.org/ministries/.

Lutheran Campus Ministry at Penn State is the ELCA's presence on the Penn State campus, supported through grants from the Upper Susquehanna Synod, Lower Susquehanna Synod, Allegheny Synod, ELCA Churchwide, individuals, and congregations who are committed to fostering spiritual growth of students on campus which lays the groundwork for their lives after graduation.

For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we may walk in them. —Ephesians 2:10

Fiscal 2022–23 was a year of transition and transformation at Luther Seminary.

Transition: Across our educational programs, we are working to create sustainable new models so that learners can afford not just theological education, but life in Christian leadership.

Transformation: We continue to witness how the Jubilee Scholarship creates a path for students from all walks of life to answer God’s call to ministry. Since implementing this full-tuition scholarship model in 2018, student borrowing has dropped to its lowest level at the seminary in nearly 25 years. A remarkable 67% of our 2023 class graduated with zero student debt.

At the same time, we continue to expand the accessibility of theological education beyond our degree programs through Faith+Lead and digital media like Working Preacher, Enter the Bible, and God Pause. Combined visits to our digital properties and podcast downloads topped 5 million unique visitors in 2022–23, a 20% increase over the previous year.

Transition: With the close of the MDivX pilot program this spring, we are pivoting toward a permanent option for an accelerated M.Div. pathway.

Transformation: MDivX was a resounding success, demonstrating the effectiveness and appeal of a two-year model with simultaneous contextual learning. Retention in the pilot program was extraordinarily high, with 96% of participants graduating. Out of the 51 graduates from the first two cohorts, 47 are actively serving in ministry contexts at the time of this writing, with one in the process of becoming ordained.



The lessons from MDivX helped shape a larger curriculum refresh that reflects our students’ and the church’s needs. The faculty applied insights from MDivX, deep listening to the church, and assessment data in redesigning the curriculum last year for a Fall 2023 implementation. This curricular “refresh” strengthens course sequencing to support learning outcomes, creates natural cohorts through three defined pathways (full-time, part-time, and, in the future, accelerated), and reduces requirements without sacrificing depth or rigor.

Transition: We are in the midst of two budget years designed to support investments in our strategic plan priorities and key financial goals, including increasing Faith+Lead revenue and restructuring the academic programs for efficiency. Modest operating deficits planned for these two years are supported by the seminary’s strong cash position and robust \$120 million endowment valuation as of June 30, 2023.

Transformation: I’m grateful to share with you this snapshot of the “good works” for which God has equipped Luther Seminary. And yet, we know that the true outcomes of the Holy Spirit’s action with and through us ripple out far beyond what can be quantified in any financial report.

Thank you for your prayerful support as we seek to faithfully steward the gifts and mission of this community for the future of Christ’s church.



Peace and blessings,

Robin J. Steinke
President

Luther Seminary

2023 ANNUAL REPORT

AT A GLANCE

- The seminary awarded 439 scholarships in 2022–23.
- Master of Arts students like Ryan made up 62% of enrolled students.
- As scholarship recipients, Ryan and Laura received part of the \$6.15 million awarded during the 2022–23 academic year. On average, students received \$11,033 in scholarships and grants from Luther Seminary.
- Laura was among the 28% of students who pursued a Master of Divinity degree in 2022–23.
- Financial aid covered 100% of the cost of tuition for qualified incoming M.A. and M.Div. students.

BY THE NUMBERS

- 412 students enrolled at Luther Seminary during the 2022–23 academic year.
- ELCA members accounted for 71% of the student body. 34 denominations made up the remaining 29% of students.
- Tuition, student fees, books, and on-campus living expenses cost approximately \$43,911 for full-time students.



MEET RYAN

Having been influenced by philosopher Charles Taylor, **Ryan Popineau '24 M.A.** came to Luther Seminary in order to study with Professor **Andrew Root**, who has written about the implications of Taylor's ideas on ministry. A hospice chaplain and former youth pastor, Ryan is able to apply what he is learning to his work. After graduation, he hopes to write and speak on practical steps pastors and churches can take to minister in the world. "I wanted to attend seminary for nearly 15 years," he said. "The Jubilee Scholarship made attendance an opportunity I could not pass up."

DURING THE 2022–23 FISCAL YEAR

36 international students enrolled from 23 countries.

138 students graduated May 21.

Donor sources made up 96% of Luther Seminary's operating revenue when combining individual donor support, the endowment, and church and synod appropriations.

67% of students graduated without seminary debt. For the others, median debt was \$35,000.



AND LAURA

Laura Otieno '27 M.Div. enrolled in seminary to deepen her understanding of her faith and become a more confident leader, seeking ways to engage individuals and communities with the gospel. Having pursued an undergraduate degree in social work and a master's in nonprofit management while working, she maintains a full-time job in higher education while she studies at Luther Seminary. "The Jubilee Scholarship made seminary accessible to me," she said. "The financial barrier would have kept me from future studying, but now I have the opportunity to develop as a leader."



LUTHER SEMINARY®

Finances 2022–23

Luther Seminary and Foundation consolidated balance sheets
as of June 30, 2023 and June 30, 2022

ASSETS	2023	2022
Current Assets		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$12,999,656	\$14,973,591
Other Current Assets	355,911	635,921
Total Current Assets	\$13,355,567	\$15,609,512
Non-Current Assets		
Other Assets	\$2,007,730	\$2,439,809
Investments	123,277,429	122,347,512
Student Notes Receivable, Net	2,038,013	2,156,994
Land, Buildings, and Equipment, Net	8,019,197	8,458,045
Total Other Assets	\$135,342,369	\$135,402,360
Total Assets	\$148,697,936	\$151,011,872

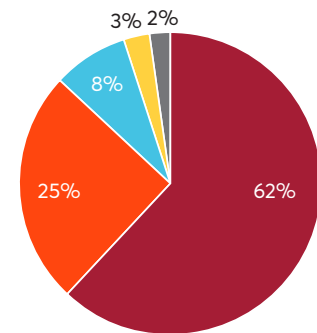
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

Current Liabilities		
Other Current Liabilities	\$4,598,779	\$5,145,611
Notes Payable, Current Portion	153,473	147,465
Total Current Liabilities	\$4,752,252	\$5,293,076
Long-Term Liabilities		
Other Long-Term Liabilities	\$7,604,991	\$8,230,078
Notes Payable, Net of Current Portion	4,231,740	4,385,213
Total Long-Term Liabilities	\$11,836,731	\$12,615,291
Total Liabilities	\$16,588,983	\$17,908,367
Net Assets		
Without Donor Restrictions	\$5,354,872	\$6,937,100
With Donor Restrictions	126,754,081	126,166,405
Total Net Assets	\$132,108,953	\$133,103,505
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$148,697,936	\$151,011,872

ENDOWMENT

Total Market Value (as of 6/30/23)	\$120 million
Investment Returns	
1-year	0.8%
3-year	11.4%
5-year	12.1%

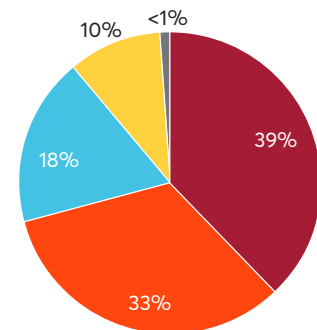
Luther Seminary's annual report numbers are also available at luthersem.edu/giving/annual-report.
Learn more about giving to support future church leaders at luthersem.edu/giving.



Unrestricted Operating Income

Donor Support	\$11,998,446
Endowment Draw	4,897,345
Churchwide and Synod Support	1,504,806
Net Tuition and Fees	437,707
Auxiliary Enterprises and Other Income	415,637

Total Unrestricted Operating Income \$19,253,941



Unrestricted Operating Expenses

Student Instruction and Support	\$8,081,592
Institutional Support	6,961,958
Faith+Lead	3,775,597
Physical Plant and Maintenance	2,216,933
Auxiliary Enterprises and Other Expenses	155,814

Total Expenses* \$21,191,894

*Includes depreciation



Mission Investment Fund Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

The Mission Investment Fund: Your financial partner

The **Mission Investment Fund**, a financial services ministry of the ELCA, provides a strong, stable, faith-based way for individuals, congregations and ministries to achieve their financial goals. MIF offers a range of investments for individuals, congregations and ministries. We put those investments to work to fund building and renovation loans for congregations and partner ministries, including outdoor camps, senior housing and social service agencies.



The result? Impact investments, with a transformative impact on our communities: Expanded worship spaces ... new space for education and youth ministry ... much-needed day care centers for working families ... industrial-grade kitchens and fellowship halls for community meals.

Why is MIF the right choice?

- **MIF has demonstrated expertise** in church and ministry financing. With longstanding experience in congregation and ministry building projects, we're unique among lending institutions.
- **We consistently offer competitive rates and terms.**
- **We offer a full suite of financial services.** MIF offers congregations, ministries and individuals a host of investment options. We work in deep partnership with the ELCA Federal Credit Union to offer a wide range of financial products and services.
- **The faithful stewardship of Lutheran congregations and their members funds our loans.** The money invested in MIF finances hundreds of capital projects across the church.

MIF has a longstanding tradition of strength and stability. At year-end 2023, MIF had 811 loans outstanding, totaling \$578.3 million. Investment obligations totaled \$547.7 million. With total assets of \$774.4 million and net assets of \$208.2 million at year-end 2023, MIF maintains a capital ratio of 26.88 percent—positioning MIF in the top tier of well-capitalized church extension funds.

Our steadfast support continues for the members, congregations and ministries of the ELCA and the many ways you minister to a world in need. We are honored to walk alongside you as a trusted partner.

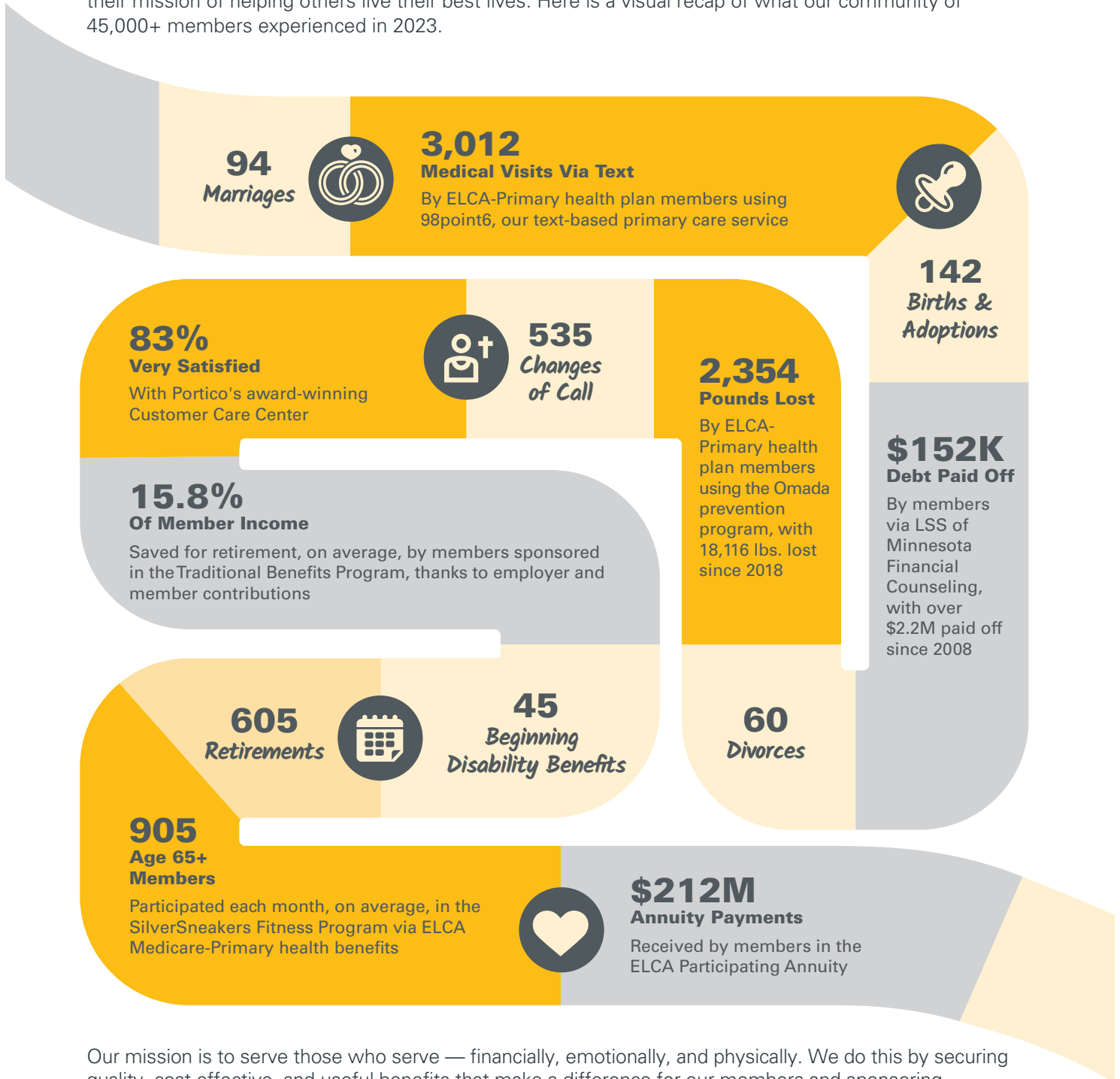
MIF at work in the Allegheny Synod (as of December 31, 2023):

- \$2,405,671 in Mission Investment Fund investment obligations

For more information about MIF capabilities, please visit our website, mif.elca.org or contact your Regional Manager the Rev. Kent Peterson: 276-698-7970 kent.peterson@elca.org

Benefits Making a Difference

At Portico we strive to offer benefits that make our plan members' lives better, so that they can fulfill their mission of helping others live their best lives. Here is a visual recap of what our community of 45,000+ members experienced in 2023.



Our mission is to serve those who serve — financially, emotionally, and physically. We do this by securing quality, cost-effective, and useful benefits that make a difference for our members and sponsoring organizations. With each new year we continue to grow our pool and affirm the value and importance of church together.

Note: Unless a specific benefit program is mentioned, these numbers and percentages were drawn from across Portico's benefit programs.

Sequanota Lutheran Conference Center & Camp

Look at What YOU DID through

Sequanota Conference Center & Camp



YOU
Are Making a Difference

The 2023 camper survey results are in!
Here is a snapshot of the survey responses and the impact of camp!

Campers surveyed agreed:

- 95% felt they were included.
- 82% felt they grew in their faith in God.
- 98% had fun.
- 96% felt safe.
- 93% tried something new.
- 82% practiced their faith habits.
- 79% didn't give up when challenged.
- 97% had a great week.

How has your time at camp changed you?

- "I grew in my faith and independence. I also made new friends."
- "I'm more confident and I can sing better."
- "I will challenge myself more."
- "I think it really opened my eyes to God more."
- "It made me feel empowered and to spend more time with God."
- "I'm not as shy."
- "I like nature more."

Summer Camp

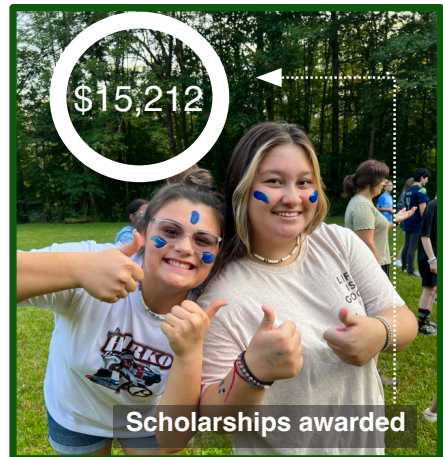
YOU Are Making a Difference

Camp is an odd magic trick. When campers overcome a fear (climbing to heights) or solve a problem (resolving a conflict with cabin-mates) or experience a triumph (learning to shoot a bow and arrow), they often think that they are doing so all on their own. No parents are there, so the triumph belongs to them. Here is the trick - while they think they are "all on their own," they are surrounded by caring cabin guides who form a supportive community that will spring to action if they truly struggle in a way that becomes destructive or damaging. Campers get the boost of confidence that comes from independent success without the risk of complete and unsupported independence.

Camp is an odd magic trick. When campers overcome a fear (climbing to heights) or solve a problem (resolving a conflict with cabin-mates) or experience a triumph (learning to shoot a bow and arrow), they often think that they are doing so all on their own. No parents are there, so the triumph belongs to them. Here is the trick - while they think they are "all on their own," they are surrounded by caring cabin guides who form a supportive community that will spring to action if they truly struggle in a way that becomes destructive or damaging. Campers get the boost of confidence that comes from independent success without the risk of complete and unsupported independence.

<i>Campers</i>	2023	2022	2021	2019
On Site	341	341	301	308
Off site Day Camp	65	57	0	224
Hosted Youth Camps	327	298	133	238
Summer Totals	733	696	434	770

How YOU DID IT





26 Young adult summer staff members hired



28 Worship services led by summer staff



16 Lifeguards trained

Sequanota hires a team of young adults to help accomplish the magic trick of camp. This team of staff create an invisible scaffolding, which provides care, support and guidance to campers. It is what makes the camp experience a unique and vital part of a child's development. Camp's staff aid campers in growing in confidence, independence and persistence. Thank you for your contributions that support a great staff!



124 Individuals volunteered

How
YOU DID IT

<i>Volunteer Hours</i>	2023
Summer Camp	1216
Year Round	929

Valuation of volunteer hours \$63,878



Conference & Retreat

New Year's Day Hike



2023 Programmed Ministries

New Year's Day Hike

Snow Camp

IGNITE Youth Retreat

Sustain: Adult Retreat

Belong: Young Adult Retreat

Love Your Mother (Earth) Retreat

Spring Work Day/Fall Trail Clean up

5 School Field Trips

Well Festival

Adult Day Study



<i>Conference & Retreat</i>	# of groups
Hosted Ministry	47
Program Ministry	14



YOU Are Making a Difference Facility Improvements

Sequanota's facilities team, volunteers, and synod congregations (Grace, State College and St. David's, Davidsville) continue to make renovations to the campus. Bathroom upgrades have been central this year. We have remodeled

cabins 2 & 11, the staff cabin, and the old dining hall bathrooms to have individual stalls with locking doors for added privacy. Cabin floors and walls were painted. The craft cabin and cabin 1 were scraped and are ready for a new coat of paint. Twenty volunteers help to rejuvenate four trails and bridges on trail clean-up day in September. St. David's spent "God's work our hands" day clearing brush and trees, fall cleaning the Bowersox Retreat Center, and preparing a mailing. We couldn't do it without you!



This year we tried something new! A festival style weekend filled with learning opportunities sturctured to encourage conversations between sessions leaders and attendees. Both adults and kids enjoyed the weekend and we are excited to do it again in 2024! Join us June 20-23 for the Tend Festival at Sequanota!



Session choices



Baskets woven

Read what folks said about the Well Festival

"Kaila is a gifted teacher who uses her talents very effectively to share her faith. She is caring, dedicated, generous, patient, and fun. She clearly loves what she does. She went over and beyond her commitment to the camp to help everyone who wanted to create a basket achieved success. She also seemed to enjoy socializing with campers when she wasn't teaching. Her message at worship was a wonderful memorable way to share the Good News."

"The Well Festival was an incredible experience."

"Hiking barefoot was nothing I ever considered doing and I loved the experience."

"It made me physically feel good!"



Garden teas made by kids



92

How YOU DID IT Kindle Monthly Giving Club



BECOME A KINDLE CLUB MEMBER

KINDLE Monthly Giving Club partners ignite our ministry to serve in new ways. When you give though monthly gifts, you provide regular and consistent income to help Sequanota kindle the faith of our campers and guests.



346 monthly gifts ranged from \$5 - \$250



Scan the QR code and become a Kindle Club member today!

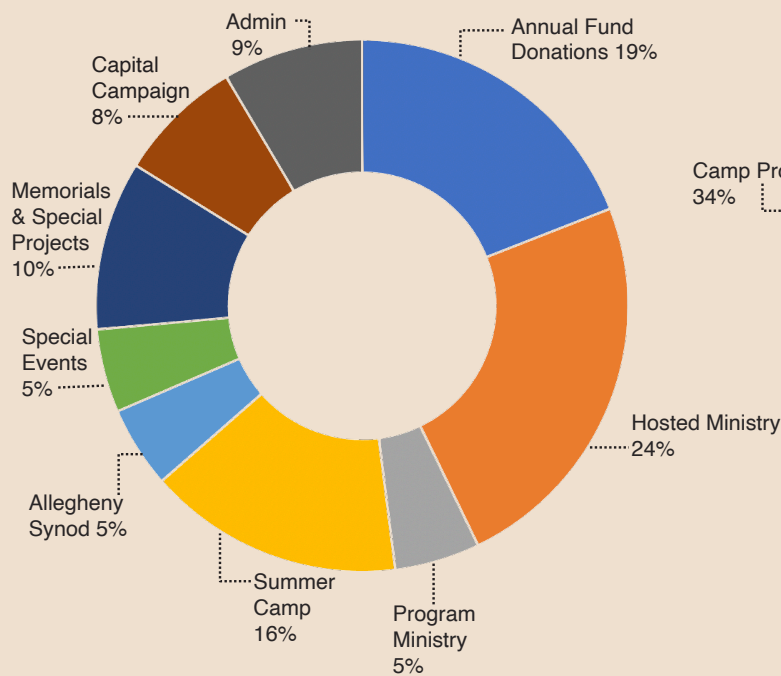
How YOU DID IT

Special Events

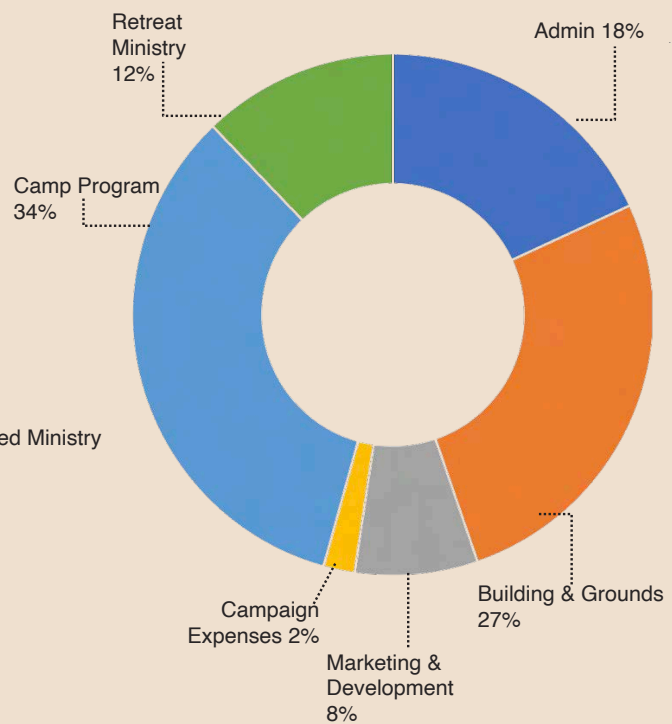
Special Events	Participants	\$ Raised
Happy Camper Fun Run	20	\$7,815
Spring Benefit Dinner	92	\$12,940
Mother's Day Buffet	302	\$4,974
Golf Benefit	40	\$3,644
Breakfast with Santa	156	\$923
TOTAL	610	\$30,296



Total Revenue - \$658,700



Total Expenses - \$635,487



Assets

Cash and cash equivalents	\$	363,456
Pledges & Receivables		4,680
Other assets		17,111
Property and equipment, net		895,399
Total	\$	1,280,646

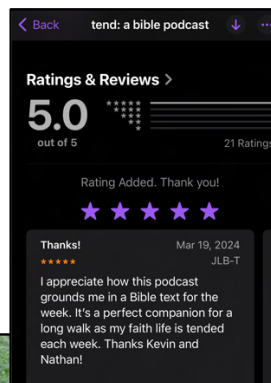
Liabilities

Notes payable	\$	230,820
Deferred revenue		5,816
Other Liabilities		25,813
Equity		1,018,197
Total Liabilities & Equity	\$	1,280,646

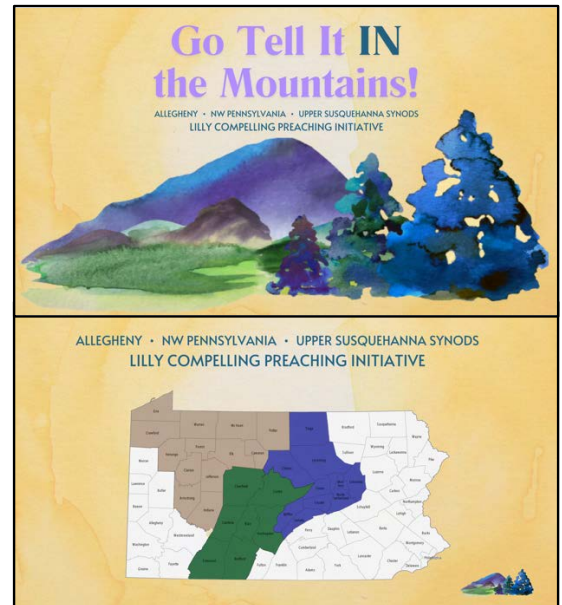
Note: The 2023 audited financials will be available after September 2024.

Partners with SEQUANOTA

During the spring of 2023, Pastor Nathan convened a group to write a grant from the Lilly Foundation. The grant was fully funded at \$1.25 million dollars and will support preaching resources to be developed and used throughout our region. Contact the Allegheny Synod to see how your congregation can be involved!



Pastor Nathan and Pastor Kevin Shock recorded 54 episodes of "tend, a bible podcast." There were 3,122 downloads and 21 5-star reviews! Episodes average 45 minutes and focus on a scripture passage from the weekly lectionary. You can find it on Apple Podcasts and Spotify.



The Sequanota team worked with colleagues from the Allegheny Synod to create both a devotional resource and a weekend event for synod youth in December.

Thrivent Choice Dollar Donations for 2023 = \$8,514

Allen and Carol Chrise

Ann Brooks

Anna Weaver

Anne & Ronald Barnes

Ben and Marie Waltermire

Cleone Rudisill

Dave and Theresa

Shoemaker

Ed and Sue Vorhauer

George and Ardelle Mason

Jeffrey and Angela Fink

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Marvin and Jeanie Shaffer

Jean Ayers

Wayne Kaufman

David and Karen Truesdale

Bill and Paula Nihoff

Roxann and Lewis Berkey

Gregory and Susan Ferro

Nancy Shingledecker

Jean Vonada

Mark Swank

Founders' Fires Giving Tiers

2023 gifts to the Annual Fund. Benefits, memorials, and scholarship funds

+ Denotes Kindle Club Members

Founders:

\$1000+

Benscreek Lutheran, Hollsopple
 Christ Lutheran, Claysburg
 Grace Lutheran, Stoystown
 Simpson Temple United Parish
 St. John's Lutheran, Salisbury
 St. Luke's Lutheran, Rockwood
 St. Matthew, Martinsburg
 St. Paul's Lutheran, Johnstown
 Trinity Lutheran, Somerset
 Zion Lutheran, Johnstown
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Luther League:

\$500 - \$999

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 Mt. Calvary Lutheran, Somerset
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 Priscilla Walter
 Dana and Dennis Weimer
 Stacy and Paul Wheeler
 Richard and Rebecca Whipkey
 Cindy Winger
 Larry Mazer and Susan Winger +

Council Fire:

\$250 - \$499

Faith United Lutheran, Houtzdale
 Christ Lutheran, Buffalo Mills
 Laurel Trinity Lutheran,
 Jennerstown
 Zion Hoffman Lutheran, Acosta
 St. John Lutheran, Centre Hall
 St. John Lutheran, Williamsburg
 North Star Youth Outreach
 Zellem Masonry Construction
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 Kim Ankeny
 Charlotte Aungst
 Rod and Julia Benton
 Gillian Benton +
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 Paula Townsend +
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 Ed and Sue Vorhauer
 Dr. Florence Warfel
 Gary and Amy Weimer
 Hanna Weimer +
 Claire and Stephen Zufall



Nature Lodge:
\$175 - \$249

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 Mt. Zion Lutheran, Glasgow
 Faith Lutheran, Somerset
 First Lutheran Altoona
 First Lutheran, Johnstown
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 Ronald and Lois Tessari +
 Joel and Kristine Weaver
 Nancy and John Webb
 Daniel Weimer +
 Greg and Amy Will
 Hattie Williams
 Raymond and Nancy Wojnarowski

Outpost:
\$100 - \$174

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 Friedens Lutheran Church
 Beer, Ream & Co
 Olanta Lutheran Church
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 Bob and Bev Anderson
 Pink and Sherri Andrews
 Alison Baker
 Jeff and Heather Baltzer
 Rick and Tina Barron
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Becky Zlotkowski
Violet and Edward Zorn

2023 gifts in memory of

Jack Timm

Leverne Sedory

Linda McElroy Thomas

Ed Harshberger

Charlie Lady

T. Zoe Smith

Merle Mishler



Faith-informed Learning & Community

June 20-23, 2024

We are excited to invite you to Sequanota's Tend Festival, an event that celebrates creation, wellness, social justice, and community. This unique festival offers a range of activities and events that promote physical, mental, and spiritual well-being, as well as an opportunity to enjoy the beautiful surroundings of Sequanota.

The Tend Festival will take place on June 20-23 at Sequanota, and we would love to have you join us. We strive to live authentically as God's people. Over the generations, people have found that it is easier to live and strive when we do it together. This is what the Tend Festival is all about - living, learning, and loving together.

A key component of the event is to simply provide open space for participants to engage one another. The idea is for spiritual explorers to gather to find community and support as we engage in a wide range of conversations.

The festival is designed to offer different learning experiences to provide opportunities for conversation. Maybe the conversation is new to you, or maybe you are a seasoned veteran on a topic, but this weekend is curated to provide the space to discuss and explore together.

For more information and to register, visit our website: www.sequanota.com/tendfest

Sample Learning Areas

Environment

- Naturalist hike & technology
- Feeding ourselves and our neighbors
- Hunting and ethics
- Climate change and faith

Economics, Justice & Advocacy

- Gender & Inclusion
- Recovery Advocacy

Food & Health

- Mental Health
- Kids and Gardens

Practical Theology

- Welcome in the congregation
- Finding your way in faith as a young adult
- Social media and evangelism
- Faith & Politics

Devotional/Spiritual Life

- Yoga
- Walking a Prayer Labyrinth
- Meditative Prayer

Arts & Media

- Cross making
- Painting and crafts

Music

- Faith and sound workshop
- Hymn sing along
- Exploring the new All Creation Sings hymn book
- Live music

Open Space

This is a designated area that will always be open to continue a conversation. Participants can share a topic they would like to talk about or continue a topic from earlier in the event. The space is designed to make an open space for continued conversation.

Thank
YOU!

Thank
YOU!

Thank
YOU!



We always give thanks to God for all of you and mention you in our prayers, constantly remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

— 1 Thessalonians 1:2-3

Looking forward in 2024

- | | |
|------------|-------------------------|
| May 12 | Mother's Day Banquet |
| June - Aug | SUMMER CAMP |
| June 20-23 | TEND FESTIVAL |
| Aug 19 | Golf Benefit |
| Aug 21-28 | Adirondack Canoe Trip |
| Sept 14 | Trail Clean Up Weekend |
| Sept 28-29 | IGNITE/PLUNGE - Retreat |
| Oct 10 | Adult Day Bible Study |
| Dec 7 | Breakfast with Santa |



SEQUANOTA
Lutheran Conference Center & Camp
PO Box 245
Jennerstown, PA 15547

Contact us:
web: www.sequanota.com
Phone: (814) 629-6627
email: contact@sequanota.com

Report of Susquehanna University

Life of the University

The 2023-2024 academic year marks the 166th for Susquehanna University. The University continues to serve a religiously diverse student body, about 7% of whom self-identify as Lutheran and who hail from 35 states and 22 countries. Dr. Jonathan Green, Susquehanna's 15th president, is completing his seventh year of service.

Campus Religious Activities

Life continues to help members of the academic community integrate faith, life, and learning. Many religious life organizations and various ministries and programs offered by the Office of Religious and Spiritual Life help students grow spiritually as they grow intellectually.

Sunday worship services are held in Weber Chapel when classes are in session, welcoming students, faculty and staff as well as people from the surrounding community. The student leadership intern program allows select students to explore Christian service through formal servant-leadership roles.

Interfaith engagement is a strong commitment of ELCA institutions of higher education generally, and Susquehanna in particular. Eight different religious student clubs and organizations attest to the vibrancy of religious life on campus. As part of campus commemorations of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s legacy, a campus interfaith

celebration remembered King's work as an interfaith leader and featured student speakers from a diversity of religious traditions.

Ours is a religiously diverse campus, a reality which we embrace not in spite of but because of our Lutheran tradition, which teaches that the other is to be welcomed as Christ and that education serves the common good. In our world where religious conflicts are routinely in the headlines, the work of building bridges of understanding and cooperation across lines of religious and philosophical difference is an essential civic and spiritual task. Such work has been an important part of religious life at Susquehanna in the past year.

In October, Rev. Lamont Wells, president of the Network of ELCA Colleges and Universities, delivered the Schmidt Lecture in Ethics, "Faith in the Academy: Exploring and Reframing the Role of Religion in Higher Education." This provided a rich discussion on the mission of Lutheran higher education at Susquehanna and beyond.

In Conclusion

Susquehanna University deeply appreciates the ongoing support and encouragement that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Lower Susquehanna Synod give to its efforts to be a strong and successful college of the Church.

The Rev. Dr. Scott M. Kershner, Chaplain to the University

United Lutheran Seminary

Unifying, Learning, Serving

Dear Partners in Ministry,

Grace and Peace be with you in your synod assembly. I pray that your work bears fruit that will give praise to God and service to neighbor in the broad context of ministries that you share.

United Lutheran Seminary continues to walk with you in this journey, asking for your prayers and support as we focus on four areas of accompaniment:

1. Providing a relevant education for students studying to be deacons and pastors through our recently revamped curriculum, which increases emphasis on the practice of ministry.
2. Seeking ways to decrease the costs of a seminary education so that our graduates will not be burdened with debt loads, and at the same time trying to bring as many students as possible into our classrooms.
3. Increasing the quantity and quality of continuing education options through initiatives like the Kindling Faith program so as to offer a lifelong community of learning for rostered and lay people. We also hope to be out among you in the synods more often than we have been since the pandemic.
4. Seeking your support to strengthen and sustain our relationship with your synod and the whole ELCA that responds to the needs of the church now and in the future.

I am happy to share that our enrollment numbers continue to be strong with just over 350 students across our degree programs: 116 studying to become deacons or pastors, 89 in the Doctor of Ministry program,



and the remainder in other master's level or certificate programs. This fall we will be enrolling a new cohort of PhD students for the first time since before the consolidation of our predecessor schools. In addition, the Asian Theological Institute, Kindling Faith, and the Urban Theological

Institute have received \$3 million in grants, collectively, to benefit their continued work.

We also welcome Rev. Dr. Nelson Rivera and Dr. Andre Price to our faculty and the new CFO, Brandee Carrigan, to senior administration. We are grateful for those of you who serve on our Board of Trustees for the wisdom you bring to the table. Our Seminary Ridge Museum excels at sharing the complex narrative of the pivotal moment in the Civil War that continues to inform our theological discussion in these times of polarization and strife. Our Kindling Faith program is always expanding its programming and providing opportunities that are culturally relevant and spiritually fulfilling both online and in-person, and on both our physical campuses (type "Kindling Faith" in the search bar to learn more).

This being my fourth year as President of ULS, I can report with gratitude that the prospects for the seminary are very good as we approach the 200th anniversary of our founding. We hope you'll be able to celebrate with us at one of the many 2026 events we are planning to mark the occasion. Lastly, I wish you the peace that passes all understanding in the journey ahead—a journey we make together.

Rev. Dr. R. Guy Erwin

Wartburg College is dedicated to challenging and nurturing students for lives of leadership and service as a spirited expression of their faith and learning.

Guided by our vision, we are answering the call to prepare resilient leaders of positive change for service in a complex world. This will be realized by building on our distinctives and embracing new opportunities to be the leading institution in educating the whole person.

Enrollment

- Fall 2023 enrollment was 1,472 students from 41 U.S. states and 44 countries, which includes 196 U.S. students of color and 92 international students. More than 20 Christian denominations and several world religions are represented. Our enrollment saw its largest year-to-year percentage increase since 2016.
- The five majors with the highest enrollment are business administration, biology, exercise science, elementary education, and psychology.
- The online Master of Arts in Leadership program enrolled a new cohort of eight students as well as one pursuing the Graduate Leadership Certificate.

Strategic Positioning

- After almost two years of research and planning, the college announced the Wartburg Commitment, a new pricing model and value proposition designed to help students consider, afford, and experience Wartburg College. Starting in Fall 2024, the comprehensive program includes a new competitive price, reduced financial barriers for lower- and middle-income families, and funding to increase access to immersive experiences.
- A new Wartburg brand, Experience More, was launched in conjunction with the Wartburg Commitment. Extensive research found the distinctive experiences students have at Wartburg involve a nurturing community, connection, and engagement. These common threads of the Wartburg experience resonate with students, faculty, staff, and alumni.

Academic and Co-Curricular Programs

- The first 15 students to earn a master's degree from Wartburg College graduated in May with a Master of Arts in Leadership. The students came from as far away as Ohio and California and represented an array of work sectors, including business, K-12 and higher education, public administration, the military, and faith communities.
- In January 2023, Wartburg faculty approved a new THRIVE General Education curriculum to be implemented in the 2024-25 academic year. THRIVE stands for Thinking Critically, Human Culture, Reasoning, Information Fluency, Vocation, and Effective Communication.
- Dr. Ethan Blass was inducted into the newly established Herbert and Mildred Kleinfeld Professorship in German Language and Culture. The professorship, provided through the generosity of Gerald Kleinfeld in honor of his parents, will support teaching and learning in the German Department.
- As a member of the Iowa Private Transfer Collaborative, Wartburg received a three-year grant from the Arthur Vining Davis Foundations and Teagle Foundation to make the experience of transferring from an Iowa community college more transparent.
- The college launched Knights to Know, an educational web series that introduces influential alumni to the greater Wartburg community. The first year's theme is Women of Wartburg and has featured women in STEM and leaders in service.
- In 2023, the Wartburg esports team began competing in a new state-of-the-art arena that was created through the renovation of a computer lab and classroom.
- Women's wrestling opened its inaugural season in Fall 2023, bringing the total number of intercollegiate athletics teams to 25.

Spiritual Life and Campus Ministry

- The Rev. Maggie Falenshek was named the dean of spiritual life and the Herbert and Cora Moehlmann

continued

Chaplaincy Chair effective Aug. 7, 2023. She is a graduate of Concordia College and Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary with a demonstrated passion for Lutheran higher education and a desire to interpret Wartburg's Lutheran values for an increasingly diverse campus community.

- Spiritual Life equips all students to live into a spirited expression of their faith. As our campus becomes increasingly religiously diverse, we seek innovative ways to holistically support our students as well as build bridges across difference. This work includes partnering across campus with Student Life, Academic Affairs, and Dining Services.
- SLCM has welcomed Kristin Teig Torres in a reimagined position as Director of Student Leadership, Service, and Engagement. Kristin's presence in and in collaboration with SLCM intends to amplify the connection between spirituality and service on our campus.
- Within their roles as Moehlmann Chaplaincy Chair and McCoy Family Distinguished Chair in Lutheran Heritage and Mission, Maggie Falenschek and Caryn Riswold are working to develop a common language set focused on what it means to be a Lutheran college to assist with interviewing and onboarding of new employees and as foundational understanding for our campus community.
- Craig Hella Johnson, a critically acclaimed composer, arranger, educator, and conductor, received the 2023 Graven Award in its 34th year. The annual award for Christian vocation highlights the powerful and positive effect of a strong sense of Christian vocation as it interfaces with service to the community, the church, and the world.

Recognition

- President Rebecca Ehretsman was the recipient of the 2023 American Association for Hand Surgery Humanitarian Award, which honors special contributions or personal sacrifices for the betterment of humanitarian efforts. Ehretsman has contributed to global medical outreach around the world, including 19 visits to Guatemala and treatment for hundreds of children with congenital limb differences and traumatic injuries.
- Michael McCoy, chair of the Wartburg Board of Regents, received the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) Volunteer of the

Year Award for his work with the college, which has spanned three decades and includes more than \$7 million in gifts for capital projects, an endowed chair, and numerous other enhancements.

- The Wartburg Medal was presented to Bill Hamm '66, former interim president of the college and Lutheran higher education leader; the Rev. Durwood "Bud" Buchheim '53, a longtime Lutheran pastor; Hans-Peter Brodhun and the late Günter Schuchardt, retired members of the Board of Regents from Eisenach, Germany; and Tom '68 and Marnie '69 Hubbard, former Wartburg employees. The Wartburg Medal recognizes individuals who have provided significant service to the college over a sustained period and who have a personal commitment to the college's mission, quality, and character.
- Jen Christy Bye '95, a strategic portfolio and program manager for Principal Financial Group, was elected to the Board of Regents.
- Paul Zelle '24 received the Rossing Scholarship in Physics from the ELCA for the second time. Zelle is pursuing a degree in computer science and physics.
- Rebecca Ndhlovu '24, a Davis United World Scholar from Zambia, received a \$10,000 Projects for Peace grant to carry out a summer humanitarian effort teaching young girls in Lusaka, Zambia, how to make and sanitize reusable menstrual pads.
- Maeve Dunne '23 was selected by the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board for a Fulbright award to Taiwan through the program's English Teaching Assistant Program.
- Andrew Buchheim '23 received the prestigious R.J. McElroy Graduate Fellowship, designed to encourage persons of accomplishment, intelligence, integrity, and leadership ability to pursue challenging academic careers.
- Dr. Duane Koenig '53 received an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters at May Commencement for his distinguished career in family medicine and general surgery and medical mission work in Tanzania.

Wartburg continues to deliver on a vibrant mission that transforms the entire college community as together we learn, serve, and demonstrate care for each other. Thank you for your prayerful support of our efforts to strengthen Lutheran higher education and our community of learning.

Dr. Rebecca Ehretsman, President



SECTION

4

RESOLUTIONS & MEMORIALS



Allegheny Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Resolution SA24.06.01

A Resolution Concerning the Authorized Lay Worship Leader Program in the Allegheny Synod, ELCA

PROPONENT: Benjamin Hoffman, Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church, Karthaus, PA

WHEREAS

Whereas Lay Leadership serves a vital role in the life of the church, particularly as the number of ELCA pastoral vacancies continues to outpace the numbers of new rostered ministers available for call;

Whereas many congregations within the Allegheny Synod are without a rostered minister, and therefore call on Lay Leadership to fulfill weekly worship needs;

Whereas the Allegheny Synod has stressed the importance of Lay Leadership in new parish arrangements where individual congregations may not be able to financially support a full time call;

Whereas the Allegheny Synod is called to “provide for ministries to and with leaders of this synod” (S11.01.22, Synod Constitution), to include Lay Leadership;

Whereas the Allegheny Synod provides for the education and nurturing of Lay Leadership within the Synod through the Authorized Lay Worship Leaders program (IGNITE), and;

Whereas the Allegheny Synod Operating Principles for Authorized Lay Leaders for the administration of the Lay Leadership program requires updates to meet the current realities and address future needs.

RESOLVED

Be it resolved that the Allegheny Synod Assembly directs the Office of the Bishop and the Synod Council, either directly or through the establishment of a team or task force, to explore and establish the following:

- a. Conduct a current state analysis of the Lay Leadership program including current opportunities, challenges, and benchmarking with peer synods.
- b. Understand, forecast, and document the future state and needs of the Lay Leader program.
- c. Provide recommendations for the updating of the Operating Principles to include the following:
 - I. Addressing new or emerging opportunities and arrangements (as defined in the future state) in the Authorized Lay Leader’s service to congregations.
 - II. Updating and clarifying procedural items to reflect current realities and future needs.
 - III. Refining mentorship and continuing education opportunities for Authorized Lay Worship Leaders, including opportunities for gathering as a group.
 - IV. Refining guidelines and processes for rostered ministers and congregations to provide feedback to Lay Leaders on performance and other matters concerning their leadership.
 - V. Refining or defining guidelines and processes for consultation, discipline, and if necessary, revocation of the authorization of a Lay Leader who acts beyond their authority, teaches contrary to the doctrines of this church, are disruptive in their capacity as a Lay Leader, and/or for misconduct (in similar fashion to the guidelines and processes established for rostered ministers)

Be it further resolved that the Office of the Bishop and the Synod Council shall provide a report back to the Synod Assembly in 2025 with their findings and actions related to this resolution.

Memorial SA24.06.02

Memorialized by vote of St Paul Lutheran Church, Pine Grove Mills, PA at their annual meeting on January 28, 2024 to the Allegheny Synod,

To transmit the following memorial to the 2025 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:

WHEREAS

Whereas, The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (“ELCA”) states that “to participate in God’s mission, this church shall worship God in proclamation of the Word and administration of the sacraments” (4.02.d) and that to fulfill this purpose individuals are to oversee the ministries of Word and Sacrament, Word and Service, and such other forms (4.03.c); and,

Whereas, The ELCA “is committed to the principle that ‘healthy leaders enhance lives’” and that to implement this philosophy “the design and administration of [this church’s] benefit programs should respond to changing societal and economic realities,” and that benefits “should be administered efficiently in order to both enhance the well-being of rostered ministers and lay employees and capture value and savings where possible,” (ELCA Philosophy of Benefits); and,

Whereas, The overall price of health insurance is determined by the age and statistical health challenges of the individuals who are paying to pool their risk with the cost rising with age; and,

Whereas, The average and median age of a minister in the ELCA is higher than that of the general population; and,

Whereas, The Affordable Care Act (ACA) mandated health insurance plans to cover preexisting conditions; and,

Whereas, The ACA created a federal health insurance marketplace and encouraged the establishment state level marketplaces (ACA marketplaces) with premium tax credits of up to four (4) times the federal poverty line for families and individuals based on their Modified Adjusted Gross Income; and,

Whereas, Individual Coverage Health Reimbursement Arrangement (ICHRA) plans now exist to allow employers

to provide tax free money to their employees to pay for a health insurance plan on the ACA marketplaces; and,

Whereas, The current cost of insurance offered through Portico is a burden to many ELCA congregations by either preventing them from being able to call a rostered minister or eroding the congregation’s financial resources; and,

Whereas, Health insurance plans comparable to Portico’s Gold+ plan can frequently be found for lower prices on the ACA marketplaces before including the premium tax credit; therefore, be it

RESOLVED

Resolved, That the Allegheny Synod Assembly memorialize the 2025 Churchwide Assembly to direct the Portico Benefit Services Board of Trustees to review and potentially update the ELCA Philosophy of Benefits after a review of the levels of consistency and support provided by health insurance plans in the ACA marketplaces;

Resolved, That the Allegheny Synod Assembly memorialize the 2025 Churchwide Assembly to direct Portico Benefit Services to provide to signatories of the ELCA Philosophy of Benefits a numeric and statistical comparison between Portico’s offered health plans to those found on the ACA marketplaces factoring in expected premium tax credits;

Resolved, That the Allegheny Synod Assembly memorialize the 2025 Churchwide Assembly to direct the ELCA Office of the Secretary to provide signatories of the ELCA Philosophy of Benefits an estimation of ELCA congregations unable to call a rostered minister due to the price of Portico’s health insurance plans;

Resolved, That the Allegheny Synod Assembly memorialize the 2025 Churchwide Assembly to direct Portico Benefit Services to evaluate its ability to offer ELCA ministries ICHRA plans alongside supplemental, vision, and dental insurance plans as add-ons;

Resolved, That the Allegheny Synod Assembly memorialize the 2025 Churchwide Assembly to find a way for rostered ministers to have less expensive health insurance.



Allegheny Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



SECTION

5

CONSTITUTION

Constitution

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Constitution of the Allegheny Synod 8c¹ 2022-2025

Modified by Churchwide Assembly

Columbus, Ohio

August 2022

¹ This constitution was revised & updated on June 17, 2023, by the Allegheny Synod Assembly.
This constitution was reviewed & modified on August 21, 2023, by the Office of the Secretary-ELCA.

INTRODUCTION to the *Constitution for Synods*

The *Constitution for Synods*, like the other governing documents of this church, reflects the theology and polity of this church as it organizes itself to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, share the sacraments, reach out to the neighbor with good news, and share the love of God in the world. Each expression of this church — churchwide, synod and congregation — is held together in a relationship of interdependence that encourages each to respond to its context. These documents also demonstrate our commitment to seeing ourselves with others as part of the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. As such, the *Constitution for Synods* is deeply rooted in Scripture, the Lutheran Confessions, and the history of this church and its predecessors.

The *Constitution for Synods* was adopted by the Constituting Convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, as required by the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. This current edition of the *Constitution for Synods* contains changes adopted by all churchwide assemblies, including the fifteenth Churchwide Assembly in 2019. It is consistent with the requirements of the governing documents of the ELCA's churchwide organization, and it provides organizational flexibility to recognize local context.

► **Required provisions:** Sections of the *Constitution for Synods* marked by a dagger [†] are required provisions. These sections, including constitutional provisions and bylaws, must be used without alteration or amendment of the text in any manner (i.e., neither additions nor deletions are permissible). In accordance with provision †S18.11, amendments to required provisions in the *Constitution for Synods* passed by the Churchwide Assembly are automatically incorporated into the constitutions of individual synods upon formal certification by the secretary of this church. Because the secretary has provided such certification following the 2019 Churchwide Assembly, required provisions marked by a dagger [†] have been incorporated into synod constitutions.

► **Codification explanation:** The *Constitution for Synods*, like the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* and the *Model Constitution for Congregations*, is organized into chapters by general subject matter and codified as (a) constitutional provisions, (b) bylaws, and (c) continuing resolutions. Each provision is preceded by a capital “S.” If a provision is mandatory, it will be preceded by a dagger, “†S.”

- a. Constitutional provisions are codified with two sets of numbers, preceded by an “S”: the chapter number, followed by a period and a two-digit number. A period follows the two-digit number. Thus, one required constitutional provision related to “Conferences, Clusters, Coalitions, Area Subdivisions, and Networks” in Chapter 12 is codified as “†S12.01.” In accordance with Chapter 18, titled “Amendments, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions,” there are three types of constitutional provisions in each synod’s constitution:
 1. Required constitutional provisions adopted by the Churchwide Assembly are designated by a dagger “†”, as discussed above (†S18.11.);
 2. Recommended constitutional provisions adopted by the Churchwide Assembly may be adopted by majority vote at one meeting of the Synod Assembly (†S18.12.);
 3. Other constitutional provisions, including different versions of the recommended provisions referred to in the previous paragraph, may be initiated in and adopted by individual synods, but such provisions may not conflict with the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. Such synod constitutional amendments are adopted and become effective in accordance with †S18.13.
- b. Bylaws follow constitutional provisions to which they apply. They are not intended to be organized in a separate document at the end of the constitutional provisions. Bylaws are codified with three sets of numbers: the chapter number (preceded by an “S”), the related constitutional provision number, and a two-digit number. There are periods after the chapter number, after the reference to the constitutional provision, and after the bylaw number. Thus, a bylaw relating to synod networks would be codified as “S12.01.01.” Although the *Constitution for Synods* contains some required bylaws, there is not a model set of bylaws or continuing resolutions because bylaws and continuing resolutions normally relate to specific practices and details of each synod’s organization, operation, and life. Thus, each synod has discretion and may develop its own bylaws and continuing resolutions, including bylaws and continuing resolutions under required constitutional provisions, but no such bylaw or continuing resolution may conflict with constitutional provisions in the *Constitution for Synods*, mandatory synod bylaws, or with the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. Bylaws are adopted and amended in accordance with Chapter 18. Newly adopted bylaws or amendments to bylaws shall be reported to the secretary of this church.

- c. Continuing resolutions are intended to provide descriptions of operational patterns and practices or of the ongoing responsibilities of committees or other units within the organizational structure of the synod. They follow the relevant constitutional provision or bylaw to which they refer. Continuing resolutions also are codified with three sets of numbers, except that the third set is preceded by a capital letter. Thus, a continuing resolution describing the contents of a Synod Council report to the Synod Assembly in Chapter 10 might be numbered “S10.03.A19.” The initial numbers “S10.03” indicate that the continuing resolution relates to the designated constitutional provision, which in this case states that the functions of the Synod Council include providing a report to the regular meeting of the Synod Assembly. The final letter and numbers “A19” designate that this is the first continuing resolution “A” and the year that it was adopted, in this example 2019. Continuing resolutions are adopted and amended in accordance with Chapter 18. Unlike constitutional provisions and bylaws, continuing resolutions may be adopted either at a legally called and conducted meeting of the Synod Assembly (by a majority vote) or by the Synod Council (by a two-thirds vote). New continuing resolutions or amendments to existing continuing resolutions shall be reported to the secretary of this church.

► **Missing numbers:** You will notice that certain numbers are missing from the numbering sequence in some chapters. These omissions are intentional. For example, in some chapters the number “.10.” and multiples thereof have been reserved for possible use as section headings in future editions.

► **Selection of options:** Alternatives are provided in some places within the *Constitution for Synods*. Alternatives are noted by brackets or blank lines. For example, constitutional provision †S8.51. allows synods to choose the length of terms for the vice president, secretary, and treasurer. The appropriate number of years should be filled in by each synod. In addition, †S8.51.c. provides that the treasurer may be elected by the Synod Assembly or appointed by the Synod Council. Each synod should select one of those options.

► **References to church:** In the governing documents, “Church” with a capital letter refers to the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. The words “church” or “this church” in lower case letters refer to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

► **Consultation and concluding comments:** In order to assist synods, the Office of the Secretary is available for consultation, both about potential amendments to the *Constitution for Synods* and about the review process for congregational constitutions. The important task of amending a constitution is challenging. It is, however, an essential endeavor that merits thoughtful work. In addressing the synod’s constitutional responsibilities, may God grant you and your colleagues’ wisdom, discernment, and commitment to the unity of this church in faithful witness to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

The Allegheny Synod Constitution 2022–2025

THE ALLEGHENY SYNOD CONSTITUTION 2022-2025

Chapter 1.

NAME AND INCORPORATION

- †S1.01. The name of this synod, as determined by the Churchwide Assembly, shall be Allegheny Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- †S1.02. For the purposes of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws, the Allegheny 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 shall bear the year of its incorporation, 1986, and consists of an eight- branched tree growing out of water and entwined and upheld by the cross, all of which is superimposed upon a map of the Allegheny Synod’s territory.

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, which are recognized as having governing force in the life of this synod.
- †S2.02. The name Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA or “this church”) as used herein refers in general references to this whole church, including its three expressions: congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization. The name Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is also the name of the corporation of the churchwide organization to which specific references may be made herein.
- †S2.03. 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 2022 Churchwide Assembly, shall be the counties of Bedford, Blair, Cambria, Centre, Clearfield, Huntingdon, and Somerset in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania; the congregation Christ, Garrett County, in the state

of Maryland.

- †S3.02. “Determined by the Churchwide Assembly,” as stipulated by †S3.01., is understood to include the reported changes in synod relationship made by any congregation in a border area agreed under ELCA bylaws 10.01.01. and 10.01.03.

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.
- a. 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.
 - b. 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.
 - c. 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 Scripture 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. This church confesses the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church and is resolved to serve Christian unity throughout the world.
- †S5.03. The Church exists both as an inclusive fellowship and as local congregations gathered for worship and Christian service. Congregations find their fulfillment 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.
- †S5.04. This church, inspired and led by the Holy Spirit, participates in The Lutheran World Federation as a global communion of churches, engaging in faithful witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ and in service for the sake of God's mission in the world.

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, justice, and equity for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations, and standing in solidarity with the poor and oppressed 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. This synod, in cooperation with the churchwide organization, shall bear primary responsibility for the oversight of the life and mission of this church in its territory. In fulfillment of this role and consistent with policies and procedures of this church, the synod shall:

- a. Provide for pastoral care of congregations and rostered ministers in the synod;
- b. Plan for, facilitate, and nurture the mission of this church through congregations;
- c. Strengthen interdependent relationships among congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization, and foster relationships with agencies and institutions affiliated with or related to this church as well as ecumenical partners.
- d. Interpret the work of this church to congregations and to the public on the territory of the synod.

†S6.03.01. The responsibilities of the synod include the following:

- a. providing for pastoral care of congregations, ministers of Word and Sacrament, and ministers of Word and Service in the synod, including:
 - 1) approving candidates for rostered ministry in cooperation with the appropriate seminaries of this church, which may be done through multi-synod committees;
 - 2) authorizing ordinations and ordaining rostered ministers on behalf of this church;
 - 3) consulting in the call process for rostered ministers.
- b. providing 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 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. providing for discipline of congregations, ministers of Word and Sacrament, and ministers of Word and Service; as well as for termination of call, appointment, adjudication, and appeals consistent with Chapter 20 of this church's constitution.
- d. providing for archives in conjunction with other synods.

†S6.03.02. In planning for, facilitating, and nurturing the mission of this church through congregations, the responsibilities of the synod include the following:

- a. developing of new ministries, redevelopment of existing ministries, and support and assistance in the conclusion, if necessary, of a particular ministry;

- b. leading and encouraging of congregations in their evangelism efforts;
- c. assisting members of its congregations in carrying out their ministries in the world;
- d. encouraging congregations to respond to human need, work for justice and peace, care for the sick and the suffering, and participate responsibly in society;
- e. providing resources for congregational life;
- f. grouping congregations in conferences, clusters, coalitions, or other area subdivisions for mission purposes.

†S6.03.03. In strengthening interdependent relationships among congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization, and in fostering relationships with agencies and institutions affiliated with or related to this church as well as with ecumenical partners, the responsibilities of the synod include the following:

- a. promoting interdependent relationships among congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization, and entering into relationships with other synods in the region;
- b. fostering organizations for youth, women, and men, and organizations for language or ethnic communities;
- c. developing relationships with social ministry organizations and ministries, participating in their mission planning, and providing supportive funding;
- d. supporting relationships with and providing supportive funding on behalf of colleges, universities, and campus ministries;
- e. maintaining relationships with and providing supportive funding on behalf of seminaries and continuing education centers;
- f. fostering supporting relationships with camps and other outdoor ministries;
- g. fostering supporting relationships with preschools, elementary schools, and secondary schools operated by congregations of the synod;
- h. fostering relationships with ecumenical and global companions;
- i. cooperating with other synods and the churchwide organization in creating, using, and supporting regions to carry out those functions of the synod which can best be done cooperatively with other synods and the churchwide organization.

†S6.03.04. In interpreting the work of this church on the territory of the synod, the responsibilities of the synod include the following:

- a. encouraging financial support for the work of this church by individuals and congregations;
- b. participating in churchwide programs;
- c. interpreting social statements in a manner consistent with the interpretation given by the churchwide unit or office which assisted in the development of the statement, and suggestion of social study issues;
- d. providing ecumenical guidance and encouragement.

†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, at least 45 percent of the lay members of assemblies, councils, committees,

boards, or other organizational units shall be women and, as nearly as possible, at least 45 percent shall be men; and that, where possible, the representation of rostered ministers shall include both men and women. 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.

- †S6.04.01. 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 synod 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.
- †S6.06. References herein to the nature of the relationship between the three expressions of this church—congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization—as being interdependent or as being in a partnership relationship describe the mutual responsibility of these expressions in God’s mission and the fulfillment of the purposes of this church as described in this chapter, and do not imply or describe the creation of partnerships, co-ventures, agencies, or other legal relationships recognized in civil law.

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.
- †S7.11. A regular meeting of the Synod Assembly shall be held at least triennially.
 - S7.11.01. The time and place of the Allegheny Synod Assembly shall be determined by the Synod Council. The time and place for the next regular assembly normally shall be announced three months prior to the assembly.

- S7.11.A20. This Allegheny Synod may hold the Allegheny Synod Assembly by remote communication, including electronically and by telephone conference, as long as there is an opportunity for simultaneous aural communication. To the extent permitted by state law, notice of all meetings may be provided electronically.
- S7.11.B20. The Allegheny Synod Assembly and its committees may hold meetings by remote communication, including electronically and by telephone conference, as long as there is an opportunity for simultaneous aural communication. To the extent permitted by state law, notice of all meetings may be provided electronically.
- 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 Synod Council after consultation with the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- 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-third of the members of 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 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.
 - c. Voting membership shall include the officers of this synod.
- S7.21.01. Voting members shall begin serving with the opening of a regular Synod Assembly and shall continue serving until the opening of the next regular Synod Assembly.

- †S7.21.02. If a special Synod Assembly is called and voting members at the previous assembly are unable to serve as voting members, where permitted by state law, the congregation through the Congregation Council may elect new members who shall continue to serve until the next regular Synod Assembly.
- 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, provided that such processes not result in fewer than 60% of the voting members of the Synod Assembly being laypersons in contravention of †S7.21. 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.
- †S7.23. 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 the opening of the next regular synod assembly, or unless replaced by the election of new members for a special synod assembly, or until they have been disqualified by termination of congregation membership.
- †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 lay representatives of authorized worshiping communities 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.
- 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 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.
- S7.27.01. The Allegheny Synod Lutheran Youth Organization shall elect annually one youth representative from each conference to the Allegheny Synod Assembly, and each youth representative shall have the privilege of voice and vote.

- 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.
- S7.32. Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of the Synod Assembly, unless otherwise ordered by the 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 minister of Word and Sacrament of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- S8.11.01. When authorized by the Synod Council in order to address special circumstances, the synod bishop may be compensated as an employee or contractor for specified services to another expression of this church. Such an arrangement may be terminated by the Synod Assembly or Synod Council if determined to be detrimental to the function of the office or if the special circumstances no longer apply.
- †S8.12. As this synod's pastor, the bishop 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 ministers of Word and Sacrament, and its ministers of Word and Service.
 - c. Exercise solely this church's power to ordain (or provide for the ordination by another synod bishop of) approved candidates who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested letter of call for the office of ministry of Word and Sacrament (and as provided in the bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America).
 - d. Ordain (or provide for the ordination of) approved candidates who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested letter of call for service as ministers of Word and Service 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) rostered ministers whose calls the bishop has attested.
- 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 the 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 rostered ministers and congregations of this synod;
 - 3) Be the chief ecumenical officer of this synod;
 - 4) Be a member of the Conference of Bishops and consult regularly with other synod 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 the synod and of the churchwide organization are duly observed within this synod, and that the actions of the synod in conformity therewith are carried into effect;
 - 4) Direct and guide the work of the other officers;
 - 5) Exercise supervision over the work of all synod 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 the synod, except as otherwise provided in this constitution;

- 8) Provide for preparation and maintenance of synod rosters containing the names and addresses of all rostered ministers of this synod and a record of the calls under which they are serving or the date on which their retired or disability status took effect;
 - 9) Annually bring to the attention of the Synod Council the names of all rostered ministers on leave from call or engaged in approved graduate study in conformity with the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions 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;
 - b) the issuance of certificates of transfer for rostered ministers 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 roster 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 the synod, who shall secure the 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.
- †S8.13. The synod bishop may appoint an attorney, admitted to the bar within the territory of the synod or the state where the synod is located, to be Synod Attorney. The appointment must be approved by the Synod Council and reported to the Synod Assembly and to the secretary of this church. The appointment continues until resignation or until a successor is appointed. The Synod Attorney provides legal advice and counsel to the synod officers and the Synod Council. The Synod Attorney is expected to be familiar with the governing documents and policies of the synod and, as necessary, to attend meetings of the Synod Council. The Synod Attorney serves without salary but may be retained and compensated for specific legal services requested by the synod.
- S8.14. The synod bishop may have such assistants as this synod shall from time to time authorize.
- †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 synod bishop.
- †S8.16. Conflicts of Interest
- †S8.16.01. The following procedures shall govern matters of potential conflicts of interest for synod bishops:
- a. Whenever a synod bishop determines that a matter of the kind described in †S8.16.01.b. may require the bishop's determination or action with respect to a related individual as defined in †S8.16.01.c., the synod bishop shall withdraw from personal involvement in such

matter and shall so notify the presiding bishop. The presiding bishop shall then appoint another synod 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 provisions 7.46. and 7.75. of the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (†S14.18. and †S14.43.), candidacy, reinstatement, and similar matters where determinations or actions by the synod 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 synod bishop, 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).

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 the office.

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

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 a rostered minister.

†S8.32. The secretary shall:

- a. Keep the minutes of all meetings of the Synod Assembly and Synod Council, be responsible for 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.

S8.40. **Treasurer**

†S8.41. The treasurer may be elected by the Synod Assembly or may be appointed by the Synod Council. The treasurer shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod. The treasurer may be either a layperson or a rostered 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 as well as any funds to support restricted programs 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.

S8.50. **General Provisions**

†S8.51. The terms of office of the officers of this synod shall be as follows:

- a. The bishop of this synod shall be elected to a term of six years and may be re-elected.
- b. The vice president and secretary of this synod shall be elected to a term of four-years and may be re-elected. The officer shall serve until a successor takes office.
- c. The treasurer of this synod shall be [elected] [appointed] to a term of four-years and may be [re-elected] [re-appointed]. The treasurer shall serve until a successor takes office.

†S8.52. The terms of the officers shall begin on the first day of the 3rd calendar month following election or, in special circumstances, at a time designated by the Synod Council.

†S8.53. Each officer shall be a voting member in 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, after consultation with the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 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 four years. If the treasurer is appointed by the Synod Council, the Synod Council shall appoint a new treasurer to a four-year term.
- †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 10 calendar days prior to the meeting.
- †S8.57. The recall or dismissal of an officer and the vacating of office may be effected for willful disregard or violation of the constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this church; for such physical or mental disability as renders the officer incapable of performing the duties of office; or for such conduct as would subject the officer to disciplinary action as a rostered minister or as a member of a congregation of this church.
- a. Proceedings for the recall or dismissal of a synod bishop shall be instituted by written petition by:
 - 1) the Synod Council on an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of its elected members present and voting;
 - 2) the Synod Assembly on an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of its members present and voting;
 - 3) at least 10 synod bishops; or
 - 4) the presiding bishop of this church.
 - b. Proceedings for the recall or dismissal of an officer of a synod, other than the synod bishop, shall be instituted by written petition by:
 - 1) the Synod Council on an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of its elected members present and voting;
 - 2) the Synod Assembly on an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of its members present and voting; or
 - 3) the synod bishop.

- c. The petition shall be filed with the chair of the Committee on Appeals (in care of the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 8765 West Higgins Road, Chicago, Illinois 60631) and shall set forth the specific charge or charges.
- d. Upon the filing of a written petition, the Executive Committee of the Synod Council may temporarily suspend the officer from service in the synod without prejudice, but with continuation of compensation, including benefits, if the officer is a salaried employee of the synod.
- e. In the case of alleged physical or mental incapacity of an officer of the synod, the procedures outlined in †S8.56. shall be followed, and such officer shall comply with the decision of the Synod Council. If such officer fails or refuses to comply, the Synod Council may proceed to petition for recall or dismissal as follows:
 - 1) the Synod Council will submit a written report of their findings and the basis of their decision to the Committee on Appeals.
 - 2) the Committee on Appeals, exclusive of any members who are disqualified, shall review the findings and decision of the Synod Council and by an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of those present and voting may adopt the findings and grant the petition.
- f. If the synod officer is a minister of Word and Sacrament, grounds for recall or dismissal include those set forth in ELCA bylaw 20.22.01. and as defined under the process described in ELCA constitutional provisions 20.21. and 20.22. as grounds for discipline. If the officer is a minister of Word and Service, grounds for recall or dismissal include those set forth in ELCA bylaw 20.23.01. and as defined under the process described in ELCA constitutional provisions 20.21. and 20.22. as grounds for discipline.
- g. If the officer is a layperson, grounds for recall or dismissal include those set forth in ELCA bylaw 20.41.01. as grounds for discipline.
- h. If the case of alleged willful disregard or violation of the constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions or of alleged conduct as would subject the officer to disciplinary action, the following procedures shall apply:
 - 1) the petition shall be referred to the Committee on Appeals, which shall function as the discipline hearing committee that shall conduct a hearing in accordance with the rules provided for in ELCA bylaw 20.22.14. except to the extent that those rules are in conflict with the provisions of this bylaw; and
 - 2) the members of the Committee on Appeals, other than those who are disqualified, may grant the petition by an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of those present and voting.
- i. Written notice of a decision by the Committee on Appeals that the charges have been sustained shall be given to the affected officer and to the Synod Council, and the office shall be vacated.

†S8.58. If the bishop is to be temporarily absent from the synod for an extended period not to exceed 90 days, the bishop, after consultation with the presiding bishop and with the consent of the Synod Council, may appoint as acting bishop for such period a minister of Word and Sacrament 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. 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.
- †S9.02. 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 one member from each of this synod's conferences and three members-at-large 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.
- 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.
- S9.05. The Nominating Committee shall nominate at least one person for vice president; additional nominations may be made from the floor.
- S9.06. The Synod Council shall nominate at least one person for secretary; additional nominations may be made from the floor.
- S9.07. If the treasurer is elected, the Synod Council shall nominate at least one person for treasurer; additional nominations may be made from the floor.
- S9.08. In all elections, except for the bishop, 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.

- †S9.10. When notified by the secretary of this church, on behalf of the Nominating Committee of the Churchwide Assembly, the Synod Assembly shall nominate two persons in the specified categories for possible election by the Churchwide Assembly to the Church Council.
- S9.11. The Synod Council shall elect or appoint representatives to the steering committee of its region.
- †S9.12. Background checks and screening shall be required and completed for persons nominated as synod 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 the 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 ministers on a 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.
- S10.01.01. There shall be a Synod Council consisting of the four officers of the synod, twelve members-at-large, and one youth, to be elected by the Synod Assembly from a slate of nominees chosen by the Nominating Committee. Congregations may submit nominations to the Nominating Committee. The person elected to the youth position shall be elected to a two-year term.
- S10.01.02. The terms for the members of the Synod Council shall be for three years, with one third of the terms expiring each year. No member shall serve more than two consecutive terms, and partial terms shall be considered as a full term.
- †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.

- 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 an annual review of the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament and the roster of Ministers of Word and Service, 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 rostered 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.
 - g. Report its actions to the regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.
 - h. 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.

S10.03.B18.

That the Allegheny Synod Council may vote on motions via email when the matter requires urgency, or when it is deemed not practicable to convene a Synod Council meeting. The Bishop of the Synod may make a motion, any member of Synod Council may second the motion and the Office of the Bishop shall send the motion to the Council members via email for discussion and a vote. Passage of the motion would rely on the required percentage of approval as stated in the Allegheny Synod Constitution, for the issue being considered.

Members of the Allegheny Synod Council may also participate in meetings via telephone, or may participate via the Internet using video conferencing applications. Members participating remotely shall have full rights of voice and vote at these meetings.

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 meet the requirements of the position to which she or he was elected, 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 meet at least quarterly.

S10.08. Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of all meetings of the Synod Council.

S10.08.01. To the extent permitted by state law, meetings of the Synod Council and its committees may be held electronically or by telephone conference, and notice of all meetings may be provided electronically.

Chapter 11.

COMMITTEES

†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 one member at large elected from the Synod Council.

- a. The executive Committee shall be subordinate to the Synod Council, assuring that all necessary support information is available prior to the meeting of the council.
- b. The Executive Committee shall be subordinate to the Synod Council and shall not make decisions which are in conflict with the will of the council or that are precluded by the synod constitution and bylaws or the actions of the Synod Assembly.
- c. The Executive Committee may act on behalf of the Synod Council in emergency situations.
- d. The Executive Committee shall perform such other functions as are set forth in the constitution and bylaws of this synod or as may be delegated to it by the Synod Council.

S11.01.02. Constitution and Bylaws Committee -- which shall consist of no more than seven persons.

- a. This committee shall review the constitution and bylaws annually and make recommendations to Synod council if changes are needed.
- b. This committee shall see that changes are made to the constitution and bylaws as mandated by the church wide assembly.
- c. This committee shall review the constitution and bylaws annually to see that all is in compliance with mandates of the Evangelical Church in America and is supportive of the ministries of this synod.
- d. This committee shall review constitutions and bylaws of congregations and make recommendations to the respective congregation if such is not in conformance with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

S11.01.10. This synod shall provide for the following administrative functions:

- a. Program proposal
 - 1) Preparation of the synod's program proposal for each year;
 - 2) Recommendation on compensation guidelines for Rostered Ministers of this Synod
- b. Synod Assembly -- as specified in Chapter 7 – Synod Assembly
- c. Nominations -- as specified in S9.03.

S11.01.21. This Synod shall provide for ministries to and with partner organizations which shall include but not be limited to the following:

- a. Partners on the territory of the synod;
- b. Partners on the territory of the region;
- c. Churchwide partners.

S11.01.22. This synod shall provide for ministries to and with leaders of this synod which shall include but not be limited to the following:

- a. Pastors;
- b. Deacons;
- c. Lay leaders;
- d. Candidates for ministry.

S11.01.23. This synod shall recognize and encourage special ministries, such as youth, scouts, women, men, and other emphases that arise from time to time.

S11.01.30. Common Rules of Procedure for Synod Committees

S11.01.31. The Synod Council shall give direction and make all appointments to each administrative and ministry committee. Each committee shall have at least three (3) members (unless otherwise indicated in these bylaws) with attention given to representation from all conferences in committee appointments. The chairperson of each administrative and ministry committee shall be appointed by the Synod Council. Appointments shall generally be made at the first council meeting following the annual Assembly.

S11.01.32. Terms shall not exceed three (3) years and shall begin upon notification of appointment and end as indicated in the appropriate notice. Each appointee shall be notified of appointment and term by the synod secretary.

S11.01.33. Each committee shall

- a. record minutes of meetings and activities which shall be shared with the Synod Council and the office of the bishop;
- b. Submit to the committee responsible for this Synod's program proposal its anticipated budgetary needs for the next year's Program Proposal, breaking the request down into line items;
- c. submit a report to the Synod Assembly.

S11.01.34. In the event that a committee member is absent without an appropriate reason for three consecutive committee meetings, that member's position shall be considered vacant. Another person will be appointed by the Synod Council for the remainder of the term.

S11.01.A23. There shall be a Finance Team

- a. whose purpose will be to provide for the following administrative functions;
 - 1) make a recommendation to Synod Council regarding the synod's program proposal for the next fiscal year
 - 2) make a recommendation to Synod Council concerning compensation and benefits guidelines for Rostered Ministers
 - 3) make recommendation to the Synod Council concerning the synod's investment portfolio
- b. A team of no less than four and not more than seven people shall be appointed by the Synod Council.
- c. which shall have the Synod Treasurer as an ex-officio member of this committee.

S11.01.B23. There shall be a Global Mission Committee

- 1) Global Mission Committee shall
 - a) raise the synod's awareness of the global dimensions of the church,
 - b) promote support for the global work of spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ,
 - c) submit an annual program proposal for monies to be allocated for global mission,
 - d) relate to the Allegheny Synod's Companion Synod the Kenya Evangelical Lutheran Church.

S11.01.C23. There shall be a Synod Advocacy Team

- a. Coordinate annual training for Rostered Ministers on racial justice and boundaries.
- b. Raise awareness of issues in the world including but not limited to peace, justice, creation, health, environment, racism.

S11.01.D23. There shall be a Leadership Committee

- a) to provide counsel and guidance to the Synod's ministry to and with leaders of this Synod.
- b) which shall be composed of representatives from among active and retired pastors, deacons, pastors serving under special call, and authorized lay leaders.
- c) Authorized Lay Leaders, Spiritual Retreats, First Call Theological Education, the Bishop's Convocation and other forms of continuing education for this Synod's leaders shall be the committee's focus.
- d) Who shall be responsive to suggestions made by the ELCA, Region 8, the Bishop, Synod Council, and other members of the Leadership Committee.

S11.01.E23. There shall be a Candidacy Committee

- a. which is related to the Leadership Committee for purposes of ministry support but is under the direction of the Bishop and Synod Council.
- b. which shall have ten members appointed by Synod Council. No committee member shall

serve for more than six consecutive years.

c. whose operational process of this committee shall be as follows:

- 1) receive the Congregational Registration of potential candidates for ordained or certified ministry,
- 2) receive information from and screen all candidates,
- 3) endorse each potential candidate for the appropriate preparatory program of studies,
- 4) review each potential candidate prior to final endorsement,
- 5) provide ongoing support and guidance to endorsed candidates and receive reports on their progress, and
- 6) during the candidate's last year of studies grant approval for (or deny) ordination or certification.

d. after careful review, withdraw the endorsement of a candidate not deemed to be making satisfactory progress.

S11.01.A17. A Committee on Reference and Counsel shall be appointed by the Bishop at the opening session of the Assembly. The committee:

A. Shall receive resolution not germane to matters before the Assembly.

1. The committee shall review those resolutions and transmit them to the Assembly with one of the following recommendations:

- that the Assembly consider the resolution. If the committee recommends that the Assembly consider the resolution, the committee may also recommend:
- that the Assembly pass the resolution;
- that the Assembly defeat the resolution;
- that the Assembly amend the resolution in a specified manner.
- that the Assembly refer the resolution to the Synod Council, a committee of the synod, or some other defined group for its consideration;
- that the Assembly not consider the resolution.

2. shall state its reasons for its recommendations if it recommends anything other than that the Assembly considers the resolution.

3. shall determine if a resolution submitted after the pre-assembly deadline is of imminent concern. Resolutions of imminent concern would include any resolutions pertaining to issues which call for attention or action prior to the next regularly scheduled assembly of this synod.

B. May edit resolutions and the committee may combine similar resolutions to expedite the work of the assembly, but the committee shall not change the substance of any resolution.

C. May consult with the author of a resolution and encourage them to take action that would not bring the resolution to the assembly.

D. In consultation with the chair, shall recommend the order in which resolutions are transmitted to the assembly. Whenever possible, resolutions of a similar nature should be presented consecutively.

E. May recommend that a resolution be considered as a special order.

F. May grant or deny permission to distribute printed matter not introduced on the floor of

the assembly.

G. Shall give assistance to the chair as requested by the chair during the assembly.

Anyone wishing to distribute printed matter not introduced on the floor as part of a report to the assembly or as part of the business of the assembly must receive the approval of the Committee on Reference and Counsel before distributing the material.

S11.01.C18.

That the Allegheny Synod Council Executive Committee may vote on motions via email when the matter requires urgency, or when it is deemed not practicable to convene an Executive Committee meeting. The Bishop of the Synod may make a motion, any member of the Executive Committee may second the motion and the Office of the Bishop shall send the motion to the Executive Committee members via email for discussion and a vote. Passage of the motion would rely on the required percentage of approval as stated in the Allegheny Synod Constitution, for the issue being considered.

Members of the Allegheny Synod Council Executive Committee may also participate in meetings via telephone, or may participate via the Internet using video conferencing applications. Members participating remotely shall have full rights of voice and vote at these meetings.

- †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 rostered ministers and half shall be laypersons, who shall each be elected by the Synod Assembly for a term of six years without consecutive re-election. 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.
- †S11.03. The Committee on Discipline of this synod shall consist of 12 persons, of whom six shall be rostered ministers and six shall be laypersons, who shall each be elected by the Synod Assembly for a term of six years without consecutive re-election.
- 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 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.
- †S11.05. The Audit Committee of this synod shall consist of three to six persons, none of whom is a member 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.

S11.05.10. Any changes in the Continuing Resolutions implemented in the Synod Constitution shall be reported annually at the Synod Assembly.

†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 ministers on the rosters of this synod who reside outside the territory of this synod, 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, AREA SUBDIVISIONS, AND NETWORKS

†S12.01. This synod may establish conferences, clusters, coalitions, area subdivisions, and networks as appropriate within its territory and in collaboration with other synods and entities, as specified in the bylaws and continuing resolutions. The purpose of such groupings shall be to foster interdependent relationships for missional purposes among congregations, synods, the churchwide organization, and other affiliates.

S12.01.01. Between the first day of each year and two months before each annual Synod Assembly, the conferences established by the Synod Assembly shall meet as the annual Conference Assembly for the purpose of:

- a. The election of officers;
- b. The suggesting of names to the nominating committee for the elections to be held at the next Synod Assembly;
- c. To identify conference needs and to organize to meet those needs; and,
- d. To provide for preparation for participation in the business of the Synod Assembly.

S12.01.02. The voting representatives at the annual Conference Assembly shall be the same persons elected to be delegates or alternates to the Synod Assembly.

S12.01.03. The officers of each conference shall consist of a Dean and a Secretary. The dean shall be an ordained minister or a deacon. A Conference Assembly may also elect a treasurer and other officers.

S12.01.04. Each conference shall submit a report to the Synod Assembly through its dean, and, if there is a conference treasury, include a summary of its treasury.

- S12.01.05. The terms of each elected officer shall be for two years, beginning and ending with the adjournment of each annual Synod Assembly. Each officer may serve only two consecutive full terms, with partial terms not being counted.
- S12.01.06. Conferences are encouraged to meet on other occasions. Non-voting visitors shall always be welcome to attend Conference Assemblies.
- S12.01.07. The ordained ministers and the deacons of each conference, or in combinations of conferences, are encouraged to meet for the purpose of mutual support in ministry, continuing education, fellowship, and worship.
- S12.01.08. Each conference which has a treasury shall have an annual audit of its treasurer's records.
- S12.02.09. The Synod Assembly or the Synod Council shall assign each one of its congregations to one of the conferences within its territory. A congregation may request reassignment by submitting a request of its congregational council to the Synod Assembly or Synod Council.

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 roster of congregations of this synod, shall adopt the Model Constitution for Congregations or one acceptable to this synod that 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 constitution and bylaws of this church.
 - 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 the constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions 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 this church 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 leadership 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 contact the ELCA synod bishop or staff where the congregation is located. The synod bishop or synod staff where the transferring or independent congregation is located shall confer with the congregation to assure its understanding and acceptance of commitment to and affiliation with this church.

- 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 the synod and action by the 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 roster of congregations.

S13.01.10. Criteria for Recognition

S13.01.11. The synod shall recognize those congregations which by their practice as well as their governing documents:

- a. preach the Word, administer the sacraments, and carry out God's mission;
- b. accept this church's Confession of Faith;
- c. agree to the purposes of this synod;
- d. agree to call pastoral leadership from the clergy roster of this church in accordance with the call procedures of this church except in special circumstances and with the approval of the synodical bishop;
- e. agree to be responsible for their life as a Christian community; and,
- f. agree to support the life and work of this church.

†S13.02. It shall be the responsibility of each congregation of this synod to elect 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. Normatively, congregations should hold elections prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly. 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 rostered 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 rostered minister shall make satisfactory settlement of the obligation before calling a successor.

S13.13.01. Each congregation treasury shall have an annual audit of its treasurers' records.

†S13.20. A congregation considering a relocation shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located and the appropriate 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. (*previously †S13.19*)

- †S13.21. 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 unit of the churchwide organization before any steps are taken leading to such action. *(previously †S13.20)*
- †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 constitution of this church 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, then title to the property shall revert to the synod, and the congregation, upon written demand, shall reconvey the property to the synod.
- †S13.24. The Synod Council, itself or through trustees appointed by it, may take charge and control of the property of a congregation of this synod to hold, manage, and convey the same on behalf of this synod, if any of the following apply:
- a. The congregation has disbanded, ceased to worship, or otherwise ceased to exist as a congregation.
 - b. The congregation has abandoned its property.
 - c. The remaining members of the congregation decide that it is no longer possible to function as a congregation or that they are unable to provide required governance.
 - d. The Synod Council determines that the membership of a congregation has become so scattered or so diminished in numbers that it cannot provide required governance or that it has become impractical for the congregation to fulfill the purposes for which it was organized.
 - e. The Synod Council determines that it is necessary for this synod to protect and preserve the congregation's property from waste and deterioration.
- The congregation shall have the right to appeal any such decision to the next Synod Assembly.
- S13.25. This synod may temporarily assume administration of a congregation upon its request or with its concurrence. Such synod administration shall continue only so long as necessary to complete the purposes for which it was requested by the congregation or until the congregation withdraws consent to continued administration.
- S13.30. Discipline

†S13.31. Congregations and members of congregations are subject to discipline in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 20 of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. The synod's involvement in and responsibility for such disciplinary processes shall be as set forth in that chapter.

S13.40. Synod-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.

ROSTERED MINISTERS

S14.10. Ministers of Word and Sacrament

†S14.11. The time and place of the ordination of those persons properly called to ministry in this synod shall be authorized by the bishop of this synod.

†S14.12. Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,
a. Every minister of Word and Sacrament shall:

- 1) preach the Word;
- 2) administer the sacraments;
- 3) conduct public worship;
- 4) provide pastoral care;
- 5) seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel;
- 6) impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through available channels of effective communication;
- 7) witness to the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation and abroad; and
- 8) speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, advocating dignity, justice, and equity for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, and embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations.

b. Each pastor with a congregational call shall, within the congregation:

- 1) offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead;
- 2) relate to all schools and organizations of the congregation;
- 3) install regularly elected members of the Congregation Council;
- 4) with the council, administer discipline;
- 5) endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the churchwide organization and of this synod; and

- 6) encourage adherence to covenantal relationship with this church as expressed in the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.
- S14.13. The pastor (a) shall keep accurate 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.
- S14.14. 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 congregation nearer to their place of residence.
- S14.15. Each minister of Word and Sacrament on the roster of this synod shall submit a report of ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.
- †S14.16. When a congregation of this church desires to call a pastor or a candidate for the ministry of Word and Sacrament 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 candidate by a congregation of this synod in accord with ELCA constitutional provision 7.41., a two-thirds vote shall be required of voting 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.
- S14.17. No minister of Word and Sacrament shall accept a call without first conferring with the bishop of this synod. A minister of Word and Sacrament 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 president of the Congregation Council of the congregation issuing the call, an additional 15 days may be granted to respond to a letter of call.
- †S14.18. The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between a minister of Word and Sacrament and a congregation shall be as follows:
- a. The call of a congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment which shall be terminated only by the pastor's death or, following consultation with the synod bishop, for any of 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, no later than 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;
 - 4) inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in view of disability or incapacity of the pastor;
 - 5) suspension of the pastor through discipline for more than three months;
 - 6) resignation or removal of the pastor from the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament of this church;
 - 7) termination of the relationship between this church and the congregation;
 - 8) dissolution of the congregation or the termination of a parish arrangement; or
 - 9) suspension of the congregation through discipline for more than six months.
- b. When allegations of disability or incapacity of the pastor under paragraph a.4) above, or ineffective conduct of the pastoral office under paragraph a.3) above, have come to the attention of the bishop of this synod,
- 1) the bishop, who has sole discretion, may investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson, or
 - 2) when such allegations have been brought to the 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 personally shall investigate such conditions together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson.
- c. In case of alleged disability or incapacity under paragraph a.4) above, the bishop's committee shall obtain and document competent medical opinion concerning the pastor's condition. When a disability or incapacity is evident to the committee, the bishop of this synod may declare the pastorate vacant. When the pastorate is declared vacant, the Synod Council shall list the pastor on the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament with disability status. Upon resumption of the ability to conduct the office effectively, the bishop shall take steps to enable the pastor to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another appropriate call.
- d. In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of the congregation under paragraph a.3) above, the bishop's committee shall endeavor to hear from all concerned persons, after which the bishop together with the committee shall present their recommendations first to the pastor and then to the congregation. The recommendations of the bishop's committee must address whether the pastor's call should come to an end and, if so, may suggest appropriate severance arrangements. The committee may also propose other actions that should be undertaken by the congregation and by the pastor, if appropriate. If the pastor and congregation agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action need be taken by the synod.
- e. If either party fails to assent to the recommendations of the bishop's committee concerning the pastor's call, the congregation may dismiss the pastor only at a legally called meeting after consultation with the bishop, either (a) by a two-thirds 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 majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee recommended termination of the call.

f. If, in the course of proceedings described in paragraph c. or paragraph d. above, the bishop's committee concludes that there may be grounds for disciplinary action, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action in accordance with the provisions of this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions.

†S14.19. Ministers of Word and Sacrament 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.

†S14.21. The records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members transferred or dismissed, members who have become inactive, or members excluded from the congregation shall be kept accurately and permanently. They shall remain the property of each congregation. At the time of the closure of a congregation, such records shall be sent to the regional archives. The secretary of the congregation shall attest to the bishop of this synod that such records have been placed in the secretary's hands in good order by a departing pastor before:

- a. installation in another call, or
- b. approval of a request for change in roster status.

†S14.22. The pastor shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to a former congregation before:

- a. installation in another call, or
- b. approval of a request for change in roster status.

†S14.23. 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 rostered minister 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 congregation records, for the period for which the interim pastor was responsible, are in order.

†S14.24. With the approval of the synod 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 †S14.18., 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. 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 †S14.18.

- S14.25. All ministers of Word and Sacrament 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. Ministers of Word and Service
- †S14.31. The time and place of the ordination of those persons properly called to ministry in this synod shall be authorized by the bishop of this synod.
- †S14.32. Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, every Minister of Word and Service shall:
- a. Be rooted in the Word of God, for proclamation and service;
 - b. Advocate a prophetic diakonia that commits itself to risk-taking and innovative service on the frontiers of the Church's outreach, giving particular attention to the suffering places in God's world;
 - c. Speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, advocating dignity, justice, and equity for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, and embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations;
 - d. Equip the baptized for ministry in God's world that affirms the gifts of all people;
 - e. Encourage mutual relationships that invite participation and accompaniment of others in God's mission;
 - f. Practice stewardship that respects God's gift of time, talents, and resources;
 - g. Be grounded in a gathered community for ongoing diaconal formation;
 - h. Share knowledge of this church and its wider ministry of the gospel, and advocate for the work of all expressions of this church; and
 - i. Identify and encourage qualified persons to prepare for ministry of the gospel.
- S14.33. The minister of Word and Service shall become a member of the congregation upon receipt and acceptance of the letter of call. In a parish of multiple congregations, the minister of Word and Service shall hold membership in one of the congregations.
- S14.34. Each minister of Word and Service on the roster of this synod shall submit a report of ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.
- †S14.41. When a congregation of this church desires to call a minister of Word and Service or a candidate for the ministry of Word and Service 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 minister of Word and Service.
 - b. For issuance of a letter of call to a minister of Word and Service or candidate by a congregation of this synod in accord with ELCA constitutional provision 7.71., a two-thirds 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 minister of Word and Service, the letter of call shall be submitted to the bishop of this synod for the bishop's signature.

S14.42. No minister of Word and Service shall accept a call without first conferring with the bishop of this synod. A minister of Word and Service 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 president of the Congregation Council of the congregation issuing the call, an additional 15 days may be granted to respond to a letter of call.

†S14.43. The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between a minister of Word and Service and a congregation shall be as follows:

- a. The call of a congregation, when accepted by a minister of Word and Service, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment which shall be terminated only by the deacon's death or, following consultation with the synod bishop, for any of the following reasons:
 - 1) mutual agreement to terminate the call or the completion of a call for a specific term;
 - 2) resignation of the minister of Word and Service, which shall become effective, unless otherwise agreed, no later than 30 days after the date on which it was submitted;
 - 3) inability to conduct the office effectively in that congregation in view of local conditions;
 - 4) inability to conduct the office effectively in view of disability or incapacity of the minister of Word and Service;
 - 5) suspension of the minister of Word and Service through discipline for more than three months;
 - 6) resignation or removal of the minister of Word and Service from the roster of Ministers of Word and Service of this church;
 - 7) termination of the relationship between this church and the congregation;
 - 8) dissolution of the congregation or the termination of a parish arrangement; or
 - 9) suspension of the congregation through discipline for more than six months.
- b. When allegations of disability or incapacity of the minister of Word and Service under paragraph a.4) above, or ineffective conduct of the ministry of Word and Service under paragraph a.3) above, have come to the attention of the bishop of this synod,
 - 1) the bishop, who has sole discretion, may investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson, or
 - 2) when such allegations have been brought to the 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 personally shall investigate such conditions together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson.
- c. In case of alleged disability or incapacity under paragraph a.4) above, the bishop's committee shall obtain and document competent medical opinion concerning the minister of Word and Service's condition. When a disability or incapacity is evident to the committee, the bishop of this synod may declare the position vacant. When the position is

declared vacant, the Synod Council shall list the deacon on the roster of Ministers of Word and Service with disability status. Upon resumption of the ability to conduct the office effectively, the bishop shall take steps to enable the minister of Word and Service to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another appropriate call.

- d. In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of the congregation under paragraph a.3) above, the bishop's committee shall endeavor to hear from all concerned persons, after which the bishop together with the committee shall present their recommendations first to the minister of Word and Service and then to the congregation. The recommendations of the bishop's committee address whether the minister of Word and Service's call should come to an end and, if so, may suggest appropriate severance arrangements. The committee may also propose other actions that should be undertaken by the congregation and by the minister of Word and Service, if appropriate. If the minister of Word and Service and congregation agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action need be taken by the synod.
- e. If either party fails to assent to the recommendations of the bishop's committee concerning the minister of Word and Service's call, the congregation may dismiss the minister of Word and Service only at a legally called meeting after consultation with the bishop, either (a) by a two-thirds 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 majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee recommended termination of the call.
- f. If, in the course of proceedings described in paragraph c. or paragraph d. above, the bishop's committee concludes that there may be grounds for disciplinary action, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action in accordance with the provisions of this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions.

†S14.44. Ministers of Word and Service 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 Congregation Council.

†S14.45. The minister of Word and Service shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to a former congregation before:

- a. installation in another call, or
- b. approval of a request for change in roster status.

†S14.46. With the approval of the synod 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 †S14.43., a congregation may call a minister of Word and Service for a specific term. Details of such calls shall be in writing setting forth the purpose and conditions involved. Prior to the completion of a term, the bishop of this synod or a representative of the bishop shall meet with the minister of Word and Service 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 †S14.43.

S14.47. All ministers of Word and Service under a call shall attend meetings of the Synod Assembly, and the ministers of Word and Service of congregations shall also attend the meetings of the conference, cluster, coalition, or other area subdivision to which the congregation belongs.

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 expressions that share in God's mission, all share in the responsibility to develop, implement, and strengthen the financial support 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; thus the unity of 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 or amount of each congregation's mission support as determined in consultation with the churchwide organization and approved by the Synod Assembly as part of its budget consideration.
- c. Should the Synod Assembly not approve the proportionate share of mission support determined in consultation with the churchwide organization, a new consultation with the churchwide organization shall take place. The Synod Council is authorized to amend the budget adopted by the Synod Assembly to reflect the results of this consultation.

†S15.12. The annual budget of this synod shall reflect the entire range of its own activities and its commitment to supportive funding with other synods and the churchwide organization.

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 synod 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.

†S15.31. 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.

†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.

S15.40.00. This synod shall have a Mission Endowment Fund, whose purpose governance and operations procedures was adopted by the Synod Assembly. (See SA00.6.17)

S15.40.01.

a. Committee Membership

The committee shall consist of five members, all of whom shall be voting members of a congregation of The Allegheny Synod. Except as herein limited, the term of each member shall be three (3) years. Upon adoption of this resolution by the Synod, it shall elect five (5) members to the committee: two (2) for a term of three (3) years; two (2) for a term of two (2) years; and one (1) for a term of one (1) year. Thereafter, at each annual Synod Assembly, the Synod shall elect the necessary number for a term of three (3) years. No member shall serve more than two consecutive three (3) year terms. After a lapse of one (1) year, former committee members may be reelected. The Bishop and the Vice President of the Synod Council shall be advisory members of the committee.

b. The Council of the Synod shall nominate the committee and report at the annual Assembly in the same manner as for other offices and committees. In the event of a vacancy on the committee, the Synod Council shall appoint a member to fill the vacancy until the next annual Assembly of the Synod, at which time the Synod shall elect a member to fill the term of the vacancy.

c. The committee shall meet at least quarterly or more frequent as deemed by in the best interest of the FUND.

d. A quorum shall consist of three (3) members. When only three (3) members are present a unanimous vote shall be required to carry any motion or resolution.

e. The committee shall elect from its membership a chairperson, recording secretary and financial secretary. The chairperson shall preside at all committee meetings.

f. The recording secretary of the committee shall maintain complete and accurate minutes of all meetings and supply a copy thereof to each member of the committee. Each member shall keep a complete copy of minutes to be delivered to his or her successor. The recording secretary shall also supply a copy of the minutes to the Synod Council.

g. The financial secretary of the committee shall work with the Synod's treasurer in maintaining and coordinating complete and accurate accounts for the FUND and shall sign checks and all other necessary documents on behalf of the Synod in

furtherance of the purpose of the FUND. The books shall be audited annually by a certified public accounting firm or other appropriate person who is not a member of the committee.

- h. The committee shall report on a quarterly basis to the Synod Council and, at each annual Assembly or duly called special meeting of the Synod, shall render a full and complete audited account of the administration of the FUND during the preceding year.
- i. The committee may request other members of the Synod to Serve as advisory members and, at the expense of the FUND income, may provide for such professional counseling on investments or legal matters as it deems to be in the best interest of the FUND.
- j. Members of the committee shall not be liable for any Losses which may be incurred upon the investments of the assets of the FUND except to the extent such losses shall have been caused by bad faith or gross negligence. No members shall be personally liable as long as he or she acts in good faith and with ordinary prudence. Each member shall be liable only for his or her own willful misconduct or omissions, and shall not be liable for the acts or omissions of any other member. No member shall engage in any “self dealing” or transactions with the FUND in which the member has direct or indirect financial interest and shall at all times refrain from any conduct in which his or her personal interest would conflict with the interest of the FUND.
- k. All assets are to be held in the name of The Allegheny Synod of The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, for the benefit of The Allegheny Synod Mission Endowment Fund.

S15.40.02. Define Principal and Income

The committee shall determine what is principal and income according to accepted accounting procedures.

- a. Restricted portions of principal:

Gifts and bequests whose income is restricted by the wishes of the donor shall be invested separately in order that the income earned can be easily identified. Income can be distributed from these portions without regard to the total amount of the principal.

- b. Unrestricted principal:

Unrestricted gifts and bequests to the FUND shall accumulate until a principal in the amount of \$100,000 is achieved, after which, the income generated from the investment of the principal shall be expended.

S15.40.03. Distribution of Income

Income from any restricted portion of the FUND’s principal shall be distributed first in compliance with the donor’s wishes. Income from the unrestricted portion of the FUND shall be distributed annually and at such other times as deemed necessary or feasible to accomplish the following purposes:

One-half (1/2) for outreach into the community and Synod, including, but not limited to, grants to ELCA seminaries, colleges or students attending such schools, social service agencies, institutions and agencies to which this Synod relates, and to special programs designed for those persons in our Synod area who are in spiritual and/or economic need.

One-half (1/2) for missions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in this

continent and worldwide, including, but not limited to, grants to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for new congregations' development in North America, professional leadership, educational ministries, global mission, ecumenism, evangelism, social ministries and capital financing.

Programs for support shall be recommended by the committee and approved by the Synod Council for funding according to the guidelines established by the Synod.

Disbursement of income from the FUND need not occur annually in the event causes and programs have not been approved by the committee sufficient to utilize total income available, or if in the judgment of the committee, total annual disbursement of income is not recommended.

S15.40.04. Distribution of Principal

When, in the opinion of the committee, circumstances are so dire and of such an emergency nature that the future of the Synod is at stake, and that the only recourse seems to be the use of the FUND principal, the committee may, upon a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote, recommend such authorizing action to the Synod Council and/or Assembly.

S15.40.05. Disposition or Transfer of Fund

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that in the event The Allegheny Synod ceases to exist either through merger or dissolution, disposition or transfer of the FUND shall be at the discretion of the Synod Council in conformity with the approved synodical constitution and in consultation with the Bishop of the ELCA or his designee.

S15.40.A18. Annual Disbursement of Funds to Seminarians

- a. The Office of the Bishop shall identify seminarians eligible to receive funding during the fall semester of the current calendar year.
- b. The disbursement of funds shall be contingent on the applicable policies & procedures set forth in bylaw S15.40.03. (Distribution of Income)
- c. The disbursement of funds shall be authorized annually by vote of Synod Council at the November meeting.
- d. The calculation of available funds from Seminary Support Funds: ELCA Fund-A for distribution shall be no more than 5% of the fund balance, as of October 31 of the current calendar year.
- e. The calculation of available funds for distribution may also include other sources of funding such as restricted funds specified for seminarians, unrestricted funds, dedicated accounts & the like, upon recommendation by the Office of the Bishop & upon authorization by Synod Council.
- f. Disbursements to eligible seminarians shall be made prior to the end of the current calendar year.

Chapter 16.
Indemnification

- †S16.01. Subject to the limitations and duties imposed 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 all costs and expenses 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 †S16.02.
- a. The term "proceeding" means a threatened, pending, or completed lawsuit, whether civil or criminal, an administrative or investigative matter, arbitration, mediation, alternative dispute resolution, or any other similar legal or governmental action. Except as otherwise required by law, the term "proceeding" does not include (a) any action by this synod against the individual seeking indemnification, or (b) subject to †S16.04., a disciplinary hearing or related process described in Chapter 20 of the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - b. The term "indemnification" includes reimbursement and advances of costs and expenses for judgments, penalties, fines, settlements, excise taxes, reasonable attorneys' fees, disbursements, and similar required expenditures.
- †S16.02. 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 be entitled to indemnification only if (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.
- †S16.03. 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 †S16.01. or †S16.02.
- †S16.04. When written charges against a rostered minister of this church are made in disciplinary proceedings under Chapter 20 of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* by the synod bishop or when written charges against a congregation are made in disciplinary proceedings by the Synod Council or the synod bishop, and the discipline hearing committee determines that no discipline shall be imposed, then if such determination is not reversed or set aside on appeal, 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 made by the Synod Council.

Chapter 17.

CONSULTATION AND ADJUDICATION

- +S17.01. The synod bishop and the Executive Committee of the Synod Council shall be available to give counsel when disputes arise within this synod.

- +S17.02. The synod bishop and the Executive Committee of the Synod Council shall receive expressions of concern from rostered ministers 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 a concern relates directly to the synod bishop, the synod vice president will lead the Executive Committee's efforts at resolving the matter. When the matter at issue cannot be resolved in this manner, applicable procedures for investigation, decision, appeal, and adjudication shall be followed. Allegations or charges that could lead to the discipline of a rostered minister 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 between or among congregations of this synod on a substantive issue that cannot be resolved by the parties, the council of an affected congregation may petition the synod bishop for a consultation after informing the other affected congregation(s) of its intent to do so. If this consultation fails to resolve the issue, the bishop shall refer the matter to the Consultation Committee of the synod, which shall undertake efforts to find an appropriate solution. If the Consultation Committee's efforts fail to resolve the issue(s), the entire matter shall be referred to the Synod Council for adjudication by whatever process the council deems necessary. The decision of the Synod Council shall be final.

- +S17.04. When conferences, clusters, coalitions, or area subdivisions of this synod have a disagreement on a substantive issue that they cannot resolve, the aggrieved party or parties may petition the synod bishop and the Executive Committee of the Synod Council requesting a consultation after informing the other affected parties of their intent to do so. 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 between or among factions within a congregation on a substantive issue which cannot be resolved by the parties, members of the congregation may petition the synod bishop for consultation after informing the president of the Congregation Council of

their intent to do so. The synod bishop shall seek a timely resolution of the dispute. If the issue relates directly to the pastor, the bishop may begin the process in †S14.18.d. In all other matters, if the bishop's consultation fails to resolve the issue, the bishop shall refer the matter to the Consultation Committee of the synod, which shall undertake efforts to find an appropriate solution. If the Consultation Committee's efforts fail to resolve the dispute, the entire matter shall be referred to the Synod Council for adjudication by whatever process the council deems necessary. The Synod Council's 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 the Churchwide Assembly, 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 this synod that the Churchwide Assembly has amended the Constitution for Synods, this constitution may be amended to reflect any such amendment by a 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. Introduced with the support of at least 10 voting members and having been approved by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting at a regular meeting of the Synod Assembly, an amendment may be adopted unchanged by a two-thirds vote at the next 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 or with the constitution and bylaws of the churchwide organization. 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.

S18.21.01. Amendments to the bylaws may be adopted by this synod by a two-thirds vote at any regular meeting of the Synod Assembly after having been moved and presented in writing over the signatures of at least ten members.

†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, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of the churchwide organization. Such continuing resolutions may be adopted or amended by a majority vote of the Synod Assembly or by a two-thirds vote of the Synod Council. Newly adopted continuing resolutions and amendments to existing continuing resolutions shall be reported to the secretary of this church.