

**CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS**  
*Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod,*  
*Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*

**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 biennially.**

BLS7.11. A regular meeting of the Synod Assembly shall be held annually.

**S7.12. a. 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-tenth of the voting members of the Synod Assembly. The notice of each special meeting shall define the purpose for which it is to be held. The scope of actions to be taken at such a special meeting shall be limited to the subject matter(s) described in the notice.**

**b. If the special meeting of the Synod Assembly is required for the purpose of electing a successor Bishop because of death, resignation, or inability to serve, the special meeting shall be called by the Presiding Bishop of the ELCA in cooperation with the Synod Council.**

**S7.13. Notice of the time and place of all meetings of the Synod Assembly shall be given by the Secretary of this Synod.**

BLS7.13. Notice for a regular meeting of the Synod Assembly shall be given not less than four weeks preceding the meeting, and for a special meeting of the Synod Assembly not less than two weeks preceding the meeting.

**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% of the voting membership shall be composed of laypersons, shall be constituted as follows:**

**a. All ordained ministers under call on the roster of this Synod in attendance at the Synod Assembly shall be voting members.**

**b. All associates in ministry, deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and diaconal ministers, under call, on the official lay rosters of this Synod shall have both voice and vote as lay voting members in the Synod Assembly, in addition to the voting membership of lay members of congregations provided in item \*S7.21.c.**

- c. A minimum of one lay member elected by each congregation with fewer than 175 baptized members and a minimum of two lay members elected by each congregation with 175 or more baptized members related to this Synod, normally one of whom shall be male and one of whom shall be female, shall be voting members. The Synod Council shall establish a formula to provide additional lay representation from congregations on the basis of the number of baptized members in the congregation. The Synod Council shall seek to ensure that, as nearly as possible, 50 percent of the lay members of the Assembly shall be female and 50 percent shall be male. Additional members from each congregation normally shall be equally divided between male and female.
- BLS7.21. c. A congregation having more than 1,000 persons who are on the roll of baptized members shall be entitled to an additional lay voting member for each additional 1,000 such members, or major fraction thereof.
- \*S7.21. d. Voting membership shall include the officers of this Synod.**
- S7.22. a. All retired ordained ministers on the roster of this Synod who register for the Synod Assembly, and all retired associates in ministry, deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and diaconal ministers on the lay roster or rosters of this Synod who register for the Synod Assembly shall be voting members of the Assembly, consistent with the provision that 60% of the voting membership shall be laypersons.**
- b. All ordained ministers on the roster of this Synod who are on leave from call and who register for the Synod Assembly, and all associates in ministry, deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and diaconal ministers on the lay roster or rosters of this Synod who are on leave from call and who register for the Synod Assembly shall be voting members of the Assembly, consistent with the provision that 60% of the voting membership shall be laypersons.**
- S7.23. The Presiding Bishop of the ELCA and such other official representatives of this church as may be designated from time to time by the Church Council shall also have voice but not vote in the meetings of the Synod Assembly. Like privileges shall be accorded to those additional persons whom the Synod Assembly shall from time to time designate.**
- S7.24. Lay members of the Synod Assembly representing congregations shall continue as such until replaced by the election of new members or until they have been disqualified by termination of membership in that congregation. Normally, congregations will hold elections prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.**
- \*S7.25. Except as otherwise provided in this constitution or in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, each voting member of the Synod Assembly shall be a voting member of a congregation of this Synod.**
- S7.26. This Synod may establish processes through the Synod Council that permit representatives of mission settings formed with the intent of becoming chartered congregations and authorized worshiping communities of the Synod, under ELCA Bylaw 10.02.03., to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with \*S7.21. Authorized worshiping communities, acknowledged under criteria and**

procedures of the ELCA Division for Outreach and 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.

- S7.27** Duly elected voting members of the Synod Council who are not otherwise voting members of the synod Assembly under \*S7.21, shall be granted the privilege of both voice and vote as members of the Synod Assembly.
- \*S7.31.** Proxy and absentee voting shall not be permitted in the transaction of any business of this Synod.
- S7.32.** Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of the Synod Assembly, except as otherwise provided in the constitution or bylaws of the church or the constitution or bylaws of this Synod.
- S7.33.** “Ex-officio” as used herein means membership with full rights of voice and vote unless otherwise expressly limited.
- S7.41.** Holy Communion shall be celebrated at each regular Synod Assembly.
- S7.42.** All appointments for the conduct of general religious services or public meetings shall be made by the Bishop.
- S7.43.** The Secretary shall send out a Bulletin of Reports to all ordained ministers, and to all associates in ministry, deaconesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and diaconal ministers on the lay rosters of this Synod, and to the lay voting members of the Assembly elected by the congregations at least fifteen days before each regular Synod Assembly.
- S7.44.** The Synod Council shall prepare the proposed agenda and program for each meeting of the Synod Assembly and shall determine the time and place for each meeting of the Assembly.
- S7.45.** A special meeting of the Synod Assembly shall transact only such business as is related to the purpose stated in the call.
- S7.51.** There shall be a Committee of Reference and Counsel, whose duties shall be (a) to recommend special orders for the hearing of special representatives or for consideration of items of business; (b) to grant or deny permission to distribute printed or otherwise duplicated material not issuing from the office of the Secretary; (c) to consider and present memorials from Mission Districts and congregations and to make recommendation thereon; (d) to receive and present all motions and resolutions of a general character, not germane to any pending question or report, and to make recommendation thereon to the Assembly; (e) to give such assistance as may be requested by the Bishop in the course of the Assembly.
- S7.52.** All reports published in the Bulletin of Reports shall be received by the Synod Assembly without further action.

- S7.61. The minutes of each Synod Assembly shall be submitted meeting by meeting by the Secretary to a Committee on Minutes, which shall examine the same and make recommendations thereon to the Assembly. Approval of the minutes of any meeting of the final day of the Assembly shall be the responsibility of the officers of the Synod.**
- S7.62. The Bishop and the Secretary shall, after making any necessary corrections therein, certify two copies of the printed minutes of each Synod Assembly as the official protocol of said Assembly and shall submit the same to the next regular Assembly for approval and deposit in the archives.**