

2025 Northeastern Iowa Synod Assembly
June 6-7, 2025

Voting Materials

- Resolutions & Memorials
- Nominations & Elections



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2025 SCHEDULE

Northeastern Iowa Synod Assembly

Bien VenU Event Center • 7400 Hudson Road • Cedar Falls, IA

June 6-7, 2025

Theme: *Created to Be Connected*

Verse: John 15:5: "I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing."

Friday Schedule (optional)

7:00 PM Worship Service and Fellowship at: Fredsville Lutheran Church
32756 150th Street
Cedar Falls, IA 50613

Saturday Schedule

7:30—8:45 AM Registration Tables Open

8:30 AM Opening Worship

8:45-10:30 AM Plenary Session I

- Call to Order
- Introduction of Parliamentarian, Assembly Planning Committee and Synod Council
- Registration Committee Report
- Voting Instructions
- Adoption of Agenda
- Adoption of Assembly Rules - Resolution No. 1-25
- Bishop Kevin Jones and Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton Reports
- Resolutions Chair, Pastor Mike Ashman
 - Adoption of Resolution No. 2-25, Synod Constitution Changes
 - Adoption of Memorial No. 1-25, Truth and Healing Action Regarding Lutheran Legacy of Indian Boarding and Day Schools

10:30 AM Break

10:45 AM—Noon Plenary Session II

- Aaron Shoppa, Program Director for ELCA Youth Ministry
- Gary Lindgren, Synod Council Treasurer
 - Adoption of Resolution No. 3-25, Mission Goals
- Bishop Jones Recognition of New to Synod, Newly Ordained, and Seminary Students
- Pastor Randy Baldwin
 - Adoption of Resolution No. 4-25, Compensation Guidelines

Noon—1:15 PM Buffet Lunch

1:15—2:45 PM Plenary III

- Pastor Emily Harkins, Lead Pastor & Founding Developer of [The Dwelling](#)
- Elections
- Report of Synod Elections
- Recognition of Outgoing Council

2:45 PM Break with Refreshments

3:00 PM Plenary Session IV (if needed)
Installation of Newly Elected Council and Committee Members
Closing Worship with Holy Communion

OPTIONS FOR RESOLUTIONS

- Recommendation: Adoption

Status: Upon presentation by the Resolutions Committee, this resolution will be considered by the assembly for action.

- Recommendation: Not Recommended for Adoption

Status: This resolution will not be considered by the assembly unless it is moved and seconded from the floor.

- Recommendation: Refer

Status: Upon presentation by the Resolutions Committee, the assembly will consider referring this resolution to the appropriate body. The vote will be to refer or to not refer. Any other action must be made from the floor.

- Recommendation: Presented without prejudice

Status: Upon presentation by the Resolutions Committee, this resolution will be considered by the assembly for action.

- Recommendation: Alternative Resolution

Status: Upon presentation by the Resolutions Committee, this resolution will be considered by the assembly for action.

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

To accomplish this:	You say this:	Interrupt the speaker?	Is a second necessary?	Is it debatable?	Can it be amended?	Necessary vote?	Can it be reconsidered?
Introduce business	"I move that..."	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes
Amend a motion	"I move to amend the motion by..."	No	Yes	Yes (if debatable)	Yes	Majority	Yes
Give further study	"I move to refer the matter to committee."	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes (unless it has gone to committee)
Postpone discussion for stated period of time	"I move to postpone the discussion until..."	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes
End debate and amendments	"I move the previous question."	No	Yes	No	No	2/3	No (unless vote is not taken)
Suspend consideration of an issue temporarily	"I move to table the motion."	No	Yes	No	No	Majority	No
Raise a question about noise, etc.	"I rise to a question of privilege."	Yes	No	No	No	No vote	No (usually)
Call for an intermission	"I move we recess for..."	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority	No
Adjourn the meeting	"I move that we adjourn."	No	Yes	No	No	Majority	No
Other motions to:							
Request information	"Point of information"	Yes	No	No	No	No vote	No
Reconsider an action	"I move to reconsider the vote on..."	Yes	Yes	Yes (if motion to reconsider is debatable)	No	Majority	No
Take up a matter previously tabled	"I move to take from the table..."	No	Yes	No	No	Majority	No
Verify a voice vote by having members stand	"I call for a division."	Yes	No	No	No	No vote	No
Vote on a ruling of the chair	"I appeal from the chair's decision."	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Majority	Yes
Protest breach of rules or conduct	"I rise to a point of order."	Yes	No	No	No	No vote (unless it is unclear)	No
Avoid considering an improper matter	"I object to consideration of this motion."	Yes	No	No	No	2/3	Yes (if main motion was not considered)
Suspend rules temporarily	"I move to suspend the rules so that..."	No	Yes	No	No	2/3	No

ASSEMBLY RULES

RESOLVED. That the 2025 Northeastern Iowa Synod Assembly adopt the following proposed Assembly Rules:
PROPOSED ASSEMBLY RULES

RCR.1 QUORUM

One-third of the members of the Synod Assembly shall constitute a quorum.

RCR.2 GENERAL RULES

Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, shall govern all proceedings of this assembly unless contradicted by rules adopted in this report, which shall have priority.

RCR.3 RESOLUTIONS

Resolutions will be received by members of the Resolutions Committee and the Secretary of the Synod. All resolutions shall be in writing on 8½ x 11 paper. The deadline for receiving resolutions will be May 1. Proposed amendments to offered resolutions must also be in writing on 8½ x 11 paper.

RCR.4 RESOLUTIONS NOT RECOMMENDED FOR ADOPTION

Resolutions not recommended for adoption by the Resolutions Committee may only be considered by the assembly if they are moved by a voting member and seconded by a voting member of the assembly.

RCR.5 GENERAL DISCUSSION AND DEBATE

No speech by a single voting member on any one issue shall exceed three (3) minutes in length. Speeches supporting or opposing a resolution shall be offered on an alternating basis.

RCR.6 PRIVILEGE OF VOICE

The privilege of voice, but not vote, may be granted to any individual by a majority vote of the voting members. The privilege of voice, but not vote shall automatically be extended to all retired ordained ministers on our synod roster who are not voting members, all rostered persons of this synod who are on leave from call, full communion partner pastors serving ELCA congregations under contract in our synod have voice if they do not already have voice and vote at the synod assembly, non-voting members of the Resolutions Committee of this Synod, and churchwide representatives who are not voting members.

RCR.7 PRIVILEGE OF VOICE AND VOTE

The Northeastern Iowa Synod extends voice and vote privilege at the Synod Assembly to pastors from full-communion partners currently in service to or serving ELCA congregations by Invitation to Extended Service.

RCR.8 NOMINATIONS FROM THE FLOOR

Synod Assembly voting members may submit nominations from the floor of the assembly for all elections. The name and full address and telephone number(s) of those nominees must be presented in writing to the Secretary of the Synod by Saturday at noon. Only nominations which have the assurance of the nominee's willingness to serve if elected may be submitted.

RCR.9 DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS

Consistent with the policy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Churchwide Assemblies: Only materials authorized by the synod secretary, with the approval of the Resolutions Committee, will be distributed to voting members of the assembly during the assembly.

(Continued)

RCR.10 MINISTRY EXHIBITS (DISPLAYS)

1. Ministry Exhibit (display) space is provided for ELCA and Northeastern Iowa Synod ministries.
2. Only the church's publishing house (Augsburg Fortress), the ELCA and Northeastern Iowa Synod related ministries may offer items for sale. All other requests require Synod Council approval. No commercial displays or sales booths are permitted without Synod Council approval.

SUBMITTED BY: Synod Council

ACTION OF THE RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE:

Background: The proposed rules provide for an orderly procedure of deliberation.

Recommendation: Adoption

Status: Upon presentation by the Resolutions Committee, this resolution will be considered by the assembly for action.

Vote Required for Adoption: Majority

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE NORTHEASTERN IOWA SYNOD OF THE
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**

RESOLVED, That the Northeastern Iowa Synod Assembly adopt the following amendments to the synod constitution.

SUBMITTED BY: Synod Council

ACTION OF THE SYNOD COUNCIL:

Background: Recommend adoption based on the recommendation of the Synod Council.

Recommendation: Adoption

Status: Upon presentation, this resolution will be considered by the assembly for action.

Vote Required for Adoption: 2/3

Synod Constitution Recommended Changes

November 2024

Recommendation:

For the Synod Council to present these changes to the 2025 Synod Assembly for adoption.

Process:

Gary Lindgren, Synod Council Treasurer, Pastor Susan Friedrich, Synod Council Secretary, and Jan Glaspie, Asst. to the Bishop for Synod Administration, reviewed & discussed chapter 15 Financial Matters of the Synod Constitution. Additional changes and updates were submitted by Pastor Steve Brackett, Asst. to the Bishop for Rostered Leadership. These recommended changes were then reviewed by the Audit Committee and come to the Synod Council with the recommendation to present these changes to the 2025 Synod Assembly for approval.

Reasoning:

Introduction – These changes are made for clarification purposes.

Chapter 10 Synod Council –

S10.07.08 – change of wording

Chapter 11 Committees –

Changes are reflective of having our Synod Assembly biannually and to clarify terms on committees.

Chapter 12 Conferences, Cluster, Coalitions, Area Subdivisions, and Networks

Changes to our Conferences due to realignment and closures.

Chapter 14 Rostered Ministers

Changes are reflective of having our Synod Assembly biannually and additional clarification of our current call process.

Chapter 15 Financial Matters

The sections removed no longer reflect our processes and procedures relative to best practices. Concerning the removal of S15.41.01 this is not possible under our current financial structure.

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 CONSTITUTION, BYLAWS,
 AND CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS
 OF THE
 NORTHEASTERN IOWA SYNOD
 OF THE
 EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

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INTRODUCTION

The provisions of the Constitution, the Bylaws, and the Continuing Resolutions that pertain to the same matter have been placed together. Each is separately codified, but all are preceded by the letter, "S," denoting that they are part of the synodical constitution.

- a. Constitutional provisions are codified by two sets of numbers, the chapter number followed by a period, and a two-digit sequence number also followed by a period, as in S9.08. or S10.01. There are three types of constitutional provisions:
 1. Required constitutional provisions adopted by the Churchwide Assembly are preceded by [+]. These provisions are required of all synods and must be used without alteration or amendment of the text in any manner. No additions or 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. For example, †S7.21. is a required constitutional provision in Chapter 7, the chapter on the Synod Assembly.
 2. Recommended provisions, as approved by the Churchwide Assembly, may be adopted by majority vote at one meeting of the Synod Assembly (†S18.12).
 3. Other constitutional provisions, including modified versions of the recommended provisions, may be proposed and adopted by individual synods. Such provisions may not conflict with the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* and are adopted and become effective in accordance with †S18.13.
- b. ~~A bylaw related to S9.08. would be codified as S9.08.01., and to S10.01. as S10.01.01. A bylaw under a required provision would not carry the dagger, "+", that designates a required constitutional provision.~~ The *Constitution for Synods* contains some required bylaws and recommended bylaws. They are codified with three sets of numbers, each followed by a period; the chapter number (preceded by an "S"), the related constitutional provision number, and a two-digit bylaw number. For example, a required bylaw related to Synod Assembly would be codified as †S7.21.01. A recommended bylaw related to Synod Assembly would be codified as S7.11.01. Beyond the few required and recommended bylaws, synods may adopt additional bylaws related to each synod's organization, operation, and life. Bylaws are adopted and amended in accordance with Chapter 18 of the *Constitution for Synods*. Bylaws should be incorporated following the constitutional provisions to which they apply. They should not be organized in a separate section or document.
- c. ~~Continuing resolutions also are codified by three sets of numbers, except that the third set is preceded by a capital letter. Thus, a continuing resolution might be numbered S10. to designate the chapter; S10.07. to designate the subject matter within the chapter; and the third set might be numbered A95. in the codification S10.07.A95. to indicate by the "A" that is the first continuing resolution regarding that subject and by the "95" that it was adopted in 1995.~~ The *Constitution for Synods* does not contain any suggested continuing resolutions. When or if synods adopt continuing resolutions, they also are codified with three set of numbers, except that the third set is preceded by a capital letter indicating sequence and a two-digit number indicating the year of its adoption. For example, the first continuing resolution adopted in 2022 related to the membership of the Synod Assembly would be numbered "S7.21.A22."

Continuing resolutions are adopted and amended in accordance with Chapter 18 of the *Constitution for Synods*. They are intended to provide more detailed descriptions of

operational patterns and practices within the synod. They should be incorporated following the constitutional provisions and/or bylaws to which they apply. They should not be organized in a separate section or document.

~~Types of constitutional provisions~~

~~Three types of constitutional provisions are found within the constitution.~~

~~a. **Required provisions are designated by a dagger, "†". Such required provisions:**~~

~~(1) may only be adopted or amended by the Churchwide Assembly;~~

~~(2) may not be altered or amended by the Synod Assembly; and~~

~~(3) are to be introduced "at once" into the synod's constitution upon notification of the amendment or adoption of the provision (†S18.11.).~~

~~b. Recommended provisions, as approved by the Churchwide Assembly, may be adopted by majority vote at one meeting of the Synod Assembly (†S18.12).~~

~~c. Other provisions may be initiated in and adopted by the synod (†S18.13.), but such provisions may not conflict with required constitutional provisions or with churchwide constitutional provisions and bylaws. Synodical constitutional amendments become effective upon ratification by the Church Council or Churchwide Assembly.~~

Each synod has discretion and may develop its own constitutional provisions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions (including bylaws and continuing resolutions related to required constitutional provisions) as long as they do not conflict with constitutional provisions in the *Constitution for Synods*, required synod bylaws, or the *Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. All amendments to synod constitutions shall be reported to the secretary of this church.

Note: In some chapters, you will see that certain numbers are missing from the numbering sequence. These omissions are intentional in order to provide options for future additions.

CONSTITUTION, BYLAWS,
AND CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS
OF THE
NORTHEASTERN IOWA SYNOD
OF THE
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

Chapter 1.

NAME AND INCORPORATION

- †S1.01.**The name of this synod, as determined by the Churchwide Assembly, shall be Northeastern Iowa Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- †S1.02.**For the purposes of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws, the Northeastern Iowa Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is hereafter designated as "this synod" or "the synod."
- †S1.11.**This synod shall be incorporated. Amendments to the articles of incorporation of this synod shall be submitted to the Church Council for ratification before filing.
- †S1.21.**The seal of this synod is a cross with three united flames emanating from the base of the cross and three entwined circles beside the cross superimposed on an outline of the territory of the Northeastern Iowa Synod. The name, "Northeastern Iowa Synod Evangelical Lutheran Church in America," forms the circular outer edge of the seal.
- S1.31.01.The offices of this synod, the synod council and all committees shall be at Waverly, Iowa.

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 Churchwide Assembly, shall be the counties of Allamakee, Black Hawk, Bremer, Buchanan, Butler, Cerro Gordo, Chickasaw, Clayton, Delaware, Dubuque, Fayette, Floyd, Franklin, Grundy, Hamilton (east), Hancock (east), Hardin, Howard, Jackson (north), Mitchell, Story (north), Tama (north), Winnebago (east), Winneshiek, Worth, Wright (east) in the state of Iowa.

†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.

S6.03.02.d.B99. BISHOP'S CRISIS FUND

S6.03.02.d.B99.01. This synod shall establish a Bishop's Crisis Fund to be used at the discretion of the bishop to directly aid persons within the synod territory. Such aid may be employed for, but not limited to, providing food, clothing, shelter, medical assistance, moving or transportation expenses, or other assistance directly to individuals and families in Northeastern Iowa.

S6.03.02.d.B99.02. Monies for the Bishop's Crisis Fund shall be solicited from congregations and individuals within Northeastern Iowa. Pastors are particularly charged with the responsibility to bring this need before their people. Pastors and/or licensed social workers are to make known directly to the bishop persons who have needs. The application for funds shall be handled confidentially between the pastor and/or the licensed social worker, on behalf of the persons in need, and the bishop.

S6.03.02.d.B99.03. The synod council shall evaluate the purpose and functions of the Bishop's Crisis Fund at least annually to determine whether it shall continue.

†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.

S6.03.03.b.A87.01. This synod, its officers, and all of its Councils and Committees, shall be mindful of including, in all of the work and ministry of this synod, all of the baptized, regardless of age

†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.**

S6.04.A87. AFFIRMATION OF WOMEN IN MINISTRY

S6.04.A87.01. This synod shall continue to provide opportunities for the call of female ordained ministers and seminarians. Where possible, the representation of ordained ministers of its assemblies, councils, committees, boards, or other organizational units shall be female and male.

†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 Northeastern Iowa Synod Assembly shall be determined by the Synod Council. The time and place for the next regular assembly normally shall be announced twelve months prior to the assembly.
- S7.11.03. During the Synod Assembly, the bishop of this synod shall announce the appointment of the assembly committees.
- 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.
- S7.13.01. Arrangements for meetings of the Synod Assembly shall be made by the secretary or by an assembly manager working under the supervision of the secretary.
- 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 45percent 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 designated as disabled, or on leave from call, on the roster of the synod to serve as voting members of

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.

S7.22.01. All ministers of Word and Sacrament on the retired roster of this Synod shall elect 10 percent of their number to be voting members to the Synod Assembly; all other retired ministers of Word and Sacrament shall be advisory members with voice but not vote.

S7.22.02. All ministers of Word and Sacrament on leave from call for reasons of disability shall elect 10 percent of their number to be voting members to the Synod Assembly. There shall be a minimum of one (1) such person provided both voice and vote.

†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.

S7.23.01. Guests from other church bodies may be given seat and voice, but shall not vote at the Synod Assembly.

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 congregations under development and authorized worshiping communities of the synod, which have been authorized under ELCA bylaw 10.02.03., to serve as voting **members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with †S7.21.**

S7.27. This synod may establish processes through the Synod Council to grant a minister of Word and Sacrament from a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by the Churchwide Assembly the privilege of both voice and vote in the Synod Assembly during the period of that minister of Word and Sacrament service in a congregation of this church.

S7.28. Duly elected voting members of the Synod Council who are not otherwise voting members **of the Synod Assembly under †S7.21. shall be granted the privilege of both voice and vote as** members of the Synod Assembly.

†S7.31. Proxy and absentee voting shall not be permitted in the transaction of any business of the Synod Assembly.

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

S7.32.01. Unless otherwise determined by two-thirds vote of the synod Assembly, each individual speech in general discussion shall be limited to five minutes.

S7.33. "*Ex-officio*" as used herein means membership with full rights of voice and vote unless otherwise expressly limited.

S7.41.01. This synod shall pay for all expenses incidental to the planning of the Synod Assembly. Assembly costs shall be paid on a per voting member basis by the respective congregation or sponsoring organization of each voting member.

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.

†S8.12. 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 synodical 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 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 acknowledgement 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 appointed to a term of four years and may be reappointed. The treasurer shall serve until a successor takes office.

S8.51.01 The vice president, secretary and treasurer of this synod may serve no more than two consecutive terms.

†S8.52. The terms of the officers shall begin on the first day of the third 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 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.
- S9.01.01. The secretary of this synod shall furnish the nominating committee with a list of vacancies to be filled at each Synod Assembly.
- S9.01.02. Only the bishop and vice-president may be a member of more than one council or committee, except for a person appointed to a position to fill a vacancy until the next election.
- S9.01.03. The Nominating Committee shall not nominate an individual for more than one position. Nor shall it nominate a person currently serving in a synodical position whose term does not expire at the next Assembly, except in the case of nominations for the synod council and voting members to the Churchwide Assembly of the ELCA.
- S9.01.04. The Nominating Committee shall secure from all nominees an assurance of their willingness to serve if elected as well as a brief biographical description prepared by each nominee. The certified list of nominees together with the biographical data shall be forwarded to the secretary of this synod.
- S9.01.05. Upon receipt of the Nominating Committee's list of candidates, the secretary of this synod shall distribute to the Synod Assembly voting members the list of nominees and their biographical information. The secretary shall also prepare the ballot.
- S9.01.06. In computing eligibility for continued membership on a council or committee of this synod, prior service in completing a fractional term shall be disregarded if the unexpired term so served was less than one-half of a full term.
- †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 elected by the Synod Assembly to serve for each of its regular meetings. Nominations may be made from the floor for all elections for which nominations are made by the Nominating Committee.
- S9.03.01. If through nomination from the floor or otherwise, a person is elected to more than one council or committee, and is not eligible to serve in more than one capacity, that person shall be permitted to choose the position in which to serve. In such cases, the vacancy thus created in the other position shall be handled according to regular procedures governing vacancies.
- 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.
- S9.08.01. All terms of office, except as otherwise provided for in the constitution of this synod, shall begin at the conclusion of the Synod Assembly at which election thereto occurred.
- 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.
- S9.01.A08 The Synod Council Executive Committee shall provide for background checks for persons nominated for synodical office prior to the Synod Assembly at which the election will take place or as soon as possible after the Synod Assembly for newly elected officers nominated from the floor who were not identified as nominees prior to the assembly. The process shall be as follows:
- a. Prior to the Synod Assembly appropriate notice of the background check requirement and protocol will be provided to voting members, potential nominees, and others as directed by the Synod Council.
 - b. Nominees and newly elected officers are required to provide written consent to a background check and all information necessary to complete a background check, which should be completed prior to the Synod Assembly with respect to nominees and prior to installation for newly elected officers, if possible.
 - c. **The Synod Council's Executive Committee shall designate one Executive Committee or Synod Council member to obtain the background checks.**
 - d. All background checks for nominees and newly elected officers will entail a criminal background check. A financial background check will be completed for nominees for treasurer. The Executive Committee shall decide whether additional types of background checks are appropriate for each officer position.
 - e. The background check results shall be provided to that nominee or elected officer and to the **Synod Council's Executive Committee. Further disclosure of the results may be determined by the Executive Committee.**
 - f. The Executive Committee may adopt other procedures or protocols as are necessary to provide for background checks for nominees and newly elected synodical officers and shall report such actions to the Synod Council.

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.

†S10.02. The Synod Council shall be the board of directors of this synod and shall serve as its interim legislative authority between meetings of the Synod Assembly. It may make decisions which are not in conflict with actions taken by the Synod Assembly or which are not precluded by 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.

S10.04. 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 consist of the four officers of this synod, one young adult elected at large, one person elected at large to represent the multicultural perspective, one person **elected to represent the synodical women's organization, one person elected to represent the synodical men's organization, one person elected to represent the youth organization, and as many members as there are Conferences for Cooperative Ministry in this synod.** The Executive Committee of the Synod Council shall determine a rotation of members to comply with S6.04. On December 1 of each year, the secretary of this synod shall inform the correspondent of each Conference for Cooperative Ministry of the position on the council for which a nomination is expected from that Conference for Cooperative Ministry. The annual assembly of the Conference for Cooperative Ministry shall put forward one or two nominee(s) for the position, and the correspondent shall forward the name(s) of the nominee(s) to the secretary of this synod within ten days after the conference assembly. The Synod Assembly shall vote to elect the members of the Council from the nominees provided by the Conferences for Cooperative Ministry, with further nominations from the floor of the Synod Assembly permitted. There shall be no consecutive reelection of members.

S10.07.02. Each conference may submit to the nominating committee the name of one young adult to serve on the Synod Council for a three-year term. The nominating committee shall then present at least two of these nominees for election at the Synod Assembly. In the event of a vacancy in

this position, the Synod Council shall appoint a young adult to fill the vacancy until the next Synod Assembly, at which time, a successor shall be elected.

S10.07.03. In the event of vacancies, the Synod Council shall appoint a representative from the same conference and category to fill out the term of that person whom they are replacing.

S10.07.04. The Synod Council may, as it deems appropriate, grant seat and voice, but not vote, to synod staff and to persons other than members of the council.

S10.07.05. The functions of the Synod Council, in addition to those provided for in the constitution, shall be:

- a. To call rostered staff, if and when such positions are created by the Synod Assembly, on nomination by the bishop of this synod who is responsible for the oversight of their work.
- b. To appoint those representatives not elected by the Synod Assembly who serve as synod representatives on the governing bodies of institutions, organizations and agencies to which this synod is related.
- c. To institute and oversee a system of personnel practices applicable to all synod staff and to other employees of this synod.
- d. To form whatever networks, subcommittees or other structures it may find necessary or helpful to its work.
- e. To have the primary responsibility for and oversight of synod public relations and communications.
- f. To have the primary responsibility for and oversight of institutions, organizations, and agencies of this synod.

S10.07.06. Persons serving on the Synod Council shall be responsible for implementing and administering Synod Council decisions and programs in this synod.

S10.07.07. The Synod Council shall frame and adopt basic regulations governing all councils, networks and committees of this synod.

S10.07.08. The Synod Council ~~shall~~ may make provisions for the publication of a synod periodical.

S10.07.09. The Synod Council shall have at least two stated meetings annually. Special meetings shall be called by the vice-president and/or bishop. A majority of the members of the Synod Council shall constitute a quorum.

S10.07.10. 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 following shall be considered as standing committees of this synod:

- a. There shall be an Executive Committee of the Synod Council consisting of the officers of this synod plus as many other members of this Synod Council as the Synod Council may designate. The duties of the Executive Committee shall be those assigned to it by the Constitution and Bylaws, and any other tasks specifically delegated to the Executive Committee by the Synod Council. The Executive Committee may make recommendations to the Synod Council for action.
- b. There shall be a Nominating Committee consisting of one representative from each Conference for Cooperative Ministry and one person elected at-large to represent the

multicultural perspective. The Executive Committee of the Synod Council shall determine a rotation of members to comply with S6.04.—~~On Every other year on~~ December 1 ~~of each year~~ prior to an Assembly year, the secretary of this synod shall inform the correspondent of each Conference for Cooperative Ministry of the position on this Committee for which a nomination is expected from that Conference for Cooperative Ministry. The annual assembly of the Conference for Cooperative Ministry that follows shall put forward one or two nominee(s) for the position, and the correspondent shall forward the name(s) of the nominee(s) for the position to the secretary of this synod within ten days after the conference assembly. The Synod Assembly shall vote to elect the members of this Committee from the nominees provided by the Conferences for Cooperative Ministry, with further nominations from the floor of the Synod Assembly permitted. No individual shall serve on the Nominating Committee more than one consecutive-year term, and an individual having served shall not be eligible to serve again for at least ~~two~~ three years from the Assembly in which they were originally elected to the committee.

- c. There shall be a Candidacy Committee consisting of at least six persons and not more than **twelve persons consistent with †S6.04. Committee members will serve staggered three-**year terms renewable up to ~~two~~ ~~three~~ times for a total of nine years on the committee. The three-year terms shall begin and end at the close of the final stated Synod Council meeting of the calendar year. The committee shall also include a churchwide representative, and as voting members the bishop or his or her representative, and a seminary faculty representative. This committee shall provide for the examination and approval of candidates for rostered ministry. Persons serving on this committee shall be elected by the Synod Council. The Committee will elect a chairperson, a vice-chairperson, and a secretary to serve as its Executive Committee. This committee shall report to the Synod Council and ~~annually~~ provide a committee report for the Pre-Assembly book of ~~each~~ ~~the~~ Synod Assembly.
- d. There shall be a First Call Theological Education Committee (FCTE) consisting of nine persons, six of whom are rostered ministers and three of whom are lay persons. These committee members will be nominated by the Synod Staff and appointed by the Synod Council. Committee members will serve staggered three-year terms renewable up to ~~two~~ ~~three~~ times for a total of nine years on the committee. The three-year terms shall begin and end at the close of the final stated Synod Council meeting of the calendar year. A synod staff person will be assigned to be the liaison between the FCTE committee and the Synod Office. The purpose of the Committee will be to provide for an effective First Call Theological Education program by ensuring the curriculum development for the 3-year FCTE program and continued supportive consultations with first call rostered ministers and their congregations, by monitoring the participation of rostered persons and parishes in the program, by promoting and supporting vital first call congregations, and by maintaining connections to the synod and churchwide resources for first call theological education. The Committee will elect a chairperson, a vice-chairperson, and a secretary to serve as its Executive Committee. This committee shall report to the Synod Council and ~~annually~~ provide a committee report for the Pre-Assembly book of ~~the~~ ~~each~~ Synod Assembly.

S11.01.02. Any and all councils, networks or other structures it may find necessary, and committees shall be responsible to the Synod Council and shall fulfill the mission and function of this synod.

†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.**
- †S11.11.** 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. The primary purpose of the Conferences for Cooperative Ministry is to resource congregations in the standard congregational ministry areas of worship, education, evangelism, social ministry, stewardship, youth, etc. By sharing their gifts and talents with one another, and by calling upon available resources such as synod staff, regional staff, and others, congregations within the Conference for Cooperative Ministry will be free to seek assistance in whatever areas they feel are necessary and appropriate. The primary function of the Conferences for Cooperative Ministry is creative and not administrative. Therefore, the Conferences for Cooperative Ministry shall not be used as administrators of Synod Council board decisions and programs.
- S12.01.02. Whenever two or more Conferences for Cooperative Ministry wish to engage in a common project or concern, they may organize a task force in any manner they feel is appropriate to the objective at hand, and for whatever length of time seems necessary. The Synod Council may be one channel of communication for the formation of such task forces, as may the synod staff.
- S12.01.03. Each Conference for Cooperative Ministry shall hold an assembly at least once each fiscal year, prior to March 1st. The conference assembly shall have as its members all pastors serving under call in that Conference for Cooperative Ministry plus a number of lay voting members from each congregation in the Conference for Cooperative Ministry equal to twice the number of voting members permitted that congregation at the Synod Assembly, consistent with this synod rules for representation (S6.04.). Each Conference for Cooperative Ministry may organize itself as it sees fit. However, each conference assembly shall designate one person from among its

members to serve as its official correspondent for the year. The name and address of the correspondent shall be reported to the secretary of this synod each year, ~~not later than the first session of the meeting of the Synod Assembly~~ immediately following the conference assembly. The correspondent shall arrange for the annual assembly of the Conference for Cooperative Ministry, and may call special assemblies. The correspondent shall call a special assembly of the Conference for Cooperative Ministry at the request of the Synod Council, or at the request of at least three congregations within the Conference for Cooperative Ministry.

S12.01.04. Funding for Conferences for Cooperative Ministry maybe provided by (1) a line item in the synod budget and/or (2) by Conferences for Cooperative Ministry directly, as needed for fulfilling their purposes and activities. In the matters of programming, resourcing and congregational funding Conferences for Cooperative Ministry are accountable to the congregations. In matters of synodical funding the Conferences for Cooperative Ministry are accountable to the Synod Assembly and the Synod Council **between synod assemblies (c.f. †S10.02.)**.

S12.01.05. For the purpose of communication and sharing of resource ideas, correspondents from the Conferences for Cooperative Ministry shall meet at least once a year. These meetings shall be convened by the bishop or a member of his or her staff.

S12.01.A18. CONFERENCES FOR COOPERATIVE MINISTRY ALIGNMENT

S12.01.A18.01. The Conferences for Cooperative Ministry (conferences) shall be aligned in ~~nine~~ eight conferences. Transfers of congregations from one conference to another may take place upon request of the congregation and approval of the Synod Council.

a. *Water of Life Conference shall include the following congregations:*

Asbury, Lord of Life; Balltown, St. Paul; Dubuque, Holy Trinity; ~~(Dubuque, Luther Manor Nursing Home)~~; Dubuque, St. John; Dubuque, St. Matthew; Dubuque, St. Peter; (Dubuque, Wartburg Theological Seminary).

b. *Shepherd of the Hills Conference shall include the following congregations:*

Arlington, St. John; ~~Castalia, Zion~~; ~~Clermont, East Clermont~~; ~~Clermont, West Clermont~~; Clayton, Evangelical Luth. Church of Peace; Dundee, St. John; Elgin, Elgin; Elkader, Bethany; Elkader, Highland; ~~Elkader, Hope (Littleport)~~; Elkader, Zion (Clayton Center); Farmersburg, St. John; Garnavillo, St. Paul Evangelical; Garnavillo, St. Peter; Guttenberg, St. John's Am.; Guttenberg, St. Paul; ~~Elkader, Hope (Littleport)~~; Luana, St. John; (Manchester, Good Neighbor Home); ~~Maynard, St. Paul~~; McGregor, First Evangelical; ~~Maynard, St. Paul~~; Monona, St. Paul; Oelwein, Zion; ~~(Postville, Good Samaritan Home)~~; Postville, St. Paul; ~~Ryan, Peace~~; Strawberry Point, Emanuel; (Strawberry Point, EWALU); Strawberry Point, St. Sebald; (Strawberry Point Lutheran Home); ~~Ryan, Peace~~; Volga, St. Paul.

c. *Jubilee Conference shall include the following congregations:*

Cedar Falls, Bethlehem; (Cedar Falls, Campus Ministry-UNI); ~~Cedar Falls, Nazareth~~; Cedar Falls, St. John Am.; Cedar Falls, St. Paul; Dysart, Zion Evangelical; Hudson, St. Timothy; Independence, Immanuel; Jesup, American; LaPorte City, American; LaPorte City, Zion (Jubilee); Washburn, Redeemer; Waterloo, Luth. Church of the Good Shepherd; Waterloo, Our Savior's; Waterloo, St. Ansgar; Waterloo, Trinity Am.; Waterloo, Zion Evangelical.

d. *Upper Iowa River Conference shall include the following congregations:*

~~Decorah, Burr Oak~~; Calmar, Calmar; ~~Castalia, Zion~~; ~~Chester, United~~; Cresco, First; Cresco, Immanuel; (Decorah, Aase Haugen Homes); Decorah, Big Canoe; ~~Decorah, Burr Oak~~; Decorah, Canoe Ridge; Decorah, Decorah; Decorah, First; Decorah, Glenwood; Decorah, Good Shepherd; Decorah, Hauge; Decorah, Hesper; ~~Decorah, Highland~~; Decorah, Luther College; Decorah, Springfield; Decorah, St. John's; Decorah, Washington Prairie; ~~Eldorado, St. Peter~~; Elma, St. Paul (Maple Leaf); ~~Hawkeye, Trinity~~; Lansing, Our Savior's; Lime Springs, St. Paul; Ossian, Ossian; ~~Ossian, Stavanger~~; Ridgeway, Madison; Ridgeway, Orleans; Ridgeway, Peace; ~~Decorah, Highland~~; (Waukon, Good Samaritan Home); (Waukon, Mosaic); Waukon, St. John; ~~(West Union, Good Samaritan Center)~~; ~~West Union, Zion~~.

e. *Tree of Life Conference shall include the following congregations:*

- ~~Alta Vista, Zion~~; Denver, St. John (Maxfield); Denver, St. Peter Evangelical; Frederika, St. John; Janesville, Messiah; Lawler, Immanuel (Crane Creek); New Hampton, Trinity; Oran, St. Peter; ~~Shell Rock, Faith~~; Sumner, St. John (Buck Creek); Sumner, St. John; ~~Sumner, St. Peter (Richfield)~~; Tripoli, Grace; Tripoli, St. John (Crane Creek); Waterloo, St. John (Bennington); ~~Waucoma, St. John (Stapleton)~~; (Waverly, Bartels Lutheran Retirement); ~~(Waverly, LSI-Bremwood Campus)~~; Waverly, Redeemer; Waverly, St. Paul's; (Waverly, St. Paul's Lutheran School); (Waverly, Wartburg College).
- f. *Riverside Conference shall include the following congregations:*
Belmond, St. Olaf; Belmond, Trinity; Clarion, First; ~~Coulter, Nazareth~~; Dows, First; Hampton, St. John; Hampton, St. Paul; Iowa Falls, Bethany; Jewell, Bethesda; Roland, Bergen; Stanhope, Our Savior; (Story City, Bethany Life Communities); (Story City, Riverside Bible Camp); Story City, St. Petri.
- g. *Living Waters Conference shall include the following congregations:*
Carpenter, Deer Creek; Charles City, St. John; Clear Lake, Galilean; Garner, Faith (Miller); Hanlontown, Grace; Joice, Bethany; Kensett, Bethany; Kensett, Elk Creek; Lake Mills, Salem; Lake Mills, Winnebago; Leland, Our Savior; Manly, Bethlehem; (Mason City, Good Shepherd Inc.); **Mason City, Our Saviour's; Mason City, St. James; Mason City, St. Paul; Mason City, Trinity**; Mitchell, ~~Faith~~; ~~Dwelling In Faith(SAWC)~~; Nora Springs, St. Luke; Northwood, First; (Northwood, Lutheran Retirement Home); Northwood, Silver Lake; (Osage, Faith Lutheran Home); Osage, Our Savior; Osage, Rock Creek; Osage, St. John (Rock Township); ~~Scarville, Immanuel~~; (St. Ansgar, Good Samaritan Center); Toeterville, St. Peter.
- h. *Three River Conference shall include the following congregations:*
Allison, St. James; Cedar Falls, Fredsville; Charles, City, Messiah; Clarksville, St. John; Greene, St. Peter; Grundy Center, American; Nashua, St. John; ~~Parkersburg, Peace Luth. Fellowship (SAWC)~~; ~~Marble Rock, St. Paul~~; Rockford, Zion; Rockwell, St. Peter; Sheffield, Zion St. John; ~~Shell Rock, Faith~~; Thornton, St. Paul; Wellsburg, St. Paul.
- ~~i. *Shechem Conference shall include the following congregations:*
Clermont, East Clermont; Clermont, West Clermont; Eldorado, St. Peter; Hawkeye, Trinity; Ossian, Stavanger; Sumner, St. Peter (Richfield); Waucoma, St. John (Stapleton); (West Union, Good Samaritan Center); West Union, Zion.~~

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 Chapter 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.

†S13.02. 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.

†S13.20. 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.

†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.

S13.21.01. The alignment of congregations in the sharing of pastoral leadership shall be made by mutual agreement of the congregations involved and the bishop.

†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.**

S13.24.01. The Synod Council shall establish for approval by the Synod Assembly an appeal process governing matters arising out of Section 13.24 of the constitution of this synod.

S13.25. This synod may temporarily assume administration of a congregation upon its request or with its concurrence.

S13.25.A18 The Northeastern Iowa Synod approves seasonal member voting in the congregations on its territory.

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. Synodically Authorized Worshiping Communities

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

Chapter 14.

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; and
- 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*.

S14.12.01. Rostered individuals shall be recognized as rostered consistent with Chapter 14 of the synod constitution.

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 Lutheran congregation nearer to their place of residence.

S14.15. Each rostered minister ~~of Word and Sacrament~~ on the roster of this synod shall submit a report of ministry to the bishop of the synod by March 1 of each year. ~~at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.~~

S14.15.01. The bishop shall request the annual report required by S14.0515. from each rostered individual on the roster of this synod. The bishop shall provide report forms for this purpose which shall be distributed by each February 15. The annual report may include information regarding significant events and developments which occurred in ministry during the past year, personal faith and life issues being confronted, congregational ministry data, willingness to consider a new call, and compensation data.

†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.

S14.16.01. The Synod Council shall establish continuing resolutions outlining the process for calling rostered persons.

S14.16.01. ~~A2000~~ A2025 The calling of a pastor represents a valuable partnership between God, the congregation, the synod and the ELCA. Each member of the partnership is enriched when the call process results in a good match between pastor and congregation. The total mission of the church is furthered when each member of the partnership is honored, respected, and fulfills its appropriate role in the process.

We seek to follow a process which builds on trust and openness, relies on good communication, and results in a call which is pleasing to God. Throughout this process the congregation holds the authority to call a pastor on the roster of the ELCA or to request an Invitation to Extended Service for a Full Communion Partner pastor. The congregation, the pastors, and the office of the bishop must follow the constitutions of the congregation, synod and ELCA throughout this process. For the sake of an orderly process and good communication, the congregation is encouraged to follow the guidelines of the synod.

WHEN YOUR PASTOR RESIGNS:

1. The president of the congregation calls the synod office to arrange a special council meeting with an assistant to the bishop. This meeting will include a discussion about:
 - a. Plans for appropriate closure with the current pastor
 - b. Plans for an exit interview with the current pastor
 - c. Arrangements for pastoral ministry during the pastoral vacancy
 - d. Review of the call process
 - e. Guidelines for the selection of the call committee
 - f. Synod guidelines for compensation. The council will establish a salary and benefits range for the call committee.
 - g. Condition of the parsonage or provisions for housing allowance
 - h. Establishing a committee to complete the Ministry Site Profile (MSP)
 2. Upon election/appointment of the call committee, an assistant to the bishop meets with ~~the council and~~ the call committee and interested council members.
 3. Upon completion of the Ministry Site Profile, the MSP is submitted in the ELCA online system and copies of the MSP are provided to the congregation council for review and approval. ~~we encourage~~ -The council or call committee is encouraged to present a summary of the Profile MSP to the congregation for its endorsement. The endorsed Profile summary is sent to the synod office and given to each member of the Call Committee.
 4. Within approximately three weeks of ~~receiving the Profile~~ the submission of the MSP in the ELCA system, a representative of the bishop will meet with the call committee. This meeting will include:
 - a. A review of the Ministry Site Profile
 - b. A review of call process ethics
 - c. Planning for the interviews
 - d. An emphasis on good communication with the congregation and interviewing pastors
 - e. Presentation of names ~~for~~ of candidates for call, if available.
 5. The call committee is encouraged to interview all candidates within a two-week time span. Upon completion of the interviews, all candidates and the synod office must be notified of the call committee's recommendation to the congregational council.
 6. The call committee presents one name and ~~a recommended compensation package~~ the rostered minister's paperwork to the congregational council for action. The council decides who will negotiate the compensation package with the rostered minister.
 7. In consultation with the synod office, the congregational council calls a congregational meeting for presentation of the recommended candidate and compensation package. A representative of the bishop is invited to the congregational meeting to serve as the synod representative and a resource.
 8. The congregation will vote on the recommendation of the call committee and council. Separate votes will be taken for extending the call and for the compensation package. A representative of the congregation will notify the candidate of the vote of the congregation. The Letter of Call will be signed and delivered to the synod office.
 9. The pastor may consider a Letter of Call for as long as 30 days. The time consideration may be extended through a consultation with the bishop and congregational president.
 10. Upon Acceptance of the call, an installation date is determined in consultation with the called pastor, congregation and synod office. Appropriate welcoming activities are planned.
- 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 to acceptance or declination to a letter of call within 30 days of receipt of such call. In exceptional circumstances with the approval of the bishop of this synod and the chair of the Congregation Council of the congregation issuing the call, an additional 15 days may be granted to respond to a letter of call.
- †S14.18.** 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 agreement; 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 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 annually by March 1.~~

†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 chair of the Congregation Council of the congregation issuing the call, an additional 15 days may be granted to respond to a letter of call.

†S14.43. 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 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;
 - 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 to 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.

~~S15.11.01. The Synod Council shall devise a process by which its designated representatives shall annually meet with the Congregation Council of each congregation in this synod to mutually discuss their partnership in ministry for the coming year. This discussion shall include an exploration of the means by which this synod might recognize and strengthen the ministry and mission of that congregation, as well as means by which the congregation might recognize and strengthen the ministry and mission of this synod. Out of this mutual and cooperative discussion, the congregation shall determine its benevolence contribution for the coming year. This goal shall reflect the unique conditions and circumstances of each congregation, and shall be submitted to both the Synod Council and the congregation assembly for final ratification.~~

†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.

~~S15.12.01. The annual budget of this synod shall consist of two levels of income and expense:~~

- ~~a. Level one shall be based upon current funding available.~~
 - ~~b. Additional level(s) shall be provided to challenge this synod to grow in mission.~~
- ~~— The income listed in the budget shall include total anticipated support from all sources, including contributions from individuals for specific purposes within the approved program. The budgets of synodical organization, which are to receive subsidies from this synod within a specific year, shall be reported to the Synod Council.~~

~~S15.12.02. In preparing each budget of this synod, the Synod Council shall hold hearings at which the councils, boards and committees receiving support through the budget shall be invited to consult with the Synod Council or its appointees to present full statements of their operations, the financial needs of their current work, and the budgetary implications of advance programs which they have in view for the year under consideration.~~

~~S15.12.03. The Synod Council shall submit with each budget that it presents to the Synod Assembly appropriate summary statements which serve to interpret the recommended budget.~~

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.

~~S15.13.01. The action of the Synod Assembly in adopting an annual budget of this synod constitutes an authorization to the councils, boards, committees, institutions, organizations and agencies to which this synod is related to incur financial obligations up to a specified amount. If it appears likely during the course of a year that the budgeted income will not be realized, the affected group shall review its current program in consultation with the Synod Council for the purpose of making necessary adjustments.~~

~~S15.13.02. No council or committee of this synod shall make any appropriation to any other council or committee except to defray expenses incurred in connection with joint activities without the approval of the Synod Assembly or Synod Council.~~

~~S15.13.03. All contributions by councils or committees to inter-church associations and councils to which this synod is a member shall be subject to prior approval of the Synod Council. The Synod Council in reviewing contributions shall consider the necessity of a wise balance in the total commitments of this synod to such inter-church associations and councils. All contributions shall be transmitted through the treasury of this synod.~~

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 next year's budget for regular distribution to synodical causes shall be carried forward annually for disbursement in the following year in the interest of making possible a more even flow in income to such causes. The exact number of dollars to be held in reserve shall be determined by the Synod Council.

S15.21. No appeal to congregations of this or any other synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for the raising of funds shall be conducted by congregations or organizations related to or affiliated with this synod without the consent of the Synod Assembly or the Synod Council.

S15.21.01. The approval of the Synod Assembly or Synod Council shall be required for the solicitation of funds from congregations and/or access to mailing lists of the congregations of this synod.

†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.

~~S15.41.01. No council or committee of this synod shall incur capital indebtedness without the consent of the Synod Assembly or the Synod Council.~~

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 †16.04., 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 the 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 percent of the 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.

†S18.30. 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.

Resolution No. 3-25

2026/27 NORTHEASTERN IOWA SYNOD MISSION GOALS AND
2027/28 NORTHEASTERN IOWA SYNOD SPENDING PLAN

RESOLVED, That the Northeastern Iowa Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America adopt the Proposed 2026/27 Mission Goals (synod budget).

RESOLVED, That the Northeastern Iowa Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America authorize the Synod Council to adopt the Proposed 2027/28 Spending Plan (synod budget) and to make any adjustments to the budget, as necessary, based on the previous year's review.

SUBMITTED BY: Synod Council

ACTIONS OF THE SYNOD COUNCIL:

Background: The Synod Council has approved the 2026/27 Northeastern Iowa Synod Mission Goals and the 2027/28 Northeastern Iowa Synod Spending Plan for adoption by the assembly.

This does not require action by the Resolutions Committee.

Recommendation: Adoption

Status: Upon presentation, this resolution will be considered by the assembly for action.

Vote Required for Adoption: Majority

2026/27 NORTHEASTERN IOWA SYNOD MISSION GOALS
and
2027/28 NORTHEASTERN IOWA SYNOD SPENDING PLAN

	2024/25 Mission Goals	2024/25 Actuals	2025/26 Mission Goals	2026/27 Mission Goals	2027/28 Mission Goals /Spending Plan
	Anticipated	Actual	Anticipated	Anticipated	Anticipated
CONGREGATIONAL MISSION SUPPORT & OTHER INCOME					
Mission Support	\$1,373,250	\$1,287,522	\$1,377,947	\$1,350,947	\$1,325,240
Other Income	\$31,269	\$59,722	\$48,500	\$48,500	\$38,500
TOTAL INCOME:	\$1,404,519	\$1,347,244	\$1,426,447	\$1,399,447	\$1,363,740
SYNODICAL GIVING Ministry Through ELCA:					
ELCA Gen. Mission Support	\$410,000	\$406,657	\$410,000	\$401,000	\$393,000
Regional Missions:					
ELCA Colleges & Universities	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000
ELCA Seminaries	\$22,000	\$22,000	\$22,000	\$22,000	\$22,000
Iowa Lutheran Campus Ministry	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
Lutheran Services in Iowa	\$11,550	\$11,550	\$11,550	\$11,550	\$11,550
Region V Center for Mission	\$3,800	\$3,800	\$4,197	\$4,197	\$4,197
Total Regional Mission:	\$49,350	\$49,350	\$49,747	\$49,747	\$49,747
PROGRAM SUPPORT					
Synod Council	\$4,500	\$3,011	\$4,500	\$4,500	\$4,500
Ministry Networks	\$8,000	\$404	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500
Leadership Committees	\$22,000	\$10,366	\$23,200	\$23,200	\$23,200
Lutheran Youth Organization	\$12,000	\$12,302	\$12,000	\$12,000	\$12,000
Consultation Committee	\$500	\$0	\$500	\$500	\$500
New Program Development	\$5,000	\$109	\$0	\$0	\$0
Discipline Committee	\$500	\$0	\$500	\$500	\$500
ELCA Director of Evangelical Call Process Expense	\$10,000	\$7,801	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
		\$984	\$600	\$600	\$600
Total Boards/Committees:	\$62,500	\$34,977	\$58,800	\$58,800	\$58,800
ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSE:					
Personnel Expense	\$734,069	\$741,303	\$776,800	\$730,300	\$700,300
Legal/Audit	\$6,000	\$5,500	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$6,000
Bookkeeping Services	\$19,500	\$19,250	\$19,500	\$19,500	\$19,500
Travel	\$25,000	\$21,825	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000
Utilities	\$5,000	\$5,412	\$5,500	\$5,500	\$5,500
Insurance	\$10,000	\$12,615	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
Maintenance & Repair	\$10,000	\$6,663	\$10,000	\$16,500	\$16,500
Communications	\$22,000	\$25,091	\$17,500	\$17,500	\$17,500
Printing	\$5,000	\$2,516	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000
Postage	\$5,000	\$2,079	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000
Supplies	\$16,600	\$8,991	\$14,600	\$14,600	\$14,600
Bank Charges	\$2,500	\$1,677	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000
Depreciation Expense	\$22,000	\$21,958	\$15,000	\$36,000	\$36,000
Total Synod Office:	\$882,669	\$874,880	\$907,900	\$888,900	\$858,900
TOTAL EXPENSES: INCOME or (LOSS)	\$1,404,519 \$0	\$1,365,864 -\$18,620	\$1,426,447 \$0	\$1,398,447 \$1,000	\$1,360,447 \$3,293

2026 and 2027 Northeastern Iowa Synod Minimum Compensation Guidelines Executive Summary of Changes

2026 Changes

- The Table of Contents has been updated to reflect changes in the guidelines. Please note that page numbers in the Table of Contents and those listed in this summary may not match the page numbers in the proposed guidelines because they include sections that will be deleted along with the new material that is being proposed.
- Edits to the Introduction on page 1 reflect proposed changes in how salary increases are determined, and a few changes were made for clarity on pages 1-2.
- Section C on page 4 changes bring clarity to how vacation is determined for a part-time rostered minister and Juneteenth is added as a holiday.
- Section D on page 4 was changed to include deacons.
- Section E Portico links no longer work, so instructions on where to find the calculators is provided.
- Section E.2. on page 7 clarifies that sponsoring employers still pay for ELCA retirement, disability, and group life plans when a sponsored employee waives health insurance. Two paragraphs at the end of E.2. seek to ensure that a rostered minister in a non-congregational call or a call that chooses not to use Portico provided benefits will receive benefits comparable to those provided by Portico.
- Section F on pages 7-11 reflects a change in how salary increases are determined in the Northeastern Iowa Synod. The former method of an annual salary step increase plus the Social Security cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for the current year is being replaced with a flat 3% increase every year. The former method was difficult to explain, varied so much from year-to-year making congregational budgeting difficult, and twice in recent years we have had errors in the complicated spreadsheet that is used to update base salaries. The move to Synod Assemblies every two years also makes the former method far less practical. Providing a flat 3% increase across the board solves all these issues. The new chart on page 11 is much easier to develop and use.
- Section G was added after several requests that the guidelines include information about how to determine salary and benefits for a part-time interim or contract ministry.
- Section H.4. & 5. rates were increased to match what synods around ours are paying.
- Copyright information was moved from Section G to Section I to keep compensation information together.
- Addendum F was changed to Addendum F-1 and Addendum F-2 because Portico Benefit Services determines Defined Compensation differently for rostered ministers who live in a congregation provided parsonage versus those receiving a housing allowance. Therefore, it was necessary to develop two separate forms.

2027 Changes

The only changes were updating 2026 to 2027 and updating the base salary grid on page 9 to reflect a 3% increase. Any amendments made to the 2026 guidelines in Assembly must also be reflected in the 2027 guidelines.

Resolution No. 4-25

RESOLVED, That the Northeastern Iowa Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America adopt the Proposed Minimum Compensation Guidelines for 2026 and 2027 and authorize the Synod Council to adopt any necessary changes to these guidelines prior to the 2027 Synod Assembly.

SUBMITTED BY: The Compensation Committee
and Synod Council

ACTION OF THE SYNOD COUNCIL:

Background: The Synod Council has approved the 2026 and 2027 Minimum Compensation Guidelines for adoption by the assembly. This does not require action by the Resolutions Committee.

Recommendation: Adoption

Status: Upon presentation, this resolution will be considered by the assembly for action.

Vote Required for Adoption: Majority



**Northeastern Iowa Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

20252026

MINIMUM COMPENSATION GUIDELINES

for

ROSTERED MINISTERS

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2025-2026 MINIMUM COMPENSATION GUIDELINES for **ROSTERED MINISTERS (Pastors & Deacons)**

INTRODUCTION

“Doing God’s work in the world calls for leaders who bring a variety of training, skills, interests and life experiences to the work they do in congregations, communities and partner organizations. Many of these leaders are called to serve as ministers on one of the rosters of the ELCA: Ministers of Word and Sacrament and Ministers of Word and Service. Rostered ministers carry out the work and mission of this church, sharing God’s love with the world through the good news of Jesus Christ.”¹

These guidelines are offered as an avenue of providing support for ministries of pastor and people and deacon and people. The compensation guidelines for this synod are written by a subcommittee of the Synod Council. The work of the subcommittee is reviewed and modified by the Synod Council before being submitted to the Synod Assembly. It is a core value of the Northeastern Iowa Synod to have all of our rostered ministers compensated at minimum guidelines or above.

Many factors influence these guidelines. ~~These include changes in the cost of living, including,~~ comparison with the compensation guidelines of other synods, and recognition of accumulated skills in the practice of ministry and in “first career” settings. Those involved in setting these guidelines are also aware of the high debt load carried by those new to the ministry and the shortage of rostered ministers for ministries in this church.

We urge congregations to study these guidelines and to use them for mutually affirming dialogue about the financial aspect of care for rostered ministers. It is important to note that a ministry site cannot terminate or modify a rostered minister’s call unilaterally (i.e., without the rostered minister’s consent) by reducing the rostered minister’s salary or benefits. In ELCA terminology, when a ministry site issues the call and the rostered minister accepts, our constitutions state that they have a “continuing mutual relationship and commitment” [ELCA 7.46, Synod †S14.18, Model Constitution for Congregations *C9.05]. Looked at this way, the terms of the call can be modified only by agreement between the rostered minister and the congregation. The congregation cannot unilaterally amend the call (e.g., by reducing the agreed compensation) any more than the ~~pastor-rostered minister~~ could unilaterally amend the call (e.g., by taking two months of vacation instead of one month). The terms of the call do get modified each year when the ministry site votes to adopt a new budget and the rostered minister agrees to the new compensation package in the budget (which is typically an increase). But when the rostered minister does not agree (e.g., because compensation is proposed to decrease), the terms of the call are not amended, and the rostered minister is entitled to continue receiving compensation at the prior year's level until agreement is reached on a new compensation package.

Note: Those who prepare these guidelines are not tax professionals, nor do they give tax advice. Congregations, pastors, and deacons should consult a qualified tax professional for tax related questions and advice.

¹ Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, *Rostered Minister of the ELCA* [website], <https://www.elca.org/about/leadership/rostered>, (accessed 8 March 2022)

COMPENSATION FOR ROSTERED MINISTERS (PASTORS & DEACONS)

Pastors and deacons should be compensated ~~at~~ according to the base salary grid printed below, including all benefits, and including recognition of prior service in ministry or any vocation completed before ELCA ordination. However, for deacons:

1. Federal Tax Code will not permit a tax-deductible housing allowance for lay ministers. However, congregations may provide additional, taxable compensation for housing costs. The salary grids for pastors and deacons are identical because deacons generally do not receive a housing allowance.
2. Federal Tax Code requires congregations to pay the employer's portion of FICA for deacons. Under the Federal Tax Code congregations MAY NOT pay the employer's portion of FICA to the IRS for pastors and housing allowance eligible deacons, nor may they withhold the minister's portion of FICA taxes. Instead, a FICA offset is paid to the minister for the employer portion of FICA tax owed. The minister is then required to pay the congregation portion and the personal portion of FICA taxes in quarterly tax payments to the IRS.

A. CLERGY HOUSING (generally for pastors only. See item 4 below.)

1. When a parsonage is provided, all utilities and maintenance costs are to be borne by the congregation (see Addendum C). The Fair Rental Value of the parsonage should be determined for tax purposes and to calculate Defined Compensation (see Addendum F-1).
2. When a parsonage is not provided, the congregation should provide a housing allowance at a minimum level of 30% of base salary plus the FICA offset or at a level adequate to pay for mortgage, maintenance, utilities, and taxes (see Addendum D). The pastor is responsible for determining the Fair Rental Value of the home to determine an appropriate housing allowance (see Addendum F-2).
3. Congregations providing a parsonage are encouraged to contribute to a housing equity fund for their rostered minister(s). Housing equity is a designated fund for retirement housing or a down payment on a domicile. This suggested annual contribution is 3% of defined compensation. Congregations contemplating a housing equity arrangement can contact Portico Benefit Services for additional details and assistance (see Addendum F-1 C.3).
4. Housing provided to deacons and lay church employees may not be taxable, if living on the church property is an important and necessary part of the duties of the employee. This could apply to a custodian, for example, and perhaps to other employees who are available to members of the congregation at varying hours as needed.
5. Congregations should pay the moving expenses for rostered ministers. Under the current Federal Tax Code moving expenses are considered a fringe benefit and must be included as taxable income on the minister's W-2 in the year in which they were paid.
6. For clergy couples serving in the same or different calls, both are to receive a housing allowance or reimbursement equal to a provided parsonage.

B. PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT

1. AUTOMOBILE

Automobile and other work-related travel is an expense of the congregation and, as such, is not usually reported as taxable income and should not be considered part of a salary package. Reimbursement for travel expense may be handled in one of three ways:

- a. Reimbursement for actual business miles traveled at the current rate established by the Internal Revenue Service. Congregations and rostered ministers negotiate documentation and frequency of payment details. This is the recommended method of

reimbursement. **The IRS requires that mileage be submitted by month at least every 60 days.** (See Addendum E.)

- b. Payment of a lump sum per year pro-rated to a monthly basis. Rostered ministers need to maintain accurate records of actual business mileage and vehicle expenses and provide that documentation for tax records, as portions of this allowance may be taxable.
- c. The congregation may provide a vehicle for staff use.

2. CONTINUING EDUCATION

- a. Quality, holistic continuing education for rostered ministers provides a source for challenging ideas, cutting edge programs and professional renewal. It is not vacation time. Because both benefit, congregations and rostered ministers share expenses for continuing education. Congregations are encouraged to support continuing education at the \$900 level, plus \$400 annual contribution by each rostered minister. Two weeks of time away, including two Sundays, should be allowed annually for continuing education. If there is a prior agreement between the rostered minister and the congregation's council, continuing education time and money can be cumulative to six weeks in the same ministry setting. The ELCA expectation for continuing education is 50 contact hours per year.
- b. Unused continuing education funds may accrue to three years, and, for accounting purposes, may be placed in a separate account. Termination of the call in that ministry setting will cancel all time and money contributed by the congregation for that rostered minister. The rostered minister shall be reimbursed for personal funds that have been contributed to the continuing education account.

3. FIRST CALL THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

In the first three years of ministry following ordination, rostered ministers are required to be actively involved in the Northeastern Iowa Synod's program of First Call Theological Education (FCTE), part of a churchwide emphasis on continued learning and development of supportive collegial relationships. The synod's FCTE program involves an annual retreat, mentoring, colleague groups, and elective or required continuing education opportunities. The ELCA expectation for continuing education is 50 hours per year. It is an expectation for a first call ministry site to provide time and financial support for all First Call activities.

4. SABBATICAL (Financially Supported Time for Renewal)

Opportunities for a maximum three-month sabbatical are becoming more common in the ELCA. Some congregations include a sabbatical renewal time as part of the call. Others establish sabbatical renewal as congregational policy. The Northeastern Iowa Synod Sabbatical Policy provides some broad guidelines for sabbatical planning and implementation. The synod can also provide a helpful video, contacts with sabbatical "veterans," and reference materials for congregational study and planning. (See the Sabbatical Guidelines section)

5. STAFF SUPPORT/MUTUAL MINISTRY COMMITTEE

It is recommended that a staff support/mutual ministry committee be established within each congregation. Suggestions for creation and maintenance of such an advisory committee may be found in Addendum A.

6. SYNOD ASSEMBLY AND FALL THEOLOGICAL CONFERENCE

Through the letter of call, all rostered ministers are required to attend the Synod Assembly and Fall Theological Conference at congregational expense. In addition, spouses are encouraged to

participate in the Fall Conference, with the congregation providing funds for attendance.

7. BOOKS, PERIODICALS, OTHER EXPENSES

Professional expenses such as books, periodicals, program materials, and other educational materials should be shared by the congregation and the rostered minister. A recommended congregational amount is up to \$700.00 annually.

C. VACATION, SICK LEAVE, AND HOLIDAY BENEFITS

1. Vacation

Due to the rigors and often long hours of congregational ministry, vacation equivalent to four weeks per year (28 days, including four Sundays) should be provided. This does not include time for continuing education. Supply ministers covering for vacation are to be paid by the congregation(s). No more than two weeks of vacation may be carried forward to the following calendar year. Rostered ministers serving a part-time call still receive four weeks of vacation. The number of days earned during the calendar year is prorated based on the percentage of a full-time call, but the rostered minister is still away from the call for a total of four weeks, including four Sundays. When a rostered minister leaves a call, accrued vacation is to be taken prior to the official date of departure, or is to be paid to the ~~pastor~~ rostered minister as additional salary upon departure.

2. Sick Leave

Rostered ministers accumulate 8 hours per month in sick leave. The maximum balance is 360 hours.

3. Holidays

Congregations should provide appropriate time off for holidays. If the actual day cannot be taken, another day should be designated. Holidays include: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Juneteenth, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve Day, and Christmas Day.

D. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

1. Love Gifts

So-called cash "love gifts" given to pastors and deacons at Christmas, and at other times of the year are always taxable income, regardless of whether the gifts are given individually by members of the congregation(s), or are gathered by the congregation(s) and given in a single check to the rostered minister(s) and/or lay staff members.

2. FICA Tax

Pastors:

Our nation's tax policy treats pastors as self-employed persons for FICA purposes. Where W-~~2-2~~ employees pay 7.65% of their income for FICA Tax, with the employer providing the remaining 7.65%, ordained clergy pay the full 15.3% FICA Tax on income and housing. Congregations are required to provide a FICA Tax offset equivalent to the employer's portion of this tax, as they now do with non-ordained staff. Note that congregations cannot pay the pastor's FICA tax directly. When it is provided, the offset becomes additional taxable income to the pastor. To determine the amount of FICA offset to pay a pastor, take the sum of the base salary plus the housing allowance (or fair rental value of a provided parsonage as determined by a licensed real estate professional based on furnished housing with utilities paid) and multiply by 7.65%.

Deacons:

Congregations must withhold 7.65% of a deacon's income for FICA taxes, and pay it to the IRS along with the congregation's portion of 7.65% unless it is determined that the deacon is eligible for housing, in which case the deacon must pay all FICA taxes through quarterly estimated tax payments.

3. Sick Leave/Family Sick Leave/Short-term Disability

Sick leave recommendation is one day per month, cumulative to sixty days. Sick leave days may also be taken to care for a sick child, spouse, or parent. The congregation is to assume responsibility for pulpit supply to cover worship services, funerals, etc., during sick leave. In the event of extended illness, the congregation shall assume the responsibility for providing full salary and benefits for the first two months of the illness, at which time the Portico Disability Plan will take effect if the application for disability is approved. The congregation is responsible for arranging pulpit supply during the disability.

4. Parental Leave

The church places a high value on family, therefore a need for guidelines relating to maternity, adoptive and family leave are appropriate. These guidelines are offered to help congregations approach such situations in a caring manner. During any parenting leave period, supply ministers are to be paid by the congregation.

a. Parental leave

A period of six (6) weeks leave is to be offered with full pay and benefits for each rostered parent (with the exception of car allowance). The decision regarding prenatal and postnatal time should be determined on an individual basis at the discretion of the rostered minister and the church council. Accrued vacation may also be used in conjunction with the leave. A rostered minister desiring additional leave, either prior to, or following birth or adoption, may negotiate for unpaid leave.

b. Adoptive leave

Six (6) weeks of paid adoptive leave is available to an adoptive rostered parent(s), following the adoption of a child. Accrued vacation may also be used in conjunction with the leave. A rostered minister desiring additional leave, either prior to, or following birth or adoption, may negotiate for unpaid leave.

c. Family leave

- i.* Congregations should be sensitive to family needs, such as family leave or extraordinary illness of children or parents of the rostered minister and arrange proper leave time for these circumstances.
- ii.* In the event of a death in his or her immediate family (to include spouse, children, parents, stepchildren, stepparents, brother, sister, grandparents, step-grandparents, grandchildren, step-grandchildren, mother-in-law, father-in-law, or legal guardian), a rostered minister will normally be allowed three (3) days, with pay, to attend the funeral and to deal with family affairs.
- iii.* In cases where there is a special need related to circumstances, generally assumed to be the sudden death of an immediate family member, or cases requiring extensive travel, up to a total of five (5) working days may be granted in consultation with the church council. A rostered minister desiring additional leave may negotiate for unpaid leave or vacation.

E. HEALTH, RETIREMENT, DISABILITY, AND BASIC GROUP LIFE

For pastors, the contributions are figured on defined compensation which includes: annual base salary, FICA tax allowance, housing allowance (cash or parsonage), furnishings and/or utilities allowance (if the congregation/organization pays it directly to the rostered minister), housing equity contributions (if the congregation/organization pays them directly to the rostered minister), and additional tax-sheltered annuity contributions made by way of a voluntary salary reduction agreement the rostered minister has reached with the congregation/organization (includes tax-sheltered contributions made to another financial institution).

For deacons, defined compensation is generally limited to the base salary.

Be sure to report your employee's change of compensation via EmployerLink as soon as it is applicable. More information about the process is available here:

<https://employerlink.porticobenefits.org>.

Portico offers two options on its website that help with calculations.

1. ~~Login to your~~ Rostered ministers may login to their own Portico account at <https://myportico.porticobenefits.org/overview-life-changes/calculating-the-cost-of-benefits> <https://myportico.porticobenefits.org/>, click the "OVERVIEW & LIFE CHANGES" tab, then click the "Calculating the Cost of Benefits" link under "Understanding Your Benefits."
2. Go through the Employer Link website at <https://employerlink.porticobenefits.org>, click on the "RESOURCES" tab, and click the "Calculators" link under "Understanding Portico's Benefits." <https://employerlink.porticobenefits.org/~/link.aspx?id=A8702392AA364983B0C71AEA21F576A7&ZZ>

Portico Health Benefits Coverage

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 benefits that also include dental and prescription drugs, as well as retirement, disability, and survivor 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. Our bundled approach is designed to help ensure rostered ministers and lay employees are protected against significant financial loss from a variety of risks. Through Portico, congregations** in this synod and across the country pool their collective purchasing power to provide benefits in a cost-effective manner.

Congregations and plan members share the cost of benefits. Congregations are expected to support the well-being of their covered plan members by paying all or a significant portion of the contributions for benefits (i.e., monthly premiums for the health plan). Plan members are expected to participate in the cost of utilizing their health benefits through out-of-pocket costs when they receive care (e.g., deductibles, copays, and coinsurance).

The ELCA Church Council endorses a balance of cost-sharing between congregations and plan members; the cost-sharing is reflected in all the ELCA-Primary health benefit options offered by Portico, effective Jan. 1, 2026. Each fall, congregations should engage in conversation with their sponsored plan member(s) to determine the option that best fits their needs and then make their selection during Portico's annual enrollment. Current contribution rates are available at EmployerLink.PorticoBenefits.org or by calling Portico at 800.352.2876.

*A plan member may waive health coverage if they have access to valid medical insurance coverage through their spouse or another employer, or if they qualify for a subsidy due to income level when purchasing health coverage through the exchange.

**"Congregations" may also refer to multi-point parishes or other non-parish ministry agencies such as Bible camps, long-term care facilities, hospitals, campus ministries, etc.

1. Sponsored Couples

If both spouses are sponsored under Portico Benefit Services, each sponsor is required to contribute to the ELCA benefits program for that individual. Employers will receive a “couple credit” that will be applied toward the cost of health benefits. Full contributions for retirement, disability, and group life coverages are required for both spouses.

2. Waiver of Medical-Dental Coverage Possible

Sponsored members may waive unnecessary additional medical-dental coverage under Portico Benefit Services. If a member is eligible for employer-provided medical benefits coverage **through a spouse's employer** or through a former employer, the rostered minister can select that coverage and waive coverage under the ELCA benefits program while continuing to participate in the ELCA retirement, disability, and group life plans. The sponsoring employer will be billed for these benefits.

Most members who waive coverage will incur additional costs to cover the contributions required by the spouse's plan, and to cover higher out-of-pocket costs if benefits under the spouse's plan are not as generous. Congregations, on the other hand, will save money due to lower ELCA plan contributions. Most congregations will find it appropriate to provide a larger-than-usual salary increase or additional retirement contributions when the plan member waives coverage.

Any salary increase should be unrelated to the rostered minister’s decision to continue or waive coverage. If a salary adjustment is offered in exchange for reduced health benefits, the congregation may be required to establish a Health Savings Account (HSA), or a "cafeteria plan" under Section 125 of the Internal Revenue Code in order to avoid adverse

tax consequences for rostered ministers who do not waive coverage. Please consult your tax advisor.

A member who has other employer-provided medical benefits coverage and wants to waive Portico coverage should contact the Customer Care Center of Portico Benefit Services.

When a rostered minister chooses to accept a non-congregational call where Portico benefits are not provided, the rostered minister should ensure that the employer provides comparable disability and life insurance benefits.

If a ministry site chooses to supply benefits through a different provider, those benefits must be comparable to, or better than, those benefits offered through Portico Benefit Services and must include a retirement plan and health, disability, and life insurance.

F. ROSTERED MINISTERS MINIMUM BASE SALARY ACCORDING TO YEARS OF EXPERIENCE

(Base Minimum Salary Grid) (Housing is not included in this base salary chart)

The following salaries are recommended for 2025-6 The salaries listed are minimum salaries for years of

experience. Second career rostered ministers entering the ministry receive one year of credit on the grid for every three years of first career experience after age 22. When a pastor has served as an ordained deacon or a pastor/deacon has served in other professional church vocations, the rostered minister will receive one to one credit on the base salary grid.

Ministers of Word and Sacrament ordained through the 3-year Theological Education for Emerging Ministries (TEEM) program receive a TEEM certificate, rather than a Master of Divinity degree. Therefore, second career persons entering the ministry through TEEM receive one year of credit for every four years of first career experience after age 22. When a TEEM graduate possesses a master’s degree in any field of study, previous experience will count at the standard one to three ratio.

Each call situation is unique. The varieties of situations for pastors include solo or staff ministry team, solo or multiple parish site, specialized ministries in a congregational or non-congregational setting, senior pastor, associate or assistant pastor, little or no staff to extensive staff supervision and planning. If the condition of service involves a special measure of responsibility, such as working alone in a parish and/or lack of support staff, heavier than normal workload, or head of staff responsibilities, additional compensation would be appropriate. The same is true for a deacon whose call includes additional duties beyond the norm.

The percent increase at the 2025 graduate entry level is 3.2 percent (2024 Social Security cost of living adjustment) plus incremental increases of \$635 per year through 35 years of service. Beyond year 35, congregations should negotiate with the pastor and arrive at a salary commensurate with the nature of the call. One suggestion might be to simply multiply the base increase in salary times the number of years of service over 35 years and add that total to the base minimum salary for 35 years of service. For example, 40 years of service equals 5 years x 635 = 3175 + 64,762 = 67,937, a suggested minimum base salary for 40 years of service. Another option is the negotiation of a supplementary retirement contribution. To make annual compensation increases and congregational budgeting easier and more predictable, the Northeastern Iowa Synod has moved to a flat 3% increase of base salary every year, rather than a combination of an annual salary step increase plus a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA). The grid below can be used to determine the starting base salary for a rostered minister according to years of service, and the new salary for the coming year. However, if a rostered minister’s salary does not match the grid because their duties warrant a higher base salary, or they previously negotiated a lower base salary increase in exchange for additional vacation or other benefits, simply multiply their current base salary by 3%.

Using the salary grid:—

Years-of Service	Base 2023	Base 2024	Base 2025	Dollar Increase Over 2023 Base	Percent Increase Over 2023 Base
-					
-					
Graduate	\$ 42,537	\$ 46,238	\$ 47,718	\$ 1,480	3.20%
1	43,172	46,873	48,353	2,115	4.57%
2	43,807	47,508	48,988	2,115	4.51%
3	44,442	48,143	49,623	2,115	4.45%

Graduate Level

Base 2024 at the Graduate level	46,238
Cost of living increase of 3.2%	+1,480
Equals Base 2025 for Graduate level	47,718

Subsequent Years

2024 Base for years of service plus \$2,115 (\$1,480 cost of living allowance + \$635 incremental increase) equals 2025 Base for years of service.

Years-of Service	Base 2023	Base 2024	Base 2025	Dollar Increase Over 2024 Base	Percent Increase Over 2024 Base
-					
-					
Graduate	\$ 42,537	\$ 46,238	\$ 47,718	\$ 1,480	3.20%
1	43,172	46,873	48,353	2,115	4.57%
2	43,807	47,508	48,988	2115	4.51%
3	44,442	48,143	49,623	2115	4.45%
4	45,077	48,778	50,893	2115	4.39%
5	45,712	49,413	51,528	2115	4.34%
6	46,347	50,048	52,163	2115	4.28%
7	46,982	50,683	52,798	2115	4.23%
8	47,617	51,318	53,433	2115	4.17%
9	48,252	51,953	54,068	2,115	4.12%
10	48,887	52,588	54,703	2115	4.07%
11	49,522	53,223	55,338	2115	4.02%
12	50,157	53,858	55,973	2115	3.97%
13	50,792	54,493	56,608	2115	3.93%
14	51,427	55,128	57,243	2115	3.88%
15	52,062	55,763	57,878	2115	3.84%
16	52,697	56,398	58,513	2115	3.79%
17	53,332	57,033	59,148	2,115	3.75%
18	53,967	57,668	59,783	2115	3.71%
19	54,602	58,303	60,418	2115	3.67%
20	55,237	58,938	61,053	2115	3.63%
21	55,872	59,573	61,688	2115	3.59%
22	56,507	60,208	62,323	2115	3.55%
23	57,142	60,843	62,958	2115	3.51%
24	57,777	61,478	63,593	2115	3.48%
25	58,412	62,113	64,228	2,115	3.44%
26	59,047	62,748	64,863	2115	3.41%
27	59,682	63,383	65,498	2115	3.37%
28	60,317	64,018	66,133	2115	3.34%
29	60,952	64,653	66,768	2115	3.30%
30	61,587	65,288	67,403	2115	3.27%
31	62,222	65,923	68,038	2115	3.24%
32	62,857	66,558	68,673	2115	3.21%
33	63,492	67,193	69,308	2115	3.18%
34	64,127	67,828	69,943	2115	3.15%
35	64,762	68,463	70,578	2115	3.12%

2026 Base Salary Grid

Years of Service	2025 Salary	2026 Salary after 3% increase
Seminary Grad	\$47,718	\$49,150
1	\$48,353	\$49,804
2	\$48,988	\$50,458
3	\$49,623	\$51,112
4	\$50,258	\$51,766
5	\$50,893	\$52,420
6	\$51,528	\$53,074
7	\$52,163	\$53,728
8	\$52,798	\$54,382
9	\$53,433	\$55,036
10	\$54,068	\$55,690
11	\$54,703	\$56,344
12	\$55,338	\$56,998
13	\$55,973	\$57,652
14	\$56,608	\$58,306
15	\$57,243	\$58,960
16	\$57,878	\$59,614
17	\$58,513	\$60,268
18	\$59,148	\$60,922
19	\$59,783	\$61,576
20	\$60,418	\$62,231
21	\$61,053	\$62,885
22	\$61,688	\$63,539
23	\$62,323	\$64,193
24	\$62,958	\$64,847
25	\$63,593	\$65,501
26	\$64,228	\$66,155
27	\$64,863	\$66,809
28	\$65,498	\$67,463
29	\$66,133	\$68,117
30	\$66,768	\$68,771
31	\$67,403	\$69,425
32	\$68,038	\$70,079
33	\$68,673	\$70,733
34	\$69,308	\$71,387
35	\$69,943	\$72,041

Add \$635 for every year after 35 years of service.

G. COPYRIGHT

~~Copyright law is an important consideration for rostered ministers and congregations. Sermons and other forms of oral or written resources used in ministry are subject to copyright. In copyright law, when a pastor or deacon creates a copyrightable work as part of their call, by default the ministry site as the employer becomes the owner of the work's copyright. All sermons and resources are considered to be a work for hire. Even if a rostered minister writes sermons or curriculum at home, it is likely that the copyright is the exclusive property of the ministry site. The ministry site can publish the material without the rostered minister's permission. And the rostered minister cannot sell or reproduce the materials for personal benefit. Work for hire is the default rule, but a rostered minister and the ministry site can sign an agreement that the rostered minister retains copyright of all materials produced while called to the ministry site. It is wise for the pastor and ministry site to consult with an attorney when developing such an agreement.~~

G. COMPENSATION FOR PART-TIME CONTRACT MINISTRIES

Part-time contracts can be very flexible to meet the needs of the ministry site and the rostered minister. Days and hours to be worked should be negotiated and included in the ministry agreement. This often includes having some Sundays off. For example, it is common practice for a rostered minister working under a 50%-time contract to have two Sundays off per month. The ministry site is responsible for finding supply coverage for these Sundays, but rostered ministers often help secure regular coverage.

The minimum defined compensation for a part-time contract or call should be equivalent to the compensation amount for the rostered minister at their level of experience reduced by the percentage of full-time of the contract or call. Full-time is defined as no more than 40 hours per week. The ELCA Philosophy of Benefits extends to rostered ministers in part-time calls, meaning that there is not a separate category of part-time benefits. Some benefits are calculated as a percentage of the defined compensation, so will reflect savings over a full-time rate. Health benefits use defined compensation as one factor in determining the cost of the benefit. Congregations are still expected to provide coverage for the rostered minister and family members as needed. Since defined compensation is lower for a part-time rostered minister, that will result in savings over a full-time rostered minister. Continuing Education and Publications and Professional Expenses are prorated to the percentage of the contract or call. Sick leave, disability, and parental/family leave remain at the level outlined in the Minimum Compensation Guidelines. For example, a half-time contract pastor would receive four weeks of vacation, not two weeks. Vacation time is only taken for those days/hours that a rostered minister works during an average work week. Regular days off remain regular days off, even during vacation time.

H. COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS FOR TEMPORARY MINISTRIES

Temporary staff compensation and benefits should be based on the duties and the amount of time spent completing ministry tasks. The interim rostered minister serving a congregation between permanent pastorates should be compensated as agreed upon by the rostered minister and all church councils involved, taking into account the following:

1. Full-time Interim

- a. Parish supplies housing for the pastor, spouse, and family.
- b. Compensation should be on the basis of the interim minister's number of years of experience

according to synod guidelines. Under no condition shall it be less than the minimum guidelines for seminary graduates. Auto allowance should also be paid. Supplemental benefits should also be included.

- c. Furthermore, if the parish situation requires concentrated effort above the normal routine, serious consideration should be given to meet the guidelines for a rostered minister of the experience and skills which the interim brings to bear on the problems of the parish. It must be remembered that restorative and creative ministry on the part of the interim rostered minister may be much more difficult and exhausting than regular parish ministry.
- d. Interim calls are issued by the synod council in consultation with a local site.

2. Part-time Interim (20 hours or ~~less-fewer~~ per week)

Compensation will be proportionate to the base salary, benefits and auto allowance of a full-time interim rostered minister. Interim calls are issued by the synod council. In no instance shall the minimum hourly wage fall below \$30 per hour inclusive of travel and preparation time plus mileage at the current IRS rate.

3. Supply Ministry

Compensation should include preparation time, travel time, and mileage for worship services, Bible studies, confirmation, visitation, and funeral planning. It is courteous to have a check on hand to reimburse one-time supply ministers immediately. When supply is provided for multiple weeks or on an ongoing basis, payment arrangements may be agreed upon by the congregation and the supply minister.

In the event that weather or some other issue requires the cancelation of a worship service, the supply minister must be notified as soon as possible. The supply minister shall be paid \$100 for preparation time. No mileage shall be paid, unless the minister was already traveling to the congregation before being notified of the cancelation. Only the round-trip mileage actually traveled will be paid to the supply minister in this case.

4. Weekly Worship

Single Service -~~\$175~~200; each additional service - \$50 (~~\$100~~ if additional travel is required, e.g., for a Saturday evening service).

If a class is taught - ~~\$40~~50 additional

Communion presider only - \$30 per service.

Total mileage should be paid at the IRS approved rate.

5. Other Services (weddings, funerals, etc.)

~~\$120~~200 per service, plus mileage at the IRS approved rate, paid by the congregation. This would be in addition to any honorarium the pastor might receive from the family members.

GI. COPYRIGHT

Copyright law is an important consideration for rostered ministers and congregations. Sermons and other forms of oral or written resources used in ministry are subject to copyright. In copyright law, when a pastor or deacon creates a copyrightable work as part of their call, by default the ministry site as the employer becomes the owner of the work's copyright. All sermons and resources are considered to be a work-for-hire. Even if a rostered minister writes sermons or curriculum at home, it is likely that the copyright is the exclusive property of the ministry site. The ministry site can publish the material without the rostered minister's permission. And the rostered minister cannot sell or reproduce the materials for

personal benefit. Work-for-hire is the default rule, but a rostered minister and the ministry site can sign an agreement that the rostered minister retains copyright of all materials produced while called to the ministry site. It is wise for the pastor and ministry site to consult with an attorney when developing such an agreement.

II. SABBATICAL GUIDELINES

INTRODUCTION

What is ‘Sabbatical’?

“Sabbatical” is a significant amount of time away from ministry responsibilities and is to be used for both professional growth and personal renewal. The intent of sabbatical is to sharpen the recipient’s skills and to refresh both the spiritual life and a sense of calling.

Definitions:

The phrase “extended study leave” means the same as “sabbatical.” When the word “congregation” is used in these guidelines, the terms “agency” or “employer” also apply.

Scriptural background:

The word “sabbatical” is rooted in the word “Sabbath.” The Sabbath is about time. When the work of creation was finished, God rested and reserved the seventh day as time to rest and reflect on the goodness of creation. In the third commandment, “Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy,” God protects the gift of time from the insatiable demands of work. In the New Testament, Jesus insisted that “the Sabbath was made for humankind and not humankind for the Sabbath.” (Mark 2:27) As the Son of Man and Lord over the Sabbath, Jesus reclaimed the Sabbath to serve human physical and spiritual needs as God the Creator intended. In so doing, Jesus set the needs for renewal and restoration above the burdensome labor of religious obligations. In these brief examples from Scripture, a picture of the Sabbath emerges. The Sabbath recognizes the physical and spiritual strain of routine toil. It also hallows the time that will be given to God for renewal.

What’s done on Sabbatical?

The time may be used for a) further academic study; b) enhancement of professional skills; c) purposeful creative expression relating to ministry; d) purposeful travel in connection with an area of study; and/or e) serving a mission endeavor.

Is there a need?

Ministry changes often cluster around five-to-seven-year marks. At that time, it is normal for both the rostered minister and the congregation to become aware of the need for change. As a particular ministry unfolds over time, the cumulative weight of sharing crises, nurturing new programs and striving to meet ever-changing demands and expectations eventually affects the rostered minister’s performance and attitudes. That might be called “burn out” or “fatigue.” Both the rostered minister and the congregation may sense that “something is not right.” The most common recourse is to seek a new call. Effective use of a properly planned sabbatical will allow a rostered minister to more effectively utilize the experience already gleaned in a congregation. At the same time, well planned sabbaticals allow the rostered minister to bring new ideas and challenges, enthusiasm and directions to enrich and invigorate existing ministries.

The sabbatical is one of the most effective ways for a rostered minister and parish to develop and maintain

a long-term relationship. In that sense, both the rostered minister as well as the congregation benefit from the rostered minister's sabbatical. Taking a longer hiatus from the scheduled routine helps the rostered minister update outdated or stale skills. When study is coupled with the sabbaticant's intentional and guided spiritual renewal discipline, the sabbaticant can return to the ministry re-equipped in skills and more deeply aware of the sustaining presence of God. Moreover, a rostered minister's renewed sense of perspective gleaned from the sabbatical experience may lead to more productive goal setting and mission planning in the ministry site.

What is not a Sabbatical?

Sabbatical a) is not additional vacation. Sabbaticals, unlike vacations, assume that the church council and the synod play a significant role in the planning, execution and evaluation in shaping the outcome; b) is not an opportunity to do similar work in a different setting; and c) it is not the same as annual continuing education. Continuing education is taken annually and usually not for more than an accumulated one or two weeks of time. Sabbatical time is at least three months and is granted not more than once every five years.

1. ELIGIBILITY AND LENGTH

- a. Rostered ministers shall not be eligible for a sabbatical until they have served in their present call for at least five years.
- b. Recipients of sabbatical opportunities are expected to return to their existing ministries for at least a year after the sabbatical unless noted otherwise in the shared planning documents.
- c. A typical extended study will be thirteen weeks or three months. Vacation and continuing education time are not included in sabbatical. Variations from the thirteen week/three month sabbatical are to be approved by the congregation and reported to the Assistant to the Bishop for Rostered Leadership. It is not recommended that pastors "save" either annual continuing education time or stipends for their sabbatical, but rather use their continuing education time on an annual basis. However, as long as the rostered minister is participating in appropriate annual continuing education, unused continuing education funds may be designated to an account and accumulated to help cover sabbatical expenses.

2. GOAL SETTING GUIDELINES

- a. The Synod Council encourages that the sabbatical option be included in the Letter of Call or appointment for rostered ministers.
- b. At least six months before the sabbatical is to begin, the applicant shall submit a written plan to the congregational council for study including the proposed dates. The proposal must be approved by both the rostered minister and the congregational or administrative council. The proposal is then submitted to the Assistant to the Bishop for Rostered Leadership for comment, clarification and endorsement. Such a plan needs to include:
 1. Filling out sabbatical forms available from the Northeastern Iowa Synod.
 2. Providing the congregational council/administrative board and the Assistant to the Bishop for Rostered Leadership a statement of expected educational and spiritual benefits.
 3. Written plans about how the parish duties and existing programs will be covered. Major decisions should be made prior to the sabbatical, or, if they cannot be made, they should be delayed until the rostered minister has had time to become reoriented in the ministry.
 4. Openness to input from others that the plan may be overly ambitious, especially when a major writing project is involved.
 5. A plan for re-entry into the ministry once the sabbatical is complete, since both the congregation and rostered minister will have undergone changes and a loss of intimacy.

A re-entry plan includes:

- i. selecting a person to keep a diary of parish happenings to share at the return;
- ii. staggering committee and board meetings to facilitate a gradual re-entry into the ministry;
- iii. renewing ties by visiting, for example, the congregation's homebound members who may have felt the absence most acutely;
- iv. publicly affirming the ministry done during the absence, even though some things might have not gone smoothly;
- v. determining a date to report to the congregation about short-term, intermediate and projected long-term benefits of the sabbatical.

3. COSTS DURING SABBATICAL

- a. During the sabbatical, the rostered minister shall remain at full salary and benefits, excluding automobile allowance.
- b. The participant will bear the cost of sabbatical activity. However, congregations may choose to assist in these costs by designating the current year's continuing education stipend to the sabbatical. The intent of only using the current year's stipend is to prevent rostered ministers from skipping continuing education in the years leading up to a sabbatical in order to build a sabbatical fund. If a congregation banks unused funds, the current funds, plus unused funds from the previous two years may be used toward sabbatical costs (see section B.2.b). Rostered ministers and congregations need to check current tax laws and retirement benefits rules about pre-designating a portion of the rostered minister's salary as an "education offset" during the sabbatical year.
- c. Whether a congregation initially enters into a sabbatical arrangement by Letter of Call or by congregational decision, it needs a fair estimate of the cost of providing interim ministry services. That estimate can serve as the basis for a savings plan. Some congregations may train lay persons to assume major responsibility during the sabbatical and may then budget for an interim minister only to provide minimal service. Sacramental ministry (baptism and Holy Communion) may only be performed by an ordained Minister of Word and Sacrament. Neighboring rostered ministers may make themselves available for crisis situations. When paid staff members assume the additional work of the sabbaticant, congregations may offer them an additional paid week of vacation as thanks for their cooperation.
- d. Because a sabbatical offers the congregation the chance for renewal as well as the rostered minister, congregational members are encouraged to try new ministry roles or to develop new ministries (e.g. Lay Communion Ministry Teams, Worship Leadership Teams, Preaching Teams, Confirmation Teaching Teams). In congregations served by two or more rostered ministers, the congregation is expected to partner with the remaining rostered minister(s) to ensure that the ministry of the congregation remains vibrant.
- e. Providing housing away from the congregational setting during the sabbatical is the responsibility of the sabbaticant.
- f. Grants to support a sabbatical may be available. Contact the synod office for information.

APPLICATION FOR SABBATICAL
Northeastern Iowa Synod
For submission to the Assistant to the Bishop for Rostered Leadership

for the period of _____ thru _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: (____) _____ (Office) (____) _____ (Home)

In existing ministry since:

Proposed period of sabbatical

Congregation/employer approved sabbatical

By Call? By Resolution? If by Resolution, list date of Council meeting:

Brief preliminary explanation of proposal:

Preliminary statement of Intended Benefits:

Site of Study/Experience:

Approximate costs: Tuition & housing \$ _____ Transportation \$ _____
Food and incidentals \$ _____

I am working with a local committee or council and have set the following goals:

- a. Responsibility for existing ministry _____ (date) *(see B.2.c., C.3. & C.4.)*
- b. Approval of final proposal _____ (date)
- c. Approval of "re-entry" plan _____ (date) *(see B.2.e.i.-v.)*
- d. Date to report on sabbatical _____ (date)

Rostered Minister

Council President

Addendum A
MUTUAL MINISTRY COMMITTEE

The purpose of the Mutual Ministry Committee is to foster communication and coordination between the pastor or deacon (hereafter referred to as “minister”) and the members of the congregation/parish, and to provide support to the minister in the call. The committee develops policy recommendations, consults on continuing education plans, oversees long-range planning of the congregation, contributes to reviews of ministers and congregational ministries annually, and undertakes projects requested by the minister or council.

The Mutual Ministry Committee consists of a maximum of 6 members. The minister chooses three members, but the church council may veto any of the choices. The church council chooses three members, but the minister may veto any of the choices. When the minister is serving multiple congregations, all congregations should have at least one member on the committee. Members of the committee should not serve on the church/parish council while serving on the Mutual Ministry Committee. It is suggested that the committee meet at least four times per year.

First Meeting of the Year (late January – early February) – This meeting is best scheduled shortly after each congregation’s Annual Meeting. Review the ministry goals from the previous year and acknowledge progress made on these goals. Set new ministry goals for the coming year. Both the congregation(s) and the minister should bring ideas for ministry goals to the meeting. The goals of the congregation(s) are brought by the lay members of the Mutual Ministry Committee with input from the church council and committees of the congregation(s). Special attention should be given to goals or emphases for programs/ministries that were discussed at the Annual Meeting of the congregation(s).

Second Meeting of the Year (early March) – The emphasis of this meeting should be on continuing education for the minister and members of the congregation(s), especially any continuing education needed to meet the ministry goals which have been set for the year. A report is made on continuing education that was completed during the past twelve months by the minister and any members of the congregation(s). A plan is proposed and sent to the Council for approval for continuing education that will be completed during the coming year by the minister and members of the congregation(s). The continuing education plan for the minister may take the form a written and signed “Continuing Education Covenant.”

Third Meeting of the Year (mid-summer) – The third meeting begins by reviewing progress made on the current ministry goals and determining any further steps that are needed to complete the goals. The remainder of this meeting focuses on the minister and the Mutual Ministry Committee discussing openly any topics that are “hot” in the congregation(s) at the moment – ideas for ministry, ideas for worship, ideas for fun events, complaints or concerns, etc. *This is not a place to bring up individual grievances!*

Fourth Meeting of the Year (November – early January) – In this meeting the Mutual Ministry Committee reviews the goals that were set at the beginning of the year and discusses progress made by both the congregation(s) and the minister to complete these goals. The committee and minister also discuss how these goals helped or hindered the ongoing and long-range ministry of the congregation(s)/parish. Goals that have not been completed may be carried over into the next year.

It is **not** recommended that the Mutual Ministry Committee be responsible for performing an annual review of the minister. Such a review should be performed by the Executive Committee of the Council(s)/Parish Council. The Mutual Ministry Committee may provide input into an annual review, and should advocate for the minister being compensated at least at minimum guidelines. The Review of Minister of Word and Sacrament, Minister of Word and Service, and Congregational Ministry is a suggested format for the review. It may be found in Addendum B of the Northeastern Iowa Synod Minimum Compensation Guidelines. The current version of these guidelines may be found on the synod website neiasynod.org by clicking the “Resources” link.

Based upon its work throughout the year, the Mutual Ministry Committee may at any time forward recommendations to the Church Council(s)/Parish Council for action at their regular meetings, or as an agenda item for the Annual Meeting of the congregation. These recommendations should include advocating for fair and competitive compensation for the rostered minister, developing a sabbatical policy if one does not exist, and updating and changing personnel policies as needed.

Addendum B

REVIEW OF MINISTER OF WORD AND SACRAMENT, MINISTER OF WORD AND SERVICE, AND CONGREGATIONAL MINISTRY

INTRODUCTION

Effective ministry is the result of an interaction between the rostered minister and the congregation(s). It is always important to stay in touch with shared goals and expectations.

The following documents are provided as a means to review the mutual ministry of the pastor(s)/deacon(s) and the congregation(s) based upon the Letter of Call issued to each rostered minister, which is reflected in the constitutional provisions related to the pastor(s)/deacon(s) and the congregation(s).

The review of the rostered minister(s) is generally completed annually by the executive committee of the council (or the executive committee of the parish council, if a geographical parish), but each congregation or shared ministry setting may choose which entity is best suited to conduct the review. The review of the congregational ministry is generally completed annually by the pastor(s)/deacon(s) and council(s) together.

The goals of the review are:

- a. To identify and affirm the accomplishments, faithfulness and competencies of the congregation and the pastor(s)/deacon(s).
- b. To help congregations sharpen personal goals and to define areas of needed or desired professional, spiritual, and personal growth.
- c. To help laity and rostered ministers clarify expectations of one another and to improve the effectiveness of their shared ministries.

Prior to completing the review, each person doing the review is encouraged to consult the expectations of rostered ministers as outlined in Section S14.12 of the Northeastern Iowa Synod Constitution, ELCA, for Ministers of Word and Sacrament; and in Section S14.32 for Ministers of Word and Service; and the expectations of a congregation as contained in Chapter 4, "Statement of Purpose," in the Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Sections C4.02 and C4.03.

If the ministry site has a position description for the pastor(s)/deacon(s), strengths and growth areas may be assessed for additional duties mentioned in the position description.

Please note that the synod's Minimum Compensation Guidelines are set at a level to adequately compensate a rostered minister who is meeting the minimum expectations of a Minister of Word and Sacrament or Minister of Word and Service as outlined in the Letter of Call and the Synod Constitution. If a rostered minister is performing above minimum expectations, it is appropriate to provide compensation above the minimum level for years of service.

REVIEW OF PASTOR BASED ON THE SYNOD CONSTITUTION

Section S14.12 of the Northeastern Iowa Synod Constitution:

†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;

List the pastor's strengths in the area of preaching:

List areas of growth related to preaching:

2) administer the sacraments;

List the pastor's strengths in the area of administering Baptism and Holy Communion:

List areas of growth related to administering Baptism and Holy Communion:

3) conduct public worship;

List the pastor's strengths in the area of conducting worship:

List areas of growth related to conducting worship:

4) provide pastoral care;

List the pastor's strengths in the area of providing pastoral care:

List areas of growth related to providing pastoral care:

5) seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel;

List the pastor's strengths in the area of encouraging others to consider a call to ministry:

List areas of growth related to encouraging others to consider a call to ministry:

6) impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through distribution of its communications and publications;

List the pastor's strengths in the area of informing the congregation(s) about the ministries of the synod and the ELCA, and encouraging participation:

List areas of growth related to informing the congregation(s) about the ministries of the synod and the ELCA, and encouraging participation:

7) witness to the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation and abroad; and

List the pastor's strengths in the area of witnessing to the Kingdom of God outside the congregation(s):

List areas of growth related to witnessing to the Kingdom of God outside the congregation(s):

8) speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world.

List the pastor's strengths in the area of speaking publicly on behalf of the poor and oppressed, calling for justice, and proclaiming God's love:

List areas of growth related to these areas:

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;

List the pastor's strengths in the areas of Christian education, confirmation, marriages, visitation, and funerals:

List areas of growth related to these areas:

2) relate to all schools and organizations of the congregation;

If applicable, list the pastor's strengths in relating to schools, daycare, and other organizations that are ministries of the congregation.

If applicable, list areas of growth in the pastor relating to congregational ministries.

3) install regularly elected members of the Congregational Council; and

List the pastor's strengths in the area of installing the Council, Sunday school teachers, etc.:

List areas of growth related to installations:

4) with the council, administer discipline; and

If applicable, list the pastor's strengths in administering discipline along with the council:

If applicable, list areas of growth related to administering discipline along with the council:

5) endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the ELCA Churchwide organization and of this synod.

List the pastor's strengths in encouraging regular increases to Mission Support:

List areas of growth related to the pastor encouraging regular increases to Mission Support:

List mutually agreed upon goals for the pastor for the coming year, focusing especially on areas of growth mentioned above:

REVIEW OF DEACON BASED ON THE SYNOD CONSTITUTION

The following constitution-based review should ONLY be used for deacons who were consecrated after 2018, or for those who were a deaconess or diaconal minister before the Word and Service roster was unified. It is not an appropriate resource for those who were an associate in ministry prior to the unification of the lay roster. This review is also not suitable for use for deacons who are called to a specific ministry that does not require preaching, community outreach, advocacy, etc., as duties of the call. As an alternative, a review should be developed that is based on the job description for the position that the deacon holds in the congregation or ministry. The job description should also be a part of the review even if the following tool is used.

Section S14.12 of the Northeastern Iowa Synod Constitution:

†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;

List the deacon's strengths in the area of using scripture in preaching and service:

List areas of growth related to using scripture in preaching and service:

b. Advocate a prophetic diakonia [service] 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;

List the deacon's strengths in the area of advocacy and action related to service ministries within the congregation(s) which reach out into the world:

List areas of growth related to such advocacy and action within the congregation(s):

c. Speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world, witnessing to the realm of God in the community, the nation, and abroad;

List the deacon's strengths in the area of advocacy and action related to service ministries outside the congregation(s):

List areas of growth related to such advocacy and action outside the congregation(s):

d. Equip the baptized for ministry in God's world that affirms the gifts of all people;

List the deacon's strengths in the area of equipping others for ministry:

List areas of growth related to equipping others for ministry:

e. Encourage mutual relationships that invite participation and accompaniment of others in God's mission;

List the deacon's strengths in the area of encouraging mutual relationships:

List areas of growth related to encouraging mutual relationships:

f. Practice stewardship that respects God's gift of time, talents, and resources;

List the deacon's strengths in the area of personal stewardship and encouraging generosity in others:

List areas of growth related to stewardship:

g. Be grounded in a gathered community for ongoing diaconal formation;

List the deacon's strengths in the area of participating in a gathered community:

List areas of growth related to participating in a gathered community:

h. Share knowledge of the ELCA and its wider ministry of the gospel, and advocate for the work of all expressions of this church; and

List the deacon's strengths in the area of sharing knowledge of and advocacy for participation in the ministries of the ELCA, including its three expressions: Churchwide Office, Synods, and Congregations:

List areas of growth related to these areas:

i. Identify and encourage qualified persons to prepare for ministry of the gospel.

List the deacon's strengths in the area of encouraging others to consider a call to ministry:

List areas of growth related to encouraging others to consider a call to ministry:

List mutually agreed upon goals for the deacon for the coming year, focusing especially on areas of growth mentioned above:

REVIEW OF CONGREGATIONAL MINISTRY BASED ON THE MODEL CONSTITUTION FOR CONGREGATIONS AND THE LETTER OF CALL

Model Constitution for Congregations of the ELCA, Section C4.03:

***C4.03. To fulfill these purposes [listed in *C4.02], this congregation shall:**

a. Provide services of worship at which the Word of God is preached and the sacraments are administered.

List strengths in providing services of worship, proclamation of the Word, and administration of Baptism and Holy Communion:

List areas of growth related to providing services of worship, proclamation of the Word, and administration of Baptism and Holy Communion:

b. Provide pastoral care and assist all members to participate in this ministry.

List strengths in providing pastoral care and assisting all members to participate in ministry:

List areas of growth related to providing pastoral care and facilitating participation:

c. Challenge, equip, and support all members in carrying out their calling in their daily lives and in their congregation.

List strengths in this area of ministry:

List areas of growth related to this area of ministry:

d. Teach the Word of God.

List strengths related to Bible study, Sunday school, confirmation, adult education, Vacation Bible School, worship, and other teaching opportunities:

List areas of growth related to this area of ministry:

e. Witness to the reconciling Word of God in Christ, reaching out to all people.

List strengths in this area of ministry:

List areas of growth related to this area of ministry:

f. Respond to human need, work for justice and peace, care for the sick and the suffering, and participate responsibly in society.

List strengths in this area of ministry:

List areas of growth related to this area of ministry:

g. Motivate its members to provide financial support for the congregation's ministry and the ministry of other parts of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

List strengths related to educating members regarding stewardship and mission support:

List areas of growth related to educating members regarding stewardship and mission support:

h. Foster and participate in interdependent relationships with other congregations, the synod, and the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

List strengths in this area of ministry:

List areas of growth related to this area of ministry:

i. Foster and participate in ecumenical relationships consistent with churchwide policy.

List strengths in this area of ministry:

List areas of growth related to this area of ministry:

In the Letter of Call issued to the rostered minister, it states these responsibilities for the members of the congregation(s): "With this call, we pledge our prayers, love, esteem, and personal support for the sake of the ministry entrusted to you by God and for our ministry together in Christ's name."

List ways that the congregation(s) are fulfilling these responsibilities:

List areas of growth related to the congregation(s) fulfilling these responsibilities:

List mutually agreed upon goals for the congregation(s) for the coming year, focusing especially on areas of growth mentioned above:

Addendum C

CHECKLIST FOR PARSONAGE USE

This checklist is being offered to promote ongoing discussion between congregational leadership and pastors relative to the maintenance, repair, and general use of a church owned home. It is understood the following areas may have more or less relevance to specific congregational situations.

_____ 1. The congregation has thoroughly cleaned, and redecorated as needed, the parsonage prior to use by incoming pastoral family.

_____ 2. The following appliances have been installed in the parsonage, are being properly maintained by the parsonage family, and serviced and annually inspected by the congregation

Recommended:

_____ Stove _____ Refrigerator _____ Dishwasher _____ Washer/Dryer

_____ Air conditioning _____ Microwave _____ Water Softener

_____ _____ _____ _____

As Needed/Optional:

_____ Garbage disposal _____ Water purifier

_____ TV antenna/Cable/Dish _____ Humidifier/Dehumidifier

_____ _____ _____ _____

_____ 3. The following services/utilities are being paid directly by the congregation:

_____ Electricity _____ Soft water service _____ Gas/LP _____ Cable (optional) _____ Telephone

(excluding personal calls) _____ Garbage (and other city-billed services) _____ Internet

_____ _____

_____ 4. The following items have been supplied by congregation by mutual agreement:

_____ Paint _____ Wallpaper _____ Window coverings

_____ Floor coverings _____ Light fixtures _____ Ceiling fans

_____ _____ _____ _____ _____

_____ 5. Because the congregation owns the parsonage and grounds, it shall be their responsibility to provide regular grounds maintenance (e.g. lawn mowing, landscaping, snow removal).

Therefore, any expected role of the pastor in such matters has been discussed initially and reviewed annually.

_____ 6. When it becomes time to redecorate the parsonage, consideration of such matters as color and fabric selection, floor covering options, and overall design has been done in consultation with those living in the parsonage. The congregation will determine the price range for both individual items and the total cost of the redecoration.

_____ 7. An annual inspection of the parsonage has been conducted that included:

_____ - Major kitchen appliances and heating and cooling systems.

_____ - Areas in need of minor and major repair.

_____ - Immediate and long range redecorating and modernizing projects

_____ - _____

_____ 8. After the annual inspection, the pastor and congregational leaders have discussed inspection findings and have mutually agreed on: 1) the repairs, maintenance, and any redecorating plans that will be undertaken during the upcoming year, 2) who will be responsible for completing the work, and 3) who will pay for each approved expenditure.

Addendum D

HOUSING ALLOWANCE RESOLUTION

(Insert for Congregation Council Minutes)

In order to permit _____ (Name of Pastor) _____ to benefit from the provisions of Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, the council specifies that the total compensation paid to her/him during the fiscal year ended (Subsequent Year) includes a housing allowance. Since such approval by the council would permit her/him to deduct that amount from her/his taxable income and has no further effect upon our congregation or budget, it was

RESOLVED,

That the total compensation of \$ (Amount) paid to _____ (Name of Pastor) _____ includes a housing allowance of \$ (Amount) for the current year and for all future years, unless otherwise provided.

Signature Title Date

The above resolution should be included in the minutes of the congregation council prior to January 1 of each year. A copy should be made of the motion as it appears in the minutes and given to the pastor(s) for her/his records.

This same resolution format may be used for a parsonage allowance when a pastor chooses to declare some of the base salary as a parsonage allowance to be used for expenses related to the parsonage.

Addendum E

ROSTERED MINISTER AUTOMOBILE EXPENSE REPORT

For the Month of _____, 20____

Vehicle Description: _____

(Use a separate report for each vehicle)

MILEAGE METHOD

Day Of Month	General Description of Travel Purpose (At the discretion of payroll person, minister/staff person's appointment book must reconcile with this column. When confidentiality is necessary, use "private" as descriptor.)	Total Miles Traveled (Do not include commute or personal miles) [1]	Tolls & Parking [2]
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			
13			
14			
15			
16			
17			
18			
19			
20			
21			
22			
23			
24			
25			
26			
27			
28			
29			
30			
31			
Total for Columns [1 & 2]:			
Current Mileage Reimbursement Rate Per Mile:			
Total for Column [1] times (x) current mileage reimbursement rate per mile:			
TOTAL Automobile Business Expense (A) Add last line of column [1 & 2]:			

New Form

Addendum F-1
NORTHEASTERN IOWA SYNOD

Compensation Worksheet for a Rostered Minister Living in a Parsonage

Congregation(s) _____

Name of Pastor _____ Years of Service _____

Start Date: _____

For the fillable form, DO NOT USE COMMAS IN NUMBERS

A. COMPENSATION/SALARY

1. Base salary paid to pastor \$ _____

Note: For First Call pastors, base salary increases will follow synod guidelines for at least the first three years. It is appropriate to increase base pay beyond years of service for head of staff positions, advanced degrees, additional responsibilities, or merit.

2. Parsonage Value for Determining FICA Allowance only (Base salary x 30%) \$ _____

This amount is NOT paid to the pastor. It is only used to determine Defined Compensation. For the possible tax benefit and protection of the pastor, it is recommended that the ministry site and pastor seek the services of a realtor or tax professional in determining the Fair Rental Value of the parsonage if it were a fully furnished rental property. However, the Portico Housing Factor below will always be (line 1 + 3) x 30%.

- i. Basic utilities are to be paid by the ministry site (internet, gas, electricity, sewer, garbage). The pastor and congregation may negotiate whether cable/satellite is paid by the congregation. In some cases, a tax professional may recommend that a pastor receive a utilities allowance instead. If that is the case, list the utilities allowance paid to the pastor here: _____.
ii. A pastor may choose to designate some of the base salary as a Furnishings Allowance. This provides a tax advantage to the pastor by reducing taxable income for expenses related to furnishing the parsonage and covering monthly expenses not covered by the congregation. If the pastor is designating an amount of salary as a housing allowance, list that amount here: _____.

3. FICA Allowance Paid to Pastor as Additional Salary: (line 1 + 2) x 7.65% \$ _____

Our nation's tax policy treats pastors as self-employed persons for FICA purposes. Where straight W-2 employees pay 7.65% of their income for FICA Tax, with the employer providing the remaining 7.65%, ordained clergy are required to pay the full 15.3% FICA Tax on income and housing. Congregations must provide a FICA Tax offset equivalent to the employer's portion of this tax which is paid as regular salary.

4. Portico Housing Factor for determining Defined Compensation (line 1 + 3) x 30% \$ _____

5. TOTAL DEFINED COMPENSATION (Lines 1 + 3 + 4) \$ _____

B. REIMBURSEMENTS

Required:

1. Travel [] Reimbursement at current IRS rate (enter budgeted amount or leave blank)
[] Annual Allowance (enter budgeted amount for annual allowance) \$ _____

2. Official required meetings (Synod Assembly & Fall Conference) \$ _____

3. Continuing Education (\$900 recommended for full-time call) \$ _____

4. Moving Expenses and Arrangement: _____ \$ _____

(Note: Under the current federal tax code, moving expenses are considered a fringe benefit and must be included as taxable income on the pastor's W-2)

Recommended:

5. Publications and Professional Expenses (\$700 recommended for full-time call) \$ _____

6. Amount set aside annually if Sabbatical Leave is offered (\$400 recommended) \$ _____

(This is set aside by the congregation to pay for coverage while pastor is on sabbatical.)

7. TOTAL for all items in section B. REIMBURSEMENTS \$ _____

C. PAID BENEFITS

To calculate retirement & medical you must sign into your Portico EmployerLink account, select "Resources" then "Understanding Portico's Benefits" and select "Calculators," or call Portico Customer Care at 800.352.2876.

1. Required Retirement Plan Contributions
Indicate percentage: 10% 11% 12% (% x Total Defined Compensation) \$ _____

2. Health + Disability + Basic Group Life \$ _____

Plan Option: (Platinum+; Gold+; Silver+ A or B) _____

- [] Member only [] Member & spouse [] Member & children
[] Member, spouse, children [] Coverage waived

3. Housing Equity Allowance paid as additional retirement contributions \$ _____

4. Reimbursement for medical expenses not covered by medical plan \$ _____

5. TOTAL for all items in section C. PAID BENEFITS \$ _____

D. OTHER BENEFITS

- 1. Vacation Four weeks including four Sundays
- 2. Continuing education Two weeks including two Sundays
- 3. Sabbatical Leave _____ weeks after _____ years of service in this congregation
- 4. Parenting leave of _____ weeks with full salary, housing, and benefits.
(Recommended 6 weeks)

E. AGREEMENTS

YES NO

- 1. We presently have or will establish a Mutual Ministry Committee. _____
- 2. Congregation has or will establish a Sabbatical Leave Policy. _____
- 3. Other _____
- 4. When calling a new seminary graduate, the congregation(s) must fully support the pastor participating in the Synod First Call Theological Education Program. _____

F. OTHER PROVISIONS (may be copied from the Mutual Expectations section of the Ministry Site Profile)

1. During this time period, the pastor will give special attention in ministry to the following:

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____
- e. _____

2. The congregation will encourage this pastor's ministry in the following ways:

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____
- e. _____

3. Other matters:

CONTACT PERSON:

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

New Form

Addendum F-2

NORTHEASTERN IOWA SYNOD

Compensation Worksheet for a Rostered Minister Receiving a Housing Allowance

Congregation(s) _____

Name of Pastor _____ Years of Service _____

Start Date: _____

For the fillable form, **DO NOT USE COMMAS IN NUMBERS**

A. COMPENSATION/SALARY

1. Base salary paid to pastor \$ _____

Note: For First Call pastors, base salary increases will follow synod guidelines for at least the first three years. It is appropriate to increase base pay beyond years of service for head of staff positions, advanced degrees, additional responsibilities, or merit.

2. Housing Allowance (No Parsonage) Paid to Pastor. \$ _____

For the initial calculation, this is the base salary x 30%. Once the call is issued, the pastor may raise or lower the amount of the housing allowance as needed. If the housing allowance is raised, the base salary is lowered by the same amount. If the housing allowance is lowered, the base salary is raised by the same amount. The pastor is responsible for determining the Fair Rental Value of the home with the assistance of a realtor or tax professional.

3. FICA Allowance Paid to Pastor as Additional Salary: (line 1 + 2) x 7.65% \$ _____

Our nation's tax policy treats pastors as self-employed persons for FICA purposes. Where straight W-2 employees pay 7.65% of their income for FICA Tax, with the employer providing the remaining 7.65%, ordained clergy are required to pay the full 15.3% FICA Tax on income and housing. Congregations must provide a FICA Tax offset equivalent to the employer's portion of this tax which is paid as regular salary.

4. TOTAL DEFINED COMPENSATION (Add lines 1-3) \$ _____

B. REIMBURSEMENTS

Required:

1. Travel [] Reimbursement at current IRS rate (enter budgeted amount or leave blank) [] Annual Allowance (enter budgeted amount for annual allowance) \$ _____

2. Official required meetings (Synod Assembly & Fall Conference) \$ _____

3. Continuing Education (\$900 recommended for full-time call) \$ _____

4. Moving Expenses and Arrangement: _____ \$ _____

(Note: Under the current federal tax code, moving expenses are considered a fringe benefit and must be included as taxable income on the pastor's W-2)

Recommended:

5. Publications and Professional Expenses (\$700 recommended for full-time call) \$ _____

6. Amount set aside annually if Sabbatical Leave is offered (\$400 recommended) \$ _____

(This is set aside by the congregation to pay for coverage while pastor is on sabbatical.)

7. TOTAL for all items in section B. REIMBURSEMENTS \$ _____

C. PAID BENEFITS

To calculate retirement & medical you must sign into your Portico EmployerLink account, select "Resources" then "Understanding Portico's Benefits" and select "Calculators," or call Portico Customer Care at 800.352.2876.

1. Required Retirement Plan Contributions Indicate percentage: 10% 11% 12% (% x Total Defined Compensation) \$ _____

2. Health + Disability + Basic Group Life \$ _____

Plan Option: (Platinum+; Gold+; Silver+ A or B) _____

[] Member only [] Member & spouse [] Member & children

[] Member, spouse, children [] Coverage waived

3. Reimbursement for medical expenses not covered by medical plan (optional) \$ _____

4. TOTAL for all items in section C. PAID BENEFITS \$ _____

D. OTHER BENEFITS

- 5. Vacation Four weeks including four Sundays
- 6. Continuing education Two weeks including two Sundays
- 7. Sabbatical Leave ___ weeks after ___ years of service in this congregation
- 8. Parenting leave of _____ weeks with full salary, housing, and benefits.
(Recommended 6 weeks)

E. AGREEMENTS

YES **NO**

- 1. We presently have or will establish a Mutual Ministry Committee. _____ _____
- 2. Congregation has or will establish a Sabbatical Leave Policy. _____ _____
- 3. Other _____
- 4. When calling a new seminary graduate, the congregation(s) must fully support the pastor participating in the Synod First Call Theological Education Program.

F. OTHER PROVISIONS (may be copied from the Mutual Expectations section of the Ministry Site Profile)

- 1. During this time period, the pastor will give special attention in ministry to the following:
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
 - d. _____
 - e. _____
- 2. The congregation will encourage this pastor's ministry in the following ways:
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
 - d. _____
 - e. _____
- 3. Other matters:

CONTACT PERSON:

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____



**Northeastern Iowa Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

~~2026~~2027

**MINIMUM COMPENSATION GUIDELINES
for
ROSTERED MINISTERS**

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~~2026-2027~~ MINIMUM COMPENSATION GUIDELINES
for
ROSTERED MINISTERS (Pastors & Deacons)

INTRODUCTION

“Doing God’s work in the world calls for leaders who bring a variety of training, skills, interests and life experiences to the work they do in congregations, communities and partner organizations. Many of these leaders are called to serve as ministers on one of the rosters of the ELCA: Ministers of Word and Sacrament and Ministers of Word and Service. Rostered ministers carry out the work and mission of this church, sharing God’s love with the world through the good news of Jesus Christ.”²

These guidelines are offered as an avenue of providing support for ministries of pastor and people and deacon and people. The compensation guidelines for this synod are written by a subcommittee of the Synod Council. The work of the subcommittee is reviewed and modified by the Synod Council before being submitted to the Synod Assembly. It is a core value of the Northeastern Iowa Synod to have all of our rostered ministers compensated at minimum guidelines or above.

Many factors influence these guidelines, including, comparison with the compensation guidelines of other synods and recognition of accumulated skills in the practice of ministry and in “first career” settings. Those involved in setting these guidelines are also aware of the high debt load carried by those new to the ministry and the shortage of rostered ministers for ministries in this church.

We urge congregations to study these guidelines and to use them for mutually affirming dialogue about the financial aspect of care for rostered ministers. It is important to note that a ministry site cannot terminate or modify a rostered minister’s call unilaterally (i.e., without the rostered minister’s consent) by reducing the rostered minister’s salary or benefits. In ELCA terminology, when a ministry site issues the call and the rostered minister accepts, our constitutions state that they have a “continuing mutual relationship and commitment” [ELCA 7.46, Synod †S14.18, Model Constitution for Congregations *C9.05]. Looked at this way, the terms of the call can be modified only by agreement between the rostered minister and the congregation. The congregation cannot unilaterally amend the call (e.g., by reducing the agreed compensation) any more than the rostered minister could unilaterally amend the call (e.g., by taking two months of vacation instead of one month). The terms of the call do get modified each year when the ministry site votes to adopt a new budget and the rostered minister agrees to the new compensation package in the budget (which is typically an increase). But when the rostered minister does not agree (e.g., because compensation is proposed to decrease), the terms of the call are not amended, and the rostered minister is entitled to continue receiving compensation at the prior year’s level until agreement is reached on a new compensation package.

Note: Those who prepare these guidelines are not tax professionals, nor do they give tax advice. Congregations, pastors, and deacons should consult a qualified tax professional for tax related questions and advice.

2 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, *Rostered Minister of the ELCA* [website], <https://www.elca.org/about/leadership/rostered>, (accessed 8 March 2022)

COMPENSATION FOR ROSTERED MINISTERS (PASTORS & DEACONS)

Pastors and deacons should be compensated according to the base salary grid printed below, including all benefits, and including recognition of prior service in ministry or any vocation completed before ELCA ordination. However, for deacons:

3. Federal Tax Code will not permit a tax-deductible housing allowance for lay ministers. However, congregations may provide additional, taxable compensation for housing costs. The salary grids for pastors and deacons are identical because deacons generally do not receive a housing allowance.
4. Federal Tax Code requires congregations to pay the employer's portion of FICA for deacons. Under the Federal Tax Code congregations MAY NOT pay the employer's portion of FICA to the IRS for pastors and housing allowance eligible deacons, nor may they withhold the minister's portion of FICA taxes. Instead, a FICA offset is paid to the minister for the employer portion of FICA tax owed. The minister is then required to pay the congregation portion and the personal portion of FICA taxes in quarterly tax payments to the IRS.

A. CLERGY HOUSING (generally for pastors only. See item 4 below.)

7. When a parsonage is provided, all utilities and maintenance costs are to be borne by the congregation (see Addendum C). The Fair Rental Value of the parsonage should be determined for tax purposes and to calculate Defined Compensation (see Addendum F-1).
8. When a parsonage is not provided, the congregation should provide a housing allowance at a minimum level of 30% of base salary plus the FICA offset or at a level adequate to pay for mortgage, maintenance, utilities, and taxes (see Addendum D). The pastor is responsible for determining the Fair Rental Value of the home to determine an appropriate housing allowance (see Addendum F-2).
9. Congregations providing a parsonage are encouraged to contribute to a housing equity fund for their rostered minister(s). Housing equity is a designated fund for retirement housing or a down payment on a domicile. This suggested annual contribution is 3% of defined compensation. Congregations contemplating a housing equity arrangement can contact Portico Benefit Services for additional details and assistance (see Addendum F-1 C.3).
10. Housing provided to deacons and lay church employees may not be taxable, if living on the church property is an important and necessary part of the duties of the employee. This could apply to a custodian, for example, and perhaps to other employees who are available to members of the congregation at varying hours as needed.
11. Congregations should pay the moving expenses for rostered ministers. Under the current Federal Tax Code moving expenses are considered a fringe benefit and must be included as taxable income on the minister's W-2 in the year in which they were paid.
12. For clergy couples serving in the same or different calls, both are to receive a housing allowance or reimbursement equal to a provided parsonage.

B. PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT

8. AUTOMOBILE

Automobile and other work-related travel is an expense of the congregation and, as such, is not usually reported as taxable income and should not be considered part of a salary package. Reimbursement for travel expense may be handled in one of three ways:

- a. Reimbursement for actual business miles traveled at the current rate established by the Internal Revenue Service. Congregations and rostered ministers negotiate documentation and frequency of payment details. This is the recommended method of

reimbursement. **The IRS requires that mileage be submitted by month at least every 60 days.** (See Addendum E.)

- b. Payment of a lump sum per year pro-rated to a monthly basis. Rostered ministers need to maintain accurate records of actual business mileage and vehicle expenses and provide that documentation for tax records, as portions of this allowance may be taxable.
- c. The congregation may provide a vehicle for staff use.

9. CONTINUING EDUCATION

- a. Quality, holistic continuing education for rostered ministers provides a source for challenging ideas, cutting edge programs and professional renewal. It is not vacation time. Because both benefit, congregations and rostered ministers share expenses for continuing education. Congregations are encouraged to support continuing education at the \$900 level, plus \$400 annual contribution by each rostered minister. Two weeks of time away, including two Sundays, should be allowed annually for continuing education. If there is a prior agreement between the rostered minister and the congregation's council, continuing education time and money can be cumulative to six weeks in the same ministry setting. The ELCA expectation for continuing education is 50 contact hours per year.
- b. Unused continuing education funds may accrue to three years, and, for accounting purposes, may be placed in a separate account. Termination of the call in that ministry setting will cancel all time and money contributed by the congregation for that rostered minister. The rostered minister shall be reimbursed for personal funds that have been contributed to the continuing education account.

10. FIRST CALL THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

In the first three years of ministry following ordination, rostered ministers are required to be actively involved in the Northeastern Iowa Synod's program of First Call Theological Education (FCTE), part of a churchwide emphasis on continued learning and development of supportive collegial relationships. The synod's FCTE program involves an annual retreat, mentoring, colleague groups, and elective or required continuing education opportunities. The ELCA expectation for continuing education is 50 hours per year. It is an expectation for a first call ministry site to provide time and financial support for all First Call activities.

11. SABBATICAL (Financially Supported Time for Renewal)

Opportunities for a maximum three-month sabbatical are becoming more common in the ELCA. Some congregations include a sabbatical renewal time as part of the call. Others establish sabbatical renewal as congregational policy. The Northeastern Iowa Synod Sabbatical Policy provides some broad guidelines for sabbatical planning and implementation. The synod can also provide a helpful video, contacts with sabbatical "veterans," and reference materials for congregational study and planning. (See the Sabbatical Guidelines section)

12. STAFF SUPPORT/MUTUAL MINISTRY COMMITTEE

It is recommended that a staff support/mutual ministry committee be established within each congregation. Suggestions for creation and maintenance of such an advisory committee may be found in Addendum A.

13. SYNOD ASSEMBLY AND FALL THEOLOGICAL CONFERENCE

Through the letter of call, all rostered ministers are required to attend the Synod Assembly and Fall Theological Conference at congregational expense. In addition, spouses are encouraged to participate in the Fall Conference, with the congregation providing funds for attendance.

14. BOOKS, PERIODICALS, OTHER EXPENSES

Professional expenses such as books, periodicals, program materials, and other educational materials should be shared by the congregation and the rostered minister. A recommended congregational amount is up to \$700.00 annually.

C. VACATION, SICK LEAVE, AND HOLIDAY BENEFITS

4. Vacation

Due to the rigors and often long hours of congregational ministry, vacation equivalent to four weeks per year (28 days, including four Sundays) should be provided. This does not include time for continuing education. Supply ministers covering for vacation are to be paid by the congregation(s). No more than two weeks of vacation may be carried forward to the following calendar year. Rostered ministers serving a part-time call still receive four weeks of vacation. The number of days earned during the calendar year is prorated based on the percentage of a full-time call, but the rostered minister is still away from the call for a total of four weeks, including four Sundays. When a rostered minister leaves a call, accrued vacation is to be taken prior to the official date of departure, or is to be paid to the rostered minister as additional salary upon departure.

5. Sick Leave

Rostered ministers accumulate 8 hours per month in sick leave. The maximum balance is 360 hours.

6. Holidays

Congregations should provide appropriate time off for holidays. If the actual day cannot be taken, another day should be designated. Holidays include: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Juneteenth, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve Day, and Christmas Day.

D. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

5. Love Gifts

So-called cash "love gifts" given to pastors and deacons at Christmas, and at other times of the year are always taxable income, regardless of whether the gifts are given individually by members of the congregation(s), or are gathered by the congregation(s) and given in a single check to the rostered minister(s) and/or lay staff members.

6. FICA Tax

Pastors:

Our nation's tax policy treats pastors as self-employed persons for FICA purposes. Where W-2 employees pay 7.65% of their income for FICA Tax, with the employer providing the remaining 7.65%, ordained clergy pay the full 15.3% FICA Tax on income and housing. Congregations are required to provide a FICA Tax offset equivalent to the employer's portion of this tax, as they now do with non-ordained staff. Note that congregations cannot pay the pastor's FICA tax directly. When it is provided, the offset becomes additional taxable income to the pastor. To determine the amount of FICA offset to pay a pastor, take the sum of the base salary plus the housing allowance (or fair rental value of a provided parsonage as determined by a licensed real estate professional based on furnished housing with utilities paid) and multiply by 7.65%.

Deacons:

Congregations must withhold 7.65% of a deacon's income for FICA taxes, and pay it to the IRS along with the congregation's portion of 7.65% unless it is determined that the deacon is eligible for housing, in which case the deacon must pay all FICA taxes through quarterly estimated tax payments.

7. Sick Leave/Family Sick Leave/Short-term Disability

Sick leave recommendation is one day per month, cumulative to sixty days. Sick leave days may also be taken to care for a sick child, spouse, or parent. The congregation is to assume responsibility for pulpit supply to cover worship services, funerals, etc., during sick leave. In the event of extended illness, the congregation shall assume the responsibility for providing full salary and benefits for the first two months of the illness, at which time the Portico Disability Plan will take effect if the application for disability is approved. The congregation is responsible for arranging pulpit supply during the disability.

8. Parental Leave

The church places a high value on family, therefore a need for guidelines relating to maternity, adoptive and family leave are appropriate. These guidelines are offered to help congregations approach such situations in a caring manner. During any parenting leave period, supply ministers are to be paid by the congregation.

a. Parental leave

A period of six (6) weeks leave is to be offered with full pay and benefits for each rostered parent (with the exception of car allowance). The decision regarding prenatal and postnatal time should be determined on an individual basis at the discretion of the rostered minister and the church council. Accrued vacation may also be used in conjunction with the leave. A rostered minister desiring additional leave, either prior to, or following birth or adoption, may negotiate for unpaid leave.

b. Adoptive leave

Six (6) weeks of paid adoptive leave is available to an adoptive rostered parent(s), following the adoption of a child. Accrued vacation may also be used in conjunction with the leave. A rostered minister desiring additional leave, either prior to, or following birth or adoption, may negotiate for unpaid leave.

c. Family leave

i. Congregations should be sensitive to family needs, such as family leave or extraordinary illness of children or parents of the rostered minister and arrange proper leave time for these circumstances.

ii. In the event of a death in his or her immediate family (to include spouse, children, parents, stepchildren, stepparents, brother, sister, grandparents, step-grandparents, grandchildren, step-grandchildren, mother-in-law, father-in-law, or legal guardian), a rostered minister will normally be allowed three (3) days, with pay, to attend the funeral and to deal with family affairs.

iii. In cases where there is a special need related to circumstances, generally assumed to be the sudden death of an immediate family member, or cases requiring extensive travel, up to a total of five (5) working days may be granted in consultation with the church council. A rostered minister desiring additional leave may negotiate for unpaid leave or vacation.

E. HEALTH, RETIREMENT, DISABILITY, AND BASIC GROUP LIFE

For pastors, the contributions are figured on defined compensation which includes: annual base salary, FICA tax allowance, housing allowance (cash or parsonage), furnishings and/or utilities allowance (if the congregation/organization pays it directly to the rostered minister), housing equity contributions (if the congregation/organization pays them directly to the rostered minister), and additional tax-sheltered annuity contributions made by way of a voluntary salary reduction agreement the rostered minister has reached with the congregation/organization (includes tax-sheltered contributions made to another financial institution).

For deacons, defined compensation is generally limited to the base salary.

Be sure to report your employee's change of compensation via EmployerLink as soon as it is applicable. More information about the process is available here:

<https://employerlink.porticobenefits.org>.

Portico offers two options on its website that help with calculations.

1. Rostered ministers may login to their own Portico account at <https://myportico.porticobenefits.org/>, click the "OVERVIEW & LIFE CHANGES" tab, then click the "Calculating the Cost of Benefits" link under "Understanding Your Benefits."
2. Go through the Employer Link website at <https://employerlink.porticobenefits.org>, click on the "RESOURCES" tab, and click the "Calculators" link under "Understanding Portico's Benefits."

Portico Health Benefits Coverage

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 benefits that also include dental and prescription drugs, as well as retirement, disability, and survivor 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. Our bundled approach is designed to help ensure rostered ministers and lay employees are protected against significant financial loss from a variety of risks. Through Portico, congregations** in this synod and across the country pool their collective purchasing power to provide benefits in a cost-effective manner.

Congregations and plan members share the cost of benefits. Congregations are expected to support the well-being of their covered plan members by paying all or a significant portion of the contributions for benefits (i.e., monthly premiums for the health plan). Plan members are expected to participate in the cost of utilizing their health benefits through out-of-pocket costs when they receive care (e.g., deductibles, copays, and coinsurance).

The ELCA Church Council endorses a balance of cost-sharing between congregations and plan members; the cost-sharing is reflected in all the ELCA-Primary health benefit options offered by Portico, effective Jan. 1, 2026. Each fall, congregations should engage in conversation with their sponsored plan member(s) to determine the option that best fits their needs and then make their selection during Portico's annual enrollment. Current contribution rates are available at EmployerLink.PorticoBenefits.org or by calling Portico at 800.352.2876.

*A plan member may waive health coverage if they have access to valid medical insurance coverage through their spouse or another employer, or if they qualify for a subsidy due to income level when purchasing health coverage through the exchange.

**"Congregations" may also refer to multi-point parishes or other non-parish ministry agencies such as Bible camps, long-term care facilities, hospitals, campus ministries, etc.

3. Sponsored Couples

If both spouses are sponsored under Portico Benefit Services, each sponsor is required to contribute to the ELCA benefits program for that individual. Employers will receive a “couple credit” that will be applied toward the cost of health benefits. Full contributions for retirement, disability, and group life coverages are required for both spouses.

4. Waiver of Medical-Dental Coverage Possible

Sponsored members may waive unnecessary additional medical-dental coverage under Portico Benefit Services. If a member is eligible for employer-provided medical benefits coverage **through a spouse's employer** or through a former employer, the rostered minister can select that coverage and waive coverage under the ELCA benefits program while continuing to participate in the ELCA retirement, disability, and group life plans. The sponsoring employer will be billed for these benefits.

Most members who waive coverage will incur additional costs to cover the contributions required by the spouse's plan, and to cover higher out-of-pocket costs if benefits under the spouse's plan are not as generous. Congregations, on the other hand, will save money due to lower ELCA plan contributions. Most congregations will find it appropriate to provide a larger-than-usual salary increase or additional retirement contributions when the plan member waives coverage.

Any salary increase should be unrelated to the rostered minister's decision to continue or waive coverage. If a salary adjustment is offered in exchange for reduced health benefits, the congregation may be required to establish a Health Savings Account (HSA), or a "cafeteria plan" under Section 125 of the Internal Revenue Code in order to avoid adverse tax consequences for rostered ministers who do not waive coverage. Please consult your tax advisor.

A member who has other employer-provided medical benefits coverage and wants to waive Portico coverage should contact the Customer Care Center of Portico Benefit Services.

When a rostered minister chooses to accept a non-congregational call where Portico benefits are not provided, the rostered minister should ensure that the employer provides comparable disability and life insurance benefits.

If a ministry site chooses to supply benefits through a different provider, those benefits must be comparable to, or better than, those benefits offered through Portico Benefit Services and must include a retirement plan and health, disability, and life insurance.

F. ROSTERED MINISTERS MINIMUM BASE SALARY ACCORDING TO YEARS OF EXPERIENCE

(Base Minimum Salary Grid) (Housing is not included in this base salary chart)

The following salaries are recommended for 2026. The salaries listed are minimum salaries for years of experience. Second career rostered ministers entering the ministry receive one year of credit on the grid for every three years of first career experience after age 22. When a pastor has served as an ordained deacon or a pastor/deacon has served in other professional church vocations, the rostered minister will receive one to one credit on the base salary grid.

Ministers of Word and Sacrament ordained through the 3-year Theological Education for Emerging Ministries (TEEM) program receive a TEEM certificate, rather than a Master of Divinity degree. Therefore, second career persons entering the ministry through TEEM receive one year of credit for every four years of first career experience after age 22. When a TEEM graduate possesses a master's degree in any field of study, previous experience will count at the standard one to three ratio.

Each call situation is unique. The varieties of situations for pastors include solo or staff ministry team, solo or multiple parish site, specialized ministries in a congregational or non-congregational setting, senior pastor, associate or assistant pastor, little or no staff to extensive staff supervision and planning. If the condition of service involves a special measure of responsibility, such as working alone in a parish and/or lack of support staff, heavier than normal workload, or head of staff responsibilities, additional compensation would be appropriate. The same is true for a deacon whose call includes additional duties beyond the norm.

To make annual compensation increases and congregational budgeting easier and more predictable, the Northeastern Iowa Synod has moved to a flat 3% increase of base salary every year, rather than a combination of an annual salary step increase plus a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA). The grid below can be used to determine the starting base salary for a rostered minister according to years of service, and the new salary for the coming year. However, if a rostered minister's salary does not match the grid because their duties warrant a higher base salary, or they previously negotiated a lower base salary increase in exchange for additional vacation or other benefits, simply multiply their current base salary by 3%.

2027 Base Salary Grid

Years of Service	2026 Salary	2027 Salary after 3% increase
Seminary Grad	\$49,150	\$50,624
1	\$49,804	\$51,298
2	\$50,458	\$51,971
3	\$51,112	\$52,645
4	\$51,766	\$53,319
5	\$52,420	\$53,992
6	\$53,074	\$54,666
7	\$53,728	\$55,340
8	\$54,382	\$56,013
9	\$55,036	\$56,687
10	\$55,690	\$57,361
11	\$56,344	\$58,034
12	\$56,998	\$58,708
13	\$57,652	\$59,382
14	\$58,306	\$60,055
15	\$58,960	\$60,729
16	\$59,614	\$61,403
17	\$60,268	\$62,076
18	\$60,922	\$62,750
19	\$61,576	\$63,424
20	\$62,231	\$64,097
21	\$62,885	\$64,771
22	\$63,539	\$65,445
23	\$64,193	\$66,118
24	\$64,847	\$66,792
25	\$65,501	\$67,466
26	\$66,155	\$68,139
27	\$66,809	\$68,813
28	\$67,463	\$69,487
29	\$68,117	\$70,160
30	\$68,771	\$70,834
31	\$69,425	\$71,508
32	\$70,079	\$72,182
33	\$70,733	\$72,855
34	\$71,387	\$73,529
35	\$72,041	\$74,203

Add \$635 for every year after 35 years of service.

G. COMPENSATION FOR PART-TIME CONTRACT MINISTRIES

Part-time contracts can be very flexible to meet the needs of the ministry site and the rostered minister. Days and hours to be worked should be negotiated and included in the ministry agreement. This often includes having some Sundays off. For example, it is common practice for a rostered minister working under a 50%-time contract to have two Sundays off per month. The ministry site is responsible for finding supply coverage for these Sundays, but rostered ministers often help secure regular coverage.

The minimum defined compensation for a part-time contract or call should be equivalent to the compensation amount for the rostered minister at their level of experience reduced by the percentage of full-time of the contract or call. Full-time is defined as no more than 40 hours per week. The ELCA Philosophy of Benefits extends to rostered ministers in part-time calls, meaning that there is not a separate category of part-time benefits. Some benefits are calculated as a percentage of the defined compensation, so will reflect savings over a full-time rate. Health benefits use defined compensation as one factor in determining the cost of the benefit. Congregations are still expected to provide coverage for the rostered minister and family members as needed. Since defined compensation is lower for a part-time rostered minister, that will result in savings over a full-time rostered minister. Continuing Education and Publications and Professional Expenses are prorated to the percentage of the contract or call. Sick leave, disability, and parental/family leave remain at the level outlined in the Minimum Compensation Guidelines. For example, a half-time contract pastor would receive four weeks of vacation, not two weeks. Vacation time is only taken for those days/hours that a rostered minister works during an average work week. Regular days off remain regular days off, even during vacation time.

H. COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS FOR TEMPORARY MINISTRIES

Temporary staff compensation and benefits should be based on the duties and the amount of time spent completing ministry tasks. The interim rostered minister serving a congregation between permanent pastorates should be compensated as agreed upon by the rostered minister and all church councils involved, taking into account the following:

1. Full-time Interim

- e. Parish supplies housing for the pastor, spouse, and family.
- f. Compensation should be on the basis of the interim minister's number of years of experience according to synod guidelines. Under no condition shall it be less than the minimum guidelines for seminary graduates. Auto allowance should also be paid. Supplemental benefits should also be included.
- g. Furthermore, if the parish situation requires concentrated effort above the normal routine, serious consideration should be given to meet the guidelines for a rostered minister of the experience and skills which the interim brings to bear on the problems of the parish. It must be remembered that restorative and creative ministry on the part of the interim rostered minister may be much more difficult and exhausting than regular parish ministry.
- h. Interim calls are issued by the synod council in consultation with a local site.

2. Part-time Interim (20 hours or fewer per week)

Compensation will be proportionate to the base salary, benefits and auto allowance of a full-time interim rostered minister. Interim calls are issued by the synod council. In no instance shall the minimum hourly wage fall below \$30 per hour inclusive of travel and preparation time plus mileage at the current IRS rate.

3. Supply Ministry

Compensation should include preparation time, travel time, and mileage for worship services, Bible studies, confirmation, visitation, and funeral planning. It is courteous to have a check on hand to reimburse one-time supply ministers immediately. When supply is provided for multiple weeks or on an ongoing basis, payment arrangements may be agreed upon by the congregation and the supply minister.

In the event that weather or some other issue requires the cancelation of a worship service, the supply minister must be notified as soon as possible. The supply minister shall be paid \$100 for preparation time. No mileage shall be paid, unless the minister was already traveling to the congregation before being notified of the cancelation. Only the round-trip mileage actually traveled will be paid to the supply minister in this case.

4. Weekly Worship

Single Service -\$200; each additional service - \$50 (\$100 if additional travel is required, e.g., for a Saturday evening service).

If a class is taught - \$50 additional

Communion presider only - \$30 per service.

Total mileage should be paid at the IRS approved rate.

5. Other Services (weddings, funerals, etc.)

\$200 per service, plus mileage at the IRS approved rate, paid by the congregation. This would be in addition to any honorarium the pastor might receive from the family members.

I. COPYRIGHT

Copyright law is an important consideration for rostered ministers and congregations. Sermons and other forms of oral or written resources used in ministry are subject to copyright. In copyright law, when a pastor or deacon creates a copyrightable work as part of their call, by default the ministry site as the employer becomes the owner of the work's copyright. All sermons and resources are considered to be a work-for-hire. Even if a rostered minister writes sermons or curriculum at home, it is likely that the copyright is the exclusive property of the ministry site. The ministry site can publish the material without the rostered minister's permission. And the rostered minister cannot sell or reproduce the materials for personal benefit. Work-for-hire is the default rule, but a rostered minister and the ministry site can sign an agreement that the rostered minister retains copyright of all materials produced while called to the ministry site. It is wise for the pastor and ministry site to consult with an attorney when developing such an agreement.

J. SABBATICAL GUIDELINES

INTRODUCTION

What is 'Sabbatical'?

"Sabbatical" is a significant amount of time away from ministry responsibilities and is to be used for both professional growth and personal renewal. The intent of sabbatical is to sharpen the recipient's skills and to refresh both the spiritual life and a sense of calling.

Definitions:

The phrase “extended study leave” means the same as “sabbatical.” When the word “congregation” is used in these guidelines, the terms “agency” or “employer” also apply.

Scriptural background:

The word “sabbatical” is rooted in the word “Sabbath.” The Sabbath is about time. When the work of creation was finished, God rested and reserved the seventh day as time to rest and reflect on the goodness of creation. In the third commandment, “Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy,” God protects the gift of time from the insatiable demands of work. In the New Testament, Jesus insisted that “the Sabbath was made for humankind and not humankind for the Sabbath.” (Mark 2:27) As the Son of Man and Lord over the Sabbath, Jesus reclaimed the Sabbath to serve human physical and spiritual needs as God the Creator intended. In so doing, Jesus set the needs for renewal and restoration above the burdensome labor of religious obligations. In these brief examples from Scripture, a picture of the Sabbath emerges. The Sabbath recognizes the physical and spiritual strain of routine toil. It also hallows the time that will be given to God for renewal.

What’s done on Sabbatical?

The time may be used for a) further academic study; b) enhancement of professional skills; c) purposeful creative expression relating to ministry; d) purposeful travel in connection with an area of study; and/or e) serving a mission endeavor.

Is there a need?

Ministry changes often cluster around five-to-seven-year marks. At that time, it is normal for both the rostered minister and the congregation to become aware of the need for change. As a particular ministry unfolds over time, the cumulative weight of sharing crises, nurturing new programs and striving to meet ever-changing demands and expectations eventually affects the rostered minister’s performance and attitudes. That might be called “burn out” or “fatigue.” Both the rostered minister and the congregation may sense that “something is not right.” The most common recourse is to seek a new call. Effective use of a properly planned sabbatical will allow a rostered minister to more effectively utilize the experience already gleaned in a congregation. At the same time, well planned sabbaticals allow the rostered minister to bring new ideas and challenges, enthusiasm and directions to enrich and invigorate existing ministries.

The sabbatical is one of the most effective ways for a rostered minister and parish to develop and maintain a long-term relationship. In that sense, both the rostered minister as well as the congregation benefit from the rostered minister’s sabbatical. Taking a longer hiatus from the scheduled routine helps the rostered minister update outdated or stale skills. When study is coupled with the sabbaticant’s intentional and guided spiritual renewal discipline, the sabbaticant can return to the ministry re-equipped in skills and more deeply aware of the sustaining presence of God. Moreover, a rostered minister’s renewed sense of perspective gleaned from the sabbatical experience may lead to more productive goal setting and mission planning in the ministry site.

What is not a Sabbatical?

Sabbatical a) is not additional vacation. Sabbaticals, unlike vacations, assume that the church council and the synod play a significant role in the planning, execution and evaluation in shaping the outcome; b) is not an opportunity to do similar work in a different setting; and c) it is not the same as annual continuing education. Continuing education is taken annually and usually not for more than an accumulated one or two weeks of time. Sabbatical time is at least three months and is granted not more than once every five years.

1. ELIGIBILITY AND LENGTH

- d. Rostered ministers shall not be eligible for a sabbatical until they have served in their present call for at least five years.
- e. Recipients of sabbatical opportunities are expected to return to their existing ministries for at least a year after the sabbatical unless noted otherwise in the shared planning documents.
- f. A typical extended study will be thirteen weeks or three months. Vacation and continuing education time are not included in sabbatical. Variations from the thirteen week/three month sabbatical are to be approved by the congregation and reported to the Assistant to the Bishop for Rostered Leadership. It is not recommended that pastors “save” either annual continuing education time or stipends for their sabbatical, but rather use their continuing education time on an annual basis. However, as long as the rostered minister is participating in appropriate annual continuing education, unused continuing education funds may be designated to an account and accumulated to help cover sabbatical expenses.

2. GOAL SETTING GUIDELINES

- c. The Synod Council encourages that the sabbatical option be included in the Letter of Call or appointment for rostered ministers.
- d. At least six months before the sabbatical is to begin, the applicant shall submit a written plan to the congregational council for study including the proposed dates. The proposal must be approved by both the rostered minister and the congregational or administrative council. The proposal is then submitted to the Assistant to the Bishop for Rostered Leadership for comment, clarification and endorsement. Such a plan needs to include:
 - 1. Filling out sabbatical forms available from the Northeastern Iowa Synod.
 - 2. Providing the congregational council/administrative board and the Assistant to the Bishop for Rostered Leadership a statement of expected educational and spiritual benefits.
 - 3. Written plans about how the parish duties and existing programs will be covered. Major decisions should be made prior to the sabbatical, or, if they cannot be made, they should be delayed until the rostered minister has had time to become reoriented in the ministry.
 - 4. Openness to input from others that the plan may be overly ambitious, especially when a major writing project is involved.
 - 5. A plan for re-entry into the ministry once the sabbatical is complete, since both the congregation and rostered minister will have undergone changes and a loss of intimacy. A re-entry plan includes:
 - i. selecting a person to keep a diary of parish happenings to share at the return;
 - ii. staggering committee and board meetings to facilitate a gradual re-entry into the ministry;
 - iii. renewing ties by visiting, for example, the congregation’s homebound members who may have felt the absence most acutely;
 - iv. publicly affirming the ministry done during the absence, even though some things might have not gone smoothly;
 - v. determining a date to report to the congregation about short-term, intermediate and projected long-term benefits of the sabbatical.

3. COSTS DURING SABBATICAL

- g. During the sabbatical, the rostered minister shall remain at full salary and benefits, excluding automobile allowance.
- h. The participant will bear the cost of sabbatical activity. However, congregations may choose to assist in these costs by designating the current year’s continuing education stipend to the

sabbatical. The intent of only using the current year's stipend is to prevent rostered ministers from skipping continuing education in the years leading up to a sabbatical in order to build a sabbatical fund. If a congregation banks unused funds, the current funds, plus unused funds from the previous two years may be used toward sabbatical costs (see section B.2.b). Rostered ministers and congregations need to check current tax laws and retirement benefits rules about pre-designating a portion of the rostered minister's salary as an "education offset" during the sabbatical year.

- i. Whether a congregation initially enters into a sabbatical arrangement by Letter of Call or by congregational decision, it needs a fair estimate of the cost of providing interim ministry services. That estimate can serve as the basis for a savings plan. Some congregations may train lay persons to assume major responsibility during the sabbatical and may then budget for an interim minister only to provide minimal service. Sacramental ministry (baptism and Holy Communion) may only be performed by an ordained Minister of Word and Sacrament. Neighboring rostered ministers may make themselves available for crisis situations. When paid staff members assume the additional work of the sabbaticant, congregations may offer them an additional paid week of vacation as thanks for their cooperation.
- j. Because a sabbatical offers the congregation the chance for renewal as well as the rostered minister, congregational members are encouraged to try new ministry roles or to develop new ministries (e.g. Lay Communion Ministry Teams, Worship Leadership Teams, Preaching Teams, Confirmation Teaching Teams). In congregations served by two or more rostered ministers, the congregation is expected to partner with the remaining rostered minister(s) to ensure that the ministry of the congregation remains vibrant.
- k. Providing housing away from the congregational setting during the sabbatical is the responsibility of the sabbaticant.
- l. Grants to support a sabbatical may be available. Contact the synod office for information.

APPLICATION FOR SABBATICAL
Northeastern Iowa Synod
For submission to the Assistant to the Bishop for Rostered Leadership

for the period of _____ thru _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: (____) _____ (Office) (____) _____ (Home)

In existing ministry since:

Proposed period of sabbatical

Congregation/employer approved sabbatical

By Call? By Resolution? If by Resolution, list date of Council meeting:

Brief preliminary explanation of proposal:

Preliminary statement of Intended Benefits:

Site of Study/Experience:

Approximate costs: Tuition & housing \$ _____ Transportation \$ _____
Food and incidentals \$ _____

I am working with a local committee or council and have set the following goals:

- a. Responsibility for existing ministry _____ (date) *(see B.2.c., C.3. & C.4.)*
- b. Approval of final proposal _____ (date)
- c. Approval of "re-entry" plan _____ (date) *(see B.2.e.i.-v.)*
- d. Date to report on sabbatical _____ (date)

Rostered Minister

Council President

Addendum A

MUTUAL MINISTRY COMMITTEE

The purpose of the Mutual Ministry Committee is to foster communication and coordination between the pastor or deacon (hereafter referred to as “minister”) and the members of the congregation/parish, and to provide support to the minister in the call. The committee develops policy recommendations, consults on continuing education plans, oversees long-range planning of the congregation, contributes to reviews of ministers and congregational ministries annually, and undertakes projects requested by the minister or council.

The Mutual Ministry Committee consists of a maximum of 6 members. The minister chooses three members, but the church council may veto any of the choices. The church council chooses three members, but the minister may veto any of the choices. When the minister is serving multiple congregations, all congregations should have at least one member on the committee. Members of the committee should not serve on the church/parish council while serving on the Mutual Ministry Committee. It is suggested that the committee meet at least four times per year.

First Meeting of the Year (late January – early February) – This meeting is best scheduled shortly after each congregation’s Annual Meeting. Review the ministry goals from the previous year and acknowledge progress made on these goals. Set new ministry goals for the coming year. Both the congregation(s) and the minister should bring ideas for ministry goals to the meeting. The goals of the congregation(s) are brought by the lay members of the Mutual Ministry Committee with input from the church council and committees of the congregation(s). Special attention should be given to goals or emphases for programs/ministries that were discussed at the Annual Meeting of the congregation(s).

Second Meeting of the Year (early March) – The emphasis of this meeting should be on continuing education for the minister and members of the congregation(s), especially any continuing education needed to meet the ministry goals which have been set for the year. A report is made on continuing education that was completed during the past twelve months by the minister and any members of the congregation(s). A plan is proposed and sent to the Council for approval for continuing education that will be completed during the coming year by the minister and members of the congregation(s). The continuing education plan for the minister may take the form a written and signed “Continuing Education Covenant.”

Third Meeting of the Year (mid-summer) – The third meeting begins by reviewing progress made on the current ministry goals and determining any further steps that are needed to complete the goals. The remainder of this meeting focuses on the minister and the Mutual Ministry Committee discussing openly any topics that are “hot” in the congregation(s) at the moment – ideas for ministry, ideas for worship, ideas for fun events, complaints or concerns, etc. *This is not a place to bring up individual grievances!*

Fourth Meeting of the Year (November – early January) – In this meeting the Mutual Ministry Committee reviews the goals that were set at the beginning of the year and discusses progress made by both the congregation(s) and the minister to complete these goals. The committee and minister also discuss how these goals helped or hindered the ongoing and long-range ministry of the congregation(s)/parish. Goals that have not been completed may be carried over into the next year.

It is **not** recommended that the Mutual Ministry Committee be responsible for performing an annual review of the minister. Such a review should be performed by the Executive Committee of the Council(s)/Parish Council. The Mutual Ministry Committee may provide input into an annual review, and should advocate for the minister being compensated at least at minimum guidelines. The Review of Minister of Word and Sacrament, Minister of Word and Service, and Congregational Ministry is a suggested format for the review. It may be found in Addendum B of the Northeastern Iowa Synod Minimum Compensation Guidelines. The current version of these guidelines may be found on the synod website neiasynod.org by clicking the “Resources” link.

Based upon its work throughout the year, the Mutual Ministry Committee may at any time forward recommendations to the Church Council(s)/Parish Council for action at their regular meetings, or as an agenda item for the Annual Meeting of the congregation. These recommendations should include advocating for fair and competitive compensation for the rostered minister, developing a sabbatical policy if one does not exist, and updating and changing personnel policies as needed.

Addendum B

REVIEW OF MINISTER OF WORD AND SACRAMENT, MINISTER OF WORD AND SERVICE, AND CONGREGATIONAL MINISTRY

INTRODUCTION

Effective ministry is the result of an interaction between the rostered minister and the congregation(s). It is always important to stay in touch with shared goals and expectations.

The following documents are provided as a means to review the mutual ministry of the pastor(s)/deacon(s) and the congregation(s) based upon the Letter of Call issued to each rostered minister, which is reflected in the constitutional provisions related to the pastor(s)/deacon(s) and the congregation(s).

The review of the rostered minister(s) is generally completed annually by the executive committee of the council (or the executive committee of the parish council, if a geographical parish), but each congregation or shared ministry setting may choose which entity is best suited to conduct the review. The review of the congregational ministry is generally completed annually by the pastor(s)/deacon(s) and council(s) together.

The goals of the review are:

- a. To identify and affirm the accomplishments, faithfulness and competencies of the congregation and the pastor(s)/deacon(s).
- b. To help congregations sharpen personal goals and to define areas of needed or desired professional, spiritual, and personal growth.
- c. To help laity and rostered ministers clarify expectations of one another and to improve the effectiveness of their shared ministries.

Prior to completing the review, each person doing the review is encouraged to consult the expectations of rostered ministers as outlined in Section S14.12 of the Northeastern Iowa Synod Constitution, ELCA, for Ministers of Word and Sacrament; and in Section S14.32 for Ministers of Word and Service; and the expectations of a congregation as contained in Chapter 4, "Statement of Purpose," in the Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Sections C4.02 and C4.03.

If the ministry site has a position description for the pastor(s)/deacon(s), strengths and growth areas may be assessed for additional duties mentioned in the position description.

Please note that the synod's Minimum Compensation Guidelines are set at a level to adequately compensate a rostered minister who is meeting the minimum expectations of a Minister of Word and Sacrament or Minister of Word and Service as outlined in the Letter of Call and the Synod Constitution. If a rostered minister is performing above minimum expectations, it is appropriate to provide compensation above the minimum level for years of service.

REVIEW OF PASTOR BASED ON THE SYNOD CONSTITUTION

Section S14.12 of the Northeastern Iowa Synod Constitution:

†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;

List the pastor's strengths in the area of preaching:

List areas of growth related to preaching:

2) administer the sacraments;

List the pastor's strengths in the area of administering Baptism and Holy Communion:

List areas of growth related to administering Baptism and Holy Communion:

3) conduct public worship;

List the pastor's strengths in the area of conducting worship:

List areas of growth related to conducting worship:

4) provide pastoral care;

List the pastor's strengths in the area of providing pastoral care:

List areas of growth related to providing pastoral care:

5) seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel;

List the pastor's strengths in the area of encouraging others to consider a call to ministry:

List areas of growth related to encouraging others to consider a call to ministry:

6) impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through distribution of its communications and publications;

List the pastor's strengths in the area of informing the congregation(s) about the ministries of the synod and the ELCA, and encouraging participation:

List areas of growth related to informing the congregation(s) about the ministries of the synod and the ELCA, and encouraging participation:

7) witness to the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation and abroad; and

List the pastor's strengths in the area of witnessing to the Kingdom of God outside the congregation(s):

List areas of growth related to witnessing to the Kingdom of God outside the congregation(s):

8) speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world.

List the pastor's strengths in the area of speaking publicly on behalf of the poor and oppressed, calling for justice, and proclaiming God's love:

List areas of growth related to these areas:

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;

List the pastor's strengths in the areas of Christian education, confirmation, marriages, visitation, and funerals:

List areas of growth related to these areas:

2) relate to all schools and organizations of the congregation;

If applicable, list the pastor's strengths in relating to schools, daycare, and other organizations that are ministries of the congregation.

If applicable, list areas of growth in the pastor relating to congregational ministries.

3) install regularly elected members of the Congregational Council; and

List the pastor's strengths in the area of installing the Council, Sunday school teachers, etc.:

List areas of growth related to installations:

4) with the council, administer discipline; and

If applicable, list the pastor's strengths in administering discipline along with the council:

If applicable, list areas of growth related to administering discipline along with the council:

5) endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the ELCA Churchwide organization and of this synod.

List the pastor's strengths in encouraging regular increases to Mission Support:

List areas of growth related to the pastor encouraging regular increases to Mission Support:

List mutually agreed upon goals for the pastor for the coming year, focusing especially on areas of growth mentioned above:

REVIEW OF DEACON BASED ON THE SYNOD CONSTITUTION

The following constitution-based review should ONLY be used for deacons who were consecrated after 2018, or for those who were a deaconess or diaconal minister before the Word and Service roster was unified. It is not an appropriate resource for those who were an associate in ministry prior to the unification of the lay roster. This review is also not suitable for use for deacons who are called to a specific ministry that does not require preaching, community outreach, advocacy, etc., as duties of the call. As an alternative, a review should be developed that is based on the job description for the position that the deacon holds in the congregation or ministry. The job description should also be a part of the review even if the following tool is used.

Section S14.12 of the Northeastern Iowa Synod Constitution:

†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;

List the deacon's strengths in the area of using scripture in preaching and service:

List areas of growth related to using scripture in preaching and service:

b. Advocate a prophetic diakonia [service] 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;

List the deacon's strengths in the area of advocacy and action related to service ministries within the congregation(s) which reach out into the world:

List areas of growth related to such advocacy and action within the congregation(s):

c. Speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world, witnessing to the realm of God in the community, the nation, and abroad;

List the deacon's strengths in the area of advocacy and action related to service ministries outside the congregation(s):

List areas of growth related to such advocacy and action outside the congregation(s):

d. Equip the baptized for ministry in God's world that affirms the gifts of all people;

List the deacon's strengths in the area of equipping others for ministry:

List areas of growth related to equipping others for ministry:

e. Encourage mutual relationships that invite participation and accompaniment of others in God's mission;

List the deacon's strengths in the area of encouraging mutual relationships:

List areas of growth related to encouraging mutual relationships:

f. Practice stewardship that respects God's gift of time, talents, and resources;

List the deacon's strengths in the area of personal stewardship and encouraging generosity in others:

List areas of growth related to stewardship:

g. Be grounded in a gathered community for ongoing diaconal formation;

List the deacon's strengths in the area of participating in a gathered community:

List areas of growth related to participating in a gathered community:

h. Share knowledge of the ELCA and its wider ministry of the gospel, and advocate for the work of all expressions of this church; and

List the deacon's strengths in the area of sharing knowledge of and advocacy for participation in the ministries of the ELCA, including its three expressions: Churchwide Office, Synods, and Congregations:

List areas of growth related to these areas:

i. Identify and encourage qualified persons to prepare for ministry of the gospel.

List the deacon's strengths in the area of encouraging others to consider a call to ministry:

List areas of growth related to encouraging others to consider a call to ministry:

List mutually agreed upon goals for the deacon for the coming year, focusing especially on areas of growth mentioned above:

REVIEW OF CONGREGATIONAL MINISTRY BASED ON THE MODEL CONSTITUTION FOR CONGREGATIONS AND THE LETTER OF CALL

Model Constitution for Congregations of the ELCA, Section C4.03:

***C4.03. To fulfill these purposes [listed in *C4.02], this congregation shall:**

a. Provide services of worship at which the Word of God is preached and the sacraments are administered.

List strengths in providing services of worship, proclamation of the Word, and administration of Baptism and Holy Communion:

List areas of growth related to providing services of worship, proclamation of the Word, and administration of Baptism and Holy Communion:

b. Provide pastoral care and assist all members to participate in this ministry.

List strengths in providing pastoral care and assisting all members to participate in ministry:

List areas of growth related to providing pastoral care and facilitating participation:

c. Challenge, equip, and support all members in carrying out their calling in their daily lives and in their congregation.

List strengths in this area of ministry:

List areas of growth related to this area of ministry:

d. Teach the Word of God.

List strengths related to Bible study, Sunday school, confirmation, adult education, Vacation Bible School, worship, and other teaching opportunities:

List areas of growth related to this area of ministry:

e. Witness to the reconciling Word of God in Christ, reaching out to all people.

List strengths in this area of ministry:

List areas of growth related to this area of ministry:

f. Respond to human need, work for justice and peace, care for the sick and the suffering, and participate responsibly in society.

List strengths in this area of ministry:

List areas of growth related to this area of ministry:

g. Motivate its members to provide financial support for the congregation's ministry and the ministry of other parts of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

List strengths related to educating members regarding stewardship and mission support:

List areas of growth related to educating members regarding stewardship and mission support:

h. Foster and participate in interdependent relationships with other congregations, the synod, and the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

List strengths in this area of ministry:

List areas of growth related to this area of ministry:

i. Foster and participate in ecumenical relationships consistent with churchwide policy.

List strengths in this area of ministry:

List areas of growth related to this area of ministry:

In the Letter of Call issued to the rostered minister, it states these responsibilities for the members of the congregation(s): "With this call, we pledge our prayers, love, esteem, and personal support for the sake of the ministry entrusted to you by God and for our ministry together in Christ's name."

List ways that the congregation(s) are fulfilling these responsibilities:

List areas of growth related to the congregation(s) fulfilling these responsibilities:

List mutually agreed upon goals for the congregation(s) for the coming year, focusing especially on areas of growth mentioned above:

Addendum C
CHECKLIST FOR PARSONAGE USE

This checklist is being offered to promote ongoing discussion between congregational leadership and pastors relative to the maintenance, repair, and general use of a church owned home. It is understood the following areas may have more or less relevance to specific congregational situations.

_____ 1. The congregation has thoroughly cleaned, and redecorated as needed, the parsonage prior to use by incoming pastoral family.

_____ 2. The following appliances have been installed in the parsonage, are being properly maintained by the parsonage family, and serviced and annually inspected by the congregation

Recommended:

_____ Stove _____ Refrigerator _____ Dishwasher _____ Washer/Dryer
_____ Air conditioning _____ Microwave _____ Water Softener
_____ _____ _____ _____

As Needed/Optional:

_____ Garbage disposal _____ Water purifier
_____ TV antenna/Cable/Dish _____ Humidifier/Dehumidifier
_____ _____ _____ _____

_____ 3. The following services/utilities are being paid directly by the congregation:

_____ Electricity _____ Soft water service _____ Gas/LP _____ Cable (optional) _____ Telephone
(excluding personal calls) _____ Garbage (and other city-billed services) _____ Internet
_____ _____

_____ 4. The following items have been supplied by congregation by mutual agreement:

_____ Paint _____ Wallpaper _____ Window coverings
_____ Floor coverings _____ Light fixtures _____ Ceiling fans
_____ _____ _____ _____ _____

_____ 5. Because the congregation owns the parsonage and grounds, it shall be their responsibility to provide regular grounds maintenance (e.g. lawn mowing, landscaping, snow removal).
Therefore, any expected role of the pastor in such matters has been discussed initially and reviewed annually.

_____ 6. When it becomes time to redecorate the parsonage, consideration of such matters as color and fabric selection, floor covering options, and overall design has been done in consultation with those living in the parsonage. The congregation will determine the price range for both individual items and the total cost of the redecoration.

_____ 7. An annual inspection of the parsonage has been conducted that included:

- _____ - Major kitchen appliances and heating and cooling systems.
- _____ - Areas in need of minor and major repair.
- _____ - Immediate and long range redecorating and modernizing projects
- _____ - _____

_____ 8. After the annual inspection, the pastor and congregational leaders have discussed inspection findings and have mutually agreed on: 1) the repairs, maintenance, and any redecorating plans that will be undertaken during the upcoming year, 2) who will be responsible for completing the work, and 3) who will pay for each approved expenditure.

Addendum D

HOUSING ALLOWANCE RESOLUTION

(Insert for Congregation Council Minutes)

In order to permit _____ (Name of Pastor) _____ to benefit from the provisions of Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, the council specifies that the total compensation paid to her/him during the fiscal year ended (Subsequent Year) includes a housing allowance. Since such approval by the council would permit her/him to deduct that amount from her/his taxable income and has no further effect upon our congregation or budget, it was

RESOLVED,

That the total compensation of \$ (Amount) paid to _____ (Name of Pastor) _____ includes a housing allowance of \$ (Amount) for the current year and for all future years, unless otherwise provided.

Signature Title Date

The above resolution should be included in the minutes of the congregation council prior to January 1 of each year. A copy should be made of the motion as it appears in the minutes and given to the pastor(s) for her/his records.

This same resolution format may be used for a parsonage allowance when a pastor chooses to declare some of the base salary as a parsonage allowance to be used for expenses related to the parsonage.

Addendum E

ROSTERED MINISTER AUTOMOBILE EXPENSE REPORT

For the Month of _____, 20____

Vehicle Description: _____

(Use a separate report for each vehicle)

MILEAGE METHOD

Day Of Month	General Description of Travel Purpose (At the discretion of payroll person, minister/staff person's appointment book must reconcile with this column. When confidentiality is necessary, use "private" as descriptor.)	Total Miles Traveled (Do not include commute or personal miles) [1]	Tolls & Parking [2]
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			
13			
14			
15			
16			
17			
18			
19			
20			
21			
22			
23			
24			
25			
26			
27			
28			
29			
30			
31			
Total for Columns [1 & 2]: Current Mileage Reimbursement Rate Per Mile: Total for Column [1] times (x) current mileage reimbursement rate per mile:			
TOTAL Automobile Business Expense (A) Add last line of column [1 & 2]:			

Addendum F-1
NORTHEASTERN IOWA SYNOD
Compensation Worksheet for a Rostered Minister Living in a Parsonage

Congregation(s) _____

Name of Pastor _____ Years of Service _____

Start Date: _____ For the fillable form, **DO NOT USE COMMAS IN NUMBERS**

A. COMPENSATION/SALARY

1. Base salary paid to pastor \$ _____

Note: For First Call pastors, base salary increases will follow synod guidelines for at least the first three years. It is appropriate to increase base pay beyond years of service for head of staff positions, advanced degrees, additional responsibilities, or merit.

2. Parsonage Value for Determining FICA Allowance only (Base salary x 30%) \$ _____

This amount is NOT paid to the pastor. It is only used to determine Defined Compensation. For the possible tax benefit and protection of the pastor, it is recommended that the ministry site and pastor seek the services of a realtor or tax professional in determining the Fair Rental Value of the parsonage if it were a fully furnished rental property. However, the Portico Housing Factor below will always be (line 1 + 3) x 30%.

iii. Basic utilities are to be paid by the ministry site (internet, gas, electricity, sewer, garbage). The pastor and congregation may negotiate whether cable/satellite is paid by the congregation. In some cases, a tax professional may recommend that a pastor receive a utilities allowance instead. If that is the case, list the utilities allowance paid to the pastor here: _____.

iv. A pastor may choose to designate some of the base salary as a Furnishings Allowance. This provides a tax advantage to the pastor by reducing taxable income for expenses related to furnishing the parsonage and covering monthly expenses not covered by the congregation. If the pastor is designating an amount of salary as a housing allowance, list that amount here: _____.

3. FICA Allowance Paid to Pastor as Additional Salary: (line 1 + 2) x 7.65% \$ _____

Our nation's tax policy treats pastors as self-employed persons for FICA purposes. Where straight W-2 employees pay 7.65% of their income for FICA Tax, with the employer providing the remaining 7.65%, ordained clergy are required to pay the full 15.3% FICA Tax on income and housing. Congregations must provide a FICA Tax offset equivalent to the employer's portion of this tax which is paid as regular salary.

4. Portico Housing Factor for determining Defined Compensation (line 1 + 3) x 30% \$ _____

5. **TOTAL DEFINED COMPENSATION** (Lines 1 + 3 + 4) \$ _____

B. REIMBURSEMENTS

Required:

1. Travel Reimbursement at current IRS rate (enter budgeted amount or leave blank)
 Annual Allowance (enter budgeted amount for annual allowance) \$ _____

2. Official required meetings (Synod Assembly & Fall Conference) \$ _____

3. Continuing Education (\$900 recommended for full-time call) \$ _____

4. Moving Expenses and Arrangement: _____ \$ _____

(Note: Under the current federal tax code, moving expenses are considered a fringe benefit and must be included as taxable income on the pastor's W-2)

Recommended:

5. Publications and Professional Expenses (\$700 recommended for full-time call) \$ _____

6. Amount set aside annually if Sabbatical Leave is offered (\$400 recommended) \$ _____

(This is set aside by the congregation to pay for coverage while pastor is on sabbatical.)

7. **TOTAL** for all items in section B. REIMBURSEMENTS \$ _____

C. PAID BENEFITS

To calculate retirement & medical you must sign into your Portico EmployerLink account, select "Resources" then "Understanding Portico's Benefits" and select "Calculators," or call Portico Customer Care at 800.352.2876.

1. Required Retirement Plan Contributions \$ _____

Indicate percentage: 10% 11% 12% (% x Total Defined Compensation)

2. Health + Disability + Basic Group Life \$ _____

Plan Option: (Platinum+; Gold+; Silver+ A or B) _____

Member only Member & spouse Member & children

Member, spouse, children Coverage waived

3. Housing Equity Allowance paid as additional retirement contributions \$ _____

4. Reimbursement for medical expenses not covered by medical plan \$ _____

5. **TOTAL** for all items in section C. PAID BENEFITS \$ _____

D. OTHER BENEFITS

- 1. Vacation Four weeks including four Sundays
- 2. Continuing education Two weeks including two Sundays
- 3. Sabbatical Leave _____ weeks after _____ years of service in this congregation
- 4. Parenting leave of _____ weeks with full salary, housing, and benefits.
(Recommended 6 weeks)

E. AGREEMENTS

YES NO

- 1. We presently have or will establish a Mutual Ministry Committee. _____ _____
- 2. Congregation has or will establish a Sabbatical Leave Policy. _____ _____
- 3. Other _____
- 4. When calling a new seminary graduate, the congregation(s) must fully support the pastor participating in the Synod First Call Theological Education Program.

F. OTHER PROVISIONS (may be copied from the Mutual Expectations section of the Ministry Site Profile)

- 1. During this time period, the pastor will give special attention in ministry to the following:
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
 - d. _____
 - e. _____

- 2. The congregation will encourage this pastor's ministry in the following ways:
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
 - d. _____
 - e. _____

- 3. Other matters:
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____

CONTACT PERSON:

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

**Addendum F-2
NORTHEASTERN IOWA SYNOD**

Compensation Worksheet for a Rostered Minister Receiving a Housing Allowance

Congregation(s) _____

Name of Pastor _____ Years of Service _____

Start Date: _____ For the fillable form, **DO NOT USE COMMAS IN NUMBERS**

A. COMPENSATION/SALARY

1. Base salary paid to pastor \$ _____

Note: For First Call pastors, base salary increases will follow synod guidelines for at least the first three years. It is appropriate to increase base pay beyond years of service for head of staff positions, advanced degrees, additional responsibilities, or merit.

2. Housing Allowance (No Parsonage) Paid to Pastor. \$ _____

For the initial calculation, this is the base salary x 30%. Once the call is issued, the pastor may raise or lower the amount of the housing allowance as needed. If the housing allowance is raised, the base salary is lowered by the same amount. If the housing allowance is lowered, the base salary is raised by the same amount. The pastor is responsible for determining the Fair Rental Value of the home with the assistance of a realtor or tax professional.

3. FICA Allowance Paid to Pastor as Additional Salary: (line 1 + 2) x 7.65% \$ _____

Our nation's tax policy treats pastors as self-employed persons for FICA purposes. Where straight W-2 employees pay 7.65% of their income for FICA Tax, with the employer providing the remaining 7.65%, ordained clergy are required to pay the full 15.3% FICA Tax on income and housing. Congregations must provide a FICA Tax offset equivalent to the employer's portion of this tax which is paid as regular salary.

4. **TOTAL DEFINED COMPENSATION** (Add lines 1-3) \$ _____

B. REIMBURSEMENTS

Required:

1. Travel Reimbursement at current IRS rate (enter budgeted amount or leave blank)
 Annual Allowance (enter budgeted amount for annual allowance) \$ _____

2. Official required meetings (Synod Assembly & Fall Conference) \$ _____

3. Continuing Education (\$900 recommended for full-time call) \$ _____

4. Moving Expenses and Arrangement: _____ \$ _____

(Note: Under the current federal tax code, moving expenses are considered a fringe benefit and must be included as taxable income on the pastor's W-2)

Recommended:

5. Publications and Professional Expenses (\$700 recommended for full-time call) \$ _____

6. Amount set aside annually if Sabbatical Leave is offered (\$400 recommended) \$ _____

(This is set aside by the congregation to pay for coverage while pastor is on sabbatical.)

7. **TOTAL** for all items in section B. REIMBURSEMENTS \$ _____

C. PAID BENEFITS

To calculate retirement & medical you must sign into your Portico EmployerLink account, select "Resources" then "Understanding Portico's Benefits" and select "Calculators," or call Portico Customer Care at 800.352.2876.

1. Required Retirement Plan Contributions
Indicate percentage: 10% 11% 12% (% x Total Defined Compensation) \$ _____

2. Health + Disability + Basic Group Life \$ _____

Plan Option: (Platinum+; Gold+; Silver+ A or B) _____

Member only Member & spouse Member & children

Member, spouse, children Coverage waived

3. Reimbursement for medical expenses not covered by medical plan (optional) \$ _____

4. **TOTAL** for all items in section C. PAID BENEFITS \$ _____

D. OTHER BENEFITS

- 5. Vacation Four weeks including four Sundays
- 6. Continuing education Two weeks including two Sundays
- 7. Sabbatical Leave ___ weeks after ___ years of service in this congregation
- 8. Parenting leave of _____ weeks with full salary, housing, and benefits.
(Recommended 6 weeks)

E. AGREEMENTS

YES NO

- 1. We presently have or will establish a Mutual Ministry Committee. _____
- 2. Congregation has or will establish a Sabbatical Leave Policy. _____
- 3. Other _____
- 4. When calling a new seminary graduate, the congregation(s) must fully support the pastor participating in the Synod First Call Theological Education Program.

F. OTHER PROVISIONS (may be copied from the Mutual Expectations section of the Ministry Site Profile)

- 1. During this time period, the pastor will give special attention in ministry to the following:
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
 - d. _____
 - e. _____
- 2. The congregation will encourage this pastor's ministry in the following ways:
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
 - d. _____
 - e. _____
- 3. Other matters:

CONTACT PERSON:

Name: _____ Phone: _____
Address: _____

**TRUTH AND HEALING ACTION REGARDING
LUTHERAN LEGACY OF INDIAN BOARDING AND DAY SCHOOLS**

WHEREAS, from 1819 to 1969, numerous Indian day schools and over 520 Indian boarding schools operated in the United States, with 417 receiving federal support [1], where Native children were forcibly separated from families, prohibited from using Native languages and practicing cultures, and compelled to perform manual labor [2], to "Kill the Indian in him, and save the man" [3]; and

WHEREAS, religious organizations collaborated with the federal government in operating more than half of these federally-funded schools; and the Norwegian Synod, a predecessor body of the ELCA, operated Bethany Indian Mission Boarding School (1884) in Wittenburg, WI [4], founded by Luther College alumni, supported by Northeastern Iowa area congregations, and the only Lutheran school contracting with the federal Indian Boarding School system [5]; and

WHEREAS, these schools were part of a larger strategy of cultural genocide that included forcing Indigenous people off their original homelands onto reservations so settlers and governments could claim the stolen land, undermining tribal sovereignty [6], and perpetrating harm in multiple other ways; and

WHEREAS, boarding school students, which at one point included over 83% of all Native children [7], suffered physical, sexual, emotional, and psychological abuse causing intergenerational trauma [8]; and an untold number of children died while at boarding schools, with nearly 1,000 deaths identified to date [9]; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA has committed to work against injustices and toward healing as stated in "The Repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery" (2016) [10] and the "Declaration to American Indian and Alaska Native People" (2021) [11], therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Iowa Synod Assembly memorialize the 2025 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to direct the churchwide organization to address the legacies of our church's role in Indian Boarding Schools through the following actions:

1. Develop and distribute resources to all congregations, synods, and affiliate ministries to commemorate the National Day of Remembrance for Indian Boarding Schools annually on or near September 30th;
2. Create and publish by adult and children/youth educational materials about Christian and Lutheran roles in Indian boarding schools, and commit to publishing at least quarterly articles in Living Lutheran and other ELCA publications;
3. Allocate staff time and resources to support the ELCA Truth-Seeking & Truth-Telling Initiative on Indian Boarding Schools (www.elca.org/IndianBoardingSchools) in their work to document the ELCA's predecessor bodies' involvement with Indian boarding and day schools;
4. Establish a process to help ELCA congregations and affiliated ministries to assess their historical involvement with Indian boarding schools, in partnership with the ELCA Truth-Seeking & Truth-Telling Initiative, and develop paths to healing and repair;
5. Direct the ELCA Archives to establish a comprehensive preservation plan for all records and artifacts related to Indian boarding and day schools, recognizing that this information belongs to student survivors, their descendants, communities, and Tribal Nations, and ensure these records are accessible to them in a culturally appropriate manner;
6. Allocate specific funding in the churchwide budget to support the research, digitization, and proper labeling of all ELCA Indian boarding school archival records, with regular progress reports to the Church Council.

Submitted by: The Racial Justice Network

ACTION OF THE RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE:

Recommendation: Adoption

Status: Upon presentation by the Resolutions Committee, this memorial will be considered by the assembly for action and forwarded to the ELCA if adopted.

Vote Required for Adoption: Majority

Memorial No. 1-25

NOTES

1. "Indian Boarding Schools in the United States." National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition. January 2025: <https://boardingschoolhealing.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/2025-Indian-Boarding-Schools-Map-pdf>
2. David Treuer, *The Heartbeat of Wounded Knee: Native America From 1890 to the Present* (New York: Riverhead Books, 2019): 141.
3. "'Kill the Indian in him, and save the man': R.H. Pratt on the Education of Native Americans." Carlisle Indian School Digital Resource Center. Accessed February 15, 2025. <https://carlisleindian.dickinson.edu/teach/kill-indian-him-and-save-man-r-h-pratt-education-native-americans>
4. Anna M. Peterson, "Norwegian Americans and the Bethany Indian Mission," *Currents: The Newsletter of the Norwegian-American Historical Society* (Volume 189, Fall 2023): 6-9.
5. United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, *Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative Investigative Report Volume II - List of Other Institutions* (Appendix F), July 2024, <https://www.bia.gov/service/federal-indian-boarding-school-initiative>
6. Ned Blackhawk, *The Rediscovery of America: Native Peoples and the Unmaking of U.S. History* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2023): 333-337.
7. "US Indian Boarding School History." National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition. Accessed February 15, 2025. <https://boardingschoolhealing.org/education/us-indian-boarding-school-history/>
8. United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, *Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative Investigative Report Volume II*, July 2024, 15, <https://www.bia.gov/service/federal-indian-boarding-school-initiative>
9. Matthew Brown. "Survivors Say Trauma from Abusive Native American Boarding Schools Stretch Across the Generations." *AP*. Updated November 5, 2023. <https://apnews.com/article/native-american-boarding-schools-victims-3f927e5054b6790cef1c6012d8616ad6>
10. "ELCA Repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery," Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, 2016, https://resources.elca.org/wp-content/uploads/Repudiation_Doctrine_of_DiscoverySPR16.pdf
11. "A Declaration of the ELCA to American Indian and Alaska Native People," Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, 2021, https://resources.elca.org/wp-content/uploads/Declaration_to_American_Indian_Alaska_Native.pdf

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ELECTION INFORMATION

2025 Nominations

Northeastern Iowa Synod

NOTE: As of May 7, 2025, these are the nominations we have received. The Electronic Ballot used during elections at the Synod Assembly may contain additional names.

Synod Council: Vice-President — 4-year term plus remainder of current uncompleted term (term begins 7-15-25; term ends 8-31-2030) — *One to be Elected*

➤ Kate Stierman

Conference: Water of Life

Church: Holy Trinity, Dubuque

Occupation: A long-time member serving on various committees and councils, I stepped into a “temporary” administrator role at Holy Trinity during a time of major congregational transition in 2022. That interim role has evolved into a rewarding vocation of support and witness. I enjoy dynamic, collaborative lay/clergy leadership with my partner in crime, Pastor Jason Davis. We watch in awe as the Spirit has revitalized energy and fostered new, creative approaches in ministry at Holy Trinity.

Miscellaneous: **I was baptized, raised, attended school, and confirmed at St. Paul’s, Waverly. After graduating from the University of Iowa with a degree in finance, I moved to Dubuque to work as a financial analyst. My husband Matt and I have the three most amazing humans as kids. Julia 18, James 16, and Jack 14 keep life moving quickly at our house. We also have the most ridiculous Boston Terrier named Franklin. If I’m not chasing the kids, I might be at the driving range, sewing a quilt slightly crooked (the LWR quilters have assured me they don’t need my help...), power reading some non-fiction, or traveling with the family. We’ve been to 49 states with our kids.**

Synod Council: Secretary — 4-year term — *One to be Elected*

➤ Rev. Susan Friedrich

Conference: Upper Iowa River

Involvement: Pastor; Synod Council Secretary; and Local Ministerial

Occupation: Pastor

Hobbies: Reading; Walking; Baking Bread; Quilting; Animals; NAMI & Mental Health; and 4-H

Synod Council: Lay Woman — 3-year term — *One to be Elected*

➤ Open Nomination: _____

Preferred Conference: Water of Life (or At-Large)

Synod Council: Minister of Word & Sacrament — 3-year term — *One to be Elected*

➤ Rev. Mike Erickson

Conference: Shepherd of the Hills

Church: West Clermont Lutheran Church, Clermont

Involvement: Pastor

Occupation: Pastor, farmer, truck driver

Hobbies: Antique tractors; fishing; reading; and watching football, baseball, soccer and racing either on TV or in person

Synod Council: Lay Woman — 3-year term — *One to be Elected*

➤ Darlene Taylor

Conference: Jubilee
Church: St. John American, Cedar Falls
Involvement: **I teach Sunday School and am a VBS craft leader/teacher. Helped create a new member’s group** to help folks get connected and also helped get new members involved in small groups. Previously involved in music ministry, youth leadership, administrative work, fellowship activities & outreach.
Occupation: **Preschool teacher at Little Pirate’s Preschool in Hudson and substitute at St. John’s Preschool and Childcare.**
Hobbies: In my free time, I like to spend time with family and friends, especially our children and grandchildren. I also enjoy gardening, crocheting, reading, decorating, hiking and volunteering.
Other: My husband and I have been married for 49 years and have 5 children and 12 grandchildren.

Synod Council: Young Adult — At Large 3-year term — *One to be Elected*

➤ Peter Lyon

Conference: At-Large (Shepherd of the Hills)
Church: Zion, Oelwein
Involvement: Church Council Member
Occupation: High School History Teacher
Hobbies: I like to visit Civil War monuments.

Synod Council: Young Adult — At-Large, 2-year term to finish Uncompleted Term — *One to be Elected*

➤ Matthias Letsche

Conference: Tree of Life
Church: Redeemer, Waverly
Involvement: Altar guild; wash dishes during Wednesday night meals; help with youth events; former LYO synod council member; LYO; and anything to help Pastor Corey and the Director of Faith Formation.
Occupation: Senior at Wartburg College with a religion major & German language minor; enrolled at Wartburg Theological Seminary this fall; Chaplain at Camp EWALU this summer; this is my 4th summer working there. I am currently fascinated by rural ministry and Prison Chaplaincy.
Hobbies: I enjoy reading, researching new theological topics such as the church’s role in criminal justice and ideas surrounding liberation theology, camping, playing intramural sports, video games, watching Wartburg Football and the Green Bay Packers, singing in choir, and playing instruments.

Synod Council: **Person of Color or Whose Primary Language isn’t English** — At-Large, 2-year term to finish Uncompleted Term — *One to be Elected*

➤ Rev. Edy Santos

Conference: Water of Life (or At-Large)
Occupation: Coordinator for Caminemos Juntos at Wartburg Theological Seminary
Hobbies:
Other:



Discipline Committee: Lay Man — 6-year term beginning 6-15-25 — *One to be Elected*

➤ Mike Meyer

Conference: Tree of Life
Church: St. John (Buck Creek), Sumner
Involvement: Church Council President
Occupation: General Contractor and Farmer
Hobbies: Boating and Hunting

2026 Nominations

Northeastern Iowa Synod

NOTE: As of May 7, 2025, these are the nominations we have received. The Electronic Ballot used at the Synod Assembly may contain additional names.

Synod Council: Lay Man — 3-year term, beginning 6-15-26 — *One to be Elected*

➤ Micah Stockberger

Conference: Living Waters

Church: St. Paul, Mason City

Involvement: I have been involved with the Church all my life and often volunteer my time to do things around the church like spring clean-up or anything else that needs to be done.

Occupation: I am employed with Alliant Energy as a garage mechanic.

Hobbies: In my free time, I enjoy glass work, fishing, gardening and time with my family.

Synod Council: Minister of Word & Sacrament — 3-year term, beginning 6-15-26 — *One to be Elected*

➤ Rev. Reed Pedersen

Conference: Tree of Life

Church: St. Peter, Denver

Occupation: Pastor

Hobbies: Golf and taking the kids to the park.

Synod Council: Lay Woman — 3-year term, beginning 6-15-26 — *One to be Elected*

➤ Nancy Carlson

Conference: Riverside

Church: St. Petri, Story City

Involvement: Music; Stewardship, Finance & Property Committees; Fall Dinner & Other Meal Fundraising Committees; St. Petri Trivia Team; St. Petri volunteer at the food bank and at the senior lunches at the community center. I am a former medical director at the Story City nursing home and currently serve on their board.

Occupation: Retired family physician. I started at Semler Medical Clinic and then worked 30 years at McFarland Clinic

Hobbies: I have collected cookie cutters ever since I was 12 and have thousands of them. I use the cutters and enjoy taking cookies to church for coffee hour. I belong to a Quester chapter & volunteer at the local museum cataloging items. I collect stamps worldwide with a number of favorite countries, especially India. I am an active member of the Des Moines Philatelic Society, love to cook, and am especially fond of cooking Indian food, and gardening.



Nominating Committee: Lay Woman — 1-year term (for 2027 Synod Assembly) — *Two to be Elected*

➤ Julaine Jarvis

Conference: Living Waters

Church: Bethlehem, Manly and Hope United Parish

Involvement: Altar Guild and Altar Guild treasurer. I am enrolled in the 2-year Lay Ministry Program, which would make me eligible to serve as a Synodically Authorized Minister.

Occupation: Retired church secretary and Lay Preacher for Hope United Parish. I live on a farm and help my brother in the day-to-day operations.

Hobbies: I enjoy gardening and like to can. I occasionally deliver new Winnebago motorhomes to dealers anywhere in the US, Canada, and even Alaska. I feel I'm qualified to serve on the Nominating Committee and would be honored to do so.

Open Nomination: _____

Preferred Conference: Water of Life (or At-Large)

Nominating Committee: Minister of Word and Sacrament — 1-year term (for 2027 Synod Assembly) — *Three to be Elected*

➤ Rev. Gary Hatcher

Conference: Shepherd of the Hills
Church: Pastor at St. Paul Lutheran, Garnavillo and First Lutheran, McGregor
Occupation: Pastor
Hobbies: My grandkids, fountain pens, computer use and repair, photography, genealogy

➤ Rev. Dena Gable

Preferred Conference: Jubilee (or At-Large)
Church: St. Timothy, Hudson
Occupation: Pastor
Hobbies:

➤ Rev. Peter Kowitz

Preferred Conference: Upper Iowa River (or At-Large)
Church: Decorah Lutheran Church, Decorah
Occupation: Senior Pastor
Hobbies: I enjoy listening to and performing music. I like to attend concerts and performances in town and around the country. When I travel, I like to see a show, visit a museum, and attend a sporting event.

Nominating Committee: Lay Man — 1-year term (for 2027 Synod Assembly) — *Three to be Elected*

➤ Lynn Schulte

Conference: Riverside
Church: Bergen, Roland
Involvement: In the past I served as president several terms and have been involved in church council serving on various committees. I currently am the council rep for our building asset committee involving church maintenance and working with other committees on projects within the church.
Occupation: Retired from an engineering company serving in several capacities in product development.
Hobbies: I have a mechanical technology education background and enjoy working on classic cars and antique tractors. I also enjoy outdoor activities including camping and walking.

➤ Open Nomination: _____

Preferred Conference: Tree of Life (or At-Large)

➤ Darwin Meyer

Conference: Three River (or At-Large)
Church: Zion St. John Lutheran Church, Sheffield
Involvement: Sunday School teacher; 7 terms on Church Council; former Synod Council member; help with confirmation program; helped start Youth Ministry Program; served on Riverside Lutheran Bible Camp board. Have been on 2 mission trips to Tanzania Africa. Work with West Fork Food Pantry, Sheffield.
Miscellaneous: Married to Lorna for 53 years; 2 married children, Tawnya (Paul) and Brian (Hollie); and 4 grandchildren.
Committees: Franklin County Farm Bureau; Iowa Pork Producers State Board; Sheffield Farmers Coop Board; and Franklin County Historical Board.



Discipline Committee: Minister — 6-year terms beginning June 15, 2026 — *Two to be Elected*

➤ Rev. Brian Julin-McCleary

Conference: Jubilee
Church: St. John American Lutheran Church, Cedar Falls
Occupation: Pastor
Hobbies: I like to ride bicycles and hike; spend time with people and coffee; cheer for Liverpool Football Club and the Green Bay Packers.

➤ Rev. Katie Pals

Conference: Riverside
Church: Trinity Lutheran Church, Belmond
Occupation: Pastor
Hobbies: I like to read, listen to music, spend time outside, play with my puppy, and enjoy time with my family.

Discipline Committee: Lay Man — 6-year term beginning June 15, 2026 — *One to be Elected*

➤ John Latham

Conference: Three River
Church: Zion St. John, Sheffield
Involvement: Church Council, Youth Committee, Church Choir
Occupation: President, Latham Quality, Inc (seed and biological sales)
Hobbies: Golfing, Boating, Traveling, Iowa State Athletic events