

PROPOSED Rules of Procedure for the 2024 Saint Paul Area Synod Assembly

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A. Agenda

- I. The business of the assembly shall be conducted during working sessions on Saturday, May 11, 2024. The chair shall have authority to call items of business before the assembly in whatever order is most expedient for conducting assembly business. Resolutions or other business not addressed by the synod assembly shall be forwarded to the synod council.
- II. The agenda shall be presented and adopted at the beginning of the first plenary session. If any voting member desires to add any item of new business to the agenda after the initial adoption of the agenda by the assembly, the voting member shall present such item of business to the chair. A two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting shall be required to add the item of new business to the agenda.

B. Quorum

- I. Fifty percent (50%) of voting members who have confirmed registration upon the beginning of the assembly shall constitute a quorum as required by the synod constitution (§7.14.).

C. Floor Procedures

- I. Registered voting members and advisory members shall have equal privilege of addressing the assembly. Advisory members will have voice but no vote on matters before the assembly. They shall include: rostered persons not under call (retired, on leave from call, and in study) except for those selected as voting members; lay members of committees, leadership teams, task forces and work groups; lay members of synod assembly committees; lay members elected by this synod to be voting members of an upcoming churchwide assembly; lay members of the synod staff; representatives of synod partners in ministry; and representatives from ELCA synodical, and churchwide offices. Congregations, congregations under development, and synodically-authorized worshipping communities may request from the synod council such privilege for persons not on the ELCA roster serving in pastoral roles in the congregation prior to the registration deadline. If granted, such persons pay the normal registration fees.
- II. Upon a motion from a voting member, a registered visitor may be granted the privilege of voice by a two-thirds vote of the synod assembly.
- III. Once recognized by the chair, each speaker will state his or her name and congregational membership. No person may speak more than once on an item of business until all others who wish to speak have had opportunity to do so.
- IV. Except for the making of a motion, all speaking to an item by each voting or advisory member is limited to two (2) minutes. Time will be kept by a member of the reference and counsel committee. The chair will rotate speaking privileges among floor microphones and between proponents (green card) and opponents (red card) of a measure. A white card will indicate procedural questions. Debate will terminate when three speakers have been heard on each side, unless otherwise determined by a majority vote of the assembly. All speaking to the assembly shall be done from one of the floor microphones, and the order of the speakers will be determined by their order in line at the microphone.
- V. If a voting member recognized by the chair desires to make a motion, the motion is to be made first, before the voting member speaks to it. Once a motion is made, if there is a second, the voting member at the microphone may then speak in support of the motion made.
- VI. The chair may recognize an individual(s) to provide pertinent background information regarding a resolution. Such speakers shall be limited to three (3) minutes.

- VII. Following the reading of the resolution or the introduction of the item of business, discussion on any item of business shall be limited to twenty (20) minutes. This rule may be suspended by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting.

D. Voting

- I. Voting shall be by use of voice, voting card, written ballot, or by a division of the house upon request. In determining the outcome of a vote, only the yes and no votes shall be counted in determining the total number of votes required for adoption. Abstentions may be recorded, but do not count in the vote total. Proxy and absentee voting shall not be permitted in the transaction of any business of the Synod Assembly.
- II. Those in attendance at the synod assembly entitled to vote upon all matters before the assembly shall include:
 - a. Lay voting members chosen by member congregations, congregations under development, or synodically authorized worshipping communities in accordance with the synod constitution (S7.21.c.).
 - b. All Ministers of Word and Sacrament and Ministers of Word and Service under call on the rosters of the synod (S7.24.).
 - c. Five percent (5%) of retired ministers (pastors and deacons) on the roster of this synod elected as voting members at a caucus convened by the bishop (S7.22). Retired ministers on the roster of the Saint Paul Area Synod who are serving as interim pastors in the Saint Paul Area Synod shall automatically be included in the five percent. Should their service conclude prior to the synod assembly, an alternate shall be chosen.
 - d. The officers of this synod (7.21.d) and lay members of the synod council not otherwise serving as voting members (S7.28.).
- III. All voting members shall confirm registration upon arrival at the assembly. No voting member shall be able to vote unless duly registered with the credentials committee.
- IV. Each congregation is allotted lay voting members as follows, according to baptized membership: two voting members for congregations having fewer than 175 baptized members. Three voting members for congregations of 175-500 members, with an additional voting member for every 500 baptized members or major fraction thereof (i.e., 501-749 = 3 voting members; 750-1249 = 4 voting members; 1250-1749 = 5 voting members, etc.). Synodically Authorized Worshipping Communities are allocated 2 lay voting members.
- V. Each congregation shall pre-register lay voting members, as nearly as possible, with at least 45 percent women and at least 45 percent men. The percentage of laypersons that is not allocated to women or men may be allocated to persons who identify as gender non-binary, gender fluid, women, men, or other gender.
- VI. A pre-registered alternate voting member may be seated as voting member for one or more complete plenary sessions. Certification of the change must be registered with the assembly office by the pastor or congregational president. A relinquished voting privilege may not be reclaimed.
- VII. An alternate not listed on the registration rolls must have a letter of authorization from his or her congregational officer or pastor in order to be registered as an official voting member. This will be submitted electronically to the Credentials Committee.

E. Elections

- I. Along with candidates for election from the Nominating Committee, additional names may be placed in nomination by electronic submission to the Nominating Committee by Friday, May 3, 2024 at 5 pm. A person willing to serve shall be nominated by one voting member and seconded by one additional voting member. The following information must be provided: name, address, telephone number, email, congregation, conference, roster status (clergy/lay), and position for which being nominated. The Nominating Committee may amend their report to include substitutions for persons listed in the pre-assembly bulletin, who remove their name prior to the reading of the report at the Assembly.
- II. Elections shall be by written ballot or electronic voting application. Unless otherwise stated, all elections must be by a majority of the legal votes cast. In all elections, including the officers other than the bishop, the names of the persons receiving the highest number of votes, but not elected by a majority of the votes cast on a preceding ballot, shall be entered on the next ballot. For each vacancy unfilled, the second ballot shall be one-half of the number of persons on the first ballot. If no one receives a majority of the votes cast on the second ballot, the third ballot shall be limited to the two persons (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of votes on the second ballot (S9.08.).
- III. Invalid ballots-which shall not be counted-are those ballots that:
 - a. Are illegible;
 - b. Contain more marks than the ballot permits;
 - c. Contain a write-in vote, except where a write-in vote is specifically permitted.

- IV. Ballots shall be distributed and collected only by assembly pages and/or members of the election committee.

F. Resolutions

- I. All proposed resolutions other than those originating with the synod council can be directed to the assembly only through the reference and counsel committee in accordance with the procedures outlined in the pre-assembly materials. Authority to submit resolutions is limited to congregations, constitutionally defined committees, conferences, and the synod council. The reference and counsel committee may seek to provide for engagement with the concerns/issues identified by the resolution in a manner that does not include a vote. Such engagement may be in the form of group presentation/discussion, action-strategy sessions, or other means. Any voting member wishing to bring to a vote a resolution that has been otherwise provided for by the reference and counsel committee may move to suspend the rules for the purpose of considering the resolution for vote. Such a motion shall require a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting.
- II. Resolutions are deemed to have been moved for adoption and require no second to become the business of the assembly. The reference and counsel committee shall present resolutions to the assembly with recommendation and may include appropriate background information. The reference and counsel committee may submit its own amendment or a substitute motion to the assembly as an alternative to any proposed resolution. The reference and counsel committee may also seek to combine resolutions addressing the same topic into one resolution to facilitate the assembly's consideration of multiple resolutions. Such committee-drafted resolution(s) shall be submitted only after discussion with the originator of the resolution(s). An amendment or substitute motion moved by the reference and counsel committee for adoption requires no second.
- III. Should inaccuracies be found in the text of a resolution, the reference and counsel committee has the authority to make technical corrections to clarify meaning, correct grammar, provide the accurate name for organizations, etc.
- IV. A voting member wishing to present an amendment or substitute motion shall present the exact wording in writing to the designated person prior to moving the amendment, using a form available from assembly pages.
- V. The deadline for submitting resolutions is March 22, 2024.
- VI. Resolutions submitted after this deadline must be considered first by the reference and counsel committee, and then (with or without their support) will come before the assembly only by means of a motion to suspend the rules for the purpose of considering the late resolution. The reference and counsel committee will consider the reason for late submission in giving its recommendation.
- VII. Resolutions not addressed by the synod assembly shall be forwarded to the synod council.
- VIII. The synod constitution may be amended in either of the two following ways:
 - a. According to S18.13.a., changes to the provisions of the constitution shall be submitted to the reference and counsel committee in the form of a resolution over the signatures of at least eighty (80) voting members. Such resolutions shall require a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting to pass at two (2) consecutive regular meetings of the Synod Assembly;
 - b. According to S18.13.b., the Synod Council may propose the amendment(s) and notify the congregations six (6) months in advance of the Synod Assembly. Such proposals shall require a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting to pass at one (1) regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.
- IX. Changes to the bylaws of the constitution shall be submitted to the reference and counsel committee in the form of a resolution by the March 22, 2024 deadline. Such resolutions shall require a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting to pass as required by S18.21.
- X. Changes to the continuing resolutions (as included in the synod constitution) shall be submitted to the reference and counsel committee in the form of a resolution by the March 22, 2024 deadline. Such resolutions shall require a majority vote to pass as required by S18.31.
- XI. The synod constitution may be amended by a simple majority vote to reflect amendments made to the Model Constitution for Synods by the Churchwide Assembly (S18.12.).
- XII. All other resolutions shall require a majority vote of the voting members present and voting to pass.

G. Seating

- I. Seating on the floor of the assembly shall be designated for voting members, advisors, and visitors. Only those persons officially registered and wearing proper credentials shall be allowed a seat in each of these designated sections.

H. Miscellaneous

- I. Smoking shall be prohibited in all assembly facilities in accordance with Saint Paul Area Synod Assembly Resolution 87-06A, and shall additionally follow all smoking regulations of our host site.
- II. Any proposal increasing any line item in the proposed 2024 budget shall indicate from which line or lines an equal amount is to be subtracted.
- III. No printed materials of any kind may be distributed or posted within the assembly hall or dining areas except by assembly pages, and only following authorization granted by the assembly manager as authorized by the reference and counsel committee.
- IV. Cell phones, laptops, and other wireless electronic communication devices must be on silent mode in the assembly hall. Calls are not allowed in the assembly hall or meeting rooms.
- V. A motion to adjourn shall be debatable.
- VI. The chair, at any time, may declare a recess of the assembly for purposes of addressing technical issues.
- VII. All matters not governed by rules of this assembly or by specific assembly action shall be governed by *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, in its most current edition.