

3. ELCA Church Council Position

Six-year term beginning 2019

The NT-NL Synod is paired with the Arkansas Oklahoma (AOK) Synod in continuing resolution 19.02.C05. for the purpose of nominating two persons to the ELCA Church Council to be elected by the 2019 Churchwide Assembly. The nominating committee has assigned the category of Minister of Word and Sacrament to our synod for nomination.

We are looking for people who would bring a commitment to the work of this church in all of its expressions. It is important that those nominated can work with the other members of the Church Council in assuming the governance role that has been assigned to the council.

*This means that our 2018 Synod Assembly will **select two persons** who fit this category. These persons will then be nominated to the Churchwide Assembly, which will elect one to a six-year term on the Church Council, beginning upon the conclusion of the 2019 assembly.*

The process that our synod uses to identify and nominate these people is not described in the constitution. What is required is that the Synod Assembly nominates them. That means there will need to be a vote of the assembly to place these two people in nomination. Once these names are presented to the assembly in Milwaukee, there is not provision for nominations from the floor for this position. The two people we nominate from our 2018 Synod Assembly will be the only two on the ballot for the 2019 Churchwide Assembly.

BALLOT - H. Nominees to the 2019 Churchwide Assembly for a clergy position on the ELCA Church Council Elect TWO



NAME: **The Rev. Russell Vardell** First United / Dallas, TX
Eastern Conference

Occupation: ELCA Rostered Minister of Word and Sacrament

Education: MDiv, MTh (Church History) -- Luther Theological Seminary, St. Paul, MN; PhD (American History) -- University of Houston, Houston, TX; MS -- Computer Education and Cognitive Studies, University of North Texas, Denton, TX

Leadership:

Parish – All aspects of congregational life: Pastor, First United, Dallas, Texas; Pastor, Our Saviour's , Durant, Oklahoma; Pastor, Our Redeemer, Grand Prairie, Texas; Pastor, St. John Lutheran Parish, Westhoff / Lindenau, Texas; Pastor, St. Paul Lutheran Parish, Nordheim/Runge, Texas; Interim Pastor: Shepherd of Life Lutheran, Arlington, Texas; First, Waco, Texas; Good Shepherd Lutheran, Irving, Texas; University of Houston Campus; Ministry, Houston, Texas; Texas Southern University Campus Ministry, Houston, Texas; Pulpit Supply: NT-NL, SWTexas, TX Gulf Coast, and Grand Canyon Synods

NT-NL/CW - TEEM candidate Mentor; Parish Lay Mission Academy, Dean and Church History Instructor; Conference Dean and Assistant Dean; Theological Conference Planning Committee Synod Council (partial term); Presenter at Synod Assembly, ALOA, Congregations SELECT course facilitator

Community - Boy Scout troop volunteer; Local School PTA Treasurer; Speaker for Community Groups; CROP Walk

Part C - Addendum



NAME: The Rev. Neil White Rejoice / Frisco, TX
 Dallas Area Metro North Conference

Occupation: ELCA Rostered Minister of Word and Sacrament
Education: B.S. in Civil Engineering, Texas A&M University 1995
 MDiv Wartburg Theological Seminary 2004

Leadership:
Parish - Previously: Pastor of Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church, North Little Rock, AR; Peace Lutheran Church, Edmond, OK and Trinity Lutheran Church, Papillion, NE. Currently Pastor of Rejoice Lutheran Church, Frisco, TX. While at Rejoice in Frisco helped facilitate the planning and construction of a major expansion at Rejoice which will be completed this month.

NT-NL/CW - Was a part of both the Synod's Leadership Development Team and still a part of the Congregational Renewal (now Congregation Vitality) Team. Served as associate dean of the Dallas Area Metro North Conference from 2015-2017 and currently serves as the dean for the conference.

Community - Founded the Frisco Interfaith Alliance which has rapidly grown to discuss how multiple faiths live out their faiths in Frisco's diverse community. A member of the Student Health and Activities Committee for Frisco ISD.

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NAME: The Rev. Nick Billardello Abiding Grace / Southlake, TX
 Metroplex West

Conference: ELCA Rostered Minister of Word and Sacrament
Occupation: ELCA Rostered Minister of Word and Sacrament
Education: BA: Oakland University, Rochester MI, MDiv: Trinity Lutheran Seminary, Columbus OH

Leadership:
Parish - I began Abiding Grace Lutheran Church as a Mission Developer in 2010. After Abiding Grace organized as a congregation in June of 2011, I was called as Senior Pastor and am still serving as such. Over the course of my ministry, I have led Abiding Grace through two capital campaigns, the purchase of property, and a building project. Since our inception, Abiding Grace has grown to more than 400 members. We have increased in membership and giving every year.

NT-NL/CW - I served on Synod Council from 2015-2017, and currently serve as the Chairman of the Board of the Church of the Damascus Road Prison Ministry.

Community - As the Pastor of Abiding Grace, I have worked with Habitat for Humanity in Fort Worth, Mid-Cities Care Corp (who operate a satellite office out of Abiding Grace), Presbyterian

Night Shelter, GRACE, Harbor Chase Assisted Living, Meadowood Assisted Living, Fish and Loaves Food Pantry, the Soup Mobile of Dallas, SWAT (Southlake Working As a Team), Mayor Advisory Committee, Southlake Police Chaplain, Denton County Friends of the Family Domestic Shelter, the BRAVE Special Olympics team, and SPCA of Dallas. We have also partnered with San Gabriel Lutheran Church in Alvarado, providing Christmas presents and Easter bags for their children's ministry. We also help Good shepherd Lutheran Church in Irving in organizing a community Thanksgiving dinner.

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