

## 2023 RULES OF ORGANIZATION & PROCEDURE

*Order and procedure of this assembly shall be governed by the constitution, by-laws, and continuing resolutions of the Northern Texas – Northern Louisiana Synod, these rules of organization and procedure, and, unless otherwise ordered, parliamentary procedures in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition.*

**Members** – Voting members, by constitution (S7.21ff), are persons designated by their congregation to be a voting member according to the representative formula of this Synod. Voting members also include (1) persons designated by a Synodically Authorized Worshiping Community or Mission Congregation under Development to be a voting member according to the representative formula of this Synod, (2) all ordained and lay rostered ministers on the roster of this Synod, (3) ordained ministers of a church body with which the ELCA is in full communion who are serving as pastors under contract with a congregation or Synodically Authorized Worshiping Community of this Synod, (4) lay Synodically Authorized Worship Leaders who are serving under contract with a congregation of this Synod by the Bishop's authorization, and (5) members of the Synod Council who are registered for the assembly. A voting member must be seated in the assembly hall to vote. Proxy and absentee voting are not allowed.

**Advisory Members** are the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or the presiding bishop's representative, chairpersons of Synod Teams, Youth Convo members, and seminary interns currently serving within a congregation of this Synod. Advisory members have voice but no vote.

**Resource Members** are the chief executives of church agencies and institutions related to this Synod, the executive directors and chairpersons of the boards of the NT-NL Mission Endowment Fund and Briarwood Lutheran Ministries, the meeting planner for the assembly, and others as granted permission by this assembly, who because of their position or expertise can contribute to the work of the assembly. Resource members have voice only with respect to matters within their expertise, but no vote, unless otherwise granted by their roster or appointed status.

**Quorum** - One half of the registered voting members must be present to constitute a quorum.

**Agenda** - The proposed agenda may be amended by a majority vote prior to its adoption. Thereafter a two-thirds vote shall be required for amending the adopted agenda. With the consent of the assembly, the chair may call items of business in whatever order the chair considers most expedient for the conduct of the assembly's business.

**Resolutions** – Only items of business which have been submitted by voting members or the Synod Council may be considered by the assembly. Resolutions must be submitted to the Committee for Reference and Counsel by April 15, 2023 in order to be considered at this year's assembly. Text of proposed resolutions, which are received at the synod office by this date, will be posted online in the Assembly Reference Materials. Resolutions not germane to the pending business, question or report, and all amendments to the constitution or bylaws are due by April 15, 2023 and are immediately referred to the Committee for Reference and Counsel. A voting member who makes a resolution which is referred to the Committee for Reference and Counsel shall be available to that committee for conversation about the proposed resolution. The Committee for Reference and Counsel shall make a recommendation on every item of business referred to it (S7.13.04.). Among the recommendations the committee may make are that the resolution be adopted, not adopted, not considered, referred to an appropriate council, committee or board, deferred to another time on the agenda, or received as information only; the committee may also offer a substitute motion. Resolutions recommended by the Synod Council may be acted upon without reference to the Committee for Reference and Counsel.

### **Moving the Previous Question**

A member who has spoken on the pending question(s) may not move the previous question(s).

A motion to end debate by moving the previous question shall apply only to the immediately preceding motion.

A motion to end debate on all matters on the floor or more than the immediately pending question is not in order.

### **Substitute Motions**

When a substitute motion is made, secondary amendments may be offered first to the original motion. After all secondary amendments to the original motion have been disposed of, secondary amendments to the substitute motion may be offered. When all amendments to the substitute motion have been disposed of, the vote shall be taken on whether the substitute motion is to be substituted as the original motion or be rejected.

**Nominations** - Following nominations by the Nominating Committee, voting members may make additional nominations from the floor, with the nominee's consent. With each nomination an information sheet about that person shall be filed immediately with the secretary for use by the Committee on Elections. All persons nominated as an officer of this Synod (Bishop, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer) shall have appropriate background checks conducted prior to the election, or, in the instance of someone nominated from the floor and subsequently elected, conducted immediately after the assembly in accordance with Continuing Resolution S9.01.A08 of the NT-NL Constitution. A majority vote of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election.

**Elections** - Each category for which an election is held is considered a separate ballot even though several categories for election may appear on the same sheet of paper or electronic screen. If the ballot is a paper ballot and more than the number to be elected is marked, that ballot is an illegal ballot. A paper ballot with fewer marked than the number to be elected is a legal ballot. 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 (S9.08.). In cases where there is only one nominee after nominations have been closed, the chair may take a voice vote on electing that person and, if it is a majority, declare the election of that nomination.

**Debate** - Speakers shall limit their speeches to two minutes. No one is entitled to recognition a second time on the same question as long as another who has not spoken on the motion desires the floor. A person who has spoken twice on a particular question on the same day has exhausted the right to debate further that question that day. Insofar as is possible during discussion, a speaker on one side of the question shall be followed by a speaker on the other side. In the give and take of debate on issues, members and visitors shall refrain from applause.

**Distribution of materials** - Only material originating from the Office of the Secretary, the Bishop Election Committee (when constituted) and the official assembly newspaper may be distributed to voting members' places. With the approval of the Credentials Committee other material may be distributed at the doors to the assembly hall. Official reports from NT-NL related church agencies and institutions are posted online on the assembly's web page as they arrive and assembly app.

**Proposed Mission Strategy** - The proposed Mission Strategy (budget) along with the rationale shall be presented to the assembly during a business session. Debate and adoption of the Mission Strategy shall take place in a subsequent business session. Any motion for expenditure of funds or proposed amendment to the Mission Strategy as presented by the Synod Council shall be submitted in writing to the secretary by the time designated in the agenda as the deadline for submissions for review and recommendation by the Committee for Reference and Counsel. Any proposal to appropriate funds, whether by amendment to the Mission Strategy or otherwise, which is presented to the assembly without the approval of the Synod Council shall require a two-thirds vote for adoption.