

Minutes Northern Texas – Northern Louisiana Synod Assembly
Northern Texas – Northern Louisiana
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Meeting: April 19-20, 2024
Inglesia Luterana Santa Maria – 261 S MacArthur Blvd. Irving, TX

Friday April 19th

Registration opens 10:00am

1:00pm Service of the Word and Order for the Opening of an Assembly

Assembly Business Session One

Assembly called into session at 1:17pm

Bishop Gronberg & VP Don Heller Offered Brief Opening Remarks

Welcome to Santa Maria - Irving

The Rev. Moises Carrasquillo

VOTED SA 04.19.01

To approve the agenda and the Rules of Procedure for the 2024 Synod Assembly.

APPROVED

The Rev. Kelsey Fitting-Snyder presented the minutes from the 2023 Synod Assembly

VOTED SA 04.19.02

To approve the Minutes of the 2023 Assembly.

APPROVED

Bishop Gronberg introduced Rick Bidne as the parliamentarian.

The Credentials Report

The Rev. Mallory Morris presented the credential report at 1:29pm

Rostered Leaders - 50

Lay Leaders - 109

Total - 159

Bishop Gronberg declared a quorum for the assembly.

Report of the Nominating Committee

The Rev. Austin Nickel presented the slate of candidates for synod council general elections

NT-NL General Elections

The Rev. Kelsey Fitting-Snyder – Synod Council Secretary
Griselda Espinoza – Lay Female Synod Council, Conferencia de Latina
The Rev. Neil White – Rostered Synod Council, Dallas Area Metro North Conference
The Rev. Austin Nickel – Rostered Synod Council, Heart of Texas Conference
Leeland Jones – Lay Male Synod Council, Eastern Conference
Blanca Illades – Lay Female Synod Council, Eastern Conference
Myrna Biggers – Lay Female Synod Council, Panhandle Conference

Committee on Elections Chair, Lael Cordes-Pitts

First Ballot of General Elections

VOTED SA 04.19.03	<i>To approve the slate of candidates for synod council.</i> APPROVED
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VOTED SA 04.19.04	<i>To approve Becky Brakke as the lay female over 35 as churchwide voting member from NT-NL.</i> APPROVED
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First Ballot NT-NL Churchwide Assembly Elections

Rostered Minister of Word and Sacrament Female

The Rev. Leah Lawson
The Rev. Lesley Radius
The Rev. Kathryn Saunders-Allen
The Rev. Darlene Hopkins

Rostered Minister of Word and Sacrament Male

The Rev. Sean McConathy
The Rev. Daniel Weichert

Lay Female (preferably 35 or younger)

Anna Thompson
Katelyn Hicks

Lay Female (preferably 36 or older)

Becky Brakke

Lay Male (preferably 35 or younger)

Benjamin Freitag
Anthony Ormsbee-Hale

Lay Male (preferably 36 or older)

Filled, Don Heller, Synod Vice President

Report of the Synod Vice President

Don Heller

Don Heller reported on the shortage of pastors around the ELCA, and expressed the difficulties that were shared at the Vice President gathering in Chicago in March.

Key Note Session One

Dr. James Hopper

How Leaders Create Clarity in a Community of Calamity
Everyone Communicates – Few Connect

Business Session Two

Report of the Treasurer and Presentation of 2026 Mission Plan

Jannet Kennedy

Jannet Kennedy outlined the significant events in the fiscal. Walnut Hill, King of Glory, Forth Worth, and St. John's in Dallas all sold. The Rev. Edy Santos left the Synod payroll Dec. 31, 2023. Janet reported that Mission support for this year was over and above our budget.

The synod council approved changes in the budget for the current fiscal year. Including Pastor Chove's salary for the 2024 calendar year. A \$500k was purchased from MIF in March 2024. Administrative costs have gone up and that is reflected in the budget. A new car was purchased for Bishop Gronberg.

NT-NL Coaching Ministry Report

The Rev. Nathan Swenson-Reinhold

Nathan Swenson-Reinhold explained the coaching opportunities in the synod and thanked the current coaches for their work.

Report of the Mission Endowment Fund

Jennifer Hachmeister

Jennifer Hachmeister introduced this year's grant recipients, announced MEF Sunday, and shared the dates of the banquet.

Report of the Lutheran Foundation of the Southwest

Morgan Schmidlin

Report of the Bishop

Bishop Erik Gronberg

“Together in Mission”

Bishop described the following key areas of emphasis

- Raising up leaders
- Continuing to be open to new partnerships and possibilities
- Navigating transitions trusting in the Holy Spirit
- Engaging our communities and sharing the Gospel

Fist Ballot Results for Churchwide Voting Delegates

159 votes 81 needed to elect

Rostered Female

Leah Lawson 34

Lesley Radius 36

Kathryn Saunders-Allen 50

Darlene Hopkins 30

Lay Female

Katelyn Hicks 57

Anna Thompson 56

Maddie Franklin 38

Rostered Male

Daniel Weichert 84 *Elected on First Ballot*

Sean McConathy 65

Lay Male

Benjamin Freitag 82 *Elected on First Ballot*

Anthony Ormsbee-Hale 67

Worship with Holy Communion

Dinner with Anniversary and Fund for Leader Scholarship Recognitions

Saturday April 20th, 2024

Minute Report

The Rev. Heath Abel declared the minutes to be in order.

Keynote Session Two

Dr. James Hopper

The Generations

Together in Mission for a Multi-Generational Church

Business Session Three

The Report of the Bishop's Associate for Leadership Formation and Congregational Care

The Rev. Kris Totzke

The Rev. Kris Totzke referenced her written report, and introduced the current candidates in the candidacy process in the NT-NL Synod. Pastor Kris shared her plans for leaving her current role as Bishop's Associate to take a call closer to family in Wisconsin. Pastor Kris expressed her gratitude for the NT-NL Synod, the welcome she received, and the relationships she made.

Youth Ministry Connector and Gathering Update

The Rev. Adam Stockton

Pastor Adam promoted a ministry in the NT-NL Synod that would help share resources of lesson plans, Bible Studies, etc.

Metaverse Experiment Report

The Rev. Jeremy Ullrich

Pastor Jeremy gave an update on the work of the ELCA innovation lab in regards to its new Virtuality Realty project and space.

Denton Campus Ministry Partnership

The Rev. Marianne Brown-Trigg

The NTNL synod has affirmed a partnership with the Wesley House at UNT. We will be working in partnership to create a Lutheran and Wesley House joint ministry.

The Credentials Report

The Rev. Mallory Morris presented the Credential report at 10:54am.

Rostered Leaders 62

Lay Leaders 120

Total 182

Ballot Two - Committee on Elections Chair, Lael Cordes-Pitts

Rostered Female

The Rev. Lesley Radius

The Rev. Kathryn Saunders-Allen

Lay Female (35 under)

Anna Thompson

Katelyn Hicks

Report of the Director for Evangelical Mission

The Rev. Irma Banales

Pastor Irma reported on the congregations in the LEAD process within the synod. She also shared new grant opportunities for ministries that include stewardship and evangelism.

Keynote Session Three

Dr. James Hopper

The Cultures

Together in Mission for a Multi-Cultural Church

Ballot Two Results - Committee on Elections Chair, Lael Cordes-Pitts

Rostered Female

The Rev. Lesley Radius 69

The Rev. Kathryn Saunders-Allen 90 *Elected on Second Ballot*

Lay Female (35 under)

Anna Thompson 86 *Elected on Second Ballot*

Katelyn Hicks 75

Lunch

ELCSL Visit Update

Anthony Tucker

Anthony shared about his visit to Sierra Leone.

Report of the ELCA Churchwide Representative

Nick Kiger, ELCA Director for Mission Support

Nick shared the many ways that the NT-NL mission support helps sustain ministry locally and globally. Nick expressed gratitude for the partnerships.

ELCA Church Council Representative

The Rev. Nick Billardello

Pastor Nick expressed that the ELCA Church Council is looking for a new preferred partner for insurance. He explained the work continues on the committee that is working on a new candidacy process. Pastor Nick also shared that Bishop Eaton will be stepping away as presiding Bishop and Sue Rothmoyer will be stepping away as church secretary in 2025. Starting in November pastor Nick reported there will be a 403b IRA option.

Report of Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church
Anthony Ormsbee-Hale

Anthony reported that the commission is looking at governing structures, and places of flexibility, and the commission has held over 50 listening sessions to date.

Report of the Public Witness Team
Todd Porter

Todd gave a recap of all the learning and conversations of the past year.

Business Session Four

Consideration of 2026 Mission Plan
Janet Kennedy

VOTED SA 04.19.05	<i>To approve the Mission Plan for the 2026 Fiscal Year.</i>
	APPROVED

Care and Compensation

The Rev. Kris Totzke presented the Care and Compensation guidelines for 2025.

VOTED SA 04.19.06	<i>To approve the Care and Compensation Guidelines for 2025.</i>
	APPROVED

Minute Report

The Rev. Heath Abel declared the minutes to be in order.

Resolutions of Gratitude and Appreciation

The 2024 Assembly Team
The Rev. Kris Totzke

April 25-26 2025

VOTED SA 04.19.07	<i>To adjourn the 2024 NT-NL Synod Assembly.</i>
	APPROVED

Assembly adjourned at 2:11pm

Respectfully Submitted,



The Rev. Kelsey Fitting-Snyder