

**Minutes Northern Texas – Northern Louisiana Synod Assembly**  
**Northern Texas – Northern Louisiana**  
**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
**Meeting: April 24-25, 2025**  
**MCM Elegante, Lubbock, Texas**

**Friday April 25<sup>th</sup>**

*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 1:05pm

**Bishop Gronberg & VP Don Heller Offer Brief Opening Remarks**

Bishop began with opening remarks

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| <i>VOTED SA 04.25.01</i> | <i>To approve the agenda and the Rules of Procedure for the 2025 Synod Assembly.<br/>APPROVED by general acclamation</i> |
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| <i>VOTED SA 04.19.02</i> | <i>To approve the Minutes of the 2024 Assembly.<br/>APPROVED by general acclamation</i> |
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Bishop Gronberg introduced Rick Bidne as the parliamentarian.

Bishop Gronberg introduced Rev. Phil Hirsch as the churchwide representative.

The Rostered and Authorized leaders of the Panhandle conference were introduced and welcomed the Synod Assembly: Rev. Eric Saed, Rev. Leah Lawson, Rev. Sean McConthay, PLM Tonda Freitag, and Rev. Darlene Hopkins.

**Report of the Nominating Committee**

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

- Panhandle Conference – Pastor Eric Saed, Lazareth Lopez,
- Conferencia Latina – Pastor Jose Rodriguez, Jesus Ortiz
- Eastern – Pastor Moises Carrasquillo
- DAMN Conference – Sally Weber-Hawthorne
  
- Consultation Committee:
  - Johnna Page COW Conference
  - Christian Wilson HOT Conference
  - Pastor Linda Anderson DAMN
  - Pam Grosze DAMN
  - Pastor Russel Vardel Eastern Conference

- Discipline Committee:
  - Lupita Escumillia CL
  - Yolanda Resendiz CL
  - Pastor Paul Cannon Cow
  - Joyce O Connell Cow
  - Pastor John Bell DAMN
  - Ceci Gunderson DAMN
  - Moises Carrasquillo Eastern Conference

**Welcome and Report from the Synod Vice President – Mr. Don Heller**

Mr. Heller offered thanksgiving and welcome for all that brought Synod Assembly together. He spoke to the Assembly Theme – on Common Ground – and encouraged the assembly to get to know new people and learn from one another. He spoke about the NTNL trip to Sierra Leone and the common ground found there, sharing stories of seeing the work of God in our sister synod.

**Report of the Treasurer and Presentation of 2027 Mission Plan – Ms. Janet Kennedy**

Ms. Kennedy shared the ways the money from the Briarwood endowment has been used to support youth ministries in the synod over the past year.

The synod gave \$60,000 to the ELCSL Jubilee Center out of our discretionary fund, and gave for the Panhandle fire relief.

Ms. Kennedy outlined significant events of the past year: Rev. Nicholaus Chove was removed from the synod payroll, and Rev. Adam Stockton was added.

Congregational mission support was 93.7% of the budget for the year. 48% of congregational support was donated to ELCA Churchwide

Changes have been made to the current budget, accounting for changes in staff support.

**Credentials Report – Mr. John Parsons**

56 - rostered leaders present  
 87 - lay leaders present  
 A quorum is present for elections

**NT-NL General Elections**

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| <i>VOTED SA 04.19.03</i> | <i>To approve the slate of candidates for discipline and consultation committees.</i> |
|                          | <i>APPROVED</i>   |

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| <i>VOTED SA 04.19.04</i> | <i>To approve the slate of candidates for synod council.</i> |
|                          | <i>APPROVED</i>  |

### **First Ballot for Synod Secretary**

Victor Larson

Anthony Ormsbee-Hale

### **Report of the Reference and Counsel Committee – Rev. Ben Dueholm**

Rev. Dueholm presented one resolution to the Assembly: from the Eastern Conference A New Start Resolution

Questions and comments by the assembly were shared

Questions were related to costs, types of new ministries, and oversight

Comments against, arguing for the synod to focus its resources on redevelopment of the current ministries of the synod

Comments for, we are called to take risks, be ambitious in the name of Christ, start new ministries in new ways

*VOTED SA 04.19.05*

*To accept the New Start Resolution.  
APPROVED*

### **Key Note Session One**

Rev. Dr. Edson Way

*Context and History of the Panhandle*

### **Business Session Two**

#### **Video from the Evangelical Lutheran Education Association**

#### **Ballot Results**

128 votes cast 4 disqualified,

67 for Ormsbee-Hale *elected on first ballot*

57 for Victor Larson

**Presentation from the Lutheran Federation of the Southwest - Deacon John Dellis and Mr. Kirk Barrett**

#### **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.

**Presentation on Portico Benefits Service – Rev. Tim Schoreder**

**Report of the Bishop's Associate for Leadership Formation and Congregational Care - Rev. Kelsey Fitting-Snyder**

Rev. Fitting-Snyder shared her experiences visiting congregations around the synod and getting to know them better.

She spoke about the work of the candidacy committee and candidates moving through the NTNL synod.

She also spoke about her work with first call pastors and plans for a rostered and authorized minister retreat in the fall.

### **DEM Advisory Team session #1**

Rev. Irma Banales shared her role as a Director of Evangelical Ministry and the work of the DEM advisory team.

Rev. Moises Carrasquillo shared the work the Latina congregations in the NTNL are doing to work on generosity and stewardship at this time.

Rev. Moises led a panel discussion with Mr. Don Heller and Rev. Kelsey Fitting-Snyder and Rev. Irma

Rev. Jeff Borgwardt shared resources from the DEM advisory team

### **Panhandle Conference Breakout Session #1**

The Panhandle Conference led a breakout session of each of the synod conferences sharing their various stories.

### **Report of the Bishop – Bishop Erik Gronberg**

Bishop shared milestones from 2024 in the synod: Kelsey's installation, milestone celebrations in churches, NTNL presence at the ELCA Youth Gathering, Synod leadership travel to Germany, hosting region 4 bishops, sharing ministry together.

Bishop gives thanks for the continued work of the Parish Lay Ministry Academy, raising up leaders in the NTNL. Speaks about the continued raising up of leaders from the synod and the partnerships happening within the synod.

### **Dinner with Anniversary and Fund for Leader Scholarship Recognitions**

*Saturday April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2025*

### **Worship with Holy Communion**

### **Business Session Three**

**Report of Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church** – Mr. Anthony Ormsbee-Hale  
Anthony reported on the CRLCs work, and report of the CRLC, as well as recommendations made by the Church Council in regard to their report.

**Report on the Mission Endowment Fund** – Jennifer Hachmeister, Executive Director  
Ms. Hachmeister shared the work of the MEF and encouraged the synod to continue to engage with MEF to support the ministries of the synod.

**ELCA Church Council Representative** - Rev. Nick Billardello  
Rev. Bilardello spoke about the past six years of his experience on the ELCA Church council, including the work of defining ourselves as a Sanctuary Denomination

**Report on the NTNL trip to the ELCSL** – Rev. Ben Dueholm  
Rev. Dueholm spoke about what he learned in his time in Sierra Leone and encouraged the synod to pray for peace and the unity of the church in Sierra Leone, as requested by Bishop Momoh.

**Report from Women of the ELCA** – Ms. Jane Winge  
Ms. Winge shared updates on both the churchwide and synodical expressions of WELCA and encouraged women in the synod to take part in upcoming events.

**DEM Advisory Team session #2**

Mr. Trent Ormsbee-Hale led a panel discussion with Rev. Nicholas Chove, Rev. Leah Lawson, Rev Austin Nickel, Rev. Alicia Thompson-Summers, and Ms. Annalie Cordejo

**Report by the Churchwide Representative** – Rev. Phil Hirsch  
Rev. Hirsch shared his insights from Churchwide and the Synod’s place within the larger church

**Report on Youth Ministry** – Rev. Cheryl Hines, Rev. Paul Masschio, Rev. Kyle Rouze  
Shared upcoming youth opportunities and resources to connect youth of the synod.

**Report on the Public Witness Team** – Mr. Todd Porter  
Mr. Porter explained the work of the Public Witness Team and encouraged congregations to take part.

**Breakout Session #2 Hopes and Dreams for the Future**  
The Panhandle Conference led a second breakout session encouraging the various conferences to share their hopes and dreams among one another.

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| <i>VOTED SA 04.19.06</i> | <i>To accept the updated 2025-2026 budget.<br/>APPROVED</i> |
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| <i>VOTED SA 04.19.07</i> | <i>To accept the budget for FY2027.<br/>APPROVED</i> |
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*VOTED SA 04.19.08*

*To accept the 2026 Care and Compensation Guidelines.  
APPROVED*

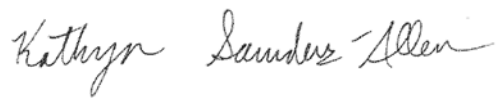
*VOTED SA 04.19.09  
Team.*

*To accept a resolution of gratitude for the Synod Assembly  
APPROVED*

**Synod Assembly 2026 will be April 24-26 at Advent Lutheran Church in Arlington, TX**

**Assembly is closed at 2:27pm, April 26th**

Respectfully Submitted,



The Rev. Kathryn Saunders-Allen