



**2026 NWMN
SYNOD ASSEMBLY**
...grace in a digital space

CONSENT AGENDA

Prepared for the 2026 Synod Assembly

Consent Agenda

The following items are proposed as part of the Consent Agenda for the 2026 Northwestern Minnesota Synod Assembly. Voting members may request that any item be removed from the Consent Agenda for separate consideration.

Included in the Consent Agenda

1. Approval of the Draft Agenda
2. Approval of the Rules of Organization and Procedure for the 2026 Synod Assembly
3. Approval of the Approval of the 2025 Synod Assembly minutes
4. Resolution 1: Resolution to Approve 2027 Compensation Guidelines
5. Resolution 2: Resolution to Approve Changes to Synod Constitution
6. Resolution 3: Continuing Resolution for the Establishment of a Care for Creation Committee

Motion:

Because the source of this motion is the Synod Council, it is considered moved and seconded when presented to the Assembly.

Motion: To approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

Draft Agenda

The agenda remains in draft form until it is formally adopted by the voting members at Synod Assembly.

Friday, May 29

5:30PM | Orientation

- Overview of agenda
- Practice voting

Saturday, May 30

9:00AM | Opening Worship

9:35AM | Plenary One

- Opening of the Assembly
- Credentials Report
- Adoption of Rules & Agenda
- Churchwide Representative Report | Rev. Louise Johnson
- Bishop's Report | Bishop Bill Tesch

11:05AM | Break

11:20AM | Plenary Two

- Credentials Report
- Keynote Speaker | Jeremy Steele
- Treasurer Report
- Vote on Resolution 3 (Mission Plan)
- Associate to the Bishop for Leadership Report | Rev. Genelle Netland
- Associate to the Bishop for Mission, Director of Evangelical Mission Report | Rev. Rebel Hurd
- Lunch Prayer

12:45-1:30PM | Lunch Break

- 1:15PM Memorials & Anniversaries

1:30PM | Plenary Three

- Resolutions
- Holy Cow Award
- Servant of Christ Award

2:25PM | Break

2:40PM | Plenary Four

- Elections
- Keynote Presentation | Jeremy Steele
- SAM Commissioning
- Unfinished Business

5:00PM | Closing of the Assembly





2026 NWMN SYNOD ASSEMBLY

...grace in a digital space

RULES OF ORGANIZATION AND PROCEDURE

Prepared for the 2026 Synod Assembly



Rules of Organization and Procedure

For The 2026 Northwestern Minnesota Synod Assembly

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Notes

The gray shadowed boxes contain provisions from the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this synod. They are provided here for the purpose of explaining rules and procedures that apply to the Synod Assembly. The full text of the governing documents may be found on the synod's Web site. The vote to approve the Rules of Organization and Procedure does not include adoption of the material in gray, which is already in effect and can be amended only as described in Part Ten.

[Brackets in the gray shadowed boxes are provided for clarity and context.]

Part One: Authority and Duties

†S7.01. This synod shall have a Synod Assembly, which shall be at its highest legislative authority. The powers of the Synod Assembly are limited only by the provisions in the Articles of Incorporation, this constitution and bylaws, the assembly's own resolutions, and the constitutions and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Authority of the Synod Assembly Presiding Officer

†S8.12.i.2 [The Bishop]...[shall] preside at all meetings of the Synod Assembly...

The Bishop may appoint a chair pro tem to preside during selected portions of the assembly.

Assembly Secretary

†S8.32 The secretary shall:

Keep the minutes of all meetings of the Synod Assembly...be responsible for the printing and distribution of such minutes and perform such other duties as this synod may from time to time direct.

Agenda

†S8.12.i.2 [The Bishop]...[shall] provide for the preparation of the agenda for the Synod Assembly,...

PART TWO: Membership of the Synod Assembly

Voting members

†S7.21. The membership of the Synod Assembly, of which at least 60 percent of the voting membership shall be composed of lay persons, shall be constituted as follows:

- a) All rostered ministers under call on the roster of this synod shall be voting members of the Synod Assembly.
- b) A minimum of one lay member elected by each congregation with fewer than 175 baptized members and a minimum of two lay members elected by each congregation with 175 or more baptized members related to this synod, typically one of whom shall be a man and one of whom shall be a woman, shall be voting members. The Synod Council shall establish a formula to provide additional lay representation from congregations on the basis of the number of baptized members in the congregation. The Synod Council shall seek to ensure that, as nearly as possible, at least 45 percent of the lay members of the assembly shall be women, and as nearly as possible, at least 45 percent shall be men.
- c) Voting members shall include the officers of this synod

- d) Synod Authorized Ministers may register as an additional Lay voting Member of the Assembly from the congregation they are serving as a Synod Authorized Minister under S7.21.02 of the Synod Constitution.

†S7.25. Except as otherwise provided in this constitution or in the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, each voting member of the Synod Assembly shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod.

†S7.28. Duly elected voting members of the Synod Council who are not otherwise voting members of the Synod Assembly under †7.21. shall be granted the privilege of both voice and vote as members of the Synod Assembly.

†S7.27. This synod may establish processes through the Synod Council to grant an ordained minister from a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by the Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America the privilege of both voice and vote in the Synod Assembly during the period of that ordained minister's service in a congregation of this church.

S7.22.01. All retired ordained ministers on the roster of this synod in attendance at the Synod Assembly shall be voting members.

Non-voting members

S7.22 This synod may establish processes that permit...those granted disability status, or on leave from call, on the roster of the synod to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with †S7.21.b. If the synod does not establish processes to permit the rostered ministers specified above to serve as voting members, they shall have voice but not vote in the meetings of the Synod Assembly.

†S7.23 The presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and such other official representatives of this church as may be designated from time to time by the Church Council shall also have voice but not vote in the meetings of the Synod Assembly. Like privileges shall be accorded to those assitional persons whom the Synod Assembly or the Synod Council shall from time to time designate.

Voting Members

Voting members will have appropriate credentials on their nametags; and their nametags will differ from non-voting members and guests.

Designation of Alternate Members

In the event that a voting member from a congregation is unable to serve, upon request of a representative from that congregation, the assembly registrar may authorize the seating of an alternate voting member.

Non-voting members and Guests

Non-voting members and guests will have a designated nametag. They may have voice to address the assembly only if provided in the agenda, invited by the chair to speak, or upon majority vote of the voting members present and voting.

PART THREE: Meetings of the Synod Assembly

Regular and Special Meetings

†S7.11. A regular meeting of the Synod Assembly shall be held at least triennially.

S7.12. Special meetings of the Synod Assembly may be called by the bishop with the consent of the Synod Council, and shall be called by the bishop at the request of one-fifth of the voting members of the Synod Assembly....

Notice of Meeting

S7.13. Notice of the time and place of all meetings of the Synod Assembly shall be given by the secretary of the synod.

Assembly Properly Constituted

†S6.05. Each assembly, council, committee, board, commission, task force, or other body of this synod or any synod units shall be conclusively presumed to have been properly constituted, and neither the method of selection nor the composition of any such assembly, council, committee, board, commission, task force, or other body may be challenged in a court of law by any person or be used as the basis of a challenge in a court of law to the validity or effect of any action taken or authorized by any such assembly, council, committee, board, commission, task force, or other body.

PART FOUR: Quorum and Procedure

Quorum

S7.14. One-half of the members of the Synod Assembly, as defined by †S7.21., S7.24., S7.27., shall constitute a quorum.

Parliamentary Procedure

†S7.32. Roberts' Rules of Order, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of the Synod Assembly, unless otherwise ordered by the assembly.

Obtaining the Floor

Except in circumstances in which Robert's Rules of Order authorizes interruption of a speaker, a voting member may obtain the floor by going to a microphone and being recognized by the chair. A voting member desiring to make a motion or ask a question shall display a white card; a voting member desiring to speak in support of a pending motion shall display a green card; and a voting member desiring to speak in opposition to a pending motion shall display a red card.

Upon recognition, a person speaking should identify himself or herself and state her or his congregation or agency or institution.

Speeches

Unless otherwise provided in the agenda or determined by a majority vote of the assembly, all speeches during discussion of a motion or resolution shall be limited to two minutes. A countdown clock shall be displayed in a corner of the video enhancement

screen in the front of the assembly hall, allowing each speaker to know how much time remains in his or her 2-minute limit. No person shall speak more than twice on the same subject.

Insofar as possible during discussion of a motion or resolution, a speaker on one side of the question shall be followed by a speaker on the other side. To facilitate alternating speeches and/or when requested by the chair, assembly members awaiting recognition at the microphones shall display one of three cards:

- Green: The green card is to be used to identify a member who will speak in favor of the pending matter on the floor.
- Red: A red card is to be used to identify a member who wishes to speak against the pending matter.
- White: A white card is to be used to identify a member who wishes to offer an amendment to the pending matter, or some other motion that would be in order.

Moving the Previous Question

A member who has spoken on the pending question(s) may not move the previous question, [if there are other members who wish to speak to the issue].

Applause

In the give-and-take of debate on issues before the Synod Assembly, voting members and others shall refrain from applause.

Departing from the Agenda

With the consent of a majority of the voting members, the chair shall have the authority to call items of business before the assembly in whatever order he or she considers most expedient for the conduct of the assembly's business. A motion to alter the agenda shall require for adoption a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting.

Suspending or Revising the Rules

After the adoption of the Rules of Organization and Procedure, and any amendments offered to them prior to adoption, any further amendment to, revision of, or suspension of the rules shall require for adoption a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting.

Unfinished Business

Upon adjournment of the Synod Assembly, all remaining unfinished items of business shall be referred to the Synod Council for disposition.

PART FIVE: Committees

Synod Assembly Committees

The Synod Council establishes committees to facilitate the work of the Synod Assembly.

Synod Assembly Planning Committee

The Synod Assembly Planning Committee shall provide for the arrangements of the Synod Assembly and such other responsibilities as may be assigned by the Synod Council.

Nominating Committee

S9.03. There shall be a Nominating Committee, appointed by the Synod Council to a term of one year, of no less than 3 nor more than 10 members. Fifty percent of the members of the Nominating Committee shall be female and fifty percent shall be male. Additional nominations may be made from the floor for all elections for which nominations are made by the Nominating Committee

Elections Committee

There shall be an Elections Committee whose responsibility it is to prepare ballots, count ballots, report elections to the assembly, and otherwise oversee the election process.

Reference and Counsel Committee

The Reference and Counsel Committee shall review resolutions and other main motions submitted for consideration by the Synod Assembly, other than proposed amendments to the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions and resolutions and main motions originating in the Synod Council. See PART SEVEN for a more detailed description of the responsibilities of this committee.

Minutes Committee

The Executive Committee shall serve as the Minutes Committee. They shall review minutes of the Synod Assembly prepared under the supervision of the secretary of this synod. They shall also have the authority to approve the minutes on behalf of the Synod Assembly and shall deposit in the archives of this church the protocol copy of the assembly's minutes.

PART SIX: Voting Procedures

Methods of Voting

As directed by the chair voting may be by personal electronic devices, voice, show of hands, use of colored voting cards, or written ballot. Any member who because of a physical limitation has difficulty voting should contact the Elections Committee for assistance. Abstentions ordinarily will not be recorded in the minutes. Any member wishing to have an abstention from a vote recorded should contact the secretary immediately after the vote is taken.

Proxy and Absentee Voting Precluded

†S7.31 Proxy and absentee voting shall not be permitted in the transaction of any business of this synod.

PART SEVEN: Motions and Resolutions

Written Motions and Resolutions Required

Main motions or resolutions, or amendments to either, must be presented in writing to the secretary of this synod immediately after being moved at the Synod Assembly.

Nature of Motions and Resolutions

A motion is a proposal for the assembly to take action. The basic form of motion which introduces business before the assembly is a main motion. A resolution is a form of main motion which usually is more complex and may contain "Whereas" clauses that accurately describe the background of the resolution and will contain "Resolved" clauses that describe the proposed action. A

memorial is a particular form of resolution that requests action to be taken by the Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Other motions are as described in Robert's Rules of Order, 10th edition.

Sources of Resolutions

Resolutions that emerge prior to the start of a Synod Assembly may be submitted to the Reference and Counsel Committee for consideration at the Synod Assembly only if they have first been approved by:

- The Synod Council, another synod leadership group (a synod committee, task force, or table), or an organization (S6.03.d) of the synod; or
- At least one conference assembly; or
- Congregational meetings or council meetings in at least three congregations of the synod.

Background Information

The author of a resolution submitted to the Reference and Counsel Committee may append background information, up to two pages in length (12 pt. font, 1" margins). In putting together such material, the author is encouraged to bear in mind the primary purpose of background information: to help the voting members of the Synod Assembly do thoughtful, careful deliberation about the topic addressed by the resolution. Background information should be informative more than argumentative, clarifying unfamiliar terms or concepts in the resolution. The Reference and Counsel Committee reserves the right to edit background information, normally in consultation with the author of the resolution.

Deadline for Motions and Resolutions

Unless an exception is granted by the Synod Council, to be considered by the assembly a resolution must be submitted to the synod office 60 days prior to the assembly.

Untimely motions will be reported for information purposes to the assembly, by the Reference and Counsel Committee and referred to the Synod Council, unless a motion to consider the matter is adopted by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting.

Handling of Motions and Resolutions

All main motions and resolutions shall be referred to the Reference and Counsel Committee, other than proposals to amend the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this synod and resolutions and main motions originating from the Synod Council. Any recommendation for action presented on behalf of the Synod Council shall be the main motion before the assembly. Such a recommendation does not require a second.

Resolutions that may be considered after the assembly begins

Non-Germane Resolutions Submitted after the Deadline for Resolutions:

Non-Germane Resolutions submitted after the deadline for resolutions may be considered by the assembly only if they are brought before the assembly by a two-thirds majority approval of a motion to suspend the rules and to consider the specific resolution. The secretary shall refer non-germane resolutions to the Reference and Counsel Committee.

Germane Resolutions (motions):

Germane resolutions and motions include incidental main motions, secondary motions, motions that bring a question again before the assembly, and main motions that, in accord with a strict standard of relevance, are on the same subject as a report or pending resolution.

- Germane motions may be offered by any voting member from the floor by going to a microphone and being recognized by the chair.
- When the chair recognizes you, give your name, the congregation you represent, and your community, and then state the motion beginning, "I move that...."
- Unless the Rules of Procedure permit otherwise, a germane motion must be seconded before the assembly may consider it. The mover must submit a written copy of the motion to the secretary as stated above.

In determining if a main motion is germane, the chair shall use as a standard the principle that to be germane a motion must, according to a strict standard of relevance, be on the same subject as a report or pending matter before the assembly.

The chair shall refer a germane main motion to the Reference and Counsel Committee if the chair determines referral is in the best interests of the assembly.

The motion will be restated by the chair before the assembly debates or votes on the motion.

A motion or resolution which is germane to the matter before the assembly may be offered by any voting member from the floor by going to a microphone and being recognized by the chair, unless a deadline previously has been established that would prevent such a motion or resolution.

In reviewing proposed resolutions and main motions, the Reference and Counsel Committee may edit, prepare an alternative resolution or motion, or consolidate into a single proposed action multiple resolutions or main motions on the same or similar subjects. Whenever the Reference and Counsel Committee recommends an edited or alternative resolution or motion, the report to the assembly shall contain the original maker's text.

Work of the Reference and Counsel Committee

- The purpose of the work on resolutions of the Reference and Counsel Committee is to expedite the work of the assembly.
- The Committee may edit resolutions while seeking to retain their substance.
- The Committee may combine similar resolutions into one substitute resolution.
- The Committee will usually consult with the author of a resolution regarding issues of editing, combining or substituting for the author's resolution. In some situations the Committee may wish to encourage the author to take action that would not bring the resolution to the assembly.
- The Committee, in consultation with the chair, shall recommend the order in which resolutions are transmitted to the assembly. Whenever possible, resolutions of a similar nature should be presented consecutively. The Committee may recommend that a resolution be considered as a special order.

Debate and Working With Resolutions and Motions

The chair shall regard all motions transmitted to the assembly through the Synod Council as moved and seconded.

The chair shall regard as moved and seconded all motions transmitted from the Reference and Counsel Committee that retain a "Do Pass" recommendation.

Resolutions that retain a "Do Not Pass" recommendation from the Reference and Counsel Committee shall not appear on the agenda and may be considered by the assembly only by a motion to revise the agenda which requires a two-thirds majority.

Resolutions retaining a “No Recommendation” or a “Recommendation to Refer” shall appear on the agenda but shall require a motion and second before consideration by the assembly.

The chair may invite members of the assembly to engage in small group discussion of a resolution before it is open for debate.

When a resolution is open for debate, the right to speak first belongs to a member of the assembly who speaks in favor of the resolution. A member of the Synod Council will also usually speak to the assembly, summarizing observations that have arisen out of the council’s prior discussion of the resolution.

A member who has spoken on the pending question(s) may not move the previous question(s), if there are other members who wish to speak to the issue.

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 rejected.

Status of Reports

A motion is not in order to approve or receive reports. All reports shall be received for information and referred to the Synod Council.

PART EIGHT: Nominations and Elections

General Provision

†S9.01. The Synod Assembly shall elect such officers of this synod and such other persons as the constitution and bylaws may require, according to procedures set forth in the bylaws.

Role of Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee shall nominate qualified persons to positions for which elections will be held at the Synod Assembly. The Nominating Committee shall ensure that nominated persons meet the applicable qualifications for the position, including the representational principles enumerated in †S6.04.

Nominations from the Floor

Nominations may be made from the floor. Biographical information on all such nominations shall be submitted in a timely fashion in writing to the secretary.

Nomination of Officers

S9.05, S9.06 and S9.07 provide direction for nomination of persons for synod vice president, secretary and treasurer.

Vote Requirement for Elections

†S9.02. In all elections by the Synod Assembly, other than for bishop, a majority of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election.

Report of Election Results

S9.09. The result of each ballot in every election shall be announced in detail to the assembly.

Runoff Elections

S9.08. In all elections, except for the bishop, the names of the persons receiving the highest number of 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 or two for each vacancy unfilled.

Balloting and electioneering

All elections for which there is more than one candidate shall be by ballot.

- In non-bishop elections, a majority of the votes cast on any ballot shall elect.
- For those offices for which the constitution does not require election by ballot and there is only one candidate nominated at the time of the election, a motion to elect the candidate by acclamation of the assembly's voting members shall be in order.

Ballots for all elections will be distributed only to voting members who are seated at their places within the voting member area.

Any public audio or visual display of support for a candidate for election by this assembly shall be ruled out of order by the chair of the assembly.

PART NINE: Budget Proposals

S10.04. Any proposal to appropriate funds, whether by amendment to the budget or otherwise, which is presented to a meeting of the Synod Assembly without the approval of the Synod Council, shall require a two-thirds vote for adoption.

Motions to amend that increase a line item or add an additional line item in the proposed budget must specify the source of funds for the increase or added line item.

PART TEN: Amendments to Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions

Procedures for amending the Synod Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions are described in Chapter 18 of the Synod Constitution.

Process for Proposing Amendments

Proposed amendments to the governing documents of this synod shall be submitted by the deadline established by the Synod Council for resolutions. All proposed amendments shall be referred to the Synod Council.

PART ELEVEN: Synod Assembly Displays

The Synod Assembly Planning Committee shall, on an annual basis, determine the amount of space available for displays at each assembly. The Assembly Coordinator will share information about display space (and any rental fees that may apply) with groups that might want to reserve a display spot.

Space for displays will be made available according to the following priorities:

- First priority: official synodical leadership groups, e.g. a synod team or task force.
- Second priority: groups and organizations directly affiliated with the Northwestern Minnesota and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, e.g. the synod's men's, women's and youth organizations.
- Third priority: other organizations, services or ministries that offer helpful information, resources or services to members, congregations and other agencies of the synod. Such entities—though not necessarily affiliated directly with the synod or the ELCA--shall have purposes in line with and supportive of the mission and ministry of the Northwestern Minnesota Synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Having a display at a synod assembly is a privilege, not a right, for any organization not directly affiliated with this synod and/or the ELCA.

With the exception of the official bookstore provider for each assembly, display space will not be provided to for-profit organizations. Other than the official bookstore, no display provider will sell goods or services as part of their display, without the express permission of the Synod Assembly Planning Committee.

The Synod Assembly Manager (in conversation with the bishop if needed) shall administer this policy. The manager may consult with the Synod Assembly Planning Committee if he or she needs additional input regarding a specific request for display space. In all cases, the decision of the Synod Assembly Planning Committee shall be final.

PART TWELVE: Miscellaneous Provisions

Distribution of Materials

Any materials for distribution in the Synod Assembly must be approved in advance by the Synod Assembly Planning Committee.

Electronic Devices

Use of computers and other electronic devices, such as cellphones (in texting mode only), smart phones, tablets, and other wireless electronic communication devices is allowed in the assembly hall, provided that such devices are in a silent mode and do not disturb voting members. Speaking on any device is prohibited in the assembly hall (except for non-programmed meal times). Assembly participants are expected to be courteous and respectful and are required to leave the assembly hall during times they intend to engage in communication activities that may disturb others or are not related to the work of the assembly.

NWMN SYNOD

highways & hedges

ASSEMBLY
2025

2025 Synod Assembly Minutes

Prepared for the 2026 Synod Assembly

**Minutes.2025 Northwestern Minnesota Synod Assembly
May 30-June 1, 2025
Concordia College, Moorhead**

Friday, May 30

4:00p.m. Opening Worship

6:30pm | PLENARY ONE

Assembly was called to order by Sharon Josephson at 6:31pm

Our Purpose Together: We gather in the assembly to worship as a synod; to listen to one another and to God's word for the sake of God's mission; to deepen our relationships; to deliberate as a synod.

Our Goals:

1. Be Faithful in Relationships

- a. (Re) Connect with old and new partners in ministry from around our congregations' region.
- b. To accompany leaders through support and encouragement as they lead Christ's church.

2. Be Authentic in Welcome

- a. Reaffirm our commitment to be a diverse church, welcoming all in the name of Jesus.
- b. Experience hospitality in each other's presence as followers of Jesus.

3. Love that Makes a Difference

- a. Make decisions that build up the body of Christ and benefit our beloved neighbors.
- b. Invest in our time and work to positively impact the Northwestern Minnesota Synod.

Bishop gave introductions and introduced on-site participants.

Bishop gave introductions and introduced on-site participants.

Dr. Craig Nesson

Dr. Jeff Howison

Victoria Flood- ELCA representative

Rolf Nycklemoe

Credentials Committee Report (read by Katie DeMarais)

Registered voters

Credentials Committee Report (read by Katie DeMarais)

Rostered leaders- 105

Lay voting members- 220 (including 25 SAMs)

325 Voting Members

We have met our quorum (needed 244)

Consent Agenda VP Sharon Josephson

A consent agenda groups the routine, procedural, informational and self-explanatory non-controversial items typically found in an agenda. These items are then presented to the board in a single motion for an up or down vote after allowing anyone to request that a specific item be moved to the full agenda for individual attention.

- Approve Rules of Organization and Procedure]

→ **Vote for consent agenda – majority vote required. Vote Passed**

Keynote from Dr. Craig L. Nesson, Professor of Contextual Theology at Wartburg Theological Seminary.

First Ballot for Bishop

Chair of the Bishop Election Committee- John Wold. Introduced the process leading up to today.

Prayer before first ballot by Victoria Flood. Victoria will chair this portion of this meeting.

Ms. Flood walked through the overall process of a bishop election.

→ **First Ballot for Bishop: Paper ballot.**

Companion Synod Presentation

Lutheran Social Services- located in every county in the state of Minnesota providing foster care and adoption. “We are growing, things are strong, exciting things are happening.” “The kind of person God made, is the kind of person we serve. All of them.”

Servant of Christ award: non ELCA congregation. The Log Church in Crosslake

Followed by **Video from LSS**

John Wold reads the results from the first ballot

Total: 315 votes

Legal: 311 votes

Required for election: 234 votes

Brad Skogen: 6 votes

Genelle Netland: 9 votes

Rebel Hurd: 17 votes

Bishop Bill: 263 votes

Announcements and Prayer before closing for the day.

*Nominees for Bishop had until 9am on Saturday to remove names from ballot.

Saturday, May 31

9:30a.m. | PLENARY 2

Call to order by Bishop Bill Tesch at 9:35am

Credential Report

107 Rostered Voting Members

236 Lay Voting Members (of which 27 are SAMs)

343 Total voting members

25 registered visitors

Unfinished Business from yesterday- Sharon called up John Wold.

→Motion was made by John Wold to destroy the ballots from last night. Seconded by Steve Norby. Motion carried.

John introduced the Bishop Election Committee and thanked them for their diligent work.

Ministry Spotlight: Mission Developer Pastor Emily Papke Larson (Community Called Grace): Church without walls, with each other. Coffee shop theology

Motto: Be together. Be you. Be open.

Vision: Spiritual home for all

Ministry Spotlight: Mission Developer Pastor Birgitte Simpson (People's Church, Bemidji): ministry serving folks who are unhoused in some sort of way. In current form, serving 31 people/night in an emergency shelter. Also provides meals and food support. Feeding 80-95 people/day. Not a service provider but a community together. Recognized the important work of Julia Plum.

Churchwide Report: Victoria Flood

Keynote Presentation by Jeff Howison: Senior Research Analyst, Minnesota State Demographic Center

Short Break

Ministry Spotlight: Mission Developer Pastor Melissa Pickering

Ministry Spotlight: Mission Developer Pastor Mark Olson

Workshops:

Discovering the Sacred Rhythm of Sleep: A Pastor's Journey into Night Prayer.

Let's Talk about Creation: Making a Difference in Your Community

SAM Connect

Raising the Next Generation: Shifting the Focus to Parents

Cultivating Generosity in Your Congregation

Tour of Churches United for the Homeless with CEO/Pastor Devlyn Brooks.

Parliamentary Procedure in Practice: Navigating Meetings with Confidence

Rooted and Growing: Faith Formation with Young People

Scripture and Discernment: A Bible Study with Dr. Nessian

Lunch

2:00pm | Plenary 3

Bishop Bill called the session to order at 2:10pm

Brother Jeff began our time with leading a taize faith practice.

Bible Study with Dr. Nessian

Based on Ephesians 4:11-13. Future of Church is diaconal. Worship practices are life practices.

- 1.
2. Mentor people to speak the life
3. Opportunities for practice of diakonia in our local communities

Ministry Spotlight: Mission Investment Fund Video- thanks for the breaks treat!

Commissioning of SAMs

Ministry Spotlight: Eric Clapp, Committee for Racial Equity, Justice, and Right Relationship- invitation to join July Book study

Ministry Spotlight: Keith Pearson, Minister of Generosity

Ministry Spotlight: FACES of Leadership

Upcoming 15 hour continuing education course available soon.

Faith Practices

Adaptive Leadership

Coaching

Emotional Intelligence

Storytelling

Break

4pm | Plenary 4

Sharon Josephson called the session to order at 4pm

Credentials Report

109 Rostered Voting Members

236 Lay Voting Members (of which 27 are SAMs)

345 Total voting members

25 registered visitors

Ministry Spotlight: Bible Camps

Resolution 1: Compensation Guidelines

Resolution was introduced by Reference and Counsel by Curt Peterson and Deacon Suzie Porter. It was noted that a simple majority vote is required.

No Discussion:

→ Vote for Resolution One: Compensation Guidelines—Passed

Resolution 3: Continuing Resolution to establish a Constitutional Review Committee

Motion made by Pastor Jon Ragen. Seconded by Pastor Ali Haugerud.

→ Vote for Resolution Three: Constitutional Review Committee —Passed

Pastor Grant Vanderford, Bethesda, Moorhead

Motion made by Grant to suspend the rules of the Assembly to bring a Resolution forward:
Comes from the NW Washington Synod, supported by several other synods.

Parliamentarian went over the rules.

Seconded by Pastor Mark Olson

→ Vote to suspend the rules of the assembly (228 needed for motion to pass). Motion has passed.

Rules have been suspended.

Resolution: Memorial to authorize ELCA participation in national Legal Actions in Support of Vulnerable ELCA Communities.

Pastor Grant Vanderford made the motion. Seconded by Caroline Larson, Solway Lutheran.

Pastor Jake Anderson, Our Saviors, MHD – question on what it means that memorializing

Pastor Elizabeth Hiller, Dilworth Lutheran - Point of Information – is this memorialization a blanket response or in just this particular situation (response to LSS and other organizations)

Willard Hiebert, Trinity, Moorhead- Speaks for the motion

Pastor Cory Furman, First Lutheran, Bemidji- POI- Is it possible to table this until tomorrow?

→ **Kayla Billings, First Bemidji, made the motion to table this resolution until tomorrow's Plenary 5. Seconded by Eric Billings, First Bemidji.** (Requires simple majority) – **Motion passed.**

Holy Cow Award- Calvary Lutheran of Little Sauk – SAM - Al Mortenson

Nomination Report- We have a full ballot for Synod Council, Discipline Committee.
Elections – names given for Synod Council and Consultation Committee and Discipline Committee

Motion for a unanimous ballot Synod Council Mary Suomala Folkerds, Good Shepherd, Moorhead, Seconded by Pastor David Fleener, Alexandria

→ **Vote for Synod Council Elections– passed.**

Motion for a unanimous ballot for Discipline Committee Nominations made by Jeremiah Holst, Calvary Bemidji, Seconded Nola Smith, Shalom Lutheran.

→ **Vote for Discipline Committee– passed.**

Motion for a unanimous ballot for Consultation Committee made by Jerry Peterson, Augustana Lutheran Fergus Falls. Seconded by Michele Jensen, Christ the King, Moorhead.

→ **Vote for Consultation Committee– passed.**

Ministry Spotlight: Portico Video (Pastor Tim Schroeder)

Ministry Spotlight: MSUM Campus Ministry, Bemidji Campus Ministry, Concordia Campus Ministry

Financial Report & Mission Plan (2027 Budget)- Treasurer Chris Elderedge –

Fiscal year 2025: Budget vs. Actual: \$1.7 mil budgeted (ended at the end of January)- ended very close.

Proposed Mission Plan FY2027:

Notes: 68% comes from Congregational Mission Support, Change in the way we have previously published the budget: how we show transfer from restricted funds.

this current mission plan better shows events and programs & strategic initiatives (fundraising coming in for programs like FACES)

Resolution 2: to approve Mission Plan FY2027 read by Pastor Curt Peterson
→ **Resolution 2: Vote for Mission Plan (2027 Budget)– passed.**

VP Sharon Josephson closed session for Plenary 4.

Announcements and Prayer as we close for the day.

Sunday, June 1

9am | Plenary 4

Sharon Josephson called the session to order at 9am

Credentials Report

109 Rostered Voting Members

236 Lay Voting Members (of which 27 are SAMs)

345 Total voting members

25 registered visitors

Unfinished Business

Memorial brought forward from yesterday. Bishop Bill declared that the motion is out of order because the hard deadline for memorials to Churchwide Assembly has already passed (April 7). Memorial will still come before the Churchwide Assembly

Ministry Spotlight: Jeremiah 29 Cohort: Highlights from a few of the cohort members on the projects they are working on including entrepreneurial mindset for family fun nights, Spanish-English classes, backpack food program, and acquisition/cleaning up land near church property

Ministry Spotlight: Pastor Rebel, Associate to the Bishop for Mission/Director of Evangelical Mission:

Ministry Spotlight: Pastor Genelle- Associate to the Bishop for Leadership

Ministry Spotlight: Bishop Bill's Report

Nuggets include: More Congregations needing support; Deeper trust in the Gospel Mission is to go out as followers of Jesus – encourages Mental Health First Aid Course - to be equipped

Thanks and gratitude to Synod staff!

Recap of the Assembly: VP Sharon Josephson summarized the work of the assembly. What each of us are doing is critical. VP Josephson reminded us of the important work we've done over the last 6 years.

Mental Health- started way back during the times of Covid. We voted to make that happen

and it is happening.

World was changing and burning down- how are we equipping congregations during these times- **Commission Racial Justice,**

Adopted a Strategic Plan to inform the way we spent money and created projects. Our strength is our laity. Other projects include Jeremiah 29, Rural Revival, etc.

Continuing working with Large Congregations.

Joint Ministry with White Earth Project

Funding Generosity Project

Reports- projects that we as the synod have instituted and supported.

Look at the Synod staff- the work of the Spirit is at work in each of them.

Things are happening and we are embarking on our next adventure and who knows where that will take us!

Motion to adjourn was made and seconded. Bishop Bill declared the closing of the assembly.

Closing Worship

Preaching Minister: Dr. Craig Nesson



**2026 NWMN
SYNOD ASSEMBLY**
...grace in a digital space

RESOLUTIONS

Prepared for the 2026 Synod Assembly

1 **NWMN Synod of the ELCA**
2 **Resolution to Approve 2027 Compensation Guidelines**

3
4 WHEREAS

5 Whereas, the Northwestern Minnesota Synod is called to provide guidance and support
6 for the well-being of rostered ministers, and professional lay staff in their service to the
7 Gospel;

8
9 Whereas, a task force of the Synod Council—consisting of one layperson, one pastor,
10 one deacon, one Synod Authorized Minister, and the bishop—has met to review, revise,
11 and recommend updated compensation guidelines for 2027;

12
13 Therefore, be it RESOLVED,
14 that the Northwestern Minnesota Synod meeting in Assembly approves the 2027
15 Compensation Guidelines as recommended, including those for:

- 16 • Ministers of Word and Sacrament (with parsonage)
- 17 • Ministers of Word and Sacrament (without parsonage)
- 18 • Ministers of Word and Service
- 19 • Synod Authorized Ministers
- 20 • Professional Lay Staff

1 **NWMN Synod of the ELCA**
2 **Resolution to Approve Changes to Synod Constitution**

3
4 WHEREAS

5 Whereas, the 2025 the Churchwide Assembly approved changes to non-required
6 provisions of the model constitution for synods.

7
8 Whereas, the synod council discussed these changes, and determined they were
9 worthwhile amendments;

10
11 Whereas, the synod council recommends to the 2026 NWMN Synod Assembly
12 accepting the changes to S7.26, and S9.04.

13
14 Therefore, be it RESOLVED,
15 that the Northwestern Minnesota Synod meeting in Assembly approves the
16 amendments to S7.26 and S9.04.

1 **NWMN Synod of the ELCA**
2 **Continuing Resolution for the Establishment of a Care for Creation Committee**

3
4 WHEREAS the congregations of the Northwestern Minnesota (NWMN) Synod, meeting in assembly in
5 2023, voted to accept their responsibility to be stewards of the earth, and pledged to grow faithfully
6 and intentionally in this responsibility as individuals and as anticipatory communities within the synod
7 by:

- 8 · Worshiping in ways that celebrate and foster care for creation,
- 9 · Educating adults and children about biblical and theological foundations for creation care,
10 about ecological issues and community practices,
- 11 · Improving energy conservation efforts in church buildings and on their grounds,
- 12 · Promoting earth-friendly practices of members at home and work,
- 13 · Demonstrating care for creation in their local communities, and
- 14 · Advocating for energy policies at local, state and national levels that will foster cleaner,
14 renewable, and more efficient energy use in all sectors of society; and

15
16 WHEREAS the NWMN Synod Creation Care Task Force (appointed by the Synod Council pursuant to the
17 approved 2023 Resolution on Care for Creation), has provided leadership and oversight of this pledge
18 by working with Lutheran Advocacy-Minnesota, the EcoFaith Network of the Upper Midwest, the
19 Center for Climate Justice and Faith, along with other partnering organizations in fulfillment of its
20 mandate; and

21
22 WHEREAS congregations of the NWMN Synod have been living out these ecological commitments to
23 creation care in a variety of inspiring ways through forming congregational creation care teams,
hosting 24 community events, promoting energy conservation, and increasing awareness of earthkeeping
25 practices; and

26
27 WHEREAS the NWMN Synod Creation Care Task Force has seen fit to develop a mission statement and
28 set of by-laws to sustain a long term synodical commitment to this work as a newly organized Care for
29 Creation Committee; therefore, be it

30
31 RESOLVED that the NWMN Synod, meeting in assembly, establish by continuing resolution [S11.13.01]

a
32 Care for Creation Committee to work with members, congregations, ministries, companion synods,
33 affiliated organizations, and other creation-justice partners of this synod in support of the mission of
34 the Church in its calling to care for creation; and be it further

35
36 RESOLVED that the NWMN Synod, meeting in assembly, recognize care for creation as integral to the
37 values we share (i.e., “FAITHFUL in relationships. AUTHENTIC in our welcome. LOVE that makes a
38 difference.”), to our synod’s strategic plan, and to our synodical mission (to “nurture safe and healthy
39 spaces for the ministry of the Gospel to unfold and shape an abundant future for all in northwestern
40 Minnesota.”); and be it finally

41
42 RESOLVED that the NWMN Synod, meeting in assembly, renew its commitment to earth stewardship
by 43 encouraging congregations to engage this calling to creation care boldly and creatively in their local
44 communities, trusting and participating in God’s creative, redemptive, and sustaining love for the
45 world.

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[S11.13.01] The Care for Creation Committee shall work with members, congregations, ministries, companion synods, affiliated organizations, and other creation-justice partners of this synod in support of the mission of the Church in its calling to care for creation.

1. Membership Composition

- a. The Care for Creation Committee shall consist of members from as broad a representation of conferences as possible.
- b. The number of members from each conference will be determined by the Committee in consultation with the synod’s leadership, but each conference shall endeavor to provide at least one representative.
- c. The committee shall not exceed 12 members. One member should be a member of the Synod Council and act as a liaison as such.

2. Qualifications

- a. Members of the Committee shall be active members of an ELCA congregation within the Northwestern Minnesota Synod.
- b. Members should have a demonstrated commitment to creation care, sustainability, or environmental stewardship.

3. Term Lengths and Elections

- a. President and Vice President shall be elected for a term of one year by majority vote of the Committee. The VP shall move into the President role following the President’s term.
- b. Secretary and Treasurer shall be elected for a term of one year by majority vote of the Committee.
- c. All other members shall serve for a term of three years. Terms should be staggered to ensure continuity.
- d. Elections shall occur at the first meeting of the year, or as necessary to fill vacancies.
- e. A member may serve multiple consecutive terms but may not hold the office of President or Vice President for more than two consecutive terms.

4. Vacancies

- a. Should a vacancy occur in the office of the President, Vice President, Secretary, or Treasurer, a special election shall be held at the next meeting to fill the unexpired term.
- b. If a regular member's term is vacated before it concludes, the Committee shall appoint a new member to complete the term, endeavoring (to the greatest extent possible) that each conference remains represented.
- c. Members vacating their positions prior to their three year commitment are encouraged to consult with their conference to find a replacement.

5. Leadership

- a. President
 - i. The President shall preside at all meetings of the Care for Creation Committee and shall be the primary representative to the Synod Council and other synodical bodies.
 - ii. The President shall set the agenda for Committee meetings in consultation with the Vice President and other members.
 - iii. The President shall ensure that the Committee fulfills its duties and responsibilities as outlined in these by-laws.
 - iv. The President shall provide a written summary of activity to the annual Synod

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Assembly.

b. Vice President

- i. The Vice President shall assist the President in all duties and assume the duties of the President in their absence.
- ii. The Vice President shall coordinate subcommittees or work groups formed to address specific areas of creation care, as determined by the Committee.

c. Secretary

- i. The Secretary shall be responsible for keeping accurate records of all meetings and activities of the Care for Creation Committee and making sure all records are shared with the committee in a timely manner.
- ii. The Secretary shall distribute minutes of meetings to all members in a timely manner.
- iii. The Secretary shall maintain a roster of Committee members and keep contact information up to date.
- iv. The Secretary shall be responsible for any correspondence sent on behalf of the Committee.

d. Treasurer

- i. The Treasurer shall be responsible for the financial oversight of the Care for Creation Committee.
- ii. The Treasurer shall keep accurate records of all income, expenditures, and financial transactions related to Committee activities.
- iii. The Treasurer shall provide a financial report to the Committee at each meeting, including an annual financial statement.
- iv. The Treasurer shall work with the Synod to ensure that funds are managed appropriately and in accordance with synod policies.