



Northeastern Minnesota Synod, ELCA 37th Synod Assembly

April 27, 2024
Online via Zoom

Make Us One
Ephesians 4:4-6

Proposed Rules and Procedures

Voting Member Credentials and Voting Privileges

1. Voting Members to the 2024 Online Synod Assembly shall be entitled to vote on all matters before the assembly. Voting Members shall include the following:
 - a. Voting members chosen by member congregations in accordance with the Synod Constitution (†S7.21.c.).
 - b. All ministers of Word and Sacrament under call and all retired ministers of Word and Sacrament on the roster of the synod (†S7.21.a.; S7.22.01).
 - c. All ministers of Word and Service under call on the roster of the synod and all retired ministers of Word and Service on the roster of the synod (†S7.21.b.; S7.22.01.).
 - d. All members of the Synod Council (†S7.21.d.; S7.28.).
 - e. In addition to the voting membership of the lay members of congregations provided in provision (†S7.21.c.), the Synod Council may authorize annually ELCA members serving as Synod Authorized Ministers (SAMs) within the synod to serve as voting lay members of the synod assembly (S7.21.03.).
2. Each Voting Member (rostered minister and lay) must register with the assembly registrar. Each Voting Member participating via Zoom will need a unique email address and/or mobile phone number to receive the link to participate in the online voting. No voting member shall be allowed to vote unless duly registered with the assembly registrar. The deadline for registration is April 15, 2024.
3. Voting Members shall be a minimum of one lay member elected by each congregation with fewer than 175 baptized members and a minimum of two (2) lay members elected by each congregation with 175 or more baptized members related to the synod, *normally* one of whom shall be male and one of whom shall be female. All congregations having more than 500 confirmed members shall be entitled to elect an additional Voting Member for each additional 500 confirmed members or major fraction thereof (S7.21.01).
4. Voting Members for each congregation shall be the same persons for the day of the Assembly. The vote is not transferable to an alternate or other person after the opening of the first plenary session Saturday, April 27, 2024. An alternate not listed on the registration rolls must have a letter of authorization from their congregational officer or rostered minister/SAM to be registered as an official Voting Member.
5. The only people who will be allowed in the online Synod Assembly meeting will be duly registered and credentialed Voting Members, members of the Synod Staff, and the Synod Assembly Planning Committee, and others requested to be present. Online Voting Members may participate from their home or congregation, provided there is sufficient Internet access and equipment (computer, tablet, smart phone, etc.).
6. Guests and visitors to the Synod Assembly may watch on the social media(s) chosen for the assembly.

Quorum and Assembly Business

7. Fifty percent (50%) of the registered voting members, as required by the constitution (S7.14.), shall constitute a quorum.
8. Advisory members (lay members of the synod staff) shall have equal privilege addressing the assembly. Others having voice but not vote are the ELCA representative, regional staff, the chairperson of the NE MN Synod Women's Organization, and the chairperson of the synod Lutheran Youth Organization. Observers shall have the privilege to speak at the discretion of the Chair.
9. To the extent consistent with these Rules and Procedures, Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, shall govern.
10. If a person wishes to speak to the assembly, she/he should type in the Zoom Group Chat the following information: their name, their congregational membership and the reason for addressing the assembly i.e. – to make a motion or second a motion, to speak for or against the motion on the floor, to make a point of order, to move the previous question to end debate, etc. There will be people watching the Zoom chat who will notify the Chair of that person's desire to address the assembly and their reason to address the assembly. Once recognized by the Chair, speakers will first state their name and their congregational membership.
11. Except for the making of a motion, speeches shall be limited to three minutes. Speakers may speak a second time for two minutes, but only after all others have been given an opportunity to speak. Any person speaking to the assembly will speak to the Assembly Chair. The Chair will determine the order of the speakers.
12. At the discretion of the Chair, the Chair may use Unanimous Consent (also called General Consent) to adopt an action. The method of Unanimous Consent can be used to adopt a motion without the steps of putting the motion to a formal vote. After the Chair states, "If there is no objection (or "Without objection") to the [matter]", the Chair will pause to hear if there is any objection. If no one objects, the Chair announces, "Since there is no objection, the action is decided upon."

Voting

13. Elections shall proceed by Zoom Polling and/or Google Forms and/or a format designated by the Chair of the Assembly.
14. Each Voting Member may vote only once on a measure before the assembly.
15. Invalid ballots will not be counted. Invalid ballots are those ballots that:
 - a. Contain more marks than the ballot permits.
 - b. Contain a write-in vote, except where a write-in vote is specifically permitted.
16. Ballots shall be sent to the Voting Members via their registered email address and/or mobile phone number.

Elections

17. Nominations from the Zoom platform shall be made in writing on official forms available. Biographical data of the nominee shall be supplied to the assembly Chair by the person presenting the nomination. The person placing the name in nomination must determine the willingness of the nominee to serve and so state on the nomination form.
18. In all elections the names of the person receiving the highest number of votes, but not elected by a majority of the votes cast, shall be entered on the next ballot to the number of two for each vacancy unfilled (S9.08.).

Resolutions

19. All proposed resolutions are to be directed to the assembly through the Committee for Reference, Counsel and Memorial. They shall include the name, phone number and congregational membership of the author with an indication of any groups that have endorsed the resolution. Resolutions may be submitted by a congregation, a conference, synod committee, or ten (10) voting members of the synod assembly (with congregational memberships noted).

20. Resolutions, motions, amendments, and nominations made from the Zoom platform shall be made in writing in the Zoom chat and/or to info@nemnsynod.org.
21. Resolutions will be accepted by the Committee for Reference, Counsel, and Memorial until Friday, April 12. Resolutions received after April 12 must include 25 Voting Member's signatures and will be dealt with only by specific approval of the Assembly. This action would require a two-thirds vote.
22. The order in which resolutions are presented to the assembly shall be the responsibility of the chair of the Assembly and Synod Assembly Parliamentarian.
23. The Committee for Reference, Counsel, and Memorial may consult with the originator of any proposed resolution for clarification and/or to check factuality and documentation. The Committee may make grammatical changes.
24. The Committee for Reference, Counsel, and Memorial shall present resolutions to the assembly without recommendation. Resolutions received by the Committee, in accordance with the previous rules, are deemed to have been moved for adoption and require no second to become the business of the assembly.

Agenda

25. The business of the assembly shall be conducted during two (2) working sessions: the morning and afternoon of Saturday, April 27, 2024. The Chair shall have the authority to call items of business before the assembly in whatever order is most expedient for conducting assembly business. Resolutions not addressed by the assembly shall be forwarded to the Synod Council.
26. The agenda shall be presented and adopted at the first working session. If any voting member desires to add an item of new business to the agenda after the initial adoption of the agenda by the assembly, the voting member shall present such item of business to the Chair. The Chair shall report to the assembly its recommendation for the handling of such new business, which may include a recommendation that the matter is not considered. A majority vote of the assembly shall be required to add an item of new business to the agenda.

Miscellaneous

27. Anyone proposing an increase or decrease in any line item in the proposed 2025 budget shall indicate which line(s) the amount is to be taken from or added to, thereby keeping the budget in balance.

Please note:

Because of the nature of this online assembly, the variety of access to the Internet and Internet speed, etc., voting members are encouraged to be patient, kind and forgiving with the making of motions and seconds and the discussion of motions. The Assembly leadership wants to make sure all participants have adequate time to listen and consider the proceedings, to make motions and speak to the chair and be heard by the assembly.