

The Alaska Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



# **Alaska Synod, ELCA Constitution**

**September 2022**

Amended by Churchwide Assembly  
2022, 2019, 2016, 2013, 2011, 2009, 2007, 2005, 2003, 1997, 1995

Revision passed by Alaska Synod Assembly  
April 2014, April 2011, April 2009, April 2008, May 2006, June 2004, June 2002, October 1999, May 1998, June 1997

Passed by Alaska Synod Assembly  
June 1995

## Chapter 8. OFFICERS

†S8.01. The officers of this synod shall be a bishop, a vice president, a secretary, and a treasurer.

S8.10. Bishop

†S8.11. The bishop shall be elected by the Synod Assembly. The bishop shall be a minister of Word and Sacrament of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

†S8.12. As this synod's pastor, the bishop shall:

- a) Preach, teach, and administer the sacraments in accord with the Confession of Faith of this church.
- b) Have primary responsibility for the ministry of Word and Sacrament in this synod and its congregations, providing pastoral care and leadership for this synod, its congregations, ministers of Word and Sacrament, and its ministers of Word and Service.
- c) Exercise solely this church's power to ordain (or provide for the ordination by another synod bishop of) approved candidates who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested letter of call for the office of ministry of Word and Sacrament (and as provided in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*).
- d) Ordain (or provide for the ordination of) approved candidates who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested letter of call for service as ministers of Word and Service.
- e) Attest letters of call for persons called to serve congregations in the synod, letters of call for persons called by the Synod Council, and letters of call for persons on the rosters of this synod called by the Church Council.
- f) Install (or provide for the installation of) rostered ministers whose calls the bishop has attested.
- g) Exercise leadership in the mission of this church and in so doing:
  1. Interpret and advocate the mission and theology of the whole church;
  2. Lead in fostering support for and commitment to the mission of this church within this synod;
  3. Coordinate the use of the resources available to this synod as it seeks to promote the health of this church's life and witness in the areas served by this synod.
  4. Submit a report to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly concerning this synod's life and work; and
  5. Advise and counsel this synod's related institutions and organizations.
- h) Practice leadership in strengthening the unity of the Church and in so doing:
  1. Exercise oversight of the preaching, teaching, and administration of the sacraments within this synod in accord with the Confession of Faith of this church;
  2. Be responsible for administering the constitutionally established processes for the resolution of controversies and for the discipline of rostered ministers, and congregations of this synod.

3. Be the chief ecumenical officer of this synod;
  4. Be a member of the Conference of Bishops and consult regularly with other synod bishops;
  5. Foster awareness of other churches throughout the Lutheran world communion and, where appropriate, engage in contact with leaders of those churches;
  6. Cultivate communion in faith and mission with appropriate Christian judicatory leaders functioning within the territory of this synod; and
  7. Be ex officio a member of the Churchwide Assembly.
- i) Oversee and administer the work of this synod and in so doing:
1. Serve as the president of the synod corporation and be the chief executive officer and administrative officer of this synod; who is authorized and empowered, in the name of this synod, to sign deeds or other instruments and to affix the seal of this synod;
  2. Preside at all meetings of the Synod Assembly and provide for the preparation of the agenda for the Synod Assembly, Synod Council, and the council's Executive Committee;
  3. Ensure that the constitution and bylaws of this synod and of the churchwide organization are duly observed within this synod, and that the actions of this synod in conformity therewith are carried into effect;
  4. Direct and guide the work of the other officers;
  5. Exercise supervision over the work of all synod staff members;
  6. Appoint all committees for which provision is not otherwise made;
  7. Be a member of all committees and any other organizational units of the synod, except as otherwise provided in this constitution;
  8. Provide for preparation and maintenance of synod rosters containing the names and addresses of all rostered ministers of this synod and a record of the calls under which they are serving or the date on which their retired or disability status took effect;
  9. Annually bring to the attention of the Synod Council the names of all rostered ministers on leave from call or engaged in approved graduate study in conformity with the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this church and pursuant to prior action of this synod through the Synod Council;
  10. Provide for prompt reporting to the secretary of this church of:
    - a) additions to and subtractions from the rosters of this synod;
    - b) the issuance of a certificate of transfer for rostered ministers in good standing who have received and accepted a properly issued, duly attested, regular letter of call under the jurisdiction of another synod;
    - c) the entrance of the names of such persons for whom proper certificates of transfer have been received;
  11. Provide for preparation and maintenance of a roster of the congregations of this synod and the names of the laypersons who have been elected to represent them; and
  12. Appoint a statistician of this synod, secure the reports of the congregations and make the reports available to the secretary of this church for collation, analysis, and distribution of the statistical summaries to this synod and the other synods of this church.

- †S8.13. The synod bishop may appoint an attorney, admitted to the bar within the territory of the synod or the state where the synod is located, to be Synod Attorney. The appointment must be approved by the Synod Council and reported to the Synod Assembly and to the secretary of the church. The appointment continues until resignation or until a successor is appointed. The Synod Attorney provides legal advice and counsel to the synod officers and the Synod Council. The Synod Attorney is expected to be familiar with the governing documents and policies of the synod and, as necessary, to attend meetings of the Synod Council. The Synod Attorney serves without salary, but may be retained and compensated for specific legal services requested by the synod.
- S8.14. The synodical bishop may have such assistants as this synod shall from time to time authorize.
- †S8.15. The presiding bishop of this church, or the appointee of the bishop, shall install into office, in accord with the policy and approved rite of this church, each newly elected synod bishop.
- †S8.16. Conflicts of Interest
- †S8.16.01. The following procedures shall govern matters of potential conflicts of interest for synodical bishops:
- a) Whenever a synod bishop determines that a matter of the kind described in †S8.16.01.b. may require the bishop's determination or action with respect to a related individual as defined in †S8.16.01.c., the synod bishop shall withdraw from personal involvement in such matter and shall so notify the presiding bishop. The presiding bishop shall then appoint another synod bishop from the same region to handle the matter to conclusion. In dealing with such matter, the appointed bishop shall exercise all of the functions and authority to the same extent as if the appointed bishop were the elected bishop of the withdrawing bishop's synod.
  - b) Matters include any proceedings under Chapter 20, proceedings under provisions 7.46. and 7.75. of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* (†S14.18. and †S14.43.), candidacy, reinstatement, and similar matters where determinations or actions by the synod bishop could change, limit, restrict, approve, authorize, or deny the related individual's ministry on one of the official rosters of this church.
  - c) A related individual is one who, with respect to the synod bishop, is a spouse, parent, son, daughter, sibling, uncle, aunt, niece, nephew, grandparent, grandchild, including corresponding members of blended families and in-laws (parent, son, daughter, or sibling of a spouse, spouse of a sibling, or the parent or sibling of the spouse of a sibling).
- S8.20. Vice President
- †S8.21. The vice president shall be elected by the Synod Assembly. The vice president shall be a layperson. The vice president shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod. The vice president shall not receive a salary for the performance of the duties of the office.
- S8.22. The vice president shall chair the Synod Council.

**S8.30.** Secretary

†**S8.31.** The secretary shall be elected by the Synod Assembly. The secretary shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod. The secretary may be either a layperson or a rostered minister.

†**S8.32.** The secretary shall:

- a) Keep the minutes of all meetings of the Synod Assembly and Synod Council, be responsible for distribution of such minutes, and perform such other duties as this synod may from time to time direct.
- b) Be authorized and empowered, in the name of this synod, to attest all instruments which require the same, and which are signed and sealed by the bishop.
- c) In consultation with the bishop, classify and arrange all important papers and documents and deposit them in the archives of this synod.
- d) Submit to the secretary of this church at least nine months before each regular Churchwide Assembly a certified list of the voting members elected by the Synod Assembly.

**S8.40.** Treasurer

†**S8.41.** The treasurer may be elected by the Synod Assembly or may be appointed by the Synod Council. The treasurer shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod. The treasurer may be either a layperson or a rostered minister.

**S8.42.** The treasurer shall provide and be accountable for:

- a) Management of the monies and accounts of this synod, its deeds, mortgages, contracts, evidences of claims and revenues, and trust funds, holding the same at all times subject to the order of this synod.
- b) Investment of funds upon the authorization of the Synod Council.
- c) Receipt and acknowledgment of offerings, contributions, and bequests made to this synod, collecting interest and income from its invested funds, and paying regular appropriations and orders on the several accounts as approved and directed by the Synod Council. The treasurer shall transmit each month to the treasurer of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America the funds received by this synod for the general work of this church as well as funds to support restricted programs of this church.
- d) Maintenance of regular account with each congregation of this synod and informing the congregation, at least quarterly, of the status of this account.
- e) Rendering at each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly a full, detailed, and duly audited report of receipts and disbursements in the several accounts of this synod for the preceding fiscal year, together with the tabulation, for record and publication in the minutes, of the contributions from the congregations.

**S8.50.** General Provisions

†**S8.51.** The terms of office of the officers of this synod shall be as follows:

- a) The bishop of this synod shall be elected to a term of six years and may be reelected.
- b) The vice president and secretary of this synod shall be elected to a term of four years and maybe re-elected. The officer shall serve until a successor takes office.
- c) The treasurer of this synod shall be elected to a term of four years and may be re-elected reappointed. The treasurer shall serve until a successor takes office.

**S8.51.01.** All officers may serve in their respective offices no more than twelve consecutive years. The bishop may serve a maximum of two six-year terms and all other officers may serve a maximum of three four-year terms.

**S8.52.** The terms of the officers shall begin on the first day of the third month following election or, in special circumstances, at a time designated by the Synod Council.

†**S8.53.** Each officer shall be a voting member in a congregation of this synod, except that the bishop needs not be a member of a congregation of this synod at the time of election.

†**S8.54.** Should the bishop die, resign, or be unable to serve, the vice president, after consultation with the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, shall convene the Synod Council to arrange for the appropriate care of the responsibilities of the bishop until an election of a new bishop can be held or, in the case of temporary disability, until the bishop is able to serve again. Such arrangements may include the appointment by the Synod Council of an interim bishop, who during the vacancy or period of disability shall possess all of the powers and authority of a regularly elected bishop. The term of the successor bishop, elected by the next Synod Assembly or a special meeting of the Synod Assembly called for the purpose of election, shall be six years with the subsequent election to take place at the Synod Assembly closest to the expiration of such a term and with the starting date of a successor term to be governed by constitutional provision S8.52.

**S8.55.** Should the vice president, secretary, or treasurer die, resign, or be unable to serve, the bishop, with the approval of the Executive Committee of the Synod Council, shall arrange for the appropriate care of the responsibilities of the officer until an election of a new officer can be held or, in the case of temporary disability, until the officer is able to serve again. The term of the successor officer, elected by the next Synod Assembly, shall be four years. If the treasurer is appointed by the Synod Council, the Synod Council shall appoint a new treasurer to a four-year term.

**S8.55.01.** To maintain good order, the Synod Council has the authority to appoint an interim replacement of an officer for a term so elections continue in a rotational basis.

†**S8.56.** The Executive Committee of the Synod Council shall determine whether an officer is unable to serve; the officer may appeal the decision of the Executive Committee by requesting a hearing before the Synod Council. A meeting to determine the ability of an officer to serve shall be called upon the request of at least three members of the Executive Committee and prior written notice of the meeting shall be given to the officer in question at least ten calendar days prior to the meeting.

†S8.57.

The recall or dismissal of an officer and the vacating of office may be effected for willful disregard or violation of the constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this church; for such physical or mental disability as renders the officer incapable of performing the duties of office; or for such conduct as would subject the officer to disciplinary action as a rostered minister or as a member of a congregation of this church.

- a) Proceedings for the recall or dismissal of a synod bishop shall be instituted by written petition by:
  1. the Synod Council on an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of its elected members present and voting;
  2. the Synod Assembly on an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of its members present and voting;
  3. at least 10 synod bishops; or the presiding bishop of this church.
- b) Proceedings for the recall or dismissal of an officer of a synod, other than the synodical bishop, shall be instituted by written petition by:
  1. the Synod Council on an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of its elected members present and voting;
  2. the Synod Assembly on an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of its members present and voting; or
  3. the synod bishop.
- c) The petition shall be filed with the chair of the Committee on Appeals (in care of the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 8765 West Higgins Road, Chicago, Illinois 60631) and shall set forth the specific charge or charges.
- d) Upon the filing of a written petition, the Executive Committee of the Synod Council may temporarily suspend the officer from service in the synod without prejudice, but with continuation of compensation, including benefits, if the officer is a salaried employee of the synod.
- e) In the case of alleged physical or mental incapacity of an officer of the synod, the procedures outlined in †S8.56. shall be followed, and such officer shall comply with the decision of the Synod Council. If such officer fails or refuses to comply, the Synod Council may proceed to petition for recall or dismissal as follows:
  1. the Synod Council will submit a written report of their findings and the basis of their decision to the Committee on Appeals.
  2. the Committee on Appeals, exclusive of any members who are disqualified, shall review the findings and decision of the Synod Council and by an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of those present and voting may adopt the findings and grant the petition.
- f) If the synod officer is a minister of Word and Sacrament, grounds for recall or dismissal include those set forth in ELCA bylaw 20.22.01. and as defined under the process described in ELCA constitutional provisions 20.21. and 20.22. as grounds for discipline. If the officer is a minister of Word and Service, grounds for recall or dismissal include those set forth in ELCA bylaw 20.23.01. and as defined under the process described in ELCA constitutional provisions 20.21. and 20.22. as grounds for discipline.
- g) If the officer is a layperson, grounds for recall or dismissal include those set forth in ELCA bylaw 20.41.01. as grounds for discipline.

- h) If the case of alleged willful disregard or violation of the constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions or of alleged conduct as would subject the officer to disciplinary action, the following procedures shall apply:
  - 1. the petition shall be referred to the Committee on Appeals, which shall function as the discipline hearing committee that shall conduct a hearing in accordance with the rules provided for in ELCA bylaw 20.22.14. except to the extent that those rules are in conflict with the provisions of this bylaw; and
  - 2. the members of the Committee on Appeals, other than those who are disqualified, may grant the petition by an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of those present and voting.
  
- i) Written notice of a decision by the Committee on Appeals that the charges have been sustained shall be given to the affected officer and to the Synod Council, and the office shall be vacated.

†S8.58.

If the bishop is to be temporarily absent from the synod for an extended period, not to exceed 90 days, the bishop, after consultation with the presiding bishop and with the consent of the Synod Council, may appoint as acting bishop for such period a minister of Word and Sacrament of this church. Except as limited by action of the Synod Council, an acting bishop shall possess all of the powers and authority of a regularly elected bishop other than authority to ordain or to authorize the ordination of properly approved candidates for ordination.



## Chapter 9. NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

- †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. The Synod Assembly shall elect members of the Churchwide Assembly in accordance with bylaw 12.41.11. of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.
- S9.01.A16. The Synod Council Executive Committee shall provide for background checks for persons nominated for synodical office prior to the Synod Assembly at which the election will take place or as soon as possible after the Synod Assembly for newly elected officers nominated from the floor who were not identified as nominees prior to the Assembly. The process shall be as follows:
- a) Prior to the Synod Assembly appropriate notice of the background check requirement and protocol will be provided to voting members, potential nominees, and others as directed by the Synod Council.
  - b) Nominees and newly elected officers are required to provide written consent to a background check and all information necessary to complete a background check, which should be completed prior to the Synod Assembly with respect to nominees and prior to installation for newly elected officers, if possible.
  - c) The Synod Council's Executive Committee shall designate one Executive Committee or Synod Council member to obtain the background checks. The Bishop may also obtain background checks.
  - d) All background checks for nominees and newly elected officers will entail a criminal background check. A financial background check will be completed for nominees for treasurer. The Executive Committee shall decide whether additional types of background checks are appropriate for each officer position.
  - e) The background check results shall be provided to that nominee or elected officer and to the Synod Council's Executive Committee. Further disclosure of the results may be determined by the Executive Committee.
  - f) The Executive Committee may adopt other procedures or protocols as are necessary to provide for background checks for nominees and newly elected synodical officers and shall report such actions to the Synod Council.
- S9.02. In all elections by the Synod Assembly, other than for the bishop, a majority of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election.
- S9.03. There shall be a Nominating Committee consisting of seven (7) members who shall be appointed by the Synod Council to serve for each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly. Additional nominations may be made from the floor for all elections for which nominations are made by the Nominating Committee.

- S9.03.01.** The Nominating Committee shall consist of one (1) person from the Synod Council and six (6) members at large, preferably with at least one person from each of the clusters of the synod. Terms shall be restricted to not more than three consecutive years.
- S9.04.** The bishop shall be elected by the Synod Assembly by ecclesiastical ballot. Three-fourths of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election on the first ballot. If no one is elected, the first ballot shall be considered the nominating ballot. Three-fourths of the legal votes cast on the second ballot shall be necessary for election. The third ballot shall be limited to the seven persons (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of legal votes on the second ballot, and two-thirds of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election. The fourth ballot shall be limited to the three persons (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of legal votes on the third ballot, and 60% of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election. On subsequent ballots a majority of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election. These ballots shall be limited to the two persons (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of legal votes on the previous ballot.
- S9.05.** The Nominating Committee shall nominate at least one person for vice president; additional nominations may be made from the floor.
- S9.06.** The Synod Council shall nominate at least one person for secretary; additional nominations may be made from the floor.
- S9.07.** If the treasurer is elected, the Synod Council shall nominate at least one person for treasurer; additional nominations may be made from the floor.
- S9.08.** 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. On any ballot when only two names appear, a majority of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election.
- S9.09.** The result of each ballot in every election shall be announced in detail to the Assembly.
- †**S9.10.** When notified by the secretary of this church, on behalf of the Nominating Committee of the Churchwide Assembly, the Synod Assembly shall nominate two persons in the specified categories for possible election by the Churchwide Assembly to the Church Council.
- S9.11.** The Synod Council shall elect or appoint representatives to the steering committee of its region.
- S9.11.01.** The representatives to the Region I Council are to be the bishop and one lay delegate. The lay delegate will normally be the synod vice-president. In the event that the vice-president is unable to attend, the Synod Council will appoint a lay representative for one meeting only.
- †**S9.12.** Background checks and screening shall be required and completed for persons nominated as synod officers prior to their election, if possible, or as soon as practical after their election. The specific procedures and timing of background checks and screening shall be determined by the Synod Council.

## Chapter 10. SYNOD COUNCIL

- †**S10.01.** The Synod Council consisting of the four officers of the synod, 10 to 24 other members, and at least one youth and at least one young adult, shall be elected by the Synod Assembly.
- a) Each person elected to the Synod Council shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod, with the exception of ministers on a roster of this synod who reside outside the territory of this synod. The process for election and the term of office when not otherwise provided shall be specified in the bylaws. A member of the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, unless otherwise elected as a voting member of the Synod Council, may serve as an advisory member of the Synod Council with voice but not vote.
  - b) The term of office of members of the Synod Council, with the exception of the officers and the youth member, shall be four (4) years.
- S10.01.01.** The Synod Council shall consist of thirteen (13) members in addition to the officers of the synod, plus the elected Multicultural Committee representative, the elected youth member, the President elected by the women's organization (ASWO) and the President elected by the Men inMission organization, so long as the latter two organizations have a functioning statewide organization.
- S10.01.02.** The thirteen (13) members of the Synod Council shall be elected to four-year terms by the Synod Assembly at large, but shall be chosen from the five (5) clusters, one (1) lay and one (1) minister of Word and Sacrament from each cluster and two (2) representatives-at-large, both lay. The cluster which includes Anchorage shall have one (1) additional lay member.
- S10.01.03.** Terms of office shall begin on the first day of the third month following election.
- †**S10.02.** The Synod Council shall be the board of directors of this synod and shall serve as its interim legislative authority between meetings of the Synod Assembly. It may make decisions which are not in conflict with actions taken by the Synod Assembly or which are not precluded by provisions of this constitution or the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.

- S10.03.** The functions of the Synod Council shall be to:
- a) Exercise trusteeship responsibilities on behalf of this synod.
  - b) Recommend program goals and budgets to the regular meetings of the Synod Assembly.
  - c) Carry out the resolutions of the Synod Assembly.
  - d) Provide for an annual review of the roster of ministers of Word and Sacrament and the roster of ministers of Word and Service, receive and act upon appropriate recommendations regarding those persons whose status is subject to reconsideration and action under the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, and make a report to the Synod Assembly of the Synod Council's actions in this regard.
  - e) Issue letters of call to rostered ministers as authorized by Chapter 7 of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.
  - f) Fill vacancies until the next regular meeting of the Synod Assembly except as may otherwise be provided in the constitution or bylaws of this synod, and determine the fact of the incapacity of an officer of this synod.
  - g) Report its actions to the regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.
  - h) Perform such other functions as are set forth in the bylaws of this synod, or as may be delegated to it by the Synod Assembly.
- S10.03.01.** The Synod Council shall appoint members to fill any vacancies which arise on the Synod Council. Said appointments shall be made with regard to the goals of geographic, clergy-laity, male-female, and minority requirements. [See S10.03f.]
- 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.
- S10.05.** No elected member of the Synod Council shall receive compensation for such service.
- S10.06.** If a member of the Synod Council ceases to meet the requirements of the position to which she or he was elected, the office filled by such member shall at once become vacant.
- S10.07.** The composition of the Synod Council, the number of its members, and the manner of their selection, as well as the organization of the Synod Council, its additional duties and responsibilities, and the number of meetings to be held each year shall be as set forth in the bylaws.
- S10.07.01.** To the extent permitted by state law, meetings of the Synod Council and its committees may be held electronically or by telephone conference, and notice of all meetings may be provided electronically.
- S10.07.02.** The Synod Council shall meet at least twice per year and additionally upon the call of the synod's bishop. Meetings may include audio conferencing, email, or other electronic communication.

- S10.07.03.** The Synod Council shall determine the membership of all the committees and the committees necessary to carry out the work of the synod.
- S10.07.04.** The Synod Council may convene a Task Force or an ad hoc committee of three to five (3-5) members to carry out a specific assignment with a stated ending date to complete the assignment and a required report at the completion of its work.
- S10.07.05.** Auxiliary Organizations
- a) Alaska Synodical Women’s Organization (ASWO): The ASWO President shall be an ex officio member of the Synod Council. The ASWO President’s expenses incurred in attending Synod Council meetings shall be covered by the Synod travel budget.
  - b) Men in Mission: The Men in Mission President shall be an ex officio member of the Synod Council. The Men in Mission President’s expenses incurred in attending Synod Council meetings shall be covered by the Synod travel budget.
- S10.07.06.** Representatives of the Synod elected at the Synod Assembly
- a) Pacific Lutheran University (PLU) Corporation: In accordance with the guidelines established by PLU.
  - b) AK Child & Family: Three (3) members. One (1) elected each year for a three-year term. One (1) female, one (1) male and one (1) minister of Word and Sacrament with consideration given for minority representation is encouraged by AK Child & Family.

## Chapter 11. COMMITTEES

- †S11.01. There shall be an Executive Committee, a Consultation Committee, a Committee on Discipline, a Mutual Ministry Committee, an Audit Committee, and such other committees as this synod may from time to time determine. The duties and functions of such committees, or any other organizational units created by this synod, and the composition and organizational structure of such units, shall be as set forth in this constitution or in the bylaws or continuing resolutions and shall be subject to any applicable provisions or requirements of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.
- S11.01.01. The executive committee shall consist of the officers of the synod. The executive committee shall manage the day-to-day affairs of the synod and act for and speak for the synod when the Synod Council or the Synod Assembly is not meeting or in session, except in any matters of policy or procedures reserved to other officers or representative groups by the Churchwide constitution, this constitution, or these bylaws.
- S11.01.02. The Synod Council by its own action or at the request of the synod bishop shall establish and provide for the appointment of members to such other committees as they deem necessary to handle the affairs of the Synod.
- †S11.02. The Consultation Committee of this synod shall consist of at least six persons and not more than 12 persons, of whom half shall be rostered ministers and half shall be laypersons, who shall each be elected by the Synod Assembly for a term of six years without consecutive reelection. The functions of the Consultation Committee are set forth in Chapter 20 of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* and in Chapter 17 of this constitution. The size of the Consultation Committee, in accord with this provision, shall be defined in this synod's bylaws.
- †S11.03. The Committee on Discipline of this synod shall consist of 12 persons, of whom six shall be rostered ministers and six shall be laypersons, who shall each be elected by the Synod Assembly for a term of six years without consecutive reelection.
- a) The functions of the Committee on Discipline of this synod are set forth in Chapter 20 of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.
  - b) The Synod Council shall fill vacancies on the Committee on Discipline for any unexpired term.
- †S11.04. The Mutual Ministry Committee shall be appointed by the Executive Committee of the Synod Council to provide support and counsel to the bishop.
- S11.04.01. The committee on mutual ministries shall consist of three (3) members. This committee shall seek to give encouragement by its concerns for spiritual, emotional and physical well-being. It will allow for open communication concerning attitude and conditions within the church.

- †S11.05.** The Audit Committee of this synod shall consist of three to six persons, none of whom is a member of the synod staff. Up to half of the committee members may be Synod Council members. The Audit Committee members shall be elected by the Synod Council for a term of three years and be eligible for re-election to a second consecutive three-year term. The terms of the Audit Committee members shall be staggered. The Audit Committee shall be responsible for assisting the Synod Council in fulfilling its general oversight of the synod's accounting, financial reporting, internal control systems, and external audit processes as provided in †S15.31.
- S11.06.** Candidacy Committee
- S11.06.01.** The Candidacy Committee is responsible for determining the readiness of persons to enter the candidacy process and to begin the theological education, for endorsing individuals as candidates of this church, and in the approval process for determining an individual's qualifications and readiness to serve in rostered ministry.
- S11.11.** This synod shall in its bylaws or by continuing resolution establish a process to ensure that the members of its committees and other organizational units will be persons possessing the necessary knowledge and competence to be effective members of such units, and to meet the requirements of †S6.04. With the exception of ministers on the rosters of this synod who reside outside the territory of this synod, each member of a committee of this synod, or any other organizational unit created by this synod, shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod.

## **Chapter 12. CONFERENCES, CLUSTERS, COALITIONS, AREA SUBDIVISIONS AND NETWORKS**

- †**S12.01.** This synod may establish conferences, clusters, coalitions, area subdivisions, and networks as appropriate within its territory and in collaboration with other synods and entities as specified in the bylaws and continuing resolutions. The purpose of such groupings shall be to foster interdependent relationships for missional purposes among congregations, synods, the churchwide organization, and other affiliates.
- S12.01.01.** The clusters of the Alaska Synod shall be determined by the Synod Council.
- S12.01.02.** The clusters of the Synod are encouraged to meet twice each year for fellowship, for equipping the members of the cluster for service, for carrying out the work done by the congregations through the cluster and carrying out the assignments given to the cluster. One of these meetings could be held at the time of the Synod Assembly. At or by the time of the Synod Assembly the voting members from the cluster shall elect a Cluster Dean and persons for other synod committees as needed.
- S12.01.03.** The Cluster Dean shall be elected by the voting members of the cluster at or by the time of the Synod Assembly and he or she shall serve a two-year term, he or she may be elected to a second term. The Cluster Dean shall be a minister of Word and Sacrament serving within the cluster. The Cluster Dean may assist the bishop in the call process, in conflict resolution, in communicating with the parishes and ministers of Word and Sacrament of the cluster, and may represent the bishop at congregational events within the cluster or act in behalf of the bishop when the bishop is out of the synod.