

**Bylaws
of the
West Virginia--Western Maryland Synod**

**23 November 2021
(as amended by the 2021 Synod Assembly)**

(Bylaw Section Numbers Coincide With Constitution Chapter Numbers)

Section I

Reserved For Future Use.

Section II

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Section III

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Section IV

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Section V

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Section VI

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Section VII

The Synod Assembly

B7.01. A notice of the time and place of the Synod Assembly shall be given to all pastors and to the readers of the Bishop's Road Show E-News at least sixty days before the opening day of the assembly.

B7.02. The secretary of the synod shall prepare in advance of any assembly the roster of the synod, delivering a copy thereof to the Committee on Registration and Attendance. The secretary shall list as voting members those persons whose credentials have been sent by the congregations.

B7.03. The bishop of synod shall appoint the following convention committees:

- Committee on Elections
- Committee on Minutes
- Committee on Reference and Counsel
- Committee on Registration and Attendance
- Committee on Resolutions
- Committee on Worship

B7.05. Every congregation shall have the right to memorialize the assembly of this synod on subjects affecting its own welfare and legitimate interests.

B7.06. There shall be a division between the voting members and the others on the assembly floor which shall be indicated by a marker(s). Voting members and those persons accorded privilege of seat and voice shall seat themselves in the section in front of the marker(s). All others shall be seated behind the marker(s).

B7.07. When a voting member is unable to serve, the alternate voting member shall be seated when the Committee on Registration and Attendance has been provided with the necessary information and the alternate has been given a voting member's card.

B7.08. All retired ordained ministers on the roster of this synod in attendance at the Synod Assembly shall be voting members provided that the voting membership of the Assembly is still 60% laypersons.

B7.10. All motions, resolutions, amendments, and nominations shall be submitted in writing and on proper forms available from the secretary of synod or the assembly pages. This provision may be waived by the secretary.

Program

B7.13. All appointments for the conduct of general religious services or public meetings shall be made by the bishop.

B7.14. The secretary shall post on the synod web site the bulletin of reports at least ten days before each regular Synod Assembly.

Procedures

B7.16. A resolution of a general character which is not germane to the pending question or report shall be given by the proposer to a Committee of Reference and Counsel, which shall report thereon to the assembly with its recommendations. Other duties of the committee shall be (a) to recommend special orders for the hearing of representatives, (b) to grant or deny permission to distribute printed matter not issuing from the office of the secretary and (c) to give such assistance to the bishop as may be desired in the course of the assembly.

B7.17. All reports published in the bulletin of reports shall be received by the assembly by virtue of that fact without vote.

B7.18. Voting members shall not absent themselves from any meeting of the assembly without valid excuse.

Section VIII

B8.01. If the vice-president is unable to or recuses his/her prerogative to serve as an *ex officio* voting member of the Churchwide Assembly, an alternate lay person of the same gender, meeting all other requirements, may be credentialed by the authority empowered to do so under the governing documents of the of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Section IX

Nominations and Elections

B9.02. Ninety days prior to the Synod Assembly, the Nominating Committee shall post on the synod website, shall post on The Bishop's Roadshow, and shall send to the pastors of the Synod a list of the offices and positions to be filled by election and shall invite nominations for these offices and positions.

B9.03. Nominations by pastors, congregational councils, conferences, and voting members of synod congregations, along with the necessary vita information requested by the Nominating Committee, shall be sent to the Nominating Committee within thirty days.

B9.04. The Nominating Committee shall nominate a minimum of two persons for each office and position to be filled by election, with the exception of those positions assigned to young adults, youth, or persons of color and/or primary language other than English.

B9.05. The report of the Nominating Committee, which shall include the names of the committee's nominees with, at minimum, congregational membership and exposition, shall be published on the synod web site at least ten days prior to the assembly.

B9.07. In all elections by the Synod Assembly, other than for the Bishop, additional nominations may be made from the floor. Nominators may provide copies of the completed nomination form (as defined by the nominating committee) to the secretary of the synod for distribution.

B9.09. All terms of office, except as otherwise provided in the constitution and bylaws of the Synod, shall begin the first day of the second month following election.

Section X

Synod Council

B10.01. The Synod Council shall consist of the four officers of the synod, four pastors, six lay members, and one youth member and one young adult.

- (a) Four pastors shall be elected, one from each of the four conferences.
- (b) Six lay members shall be elected, one from each of the four conferences and two members at large.
- (c) The youth member shall be elected at large. The youth member shall not have reached the age of 18 at the time of election.
- (d) The young adult member shall be elected at large. The young adult member shall be between (and inclusive of) the ages of 18 and 30 at the time of election.

B10.02. Terms of office:

- (a) Four pastors, six lay members, and the young adult member shall be elected for a three-year term and shall not serve for more than two consecutive terms.
- (b) The youth member shall be elected to a one-year term.

B10.03. The Synod Council shall meet in regular session at least twice a year. Any additional meeting(s) shall be by call of the vice president, the bishop, the presiding bishop of the ELCA, or petition by $\frac{1}{3}$ of the voting members of the council.

B10.04. The president of the synodical women's organization or her appointee will serve as an advisory member of the Synod Council with voice, but without vote.

B10.05. The Synod Council shall have an Executive Committee composed of the officers and three members of the council (1 pastor, 2 lay members) elected by the council. The Executive Committee shall counsel with the officers and shall perform those functions of the Synod Council assigned to it by the Synod Council. The Executive Committee, with the exception of the bishop of this synod, shall review the work of the bishop, assistants to the bishop and support staff of the synod and shall recommend salaries and benefits for the bishop, assistants to the bishop and support staff of the synod.

B10.07. From within its membership, including such other members of the synod as desired, the Synod Council shall appoint a Budget and Finance Committee.

B10.08. Synod Council and all other committees may, at the discretion of the chair, employ mail (including asynchronous telecommunications) voting so long as all members have been notified of the call for vote and have acknowledged that call for vote, a unit veto striking down the question.

Section XI

Committees, Commissions and Other Organization Units

B11.01. There shall be a Consultation Committee consisting of twelve (12) persons, of whom three (6) shall be ordained ministers and three (6) shall be laypersons, who shall be elected by the Synod Assembly for a term of six (6) years without consecutive reelection. The bishop of the synod shall be a member of the Consultation Committee ex-officio except in instances when the bishop brings charges against an ordained minister. The responsibilities and procedures of this committee shall be those outlined in Chapter 20 of the constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

B11.02. There shall be a Committee on Discipline which shall be composed of twelve (12) persons, of whom six (6) shall be ordained ministers and six (6) shall be laypersons, who shall be elected by the Synod Assembly for a term of six (6) years without consecutive reelection. The bishop shall not be a member of the Committee on Discipline. The responsibilities and procedures of this committee shall be those outlined in Chapter 20 of the constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

B11.03. There shall be a Professional Candidacy Committee to provide for the professional leadership recruitment preparation and support in accordance with churchwide standards and policies and to certify candidates for the ordained ministry in cooperation with the appropriate seminaries of this church. This committee shall have six (6) members, four (4) laypersons and two (2) ordained ministers, appointed for a term of six (6) years. The terms of those initially appointed shall be staggered so that not all terms will expire at the same time.

B11.07. There shall be such operational committees as deemed necessary by this synod to guide and support the ministry of the synod and its congregations in the various aspects of the Church's mission. Such committees shall normally be created or disbanded by continuing resolution of the Synod Council, but nothing herein shall preclude the right of the Synod Assembly to create or disband such operational committees by either continuing resolution or bylaw.

B11.12. Vacancies upon committees, commissions and boards shall be filled by the Synod Council. Vacancies may occur through resignations, death or by a chairperson declaring a vacancy upon a committee, commission or board after two unexcused absences by a member.

B11.14. The synodical women's organizational president or her appointee will serve as the representative of the synodical women's organization to the Synod Council and will report to the Synod Council and the Synod Assembly.

B11.15. The synod bishop or the bishop's appointee will serve as the representative of the synod to the synodical women's organization and will provide reports to the board meetings and conventions of the synodical women's organization.

Section XII

Conferences, Clusters and Coalitions

Designations

B12.01. There shall be four conferences designated as follows:

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(a). Monongahela Valley - Mountain Conference

1. Bittinger MD, Emmanuel
2. Jennings MD, Zion
3. Swanton MD, St. John's (Meadow Mountain)
4. Clarksburg WV, St. Mark
5. Davis WV, St. John
6. Elkins WV, Holy Trinity
7. Fairmont WV, Grace
8. Grafton WV, Church of the Covenant

9. McHenry MD, Shepherd of the Hills
 10. Morgantown WV, St. Paul
 11. New Milton WV, St. Johannes
 12. Oakland MD, St. Mark's
 13. Accident MD, St. Paul's
 14. Accident MD, St. John's (Cove)
 15. Friendsville MD, Grace
 16. Aurora WV, St. Paul
 17. Red House MD, St. John's
- (b). Ohio - Kanawha Valley Conference
1. Beckley WV, St. Luke
 2. Charleston WV, Trinity
 3. Huntington WV, Christ the King (Barboursville)
 4. Huntington WV, St. Paul
 5. Hurricane, WV, Cross of Grace
 6. Letart WV, St Mark (Upper Flats)
 7. New Haven WV, St. Paul
 8. Point Pleasant WV, St. Peter
 9. Parkersburg WV, First
 10. Vienna WV, Christ
- (c). Potomac Conference
1. Martinsburg WV, St. John
 2. Martinsburg WV, Trinity
 3. Charles Town WV, St Thomas
 4. Harpers Ferry WV, St John
 5. Petersburg WV, Grace
 6. Baker WV, Zion
 7. Moorefield WV, Mt. Olive (Peru)
 8. Gore VA, Fairview
 9. Rio WV, Ebenezer
 10. Wardensville WV, St. Peter
 11. Yellow Spring WV, Hebron
 12. Franklin WV, Faith
 13. Minnehaha Springs WV, New Hope
 14. Moyers WV, St. John
 15. Upper Tract WV, Mt. Hope
 16. Brandywine WV, Calvary
 17. Keyser WV, Trinity
 18. Westernport MD, Mt. Calvary
 19. Shepherdstown WV, St. Peter
 20. Uvilla WV, St. James
- (d). Upper Ohio Valley Conference
1. Wheeling WV, First English
 2. Wheeling WV, Christ (Mozart)
 3. Wheeling WV, Grace (Bethlehem)
 4. Wheeling WV, St. James
 5. Wheeling WV, St. Mark (Elm Grove)
 6. Weirton WV, Trinity
 7. Wheeling WV, Trinity
 8. Moundsville WV, Messiah
 9. New Martinsville WV, Good Shepherd

B12.02. Purpose: The conferences shall exist for the purpose of fostering interdependent relationships among congregations, institutions, synodical and churchwide units, and adjacent groups in neighboring synods.

B12.03. Conference Polity: The Synod Council shall establish the governing structure of each conference through continuing resolutions.

B12.04. Deans: Deans will be appointed by the bishop in consultation with the pastors of the conference and reviewed annually. Deans are extensions of the bishop and his office in the local setting. The bishop shall consult with the church council(s) of a dean to negotiate specific time for the dean to devote to his/her duties, with a recommendation minimum of one day per month. Deans will not be paid for the performance of their duties, but expenses will be reimbursed by the synod. A dean's primary duty will be to assist the bishop in providing pastoral care to pastors and congregations.

B12.05. Presbyterian Collegiality: The pastors and the dean of each conference will develop methods for promoting collegiality.

B12.06. Clusters: Clusters of congregations may be established, as needed, to further support and to inter-relate ministries of local congregations. Clustering of congregations shall not be limited to geographic proximity. Clustering of congregations could be determined by size, by single or multiple church parishes, the setting of congregations for ministry and other factors that would foster such relationships. Clusters may continue as long as needs exist. Clusters of congregations may not be limited by conference or synodical boundaries.

Section XIII

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Section XIV

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Section XV

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Section XVI

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Section XVII

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