

DRAFT TO BE ACCEPTED BY THE SYNOD ASSEMBLY

## ROCKY MOUNTAIN SYNOD

# EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

### STANDING RULES FOR ELECTION OF A BISHOP

Resources:

1. Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions (May 2016), Rocky Mountain Synod, ELCA
2. Constitution, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
3. ELCA Toolkit for Synod Bishop Elections (2018)
4. Rocky Mountain Synod Procedures for Election of a Bishop (2018)

These Standing Rules supplement the 2018 Rocky Mountain Synod Procedures for Election of a Bishop (2018), which was adopted by Synod Council on \_\_\_\_\_, 2018, and the Assembly Rules of Procedure.

### ECCLESIASTICAL BALLOT FOR ELECTION OF A BISHOP

The ELCA Churchwide Representative shall preside over the Assembly, whenever the Assembly is in session and considering business related to the election of the Synod Bishop, or when the Assembly is casting ballots in the election. Before each ballot, there shall be a transition from instruction to voting with a period of silence, followed by prayer. Upon conclusion of the balloting or of specific business related to the election, the Synod Bishop shall resume presiding over the Assembly.

A spreadsheet with ballot specifics is attached to these Standing Rules as Exhibit "A".

Individuals identified as potential nominees for bishop during a process prior to the Assembly were invited to complete biographical information, which was posted on the 2018 Bishop Election page of the Rocky Mountain Synod website. All such biographical information was for pre-assembly informational purposes only. It does not limit the "Ecclesiastical Ballot," and such biographical information shall be removed from the website prior to the Assembly.

At Assembly registration/check-in, voting members will receive a voting member badge. Only voting members with a voting member badge may receive a ballot and vote. Paper ballots will be utilized for election of a bishop.

To facilitate the credentials assessment and reporting, **Assembly registration/check-in shall be suspended for a period, generally 30 minutes, prior to any bishop election ballot and shall remain suspended until voting has been completed** for that ballot.

### **FIRST BALLOT**

Any pastor currently on the ELCA Roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament may be nominated on the **first (1<sup>st</sup>) ballot**. Three-fourths (75%) of the legal votes cast is necessary for election. Unless a nominee receives 75% of the legal votes cast, the first ballot becomes the nominating ballot.

Any nominee who does not wish to be considered for bishop may withdraw after the posting of the results of the first ballot by providing written notice of withdrawal by the time designated by the Bishop Election Committee. Nominees not present may withdraw via email or by telephone, if at least two members of the Bishop Election Committee are on the call. Any nominee not present at the Assembly will be given the opportunity to continue if he/she so wishes. The Election Committee will make a good faith effort to contact him/her to get a response. Without a response, he/she will be removed from the ballot. Upon finalizing the list of nominees on the second (2<sup>nd</sup>) ballot, the list shall be posted by the time designated on the Assembly Schedule.

### **SECOND BALLOT**

A biographical information form, Authorization and Release for Background Check form, and Disclosure Form will be distributed to all nominees on the second ballot. The completed forms will be collected prior to the **third (3<sup>rd</sup>) ballot** for all nominees on the third ballot.

The **second (2<sup>nd</sup>) ballot** contains the names of all persons nominated on the first ballot, who have not withdrawn or been removed. Three-fourths (75%) of the legal votes cast is necessary for election.

### **THIRD BALLOT**

On the **third (3<sup>rd</sup>) ballot**, two-thirds (2/3) of the legal votes cast is necessary for election. Prior to the **third (3<sup>rd</sup>) ballot**, which contains the seven (7) nominees with the most votes (and any ties) from ballot two, biographical information on the nominees will be obtained, on a form approved by Synod Council. The biographical information shall be distributed, or otherwise made available, to all Assembly voting members. In addition, an executed Authorization and Release for Background Check and Screening and Disclosure Form shall be obtained from each nominee.

Spiritual care shall be provided to the nominees, beginning with nominees on the **third (3<sup>rd</sup>) ballot**, and continuing thru all remaining ballots.

Each nominee shall be given the opportunity to address the Assembly prior to the third ballot. Each speech shall be limited to five (5) minutes. A timekeeper shall indicate to the speaker when 30 seconds remain of the allocated time and when the allocated time has elapsed. If feasible, the Assembly Parliamentarian shall act as timekeeper. The sequence of speeches shall be determined by lot.

If any nominee is not present at the Assembly, the nominee may address the Assembly by live-stream or telephonically, if feasible; or the nominee may designate a person to speak on her or his behalf.

#### **FOURTH BALLOT**

On the **fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) ballot**, sixty (60%) of the legal votes cast is necessary for election. Prior to voting, the three nominees (and any ties) on Ballot 4 shall be invited to participate in a question and answer session moderated by the ELCA Churchwide Representative, who is the presider at the election. Each nominee will appear individually and answer a set of questions determined by the vice president and secretary of the Synod. Questions may be submitted in writing to the secretary, or the secretary's designee, by any voting member, prior to noon on Thursday, May 3, 2018

Each answer is limited to a maximum of 2 minutes. A timekeeper shall indicate to the speaker when 30 seconds remain of the allotted time and when the allotted time has ended. If feasible, the Assembly Parliamentarian shall act as Timekeeper.

The time for the question and answer session shall not exceed a maximum of 45 minutes. If a nominee cannot be physically present, the question and answer period for that nominee may be live-streamed to the Assembly, if feasible

#### **FIFTH BALLOT**

At the **fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) ballot**, with the two (2) nominees with the most votes (and any ties) from ballot four, the nominee who receives a majority of legal votes cast is elected.

**AMENDMENT OF RULES**

**These Standing Rules for Election of a Bishop may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the Synod Assembly.**