

**Minutes of the Northeastern Ohio Synod Assembly
Thirty-Sixth Regular Assembly
May 13-14, 2022
John S. Knight Center, Akron**

*Jesus said, “And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.”
--John 12:32*

Saturday, May 14, 2022

1. Practice voting 8:10 am. Bishop Barbins provided an explanation of the voting systems and supervised a test vote. A series of votes scrolled through in the session ID to be used as practice. Votes were practiced to ensure that all devices were working. Some early snafus emerged with technology.
2. The Assembly began with Morning Prayer at 8:28 am. The liturgy concluded with the Order for Opening of a Synod Assembly led by Bishop Laura Barbins. The Assembly was then called to order at 9:00 am.
3. A Land Acknowledgement was given by The Rev Deborah Pinnegar.
4. The Rev. Marilyn Matevia presented the report of the Credentials Committee: As of 9:03 am, there were 268 individuals registered: 122 rostered leaders and 146 lay members.
5. Technology challenges (re) surfaced—coupled with being a little ahead of schedule—meant adjusting some of the order of events.
6. Bishop Barbins welcomed the following:
 - a. Synod VP Mr. Kevin Kampfer, Dr. Matthew Beery Synod Secretary, Mr. John Sleasman Synod Treasurer—also serving as Parliamentarian.
 - b. Assembly Coordinator, Sony Gilroy; Tim Barrage, PowerPoint presentation and audio/visual materials, assisted by Mason Shamp.
 - c. Representing the ELCA: The Rev. Christopher Otten and Mr. David Lenz.
 - d. Father Raymond Guiao, SJ, St. Ignatius High School.
7. Bishop Barbins recognized Secretary Matthew Beery who presented the Proposed Rules of Procedure for the 2022 Northeastern Ohio Synod Assembly, which were unchanged from last year except for the deadlines pertaining to submissions of urgent and germane resolutions and budget modifications. *The Rules of Procedure were adopted with no objections.*

**SA22.05.01
APPROVED**

**To adopt the Rules of Procedure as previously distributed as
proposed (Moved by council action; two-thirds vote required; carried)**

2022 NEOS Assembly Proposed Rules of Procedure

I. General Rules

- A. Upon recognition by the chair, a speaker shall identify oneself by name, congregation (or agency or institution), and town (or city).
- B. Chairpersons of standing committees or committees of the synod council who are not voting members of the synod assembly are accorded voice but not vote on all business relevant to the committees' work.
- C. Unless otherwise determined by a two-thirds vote, speeches during debate shall be limited to two (2) minutes.
- D. The chair may bring forward items as necessary or as helpful to the business of the assembly.
- E. Motions shall be submitted to the secretary in writing on forms provided for that purpose or electronically, according to the form/instructions provided in the preassembly materials and at the assembly for that purpose.
- F. To afford voting members the option of expressing “no opinion” on a question, the chair will call for yeas, nays, and abstentions.
- G. In the event that the assembly must adjourn before completing its business, all remaining items shall be referred to the synod council for disposition.
- H. Because of the inability to add voting members after the authorized voting list has been finalized with the voting application vendor prior to the assembly, the Credentials Committee will simply and singly report the final number of members authorized to receive voting credentials as the members in attendance at the assembly. The final assembly minutes will also show any information about the number of such individuals who did not at any time join the meeting or vote.

II. Nominations and Elections

- A. The consent of all nominees shall have been obtained prior to their nomination. Time constraints prevent distribution of biographical information for persons nominated from the floor. Nominations made from the floor of the assembly must be submitted electronically, according to instructions provided at the assembly for that purpose. Since such nominations may be submitted at any time after the opening of the assembly, if no nominations are received electronically prior to the time that the nominations committee has presented its official slate, the chair will declare nominations closed.
- B. Nominees for offices shall be listed in alphabetical order on the first ballot, in two groups. Nominations made prior to the assembly shall be alphabetically listed first, followed by nominations made from the floor. This grouping is necessary for efficient handling of vote counting. On subsequent ballots, listing will be in descending order according to votes received on the previous ballot.
- C. Upon completion of all elections, a printed summary of the results shall be published.

III. Consideration of the Budget

- A. Changes to the proposed budget shall be submitted electronically, according to instructions provided in the preassembly materials for that purpose, to the Finance Committee by 12:00 noon on Friday, May 6, 2022. The Budget Change Request form with instructions is available at <https://neos-elca.org/synod-assembly/>. This will allow the Finance Committee to provide written responses and recommendation, which will be distributed as website materials for assembly action. All proposals shall be in writing and shall include the amount of increase for a specific line item and/or the amount of decrease for a specific line item and the rationale for such change.

IV. Consideration of Resolutions

- A. Resolutions to be considered by the assembly shall be received in writing in the synod office by Friday, April 1, 2022 for consideration by the Committee on Reference and Counsel. The Committee on Reference and Counsel shall report their action on such resolutions to the assembly, whether a recommendation for discussion

and Assembly action, reference to an appropriate synod committee, no action, or postponement of further discussion to the next Assembly (with possible interim action, if appropriate). Actions of the Committee on Reference and Counsel shall be final unless the Assembly chooses to discuss such actions by a majority vote.

- B. No resolutions may be submitted after the original deadline date, unless such a resolution is determined by the Reference and Counsel Committee to be of an urgent nature, in which case the committee may recommend to the assembly that debate at the assembly be considered. Such a recommendation for debate shall require a two-thirds vote for approval; if the assembly does not pass an enabling motion, the resolution shall be referred to the synod council. Resolutions of an urgent nature shall be submitted electronically, according to instructions provided at the assembly for that purpose.

V. Remote Voting

A. The use of electronic devices, applications, and websites for the collection and counting of votes from authorized individuals who are not physically present at the main assembly site, but are actively attending the meeting (as required by the laws of the State of Ohio) is specifically authorized by this assembly.

SYNOD CONSTITUTION PROVISIONS REGARDING NON-BISHOP ELECTIONS

+S9.02. In all elections at synod assembly except for bishop, a majority of the votes cast shall be necessary for election.

S9.09. In all elections except for bishop, the names of the persons receiving the highest number of votes, but not elected by a majority of the votes cast on a preceding ballot, shall be entered on the next ballot to the number of two for each vacancy unfilled, except that this number might be exceeded in the event of ties.

S9.10. The result of each ballot in every election shall be announced in detail to the assembly.

8. Bishop Barbins presented the agenda for adoption as presented. *The agenda was approved without objection.*

**SA22.05.02 To adopt the agenda as previously distributed and proposed (Moved
APPROVED by council action; carried)**

Assembly Day 2 - Business Session: Saturday, May 14, 2022

7:30 am Doors and Registration Open Lower Level Lobby

Breakfast Exhibit Hall I

8:05 am Announcements and Practice Voting Goodyear A&B

8:30 am Morning Prayer

9:00 am Business Session 1

Call to Order / Opening of Assembly

Adoption of Proposed Agenda and Rules of Procedure

Welcome and Introductions

9:15 am Keynote Speaker: Fr. Raymond P. Guiao, SJ

10:00 am Break

10:15 am Business Session 2

Report of Credentials Committee: Credentials Committee Chair

Report of the Nominations Committee: Nominations Committee Chair

Nominations from the Floor

Voting / Reporting of Election: Election Committee Chair

10:40 am Bishop and Assistants to the Bishop Reports

Bishop's Report: The Rev. Dr. Laura Barbins

Asst. to the Bishop for Leadership's Report: The Rev. Mitch Phillips

Asst. to the Bishop for Congregational Vitality's Report: The Rev. Julianne Smith

11:10 am Significant Anniversaries

11:15 am Information Session

Introduction of Conference Bylaw Change

Introduction of Compensation Standards

11:35 am Synod Council Vice-President's Report: Kevin Kampfer

11:45 am Finances

Treasurer's Report: John Sleasman

Audit Report: Rev. Robert Ferro, Audit Committee Chair

Budget Presentation: Mike Davis, Finance & Budget Committee Chair

12:15 pm Break / Pick-up Boxed Lunch Exhibit Hall I

12:30 pm Working Lunch

Conference Bylaw Change Discussion Firestone/OMINOVA

Compensation Standards Discussion Goodrich/Bridgestone

Proposed Budget Discussion Karl S. Hay

1:15 pm Break

1:30 pm Business Session 3 Goodyear A&B
Conference Bylaw Change Vote
Compensation Standards Vote
Proposed 2023-2024 Budget Vote

2:00 pm Churchwide Presentations
Churchwide Council Report: David Lenz
ELCA Representative: The Rev. Christopher Otten, Asst. to the Presiding
Bishop/Director, Federal Chaplaincy

2:40 pm Reference & Council Resolutions: Reference & Council Chair

3:00 pm Closing Worship

Bishop Barbins recognized Keynote Speaker Father Raymond P. Guiao, SJ from St. Ignatius High School

9. Keynote Speaker: Father Raymond P. Guiao, SJ from St. Ignatius High School
- Father Guiao spoke about the ecumenical relationship with the Roman Catholic and ELCA Lutheran communities.
 - His talk focused on the power of imagination and he led the Assembly through a text visualization exercise.
 - His time with the Assembly was received well with applause.
10. Bishop Barbins recognized significant anniversaries of congregations in the Northeastern Ohio Synod.

175	1847	St Jacob Lutheran Church
150	1872	St Paul Lutheran Church
	1872	Grace Lutheran Church
100	1922	St John Lutheran Church
	1922	Christ Lutheran Church
75	1947	St Luke Lutheran Church
	1947	Bethesda-On-The-Bay Lutheran Church
	1947	Lutheran Church Of The Covenant

11. Bishop Barbins recognized the following ministers who are celebrating significant anniversaries of 25 years or more:

25th

The Rev. Duane Jesse
 The Rev. Deborah Michaels
 The Rev. Bonnie Peltomaa
 The Rev. Jeffery Plummer

50th

The Rev. R. Langley Collins
 The Rev. Ronald Jefferson

55th

The Rev. R. Landis Coffman
 The Rev. Joseph Ertl

The Rev. Richard Seaks

60th

The Rev. Carl Cunfer

The Rev. Edward Balint

65th

The Rev. Ronald Morgan

70th

Deacon Edward Kirst

The Rev. Paul Milheim

Break 10:00-10:15 am

Technology continued to be a challenge. The order of the agenda changed yet again.

12. Bishop Barbins called the Assembly back into session at 10:15 am.
13. Bishop Barbins recognized the following pastors from the Northeastern Ohio Synod who died and left this life:
 - a. THE REV. SHERMAN BISHOP
 - b. THE REV. JANICE A. BERTHINEE
 - c. THE REV. DR. LINWOOD H. (WOODY) CHAMBERLAIN, JR.
 - d. THE REV. DONAVON DOERFER
 - e. THE REV. DONALD J. PENTZ
 - f. THE REV. LINDA SUE GREGSON

Treasurer Report—John Sleasman

14. John Sleasman highlighted the following from his written report for the pre-assembly materials:
 - a. The finance material of the pre-assembly report contains several items, both in the Finance Section and in the Business Section. Because of the early “printing” deadline for the preassembly materials, some items that are normally included here will be posted on the website as supplemental materials at a later time. These include the Churchwide Congregational Mission Support and Audit reports.
 - b. The summary of the 2021-2022 operating results can be found in the Business Items section, as part of the budget report. For 2021-2022, the Mission Support received was below budget, which has resulted in reduced expectations in the council’s amended 202223 budget, and in the proposed 2023-2024 budget.
 - c. Staff reorganization increased some expenses; however, others remained low, since Covidrelated issues reduced some things, notably travel.
 - d. The amended 2022-23 budget distributed the previously approved \$50,000 for Bishop’s Vision into other line items, adjusting to reflect the reorganization of staff and mission priorities, including starting to increase some of the funds we distribute to agencies.

- e. While the discussion of the 2023-2024 budget does not belong here, note one change in the calculation of Mission Support funds sent to the ELCA. Traditionally, that amount has been based on a percentage of Mission Support Income.
- f. For 2022-2023 and 2023-2024, that expense line has been changed to a fixed dollar amount, regardless of the actual Mission Support income. We do continue to run deficit budgets, which is discouraging and problematic. Yet we have financial resources to continue to sustain those deficits in the short-term, but have ongoing need to move toward balanced budgets in the near future. Treasurer’s Personal Comments As I end my second term as Treasurer, unfortunately the synod – as congregations and Churchwide –still faces uncertainty, fallout, and upheaval as a result of the Pandemic. Yet that also gives opportunity to seriously review our past operations and priorities, and to move, perhaps more rapidly than some would prefer, into a new mission paradigm.
- g. John quoted himself in his report, “I continue to believe that this synod, its congregations, and its members, have a message to proclaim that will not be limited by scarcity. For there is also abundance, and I believe that through efforts to continue to respond when called upon, to continue to use resources to reach out to the world, that we have the strength to continue to support our missions and priorities. We face the reality and dilemma of how to face challenges at lower financial levels than we would like at all three levels of our denominational expression – churchwide, synod, and congregation – yet we do indeed have something to look ahead, to look forward to. Thanks be to God.”
- h. John Sleasman finished his comments with a point of personal privilege, essentially with the idea that we should all strive to “leave things better than you found them.”
- i. No other items to report.
- j. Bishop Barbins recognized John, once more, and led the assembly in a warm applause. Thanks be to God for John Sleasman.

Bishop Barbins recognized The Rev Robert Ferro, Jr. from the Audit Committee.

Audit Report—The Rev Robert Ferro, Jr

- 15. Pastor Ferro, chair of the audit committee, gave the audit report.
- 16. Pastor Ferro spoke to the timing and some of the events that have caused the delay in the audit. Namely, these delays came in the form of water main break, sickness, and other factors.
- 17. The audit is still in process.
- 18. Pastor Ferro referred to the Treasurer’s Report/Budget Report, noting the 12-month numbers. The auditors have stated that these are good numbers for planning and moving forward.
- 19. Last year’s numbers received a “clean opinion”—and he expects this year’s to be the same.
- 20. Once the audit is completed, it will be published on the Northeastern Ohio Synod Web Site.

Bishop Barbins recognized Mr. Mike Davis, chair of the Finance Committee.

Budget Report—Mr. Mike Davis

- 21. Mr. Davis highlighted page 61 in the assembly materials for the 2023-2024 budget.
- 22. Mr. Davis referred back to his comments from 2021:
 - a. The NEOS finances were in a state of flux while prioritizing new initiatives, staffing, and organizational structure.
 - b. Mr. Davis mentioned the 2022-2023 revisions and changes from the budget presented last year. The changes are reflected in the amended document. Key changes:

1. Mission Support Income in relation to a fixed percentage to a fixed amount.
 2. Bishop's Vision Initiatives of \$50,000 were distributed to the appropriate line items.
23. Mr. Davis spoke to the 2023-2024 budget:
- a. Mission Support targeted at a 1,000,003. Roughly a 5% increase from previous year.
 - b. Mission Support is based on a fixed amount versus a fixed percentage.
 - c. This is a deficit budget.
 - d. The Northeastern Ohio Synod does have financial resources to continue to absorb these short falls in the short term.
 - e. Mr. Davis stated we should continue to work towards a balanced budget.
 - f. The proposed budget shows Revenue: \$1,445,500; Operating expenses: \$1,541,914; Depreciation Funding: \$26,122; Yielding a deficit of \$122,536.
 - g. Finance Committee will continue to monitor and make recommendations as needed. h. No further items noted.

Bishop Barbins relinquished the chair to Vice President Kevin Kampfer—and Kevin Kampfer recognized Bishop Laura Barbins who yielded to The Rev. Mitch Phillips.

Assistant to the Bishop for Leadership Report: The Rev. Mitch Phillips

24. Pastor Phillips opened by expressing thanks for his first 11 months in our midst. "Thank you for the warm welcome," he stated.
25. Pastor Phillips updated a few items from last year's assembly:
- a. Grants for coaching and spiritual direction; three (3) grants for coaching and six (6) grants for spiritual direction were used.
 - b. Spine-tingling goal update:
 1. Spoke about call process.
 2. Shared the chart that he created to show how this goal is progressing, found on page 71 of the assembly materials.
 3. Briefly updated how many first call pastors—as well as—other mobility matters in the Northeastern Ohio Synod.
 - c. Pastor Phillips gave some hard truths with the current landscape. There are 539 current openings with active profiles; could be easily double that number. 449 pastors with active profiles in database willing to take a call. Over the last five (5) years, the ELCA has averaged 600 retirement.
 - d. Pastor Phillips stated that there are 155 congregations here in NEOS. Roughly a 1/3 do not have a full time pastor or deacon. There are 12 congregations with active profiles, 5 retirements. Most of those congregations want part-time pastors. No pastors with active profiles are willing to take part-time call.
 - e. Pastor Phillips prompted the assembly to think about "where will the next pastor come from?" "Look in the mirror," he answered. The NEOS needs to think about how pastors are treated. "If people in congregations do not want to be pastors, ask why?"
 - f. Thoughtful questions created space for silent reflection from the assembly.

The Rev. Mitch Phillips yielded to Bishop Barbins who recognized The Rev. Julianne Smith.

Assistant to the Bishop for Congregational Vitality and Director of Evangelical Missions Report:

The Rev. Julianne Smith

26. Pastor Julianne Smith referred to pages 72-73 in the assembly materials.
- a. She began by reminding the assembly that she is a bridge between the Northeastern Ohio Synod and the Churchwide organization.
 - b. Pastor Smith spoke about some of the components of congregational vitality and discipleship and how she hopes to encourage vitality in the NEOS. She talked about being a Community of Jesus.
 - c. Pastor Smith highlighted Oasis, a Synod Authorized Worship Community.
 - d. Pastor Smith spoke about “The Dandelion Project,” which was initiated during the 2021 Northeastern Ohio Synod. It is an 18-24 month commitment, filled with in-person, online, and congregational events. Nine (9) congregations are currently participating.
 - e. Pastor Smith reiterated that discipleship in our synod provides all kinds of precious moments.
 - f. A new cohort will be formed for October 2022. Information will be forthcoming July 2022.
 - g. Pastor Smith spoke about the summits that she, Pastor Phillips, and Bishop Barbins have held. Further, discussed different church models in our midst: shared ministry, merger, anchor, and holy closure.

The Rev. Julianne Smith yielded to Bishop Barbins.

Bishop Report—The Rev. Dr. Laura Barbins

27. Bishop Barbins delivered the following remarks:

Pandemic? Endemic? Waning Pandemic? Waiting for the next wave?

As much as 2020-2021 was a year, this past year was something other. We were in the throes – and then there was a this glimmer of hope and we all clamored to reopen. And then there was Delta... followed closely by Omicron... whiplash is how I have heard it called. Open-Close-Open-Close.

It’s felt a lot like exile – or wilderness – this place of chaos and foreignness.

So.. here we are. Where we really want to get back. We want to go back. We want to be back.

We might be tempted to think that we are the first of God’s people to have this kind of experience, but we aren’t.

Long ago, God heard the cries of the people of God from slavery in Egypt. And God chose a messenger, a leader, Moses, to go and get them out. And with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, God led the people of God out of Egypt and into the future. There are so many cool things about this story:

- God leads them – which means God goes with them. Not just standing at the door with a rehabilitated animal saying, go on... fly free. Nope – God said, let’s go... and I’m going to give you some pillars to guide and dry land for your feet.
- God provides for them – manna and quail and water from the rock. God even gives them a new code of conduct so that they have a way of being together that isn’t like the old ways of Egypt.
- But most importantly, God gives them a future... a promise... there is a place that you are going that will be flowing with milk and honey.

But we all know this story, right? We know how the people of God responded to all this grace from God, right? Let’s go back to Egypt. Let’s go back. This is too hard. This is too weird. This is too... too... well –

just too. Let's go back. At one point they even resort to some idolatry and make themselves a golden calf – something other than God to place at their center.

Dear people of God – we are not called to go back. God is always about moving forward. God is always about “what's next.” God is always calling us to go somewhere. God has a place in mind for us – a pathway forward for us. And it is always forward – not back.

And God goes with us – even before us. Like a pillar of fire by night and a pillar of smoke by day. God calls to us in the dessert: here! Over here! God gives us what we need – even when we think that we will starve or die of thirst. God is there to provide.

Maybe you have seen the video already where I am granting permission (if you even need it!) to stop for 4 weeks this summer. Cancel all your meetings, don't print a newsletter. This sabbath rest is not for the sake of anything other than pausing and saying: God is gracious and merciful – God has brought us this far by faith – and God has something in mind for us **IN THE FUTURE**.

I don't know what a post-pandemic church looks like. But I don't think that the Israelites knew what a land flowing with milk and honey looked like. I don't think the disciples knew what to do after the crucifixion of Jesus. But what did the angel tell the women – tell his disciples that Jesus is going ahead of them. We might not know what the landscape looks like for the future church, but God does. And God will provide what we need to move Christ's church forward. We don't have to create the wheel – for the Creator will do that. God's got us. We get to come along for the ride. And that means listening to God's voice, discerning where the Spirit is blowing, and (gasp!) trying new things. As we move into the future the words “We've never done it that way before” needs to become the indication that it is **EXACTLY** the thing to try!

Because, quite frankly, we have never been **here** before.

We are going to try a few new things as a Synod in the months ahead. We are going to, with an affirmative vote today, try on some new Conferences. We are going to, with an affirmative vote today, try out some new compensation standards. We are going to have a try out a different sort of youth event – instead of the Winter Gathering, we will be gathering in July for a Mini-Youth Gathering modeled on the ELCA Youth Gathering that was cancelled.

Affinity Groups

We are going to try out a new Synodwide Stewardship process – your congregation might just get an invitation to join with the cohort. We have recently launched a new Enews (and you can join the fun in naming it!) and we are going to be launching a new website. Some of you have already tried some new things: from the Dandelion Project to Anchor Church training, to becoming an ELCA coach.

Creative ways to do Assembly in the coming years. Want to join in?

So – when the Assembly ends and you gather with your congregation tomorrow, watch how you use that word “back” – because God is calling us forward. God is calling us into the future. And, there is just no way to go back to the future.

Bishop Barbins concluded her remarks and yielded to Kevin Kampfer—and Kevin Kampfer relinquished the chair of the assembly back to Bishop Barbins.

Information Session: Introduction of Conference Bylaw Change—The Rev. Don King

28. Pastor Don King, Dean of the Cleveland-East Conference, presented some context and understanding behind the proposed conference reconfiguration.
 - a. Pastor King gave the data about the past and current conference configurations. Also, gave data on what the potential reconfiguring would look like.
 - b. The proposal would change from seven (7) conferences to five (5) conferences. The names would be Northwest, Northeast, Southwest, Southeast and Southcentral. This would promote fairer representation and strengthen the amount of congregations in geographical locations.
 - c. Pastor King spoke about Affinity groups to augment strengths and resources.

2022 NEOS Governing Documents PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

Relating to Conference Realignment and Council Structure

Rationale: Upon the adoption of new conference boundaries, the old synod council structure and related items in the governing documents that are dependent upon the old alignment must be adjusted to reflect the new alignments. This involves not only changing the language to reflect that, but also some language related to terms and transition policies until all council positions have been elected under the new structure.

Also, to simplify the transition process, the proposal includes a return to fixed council terms—the provision used prior to 2017—to give more certainty during the transition process for council to best balance the transition from old positions to new.

Additionally, in accordance with the goals of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Northeastern Ohio Synod to provide for intentional, authentic diversity in its leadership, the council restructuring provisions includes the establishment of new positions specifically identified and reserved to provide for diversity representation on the synod council, rather than leave such representation to random elections.

Finally, some other changes are proposed to clarify and streamline language, and to make terms consistent with current ELCA terminology.

BYLAW AND CONTINUING RESOLUTION ADOPTION REQUIREMENTS FROM NEOS GOVERNING DOCUMENTS

†S18.20. **Amendments to Bylaws**

†S18.21. This synod may adopt bylaws not in conflict with this constitution or with the constitution and bylaws of the churchwide organization. This synod may amend its bylaws at any meeting of the Synod Assembly by a two-thirds vote of voting members of the assembly present and voting. Newly adopted bylaws and amendments to existing bylaws shall be reported to the secretary of this church.

†S18.30. **Amendments to Continuing Resolutions**

†S18.31. This synod may adopt continuing resolutions not in conflict with this constitution or its bylaws or the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of the churchwide organization. Such continuing resolutions may be adopted or amended by a majority vote of the Synod Assembly or by a two-thirds vote of Synod Council. Newly adopted continuing resolutions and amendments to existing continuing resolutions shall be reported to the secretary of this church.

FINAL CONTENT READING IF THE PROVISIONS ARE ADOPTED

S9.01.01 The term of office of every person elected at a regular meeting of the Synod Assembly shall begin on the first day of September. Exceptions include terms of representatives

to the Churchwide Assembly and boards of institutions, those terms being determined by each respective institution.

S9.03.01 The Nominating Committee shall consist of two rostered ministers and three lay persons, one from each conference according to a rotation schedule developed by the Synod Council.

S10.07.02 The Synod Council shall have the following composition:

The four officers;
 one rostered minister and two lay members from each conference;
 one young adult member elected at large;
 one youth member elected at large; and
 one rostered minister and two lay members elected at large, each of whom shall be a person of color or primary language other than English, or a person who identifies as LGBTQIA+.

As nearly as possible, the provisions of †S6.04 shall be considered in nominations for council membership.

In addition there shall be one advisory member selected by the synod men's, women's, and youth groups, as long as those groups are functioning.

S10.07.03 The term of the youth member shall be two years.

S12.01.01 This synod shall have five conferences, named Northeast, Northwest, South Central, Southeast, and Southwest. Their territories shall be specified in continuing resolutions.

S12.01.A22 The Northeast Conference shall include:

- | | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| 1. Advent, Cleveland | 14. Good Shepherd, Cleveland |
| 2. Advent, Mentor | 15. Good Shepherd, Conneaut |
| 3. Advent, Solon | 16. Lord of Life, Chagrin Falls |
| 4. Bethany, Ashtabula | 17. Messiah, Ashtabula |
| 5. Calvary, East Cleveland | 18. Messiah, Lyndhurst |
| 6. Celebration, Chardon | 19. New Covenant, East Cleveland |
| 7. Christ, Willoughby | 20. Parma, Parma |
| 8. Christ the King, Twinsburg | 21. Peace, Cleveland Heights |
| 9. Christ The Redeemer, Brecksville | 22. Rejoice!, Hudson |
| 10. Covenant, Maple Heights | 23. St. John's, Highland Heights |
| 11. Euclid, Euclid | 24. St. Paul, Jefferson |
| 12. Evangelical of the Master, Bedford | 25. Trinity, Madison |
| 13. Church of the Master, Bedford | 26. Triune, Broadview Heights |
| 13. Faith, Ashtabula | |

S12.01.B22 The Northwest Conference shall include:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. All Saints, Olmsted Falls | 14. Living Word, Medina |
| 2. Bethany English, Cleveland | 15. Messiah, Fairview Park |
| 3. Bethel, Middleburg Heights | 16. Our Savior, Hinckley |
| 4. Bethesda On The Bay, Bay Village | 17. Prince Of Peace, Westlake |
| 5. Christ, Avon Lake | 18. Redeemer, Brook Park |
| 6. Christ, Lorain | 19. Redeemer, Elyria |
| 7. Divinity, Parma Heights | 20. St. Matthew, Medina |
| 8. Emmanuel, Elyria | 21. St. Paul, Berea |
| 9. First, Lorain | 22. Trinity, Lakewood |
| 10. First, Strongsville | 23. Trinity, Vermillion |
| 11. First Hungarian, Cleveland | 24. West Side Hungarian, Rocky River |
| 12. Good Soil, Rocky River | 25. Zion, Valley City |
| 13. Holy Trinity, Brunswick | |

S12.01.C22 The South Central Conference shall include:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Advent, Uniontown | 19. St. Jacob's, North Canton |
| 2. Christ, Massillon | 20. St. James, Tuscarawas |
| 3. Emmanuel, New Philadelphia | 21. St. John, Baltic |
| 4. Faith, Massillon | 22. St. Luke's, Cuyahoga Falls |
| 5. First, Beach City | 23. St. Mark, Tallmadge |
| 6. First, Canton | 24. St. Paul, Newcomerstown |
| 7. First, Strasburg | 25. St. Paul, Ravenna |
| 8. Grace, Dover | 26. St. Paul's, Massillon |
| 9. Good Shepherd, Canton | 27. St. Peter, New Philadelphia |
| 10. Holy Trinity, Akron | 28. St. Stephen, Stow |
| 11. Holy Trinity, Canton | 29. St. Stephen Martyr, Canton & Louisville |
| 12. Holy Trinity, Massillon | 30. Shanesville, Sugarcreek |
| 13. Iglesia Luterana la Trinidad, Akron | 31. Shepherd of the Valley, Sandyville |
| 14. Messiah, Akron | 32. Trinity, Carrollton |
| 15. Oasis Outreach Opportunity, Akron | 33. Trinity, Kent |
| 16. Peace, Canton | 34. Trinity, Magnolia |
| 17. Sagrado Corazón, Akron | 35. Zion, Canton |
| 18. St. Jacob, Massillon | 36. Zion, North Canton |

S12.01.D22 The Southeast Conference shall include:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Abiding Savior, Alliance | 12. Israel's, Paris |
| 2. Bethel, Youngstown | 13. Jerusalem, Columbiana |
| 3. Christ, Struthers | 14. Living Lord, Warren (Howland) |
| 4. Emmanuel, North Georgetown | 15. Lordstown, Warren |
| 5. Emmanuel, Salem | 16. Lord of Life, Canfield |
| 6. Emmanuel, Warren | 17. Martin Luther, Youngstown |
| 7. Good Hope, North Lima | 18. Messiah, Newton Falls |
| 8. Grace, Austintown | 19. Mt. Moriah, Berlin Center |
| 9. Grace, Hubbard | 20. New Life, Youngstown |
| 10. Grace, Steubenville | 21. Prince of Peace, Cortland |
| 11. Holy Trinity, Salem | 22. Prince of Peace, Poland |

- | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 23. St. James, Jewett | 31. St. Paul, Minerva |
| 24. St. John, East Liverpool | 32. St. Paul's, Warren |
| 25. St. John, Petersburg | 33. Trinity, Girard |
| 26. St. John, Warren | 34. Trinity, Niles |
| 27. St. John's, Minerva | 35. Trinity, Sebring |
| 28. St. Mark, Warren | 36. Zion, New Middletown |
| 29. St. Paul, Alliance | 37. Zion, New Waterford |
| 30. St. Paul, Leetonia | 38. Zion, Youngstown |

S12.01.E22 The Southwest Conference shall include:

- | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Augsburg, Orrville | 17. St. Mark, Mansfield |
| 2. Bethel, Bath | 18. St. Michael, Marshallville |
| 3. Canaan, Creston | 19. St. Paul, Bellville |
| 4. Faith, Fairlawn | 20. St. Paul, Lucas |
| 5. First, Plymouth | 21. St. Paul, Ontario |
| 6. Grace, Wadsworth | 22. St. Paul, Sharon Center |
| 7. Jerusalem, Seville | 23. St. Paul, Smithville |
| 8. Mt. Hope, Shiloh | 24. St. Peter, Wooster |
| 9. New Horizons, Homerville | 25. St. Timothy, Mansfield |
| 10. Peace, Ashland | 26. Salem, Wooster |
| 11. Pleasant Valley, Ashland | 27. Trinity, Clinton |
| 12. Pleasant Valley, Lucas | 28. Trinity, Norton |
| 13. Rowsburg, Polk | 29. Zion, Doylestown |
| 14. St. John, Canal Fulton | 30. Zion, Loudonville |
| 15. St. John, Lakeville | 31. Zion, Wooster |
| 16. St. John, Perrysville | |

S12.01.02 Any congregation in a border area desiring to change its conference relationship may do so upon approval of the conferences concerned and of the Synod Council, which shall then amend the appropriate continuing resolutions.

S12.01.03 After its organization each conference may, by a process of its own choosing, determine a name for that conference and request appropriate amendment of the related S12.01 items.

S12.01.04 Transition Bylaw

- a. Individuals elected to the synod council prior to the adoption of the 2022 changes to council membership shall retain their council membership until the original expiration of their terms. If their positions continue to exist under the new structure, they shall fill those positions; if their positions are eliminated because of restructuring, they will remain until the end of their original term, or until the position become vacant.
- b. As transition occurs, the synod council may adjust the length of terms to be elected in 2023 and 2024 to realign the council into classes with as equal as

- possible elections each year.
- c. This bylaw will become void and be removed after the 2025 synod assembly.

MARKED UP PROVISIONS INDICATING CHANGES

- S9.01.01 The term of office of every person elected at a regular meeting of the Synod Assembly shall begin on the first day of September, ~~the third month following the adjournment of the assembly at which they were elected and conclude when their successors begin service. For example, a June Synod Assembly would result in a September 1st start of term.~~ Exceptions include terms of representatives to the Churchwide Assembly and boards of institutions, those terms being determined by each respective institution.
- S9.03.01 The Nominating Committee shall consist of ~~three~~ two ~~rostered~~ rostered ministers of ~~Word and Sacrament~~ and ~~four~~ three ~~Ministers of Word and Service or unrostered~~ lay persons, one from each conference according to a rotation schedule developed by the Synod Council.
- S10.07.02 The Synod Council shall have the following composition:
- The four officers;
 - one rostered minister and two lay members from each conference;
 - ~~Two lay members and two clergy members from the Cleveland West Conference;~~
 - ~~Two lay members and one clergy member from the Cleveland East Conference;~~
 - ~~Two lay members and one clergy member from the Richland Ashland Conference;~~
 - ~~Two lay members and one clergy member from the Akron Wooster Conference;~~
 - ~~One lay member and two clergy members from the Eastern Conference;~~
 - ~~Two lay members and one clergy member from the Canton Massillon Conference;~~
 - ~~One lay member and one clergy member from the Southern Conference;~~
 - ~~One lay members and one clergy member elected at large;~~
 - one young adult member elected at large; one youth member elected at large;
 - ~~and , who shall be elected in accordance with S10.07.03.~~
 - one rostered minister and two lay members elected at large, each of whom shall be a person of color or primary language other than English, or a person who identifies as LGBTQIA+
- As nearly as possible, the provisions of †S6.04 shall be considered in nominations for council membership. ~~50% of the lay members shall be male and 50% shall be female.~~
- In addition there shall be one advisory member selected by the synod men's,

~~women's, and youth groups, as long as those groups are functioning. this synod's women's organization and one advisory member selected by this synod's men's organization.~~

- S10.07.03 ~~The term of the youth member shall be two years. The member shall be elected from a slate of at least two nominees elected by the Board of the synod's Lutheran Youth Organization, and names forwarded to the nominating committee in sufficient time for inclusion in the committee's report, and any additional nominations that may be made on the floor of the assembly.~~
- S12.01.01 This synod shall have ~~five~~ seven conferences, named Northeast, Northwest, South Central, Southeast, and Southwest. ~~whose names and Their~~ territories shall be specified in continuing resolutions ~~as follows:~~

Because of the length of the listing, the names and cities of the relevant congregations are not repeated here. See the "Final Content" section for the names of the congregations in each conference.

- S12.01.A22 The Northeast Conference shall include: [\[see list in final content section\]](#)
- S12.01.B22 The Northwest Conference shall include: [\[see list in final content section\]](#)
- S12.01.C22 The South Central Conference shall include: [\[see list in final content section\]](#)
- S12.01.D22 The Southeast Conference shall include: [\[see list in final content section\]](#)
- S12.01.E22 The Southwest Conference shall include: [\[see list in final content section\]](#)

~~a. Richland-Ashland. The counties of Richland and Ashland.~~

~~b. Akron-Wooster. The counties of Wayne and Portage, the county of Summit except for the city of Twinsburg; and the town of Sharon Center, village of Seville and city of Wadsworth in the county of Medina.~~

~~c. Cleveland-West. The county of Lorain, the part of the county of Cuyahoga west of the Cuyahoga River, and the part of the county of Medina not in the Akron-Wooster Conference.~~

~~d. Cleveland-East. The counties of Geauga and Lake; the county of Ashtabula except for the city of Conneaut; the part of the county of Cuyahoga east of the Cuyahoga River and the city of Twinsburg in the county of Summit.~~

e. ~~Eastern. The county of Trumbull, the county of Mahoning, except for the city of Sebring, the county of Columbiana except for the town of North Georgetown, and the city of Conneaut in the county of Ashtabula.~~

f. ~~Canton Massillon. The county of Stark except for the villages of Beach City, Magnolia and Waynesburg, the town of North Georgetown in the county of Columbiana, the city of Sebring in the county of Mahoning and the village of Minerva in the county of Carroll.~~

g. ~~Southern. The counties of Carroll, except for the city of Minerva, Jefferson, Harrison, Holmes and Tuscarawas, the villages of Beach City, Magnolia and Waynesburg in the county of Stark.~~

S12.01.02 Any congregation in a border area desiring to change its conference relationship may do so upon approval of the conferences concerned and of the Synod Council, which shall then amend the appropriate continuing resolutions. ~~petition to the Synod Assembly for appropriate amendment to the bylaws.~~

S12.01.03 After its organization each conference may, by a process of its own choosing, determine a name for that conference and request appropriate amendment of the related S12.01 items.

S12.01.04 Transition Bylaw

- d. Individuals elected to the synod council prior to the adoption of the 2022 changes to council membership shall retain their council membership until the original expiration of their terms. If their positions continue to exist under the new structure, they shall fill those positions; if their positions are eliminated because of restructuring, they will remain until the end of their original term, or until the position become vacant.
- e. As transition occurs, the synod council may adjust the length of terms to be elected in 2023 and 2024 to realign the council into classes with as equal as possible elections each year.
- f. This bylaw will become void and be removed after the 2025 synod assembly.

S12.01.04 ~~In 1991 and every third year thereafter, the Synod Council shall review the number of members of congregations in the conferences and, if necessary, shall recommend to the Synod Assembly appropriate changes in the representation specified in S10.07.01.~~

EXISTING PROVISIONS

S9.01.01 The term of office of every person elected at a regular meeting of the Synod Assembly shall begin on the first day of the third month following the adjournment of the assembly at which they were elected and conclude when their successors begin service. For example, a June Synod Assembly would result in a September 1st start of term. Exceptions include terms of representatives to the Churchwide Assembly and boards of institutions, those terms being determined by each respective institution.

S9.03.01 The Nominating Committee shall consist of three ministers of Word and Sacrament and four Ministers of Word and Service or unrostered lay persons, one from each conference according to a rotation schedule developed by the Synod Council.

S10.07.02 The Synod Council shall have the following composition:

The four officers;
 Two lay members and two clergy members from the Cleveland West Conference;
 Two lay members and one clergy member from the Cleveland East Conference;
 Two lay members and one clergy member from the Richland-Ashland Conference;
 Two lay members and one clergy member from the Akron-Wooster Conference;
 One lay member and two clergy members from the Eastern Conference;
 Two lay members and one clergy member from the Canton-Massillon Conference;
 One lay member and one clergy member from the Southern Conference;
 One lay members and one clergy member elected at large;
 One young adult member elected at large;
 One youth member, who shall be elected in accordance with S10.07.03.

As nearly as possible, 50% of the lay members shall be male and 50% shall be female. In addition there shall be one advisory member selected by this synod's women's organization and one advisory member selected by this synod's men's organization.

S10.07.03 The term of the youth member shall be two years. The member shall be elected from a slate of at least two nominees elected by the Board of the synod's Lutheran Youth Organization, and names forwarded to the nominating committee in sufficient time for inclusion in the committee's report, and any additional nominations that may be made on the floor of the assembly.

S12.01.01 This synod shall have seven conferences, whose names and territories shall be as follows:

- a. Richland-Ashland. The counties of Richland and Ashland.
- b. Akron-Wooster. The counties of Wayne and Portage, the county of Summit except for the city of Twinsburg; and the town of Sharon Center, village of Seville and city of Wadsworth in the county of Medina.
- c. Cleveland West. The county of Lorain, the part of the county of Cuyahoga west of the Cuyahoga River, and the part of the county of Medina not in the Akron-Wooster Conference.
- d. Cleveland East. The counties of Geauga and Lake; the county of Ashtabula except for the city of Conneaut; the part of the county of Cuyahoga east of the Cuyahoga River and the city of Twinsburg in the county of Summit.
- e. Eastern. The county of Trumbull, the county of Mahoning, except for the city of Sebring, the county of Columbiana except for the town of North Georgetown, and the city of Conneaut in the county of Ashtabula.
- f. Canton-Massillon. The county of Stark except for the villages of Beach City, Magnolia and Waynesburg, the town of North Georgetown in the county of Columbiana, the city of Sebring in the county of Mahoning and the village of Minerva in the county of Carroll.
- g. Southern. The counties of Carroll, except for the city of Minerva, Jefferson, Harrison, Holmes and Tuscarawas, the villages of Beach City, Magnolia and Waynesburg in the county of Stark.

S12.01.02 Any congregation in a border area desiring to change its conference relationship may do so upon approval of the conferences concerned and of the Synod Council, which shall petition to the Synod Assembly for appropriate amendment to the bylaws.

S12.01.03 After its organization each conference may, by a process of its own choosing, determine a name for that conference and request appropriate amendment of S10.07.01 and S12.01.01.

S12.01.04 In 1991 and every third year thereafter, the Synod Council shall review the number of members of congregations in the conferences and, if necessary, shall recommend to the Synod Assembly appropriate changes in the representation specified in S10.07.01.

Information Session: Introduction of Compensation Standards—The Rev. Angela Freeman-Riley

29. Bishop Barbins introduced a Compensation Standards video.
30. The video remarks were delivered by Pastor Freeman-Riley on the video. The materials referenced could be found on page 34 of the assembly materials.
31. The Compensation Standards proposed are a complete rewrite of the previous Compensation Guidelines.
32. Pastor Freeman-Riley highlighted the Compensation Standards main points.
33. During the video the assembly members were directed to the following documents in the assembly materials (full text below).

There are three topics never to bring up in polite company: politics, religion, and money. And here we are laying out for you how to talk about one of those in the context of another; there are bound to be conflicts. In fact, conversations around staff salaries at budgeting time in congregational settings tend to be some of the most anxious meetings. Pastors and Deacons can feel underappreciated, and congregations get a sense of sticker shock when they see the total cost of employing people.

These Compensation Standards are meant to help corral the anxiety that can arise around salaries. There is a clear structure here, a pathway to finding equitable payment for the people who are leading your spiritual community. For Rostered Ministers, these are some standards you can use to advocate for equitable payment.

A few things to bear in mind as you prepare to renegotiate compensation or establish new compensation:

- **God has called the two of you**, congregation and rostered minister, to be in mission together. When God has called us to something, God will provide what we need.
- **The salaries of your rostered ministers are not “overhead.”** These are the people who are driving vision and mission in your context and actively doing ministry on behalf of the congregation. They are creative, educated, and experts in their fields.
- **Our budgets reflect our values and mission.** If your Deacon is responsible for Youth and Family Ministry, you are valuing Youth and Families in your budget when you pay them. If your Pastor is gifted in Preaching and Community Outreach, you are lifting the Gospel and care of neighbor as your mission.
- **Our pastors and deacons deserve to be paid a living wage.** Most of our leaders have 4-year bachelor’s degrees and either a 2- or 4-year master’s degree. That’s 6-8 years of higher education expenses and debt. Many of them have sacrificed previous careers and stability to follow God’s call to be your pastor or deacon.
- The amount that it costs your employer to employ you is different than the amount that you take home. Very few employees see how much benefits and behind the scenes costs affects the bottom line of a company. Likewise, **the amount that a pastor/deacon is actually paid is different than the amount it costs you as the employer to have that pastor/deacon.** Please do not confuse the two amounts.

There are confusing parts to compensation – especially tax considerations for pastors. When you have questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to your Synod Staff or our Compensation Consultants (see page 26). Ultimately, we hope that these new Compensation Standards help to reduce the anxiety around compensation negotiation.

I am so thankful to the Task Force that re-wrote these standards, the Synod Council who endorsed them, and to the Assembly for passing them.

Peace,

Bishop Laura L. H. Barbins

Compensation for Pastors and Deacons

At its 2021 Synod Assembly, the Northeastern Ohio Synod embraced the “Spine-Tingling Goal” of having “an equitably paid pastor, deacon, or trained lay person in settled leadership in every congregation by Synod Assembly 2023.” One of the primary motivations behind a thorough revision and update of the compensation guidelines of this synod is to provide resources to support and provide standards for the “equitably paid” aspect of this spine-tingling goal. By establishing equitable compensation standards across the synod, pastors and deacons will be empowered to serve where they sense God calling them rather than simply by where they can afford to live.

Since 2016, Rostered Ministers in the ELCA have been gathered into one of two rosters: Ministers of Word & Sacrament (Pastors) or Ministers of Word & Service (Deacons). It is beyond the scope of this document to explicate the difference between the two roles. However, the two roles have similar education and candidacy requirements. They also have the same living expenses. Therefore, the approach to calculating compensation is the same – with some differences due to the tax status of pastors. The base salary for pastors is slightly higher in recognition of the constitutional responsibilities of a pastor and their role being similar to that of a CEO or Executive Director in other organizations.

These compensation standards apply to all pastors and deacons in the Northeastern Ohio Synod. A calculations worksheet has been developed as a companion to this document. The two should be used together whenever compensation is discussed and they may be downloaded from the synod website (www.neos-elca.org). Not every situation can be covered in this document and the accompanying worksheet. If you have any questions or believe you have a unique circumstance, please consult with the synod office as you determine compensation for your pastor or deacon. The establishment of these standards demonstrates this synod’s commitment to providing equitable compensation for its rostered ministers so that pastors and deacons may indeed serve where they feel God has called them.

How this Document is to be Used At the Time of a New Call

The compensation calculations described below – and supported by the accompanying calculations worksheet – are to be used when a congregation extends a new call to a pastor or deacon. Prior to sharing a compensation proposal with a candidate, the congregation is expected to consult with the synod office to ensure equitable compensation. All Compensation & Benefits packages must be attested to by the bishop of the Synod. Substandard compensation or benefits will rarely be accepted by the bishop and then only after due consultation with the congregation and candidate.

For Continuing Calls

For the first year of these revised compensation standards, all congregations are expected to compare their pastor or deacon’s compensation to these standards to ensure they are equitably paid. These standards will adjust each year with the federal Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA)¹. It would be appropriate to expect that the compensation of a longer-tenured pastor or deacon will exceed these standards if the congregation has continued to adjust compensation using the COLA and offering merit increases.

NOTE: If a rostered minister’s compensation is found to be significantly below the standards outlined in this document, the rostered minister and congregation leadership are encouraged to consult with the synod staff to develop a plan to ensure the rostered minister is equitably compensated.

Calculating Compensation

In preparing this thorough revision of the compensation standards, the approaches used in other synods were reviewed. We sought a simpler approach that could apply for both pastors and deacons (hence a single document) that would provide equity

¹ Historic COLA values can be found at: <https://www.ssa.gov/oact/cola/colaseries.html>

in compensation and also provide guidance for accommodating the differences in living expenses across the synod. We have developed a step-by-step Compensation Standards Worksheet as a companion to this document to be used in determining a fair range for compensation within a given community and factors relevant to your pastor or deacon. You can find images of the worksheet with sample calculations in the Appendix on page 15. The spreadsheet that automatically performs the necessary worksheet calculations based upon your inputs can be downloaded from the synod website (www.neos-elca.org).

This new approach begins by establishing a baseline salary for pastors and deacons in Section 1 of the worksheet. For 2023, the baseline salary for pastors is \$57,000 and for deacons is \$53,000. The baseline salary for pastors is slightly higher in recognition of the constitutional responsibilities of a pastor and their role being similar to that of a CEO or Executive Director in other organizations.

The baseline salary includes what was previously calculated separately as salary and housing allowance. This baseline salary assumes the median price of a home in the area where members of the congregation live is \$100,000. A local housing cost adjustment is calculated for areas in which the median home price exceeds \$100,000. Guidance for determining the appropriate local median house price can be found in the Appendix on page 20. When a pastor or deacon takes a new call, they will be moving into that community under the current housing conditions and the baseline salary *must be* adjusted accordingly to enable the pastor or deacon to move into that community.

NOTE: *Congregations who provide a parsonage to house a pastor are increasingly rare, so these compensation standards do not address that special circumstance. If your congregation has a parsonage, contact the synod office for guidance in determining a fair compensation range for your pastor.*

An additional adjustment to the baseline salary is calculated based on the years of rostered ministry experience of the pastor or deacon. The adjustment per year of experience is \$400. Section 2 of the worksheet provides an opportunity to adjust compensation based on relevant experience prior to entering rostered ministry.

Adding the adjustments for local housing costs and years of experience to the baseline salary results in the adjusted minimum baseline salary for the pastor or deacon.

In Section 2 an appropriate salary range is determined by adding up points based on longevity in the current call, years of related prior experience, staff leadership (including serving a multi-congregation call), and furthered education. The total points are multiplied by a salary range modifier (\$400 in 2023) to determine a potential salary range adjustment.

In Section 3, the adjusted baseline salary is copied from above and to this is added the potential salary range adjustment to determine a potential high end of the salary range.

NOTE: local circumstances may warrant a salary that exceeds that calculated in the worksheet.

During the conversation between the pastor or deacon and those responsible for making salary recommendations, consider using the following questions as guides for determining an appropriate position within the salary range:

- Does our pastor/deacon bring any additional or special skills to the position that ought to be rewarded?
- Has our pastor/deacon met their mutually predetermined ministry goals during the past twelve months?
- Do we expect our pastor/deacon to take on any significant additional responsibilities as a leader of our congregation?
- Is our pastor/deacon competent in their fulfillment of the ministry position to which they have been called?
- Are there any unique financial stresses which the congregation ought to seek to accommodate to allow our pastor/deacon to better serve our community?
- Are there any unique financial stresses which the congregation faces which need to be accommodated?
- Are we in an area where housing costs are unusually high and special consideration may need to be made?

This conversation will result in a mutually negotiated salary for the pastor or deacon for the coming year. That value is to be entered in Box M in Section 3 of the worksheet so that it will carry over to other tabs in the worksheet.

Examples of calculations using the Salary Development Worksheet can be found in the Appendix on page 15.

NOTE: A congregation proposing to reduce the compensation of a pastor or deacon currently under call shall consult with the synod office to explain the need for this reduction in compensation and a plan to return the rostered minister's compensation to a level that meets the standards.

Special Tax Considerations for Pastors Housing Allowance Resolution

The IRS allows pastors to designate a portion of their cash compensation as a housing allowance, which may then be excluded from federal income tax. The amount designated as housing allowance is reported separately from salary on the pastor's W-2. The housing allowance must be designated in advance, so each year the Congregation Council is encouraged ask the pastor how much of their cash compensation they want to designate as housing, and then pass an appropriate resolution and enter it into the Council minutes (see page 22 in the Appendix for a sample resolution). It is then the pastor's responsibility when they file taxes to report how much of the housing allowance was actually used to provide housing.

Social Security Offset

Employers must withhold payroll taxes from employees (6.2% Social Security and 1.45% Medicare) and themselves pay an equal amount for a total of 15.3%. A pastor, however, is defined as being selfemployed by the Social Security Administration and is responsible for paying a 15.3% self-employment tax. Congregations are expected to pay the pastor a 7.65% social security offset – equal to the employer's share of payroll tax – to help offset the pastor's tax burden. In all other aspects pastors are considered employees and are to receive a W-2 each year rather than a 1099 that is given to independent contractors.

In the accompanying calculations worksheet, the Social Security Offset is automatically calculated as

7.65% of the negotiated salary.

If a congregation continues to determine salary and housing allowance separately, the Social Security Offset is 7.65% of the sum of those two figures according to this formula:

$$\text{Social Security Offset} = (\text{Salary} + \text{Housing Allowance}) * 0.0765$$

In reporting compensation to Portico, values are submitted for Salary, Housing Allowance (if calculated separately from Salary), and Social Security Offset – with the total referred to as "Defined Compensation."

NOTE: In congregations providing a parsonage, any parsonage allowances and the fair rental value of the parsonage are included in calculating the Social Security Offset according to this formula:

$$\text{Social Security Offset} = (\text{Salary} + \text{Parsonage Allowance} + \text{Parsonage Fair Rental Value}) * 0.0765 \quad \text{Benefits}$$

for all Rostered Ministers

Portico Health, Retirement, and Other Benefits

Rostered Ministers are to be enrolled in the Portico Benefits Program, a ministry of the ELCA serving congregations and rostered ministers. Portico provides resources which provide medical and mental health insurance, as well as basic and supplemental life insurance at a group rate. Retirement and Disability benefits are also part of the benefit package administered by Portico which is specific to church plans. They also offer a range of programs advocating for the health and wellness of rostered ministers and church professionals.

Portico offers both traditional PPO (Platinum+ and Gold+) and high deductible (Silver+ and Bronze+) health plans. The Gold+ and Silver+ plans are designed to be comparable in cost to the congregation and cost-sharing for the rostered minister. The ELCA Church Council and Northeastern Ohio Synod recommend providing coverage for the rostered minister and their family under the Gold+ or Silver+ Plan A (which includes an HSA contribution from the congregation). A Letter of Call will

be signed by the Bishop only when this standard is met to the satisfaction of the Bishop. The congregation is encouraged to discuss with their rostered minister the type of insurance coverage preferred to meet their unique needs.

Rostered ministers are to receive a minimum pension contribution of 10%. Congregations are encouraged to consider a pension contribution of 12%. Rostered ministers have the option during annual enrollment to contribute a portion of their compensation to augment their retirement savings.

The standard expectation of this synod is that any congregation or eligible ministry setting will provide health coverage for the rostered minister and their family unless the rostered minister's family has Other Valid Health Coverage and may waive their health coverage. When health coverage is waived, the congregation is encouraged to consider utilizing the cost savings on health insurance to explore other benefits such as additional retirement contributions, reducing educational debt, offsetting the cost of the health coverage that enabled the waiver, additional life insurance, etc.

Types of Leave Sick Leave

Sick Leave of up to six weeks per year with full salary and benefits are to be provided by the congregation when needed. This is not accumulated and is not to be abused. This is not an entitlement. If a rostered minister's health concerns last longer than the normal six-week sick leave, or they are considering applying for disability coverage, the Congregation Council shall consult the synod office for guidance on continuing compensation and benefits, as well as available interim pastoral leadership for the congregation. **Family Leave**

Paid Family Leave with full benefits of eight (8) weeks is standard practice in the ELCA when a child is born or adopted. Congregations are encouraged to offer up to twelve (12) weeks of leave with full benefits to align with the federal standard. The number of weeks of leave before and after the birth are to be specified in advance and with mutual discussion with the rostered minister. If additional family leave beyond the defined number of weeks is desired, it shall be negotiated with the Congregation Council and is typically either paid vacation time or unpaid leave. Similarly, paid Family Leave with benefits of eight to twelve weeks are also to be available to care for a sick family member such as a spouse, child, parent, or sibling. Family leave also includes time for bereavement leave to grieve and heal from the loss of an immediate family member. It is recommended that Rostered Ministers take one to two weeks for bereavement leave. ***When calling a new rostered minister, the congregation must include a comment about sick leave and paid family leave on the ELCA Compensation and Benefits Form, under F. Other Matters.***

Disability

In the event a pastor or deacon who is sponsored in the ELCA benefits program is unable to perform their normal occupation, as a direct result of injury or physical or mental disorder that is verified by objective medical information from a Qualified Health Care Provider, they can apply for disability. If granted, they may be eligible to receive these benefits:

1. During the first two months of disability (waiting period), the employer is expected to pay the rostered minister's full salary and to continue contributions for their ELCA health, retirement, disability, and basic life insurance benefits.
2. Once the disability is approved, the program includes the following benefits which are paid by Portico:
 - a) A monthly disability income benefit, and
 - b) Contributions for health benefits coverage under the ELCA Medical and Dental Benefits Plan for the pastor/deacon and their eligible family members, and
 - c) Contributions to the pastor/deacon's retirement account under the ELCA Retirement Plan and contributions for basic group life insurance.

Weekly Hours / Time Off

Rostered ministers, like anyone else, need some time off from work in order to rest and re-energize themselves.

Congregations shall endeavor to provide each rostered minister with two full days off per week. The rostered minister's weekly schedule (days/hours) may be negotiated as necessary. For the well-being of the rostered minister and health of the congregation, such a schedule should not exceed 50 hours in a work week.

Vacation

Everyone needs a period of time away from the job in order to refresh and recharge. The congregation shall provide a minimum of four weeks of paid vacation per year, including four Sundays for all rostered ministers. Congregations with a long-tenured pastor or deacon are encouraged to consider additional vacation time in recognition of their length of service. If a rostered minister is serving in a part-time call, they shall still receive 4 weeks of paid vacation for whatever their typical ministry days are, which includes 4 Sundays. Continuing education time is not to be regarded as vacation, nor is it to be used by the rostered minister for vacation under any circumstances.

All costs and procurement of ministry coverage during vacation times, including worship leadership supply, are the responsibility of the congregation. A list of available pulpit supply may be secured from the synod website (www.neoselca.org) or synod office.

Holidays

Because of the nature of their professional responsibilities, rostered ministers are seldom able to take advantage of three-day weekends and other holidays such as Christmas, Easter, etc. The congregation is encouraged to identify the paid holidays for their staff after consulting the list of official state and federal holidays. Consideration shall be given, and the rostered minister encouraged to take these days off at another time during the week to compensate for the times when the duties of the rostered minister preclude taking the actual holiday off. This shall not be counted as vacation time.

Continuing Education

The purpose of continuing education for rostered ministers is to strengthen the professional for more effective service. The 1997 Churchwide Assembly (see page 24 in the Appendix) established the expectation of 50 contact hours annually in organized continuing education. These experiences are to be with colleagues and under responsible sponsorship, capable directors, and qualified instructors.

Continuing education may range from a single day seminar to enrollment in a formal program at an educational institution. The ELCA Letter of Call presently recommends a minimum of two weeks of continuing education annually with the congregation contributing a minimum of \$700 toward the cost of continuing education. The continuing education time and funds may be accumulated during a three-year period for a total of six weeks. In the Northeastern Ohio Synod, this time may be taken each year or after two or three years.

A post-pandemic goal of the synod staff is to re-establish the Ministry Committee with one of their responsibilities being establishing standards and offering opportunities for continuing education in the synod. If you are interested in serving on this committee, please contact a member of the synod staff.

First Call Theological Education

First Call Theological Education (FCTE) is the required ELCA three-year structured program of theological education designed to support and strengthen the new rostered minister in terms of: (1) ministry skills; (2) pastoral identity; and (3) discernment of context. FCTE is experiential learning designed to meet participants at their point of need as they encounter the demands and expectations of ministry. Documents outlining the FCTE program are available through the Synod office.

Sabbatical Leave

Sabbatical leave offers an extended block of time for study, personal growth, and reflection apart from usual congregational responsibilities. The 1997 Churchwide Assembly (see page 24 in the Appendix) established the expectation that an extended study and renewal period of one to three months every three to five years in the present call be provided with full salary and benefits. Normal vacation time may be used to extend the sabbatical leave. The leave plan is to be developed in cooperation with the

Congregation Council. The parties shall seek the counsel of the bishop before finalizing an agreement. The congregation shall be responsible for arranging for pastoral coverage, including pulpit supply, during the leave. Within six weeks of the completion of the sabbatical leave the pastor shall present the congregation a written reflection on the experience and the implications for the ministry of the congregation and ministry in the parish. This written reflection shall be added to the pastor's file in the bishop's office.

Continuing education and sabbatical leave time accrue to an individual during the service in a single congregation. All accumulated continuing education time is forfeited with the acceptance of another position or call to a different setting. Such continuing education time may not be used for vacation purposes, may not be transferred to another rostered minister or staff person, and may not be exchanged for monetary reimbursement.

Resources for sabbatical leave can be found in the Appendix on page 25.

Post-Employment Agreements

The Northeastern Ohio Synod bishop (or designee) should be consulted whenever the termination of a call is being considered. When a call is terminated, it is important to contact Portico Benefit Services for information on benefits and payment options prior to creating post-employment agreements. When appropriate, the congregation is encouraged to consider a post-employment (severance) package of three to six months. The congregation's Employer Link user should notify Portico Benefit Services of the individual's termination of employment date up to 60 days in advance via EmployerLink. If the sponsoring organization has agreed to pay severance to the formerly sponsored member, the termination of employment date provided to Portico Benefit Services should be the last date worked (plus any accrued vacation); not the last date for which severance is paid. Upon termination of the Rostered Minister's call, the benefit bundle will change as will the cost of the benefits which may be different than the amount the sponsoring employer has been paying.

Ministry Expenses

Continuing Education

To financially support continuing education, the congregation is encouraged to establish a fund to which it annually contributes a minimum of \$700, with the rostered minister contributing a minimum of \$300 for a minimum total of \$1,000. Any money which the rostered minister contributes to the fund belongs to the rostered minister and may accumulate over a period of up to three years. If the rostered minister resigns the call, any money contributed by the rostered minister but not used for continuing education is returned to the rostered minister. This money would be used for registration, course materials, travel, and housing while the person pursues approved continuing education.

Automobile Reimbursement

A rostered minister is to receive an automobile reimbursement equal to IRS guidelines per mile for business travel. Rostered ministers reimbursed for auto expense on a per mile basis do not have to report this reimbursement as income if they submit written mileage reports to the calling institution.

Synod Assembly

Rostered ministers are constitutionally required to attend the Synod Assembly. Congregations shall cover the cost or reimburse the rostered minister for costs related to attending the synod assembly. This is in addition to continuing education funds and leave.

Professional Expenses

Congregations may also reimburse the rostered minister for professional expenses such as dues, meeting expenses, professional attire, and supplies. The Congregation Council and rostered minister shall create realistic expectations and procedures around reimbursable expenses.

Computer and Cellphone

It is recommended that the congregation provide the rostered minister with a computer and cellphone to facilitate ministry. If the congregation does not directly pay the cost of the cellphone, the congregation may reimburse the rostered minister for their portion of the cellphone plan. This requires a resolution of the Congregation Council – a sample of which can be found in the Appendix on page 22.

Special Circumstances

Part Time Calls

A rostered minister in a part time setting shall be compensated according to current guidelines at a percentage based upon the time negotiated by the Congregation Council. Such calculations are accommodated in the compensation worksheet that accompanies this document. Part of the challenge with part time calls is that fractional compensation may not be sufficient for a rostered minister to cover the cost of housing. Compensation for retired rostered ministers serving part time shall be negotiated with the Congregation Council in consultation with the synod staff.

Interim Rostered Ministers

Interim rostered ministers are to be compensated the same as rostered ministers serving in a called position.

Pulpit Supply

During a pastoral absence, it may be necessary for a congregation to secure a supply pastor. A current list of individuals approved to provide pulpit supply is available and may be obtained from the synod office. Those asked to serve as pulpit supply are to be contacted well in advance of the date needed and, upon acceptance, be provided with a copy of the worship bulletin and pertinent information about the service. A member familiar with congregation worship practices should be on hand to welcome the pastor prior to the service. The recommended honorarium for one worship service is \$150 plus mileage at the current [IRS mileage reimbursement rate](#) (set at 58.5 cents per mile for 2022). For additional services, scheduled within three hours of the conclusion of the initial worship service, whether at the same congregation or at another, as in two-point parishes, an additional \$50 per service shall be paid plus any additional mileage. If additional services are scheduled during the week that are similar in nature e.g., Sunday evening, Wednesday, Saturday, etc., an additional honorarium of \$85 for each additional service plus mileage at the current IRS mileage reimbursement rate shall be paid. For additional responsibilities, appropriate compensation shall be provided. Expenses for lodging and meals, if necessary, are to be paid by the congregation.

APPENDICES

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Compensation Standards Worksheet Example

The pages following pages contain screenshots of the Compensation Standards Worksheet that was developed to accompany this document. This worksheet has been designed so that you only have to enter values in the blue shaded boxes and all of the remaining calculations will be performed automatically.

Section 1 establishes the baseline salary for the pastor. For this example, the pastor is being called to a new congregation and has ten years of experience (Box C). This congregation serves multiple zip codes. Using Zillow.com to research the median home cost in each zip code, the pastor and congregation agree to use the average of \$195,000 (Box B) for the median home cost. This results in an adjusted baseline salary of \$68,600.

	A	B	C	D	E
1	2023 Compensation Calculations		<i>NOTE: Enter appropriate values in the blue boxes. All other calculations are automatic.</i>		
14	Section 2	Determining Salary Range Adjustments	Formula	Your Points	
15	Longevity in Current Call	Research has established that vibrant long-term tenures are often associated with congregational growth. We seek to reflect our shared valuing of healthy, longer-tenured ministries with this adjustment.	Credit one point for each year of service in one's current call in Box E. NOTE: in calculating total points in Box I, the value in Box E will be capped at a value of 10. (Enter 0 when establishing compensation for a new call)	0	<<< Box E
16	Years of Related Non-Pastoral Experience	Increasingly, persons with prior experience in related fields are entering rostered ministry in our church. We seek to acknowledge the value of prior experience <i>in related fields</i> (i.e. teaching, administration, financial, counseling, social work, etc.) with this adjustment.	Enter in Box F the years of prior experience in a related field for which credit is being given. NOTE: the congregation and pastor/deacon are to discuss the relevance of prior experience and agree to a full or fractional value for that experience.	5	<<< Box F
17	Staff and/or Multiple Congregation Leadership	Pastoral leaders of large churches often bear increased responsibilities and expectations. Similarly, leaders in a multi-congregation call also oversee or supervise additional staff. We seek to acknowledge such with this adjustment.	Credit is given for primary leadership in congregations where the staff exceeds the minimum needs of a congregation (worship musician and office support). Credit at least one point for each staff member beyond the pastor, worship musician, and secretarial support. In multi-congregation calls, credit one point for <i>every</i> staff member in each additional congregation.	2	<<< Box G
18	Furthered Education	Lutherans have long expected that their pastoral leaders be well-educated. This credit seeks to account for and encourage life-long learning for leadership.	Credit is given (5 points) to those who have taken the time and made the commitment to earn a degree beyond the minimum Masters level required of a pastor or deacon. (such as M.Th., D.Min., P.H.D., S.T.M., etc.) If such is the case, enter 5 points for furthered education in Box H.		<<< Box H
19	Possible Salary Adjustment	Boxes D-H seek to quantify the value of experience, responsibilities, and education a rostered minister may possess. These factors will become a basis for possible adjustment to salary.	The credits in Boxes E, F (at 50%), G and H are added together to create a "point total" for Box I.	7	<<< Box I
9			within Base Salary), the amount that exceeds \$100,000 will be multiplied by 8% and then added to the baseline salary to adjust for the higher costs of purchasing a home in that area.	7,600	Housing Cost Adjustment
10	Years of Experience	As per most professional salary systems, we seek to reflect the value of acquired skills, wisdom, and experiences which can only come from actual ministry experience.	Enter the number of years of service as a pastor or deacon (up to a maximum of 40) in Box C.	10	<<< Box C
11			The number of years of experience is multiplied by \$400 to determine the Experience Adjustment to Baseline Salary.	4,000	Experience Adjustment
12	Adjusted Baseline Salary	In this step, the Local Housing Cost and Experience Adjustments are added to the Baseline Salary to determine the Adjusted Baseline Salary for a pastor or deacon serving in your congregation. Such factors as position, longevity, and additional degree work will be considered in Section 2 below.	Box D is the "Adjusted Baseline Salary" for your congregation. (Note: for some congregations, current salaries may be below this number. If such is the case, the Synod recommends developing a specific and mutually-agreeable written plan to bring salary up to this minimum baseline. If Council, Congregation, or Pastor/Deacon need assistance in this matter, both synodical staff and the synod's "Compensation Consultants" are able to assist.)	68,600	<<< Box D

Section 2 takes into consideration this particular context and the value the pastor brings to the congregation.

Because this is a new call, Box E does not have a value in it. The pastor taught high school for five years before entering seminary and is given credit for that experience in Box F. In addition to the music and office support staff, the congregation has a part-time youth minister and a part-time communication director, so Box G is 2 to represent the additional people the pastor will supervise. The pastor does not have a degree beyond the Master of Divinity (M.Div.) so Box H is blank.

Section 3 utilizes the adjusted baseline salary (carried to Box J) and the results of Section 2 to establish a potential range for the pastor's salary. The points from Box I are multiplied by the range modifier (result in Box K) and added to the adjusted baseline salary with the result in Box L. During discussion between the pastor and representatives of the congregation, it was agreed that the initial salary for this new call would be in the middle of the range – with the negotiated salary entered in Box M.

The **Summary** section lists the adjusted baseline, negotiated, and high end salaries with the corresponding Social Security Offset for each salary. The sum of salary and Social Security Offset is the Total Defined Compensation to be used in calculating Portico benefits (see the next page).

	A	B	C	D	E
21	Section 3	Negotiating Actual Salary	Formula	Your Figure	
22	Adjusted Baseline Salary	Section 1 (Boxes A, B, C and D) allowed you to determine the appropriate minimum level of salary for your pastor or deacon.	This is the amount from Box D in Section 1 of this form.	68,600	<<< Box J
23	Salary Adjustment Range	Section 2 (Boxes E, F, G, H and I) allowed you to compile a point total which will assist you in quantifying a range for appropriate salary. For the year 2022, the range modifier is set at \$400 per point.	The number recorded in Box I, multiplied by the range modifier described to the left, generates the spread of your appropriate salary range.	2,800	<<< Box K
24	Adjust Baseline + Adjustment Range	By adding the "Adjusted Baseline Salary" and the "Salary Adjustment Range" figures together, you will be able to determine the upper reaches of an appropriate range of salary for your rostered minister.	The sum of Box J and Box K represents a potential high end of the salary range.	71,400	<<< Box L
25	Negotiated Salary for 2023	Although the Synod may produce helpful guidelines and minimum baselines for appropriate salary, congregations need to annually review and revise salary for their rostered ministers. Using the figure in Box J as a "low" and Box L as a "high", it is the responsibility of the congregation to determine actual annual salary. During the course of the conversation between the pastor/deacon and those responsible for the annual review & salary recommendations, consider using the following questions as guides for allowing one to move up or down in the range presented: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does our pastor/deacon bring any additional or special skills to the position that ought to be rewarded? • Has our pastor/deacon met their mutually-predetermined ministry goals during the past twelve months? • Do we expect our pastor/deacon to take on any significant additional responsibilities as a leader of our congregation? • Is our pastor/deacon competent in their fulfillment of the ministry position to which they have been called? • Are there any unique financial stresses which the congregation ought to seek to accommodate so as to allow our pastor to better serve our community? • Are there any unique financial stresses which the congregation faces which need to be accommodated? • Are we in an area where housing costs are unusually high and special consideration may need to be made? The figure entered in Box M represents our mutually-negotiated salary for the year 2023. (Adjusted accordingly if the terms of call are less than full time, or if use of a parsonage is included as a portion of compensation.)		70,000	<<< Box M
26	SS Offset	As described in the Compensation Standards document, a pastor's compensation is to include a Social Security Offset.	The appropriate Social Security Offset to accompany the Negotiated Salary would be:	5,355	
27					
28	Summary	Salary	Social Security Offset (only applicable to pastors)	Total Defined Compensation to report for Portico Benefits	
29	Salary Range Low (Box J)	68,600	5,248	73,848	
30	Negotiated Salary (Box M)	70,000	5,355	75,355	
31	Salary Range High (Box L)	71,400	5,462	76,862	
32					

The **Benefits & Expenses** tab includes a link to the Portico Benefit Calculator (line 26). For this example, the congregation contributes 12% for retirement and selects the Gold+ health plan, the pastor is 42 years old and has a spouse and children. **NOTE: the Portico benefit costs entered are for illustrative purposes only!**

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q
1	Benefits & Expenses Summary																
2	With the exception of the red-bordered Compensation Modifier found below in the pink cell - and the orange congregation names and percentages in the Shared Calls section - you should only enter numbers in the blue shaded cells. Amounts for the Portico benefits are found by visiting the Portico calculator using the link below.																
3																	
4																	
5																	
6																	
7	Compensation Modifier																
8	If this is not a full-time call, enter the percentage modifier in the pink box and the modified numbers will be transferred to the report on the next tab.																
9																	
10																	
11	Compensation Modifier: <input type="text" value="100%"/>																
12																	
13																	
14																	
15	Cash Compensation (transferred from a previous tab)																
16																	
17	Negotiated/Adjusted Salary	70,000															
18	Social Security Offset	5,355															
19	Total Cash Compensation	75,355															
20																	
21																	
22																	
23																	
24	Pension, Health, and Other Benefits																
25	The Portico cost calculator can be found at:																
26	https://employerlink.porticobenefits.org/resources/calculators/benefit-costs-calculator/#/																
27	You will need to know the rostered minister's birthdate.																
28																	
29	Synod: Northeastern Ohio Synod - 6E																
30	Defined Compensation:	75,355															
31	Retirement Percentage:	12 (recommended 12% - minimum 10%)															
32																	
33	Health Insurance	30,100															
34	Retirement	9,043															
35	Disability	980															
36	Basic Group Life	678															
37	Portico Benefits Total:	40,801															
38																	
39	Additional Benefits (if applicable, please list and indicate cost)																
40	Item 1																
41	Item 2																
42	Item 3																
43	Cost of additional benefits:	0															
44																	
45	Total Cost of Benefits	40,801															
46																	
47																	
48	Other Expenses																
49	Mileage Reimbursement	3,000 (at IRS approved rate per mile)															
50	Other Professional Expenses	500															
51	Continuing Education	700 (minimum of \$700 recommended)															
52	Cell Phone Reimbursement	600															
53	Other Expenses																
54																	
55	Total Cost of Other Expenses	4,800															
56																	
57																	
58	Total Compensation, Benefits, and Other Expenses	120,956															
59																	
60																	

Shared Calls

If the expenses for this call are shared by multiple congregations, enter the congregation names and appropriate percentages below.

Name of Cong A:

Name of Cong B:

Name of Cong C:

	Cong A	Cong B	Cong C	Total
Percentage:	<input style="border: 2px solid red;" type="text"/>	<input style="border: 2px solid red;" type="text"/>	<input style="border: 2px solid red;" type="text"/>	<input style="border: 2px solid red;" type="text"/>
	0	0	0	
	0	0	0	
	0	0	0	

The **Benefits & Expenses** tab is also used in special circumstances for a part-time or shared call. If the call is not full-time, cell E11 is used to indicate the appropriate percentage and then the salary and Social Security Offset (if applicable) are modified in the pink cells. If this is a shared call, the orange shaded cells with the red outlines can be used to identify the congregations and the appropriate percentage each will contribute. In addition to the Portico benefits, lines 40-42 are used if there are additional benefits included. Lines 49-53 list the various ministry-related expenses.

The **Printable Summary** tab provides a ready-to-print summary of the full cost of compensation, benefits, and professional expenses. A different **Printable Summary – Shared Calls** tab is provided for those situations.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O
1	Proposed Compensation, Benefits, and Expenses														
2															
3	Cash Compensation to Pastor/Deacon														
4															
5		70,000	Salary												
6															
7		5,355	Social Security Offset (pastors only)												
8															
9		75,355	Cash Compensation												
10															
11															
12	Health Insurance, Retirement, and Other Benefits														
13		30,100	Health Insurance												
14		9,043	Retirement												
15		980	Disability												
16		678	Basic Group Life												
17		40,801	Total Portico Benefits												
18															
19		0	Other Benefits												
20															
21		40,801	Benefits												
22															
23															
24	Professional Expenses														
25		3,000	Mileage Reimbursement												
26		500	Other Professional Expenses												
27		700	Continuing Education												
28		600	Cell Phone Reimbursement												
29		0	Other												
30															
31		4,800	Professional Expenses												
32															
33															
34		120,956	Total Compensation, Benefits, and Expenses												
35															

References for Local Housing Costs

When a pastor or deacon takes a new call, they will be moving into that community under the current housing conditions and the baseline salary must be adjusted accordingly to enable the pastor or deacon to move into that community. It is important to note that housing values can fluctuate quickly.

The local housing adjustment gets more difficult to apply the longer a pastor or deacon lives in the area. If housing values increase dramatically, a rostered minister who locked in a mortgage when housing values were lower would

not need the full local housing adjustment in order to be equitably paid. On the other hand, if housing values decrease significantly, a rostered minister who bought into the community when the housing values were higher will have a higher mortgage payment and should not be penalized for a declining housing market.

Another consideration is the question of which area should be used to determine the local housing adjustment. If the congregation is located in an urban area, the local housing costs may be depressed and/or there is no suitable housing in the immediate vicinity of the congregation. In other situations, the congregation is located in an area that has seen dramatic increases in housing values and it would be unrealistic for the congregation to use the local housing cost in the immediate area. In general, it is appropriate to use the local housing cost in the area where most of the congregation members reside. If the members are spread over a wide area, it is appropriate to use an average value of those areas.

A local realtor will be able to help congregations determine the median home value at the present time. A congregation can also use the internet to research current housing costs in the local area. The National Association of Realtors website provides extensive research about local housing costs. This page reports the median home prices by county: [NAR Median Home Prices](#)

The websites Zillow.com and Realtor.com also provide helpful data regarding median home prices in a zip code or specific community. Website functionality frequently changes, but at the time this document was drafted, the following methods provided helpful results:

- Go to www.realtor.com and in the search field at the top of the page enter the zip code or community name and click the magnifying glass to execute the search. Scroll down below the listings, and look for a box with the heading, “Facts about Zip Code/Community.” In that box will be the median home price in that area.
- Go to www.google.com and in the search bar, enter the phrase: “median home price (zip code) realtor.com” In the search results (often the first one) look for a link described as:

<https://www.realtor.com> > (zip code) > overview

(zip code) ??? Real Estate Market – Realtor.com Following this link will bring up a page with summary information for that zip code.

— 20 —

- Go to www.zillow.com and in the search field at the top of the page, enter the zip code or community name and click the magnifying glass to execute the search. Scroll down through the sidebar with the property listings and look for the box titled “Related Searches.” One of the links should read “Zillow Home Value Price Index For (zip code).” Click that link and you will find summary information for that zip code.
- Go to www.google.com and in the search bar, enter the phrase:

“median home price (zip code) zillow” In the search results (often the first one) look for a link described as:

(zip code) Home Prices & Home Values | Zillow Following this link will bring up a page with summary information for that zip code.

Sample Congregation Council Resolutions

Designation of Housing Allowance (applicable only to pastors)

In IRS Publication 517, the IRS states the following regarding a housing allowance: “The church or organization that employs you must officially designate the payment as a housing allowance before it makes the payment. It must designate a definite amount. It can't determine the amount of the housing allowance at a later date. If the church or organization doesn't officially designate a definite amount as a housing allowance, you must include your total salary in your income.”

Shown below is a sample resolution designating a housing allowance, which is to be done each year:

The president informed the Council that under the tax law, pastors may be able to exclude from federal income tax the amount of their compensation designated as a housing allowance.

After considering the estimate of Rev. _____ of their home expenses and the amount requested to be designated as a housing allowance, a motion was made by _____, seconded and passed to adopt the following resolution:

Resolved that of the total cash salary for the year 20__, \$_____ is hereby designated as housing allowance.

Automobile Reimbursement Policy

The congregation will reimburse [the pastor/rostered ministers/employees] for automobile expenses incurred when traveling on church business, in accordance with Internal Revenue Service (IRS) rules. Current regulations require that for reimbursement to be non-taxable, individuals must keep records of amounts spent, the date of the travel, destination(s), and an adequate record of the purpose/reason for the trip (with consideration for pastoral confidentiality).

Upon receipt of sufficient documentation, a reimbursement for travel expense will be issued. Under current IRS rules, reimbursement can include mileage at the IRS approved rate plus parking fees, tolls, and similar expenses.

Professional Expense Reimbursement Policy

Since rostered ministers are expected to participate in church activities beyond the congregation and to continue to grow professionally, the congregation will reimburse [the rostered minister/each rostered minister] up to \$_____ for professional expenses each year. Such professional expenses may include dues and subscriptions; meeting expenses; books and miscellaneous educational and reference material; and personal supplies. Tangible materials purchased under this policy are the personal property of the rostered minister, unless otherwise agreed.

Cell Phone Reimbursement Policy

A cell phone provided to the pastor is a nontaxable business expense if the Congregation Council minutes state it is primarily provided for noncompensatory business reasons (such as the need to be accessible at all times for workrelated emergencies or the expectation to be available to talk with members outside of regular office hours).

As an alternative, the pastor may be provided with a nontaxable cell phone reimbursement if Congregation Council minutes state that the pastor is required to maintain a personal cell phone for noncompensatory business reasons and the reimbursement amount does not exceed reasonable business needs (i.e. reimburse the basic monthly plan, not family plan for extra minutes).

The reimbursement may either be at a fixed amount or for the identifiable costs for the individual portion of a shared plan, including the purchase of a phone.

Life-Long Learning Expectations of the ELCA

Resolution CA97.2.7 adopted by the 1997 Churchwide Assembly states:

To encourage all persons in the Evangelical Lutheran Church to engage in a holistic and systematic approach to lifelong learning and development.

- a. For rostered persons, this includes;
 - (1) Specifications: (a) a minimum of 50 contact hours per year of intentional continuing education, or
150 contact hours each three-year period;
 - (b) spiritual disciplines;
 - (c) habits of personal study;
 - (d) regular worship;
 - (e) self-care;
 - (f) involvement in the wider community;
 - (g) participation in intentional colleague groups; and
 - (h) peer review as appropriate for personal and vocational development (see “LifeLong Learning and Development for Faithful Leaders,” Appendix D [*Pre-Assembly Report*, Section IV]).
 - (2) Extended study and renewal of a minimum of one to three months every three to five years in present call. For rostered persons involved in the First-Call Theological Education program, this three- to five-year period begins upon completion of that program (see “LifeLong Learning and Development for Faithful Leaders,” Appendix C [*Pre-Assembly Report*, Section IV]).
 - (3) An annual review of continuing education needs and plans with an appropriate group within the congregation or agency and the synod.
- b. For congregations and agencies, this means:
 - (1) Being in partnership with rostered persons in continuing learning and development;
 - (2) Utilizing a mutual ministry committee or an appropriate group to review continuing education needs and plans;
 - (3) Providing an appropriate share of the funding for continuing education and programs of extended study and renewal (growing to a minimum of \$1,000—\$700 from the

congregation or agency and \$300 from the rostered person—by the year A.D. 2000); and

- (4) Respecting the rostered person’s needs for appropriate self-care. c. For synods, this means:
- (1) Communicating expectations regarding intentional learning and development by rostered persons;
 - (2) Promoting health and wellness among rostered persons and their families;
 - (3) Fostering a supportive climate for life-long learning and development; and (4) Reviewing and recording continuing education plans of rostered persons.

Sabbatical Resources

The Lilly Endowment provides grants for full-time pastors in congregational settings up to \$50,000, including up to \$15,000 for congregational expenses and events. Pastors may apply online at <https://www.cts.edu/clergyrenewal/applying/national-program/> or write to The Lilly Endowment, 2801 North Meridian St. Indianapolis, IN 46208.

The Louisville Institute has grant programs that support religious and theological scholarship through the Pastoral Study Project, with funds up to \$15,000. Information can be found at www.Louisville-Institute.org, or in writing to The Louisville Institute, 1044 Alta Vista Road, Louisville, KY, 40205.

Recommended planning resource books:

Planning Sabbaticals: A Guide for Congregations and their Pastors by Robert Saler

Sabbaticals are becoming increasingly common practice in congregations, and while there are many books on helping pastors prepare for their time away, there are no texts that approach the experience with the congregation in mind, from start to finish. This guide for congregations and their pastors draws on nearly two decades of wisdom from the Lily Endowment Clergy Renewal Program and helps draw the conversation away from a pastor-centric model and towards a holistic congregational framework for thinking about how the entire community can benefit from a pastor’s sabbatical. <https://www.amazon.com/dp/0827231792>

Clergy Renewal: The Alban Guide to Sabbatical Planning by A. Richard Bullock and Richard Bruesehoff (both authors are ELCA pastors)

Planned time away from the parish for study, rest, and spiritual renewal can be beneficial - and often necessary - for any pastor, as well as for the congregation. In this thoroughly revised and expanded edition of Alban's popular Sabbatical Planning for Clergy and Congregations, Bullock and Bruesehoff provide the definitive guide to putting together refreshing pastoral sabbaticals that can help keep ministry vital and growing for the long term. <https://www.amazon.com/dp/1566992230>

Members of the Compensation Task Force & Compensation Consultants

The team who worked on this revision of the Compensation Standards included:

Deacon Lindsay Bailey, St. Matthew Lutheran Church, Medina

Pastor Dan Cammarn, intentional interim pastor

Mr. Bob Emmerich, retired after 35 years in the banking industry

Pastor Angela Freeman-Riley, Bethesda on the Bay Lutheran Church, Bay Village

Mr. Matthew Rowlands, pastoral spouse with an accounting background

Pastor Mitch Phillips, Assistant to the Bishop for Leadership

Compensation Consultants

The following people have agreed to be available to help congregations in understanding these compensation standards and the calculation of compensation, benefits, and expenses.

Pastor Dan Cammarn – djcammarn@gmail.com

Pastor Angela Freeman-Riley – pastor.angela@bethesdaonthebay.org

Pastor Mitch Phillips – mphilips@neos-elca.org

After the Compensation Standard video Bishop Barbins recognized Vice President Kevin Kampfer

Vice President Report—Mr. Kevin Kampfer

34. Mr. Kampfer reiterated and gave an update on the “Spine-Tingling Goal” to “have an equitably paid pastor, deacon, or trained lay person in settled leadership in every congregation by the 2023 Northeastern Ohio Synod Assembly.”
- a. Mr. Kampfer summarized the Synod Council four working groups on this goal: Strengthen Congregational Leadership, Creating an Endowment, Providing Competency Opportunities, Sharing Congregational Resources, and updated their work towards reaching the Spine-Tingling Goal.
 - b. Mr. Kampfer highlighted the work that Synod Council has been working on towards this goal will be further augmented with passage of the newly revised Compensation Standards that were presented earlier. He thanked the Compensation Task Force on their work.
 - c. Mr. Kampfer gave updates on how Synod Council is authorizing funds and how they are being used. Most notably the following:
 1. Oesterlen Service for Youth— \$100,000 over five (5) years.
 2. Indiana-Kentucky Synod—\$10,000.
 3. Afghanistan Resettling in Northeastern Ohio \$25,353.

4. The Lutheran Center renovation of up to \$100,000.
- d. Mr. Kampfer also spoke about how the conference reconfiguring from seven (7) conferences to five (5) would impact the Northeastern Ohio Synod.
- e. Mr. Kampfer highlighted the many Churchwide opportunities he has been a part of since being elected Vice President in June 2021.
- f. Mr. Kampfer thanked Bishop Barbins, Synod officers, Executive Committee, the people serving on Synod Council, and the Northeastern Ohio Synod staff.

Kevin Kampfer ended his remarks and yielded the floor to Bishop Barbins who moved the assembly to lunch.

Lunch—12:10 until 1:25pm

Bishop Barbins recognized the chair of the Nominations committee, The Rev Doug Fidler.

Nominations Report—The Rev Doug Fidler

35. Bishop Barbins recognized the chair of the Nominations committee, The Rev Doug Fidler.
 - a. Pastor Fidler highlighted pages 15-18 in the pre-assembly materials detailing those who were nominated.
 - b. Pastor Fidler asked for any nominations from the floor. ***The Rev Robert Eller*** was nominated from the floor for Synod Council Southern-Clergy. This is an uncontested position.
 - c. Pastor Fidler concluded the Nomination Committee's process and report.

Bishop Barbins recognized The Rev. Richard Kidd, chair of the Elections Committee

Synod Council Elections—The Rev. Richard Kidd

36. On behalf of the Elections Committee, The Rev. Richard Kidd presented the voting procedure. There was one (1) contested position with two (2) nominees.
 - a. Pastor Kidd (re) stated the nominees for the Cleveland-West Lay Synod Council position.

Synod Council Cleveland West Lay: Douglas Doza (66), Yvonne Hoelter (104)

Yvonne Hoelter elected

37. On behalf of the Elections Committee, The Rev. Richard Kidd, presented the following: There are thirteen (13) positions for which candidates are unopposed. The following were deemed to be elected by consent.
 - a. Synod Council Canton-Massillon Clergy: The Rev Mark Kreemer
 - b. Synod Council Cleveland-West Clergy: The Rev Dan Skillman
 - c. Synod Council At-Large: The Rev Robert Ferro, Jr
 - d. Synod Council At-Large Lay: Linda Johnson-Weidenbach

- e. Synod Council Eastern Lay: Don Wiff
 - f. Synod Council Southern Lay: Susan Lux
 - g. Synod Council Southern Clergy: The Rev. Robert Eller
 - h. Consultation Committee Clergy: The Rev Brad Ross
 - i. Discipline Committee Clergy: The Rev Tina Crog
 - j. Discipline Committee Clergy. The Rev Jay Plummer
 - k. Discipline Committee Lay: Steve Wilson
 - l. Discipline Committee Lay: Yvonne Kulma
 - m. Discipline Committee Clergy: The Rev Richard Kidd
38. On behalf of the Elections Committee, The Rev. Richard Kidd, presented the following:
There are four (4) positions for which there are no candidates and these positions will remain open.
- a. Synod Council Richland-Ashland Clergy: *Open*
 - b. Synod Council Akron-Wooster Lay: *Open*
 - c. Synod Council At-Large Youth: *Open*
 - d. Consultation Committee Lay: *Open*
39. Bishop Barbins thanked the following outgoing Synod Council members:
- a. Rita Benoit
 - b. The Rev. Scott Henderson
 - c. Sarah Roth
 - d. Dr. Josephine Wright

The Northeastern Ohio Synod Conference Bylaw Change

40. Bishop Barbins presented the Northeastern Ohio Synod Conference Bylaw change to reconfigure the conferences to a vote.

SA22.05.03 Northeastern Ohio Synod Conference Bylaw Change
(Moved by council action; majority vote required; carried)
APPROVED To approve the proposed bylaw for the Northeastern Ohio Synod
governing documents for the reconfiguration of the Synod conferences
as presented.

The voting results were 173 in favor, 10 opposed, and 3 abstained.

- a. No further items noted.

Compensation Standards Update

41. Bishop Barbins presented the Northeastern Ohio Synod Compensation Standards as presented to a vote.

SA22.05.04 Compensation Standards Update (Moved by council action; majority vote required; carried).

APPROVED To approve the Northeastern Ohio Synod Compensation Standards as presented during the 2022 Northeastern Ohio Synod Assembly.

The voting results were 171 in favor, 12 opposed, and 6 abstained.

- a. No further items noted.

The 2023-2024 Budget

42. Bishop Barbins presented the 2023-2024 Budget for a vote.

1. The Rev. Jean Hansen, Faith Lutheran, Fairlawn spoke to the deficit budget.
2. Mr. Mike Davis spoke to the NEOS resources to absorb a deficit budget on the short term.

SA22.05.05 2023-2024 Budget (Moved by council action; majority vote required; carried)

APPROVED To approve the proposed 2023-2024 budget of Northeastern Ohio Synod as presented to the 2022 Northeastern Ohio Synod Assembly.

The voting results were 166 in favor, 22 opposed, and 4 abstained.

3. No other items noted.

Bishop Barbins recognized David Lenz and The Rev. Christopher Otten.

Churchwide Reports—Mr. David Lenz and The Rev. Christopher Otten

43. David Lenz brought greetings from the Churchwide Council. Also, highlighted the following:

- a. Spoke about how the Churchwide Council continues to remember the untimely death of ELCA Vice President William Horne. Carlos Pena has been working in an interim basis. A new Vice President will be elected at this year's Churchwide Assembly in August.
- b. Churchwide Council has met November 2021 and April 2022, with each meeting covering roughly three (3) days. Both meetings were held off site from the Chicago offices. Also, noted one special Zoom meeting in September 2021.
- c. Mr. Lenz spoke to the legislative function of the Churchwide Council. He highlighted the following:

4. September 2021: approved an ELCA special declaration for American Indian and Alaskan Native peoples.
5. November 2021: Revised ELCA declarations to the Jewish Community to continue to speak out against anti-Semitism.
6. April 2022: A declaration to the Muslim Community as a statement of ecumenical Lutheran/Muslim relations.
- d. Mr. Lenz highlighted the creation of task forces in education, discipline, discrimination, and candidacy processes.
- e. Mr. Lenz spoke about a Churchwide Council committee restructuring.
- f. Mr. Lenz discussed how the Council made Churchwide Assembly recommendations on procedures, budget, constitutions bylaws, and other items related to that event.
- g. Mr. Lenz spoke to the goal of trying to engage 1,000,000 new young and diverse people. Also, spoke to how the ELCA Constitution will have significant revisions coming out of the Churchwide Assembly.

David Lenz introduced The Rev. Christopher Otten.

Assistant to the Presiding Bishop and Senior Director of ELCA Chaplains and Federal Chaplaincy:

The Rev. Christopher Otten

44. Chaplain Otten explained his role and the Federal institutions he oversees—as well as—the people they serve.
45. Chaplain Otten spoke about how chaplains continue to push on where the boundaries of the Church really are. The ELCA chaplains are able to minister to all. In fact, they are sought out because ELCA chaplains will share the love, grace, and compassion of Jesus Christ to everyone no matter gender, sexual orientation, belief, or ethnicity as “Unrestricted Chaplains.” The ELCA chaplains are there to minister to all who serve our country.
46. Chaplain Otten talked about how the Northeastern Ohio Synod continues to support the ELCA and Federal chaplains.
47. Chaplain Otten recognized two (2) retirements of chaplains from the Northeastern Ohio Synod roster who ended stellar careers as chaplains by presenting the Meritorious Service Award. This is an award recognized by the ELCA as well as the Pentagon.
 - a. The Rev James Eckert
 - b. The Rev Jeffrey (Jay) Plummer
48. Chaplain Otten thanked the Northeastern Ohio Synod for the support of the greater mission of the Church. The ELCA received \$40 million in Mission Support; the Northeastern Ohio Synod contributed \$617,000. These funds go to ELCA World Hunger and ELCA Disaster Response ministering stateside and abroad in peacetime and war-torn nations. 49. Chaplain Otten introduced a video with Presiding Bishop Eaton’s message.

Chaplain yielded to Bishop Barbins who recognized Ms. Darlene Waugh

Pierstorf Presentation—Ms. Darlene Waugh

50. Ms. Waugh discussed the origins of the Pierstorf organization. It is a one of a kind Lutheran financial aid for college organization.
51. Ms. Waugh spoke about how their organization gives interest free loans to Lutherans attending higher education. There have been 3800 loans since 1994—and she talked about how the main qualifications are, “Be Lutheran and pastors are the main people who speak on behalf of the candidates.”
52. Ms. Waugh spoke about the number of peoples’ lives they have impacted in positive ways; helping students find funds to make their education goals a reality.
53. Ms. Waugh spoke about how students are change makers and will have a significant impact on the world in the future.
54. June 30 deadline: They need help to identify potential students to help them “live the life they are called to be.”

Reference and Counsel Committee—The Rev. Shelley Nelson-Bridger

55. The Rev. Shelley Nelson-Bridger, chair of Reference and Counsel, presented the report of that Committee.
56. Pastor Nelson-Bridger presented the memorial titled, “Memorial to Restructure the Governance of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America” that was drafted by the Lower Susquehanna Synod, PA led by Bishop Jim Dunlop. The following quote was to be considered:

***Resolved,** that Northeastern Ohio Synod in assembly memorialize the 2022 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Church in America to direct the Church Council to establish a Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church that, working in consultation with the Conference of Bishops and the Church Council, shall reconsider the Statements of Purpose for each of the expressions of this church, the Principles of Organization, and all matters pertaining thereunto, presenting its findings to the 2025 Churchwide Assembly in preparation for a reconstituting convention to be called under the rules for a special meeting of the Churchwide Assembly.*

57. The following people spoke about this memorial:
 - a. Pastor Jean Hansen, Faith Lutheran, Fairlawn
 - b. Ken Reinoehl, Zion, North Canton
 - c. Joanna Pretz-Anderson, retired, Messiah, Ashtabula
 - d. Pastor Don King, retired , Peace Lutheran, Cleveland Heights
 - e. Pastor Weaver, retired, Faith Lutheran, Fairlawn
 - f. Pastor George Murphy, retired, St. Mark, Tallmadge

- g. Pastor Steve Bond, Advent, Mentor
- h. John Sleasman, Synod Parliamentarian, clarified the memorial process
- i. Pastor David Anderson, retired, Messiah, Ashtabula
- j. David Lenz, ELCA Churchwide Council
- k. Mark Evans, Prince of Peace, Westlake
- l. Pastor Sara Cogsil, Trinity, Lakewood

58. Bishop Barbins called for a vote on this memorial.

SA22.05.06 Memorial to Restructure the Governance of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. (Moved Nelson-Bridger; seconded; carried)

APPROVED To adopt the memorial to Restructure the Governance of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. *The voting results were 123 in favor, 32 opposed, and 25 abstained.*

Memorial was adopted as written and will be forwarded to the Memorials Committee of Churchwide for their review and consideration

Courtesy Resolution: John Sleasman

59. The Rev Shelley Nelson-Bridger read the following:

WHEREAS our Northeastern Ohio Synod is blessed beyond measure with a great wealth of resources and servants, especially those who serve in Synodical leadership;

WHEREAS Robert Rules of Orders recommends that reports be succinct and factual, without a tendency to pontificate, we deem it necessary to disregard Roberts for this commendation.

WHEREAS this individual is considered a gifted parliamentarian by the current and three previous Bishops. One in particular said, "He often had to remind me what the constitutions and Roberts Rules would allow. Not always what I wanted to hear but a gift who told me what I needed to hear and probably helped me and us avoid some missteps along way"; WHEREAS Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton simply says he is a gift;

WHEREAS another Bishop indicated in his term alone that this individual served the Northeastern Ohio Synod, ELCA, as Acting Vice President, Synod Secretary, Treasurer and Assembly Parliamentarian. In addition to all this, this individual has also served as Churchwide Assembly Parliamentarian FOUR times;

WHEREAS Bishop Emeritus Allende also advocated that Mr. John Sleasman be ordained so he could add the office of Bishop to all these synodical positions to thus complete the cycle. John has been regarded as a treasure and a gift to our synod by all four bishops under whom John has served;

WHEREAS the amount of institution knowledge that resides in John's head and computer hard drive is staggering, but his love for the Church and his passion for helping it to run well extends even beyond those gigabytes;

AND WHEREAS John has always been a delightful presence in the office, has a story for everything, and is someone whose heart beats for justice.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Northeastern Ohio Synod will receive monetary gifts for the commission of a Volunteer Recognition art piece which will hang in the Synod Offices and be dedicated in his name. Upon this artwork the names of exemplary volunteers within the Synod or Churchwide expressions will be inscribed;

AND BE IT RESOLVED that the Northeastern Ohio gives our thanks to Advent Lutheran Church in Solon (John's home congregation) and John's family for sharing John and his expertise with us. We will pray for his continued health as he claims each day as a gift and enjoys travel and grandparenting in the days ahead.

60. *The assembly approved this memorial by acclamation and John received a standing ovation.*

61. John Sleasman was humbled, said a few words, and thanked the assembly.

Courtesy Resolution: 2022 Assembly Planning and Moving Forward

62. The Rev Shelley Nelson-Bridger read the following:

WHEREAS our Northeastern Ohio Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America gathered in assembly is called to be church located in this world gathered and centered in Christ and;

WHEREAS we in the Northeastern Ohio Synod are people sent by God to move forward into new places, new spaces, and boldly trust that God goes ahead of us to prepare us to face forward and not look back;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Northeastern Ohio Synod gives thanks to those who have spoken to us, inspired our faith, and have encouraged us to leave this church better than we first found it. We give thanks today for first peoples who stewarded these lands; for all baptized people who have gone before us known and unknown. Especially today, we remember Mildred Jones who at 103 was the eldest member of African descent in our Northeastern Ohio Synod and a proud member of Advent Lutheran Church, Cleveland;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Northeastern Ohio Synod in assembly extends its appreciation and thanks to the dedicated work and commitment of time to assembly planning

coordinator Sony Gilroy, the assembly planning committee members, especially a shout-out to Hayley Phillips, worship leaders, everyone involved as audio/visual technicians, technical support, and voting support, and Zoom support, and for church musicians from today, yesterday, and for all who helped to organize this assembly;

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we give thanks for Father Guiao's word, spiritual guidance, and centering prayer, and we celebrate the ministry of St. Ignatius High School and give thanks to God for all religious and public school educators, staff, and administrators;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we celebrate and give thanks for all chaplains who serve in many and various mission outposts for the people of God they accompany and how they share the light and love of Christ. Just as we give thanks to God for the ministry of Chaplain Christopher Otten;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we will as congregations of the Northeastern Ohio Synod pray for the spirit-filled leadership and guidance and the many and various ministries of our Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, Bishop Laura Barbins, Synod officers, Council, and staff; AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we encourage every rostered and lay person participating in congregational life to identify and spiritually lift up those who have the Godgiven gifts for ministry to share the good news of God through Jesus Christ;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we recognize the significant anniversaries and appreciate the faithful congregations and rostered leaders who have shared in the ministry of reconciliation to God and to each other;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we affirm our commitment to be working advocates to support the needs of human beings experiencing hunger, oppression, injustice, poverty, abandonment, and exclusion throughout the world;

AND BE FINALLY RESOLVED that we give thanks to God by grace as we go forth with courage as ambassadors for Christ, creators of justice, advocates for peace, and church together for the sake of the world.

63. *The resolution passed by acclamation.*

64. Bishop Barbins led the assembly in the Closing of Assembly liturgy and worship at 2:48 pm.

65. The 2022 Northeastern Ohio Synod Assembly business session was adjourned at 3:01 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Matthew Beery, June 2022