

## **Explanation of Proposed Amendments to the Central States Synod Constitution To be voted at Synod Assembly – June 4-5, 2021**

At the 2019 churchwide assembly, voting members approved amendments to required provisions of synod constitutions. These amendments did not require approval by individual synod assemblies and were incorporated into our synod constitution. The focus of many amendments were:

- Changing language around voting members for synod assemblies and synod council membership to at least 45% women and at least 45% men (rather than 50% female and 50% male.)
- Since deacons are now ordained, they are counted as “rostered ministers” rather than lay in synod representation so there is no need to distinguish between rostered ministers of word and sacrament and rostered ministers of word and service.
- Instead of using “synodical” to describe bishops, committees, etc. the word “synod” is now uniformly used as the adjective.

Most of the proposed amendments to our synod constitution will align the language of our optional provisions, by-laws, and continuing resolutions with the above language changes.

- S7.21.03 is a by-law that refers to the formula to provide for lay representation at synod assemblies reflecting the above language changes in regard to the representation of women and men.
- S7.24.A18 reflects a change in our synod language referring to Synod Authorized Ministers rather than Parish Ministry Associates who are serving as the primary pastoral leader of a congregation.
- S7.26.01 Deletes “congregations under development” as this term is no longer being used.
- S10.07.05 addresses synod council representation and reflects the changes to at 45% women and 45% men, as well as rostered ministers.
- S10.07.09c is deleted as it contradicts an earlier provision (S10.06).

Below are the provisions, by-laws, and continuing resolutions that will be voted on.

- Changes are Highlighted, (**Example**)
- New wording is indicated by underlining, (Example)
- Deleted wording is indicated by strike through, (~~Example~~)

### **Chapter 7 – Synod Assemblies**

**S7.11.18(21)** **On those years when the assembly is held in person,** planning for Synod Assemblies will provide opportunities for the youth voting members to get together for fellowship, be oriented to the purpose and procedures of the assembly, and be fully engaged in the assembly.

**S7.21.03.** **The formula established by the Synod Council to provide additional lay representation from congregations on the basis of the number of baptized members in the congregation shall be as follows:**

- a. A minimum of two lay members elected by each congregation related to this synod, typically one of whom shall be male a man and one of whom shall be female, a woman shall be voting members. Additional lay representation from congregations shall be on the basis of the number of baptized members as reported in the most recently published-ELCA Yearbook. parochial reports. Congregations having 500-1500 baptized members shall have 4 voting members (typically 2 men, 2 women 2 male, 2 female); 1501-2500 baptized members shall have 6 voting members (typically 3 men, 3 women 3 male, 3 female); and over 2500 baptized members shall have 8 voting members (typically 4 men, 4 women); 4 male, 4 female). Additional members from each congregation shall be typically divided between male and female except that the odd-numbered member, if any, may be either male or female.
- b. In the event that a congregation is unable to adhere to S.7.21.01 at their annual meeting, the congregation may request a waiver to be filed with the Synod Office by March 1. Such a request for waiver must state in detail the process followed to elect the voting members and the reasons for requesting a waiver. The Synod Council shall rule upon the request at their spring meeting. The Synod Council in acting on these waiver requests shall seek to ensure that, at least 45 percent of the lay members of the assembly shall be women and at least 45 percent shall be men. as nearly as possible, 50 percent of the lay members of the assembly shall be female and 50 percent shall be male. The Synod Council will report their decision back to the congregation in a timely manner.
- d. Any congregation may elect a youth from its voting membership as an additional lay voting member to the Synod Assembly provided that the person has not yet reached their his or her 18<sup>th</sup> birthday at the time of election and otherwise meets the requirements to be a voting member.

**S7.24.A18A21A** ~~Parish Ministry Associate of the Central States Synod~~ **Synod Authorized Ministers** serving under a covenant by authority of the Bishop of the Central States Synod shall have the privilege of voice and vote at assemblies of the Central States Synod. effective

**S7.26.01.** Synodically Authorized Worshiping Communities and Congregations Under Development in of the Synod, shall have one lay member as their representative and voting member at the Synod Assembly.

*(Please note that the continuing resolution which specified that the synod assembly be in Kansas one year, Missouri the next and at Bethany College every three years was deleted by the synod council at their October 2020 meeting in order to give greater flexibility to have online synod assemblies and determine locations for in person assemblies.)*

## **Chapter 9 – Nominations and Elections**

**S9.03.02.** At the time of the appointment and acceptance of the members of the Nominating Committee, the Secretary of this Synod shall cause the following

information to be published in the publication(s) of this Synod:

- a. The names, telephone numbers, **e-mail addresses**, and **area ministry conference** of each member of the Nominating Committee;
- b. The positions open for nomination/election with the specific characteristics and term of office of each.

**S9.03.03.** At the first meeting of the Nominating Committee, the Secretary of this Synod shall provide the chairperson of the Nominating Committee with a list of all positions open for nomination/election and the specific category, **area ministry conference** and characteristics for each position.

**S9.12.A08.A21** The Synod Council Executive Committee shall provide for background checks for persons nominated, including nominations for an additional term, for positions as synodical officers **and current officers beginning in 2008 and for synodical officers**, and Synod Council members, with the exception of youth members or nominees who are still regarded as minors or juveniles according to prevailing law, **beginning in 2009** prior to the Synod Assembly at which the election will take place or as soon as possible after the Synod Assembly for newly elected synod officers and Synod Councils members nominated from the floor.

- c. ~~The Synod Council's Executive Committee shall designate one member of the Synod Council's Executive Committee to obtain the background checks and to ensure proper records maintenance.~~ All records regarding elected officers and Synod Council members shall be maintained for at least five years following the person's leaving office or no longer serving on the Synod Council. Records may be retained longer as determined by the Synod Council Executive Committee on an individual basis. One synod staff person may be designated to assist in obtaining and maintaining records as directed by the designated Synod Council Executive Committee member.

## **Chapter 10 – Synod Council**

**S10.01.02.** The youth member shall be elected for a term of two years. **The position will alternate between male and female youth.**

**S10.07.05.** The 10 to 24 members of the Synod Council who are not elected officers of the Synod and who are not elected to youth positions as provided in S10.01.02. shall be:

- a. One rostered minister **of Word and Sacrament** or one layperson from each conference
- b. An additional 5 to 7 members elected at large by the Synod Assembly will include one youth, one young adult, one minister of word and service, and two persons of color or primary language other than English.
- c. At any given time, at least 60 percent of the members (other than officers) so elected shall be laity, **with an equal number of males and**

~~females at least 45 percent of the lay members shall be women and at least 45 percent shall be men.~~

**S10.07.09.** The following procedures shall apply to appointment to vacated positions on the Synod Council:

- c. ~~When a person occupying a position as a geographical representative moves to another area ministry, conference he/she they shall remain in office to fulfill the elected term and the plan of representation shall be reviewed and adjusted to reflect this new representation.~~ Deleted because contradicts the provision contradicts the provision below.

**S10.06.** If a member of the Synod Council ceases to meet the requirements of the position to which she or he was elected, the office filled by such member shall at once become vacant.