**Approved August 21, 2021**

**Minutes of the Minutes of the Northeastern Ohio Synod Assembly**

**Thirty-Fifth Regular Assembly**

**June 11-12, 2021**

**John S. Knight Center, Akron**

***Centered on Christ + Empowered by the Spirit + We Move Outward in Love***

**Approved August 21, 2021**

**Saturday, June 12, 2021**

1. The Assembly began with Morning Prayer at 7:45 am. The liturgy concluded with the order for opening of a synod assembly led by Bishop Laura Barbins. The assembly was called to order at 7:55am.
2. Bishop Barbins welcomed the assembly voting members and recognized the following:
   1. The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton, Presiding Bishop of the ELCA and David Lenz, ELCA Church Council representative.
   2. The Rev. Dr. Jack Fortin, our keynote speaker this year.
   3. Northeastern Ohio Synod Vice President Mr. Bryan Penvose and Northeastern Ohio Synod Secretary Dr. Matthew Beery.
   4. Mr. John Sleasman, Northeastern Ohio Synod Treasurer and Parliamentarian.
   5. Assembly Coordinator, Sony Gilroy; Assembly Planning committee: Tim Barrage, Larry Fenton, Jane Koch, Rev. Jimmy Madsen, Marilyn Matevia, John Sleasman. Tim Barrage, PowerPoint presentation and audio/visual materials, assisted by Mason Shamp.
3. Bishop Barbins provided an explanation of the voting systems and supervised a test vote. A second vote was conducted to ensure that all devices were working.
4. Erin O’Neill presented the report of the Credentials Committee: As of 8:12 am, there were 244 individuals registered. 110 rostered leaders and 134 lay members.

*\*\*Correction:* 241 registered; 115 rostered leaders and 126 lay members.

1. Secretary Matthew Beery presented the Proposed Rules of Procedure for the 2021 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. They were adopted 155 in favor, 1 against, and with 1 abstentions.

**SA21.06.01 To adopt the Rules of Procedure as previously distributed as**

**APPROVED proposed (Moved by council action; two-thirds vote required; carried)**

**2021 NEOS Assembly Proposed Rules of Procedure**

**I. General Rules**

1. Upon recognition by the chair, a speaker shall identify oneself by name, congregation (or agency or institution), and town (or city).
2. 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.
3. Unless otherwise determined by a two-thirds vote, speeches during debate shall be limited to two (2) minutes.
4. The chair may bring forward items as necessary or as helpful to the business of the assembly.
5. 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.
6. To afford voting members the option of expressing “no opinion” on a question, the chair will call for yeas, nays, and abstentions.
7. In the event that the assembly must adjourn before completing its business, all remaining items shall be referred to the synod council for disposition.
8. 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**

1. 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.
2. 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.

1. 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 pre-assembly materials for that purpose, to the Finance

Committee by 12:00 noon on Friday, June 4, 2021. 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**

1. Resolutions to be considered by the assembly shall be received in writing in the synod office by Friday, April 30, 2021 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.
2. 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.

1. Bishop Barbins presented the agenda for adoption as presented. The agenda was approved by a vote of 156 in favor, 1 against, 1 abstention.

**SA21.06.02 To adopt the agenda as previously distributed and proposed (Moved**

**APPROVED by council action; carried)**

**Assembly Day 2 - Business Session: Saturday, June 12, 2021**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 7:00 am | Doors and Registration Open |  |
|  | Breakfast |  |
| 7:15 am | Zoom Opens for Remote Voting Members |  |
| 7:30 am | Live Streaming Begins |  |
| 7:45 am | Opening Prayer and Opening of Assembly |  |
| 8:00 am | Call to Order, Adoption of Agenda & Rules of Procedure | *Bishop Laura Barbins* |
|  | Report of the Credentials Committee | *Credentials Committee Chair* |
| 8:20 am | ELCA Greetings and Report | *Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton* |
| 8:50 am | Bishop’s Report | *Bishop Laura Barbins* |
| 9:10 am | Synod Council Report | *Bryan Penvose, Vice President* |
| 9:25 am | Keynote Speaker “*The Centered Life”* | *Rev. Dr. Jack Fortin* |
| 10:25 pm | Break |  |
| 10:45 am | Nominations, First Ballot | *Elections Committee Chair* |
|  | Report of Elections Committee (1st General Ballot) |  |
| 11:15 am | Adoption of Compensation Guidelines *Compensation Guidelines Committee* | |
| 11:30 am | Treasurer’s Report *John Sleasman, Treasurer* | |
| 11:40 am | Presentation and Adoption of Budget *Finance and Budget Committee* | |
| 12:00 pm | Report of the Audit Committee *Audit Committee* | |
| 12:10 pm | Governing Documents and Remaining Business of the Assembly | |
| 12:15 pm | Report of the Reference and Counsel *Reference & Counsel Chair* | |
| 12:30 pm | Closing Prayer and Adjournment to Lunch | |
| 1:00 pm | Break and Retirement Farewell for Karen Kaufman, Resource Specialist | |

1. Bishop Barbins recognized David Lenz and he gave the Churchwide Council report.
   1. David Lenz highlighted the meeting dates and how the Churchwide Council has been meeting during the pandemic. He spoke about the work they are doing during the pandemic.
   2. David spoke about just being together is critical and we should not underestimate the power of it.
   3. David referenced the Churchwide Council Spring 2021 meeting: He discussed how the ELCA is a *sanctuary* denomination and how the Council approved guidelines for all three expressions of the church to explore what it means to live into this calling.
   4. David discussed the revisions to the Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline document that were approved by the Council in Spring 2021. He gave discussion points about the updated policies surrounding that document.
   5. David spoke about the November 2020 meeting. In this meeting, the Churchwide Council discussed restructuring “Future Church” initiative and how all three expressions can more effectively do ministry together.
2. David Lenz yielded the floor and introduced the ELCA representative for this assembly: Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton.
   1. Presiding Bishop Eaton spoke from her Powerpoint, “Our Shared Ministry”
   2. Presiding Bishop Eaton highlighted our resilience and getting through the pandemic with great mission support.
   3. Presiding Bishop Eaton gave thanks to pastors, deacons and lay folks for being present.
   4. Presiding Bishop highlighted that the Northeastern Ohio Synod gave $583,865 to the wider church. As a result, the ELCA was able to keep longstanding ministries going as well as start new ones during this time. She spoke about how synods and bishops were able to see the needs and get the resources out to sustain our work.
   5. Presiding Bishop Eaton highlighted the marvelous grants that were made available. She highlighted All Saints-Olmsted Falls, Calvary Lutheran Church, OASIS, and Advent-Cleveland received grants to do various things in ministry.
   6. Presiding Bishop Eaton spoke about how remarkable it has been to see what the ELCA has been able to do with broadcasting the gospel with the use of technology.
   7. Presiding Bishop Eaton spoke about how Lutheran Disaster Response has been active working with our worldwide partners.
   8. Presiding Bishop Eaton spoke about the plurality of our world.
   9. Presiding Bishop Eaton talked about lead congregations in the Northeastern Ohio Synod—showing that we are all the ELCA. Ministry doesn’t need to be cooked up in Chicago.
   10. Presiding Bishop Eaton thanked all of the people in the Northeastern Ohio Synod who share their gifts with the wider church expression. Also, thanked Bishop Barbins and the synod staff for all of the work they have done (and continue to do) throughout this pandemic and “new normal.”
   11. Presiding Bishop Eaton spoke about the ELCA Youth Gathering. The new date is July 24-28, 2022. *Boundless: God Beyond Measure* which will be held in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Also, the Churchwide Assembly will be happening on August 8-12, 2022 in Columbus, Ohio. Lots happening in 2022.
   12. Presiding Bishop Eaton restated what David Lenz highlighted; the question of “how can we be a unique gospel witness that the Lutheran movement brings to the rest of the church?” To begin this answer, Presiding Bishop Eaton spoke about vibrant, relevant, sustainable church dynamics that the ELCA encompasses.
   13. Presiding Bishop Eaton spoke about how we need to work in a different way to bring new and diverse peoples into our church. Our main mission—everyone in the ELCA— is to engage 1,000,000 young and diverse people by the end of the decade. This is very audacious, but God is calling us to this mission. The ELCA will do this with some Open Door grants to welcome folks and engage new folks. We will share what works in local congregations—and what is needed to bring folks into the church. We will be the innovation denomination and work with each individual congregation. Our focus should be to invite people to know the intimate and deep love that Jesus pours out on each one of us. There is a place for everyone.

*Presiding Bishop Eaton yielded the floor to Bishop Laura Barbins, so she could relinquish the chair of the assembly to Vice President Bryan Penvose only so that he could take part in the parliamentary dais dance and recognize Bishop Barbins to give the Northeastern Ohio Synod Bishop Report.*

1. Vice President Bryan Penvose recognized Bishop Laura Barbins to give the Bishop’s Report.
   1. Bishop Barbins began by thanking the synod staff. She highlighted how incredible they are as people and as a staff. She thanked The Rev. Karl Biermann, Karen Kaufman who is retiring; what a gift it has been to work with her. Marilyn Matevia who will be leaving the synod office for a call now that her TEEM training has concluded, The Rev. Julianne Smith who will be continuing her ministry as DEM, Sony Richardson-Gilroy, Marianne Schwab, The Rev. Angel Jackson, Kelli Rossini, and The Rev. Mitch Phillips (who will be starting his ministry as Assistant to the Bishop for Leadership).
   2. Bishop Barbins showed “The Dandelion Project” video from Day 8 Strategies and The Rev. Dr. Dave Daubert. The video spoke about the metaphor of the dandelion and how we can change the trajectory of congregations. We are investing in this program to strengthen our congregations. “The Dandelion Project” will begin in Fall 2021.
   3. Bishop Barbins discussed the health of rostered leaders and how the mental and physical needs of our leaders need addressed. We will be investing in pastors and deacons to get the resources they need.
   4. Bishop Barbins highlighted the document, “How Strategic and Authentic is Our Diversity?” She discussed the definition of “authentic diversity” and how it relates to our congregations reflecting the communities we serve. Bishop Barbins shared that she was impressed with the breadth and depth of this dynamic document. She will be establishing an authenticity and diversity cabinet to study this document fully as well as the recommendations on how to implement it in the Northeastern Ohio Synod.
   5. Bishop Barbins reaffirmed how we are different people, but we are all drawn and centered in Christ. She reminded all that God wants us all to be part of showing the world the love Jesus is pouring out all over the world.

*Bishop Laura Barbins yielded the floor to Vice President Bryan Penvose, so that she could take part in more dais dancing. Bishop Barbins regained the chair of the assembly and then recognized Vice President Bryan Penvose to give the Northeastern Ohio Synod Council Report.*

1. Bishop Barbins recognized Vice President Bryan Penvose, and he presented the Synod Council Report.
   1. Bryan referred to the audio snafu from last year’s online assembly that repeated his voice multiple times and highlighted how wonderful it is to be together. He thanked synod council for navigating through the pandemic and the good work that they have done. Further, recognized and thanked the whole body—in person and virtually— for the mission support that has sustained us through whatever situation we’ve been put through. It has been clear that congregations have been having the conversations about how we can continue to love and serve God’s people. Bryan emphasized that we need to keep having those conversations and growing in our ministry together.
   2. Bryan introduced the synod council liaison initiative that is intended to enhance our relationships in being church together. Further, these communications should be viewed as pathways from synod council to congregations and congregations to synod council to share impact stories, comments, and relevant information to allow us to continue our work together.
   3. Bryan channeled his inner (and former) baseball coach. He spoke about our vision statements. Furthermore, he introduced 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.” Bryan shared that this should be our goal because 58 of 157 congregations (37%) are without “settled” leadership. This 37% data doesn’t support our vision statements that we profess.
   4. Bryan discussed the complexities of this goal and ways we could approach it. Further, he elaborated on how this goal could be fulfilled.
   5. Bryan spoke about how we need to be a church that speaks out against racism. We have more work to do. Our call is to promote and seek justice and peace.
   6. Bryan finished his report by reflecting on and giving thanks for his past six (6) years serving at the Northeastern Ohio Synod Vice president.

*Bishop Laura Barbins introduced The Rev Dr. Jack Fortin*

1. Keynote Speaker: The Rev. Dr. Jack Fortin presented, “The Centered life.”
   1. The Rev. Dr. Jack Fortin asked the assembly to step back and think about our church. The church is about doing and action.
   2. The Rev. Dr. Jack Fortin spoke about how the pandemic has revealed other pandemics under the surface and many feel that we are on a bridge to nowhere. However, he sees the seeds of a movement. It is not a meltdown. It is something we need to embrace. What do we see, hear, and what are we doing? Our Lutheran theology teaches us that our church is in our hearts—also—our church was born out of the type of crisis like the pandemic.
   3. The Rev. Dr. Jack Fortin read from the gospel of John and spoke about Grace and Truth. And how these two understandings have helped us through the pandemic. Also, speaking about our baptismal call.
   4. The Rev. Dr. Jack Fortin finished his presentation by speaking directly to the Northeastern Ohio Synod—as well as—Bishop Laura Barbins and how we can continue to be a community of common mission and live out “The centered life,” so we can make a different in the world. We are awakened, called, set free, and nurtured.

*Break from 10:30-10:50 am*

1. At 10:51 am, The Rev. Don King on behalf of the Nominating Committee, presented the slate of nominees and biographical information printed on pages 23-46 of the pre-assembly materials and asked for additional nominations from the floor. Two nominations came from the floor in person or via Zoom:

The Rev. Richard Weaver (nominated by The Rev. Jean Hansen for Churchwide Assembly Richland-Ashland/Akron-Wooster Rostered position)

The Rev. Timothy Muse (nominated for Churchwide Assembly Canton-Massillon Rostered position via Zoom)

* 1. Synod Council Akron-Wooster Lay: Erin O’Neill
  2. Synod Council Canton-Massillon Lay: Lito Belardo, Bonnie Rittner
  3. Synod Council Eastern Clergy: The Rev. Jeremy Hollingshead
  4. Synod Council Cleveland East Lay: Gayle Adamek, Beverly Lund
  5. Synod Council Cleveland West Clergy: The Rev. Rosalina Rivera, The Rev. Sarah Taylor
  6. Synod Council Richland-Ashland Lay: Sheryl Budd
  7. Synod Council Southern Clergy:
  8. Synod Council Cleveland West Lay: William Meyers
  9. Synod Council At Large Lay: Gretchen Hallerberg, Linda Weidenbach
  10. Synod Vice President Lay: Kevin Kampfer
  11. Churchwide Assembly Cleveland West Rostered: The Rev. Rosalina Rivera, The Rev. Sarah Taylor, The Rev. Jim Watson
  12. Churchwide Assembly Canton-Massilon Rostered: The Rev. William Weidenbach, Jr. , The Rev Timothy Muse
  13. Churchwide Assembly Richland-Ashland/Akron-Wooster Rostered: The Rev. David Nevergall, The Rev. Deborah Pinnegar, The Rev. Jonathan Stufft, The Rev. Richard Weaver
  14. Churchwide Assembly Cleveland East/Eastern Rostered: The Rev. Donald Frantz, II, The Rev. Duane Jesse, The Rev. Jon Paulus, The Rev. Jessica Shields
  15. Churchwide Assembly Cleveland East/Cleveland West/Akron Wooster Lay Female: Cathy Byers, Lori Gale, Jill Snellman
  16. Churchwide Assembly At-Large Lay Male: Chuck Mosberger
  17. Churchwide Assembly Richland-Ashland/Eastern/Canton-Massillon/Southern Lay Female: Cindy Bagocius, Erin Slates
  18. Churchwide Assembly Youth (13-17) Female: Jhayda Ammons
  19. Churchwide Assembly Young Adult (18-30) Male: Jared Waugaman
  20. Churchwide Assembly Person of Color or Primary Language other than English Lay Female: Karen Mahan, Olivia Shelton
  21. Churchwide Assembly Person of Color or Primary Language other than English Lay Male: Bobby Barnes
  22. Consultation Committee Lay 6-year term: Lesli Eisenhart
  23. Consultation Committee Clergy 6-year term: The Rev. Donald Frantz, II, The Rev. Marissa Harrison

1. The Rev. Steven Patrick, on behalf of the Elections Committee, presented the voting procedure. There are ten (10) positions for which candidates are unopposed. The following were deemed to be elected by consent.
   1. Synod Council Akron-Wooster Lay: **Erin O’Neill elected**
   2. Synod Council Eastern Clergy: **The Rev.** **Jeremy Hollingshead elected**
   3. Synod Council Richland-Ashland Lay: **Sheryl Budd elected**
   4. Synod Council Cleveland West Lay: **William Meyers elected**
   5. Synod Vice President Lay: **Kevin Kampfer elected**
   6. Churchwide Assembly At-Large Lay Male: **Chuck Mosberger elected**
   7. Churchwide Assembly Youth (13-17) Female: **Jhayda Ammons elected**
   8. Churchwide Assembly Young Adult (18-30) Male: **Jared Waugaman elected**
   9. Churchwide Assembly Person of Color or Primary Language other than English Lay Male: **Bobby Barnes elected**
   10. Consultation Committee Lay 6-year term: **Lesli Eisenhart elected**
2. Voting on the contested elections opened at 11:04 am. Election Results for the first ballot were as follows. The numbers of votes received are in parentheses and elected or no election is in bold:
   1. Synod Council Canton-Massillon Lay: **Lito Belardo (121),** Bonnie Rittner (70) ***Election.***
   2. Synod Council Cleveland East Lay: Gayle Adamek (62), **Beverly Lund (124)** ***Election***
   3. Synod Council Cleveland West Clergy: **The Rev. Rosalina Rivera (133),** The Rev. Sarah Taylor (56) ***Election***
   4. Synod Council At Large Lay One-Year Term: Gretchen Hallerberg (66), **Linda Weidenbach (125) *Election***
   5. Churchwide Assembly Cleveland West Rostered: The Rev. Rosalina Rivera (48), The Rev. Sarah Taylor (38), **The Rev. Jim Watson (109)** ***Election***
   6. Churchwide Assembly Richland-Ashland/Akron-Wooster Rostered: The Rev. David Nevergall (47), The Rev. Deborah Pinnegar (80), The Rev. Jonathan Stufft (49) The Rev. Richard Weaver (20) ***No election***
   7. Churchwide Assembly Cleveland East/Eastern Rostered: The Rev. Donald Frantz II (23), The Rev. Duane Jesse (45), The Rev. Jon Paulus (32) The Rev. Jessica Shields (95) ***No election***
   8. Churchwide Assembly Canton-Massilon Rostered: **The Rev. William Weidenbach, Jr. (120)** The Rev. Timothy Muse (69) ***Election***
   9. Churchwide Assembly Cleveland East/Cleveland West/Akron Wooster Lay Female: Cathy Byers (48), Lori Gale,(65) Jill Snellman (77) ***No election***
   10. Churchwide Assembly Richland-Ashland/Eastern/Canton-Massillon/Southern Lay Female: Cindy Bagocius (39), **Erin Slates (149)** ***Election***
   11. Churchwide Assembly Person of Color or Primary Language other than English Lay Female: Karen Mahan (72), **Olivia Shelton (117)** ***Election***
   12. Consultation Committee Clergy 6-year term: The Rev. Donald Frantz, II, (46) **The Rev. Marissa Harrison (146)** ***Election***
3. Voting on the second ballot for remaining positions began at 11:54 am. The results were as follows:
   1. Churchwide Assembly Richland-Ashland/Akron-Wooster Rostered: **The Rev. Deborah Pinnegar (124)**, The Rev. Jonathan Stufft (67) ***Election***
   2. Churchwide Assembly Cleveland East/Eastern Rostered: The Rev. Duane Jesse (56), **The Rev. Jessica Shields (133)** ***Election***
   3. Churchwide Assembly Cleveland East/Cleveland West/Akron Wooster Lay Female: Lori Gale (75), **Jill Snellman (113)** ***Election***

*A joyful applause was sounded at the end of voting.*

1. At 11:50 am The Rev. Tina Crog presented the Compensation Guidelines that were found on page 47 for Pastors and page 57 for Deacons in the pre-assembly materials.
   1. The Rev. Tina Crog highlighted that there are no guidelines for non-rostered employees. This pay should be based on locality and employees should be paid fairly and with respect.
   2. The Rev. Tina Crog underscored that these compensation guidelines include a 1.3 % adjustment to the based for cost of living.
   3. The Rev. Tina Crog stated that these guidelines included an annual amount of $310 for both rostered pastors and deacons for additional years of rostered service.
   4. The Rev. Tina Crog included that congregations that are paying below these guidelines should consider moving to these guidelines. Also, that medical benefits through Portico should be paid at the Gold Plus level. Silver level with a high HSA contribution is acceptable as well.
   5. The guidelines were adopted in favor (182), Opposed (4), Abstain (2)

**SA21.06.03 To adopt the Compensation Guidelines as proposed (Moved by**

**APPROVED council action; carried)**

NORTHEASTERN OHIO SYNOD 2022 COMPENSATION

GUIDELINES AND WORKSHEET

MINISTER OF WORD AND SACRAMENT (PASTOR)

INTRODUCTION:

A pastor assumes many responsibilities. We expect our pastors to be preachers, evangelists, administrators, teachers, counselors and leaders. We require eight years of study (including a bachelor’s and master of divinity degrees) as a part of preparation for ordained ministry. Compensation for pastors should be comparable to professional positions of equal responsibility, education, and time commitment.

Adequate compensation enables a pastor to fulfill responsibilities and obligations, encourages vocational satisfaction, and encourages a pastor’s best efforts and gifts. Congregations and our synod have an obligation to review compensation plans annually. We also expect pastors to take initiatives in seeking annual reviews of compensation.

Inadequate compensation may result in discouragement and dissatisfaction. This sometimes occurs as a pastor’s family cannot maintain financial stability, as negative attitudes toward the congregation and church begin, as an inability to participate in continuing education programs, or as “moonlighting” becomes a necessity. Inadequate compensation means low contributions to retirement plans, which leads to inadequate retirement income. All of these realities increase the occurrence of resignations from ordained ministry of word and sacrament, make it more challenging to recruit able candidates for ordained ministry of word and sacrament, and create a poor image of the church in the community.

Our synod recognizes there are pastors and congregations who, for a variety of reasons, choose to be content with salaries that are below the synod minimum. We caution these pastors and congregations, however, that they may be doing disservice to the congregation, other pastors, and pastoral successors by allowing the compensation package to remain below recommended guidelines. In such situations, the congregation, pastor, and bishop’s office should work together to implement other support strategies.

Congregations should develop procedures whereby they review their pastor’s salary and discuss their pastor’s personal financial concerns. This may be best accomplished by a small and understanding committee of three to six individuals appointed by the congregation council. The committee should bring to the council or appropriate committee its recommendations for annual compensation adjustments. The ELCA has published a guide to use in organizing a mutual Ministry/Staff Support Committee and for compensation planning: Pastor and People: Making Mutual Ministry Work (ISBN 0-8066-4651-9) which is available from Augsburg Fortress (1-800-3284648).

It should be noted that these are suggested base salaries. The total compensation package should also reflect any special concerns of the pastor and his/her family, and other factors as discussed in this document.

I.SALARY

A. BASE CASH SALARY

1. The minimum base salary recommendation for 2021 is $40,675. This represents a 1.3% living adjustment to the 2021 minimum base cash salary recommendation, which was in turn based on the prior year’s Social Security Administration cost-of-living adjustment. It is still strongly recommended that $310 for each year of ordained service be added to this minimum base; or,

2. A congregation with experienced pastor may use a 1.3% cost of living adjustment to the current base salary plus a $310 increase for the additional year of experience in ordained ministry.

B. ADJUSTMENTS

Adjustments to the base cash salary may consist of, but are not limited to:

1. Merit

2. Local COLA (to reflect significant differences in local cost of living)

3. Responsibilities

4. Education (either advanced or specialized)

5. Other concerns identified by the congregation/pastor.

II.HOUSING

* + - 1. WITHOUT PARSONAGE

1. This is for pastors who own their own house. A fair approach to determining the housing and utilities allowance is:

a.One percent per month of the reasonable market value of a house within the general community in which the congregation resides, plus

b. The cost of utilities for such a home, plus

c. The difference in cost for the rental value of such a home furnished as compared to rental value of such a home unfurnished. A realtor can help determine this figure. This allowance is to cover the mortgage payments, taxes, insurance, utilities, furnishings, and maintenance of the house.

2. Housing allowance must be officially designated in advance by the congregation. This can be done by a separate line in the budget or by official action of the congregation council.

3. A pastor may elect to use this allowance to rent a home, in which case the allowance should cover rent, utilities, furnishings, and insurance.

4. The congregation council may also consider the establishment of a loan policy to assist the pastor in the down payment on a home if a parsonage is not provided.

B. WITH PARSONAGE

1. HOUSEHOLD FURNISHINGS / UTILITIES ALLOWANCE

If a parsonage is provided, it should be comparable to at least the average home in the congregation or community. For pastors who are in parsonages, it is appropriate for the congregation to provide a household furnishings/utilities allowance. This allowance will cover the expenses of the parsonage: utilities, maintenance, and furnishings needed to keep up the parsonage. This may be done in several ways:

A .The congregation may provide a fixed monthly parsonage allowance, based on the needs of the pastor and parsonage. This amount needs to be designated by the congregation council at its first meeting each year, or separately stated in the budget.

B .The congregation may choose to pay the utilities (gas, electric, sewage, water, trash collection, internet, telephone (except personal long-distance) directly.

C .The congregation should generally pay for the costs of maintaining the parsonage. If not, an allowance would be provided to cover expenses to maintain the parsonage.

2. HOUSING EQUITY ALLOWANCE

An equity allowance should be provided if the pastor lives in a congregation-owned home. The equity allowance provides the financial resources for a pastor to provide housing upon retirement, or to provide a down payment for the purchase of a house during active ministry.

It is suggested that the equity allowance be:

A. An amount equal to 3% of the annual pension defined compensation.

B. The congregation pays the total amount in monthly installments to a depository agreed to by the church and the pastor.

c.Each congregation would stipulate at the beginning of each pastor’s ministry (or when the plan begins) that the funds become available to the pastor only:

1. at the pastor’s retirement, or

2. at the time the pastor is granted a housing allowance and purchases a home, or

3. at the time of total and presumably permanent disability, or

4. at the time the pastor leaves the clergy roster of the ELCA, or

5. at the time of death, at which time the funds would be disbursed as stipulated by the agreement.

Our synod recommends that congregations and pastors consult with Portico Benefits Services (the ELCA Benefit Provider) and the IRS regulations and examine the pastor’s individual financial situation prior to implementation of this program.

3. It is important that parsonages be sufficiently maintained. An annual walk-through of the parsonage by the council is advised. The purpose of the walk-through is to note the general condition of the home and plan regular maintenance.

III. BENEFITS

A. PENSION / HEALTH CARE

1. The congregation shall provide full pension, health, and death benefits for the pastor and family in accordance with Portico provisions. The “Gold+” or “Silver+” levels of health benefits has been recommended by the ELCA Church Council. The NEO Synod Council recommends the “Gold+ level.

2. A “Medical Expense Reimbursement Plan”, established in accordance with specific IRS requirements, could provide tax advantages for the pastor by reimbursing deductibles, copayments, and other medical expenses not covered by insurance. There are specific rules and guidelines on such plans, available from the IRS.

3. The pastor may elect to waive the health care benefit under the coordination of the benefits clause in the Portico Handbook. The congregation should consult with Portico (612-3337651 or 800-352-2876) for assistance in determining the effects of these guidelines.

B. FICA ALLOWANCE (SOCIAL SECURITY)

1. A congregation cannot pay the social security tax for a pastor. By law, the pastor must personally pay both the employer and the employee portions of social security taxes. However, a congregation can pay a pastor a special allowance which the pastor may then use to put toward whatever self-employment social security tax he or she owes. This allowance is taxable when computing income tax and social security taxes, and must also be considered income in computing pension plan contributions.

2. The congregation should provide a minimum allowance that corresponds to the employer portion of social security taxes (currently 7.65%). In order to assist the pastor, the congregation may further choose to provide for some or all of the remaining social security taxes (currently 7.65%). Whatever is provided, the pastor reports it as salary.

3. The allowance can be calculated as follows:

a. Minimum social security allowance for pastor receiving a housing allowance (non-parsonage):

Salary

+ Housing Allowance = Social Security Base x 7.65 % (employer rate) = Social Security Allowance

b.Minimum social security allowance for pastor living in parsonage: Salary

x 1.3 (housing equivalency factor)

= Subtotal

+ Furnishings/Utilities Allowance = Social Security Base x 7.65% (employer rate) = Social Security Allowance

4. The synod recommends the pastor periodically check records to be certain accounts have been properly credited. A pastor may do this by obtaining Form SSA 7050 from the Social Security Administration office or online at https://www.ssa.gov/ from the local Social Security Administration office or post office. It is important that pastors do this periodically because one can only go back 39 ½ months to correct errors. This is critical in assuring the receipt of the maximum benefits available.

IV.PART-TIME CALLS

Compensation for part-time calls should be made in consultation with the synod staff.

V.PROFESSIONAL EXPENSES

These items are considered congregational administrative expenses and are not items to be considered as compensation.

A. AUTOMOBILE EXPENSES: Congregations should adequately provide for the pastor’s business mileage expenses in one of the following ways. In determining the method, usage should be considered including factors such as geographical limits of the congregation, distance to commonly used hospitals, etc.

1.Use of an accountable reimbursement plan to reimburse the pastor for miles driven in service of the congregation is recommended. Such reimbursement must be based on documentation as required by the IRS, should be reimbursed at the maximum IRS Standard Mileage Rate for use of a personal car for business purposes and is not taxable to the pastor; or

2.Provide the pastor with a fixed automobile allowance of at least $4,000 per year in addition

to salary. This allowance must be included as taxable income on the pastor’s Form W-2; or

3.A congregation may, in accordance with IRS guidelines, buy or lease a car and assume the total cost of operating the vehicle.

B. OTHER PROFESSIONAL EXPENSES

Other ministry related expenses incurred by the pastor should be paid by the congregation in one of the following ways:

1.Paying these amounts directly as they occur; or

2.Setting up a line item in the budget for reimbursement of these expenses, preferably combined with the automobile reimbursement into a single line item; or

3.Paying a monthly professional expense allowance to the pastor.

Note: Congregations are strongly encouraged to set up an “Accountable Professional Expense Reimbursement” for all rostered leaders in the congregation. Reimbursable professional expenses include, but are not limited to: automobile (mileage, parking tolls), overnight travel (including lodging and meals), professional and liability insurance, vestments and vestment cleaning, long distance business phone calls, books, magazines/journals, professional dues, continuing education, media resources, supplies, meals associated with official meetings and appointments, business gifts (maximum of $25.00 per person per year), and equipment purchases. Such professional expenses, when reimbursed by the congregation with adequate accounting as specified in the Internal Revenue Code, are not taxable for either income tax or social security/self-employment tax and are excluded from Form W-2. When the congregation provides an expense allowance without accountable reimbursement, the allowance is taxable income included in Form W-2. Professional expenses not reimbursed under an accountable plan, including expenses in excess of the budget for reimbursement, are deductible for selfemployment tax, but none are deductible for federal, state, city or school district income tax. For more information, please contact the synod accountant.

C. COMPUTERS AND CELL PHONES

It is recommended that the congregation provide the pastor with a computer and cell phone to facilitate ministry. Note the following in this regard:

1. Computer

a.A computer owned by the church and provided for the pastor’s use is a business expense that is not taxable to the pastor.

b.A computer purchased by the pastor is NOT a deductible business expense, even when used for business purposes.

2. Cell Phone

a.A cell phone provided to the pastor is a nontaxable business expense if the council minutes state it is primarily provided for noncompensatory business reasons (such as the need to be accessible at all time for work-related emergencies).

b.The pastor may be provided with a nontaxable cell phone reimbursement if 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).

VI. OTHER PROVISIONS

A. VACATION

The minimum vacation should be four weeks (including four Sundays). Attendance at official functions is not to be construed as vacation time.

Note: If financial constraints of a congregation make difficult monetary raises for clergy, a congregation might consider providing an extra week of vacation (including Sunday) as compensation.

B.SICK LEAVE

Sick leave should be provided for up to eight weeks per year (including Sundays) with full salary, housing, and benefits. An agreement may be made for partial disability beyond that time in coordination with Portico.

C.MATERNITY LEAVE

Maternity leave should be provided for up to six weeks (including Sundays) with full salary, housing, and benefits. Because of special concerns or needs, actual time may be negotiated between the pastor and congregation.

D.PATERNITY LEAVE / ADOPTIVE PARENTAL LEAVE

Paternity leave and adoptive parental leave may be negotiated between the pastor and congregation. It is recommended that up to six consecutive weeks (including Sundays) with full salary, housing, and benefits be provided. Because of special concerns or needs actual time may be more or less than six weeks.

E.CONTINUING EDUCATION

The ELCA expects of its pastors to complete a minimum of 50 contact hours annually in organized continuing education.

1.Congregations are encouraged to make available to their pastors at least two weeks (including Sundays) per year for continuing education.

2.The scheduling of continuing education should be determined by the pastor in consultation with the council.

3.$1,000 is recommended; a minimum of $700 per year should be provided for this education.

4.A pastor should have the privilege of accumulating educational leave and funds over a two-year period.

F.SABBATICAL LEAVE

Sabbatical leave offers an extended block of time for study, personal growth, and reflection apart from usual congregational responsibilities.

1.Normally, an extended study and renewal period of one to three months after five years in the current call should be provided with full salary, housing, and benefits.

2.The leave plan is to be developed in cooperation with the council. The parties shall seek the counsel of the bishop before finalizing an agreement.

3.The congregation shall be responsible for arranging for pastoral coverage, including pulpit supply, during the leave.

4.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.

G.WORK WEEK

Because of the nature of ministry, it is recognized that pastors are expected to fulfill many evening and weekend responsibilities in addition to Sunday morning worship. Therefore, adequate time off (one day per week minimum) should be granted that would be free from ministry-related responsibilities.

H.SPECIAL CONCERNS

Where there are special needs within a pastor’s family, these should be considered separately.

VII.ASSOCIATE / ASSISTANT / SPOUSE TEAM COMPENSATION

A.The synod recommends that the above guidelines be applied to associate / assistant pastors taking into consideration their relationship with the senior pastor, e.g., duties, responsibilities, etc.

B.For rostered spouse teams the synod staff should be consulted.

VIII.INTERIM / TEMPORARY / SUPPLY MINISTRIES

A.INTERIM

At the time of a pastoral vacancy in a congregation, the bishop’s staff, working with the congregation council, recommends an interim pastor to provide basic leadership and pastoral care until another pastor is secured and, if needed, to address any special concerns of the congregation. No pastor is to be considered as a candidate for call to a congregation while serving it as an interim.

Depending on congregational need and pastoral availability, an interim pastor may serve on a parttime or full-time basis during a pastoral vacancy. An active pastor serving in an interim ministry, whether full or part-time, should be compensated according to the current guidelines based on the time negotiated with the church council. For example, if the pastor is serving half-time (50%), compensation should be 50% of a regular compensation package. A retired pastor who serves as an interim minister shall negotiate with a church council in consultation with the synod staff.

B.TEMPORARY PASTORAL SUPPORT

Temporary pastoral support will be compensated at $200 per month for a congregation council meeting and emergency pastoral care. Mileage will be paid at the current IRS mileage reimbursement rate (see V.A. above). Compensation beyond this is to be determined in negotiations between the congregation council and the temporary pastor with guidance provided by the synod staff.

C.SUPPLY PASTOR

During a pastoral absence, it may be necessary for a congregation to secure a supply pastor. A current Pulpit Supply List is available and may be obtained from the synod office. Those asked to serve as pulpit supply should 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 congregational 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 (see V.A. above). 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 should 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 (see V.A. above) should be paid. For additional responsibilities, appropriate compensation should be provided. Expenses for lodging and meals, if necessary, are to be paid by the congregation.

NORTHEASTERN OHIO SYNOD 2022 COMPENSATION

GUIDELINES AND WORKSHEET

MINISTER OF WORD AND SERVICE (DEACON)

INTRODUCTION:

A Minister of Word and Service assumes many different responsibilities. Job descriptions vary and are developed by the congregation. We require specialized training for certification as a Minister of Word and Service (hereafter referred to as deacon). Compensation for a deacon should be comparable to professional positions of equal responsibility and training. Adequate compensation enables a deacon to fulfill responsibilities and obligations, encourages vocational satisfaction, and encourages a deacon’s best efforts and gifts. Congregations and our synod have an obligation to review compensation plans annually. We also expect deacons to take initiatives in seeking an annual review of compensation.

Inadequate compensation may result in discouragement and dissatisfaction. This sometimes occurs as a deacon’s family cannot maintain financial stability, as negative attitudes toward the congregation and church begin, as an inability to participate in continuing education programs, or as “moonlighting” becomes a necessity. Inadequate compensation means low contributions to retirement plans, which leads to inadequate retirement income. All of these realities increase the occurrence of resignations from the roster make it more challenging to recruit able candidates for deacon, and create a poor image of the church in the community.

Our synod recognizes there are deacons and congregations who, for a variety of reasons, choose to be content with salaries that are below the synod minimum. We caution these deacons and congregations, however, that they may be doing disservice to the congregation, other deacons, and their successors by allowing the compensation package to remain below recommended guidelines. In such situations, the congregation, deacon, and bishop’s office should work together to implement other support strategies.

Congregations should develop procedures to review their deacon’s salary and discuss those personal financial concerns that may apply. This may be best accomplished by a small and understanding committee of three to six individuals appointed by the congregation council. The committee should bring to the congregation council or appropriate committee its recommendations for annual compensation adjustments.

It should be noted that these are suggested base salaries. The total compensation package should also reflect any special concerns of the deacon and his/her family, and other factors as discussed in this document.

I. SALARY

A.BASE CASH SALARY

1.The minimum base salary recommendation for 2022 is based on their level of education within the area of expertise as follows:

NO DEGREE BACHELORS MASTERS

$36,750 $42,550 $44,100

This represents a 1.3% increase to the 2021 minimum base cash salary recommendation, as the Social Security Administration set the 2021 cost of living allowance at 1.3%. It is recommended that $310 for each year of rostered service be added to this minimum base, or

2.A congregation with an experienced deacon should offer a $310 increase for the additional year of experience in rostered ministry.

3.It should also be noted that these are suggested base salaries which include money for housing.

B.ADJUSTMENTS: Adjustments to the base cash salary may consist of, but are not limited to:

1.merit

2.local COLA (to reflect significant differences in local cost of living)

3.responsibilities

4.education (either advanced or specialized)

5.other concerns identified by the congregation / pastor.

II.HOUSING

Tax treatment of Ministers of Word and Service differs from that of ordained Ministers of Word and Sacrament since ELCA deacons are not eligible for housing allowances that can be excluded from income taxes. This is reflected in the higher base guideline salaries for deacons compared to pastors with the same level of education.

III.BENEFITS

A.PENSION / HEALTH CARE

1.The congregation shall provide full pension, health, and death benefits for the deacon and family in accordance with Portico Benefit Service (the ELCA Benefit Provider).

The “Gold+” or “Silver+” level of health benefits has been recommended by the ELCA Church Council. The NEO Synod Council has recommended the “Gold+” plan.

2.A “Medical Expense Reimbursement Plan”, established in accordance with specific IRS requirements, could provide tax advantages for deacons by reimbursing deductibles, co-payments, and other medical expenses not covered by insurance. There are specific rules and guidelines on such plans, available from the IRS.

3.The deacon may elect to waive the healthcare benefit under the coordination of the benefits clause in the Portico Handbook. The congregation should consult with the Portico (612-333-7651 or 800-352-2876) for assistance in determining the effects of these guidelines.

B.FICA ALLOWANCE (SOCIAL SECURITY), INCLUDING MEDICARE

1.Normally a congregation will pay these taxes for deacons, as provided by Federal laws regulating the amount to be paid.

2.For deacons who are considered self-employed as defined in current Social Security

guidelines, by virtue of a “teaching call,” please refer to Section III.B. of the pastor guidelines.

3.The synod recommends the deacon periodically check records to be certain accounts have been properly credited. A deacon may do this by obtaining Form SSA 7050 from the Social Security Administration office or online at www.ssa.gov. It is important that deacons do this periodically because one can only go back 39 ½ months to correct errors. This is critical in assuring the receipt of the maximum benefits available.

IV.PART-TIME CALLS

For part-time calls, salary, housing, and benefits should be calculated then reduced to reflect the percent of call, e.g., a call at half-time would receive 50%. All part-time calls should be made in consultation with the synod staff.

V.PROFESSIONAL EXPENSES

These items are considered congregational administrative expenses and are not items to be considered as compensation.

A.AUTOMOBILE EXPENSES: Congregations should adequately provide for business mileage expenses in one of the following ways. In determining the method, usage should be considered including factors such as geographical limits of the congregation, distance to commonly used hospitals, etc.

1.Use an accountable reimbursement plan to reimburse the deacon for miles driven in service of the congregation is recommended. Such reimbursement must be based on documentation as required by the IRS, should be reimbursed at the maximum IRS Standard Mileage Rate for use of a personal car for business purposes and is not taxable to the pastor; or

2.Provide the deacon with a fixed automobile allowance of at least $4,000 per year in addition to salary. This allowance must be included as taxable income on the deacon’s Form W-2; or

3.A congregation may, in accordance with IRS guidelines, buy or lease a car and assume the total cost of operating the vehicle.

B.OTHER PROFESSIONAL EXPENSES

Other ministry related expenses incurred by the deacon should be paid by the congregation in one of the following ways:

1.Paying these amounts directly as they occur; or

2.Setting up a line item in the budget for reimbursement of these expenses, preferably combined with the automobile reimbursement into a single line item; or

3.Paying a monthly professional expense allowance.

Note: Congregations are strongly encouraged to set up an “Accountable Professional

Expense Reimbursement” for all deacons in the congregation. Reimbursable professional expenses include, but are not limited to: automobile (mileage, parking tolls), overnight travel (including lodging and meals), professional and liability insurance, vestments and vestment cleaning, long distance business phone calls, books, magazines/journals, professional dues, continuing education, media resources, supplies, meals associated with official meetings and appointments, business gifts (maximum of $25.00 per person per year), and equipment purchases. Such professional expenses, when reimbursed by the congregation with adequate accounting as specified in the Internal Revenue Code, are not taxable for either income tax or social security/self-employment tax and are excluded from Form W-2. When the congregation provides an expense allowance without accountable reimbursement, the allowance is taxable income included in Form W-2. Professional expenses not reimbursed under an accountable plan, including expenses in excess of the budget for reimbursement, are deductible for self-employment tax, but none are deductible for federal, state, city or school district income tax.

C.COMPUTERS AND CELL PHONES

It is recommended that the congregation provide deacons with a computer and cell phone to facilitate ministry. Note the following in this regard:

1.Computer

a.A computer owned by the church and provided for the deacon’s use is a business expense that is not taxable.

b.A computer purchased by the deacon is NOT a deductible business expense, even when used for business purposes.

2.Cell Phone

a.A cell phone provided to the deacon is a nontaxable business expense if the council minutes state it is primarily provided for noncompensatory business reasons (such as the need to be accessible at all time for work-related emergencies).

b.The deacon may be provided with a nontaxable cell phone reimbursement if council minutes state that the deacon 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).

VI.OTHER PROVISIONS A. VACATION

The minimum vacation should be four weeks (including four Sundays). Attendance at official functions is not to be construed as vacation time.

Note: If financial constraints of a congregation make difficult monetary raises for a deacon, a congregation might consider providing an extra week of vacation (including Sunday) as compensation.

B.SICK LEAVE

Sick Leave should be provided for up to eight weeks per year (including Sundays) with full salary, housing, and benefits. An agreement may be made for partial disability beyond that time in coordination with Portico.

C.MATERNITY LEAVE

Maternity Leave should be provided for up to six weeks (including Sundays) with full salary, housing, and benefits. Because of special concerns or needs, additional time may be negotiated between the deacon and congregation.

D.PATERNITY LEAVE / ADOPTIVE PARENTAL LEAVE

Paternity leave and adoptive parental leave may be negotiated between the deacon and congregation. It is recommended that up to six consecutive weeks (including Sundays) with full salary, housing, and benefits be provided. Because of special concerns or needs actual time may be more or less than six weeks.

E.CONTINUNG EDUCATION: The ELCA expects of its deacons to complete a minimum of 50 contact hours annually in organized continuing education.

1.Congregations are encouraged to make available to their deacon at least two weeks (including Sundays) per year for continuing education.

2.The scheduling of continuing education should be determined by the deacon in consultation with the council.

3.$1,000 is recommended; a minimum of $700 per year should be provided for this education.

4.A deacon should have the privilege of accumulating educational leave and funds over a two year period.

F. SABBATICAL LEAVE

Sabbatical Leave offers an extended block of time for study, personal growth, and reflection apart from usual congregational responsibilities.

1.Normally, an extended study and renewal period of one to three months after five years in the current call should be provided with full salary, housing, and benefits.

2.The leave plan is to be developed in cooperation with the council. The parties shall seek the counsel of the bishop before finalizing an agreement.

3.The congregation shall be responsible for arranging for required coverage during the leave.

4.Within six weeks of the completion of the sabbatical leave the deacon 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 deacon’s file.

G.WORK WEEK

Because of the nature of ministry, it is recognized that deacons are expected to fulfill many evening and weekend responsibilities in addition to Sunday morning worship. Therefore, adequate time off (one day per week minimum) should be granted that would be free from ministry-related responsibilities.

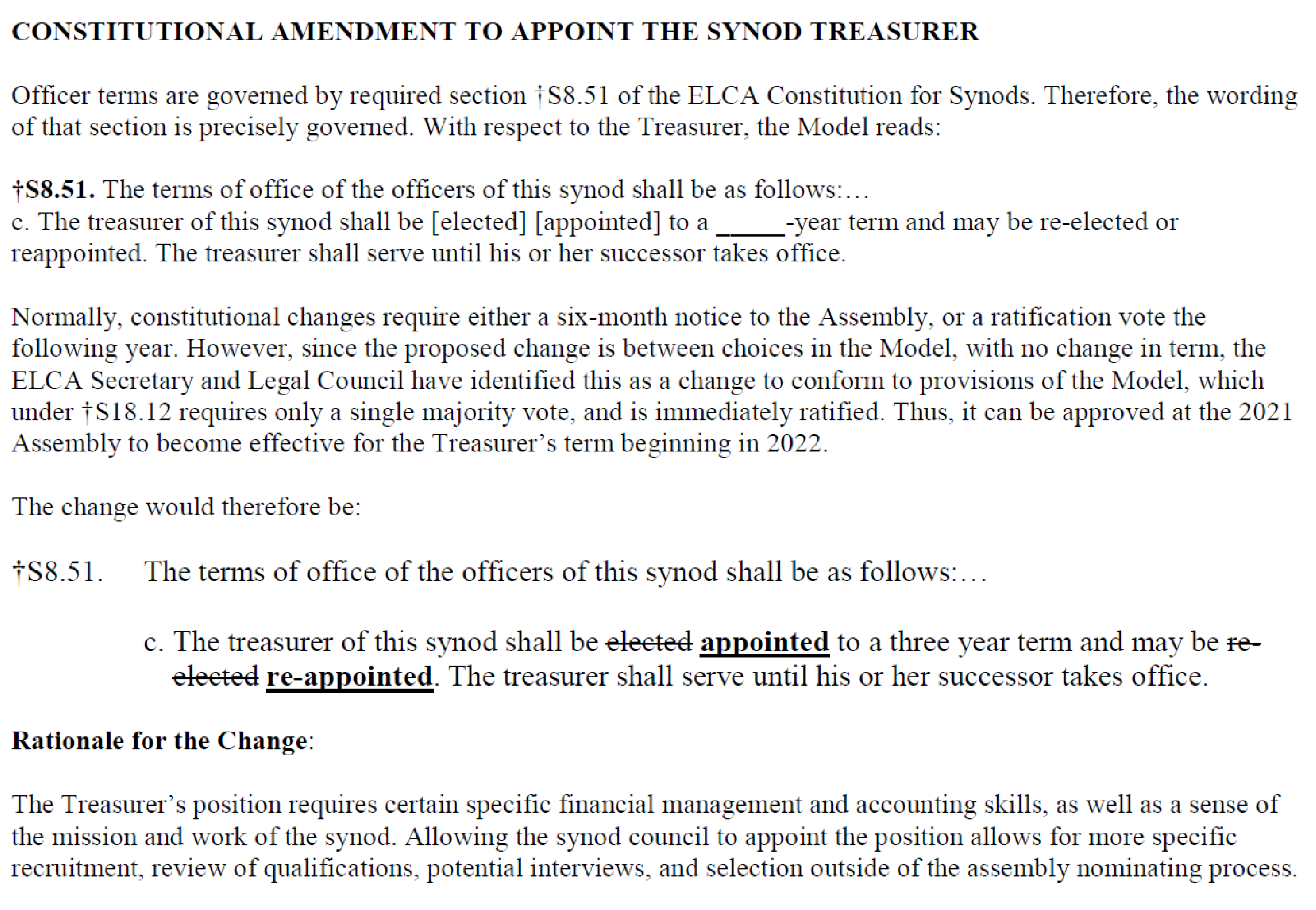
H.SPECIAL CONCERNS

Where there are special needs within a deacon’s family, these should be considered separately.

1. Secretary Matthew Beery presented the recommended revisions of bylaw S8.51 for approval.
   1. Secretary Beery highlighted that this would be a change to constitution provision S8.51 in the governing documents.
   2. This revision would make the synod treasurer an “appointed” position rather than an “elected” position.
   3. This revision requires only a single majority vote.
   4. The revisions were adopted 168 in favor, 10 opposed, and with 7 abstentions.

**SA21.06.04 To adopt the proposed revision to S8.51 Northeastern Ohio Synod**

**APPROVED Treasurer to be Appointed (Moved by council action; majority vote required; carried]**



18. Bishop Barbins recognized Treasurer John Sleasman to give the Northeastern Ohio Synod Treasurer Report.

1. John Sleasman made some simple adjustments to his written report for the sake of brevity (i.e., he ripped it up and spoke from memory).
2. John Sleasman referred to sections two (2) and four (4) of the pre-assembly materials pertaining to the budget.
3. John Sleasman then spoke about the audit delay. He highlighted that the audit report will be posted to the Northeastern Ohio Synod web site when completed.
4. John Sleasman also updated the assembly for the first quarter of the fiscal year ending in April. A slight deficit of $8,000 showing that it is starting as a very good year despite the challenges we have faced.
5. There are some extra expenses in this year’s budget because of staffing (re)configurations and other priorities being put together by Bishop Barbins. This is a flexible budget at present time.
6. No questions noted.

19. Bishop Barbins recognized Mike Davis from the Budget and Finance Committee to discuss and present the budget.

1. Mike Davis referred to the budget for 2022-2023 that can be found on pages 62-64 of the pre-assembly materials.
2. Mike Davis had a couple comments about the current budget 2021-2022:
   1. Bishop Barbins noted in her report the staffing, position descriptions, responsivities and implementation of the synod staff.
   2. Bishop Barbins shift in emphasis and priorities as she implements her direction for the Northeastern Ohio Synod.
3. Mike Davis referred back to John Sleasman’s report that the budget for 2022-2023 is in a state of flux. According to Mike, this is an understatement. Priorities have changed and some of our assumptions are no longer valid. Better “sharpen your pencils because it sounds like the bishop is on the move.”
4. Mike Davis stated that once some of these ideas become more crystal clear we will be able to make some revisions to the current year’s budget. Will make recommendations to synod council for approval to amend the budget.
5. Mike Davis then moved on to discussing FY22-23 budget (p. 62). Again, presenting a deficit budget. However in developing the budget for this timeframe, the Budget and Finance Committee took into account election of a new bishop, staffing changes, directional changes, the impacts of the Covid-19 Pandemic on our synod as well as new ideas from the bishop, developing this budget was “voluminous.” Sadly, our crystal ball was a little fuzzy.
6. Mike Davis stated that the budget for 2022-2023 projects revenues of $1,335,500. Expenditures totaling $1,463,475. Depreciation of funding totaling $23,100. These figures put us at a $131,075 deficit. The details behind these figures can be found on pages 63- 64 in the pre-assembly materials.
7. Mike Davis thanked congregations now and in the future for their continued financial support.
8. Mike Davis finished his report by reminding the assembly that the budget is a suggested financial roadmap that is based on what we know and don’t know at a given time. The Finance and Budget committee will continue to monitor these trends and figures.
9. No questions noted.
10. The voting results were 163 in favor, 8 opposed, and 6 abstained.

**SA21.06.05 To adopt the proposed 2022-2023 budget of Northeastern Ohio Synod**

**APPROVED as presented (Moved by council action; majority vote required; carried)**

20. Bishop Barbins recognized Vice President-Elect Kevin Kampfer from the Audit Committee to present the audit report.

1. Kevin Kampfer gave an update on the audit 2020-2021. He revisited some of the statements made by Treasurer John Sleasman. The audit was delayed by multiple and unavoidable factors; however, it is in the final stages of completion by our external partners, Apple Growth Partners.
2. Kevin Kampfer specially detailed the extenuating circumstances surrounding the audit—before and during the field work of the audit.
   1. A change in the Northeastern Ohio Synod accountant that occurred on the first day of the fourth quarter.
   2. Synod Treasurer John Sleasman was unexpectedly hospitalized for an extended time period during the start of the initial field work of the audit process.
   3. Apple Growth Partners found it necessary to substitute an accountant who was instrumental in generating needed reports.
   4. The inability to meet in person to review and discuss the audit. A lot can be done via Zoom and can be effective; however, they are not a substitute for face to face meetings, particularly when reviewing financial data.
3. Kevin Kampfer highlighted that the final audit report will be sent out via the Northeastern Ohio Synod weekly e-news once it is completed.
4. Kevin Kampfer, on behalf of the Audit Committee, apologized for the delay—and thanked the assembly for understanding this postponement.
5. No questions noted.

21. Bishop Barbins recognized The Rev. Kent Peterson to discuss the Mission Investment Fund

* 1. The Rev. Kent Peterson yielded his time to the chair for the sake of time.
  2. Bishop Barbins extended her thanks to Pastor Peterson, but also told the assembly that the Mission Investment Fund is incredibly important.

22. Bishop Barbins recognized The Rev. Donald Frantz from the Reference and Counsel Committee to read and present two resolutions:

The Rev. Donald Frantz communicated that the Reference and Counsel Committee did not receive any general resolutions prior to the date for acceptance for presentation to the assembly.

The Rev Donald Frantz stated that at the request of the Northeastern Ohio Synod Council the committee prepared three (3) resolutions:

The Rev. Abraham Allende

*Whereas The Reverend Abraham Allende has faithfully served as pastor of this church since his ordination on January 13, 2003 by the Northeastern Ohio Synod Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.*

*Whereas this Ministry of Word and Sacrament has been exercised in the following calls: Pastor and Mission Developer to Iglesia Luterana La Trinidad in Canton, Ohio and Pastor to the Lutheran Church of the Covenant in Maple Heights, Ohio*

*Whereas the Northeastern Ohio Synod Evangelical Lutheran Church of America extended a call to The Reverend Abraham Allende to serve as Bishop of this Synod in September of 2014 distinguishing him as the first ELCA bishop ordained through the TEEM—Theological Education for Emerging Ministries— program.*

*Whereas for great humility and faithfulness he has served this call until his retirement in November of 2020 for the benefit of the whole church and led our synod and our ELCA to celebrate ecumenism, advocate for sanctuary, and pursue racial equality and justice.*

*Whereas he continues to serve as co-convener of the ELCA task force for Strategic Authentic Diversity.*

*Whereas this proposal of an honorary title carries no remuneration, no authority, and no continuation of the offices or duties in the office of Bishop. Instead, this honorary title arises completely out of our affection, respect, esteem, and deep gratitude.*

*Therefore, be it resolved that the Northeastern Ohio Synod ELCA in assembly on June 12, 2021 now confers upon the Reverend Abraham Allende the designation of Bishop Emeritus of the Northeastern Ohio Synod of the ELCA.*

Bishop Emeritus Abraham Allende thanked the assembly and spoke about the courage of following God. Also, (re) stated that his work has not been done by him alone.

The Rev. Donald Frantz also presented a second resolution:

*Mrs. Karen Kaufman*

*Whereas our Northeastern Ohio Synod is blessed beyond measure with a great wealth of resources especially at our centered resource center and its chief steward Mrs. Karen Kaufman.*

*Whereas Karen Kaufman learning first of this ministry position serving Senate Council, she was unanimously hired to oversee the Resource Center in January of 1996, housed in the basement of the then church Saint Paul Lutheran Church Akron, Ohio.*

*Whereas her Ministry to our synod and our ELCA invited every member and congregation of our synod to grow in faith, discipleship, and mission.*

*Whereas her resource expertise and many connections on numerous synod committees and task forces, advanced Christ’s work and witness in our world, she insured the success and good order of countless synod assemblies and events.*

*Whereas she would prefer a quiet celebration of her retirement, instead of this loud accolade, we cannot let her depart without this great thanksgiving to God for her many years of faithful service, witness, and dedication to the church.*

*Therefore, be it resolved that during this Northeastern Ohio Synod ELCA in Assembly on June 12, 2021 now celebrate and gives great thanks to God in Christ Jesus for Mrs. Karen Kaufman and her 25 + years of service.*

*And be it further resolved that the Northeastern Ohio Synod Resource Center, hereafter, be known as the Kaufman Resource Center.*

Mrs. Karen Kaufman thanked the assembly. She stated it was a pleasure and a true calling. And now she is looking forward to spending time with her grandchildren.

The Rev. Donald Frantz had one more courtesy resolution

*John S. Knight Center*

*Whereas the Northeastern Ohio Synod has reached the closing moments of their 2021 Synod Assembly, be it resolved that we offer our thanks and gratitude to the John S Knight Center and its staff for their excellent service and accommodation of our synod assembly.*

*Be it further resolved that we are thankful to all that have given of their time to join us in assembly, whether it be in person or through internet capabilities.*

*Be it further resolved that we thank The Reverend Doctor Jack Fortin for his presence and his thought-provoking presentation.*

*Be it further resolved that we are thankful and blessed to have the ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton us.*

23. Bishop Barbins commended those pastors that passed away during this last year. A bell was sounded to commemorate and remember these dear brothers and sisters in Christ:

1. The Rev. David Craig
2. The Rev. Donavon Doerfer
3. The Rev. John Evans
4. The Rev. Walter Jordan
5. The Rev. Kermit Lauderbach
6. The Rev. Barbara Jane Pierce
7. The Rev. Leah Shafer
8. The Rev. Betty Lou Thiess

24. Bishop Barbins recognized Bishop Craig Schweitzer from our Domestic Partner synod,

the Western North Dakota Synod

Bishop Craig Schweitzer gave thanks for the partnership we have between Western North Dakota and Northeastern Ohio.

Bishop Craig Schweitzer presented a gift to the Northeastern Ohio Synod: a cross crafted by Bishop Schweitzer’s father, made with hardwoods that are native to North Dakota. It was signed by the synod staff as well as their synod council. Very beautiful display of kindness and our shared partnership.

1. Bishop Barbins highlighted our companion synod from the Northern Diocese of South Africa (ELCSA).
   1. The Northern Diocese of South Africa just elected a new bishop as well
   2. Bishop Barbins commented on how great it is to have these worldwide partners.
2. Bishop Barbins stated that the 2022 Northeastern Ohio Synod Assembly will happen a month earlier.
   1. The 2022 Synod Assembly will be May 13 and 14, 2022.
3. Bishop Barbins thanked all of the people leaving synod council.
   1. The Rev. Angela Freeman-Riley
   2. Bobby Barnes
   3. Bryan Penvose
   4. The Rev. Paul Bailie
4. Bishop Barbins led the assembly in worship at 12:53pm.
5. The 2021 Northeastern Ohio Synod Assembly was adjourned at 1:00 pm