Chapter 9. NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

†S9.01. The Synod Assembly shall elect such officers of this synod and such other persons as the constitution and bylaws may require, according to procedures set forth in the bylaws.

S9.01.01.A2000 The Synod Assembly shall elect voting members to Churchwide Assemblies of the ELCA according to the following procedures: (1) Five clergy voting members and ten clergy alternates shall be nominated by conference assemblies. For the 1999 Churchwide Assembly, these five conferences shall be the Glacial Ridge, Lac qui Parle, Minnesota Valley, Scenic Valley and Watonwan River Conferences. For succeeding Churchwide Assemblies the conferences will alternate representation for clergy and clergy alternates. (2) Ten lay voting members and twenty lay alternates shall be nominated by the conference assemblies. Of these positions, half shall be lay females and half shall be lay males. The five conferences that nominate clergy voting members and alternates shall also nominate lay female voting members and alternates. (3) Inasmuch as the synod vice president is an ex officio voting member of the Churchwide Assembly, cf.S8.21.01, the synod nominating committee shall nominate two lay alternates of the same gender as the synod vice president, chosen from among the members of the synod council. (4) The remaining allotment of lay voting members and lay alternates shall be nominated by the synod nominating committee on an at-large basis, using the representation principles of the ELCA, cf.S7.21.c. The nominating committee is encouraged to nominate confirmed youth age 21 or younger at the time of election for at least one of these at-large lay voting member and alternate positions. (5) The remaining allotment of clergy voting members and clergy alternates shall be nominated by the synod nominating committee on an at-large basis. (6) In its own work and in its communications with the conferences, the synod nominating committee shall assure that every voting member who is elected has a first alternate and a second alternate who is of the same lay/clergy status and/or gender.

†S9.02. In all elections by the Synod Assembly, other than for the bishop, a majority of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election.

S9.03. There shall be a Nominating Committee consisting of one member from each conference, who shall be elected by the conferences in accord with S6.04 to serve terms of three years. Additional nominations may be made from the floor for all elections for which nominations are made by the Nominating Committee.

S.9.03.01. Except as otherwise provided in the constitution and bylaws of this Synod, the Nominating Committee shall normally present the names of at least two nominees for positions elected at any meeting of a Synod Assembly. An agency or institution of the church for which the Synod Assembly elects board members may be granted an exception to this provision, provided it has (a) requested such an exception in writing to the Nominating Committee and (b) documented this request by providing the Nominating Committee with a copy of pertinent meeting minutes or governing documents of the agency or institution.

S9.04. The bishop shall be elected by the Synod Assembly in accordance with the process specified in the bylaws and continuing resolutions.

S9.04.01. For purposes of the Bylaws under S9.04 of the Constitution, the term nominee shall be synonymous with candidate. The Synod Nominating Committee shall prepare a slate of nominees for synod bishop for consideration by the conference assemblies. When preparing a slate of nominees for synod bishop, the Synod Nominating Committee shall solicit recommendations for nominees from individuals and congregations throughout the Synod, which nominees may come from within or without the Synod. The Synod Nominating Committee shall prepare a nomination information form and request that it be completed by each individual recommended as a nominee for bishop. The completed information forms will be made available to each conference assembly voting member who will be voting on the nominees at least two weeks prior to the first conference assembly preceding the Synod Assembly at which the election of the bishop is to occur. Each conference assembly shall then nominate five (5) members of the ELCA clergy roster for the office of synod bishop. Prior to placement on the conference’s nominating ballot, each nominee must first be nominated by a voting member in that conference in order for the individual’s name to be placed on the conference ballot. The nominees on the conference nominating ballot may consist of nominees other than those named in the Synod Nominating Committee slate, and need not come from within a particular conference. The names of the nominees selected by the conference nominating ballots shall be forwarded to the Synod Nominating Committee.
Each conference shall, on the first nominating ballot, allow voting members to vote for five (5) nominees. Any nominees who receive a majority of the votes cast on this ballot shall be considered nominees of the conference and their names will not reappear on subsequent ballots. On subsequent ballots, the number of nominees to be voted for on the ballot, if there is a sufficient number of nominees remaining on the ballots to be voted for, shall be equal to the number of remaining nominee positions. (For example, if two nominees achieve majority votes on the first ballot, voting members shall vote for three nominees on the second ballot.) This process shall continue until five nominees are chosen.

1. On subsequent ballots, the list of nominees shall be limited to nominees whose names appeared on the first ballot. On any ballot on which no nominee receives a majority, the nominee with the fewest votes is removed.

2. In balloting for bishop nominees, the following persons shall be eligible to vote: all rostered leaders of that conference of the Southwestern Minnesota Synod; and up to six lay persons from each congregation of the conference. Congregations are encouraged but not required to elect an equal number of male and female voting members.

The Synod Nominating Committee shall formulate a slate of five (5) nominees by determining the persons most frequently nominated at the conference assemblies. In the event of a tie for the fifth place, all fifth place nominees shall be included among the slate of nominees. In the event of the withdrawal by a nominee thirty days prior to the opening of the Synod Assembly, leaving fewer than five nominees, the Synod Nominating Committee shall place the name of the next succeeding nominee(s) on the ballot, if any.

The Synod Nominating Committee shall make arrangements for nominee forums and/or other opportunities in the synod for the purpose of acquainting members of the synod with the nominees and encouraging discussion of matters related to the election of the bishop. The Synod Nominating Committee shall cause the slate of nominees, along with their biographical information, to be published in the official publications of the synod and in the pre-assembly report for the Synod Assembly. The Synod Council shall arrange for the funding of such forums and for participation of nominees in the forums and Synod Assembly.

At the Synod Assembly, there shall be no nominations from the floor for the office of bishop. Statements by the nominees may be permitted according to rules adopted by the Synod Assembly. Where five or more nominees are on the first ballot, three-fourths of the votes cast shall be necessary for election on the first ballot. If no election results, the nominee receiving the fewest votes shall be removed from the slate of nominees. On the second ballot, two-thirds of the votes cast shall be necessary to elect. If no election results, the nominee with the fewest votes shall be removed from the slate of nominees. On all remaining ballots, until election, a majority of votes cast shall elect. If no election results on a given ballot, the nominee with the fewest votes shall be removed from the slate of nominees. Where four nominees, and only four nominees are on the first ballot, two-thirds of the votes cast shall be necessary to elect on the first ballot, and a majority of votes cast to elect on each succeeding ballot. Where three nominees or fewer are on the first ballot, a majority of votes cast shall be necessary to elect on the first ballot. Regardless of the number of nominees on the initial ballot and each succeeding ballot, if no election results, the nominee receiving the fewest votes cast shall be removed from the slate of nominees prior to the next ballot.

The Nominating Committee shall nominate at least two persons for vice-president; additional nominations may be made from the floor.

The Nominating Committee shall nominate two persons for secretary; additional nominations may be made from the floor.

The Synod Council shall nominate two persons for treasurer; additional nominations may be made from the floor.

In all elections, except for the 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.

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

The Synod Council shall elect or appoint representatives to the steering committee of its region.

Members of the Region 3 Steering Committee shall be appointed according to the Region 3 Orders of Governance and the rotation for representation defined by the Steering Committee.
S9.12. Background checks and screening shall be required and completed for persons nominated as synodical officers prior to their election, if possible, or as soon as practical after their election. The specific procedures and timing of background checks and screening shall be determined by the Synod Council.

S9.13. The Nominating Committee, in consultation with the Synod Youth Organization, shall nominate persons for election by the Synod Assembly to serve as youth member of the Synod Council.

(These pages were copied and pasted from pages 11 -12 of our SW MN Synod Constitution)
S9.14. The Nominating Committee shall nominate persons for election by the Synod Assembly as members at-large of the Synod Council.

S9.15. The Nominating Committee shall nominate persons for election by the Synod Assembly to the boards of agencies and institutions of the church according to their respective constitutions.