

RESOLUTION 24.03  
Regarding Bylaw Changes to the Synod Constitution

***Recommendation from the Synod Council of the SWMN Synod to remove the Engaging Leaders Board, the Equipping Congregations Board, and the Serving God's Word Board from the Bylaws of the SWMN Synod.***

**Whereas**, the Engaging Leaders Board, the Equipping Congregations Board, and the Serving God's Word Board no longer function in the capacity outlined in the Bylaws; and

**Whereas**, electing members to these Boards by the Synod Assembly is no longer deemed to be an effective practice for finding members willing and able to accomplish the goals of the Boards; and

**Whereas**, the work of these Boards continues to be completed by committees and teams led by Synod staff; and

**Whereas**, S11.30., S11.40., and S11.50. function as Paragraph titles rather than as part of the Constitution; and

**Be it Resolved**, to recommend to the Synod Assembly of the SWMN Synod to remove S11.30., S11.40., S11.50. and S11.30.01, S11.40.01. and S11.50.01 from the Constitution and Bylaws of the SWMN Synod at the 2024 Synod Assembly.

~~S11.30. Engaging Leaders Board~~

~~S11.30.01. There shall be a twelve member board for oversight, evaluating, and planning the synod's work of engaging leaders. It will focus on identifying, developing, and supporting lay and clergy leaders and their gifts.~~

~~S11.40. Equipping Congregations Board~~

~~S11.40.01. There shall be a twelve member board for oversight, evaluating, and planning the synod's work of equipping congregations for their ministry and mission in Christ's name.~~

~~S11.50. Serving in God's World Board~~

~~S11.50.01. There shall be a twelve member board for oversight, evaluating, and planning the synod's work of serving Christ's mission.~~

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**Recommendation from Policies & Procedures Committee  
to the Synod Council of the Southwestern Minnesota Synod  
to recommend to the 2024 Synod Assembly  
to establish the Management and Mission Support Committee, the Policies and Procedures Committee, and the Servant leadership Committee as standing committees in the Bylaws of the SWMN Synod.**

**Whereas**, the Policies and Procedures Committee has reviewed the actions of Synod Council resolution SC2000.9.68. and recommends the following resolution to codify the work of the current Management and Mission Support Committee, the Policies and Procedures Committee, and the Servant Leadership Committee; and

**Be it Resolved**, to recommend to the 2024 Southwestern Minnesota Synod Assembly to add to the Bylaws of the Southwestern Minnesota Synod Constitution S11.20., S11.21.01., S11.22.01., and S11.23.01. as outlined below:

S11.20. OTHER COMMITTEES OF THE SYOND

S11.21.01 There shall be a Management and Mission Support Committee consisting of at least 5 persons, who shall be appointed by the Executive Committee of the Synod Council for a term of three years, with the opportunity to serve consecutive terms with re-appointment. This

committee shall include members of the synod and elected members of the Synod Council. The Synod Treasurer shall serve as an *ex officio* member.

S11.22.01. There shall be a Policies and Procedures Committee consisting of at least 9 persons, who shall be appointed by the Executive Committee of the Synod Council for a term of three years, with the opportunity to serve consecutive terms with re-appointment. This committee shall include members of the synod and elected members of the Synod Council. The Synod Secretary shall serve as an *ex officio* member.

S11.23.01. There shall be a Servant Leadership Committee consisting of at least 5 persons, who shall be appointed by the Executive Committee of the Synod Council for a term of three years, with the opportunity to serve consecutive terms with re-appointment. This committee shall include members of the synod and elected members of the Synod Council.

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**Recommendation from the Policies and Procedures Committee  
to the Synod Council of the Southwestern Minnesota Synod  
to recommend to the 2024 Synod Assembly the following approach  
to provide for Synod Council Members to be eligible for election to a second term  
And to change the formation of the Synod Council**

**Chapter 10. SYNOD COUNCIL.**

†S10.01. The Synod Council, consisting of the four officers of the synod, 10 to 24 other members, and at least one youth and at least one young adult, shall be elected by the Synod Assembly.

a. Each person elected to the Synod Council shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod, with the exception of ministers on a roster of this synod who reside outside the territory of this synod. The process for election and the term of office when not otherwise provided shall be specified in the bylaws. A member of the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, unless otherwise elected as a voting member of the Synod Council, may serve as an advisory member of the Synod Council with voice but not vote.

b. The term of office of members of the Synod Council, with the exception of the officers and the youth member, shall be three years.

S10.01.01. The Synod Council shall include the officers of the synod, one person from each conference, one lay member from each conference, one rostered minister from each conference, one youth member of the synod, one young adult member of the synod, and four ~~seven~~ members elected at-large, ~~and two youth representatives.~~

S10.01.02. Each conference's shall nominate their lay and rostered ~~representative~~ members to the Synod Council at their ~~shall be nominated by the~~ Conference Assembly, striving to meet the requirements of \*S6.04. and \*S6.04.01. Each conference is encouraged to recommend to the Nominating Committee names for the youth member, the young adult members, and at-large members to stand for election at the Synod Assembly during election years for those positions. ~~to a three-year term, with no consecutive re-election, and subsequently stand for election at the Synod Assembly.~~

- S10.01.03. ~~At all times five of the conferences shall be represented by laypersons and five of the conferences shall be represented by persons who are either ministers of Word and Sacrament or ministers of Word and Service. This representation shall rotate with the completion of each term. Unless otherwise stated in this Constitution and Bylaws, Synod Council Members shall be elected to a 3 year term and shall be eligible for 2 consecutive election to a second terms when nominated by their conference assemblies and elected by the Synod Assembly as the incumbent.~~
- S10.01.04. ~~The seven Synod Council members elected at large shall include five laypersons and two persons who are either ministers of Word and Sacrament or ministers of Word and Service. These persons shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected by the Synod Assembly to three year terms. They shall not be eligible for consecutive re-election.~~
- S10.01.05. ~~The terms of the members at large shall be rotated in such a way that normally no more than two lay members and one member who is either a minister of Word and Sacrament or minister of Word and Service shall be elected by the same Synod Assembly.~~
- S10.01.064. ~~Should a member of the Synod Council die, resign, or be unable to serve, or a seat declared vacant due to a lack of nominations or elected candidates at the Synod Assembly, the Synod Council shall appoint a replacement to serve until the next Synod Assembly. The appointed replacement does not need to meet the requirements as outlined in S10.01.01., but shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod. The appointed replacement shall serve on Synod Council until the next Synod Assembly at which time a person shall be elected to complete the unexpired portion of the term. and The appointed replacement may be nominated by the Synod Council to fill an open position for which they qualify. Individuals nominated to stand for open member-at-large, youth, and young adult positions within the last three years shall be considered when choosing an appointment to a vacant seat on Synod Council.~~
- S10.01.075. The term of each member of the Synod Council begins immediately after the adjournment of the Synod Assembly in the year of election, or on June 30 in years when there shall be no Synod Assembly.
- S10.01.086. Advisory members to the Synod Council shall be seated with voice, but not vote. Those members shall include:
- a) ~~synod representative(s) on the Region 3 Steering Committee;~~
  - a) presidents of the synod's Women of the ELCA, Lutheran Men in Mission, and Lutheran Youth Organization;
  - b) representatives of the Conference Deans and Conference Chairpersons;
  - c) synod ministers and other synod staff;
  - d) persons who reside in this synod and who are serving on the ELCA Church Council or ELCA churchwide boards of divisions, commissions, departments and offices;
  - e) others whom the Synod Council may invite, such as representatives of LSS of Minnesota and shared ministries funded through the budget.
- S10.01.097. The Synod Council shall meet at least three times annually. Special meetings may be called by any three voting members of the Synod Council, or by the bishop of the synod. In the case of the bishop's death, incapacity to serve, or removal, a special meeting may be called by the vice president. A majority of the voting members of the Synod Council shall constitute a quorum.
- S10.01.11. ~~There shall be two youth representatives on the Synod Council. Youth representatives shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected by the Synod Assembly to a two year term. They shall not be eligible for consecutive re-election.~~
- †S10.02.** The Synod Council shall be the board of directors of this synod and shall serve as its interim legislative authority between meetings of the Synod Assembly. It may make decisions that are not in conflict with actions taken by the Synod Assembly or that are not precluded by provisions of this constitution or the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

**Background:**

In the spring of 2023, the Synod Council discussed the possibility of Synod Council members being able to serve 2 consecutive terms, which is not allowed currently in the Synod Constitution. Members felt that conducting the governance of the synod requires time to gain understanding and knowledge, and that those who are eager and energized to do this work ought to be given an opportunity to do so for another term. They requested the Policies and Procedures Committee to consider a process that would allow serving 2 consecutive terms, without overly complicating the election process.

The recommendation strives to create broader Conference representation and voice through one lay member and one rostered minister member per Conference, while seeking representation of male/female balance and persons of color or whose primary language is other than English (per †S6.04.01). Conferences have the responsibility to identify and elect these members; if a member enjoys serving and wants to continue, there may not be an election for that position for 6 years. One youth member (under age 18), one young adult member (age 18-30), and four at-large members stand for election at the Synod Assembly. Both the current and the proposed maximum number of Synod Council members is 30 persons.

**Recommendation from the Policies and Procedures Committee  
to the Synod Council of the Southwestern Minnesota Synod  
to recommend to the 2024 Synod Assembly the following approach  
to provide for Synod Council Members to be eligible for election to a second term**

**Chapter 10. SYNOD COUNCIL.**

- †S10.01. The Synod Council, consisting of the four officers of the synod, 10 to 24 other members, and at least one youth and at least one young adult, shall be elected by the Synod Assembly.
- a. Each person elected to the Synod Council shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod, with the exception of ministers on a roster of this synod who reside outside the territory of this synod. The process for election and the term of office when not otherwise provided shall be specified in the bylaws. A member of the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, unless otherwise elected as a voting member of the Synod Council, may serve as an advisory member of the Synod Council with voice but not vote.
  - b. The term of office of members of the Synod Council, with the exception of the officers and the youth member, shall be three years.
- S10.01.01. The Synod Council shall include the officers of the synod, one lay member from each conference, one rostered minister from each conference, one youth member of the synod, one young adult member of the synod, and four members elected at-large.
- S10.01.02. Each conference shall nominate their lay and rostered-members to the Synod Council at their Conference Assembly, striving to meet the requirements of \*S6.04. and \*S6.04.01. Each conference is encouraged to recommend to the Nominating Committee names for the youth member, the young adult member, and at-large members to stand for election at the Synod Assembly during election years for those positions.
- S10.01.03. Unless otherwise stated in this Constitution and Bylaws, Synod Council Members shall be elected to a 3 year term and shall be eligible for election to a second term when nominated by their conference assemblies and elected by the Synod Assembly as the incumbent.
- S10.01.04. Should a member of the Synod Council die, resign, be unable to serve, or a seat declared vacant due to a lack of nominations or elected candidates at the Synod Assembly, the Synod Council shall appoint a replacement to serve until the next Synod Assembly. The appointed replacement does not need to meet the requirements as outlined in S10.01.01., but shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod. The appointed replacement shall serve on Synod Council until the next Synod Assembly at which time a person shall be elected to complete the unexpired portion of the term. The appointed replacement may be nominated by the Synod Council to fill an open seat for which they qualify. Individuals nominated to stand for open member-at-

large, youth, and young adult seats within the last three years shall be considered when choosing an appointment to a vacant seat on Synod Council.

- S10.01.05. The term of each member of the Synod Council begins immediately after the adjournment of the Synod Assembly in the year of election, or on June 30 in years when there shall be no Synod Assembly.
- S10.01.06. Advisory members to the Synod Council shall be seated with voice, but not vote. Those members shall include:
- a. presidents of the synod's Women of the ELCA, Lutheran Men in Mission, and Lutheran Youth Organization;
  - b. representatives of the Conference Deans and Conference Chairpersons;
  - c. synod ministers and other synod staff;
  - d. persons who reside in this synod and who are serving on the ELCA Church Council or ELCA churchwide boards of divisions, commissions, departments and offices;
  - e. others whom the Synod Council may invite, such as representatives of LSS of Minnesota and shared ministries funded through the budget.
- S10.01.07. The Synod Council shall meet at least three times annually. Special meetings may be called by any three voting members of the Synod Council, or by the bishop of the synod. In the case of the bishop's death, incapacity to serve, or removal, a special meeting may be called by the vice president. A majority of the voting members of the Synod Council shall constitute a quorum.
- †S10.02. The Synod Council shall be the board of directors of this synod and shall serve as its interim legislative authority between meetings of the Synod Assembly. It may make decisions that are not in conflict with actions taken by the Synod Assembly or that are not precluded by provisions of this constitution or the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.