

Subject: Continuing Resolutions for the Rules and Procedures for the Election of a Bishop
Source: Synod Council

WHEREAS, a bishop election will be held at the 2019 South Dakota Synod Assembly; and,

WHEREAS, South Dakota Synod Bylaw S9.04.02 states, “Other election matters, such as the process of identifying potential nominees leading to the election of a bishop, and the rules of procedure for the election of a bishop shall be specified in the continuing resolutions of the South Dakota Synod Constitution, as approved by the Synod Assembly one (1) year prior to the assembly at which a bishop is to be elected.”; be it

RESOLVED, the South Dakota Synod Council at the March 9, 2018, meeting recommended to approve, en bloc, with the exception of such amendments as may be considered separately, the following Continuing Resolutions of the South Dakota Synod.

S9.04.A17 Process of Identifying Potential Nominees Leading to the Election of a Bishop

1. An incumbent bishop shall announce to the Synod Council whether he or she is willing to serve a subsequent term. Such announcement shall take place no later than the Synod Council meeting the fall prior to the Synod Assembly during which a bishop is to be elected.

2. The processes for identifying potential nominees for Bishop and election of a Bishop shall apply for all elections of a Bishop.

3. The Synod Council shall arrange for a synod study to be completed by the Synod Council meeting the fall prior to the beginning of the election process. The synod study shall be distributed to rostered ministers and congregations of the synod six months prior to the election, providing guidance throughout this synod as potential nominees for bishop are identified.

4. At the assembly of each conference prior to the election of a bishop, held no later than 75 days prior to Synod Assembly, the voting members will be asked to use the synod study document to guide conversation regarding the gifts desirable and necessary in a bishop.

5. At the same conference assembly, the voting members will be asked to identify current rostered ELCA ministers of Word and Sacrament whom the voting members believe have gifts desirable in a bishop. Identified pastors do not need to be members of the conference or of the South Dakota Synod. All ELCA pastors are encouraged to give permission to be considered in the discernment process.

6. The names of ministers of Word and Sacrament identified by conference assemblies will be forwarded to the Bishop Election Committee on the day of the conference assembly.

7. The Bishop Election Committee will contact the individuals identified by the conferences to confirm their willingness to have their names included as possessing gifts for the office of bishop. If these individuals reaffirm their willingness to be so identified, the Bishop Election Committee will facilitate their completion of a biographical information form. The potential nominees are to

Resolution #: 4
Recommendation: Do Pass
Action Taken:

submit these completed forms to the Bishop Election Committee within ten days of the conference assembly.

8. Forty-five days before the Synod Assembly begins the names and biographical information of the potential nominees for the office of bishop identified by the conferences will be posted on the synod website.

9. While these individuals are identified as potential nominees for the office of bishop, the South Dakota Synod will use the ecclesiastical ballot in which the name of any ELCA rostered minister of Word and Sacrament may be placed in nomination on the first ballot. Any person identified as a potential nominee must still be nominated on the first ballot by a voting member at the assembly.

10. The Synod Assembly will adopt Rules of Procedure for the Election of a Bishop based upon the ecclesiastical ballot as required by the South Dakota Synod Constitution.

S9.04.B17 Rules for the Procedure for the Election of a Bishop

1. In accordance with the South Dakota Synod Constitution, the election of a bishop shall be by ecclesiastical ballot. There shall be no spoken nominations from the floor.

2. Any ELCA rostered minister of Word and Sacrament is eligible for nomination for bishop. A valid ballot is to contain the nominee's full name and any other applicable identifying information. All registered voting members of the South Dakota Synod Assembly shall be eligible to cast a ballot.

3. Three-fourths of the legal votes cast on the first ballot shall be necessary for the election of a bishop.

4. If no election occurs, the first ballot is the nominating ballot. This ballot becomes the total slate of nominees. The Bishop Election Committee will attempt to contact all nominees identified on the first ballot.

5. Ministers of Word and Sacrament nominated on the first ballot shall have the right to withdraw their names from subsequent ballots before the casting of the second ballot. A form requesting the name to be withdrawn must be secured from and returned to the Bishop Election Committee by a time designated in the Standing Rules. This may be done electronically or via phone for candidates not present.

6. On the second and all subsequent ballots, the order of listing of the nominees on the ballot shall be from the greatest number of ballots cast to the least. Ties shall be listed alphabetically. Three-fourths of the legal votes cast on the second ballot shall be necessary for election.

7. Following the report of the second ballot, biographical data for the seven nominees (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of ballots cast on the second ballot shall be available to all

Resolution #: 4
Recommendation: Do Pass
Action Taken:

voting members. Background checks will be conducted for all nominees, to be reviewed by the Bishop Election Committee.

8. Before the casting of the third ballot, the seven nominees (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of ballots cast on the second ballot shall be invited to the stage and be introduced by name to the members of the assembly. There shall be no applause before, during, or after each individual introduction. After time has been allotted for all voting members to review the biographical information of the seven nominees (plus ties) will be invited to address the assembly on a subject of their own choosing, with each speech limited to five minutes. If any such person is not present at the assembly, the individual, may address the assembly in real time via audio or audiovisual means. A time keeper shall indicate to the speaker when 30 seconds remain of the allocated time and when the allocated time has elapsed. The sequence of the speeches shall be determined by lot. There shall be no applause before, during, or after individual speeches; only after all have spoken is there to be such affirmation. There shall be ten minutes' time allotted after these speeches for voting members to engage in prayer, reflection on the speeches, and informal conversation with other voting members before the third ballot is cast.

9. Two-thirds of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election on the third ballot.

10. Prior to the fourth ballot for synod bishop, the three persons (plus ties) who received the greatest number of votes on the third ballot will be invited to participate in a question-and-answer period. The period shall be moderated by the designated presider for the election process. The same five questions shall be asked of each of the nominees. Only one nominee shall be in the assembly room at a time. The order that the nominees shall appear on stage to answer the questions shall be determined by the draw of name. Each nominee shall have a maximum of two minutes to respond to each question. If any nominee is not present at the assembly, that individual, may address the assembly in real time via audio or audiovisual means. A time keeper will indicate to the speaker when 30 seconds remain of the allotted time and when the allotted time has ended. The time for the question-and-answer period shall be a maximum of 45 minutes. There shall be no applause before, during, or after each answer; only after the question-and-answer period has come to an end is there to be such affirmation.

Questions to be asked shall be determined by the Bishop Election Committee. Any voting member of the Synod Assembly may submit questions in a process determined by the Bishop Election Committee by a time designated in the Standing Rules.

11. Prior to the casting of the fourth ballot, there will be time for prayer, reflection on the speeches, and informal conversation with other voting members. Sixty percent of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election on the fourth ballot.

12. On ballots after the fourth ballot, the ballots shall be limited to the two nominees (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of votes cast.

13. On all subsequent ballots a majority of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election.

Resolution #: 4
Recommendation: Do Pass
Action Taken:

14. The results of each ballot shall be announced to the assembly.