

**Minutes of the
Northeastern Ohio Synod Assembly
Thirty-Second Regular Assembly
June 8-9, 2018
John S. Knight Center, Akron**

Ambassadors for Christ

Friday, June 9, 2018

1. The Assembly began with Opening Eucharist at 8:48am, with The Rev. Julianne Smith preaching and Bishop Abraham Allende. The liturgy concluded with the order for opening of a synod assembly led by Bishop Abraham Allende. The assembly was called to order at 10:06am.
2. Bishop Allende welcomed the assembly voting members and recognized the following:
 - a. Mikka McCracken, Director of Planning and Engagement for ELCA World Hunger in the Mission Advancement Unit and Iain Chester, Manager of Network Engagement for ELCA World Hunger in the Mission Advancement Unit.
 - b. Assembly Planning Coordinator, Sony Gilroy and Assembly Planning committee members The Rev. Christy Buyok, Jane Koch, Larry Fenton, John Sleasman; Statistician, Marilyn Matevia; and special thanks to Evan Buyok for the scanning and issuing of the electronic voting devices and Pat Hardwick for assisting with assembling packets.
 - c. The Rev. Darla Ann Kratzer (chair), The Rev. Erin Burns, Chuck Mosberger, and Ed Rehfus, who comprise the Reference and Counsel Committee. It was noted that timely and germane resolutions that were not submitted by the pre-assembly deadline are due to the Assembly office by 3:00pm.
 - d. John Sleasman, the Synod Treasurer. It was noted that proposed budget revisions are due to the Assembly office by 12:00pm. John will also be serving as Parliamentarian.
 - e. Bryan Penvose, Synod Vice President
 - f. David Lenz, Synod Secretary
 - g. Our synod's First Call candidate Lucas McSurley and recently consecrated Deacon Lindsay Bailey who, along with The Rev. Karl Biermann, are serving as pages
 - h. Clarence Smith, ELCA Church Council representative
 - i. Tim Barrage, who is taking care of the Powerpoint presentations and Social Media.
 - j. A/V and camera are being operated by Owen Blakslee and Rex Rickely
 - k. The Rev. John Wanamaker, Marli Elsass, Ed Rehfus, The Rev. Steve Bond, The Rev. Steve Krebill, and Kathy Lanzer, who comprise the Nominating Committee

- l. Josephine Wright, who is chairing the Credentials Committee.
 - m. Kate Venable, The Rev. David Kamphuis, The Rev. Tina Heise, and the Rev. Erin Burns, who comprise the Elections Committee
 - n. Chuck Mosberger and The Rev. Sara Cogsil, who comprise the Minutes Committee.
3. Jane Koch, of the Assembly Planning Committee, made various introductory announcements to orient voting members to the John S. Knight Center and to the electronic voting procedures. Ryan McKenna led two tests of the voting system,
 4. The Rev. Steve Krebill, on behalf of the Nominating Committee, presented the slate of nominees printed on pages 8-31 of the pre-assembly materials and asked for additional nominations from the floor:
 - a. Synod Council Akron-Wooster Lay: Erin O'Neill and Mark Waggy.
 - b. Synod Council Canton-Massillon Lay: Lito Belardo
 - c. Synod Council Cleveland East Lay: Gail Adamek, Bobby Barnes, and Dale Veres.
 - d. Synod Council Cleveland West Clergy: The Rev. Angela Freeman-Riley
 - e. Synod Council Eastern Clergy: The Rev. Paul Bailie
 - f. Synod Council Richland-Ashland Lay: Sheryl Budd
 - g. Synod Council Southern Clergy: The Rev. A. Wallace Anderson and The Rev. Scott Nellis.
 - h. Synod Council Youth Lay: Grace Braver
 - i. Synod Vice President: Bryan Penvose
 - j. Consultation Committee Lay: Cathy Byers and Allie Harpster
 - k. Consultation Committee Lay: Patricia Reed
 - l. Consultation Committee Clergy: The Rev. Jessica Shields
 - m. Discipline Committee Lay: Kimberly Carr
 - n. Discipline Committee Lay: Jan Parkinson
 - o. Discipline Committee Clergy: The Rev. Jean Hansen
 - p. Discipline Committee Clergy: The Rev. Russel Yoak
 - q. Churchwide Assembly Voting Members:
 - i. Cleveland West Clergy: The Rev. Sherman Bishop, The Rev. Angela Freeman-Riley, The Rev. Jimmy Madsen, and The Rev. James Watson.
 - ii. Canton-Massillon or Southern Clergy: The Rev. Scott Nellis and The Rev. Cindy Striker
 - iii. Cleveland East or Eastern Clergy: The Rev. Laura Barbins and The Rev. Gwendolyn Snell

- iv. Richland-Ashland or Akron-Wooster Clergy: The Rev. Angel Jackson
 - v. Canton-Massillon or Southern Lay Female: Kitty Burgett, Kimberly Carr, and Ruth Reinoehl
 - vi. Cleveland East, Cleveland West, or Akron-Wooster Lay Female: Cathy Byers, Sony Gilroy, Deacon Patricia Jabre, Leah Kulma, and Precious Pettway
 - vii. Richland-Ashland or Eastern Lay Female: Marlene Fleming or Stephanie Rueckert
 - viii. Cleveland East, Cleveland West, or Eastern Lay Male: Thomas Fox, Paul Gochmour, or Dale Veres
 - ix. Canton-Massillon, Akron-Wooster, Richland-Ashland, or Southern Lay Male: Robert Dieter, Ken Reinoehl, and Tim Wood
 - x. Youth Lay Male: Alex Babinski
 - xi. Young Adult Lay Female: Deacon Lindsay Bailey
 - xii. Person of Color or Primary Language Other Than English Lay Female: Caroline Cole
 - xiii. Person of Color or Primary Language Other Than English Lay Male: Albert Barnes
5. Josephine Wright presented the report of the Credentials Committee: As of 10:15am, 360 individuals were registered: 186 lay members, 11 official lay rostered (82 males and 115 females); and 126 clergy. There were 323 voting members total—61% lay; 39% clergy. There were 37 registered visitors.
6. Bishop Allende called attention to the list of excused, which is available at the registration table or through the guidebook app.

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- 1. The Rev. Shari Ayers
 - 2. The Rev. Sherman Bishop
 - 3. The Rev. Paul Burgeson
 - 4. The Rev. Paul Camp
 - 5. The Rev. James Cline
 - 6. The Rev. David Conrad
 - 7. The Rev. Leland Eilert
 - 8. The Rev. Jaclyn Gasior
 - 9. The Rev. Richard Gordon
 - 10. The Rev. Bruce Hathaway
 - 11. The Rev. Robert Henderson
 - 12. The Rev. Barbara Holzhauser
 - 13. The Rev. Paul Jaster
 - 14. The Rev. Karen Liddy
 - 15. The Rev. Laurie Miller
 - 16. The Rev. Randall O'Donnell
 - 17. The Rev. Rosalina Rivera
 - 18. The Rev. Denise Sager

19. The Rev. Leah Schafer
20. The Rev. Thomas Schwartz
21. The Rev. Chelsea Spencer
22. The Rev. Robert Springer
23. The Rev. Jeff Steele-Steeber
24. The Rev. Paul Stork
25. The Rev. Dennis Stylski
26. The Rev. Blanche Tyree
27. The Rev. Carolyn Wagar Hier
28. The Rev. Daniel Wenger
29. The Rev. Ann Marie Winters
30. The Rev. Russel Yoak

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7. Secretary David Lenz presented the Proposed Rules of Procedure, which were unchanged from last year except for portions addressing resolution and budget modification deadlines. They were accepted by consent.

SA18.06.01 To adopt the Rules of Procedure as previously distributed and proposed (Moved by council action; two-thirds vote required; carried)

I. General Rules

- A. Upon recognition by the chair, a speaker shall identify oneself by name, congregation (or agency or institution), and town (or city).
- B. 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.
- C. Unless otherwise determined by a two-thirds vote, speeches during debate shall be limited to two (2) minutes.
- D. The chair may bring forward items as necessary or as helpful to the business of the assembly.
- E. Motions shall be submitted to the secretary in writing on forms provided for that purpose.
- F. To afford voting members the option of expressing "no opinion" on a question, the chair will call for yeas, nays, and abstentions.
- G. In the event that the assembly must adjourn before completing its business, all remaining items shall be referred to the synod council for disposition.

II. Nominations and Elections

- A. 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.
- B. Nominees for offices except for bishop 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.
- C. 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 to the assembly office (behind registration tables) for the Finance & Budget Committee by 12:00p.m., Friday, June 8, 2018. All proposals shall be in writing and shall include 1) the amount of increase for a committee total, 2) the committee total to be decreased, and 3) the rationale for such change.
- B. Proposed changes shall be reviewed by the Finance & Budget Committee and presented to the synod assembly with its recommendations.

IV. Consideration of Resolutions

- A. Resolutions to be considered by the assembly shall be received in writing in the synod office by Saturday, March 31, 2018 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.
- B. Resolutions of an urgent nature which could not be submitted prior to the above deadline because of changing situations in the church or the world shall be submitted in writing to the assembly office (behind registration tables) by 3:00 p.m., Friday, June 8, 2018 for consideration by the Committee on Reference and Counsel. The Committee on Reference and Counsel, in consultation with the bishop and Executive Committee, may decline to report such resolutions or may report such resolutions to the assembly as in (A) above.
- C. A resolution of a general nature shall be referred to the Committee on Reference and Counsel, which shall give an opportunity to each voting member of the assembly who proposes such a resolution to comment on it. The committee shall report back to the assembly on any such resolutions submitted to it together with any recommendations it may have, as well as prepare courtesy resolutions for consideration by the assembly.
- D. The Committee on Reference and Counsel shall also grant or deny permission to distribute material to assembly voting members.

8. Bishop Allende presented the agenda for adoption as presented. The agenda was approved by consent.

SA18.06.02 To adopt the agenda as previously distributed and proposed (Moved by council action; carried)

Friday, June 8

7:40 am Registration, Continental breakfast, Displays

8:10 am Orientation for first time voting members

8:40 am **Opening Eucharist**

10:00 am Opening of synod assembly & call to order
Welcome by Planning Committee
Electronic Voting Explanation and Review
Announcement of excused

10:15 am Nominations

***** 10:15 AM REGISTRATION CLOSSES (till 11:00 am) *****

10:30 am Break

10:45 am Report of Credentials Committee
Adoption of Rules of Procedure
Adoption of agenda

10:50 am Elections Committee report
First ballot
Report of Elections Committee (1st Ballot Results)

11:00 am Synod Council report

11:10 am Bishop's report

***** 11:10 AM REGISTRATION REOPENS *****

11:45am Churchwide Council Endorsement

11:50 am Draft Social Statement on Women and Justice

12:10 pm Greetings from The Rev. Dr. Kathryn "Kit" Kleinhans

12:30 pm Lunch, Displays/Social time

1:15 pm Presentation and Bible Study led by Discipleship & Evangelism, Stewardship, and Mission Interpreter ministries

2:15 pm ELCA report *Mikka MaCracken, Director for ELCA World Hunger planning and engagement in the Mission Advancement unit*

3:00 pm Treasurer's report
Report of the Audit Committee
Presentation of Budget
Adoption of Budget
Adoption of Compensation Guidelines

3:20 pm Break

3:30 pm **Workshop Session I**

4:25 pm Break

4:35 pm Report of Credentials Committee
Second ballot
Report of Elections Committee (2nd Ballot Results)
Report of Reference and Counsel

4:50 pm Other business

5:10 pm **Evening Prayer**

5:30 PM Dismiss assembly for the day

Saturday, June 9

7:40 am Continental breakfast, Displays

8:15 am Assembly Reconvenes
Announcements

8:20 am **Morning Prayer**

8:50 am Report of Credentials Committee
Report of Minutes Committee *Minutes Committee Chair*
Third ballot (if needed)
Report of Elections Committee (3rd Ballot Results if needed)

9:00 am Churchwide Council Representative Clarence Smith

9:10 am Ecumenical Greetings

9:45 am Recognition of Significant Anniversaries

9:50 am Hunger Mission in Virginia

10:05 am NEOS LYO Greetings

10:20 am Break

10:35 am **Intergenerational Service Project / Youth Q&A** Exhibit Hall I

11:30 am Hospitality Break (refreshments and light snack) Exhibit Hall I

11:45 am **Workshop Session II**

12:40 pm Break

12:50 pm Report of Reference and Counsel *Reference and Counsel Chair* Other business

1:05 pm Recognitions

1:10 pm **Closing Eucharist** (installation of newly elected)

2:20 pm Adjournment

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9. Kate Venable, on behalf of the elections committee, presented the voting procedure. There are 17 positions for which candidates are unopposed. The following were deemed to be elected by consent.

- a. Synod Council, Canton-Massillon Conference, Lay – Lito Belardo

- b. Synod Council, Cleveland West Conference, Clergy – The Rev. Angela Freeman-Riley
 - c. Synod Council, Eastern Conference, Clergy – The Rev. Paul Bailie
 - d. Synod Council, Richland-Ashland Conference, Lay – Cheryl Budd
 - e. Synod Council, Youth – Grace Braver
 - f. Synod Vice President – Bryan Penvose
 - g. Consultation Committee, Lay – Patricia Reed
 - h. Consultation Committee, Clergy – The Rev. Jessica Shields
 - i. Discipline Committee, Lay – Kimberly Carr
 - j. Discipline Committee, Lay – Jan Parkinson
 - k. Discipline Committee, Clergy – The Rev. Jean Hansen
 - l. Discipline Committee, Clergy - The Rev. Russel Yoak
 - m. Churchwide Assembly Member, Clergy (Akron-Wooster or Richland-Ashland) – The Rev. Angel Jackson
 - n. Churchwide Assembly Member, Youth – Alex Babinski
 - o. Churchwide Assembly Member, Young Adult – Deacon Lindsay Bailey
 - p. Churchwide Assembly Member, Person of Color or Primary Language Other Than English Lay Female – Caroline Cole
 - q. Churchwide Assembly Member, Person of Color or Primary Language Other Than English Lay Male – Albert Barnes
10. Voting opened at 10:55am. Election Results were as follows:
- a. Synod Council Akron-Wooster Lay: Erin O’Neill 179 and Mark Waggy 105. Erin O’Neill is elected.
 - b. Synod Council Cleveland East Lay: Gail Adamek 92, Bobby Barnes 109, and Dale Veres 89. Bobby Barnes and Gail Adamek move on to the second ballot.
 - c. Synod Council Southern Clergy: The Rev. A. Wallace Anderson 92 and The Rev. Scott Nellis 207. The Rev. Scott Nellis is elected.
 - d. Consultation Committee Lay: Cathy Byers 134 and Allie Harpster 168. Allie Harpster is elected.
 - e. Churchwide Assembly Voting Members:
 - i. Cleveland West Clergy: The Rev. Sherman Bishop 38, The Rev. Angela Freeman-Riley 118, The Rev. Jimmy Madsen 53, and The Rev. James Watson 99. The Rev. Angela Freeman-Riley and The Rev. James Watson move on to the second ballot.
 - ii. Canton-Massillon or Southern Clergy: The Rev. Scott Nellis 141 and The Rev. Cindy Striker 161. The Rev. Cindy Striker is elected.

- iii. Cleveland East or Eastern Clergy: The Rev. Laura Barbins 122 and The Rev. Gwendolyn Snell 185. The Rev. Gwendolyn Snell is elected.
- iv. Canton-Massillon or Southern Lay Female: Kitty Burgett 89, Kimberly Carr 125, and Ruth Reinoehl 88. Kimberly Carr and Kitty Burgett move on to the second ballot.
- v. Cleveland East, Cleveland West, or Akron-Wooster Lay Female: Cathy Byers 23, Sony Gilroy 90, Deacon Patricia Jabre 48, Leah Kulma 82, or Precious Pettway 63. Sony Gilroy and Leah Kulma move on to the second ballot.
- vi. Richland-Ashland or Eastern Lay Female: Marlene Fleming 82 and Stephanie Rueckert 223. Stephanie Rueckert is elected.
- vii. Cleveland East, Cleveland West, or Eastern Lay Male: Thomas Fox 86, Paul Gochnour 125, and Dale Veres 96. Paul Gochnour and Dale Veres move on to the second ballot.
- viii. Canton-Massillon, Akron-Wooster, Richland-Ashland, or Southern Lay Male: Robert Dieter 100, Ken Reinoehl 88, and Tim Wood 119. Tim Wood and Robert Dieter move on to the second ballot.

11. Voting closed at 11:15am.

12. Vice President Bryan Penvose presented the Synod Council Report.

- a. Bryan called attention to the written Synod Council report on pages 44-45 of the pre-assembly materials. Bryan reminded voting members that they are voting members of the whole church and Ambassadors for Christ gathered and sent to proclaim the good news for all people. We were encouraged not focus on business topics, who is in church and who isn't, passing budgets and paying bills. Instead we should focus on 'Where is God calling us to move outside of our comfort zone as ambassadors for Christ?'
- b. "What is God doing through me?" This is the question we should be asking as a synod. To keep the concept in mind, Zion, Medina, abbreviated it to WIGDTM and produced wristbands available at the Assembly with those initials. The Council has taken spiritual gift inventories and brainstormed their crazy ideas for synod ministry and has reflected on its role as a council. We look forward to evaluating our Synod ministries and teams and re-structuring them for more effective ministry in today's world.
- c. Synod Council intends to continue lifting up the Stewardship and Mission Support Table, the Discipleship and Evangelism Table, the Mission Interpreters ministry. We now have over 20 trained Mission Interpreters in our Synod, which is a start toward our goal of having at least one Mission Interpreter in each congregation.
- d. In January we invited the Conference Deans to participate in our meeting to brainstorm ministry. Intentional conversation was had about ministry in each conference leading to, for example, a Cleveland West Conference Gathering for Congregational Leaders at Prince of Peace, Westlake on April 14th. Council,

youth group, discipleship and evangelism, property, finance, spiritual formation and other leaders gathered together to support and encourage and learn from each other to better accomplish ministry together.

- e. Knowing God's love, grace, and mercy, which we do not deserve, let us leave this place asking What is God doing through me? And whatever it is, let us do it together.
13. Bishop Allende relinquished the chair at 11:27am to present the bishop's report.
- a. Bishop Allende welcomed The Rt. Rev. Mark Hollingsworth Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Ohio to bring ecumenical greetings. Bishop Hollingsworth noted the relational aspect of the interaction between the Episcopal Church and the ELCA. He specifically mentioned The Rev. Rich Israel, a Lutheran pastor who has served for years at St. Paul's Episcopal Church of Cleveland, Heights, where he serves as pastor to Bishop Hollingsworth's family. He also gave thanks for the relationships for the three bishops who have served in the Northeastern Ohio Synod in his 15 years. He especially recognized Bishop Allende for his friendship and companionship these past several years.
 - b. Bishop Allende introduced his staff: The Rev. Julianne Smith, Director for Evangelical Mission. Bishop Allende also thanked The Rev. Dave Daubert for his work as interim DEM. The Rev. Karl Biermann, Assistant to the Bishop; Karen Kaufmann, Resource Specialist; The Rev. Laurie Miller, Candidacy Coordinator; Deacon Mary Ann Schwabe, Congregation Resource Team Coordinator; Mary Ann Sima, LYO Liaison; Joy Hacker, Accountant; Marilyn Matevia, Administrative Assistant; Sony Gilroy, Office Administrator.
 - c. He recognized pastors who are new to our Synod: The Rev. Seth Bridger, Messiah, Fairview Park; The Rev. Shelley Nelson-Bridger, beginning August 1st Executive Director of United Protestant Campus Ministries; The Rev. Sara Cogsil, Trinity, Lakewood; The Rev. Laura Kuntz, Redeemer, Brook Park; The Rev. Paul Bailie, Good Shepherd Conneaut; The Rev. James Steingass, St. Luke's, Cuyahoga Falls; The Rev. Anne Pairan, Staff Chaplain, OhioHealth Hospice in Mansfield
 - d. Recognized the newly ordained pastors the Rev. Kathryn Jacob and The Rev. Cynthia Striker, new Deacon Laura Bailey; and first call candidate Lucas McSurley.
 - e. The Rev. Erin Burns is the new dean of the Eastern conference.
 - f. Next year's dates for Synod Assembly are June 14-15, 2019
 - g. Synod Assembly offering will be split between ELCA World Hunger and ELCA Fund for Leaders.
 - h. The theme comes from 2 Corinthians 5:20. What is an Ambassador for Christ? The Greek word has the same root as presbyter. Regardless of how voting members were chosen, they are here representing their church and are Ambassadors for Christ. It is your role as Ambassador to develop the diplomatic skill to tell the story. God never forgets who we are and whose we are, even

when we do. We are still, however, a work in progress. We know there are concerns about decline, leadership shortages, and shrinking budgets.

- i. In the last Conference of Bishops there was discussion on this issue. Our Synod received one first call candidate, despite five congregations that could receive first call candidates. The Synod has four candidates who are in the TEEM process, taking an alternate path toward ordination. Our congregational constitutions tell us that “Every pastor shall seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel.” If you see a person who has the gifts for ministry, tell them so. Then tell them again. Bishop Allende shared a video featuring several of the Synod’s recently ordained pastors responding to the question of “Who or what encouraged you to pursue a vocation in ministry?” and “What can we do to encourage other leaders?” Our younger pastors never knew the church when it was bulging at the seams. They are ready to lead and innovate.
 - j. Bishop Allende was able to preach and commission the summer staffs of the three LOMO camps recently. Bishop Allende will be heading to Houston in a few weeks with about 526 of our youth. It was the 2015 Youth Gathering that inspired Bishop Allende to invite greater youth participation. They will lead the closing Eucharist. They wanted to have this gathering even though they are focusing on a national gathering.
 - k. Bishop Allende said “Thank You” to the congregations of the Synod for their generosity. For the first time in 12 years, the budget finished “in the black.” We serve a God of abundance, but when we focus too much on our finances, we are not living out God’s will.
 - l. One of our greatest challenges as ambassadors is sharing the story. Our discipleship and evangelizing table is doing excellent work. Evangelizing is not just bringing in more people to pay the bills—rather inviting people into a life-changing relationship with God.
 - m. There is a perceived need in renewing the mission of our congregations. Bishop Gatherings help accomplish this goal. A recent stewardship workshop was outstanding. The Fall Bishop’s Gathering will be oriented toward congregational council members and training them for effective service in the church. These will take place September 22nd at Zion, Wooster; October 6th at Grace, Austintown.
 - n. Bishop Allende highlighted the various forms of Synod communications, but he emphasized that his favorite is visiting congregations. He encouraged congregations to try to schedule him to visit.
 - o. Bishop Allende closed with the Nelson Mandela quote: “May your choices reflect your hopes, not your fears.” We are called to be a church located in this world but with a presence in the power of God and Jesus Christ.
 - p. Bryan Penvose returned the chair at 12:15pm.
14. Churchwide Council Member Endorsement: This occurs in each synod of the ELCA once every 12 years. The Rev. David Anderson presented information about members of the Church Council, who are elected for single 6-year term without eligibility for re-election. We are paired with the Southern Ohio Synod. Marjorie Ellis served for the last

6 years. The Northeastern Ohio Synod has been allocated a lay male position for election in 2019. The Synod Council was given the authority to appoint two nominees; they delegated to Executive Committee; who nominated David Lenz and Chuck Mosberger.

SA18.06.04 To endorse the Executive Committee’s nomination of David Lenz and Chuck Mosberger to ELCA Church Council (Moved by Executive Committee action; carried)

15. The Rev. Angel Jackson presented on the draft Social Statement on Women and Justice: One in Christ.
 - a. There are twelve Social Statements in existence right now, all of which are on the ELCA website. These documents speak from our church to society.
 - b. This new Social Statement was called for in 2009. A task force was selected in September of 2012. There were listening events in Northeastern Ohio Synod and throughout the ELCA in 2015. We are currently in the third step of the process, having released a draft for comment. The task force will finalize a proposed social statement to be reviewed by the Council of Bishops and Church Council. It will be voted on at the 2019 Churchwide Assembly.
 - c. The first workshop is an information and discussion session about the process of developing the Social Statement. The session at 11:45am Saturday is a formal hearing on the text of the statement.
 - d. Members are encouraged to review a draft of the statement and study it within their church. Pr. Tina Heise and Pr. Angel Jackson are doing a study through their “Sofa Studies” Facebook group for a 6-week series starting July 10th; each Tuesday at 8:30pm.
 - e. Feedback on the draft statement is requested by September 30, 2018.
16. Bishop Allende noted that the Rev. Dr. Kathryn Kleinhans will speak at 3:00pm. Bryan Penvose explained the process for re-convening for the Bible Study after lunch. Bryan led the meal prayer and the Assembly recessed for lunch at 12:36pm.
17. The Assembly reconvened at 1:15pm with small group Bible Study led by The Rev. Jim Watson of the Discipleship and Evangelism Table.
18. Bishop Allende introduced Mikka McCracken, Director, Planning and Engagement, ELCA World Hunger, from the Churchwide Organization. Mikka has been at the churchwide organization for 9 years.
 - a. We are a Lutheran church that shares a living, daring confidence in God’s grace. We are 9,300 congregations, 65 synods, and 3,700,000 members. What does it mean to be Lutheran? Sometimes we mumble through the “evangelical” part of our church name, but being evangelical simply means that we are telling others about it.
 - b. Mikka shared the Synod Assembly video and also noted that God’s Work Our Hands will be on Sunday, September 9th.
 - c. Mikka shared some of the themes of Future Directions 2025, which are available at elca.org/future. There are 5 main ways the ELCA is moving forward. (1) a

Thriving church spreading the gospel and deepening faith for all; (2) a church equipping people for their baptismal vocations in the world and this church, (3) an inviting and welcoming church that embraces the diversity of our communities and the gifts and opportunities that diversity brings; (4) a visible church deeply committed to working ecumenically and with other people of faith for justice, peace, and reconciliation in communities and around the world; and (5) a well-governed, connected, and sustainable church.

- d. Mikka highlighted the gap between congregations available to afford a pastor and available pastors from 2010 to 2019 (7638 able to afford and 7625 available in 2010 to 6864 able to afford and only 5844 available in 2019).
- e. Each year, \$1.8 billion is congregational mission support. Some is sent to the Synod as mission support; 50% of that (\$685,000) was sent from Northeastern Ohio Synod to churchwide, which relies on mission support for 65% its budget.
- f. The Campaign for the ELCA update: Campaign initiated in February 2014 for the 25th anniversary of the ELCA.
- g. The campaign is at 74% of its funding goal. Program goals include start and renew more congregations. There are 431 new and in development throughout the ELCA. Mission starts in our Synod include Iglesia Luterana La Trinidad in Canton, Lakewood Abbey, Lakewood, Oasis Outreach in Akron, and Sagrado Corazon in Akron. Synod congregations in renewal include: New Covenant, East Cleveland; Calvary, East Cleveland; Euclid, Euclid; and Good Soil, Lakewood.
- h. The Campaign seeks to train more leaders for ministry and service. ELCA Fund for Leaders is providing scholarships to 250 seminarians including Christina Jindra from Northeastern Ohio Synod.
- i. We want to raise up the next generation of youth and young adults and increase and deepen global support. There are presently 93 Young Adults in Global Mission as well as 230 missionaries in 44 countries.
- j. We must do more to end poverty and hunger. ELCA World Hunger has received gifts of \$21.3 million in 2017. Over \$250,000 from this Synod. It has supported grants to 60 countries and 268 programs throughout the U.S. Messiah Lutheran Church, Fairview Park is a recipient of a grant. Their “Laundry Love” takes over a laundromat for about 3 hours for free laundry and a free meal for members of the community. The Global Farm Challenge. We produce enough food to feed the world; 80% of the world’s food is produced on small farms. One-half of the world’s 815 million undernourished people live on farms. Mikka shared about her visit to the mountains of Colombia and how through ELCA World Hunger greenhouses can extend the growing season and rainwater can be diverted to trout ponds to provide a reliable source of protein.
- k. Lutheran Disaster Response acted in 15 states and territories and 21 countries. \$22.8 million was given to LDR last year, of which \$332,000 was from our Synod.

1. If we, as believers in the improbable life, death and resurrection of Christ, cannot proclaim the possibility of ending hunger in our world in our lifetime, no one else will.
19. Bishop Allende introduced The Rev. Dr. Kathryn “Kit” Kleinhans, Dean of Trinity Lutheran Seminary at Capital University.
- a. The church is changing while the culture is changing. The gospel is not changing, but how we proclaim it must change.
 - b. We have had our first graduates of the 2+2 Masters of Divinity program. This is two years in classes at the seminary and two years in an extended internship and some related coursework (a one-week intensive, and an online course each semester). These courses will be open to more than just the full-time seminary students. They can be used as continuing education by existing clergy or as a taste of seminary education for those considering a call. Capital University has programs in Social Work, Health Care, Education, and other similar fields. The church does not only need leaders in our congregations, but leaders who are seeking to live out their calling in these fields as well. Dean Kleinhans expressed gratitude for our continued partnership and asked for the Assembly to lift up candidates for public ministry; to continue its financial support for the seminaries (current budget is \$15,000, next year’s proposal is \$17,500) and to pray for our candidates, our seminaries, and our church.
20. Bishop Allende announced the postponement of the Treasurer’s Report and Audit report until after the workshops. The Assembly recessed to workshops at 3:22pm. Workshops included: World Hunger, Draft Statement on Women and Justice, Authentic Diversity/Cross Cultural Conversation, and Lutheran Outdoor Ministries of Ohio.
21. The Assembly reconvened at 4:42pm with Jane Koch providing a few additional announcements.
22. Josephine Wright presented the report of the Credentials Committee: As of 4:15pm, 374 individuals were registered: 186 lay members, 12 official lay rostered (82 males and 116 females); and 133 clergy. There were 331 voting members total—60% lay; 40% clergy. There were 43 registered visitors.
23. Voting opened at 4:45pm for the second ballot. Election Results were as follows:
- a. Synod Council Cleveland East Lay: Bobby Barnes 121 and Gail Adamek 109. Bobby Barnes is elected.
 - b. Churchwide Assembly Voting Members:
 - i. Cleveland West Clergy: The Rev. Angela Freeman-Riley 132 and The Rev. James Watson 106. The Rev. Angela Freeman-Riley is elected.
 - ii. Canton-Massillon or Southern Lay Female: Kimberly Carr 145 and Kitty Burgett 86. Kimberly Carr is elected.
 - iii. Cleveland East, Cleveland West, or Akron-Wooster Lay Female: Sony Gilroy 110 and Leah Kulma 129. Leah Kulma is elected.

- iv. Cleveland East, Cleveland West, or Eastern Lay Male: Paul Gochnour 132 and Dale Veres 106. Paul Gochnour is elected.
- v. Canton-Massillon, Akron-Wooster, Richland-Ashland, or Southern Lay Male: Tim Wood 133 and Robert Dieter 103. Tim Wood is elected.

24. Balloting closed at 4:52pm.

25. The Rev. Darla Ann Kratzer presented the report of the Reference and Counsel Committee. Resolution 1 was received prior to the pre-Assembly deadline. Resolutions 2 and 3 are on the timely subject of children being separated from their parents at the border in current U.S. immigration policy. The committee recommends that Resolution 1 be adopted. Resolution 2 is recommended for adoption. Resolution 3 is recommended for referral to Synod Council. They will be uploaded into the app and presented and voted on tomorrow.

26. The Rev. Laura Barbins presented the report of the Audit Committee. She called attention to pages 68 and following in the printed materials, pages 74 and following in the electronic materials. The Audit Committee met on April 19, 2018 and reviewed the 2017-2018 fiscal year. The financial books were found to be in good order. Synod Council has approved the Audit Committee's recommendation of Apple Growth Partners as the external auditor for 2018-2019.

27. Chuck Mosberger presented the Compensation Guidelines. For 2019, the recommendation is a 2% increase in the minimum base salary recommendation. Beyond the base salary, there is still a recommended \$310 increase for the extra year of service. It is recommended that benefits through Portico be provided at the Gold Plus level. Compensation for part-time calls should be determined in coordination with the Synod staff. It was noted that changes in federal tax laws have impacted deductibility of certain allowances and that a tax professional should be consulted.

28. (on the floor with recommendation from Synod Council)*** Approved 210,8,11.

SA18.06.05 To approve the compensation guidelines as presented (moved by council action; carried).

**NORTHEASTERN OHIO SYNOD 2018 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](#) (1-800-328-4648).

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 2018 is \$37,700. This represents a 0.3% living adjustment to the 2017 minimum base cash salary recommendation, which was in turn based on the 2017 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 clergy may use a 0.3% 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

A. 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+ level of health benefits has been recommended by the ELCA Church Council and the NEO Synod Council.
2. A "Medical Expense Reimbursement Plan", established in accordance with specific IRS requirements, could provide tax advantages for the pastor by reimbursing deductibles, co-payments, and other medical expenses not covered by insurance. For more information, please contact the synod accountant (jhacker@neos-elca.org)
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* (612-333-7651 or 800-352-2876) or the synod office 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):

$$\begin{array}{r}
 \text{Salary} \\
 + \text{Housing Allowance} \\
 = \text{Social Security Base} \\
 \times 7.65 \% \text{ (employer rate)}
 \end{array}$$

= 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 an accountable reimbursement plan to reimburse the pastor for miles driven in service of the congregation. 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. The pastor is accountable to the IRS for use of this allowance and may be eligible to deduct a portion of the expenses based on accurate records of church mileage. Contact your accountant or the synod office for further guidance; 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 self-employment tax, but only a portion of the expenses is deductible for federal income tax (and only if the rostered leader is eligible to itemize deductions), and none are deductible for 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 offer 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, 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 part-time 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.

**COMPENSATION WORKSHEET
MINISTER OF WORD AND SACRAMENT (PASTOR)**

A. COMPENSATION

- | | |
|---|-----------------|
| 1. Cash Salary | |
| a. Annual base salary (before salary-reduction contributions) (I.A.,B.)* | \$ _____ |
| b. Clergy Social Security tax allowance (if paid directly to pastor) (III.B.) | \$ _____ |
| 2. Total of (1a.) plus (1b.) | \$ _____ |
| 3. Housing (only one housing option may be included) | \$ _____ |
| a. Cash housing allowance without parsonage (including any household furnishings and utility allowances) (II.A.) | |
| or | |
| b. 30 percent of line 2 (if parsonage or other housing is provided) | |
| 4. Pastor's household furnishings and utilities allowances (only if parsonage is provided and the allowance is paid directly to the pastor) (II.B.1.) | \$ _____ |
| 5. TOTAL ANNUAL DEFINED COMPENSATION (Add lines 2, 3, 4). | \$ _____ |

B. PENSION AND OTHER BENEFITS

- | | |
|--|-----------------|
| 1. ELCA pension and benefits (<i>Portico</i>) (III.A.1.) | \$ _____ |
| 2. Medical reimbursement (III.A.2.) | \$ _____ |
| 3. Housing equity allowance (II.B.2.) | \$ _____ |
| TOTAL PENSION AND BENEFITS | \$ _____ |

C. PROFESSIONAL EXPENSES

- | | |
|---|----------|
| 1. Automobile reimbursement or allowance (V.A.) | \$ _____ |
| 2. Other professional expenses (V.B.) | \$ _____ |
| 3. Cell Phone (V.C.) | \$ _____ |
| 4. Continuing Education (VI.E.) | \$ _____ |

D. SPECIAL CONCERNS (VI.H.)

1. _____

2. _____

*Roman numerals, letters and numbers refer to sections within the guidelines.

Helpful calculators for defined compensation and ELCA benefits contributions are located on the Portico website at www.porticobenefits.org. Please note, however, that you should insert your own calculations for the social security allowance with guidelines III.B. For more information, a workbook entitled, "[Nuts and Bolts of Clergy Tax](#)" is available from the synod accountant.

**NORTHEASTERN OHIO SYNOD 2018 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 2018 is based on their level of education within the area of expertise as follows:

| NO DEGREE | BACHELORS | MASTERS |
|-----------|-----------|----------|
| \$34,045 | \$39,435 | \$40,850 |

This represents a 0.3% increase to the 2017 minimum base cash salary recommendation, as the Social Security Administration has set the 2017 cost of living allowance at 0.3%. 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

In compliance with federal tax law, the congregation council may consider providing housing or a housing allowance for the deacon similar to that for pastors (see Minister of Word and Service guidelines). The council may also consider the establishment of a loan policy to assist the deacon in the down payment on a home. Synod staff is available for counsel.

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+ level of health benefits has been recommended by the ELCA Church Council and the NEO Synod Council.
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. For more information, please contact the synod accountant (jhacker@neos-elca.org)
3. The deacon may elect to waive the care 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) or the synod office for assistance in determining the effects of these guidelines.

B. FICA ALLOWANCE (SOCIAL SECURITY)

1. Normally a congregation will pay Social Security tax for deacons. Social Security law regulates the amount to be paid.

2. R 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 clergy 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.

D. **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. 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. The deacon is accountable to the IRS for use of this allowance and may be eligible to deduct a portion of the expenses based on accurate records of church mileage. Contact your accountant or the synod office for further guidance; or
3. A congregation may, in accordance with IRS guidelines, buy or lease a car and assume the total cost of operating the vehicle.

E. 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 only a portion of the expenses is deductible for federal income tax (and only if the rostered leader is eligible to itemize deductions), and none are deductible for state, city or school district income tax. For more information, please contact the synod accountant (jhacker@neos-elca.org).

F. 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. CONTINUING 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.

**COMPENSATION WORKSHEET
MINISTER OF WORD AND SERVICE (DEACON)**

A. COMPENSATION

- 1. Base Salary (I.A.) _____
- 2. Housing (II.) (if applicable) _____
- 3. Other (I.B.) _____

TOTAL DEFINED COMPENSATION _____

B. PENSION AND OTHER BENEFITS

- 1. ELCA pension and benefits (*Portico*) (III.A.1.) _____
- 2. Medical Reimbursement (III.A.2) _____

TOTAL PENSION AND BENEFITS _____

C. PROFESSIONAL EXPENSES

- 1. Automobile reimbursement or allowance (V.A.) _____
- 2. Other Professional expenses (V.B.) _____
- 3. Cell phone (V.C.) _____
- 4. Continuing Education (VI.E.) _____

D. SPECIAL CONCERNS (VI.H.)

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

*Roman numerals, letters, and numbers refer to sections within the guidelines.

**NORTHEASTERN OHIO SYNOD 2018 COMPENSATION
GUIDELINES AND WORKSHEET
NON-ROSTERED**

Due to the wide range of non-rostered duties that may be performed at a congregation, this guideline will only reflect general guidance and not specific recommendations.

INTRODUCTION:

A congregation employs many non-rostered people in various positions such as musicians, custodians and administrative assistants. Compensation for these positions should be comparable to professional positions of equal responsibility and training. Adequate livable compensation for the non-rostered employee, as for anyone else, is necessary to fulfill responsibilities, obligations and maintain satisfaction in ministry. The congregation and the synod have an obligation to review compensation plans annually using the guidelines as adopted by the synod assembly. Non-rostered personnel are also urged to take initiatives in seeking an annual review of compensation.

The congregation should develop procedures whereby it may review the employees' salary and discuss those personal financial concerns that may apply. This may be best accomplished by a small and understanding committee consisting of the pastor(s), one or more representatives of the congregation council, and other persons as deemed necessary. The committee should bring to the congregation council its recommendations for annual compensation adjustments.

Written job descriptions should be developed for each position. The job description should include, but is not limited to:

1. duties
2. days of work
3. hours
4. whether salaried or hourly
5. benefits
6. rate of pay and overtime policy
7. other

A special effort should be extended in determining actual hours worked, (e.g., for musicians, detailed listing of time requirements is available from [Association of Lutheran Church Musicians](#)). Local considerations could include:

1. regular services (number per week)
2. choir practice(s)
3. additional services, e.g. Lenten
4. practice time
5. educational level

I. SALARY

- A. **BASE CASH SALARY:** An effort should be made to determine adequate local compensation levels. There are several ways to accomplish this including but not limited to:

1. Consult with local school districts, especially for custodians, secretaries, and Christian educators.
2. [U.S. Department of Labor](#)
3. other local congregations
4. classified ads
5. local Chamber of Commerce
6. negotiation with the employee (e.g., an employee who is also a member of the congregation may volunteer a portion of their compensation to the congregation)
7. professional organizations, (e.g., Association for Lutheran Church Musicians (ALCM), [International Association for Office Professionals](#)).

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/employee

II. HOUSING

not applicable

III. BENEFITS

A. PENSION / HEALTH CARE

1. The congregation shall provide full pension, health, and death benefits for the employee and family in accordance with [Portico Benefit Services](#) (ELCA Benefits Provider) provisions. Health care issues may be addressed through other agencies (e.g. a local Chamber of Commerce).
2. A “Medical Expense Reimbursement Plan”, established in accordance with specific IRS requirements, could provide tax advantages for employees by reimbursing deductibles, co-payments, and other medical expenses not covered by insurance(subject to legal regulations). For more information, please contact the synod accountant (jhacker@neos-elca.org)
3. The employee may elect to waive the spouse and dependent health care benefit under the coordination of benefits clause in the *Portico Benefit Services* Handbook. The congregation should consult with *Portico* (612-333-7651 or 800-352-2876) or the synod office for assistance in determining the effects of these guidelines.
4. For part-time employees refer to Section IV.

B. FICA ALLOWANCE (SOCIAL SECURITY)

1. A congregation shall provide FICA payments in accordance with current Federal regulations.
2. The synod recommends the employee periodically check records to be certain accounts have been properly credited. An employee may do this by obtaining Form SSA 7050 from the local Social Security Administration office or online at www.ssa.gov. It is important that employees 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 EMPLOYEES

- A. For part-time employees (less than 40 hours), salary and benefits should be calculated then reduced to reflect the percent of employment, e.g., an employee at half-time (20 hours) would receive 50%.
- B. When employed less than 20 hours, *Portico Benefit Services* is not available.

V. PROFESSIONAL EXPENSES: These items are considered congregational administrative expenses and are not items to be considered compensation.

- A. **AUTOMOBILE EXPENSES:** If congregations require the employee to use his/her own vehicle, congregations should provide an adequate automobile allowance. Such reimbursement should be consistent with the maximum [IRS Standard Mileage Rate](#) for use of a personal car for business purposes.
- B. **OTHER PROFESSIONAL EXPENSES:** These expenses include, but are not limited to books, subscriptions to magazines or journals, media resources, and official meetings. They may be covered by:
 - 1. paying these amounts directly as they occur; or
 - 2. setting up as a line item in the budget; or
 - 3. setting up as a monthly allowance.

VI. OTHER PROVISIONS

- A. **VACATION:** A graduated schedule for vacations should be used. The minimum vacation should be two weeks. The maximum is four weeks. Attendance at official functions is not construed as vacation time.
- B. **SICK LEAVE:** Sick leave should be provided for up to eight weeks per year with full salary and benefits. An agreement may be made for partial disability beyond that time in coordination with the *Portico Benefit Services*.
- C. **MATERNITY LEAVE:** Maternity leave should be provided for up to six weeks with full salary and benefits. Because of special concerns or needs, additional time may be negotiated between the employee and congregation.
- D. **PATERNITY LEAVE / ADOPTIVE PARENTAL LEAVE:** Paternity leave and adoptive parental leave may be negotiated between the employee 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:**
 - 1. If applicable, provision should be made for assisting with continuing education with paid time off and tuition reimbursement. The scheduling of continuing education should be determined by the employee in consultation with the council.
 - 2. **SABBATICAL LEAVE:** Sabbatical leave offers an extended block of time for study, personal growth, and reflection apart from usual congregational responsibilities. If a sabbatical is appropriate, refer to the sabbatical guidelines in the rostered person's guidelines.

- F. **WORK WEEK:** Because of the nature of church employment, it is recognized that employees may be expected to fulfill evening and weekend responsibilities. Therefore, adequate time off (one day per week minimum) should be granted that would be free from church-related responsibilities.
- G. **SPECIAL CONCERNS:** Where there are special needs within an employee's family, these should be considered separately.

**COMPENSATION WORKSHEET
NON-ROSTERED EMPLOYEE (POSITION)**

JOB DESCRIPTION: Duties and expectations should be provided for each position. These duties will normally be performed on (days of the week) from (list regular hours). This position is classified as hourly/salaried.

A. COMPENSATION

- 1. Base Salary (I.A., B.) _____
- TOTAL COMPENSATION _____

B. PENSION AND OTHER BENEFITS

- 1. *Portico* or other Pension and health (III.A.1.) _____
 - 2. Medical Reimbursement (III.A.2., 3.) _____
 - 3. Other Benefits _____
- TOTAL PENSION AND BENEFITS _____

C. PROFESSIONAL EXPENSES

- 1. Automobile Reimbursement or allowance (V.A.) _____
- 2. Other Professional expenses (V.B.) _____
- 3. Continuing Education (VI.E.) _____

D. OTHER PROVISIONS (VI)

- 1. Vacation
- 2. Sick leave
- 3. Maternity leave
- 4. Paternity/adoptive parental leave

E. SPECIAL CONCERNS (VI.G.)

- 1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

*Roman numerals, letters, and numbers refer to sections within the guidelines.

29. The Assembly recessed to evening prayer at 5:04pm, postponing various items of business until Saturday, when we will re-convene at 8:15am.

Saturday, June 9, 2018

30. Jane Koch made introductory announcements for Day 2 of the Assembly at 8:19am. The Assembly opened on Saturday with morning prayer service beginning at 8:20am.

31. Bishop Allende called the Assembly back to order at 8:35am

32. Josephine Wright presented the report of the Credentials Committee. As of 8:30am, there were 375 people registered: 186 lay, 12 official lay rostered for a total lay voting membership of 198; of these, there were 82 males and 116 females. There were 133 clergy for a ratio of 60% Lay, 40% Clergy. Voting members who were persons of color or whose primary language is other than English were 18; there was 1 voting member under age 18, 7 voting members age 18-30, and 323 voting members over age 30. There were 44 registered visitors.

33. John Sleasman presented the Treasurer's Report.

- a. John pointed to the printed materials that appear on pages 66-95. John provided the financial status through the first quarter of the year, which shows a deficit of \$1,026 for the year. The overall forecast is for a significant deficit this year, which will be filled through use of the budget deficit fund, so this deficit amount is relatively minor and not a cause for concern. Early returns for the first quarter are notoriously difficult to use for predictive purposes. The synod had a surplus of \$38,245 in 2017-2018, compared to a budgeted deficit of \$13,590.
- b. John pointed to the Functional expense statements on pages 77-78, which illustrate the ministry priorities behind how we spend our money. He also called attention to the restricted funds on pages 73-74, 81-83, and 91-92 and encouraged contacting the Synod staff with ministry ideas to take advantage of accumulated restricted funds.
- c. Mission support from congregations is documented on pages 98-101 of the materials. It totaled \$1,372,721.05, of which 50% was forwarded by the Synod to churchwide. Members of our Synod contributed \$428,448 either through the Synod or directly to ELCA ministries and related agencies/institutions. John also shared that the total giving to both ELCA ministries and outside ministries by our congregations represents more than 10% of their offering income.
- d. Bishop Allende again thanked the congregations for their ongoing support of the synod and ministries locally, nationally, and internationally and the increase in mission support in the prior fiscal year.

34. Bishop Allende recognized The Rev. Dan Cammarn, chairman of the Finance and Budget Committee, for the presentation of the 2018-2019 budget, which appears on Pages 96-97.
- e. The Finance and Budget Committee estimated that 2019-2020 mission support would be \$1,397,000, which is a 1.8% increase over 2017-2018. The total income forecast is \$1,417,000.
 - f. Budget increases include:
 - i. A proportionate increase in giving to churchwide (line 6)
 - ii. Lines 7-11 and 14 are our ministry partners who have borne many cuts in the past years. Several of these, other than Lutheran Disaster Response and Social Ministry Organizations, received a minor increase relative to the 2018-2019 Level 1 budget. (Trinity Seminary (\$15,000 to \$17,500), Campus Ministries (\$5,000 to \$7,500), Lutheran Outdoor Ministries of Ohio (\$47,500 to \$50,000), and Colleges and Universities – Wittenberg and Capital (\$1,000 to \$1,500).
 - iii. There are increases from \$400 to \$500 for Undergraduate scholarships for minorities (line 15) and Inclusive Ministry Scholarships to Trinity (line 17).
 - iv. The Synod Council expense line (line 34) increased from \$1,500 to \$3,000 to reflect costs related to the October overnight retreat.
 - v. Line 35 for Special Liturgies and Programs was increased from \$1,500 to \$4,500, which includes the cost of the anniversary recognition dinner.
 - vi. Line 37 for Facility Upkeep was increased from \$4,000 to \$6,000
 - vii. Office operation increased by \$8,000 from \$28,000 to \$36,000, which was largely due to depletion of non-operating funds that have supported the copier lease.
 - viii. Synod Staff Compensation and Payroll Taxes on line 41 and benefits and expenses on line 42 both increased for an aggregate shift from \$419,000 to \$443,000.
 - ix. There is a forecasted budget deficit of \$19,400.
 - g. Questions were raised: The Rev. Jean Hansen, Faith, Fairlawn asked about staff compensation and payroll taxes as to why it has decreased from \$416,590 in 2017-2018 to \$257,000 in this year. John Sleasman clarified that this is a separation of old line 41 Staff Compensation and Payroll Taxes in 2017-18 into lines 41 and 42 which separate compensation and payroll taxes in line 41 (\$274,000 in 2019-2020) and benefits and expenses in line 42 (\$169,000 in 2019-2020). In the aggregate this is an increase from \$416,590 in 2017-2018 to \$443,000 in 2019-2020. These lines were divided because benefits and expenses tend to increase more rapidly than salaries, and they wanted to track trends in each category.

- h. Retired Deaconess Judy Hoshek asked why there was no increase in Social Ministry Organizations. Pr. Cammarn indicated this is because they had not been decreased as significantly in past years.

SA18.06.06 To approve the budget as presented (moved by council action; carried).

35. Clarence Smith brought a report from the Churchwide Church Council. The Church Council has 4 officers, 35 elected members, and 9 bishops. Clarence highlighted the future directions 2025—encouraging our church to know we have a shared purpose and a shared vision. As was discussed in Mikka McCracken’s report earlier, there are five main emphases:
- a. A thriving church spreading the gospel and deepening faith for all people. One of the keys here is developing leadership—both ordained and lay leadership. We are working on ecumenical dialogues and relationships, including the Declaration on the Way agreement with the Catholic Church.
 - b. A church equipping people for their baptismal vocations in the world and this church. This emphasizes the importance of faith formation. We are also to encounter our communities.
 - c. An inviting and welcoming church that reflects and embraces the diversity of our communities and the gifts and opportunities that diversity brings. We are one of the least diverse churches in the United States. We have 7% of our members are non-white. Does this reflect our communities?
 - d. A visible church deeply committed to working ecumenically and with other people of faith for justice, peace, and reconciliation in communities and around the world.
 - e. A well-governed, connected, and sustainable church. We are all looking to preserve and sustain a church to pass the gospel on to future generations.
 - f. Our Synod Council and Congregational Councils are encouraged to structure their meetings and activities to orient toward these goals.
 - g. Congregational vitality is another emphasis. Congregations are not brick and mortar, but communities. We need to continue to connect with each other and with our communities.
 - h. Clarence expressed his thanks for the Synod’s ongoing mission support.
36. In response to Mr. Smith’s comments about diversity Bishop Allende noted that Bishop Allende has been appointed as the Co-Convener of a task force toward authentic diversity to present a strategy to the 2019 Churchwide Assembly.
37. Bishop Allende introduced various ecumenical partners who brought their greetings:
- i. Marie Coutts, Director of Christian Education, Moravian Church, Eastern District: The Lutheran Church in America was the first full communion partner with the Moravian Church, and she cited several examples of common ministries between our church bodies. “Jesus, our shepherd calls us to unity so that the world may

believe” begins the full communion statement, and it is a spirit that should continue to guide the relationship between our bodies and our deliberations here.

- j. The Rev. Joe Hilinski, Office of the Secretariat for Parish Life, Delegate for Ecumenical and Interfaith Affairs, Roman Catholic Diocese of Cleveland: He brought greetings from the newly installed Bishop Nelson Perez, whose energy and passion is oriented toward interfaith and ecumenical relations. Fr. Hilinski thanked Bishop Allende for his participation in Bishop Perez’s installation and other partnership conversations. He noted that five different church bodies are entering into conversation on the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification. Fr. Hilinski lifted up specific examples of ELCA and Catholic congregations working together in Westlake (Prince of Peace, Westlake) and in Akron (Faith, Fairlawn) to get congregation members together to break down stereotypes and encouraged further collaboration.
 - k. Msgr. Robert Siffrin, Vicar General, Catholic Diocese of Youngstown: He thanked us for prayer for Bishop Murry in his struggle with acute leukemia and asked God’s blessings on our deliberations here.
 - l. The Rev. Steven Court, Director of Connectional Ministries of the East Ohio Conference, United Methodist Church: Starbucks has issued a mission statement to inspire and nurture spiritual beings through community. We want to have an identity as a church that shows the full essence of Jesus Christ. When we work in disaster response, we bridge different identities, but when we talk about Jesus, our identity seems to be defined by our differences. They look forward to living into the vision of reaching all of God’s people in a truly inclusive manner together. Bishop Allende mentioned that we have several United Methodist pastors serving as interims in our congregations.
 - m. The Rev. Dr. Gary Halstead, Associate Association Minister of Eastern Ohio & Western Reserve Associations, Ohio Conference United Church of Christ. He brought greetings on behalf of the new General Minister of the Eastern Ohio & Western Reserve Associations, Nayiri Karjian, who grew up as an Armenian in Syria, and brings a very different perspective to those who have grown up here in northeastern Ohio. The five Ohio Associations are working on coming together as one judicatory. That is a process that remains underway. Dr. Halstead is not trying to get churches to think outside the box again but trying to get them to burn the box. He looks forward to seeing the ministries that will continue to grow joint efforts.
 - n. Bishop Allende thanked them all for their attendance.
38. Bishop Allende recognized significant anniversaries for congregations and clergy members and acknowledged that they had received their certificates at the dinner last night:
- o. 200 year congregations:
Trinity, Carrollton
 - p. 175 year congregations:
Kountze Memorial, Louisville
 - q. 150 year congregations:

- Holy Trinity, Akron
- St. Paul's Warren
- r. 25 year congregations:
 - Celebration, Chardon
- s. 25 year rostered leaders:
 - The Rev. Karol Lankford
 - The Rev. James Riggs
- t. 50 year rostered leaders:
 - The Rev. E. Richard Bowen
 - The Rev. Philip Cummings
 - The Rev. Leland Eilert
 - The Rev. Patrick Persaud
 - The Rev. John Wanamaker
 - The Rev. William Wilkins
- u. 55 year rostered leaders:
 - The Rev. George Gaiser
 - The Rev. Dean Lewis
- v. 60 year rostered leaders:
 - The Rev. George Hrbek
- w. 65 year rostered leaders:
 - The Rev. Donald Krueger
 - The Rev. Wayne Niemi (posthumously)
- x. 70 year rostered leaders:
 - The Rev. John Evans
 - The Rev. Donald Hesterman

39. Amanda Silcox, who recently served as a Young Adult in Global Mission in Cambodia and now serves as an ELCA Hunger Advocacy Fellow in Virginia, delivered a presentation on behalf of Young Adults in Global Mission and ELCA Hunger Advocacy, beginning by thanking everyone for their support for ELCA World Hunger.

- a. Amanda is an ELCA Hunger Advocacy Fellow in Virginia—one of four, who are located in Minneapolis, Houston, Virginia, and Washington DC respectively. She works at the Interfaith Center for Public Policy. The four focus areas include criminal justice reform, access to health care, economic justice, and welcoming all program for immigrants, women of color, and minorities. Her office recently worked with several organizations, legislators, and the governor to expand Medicaid access in the State of Virginia. It is a lot of work, because there are a variety of social and policy problems in Virginia, which are very similar to the issues faced by people in Ohio.
- b. She noted that our work as a church is incomplete if we do not change policies and laws for the benefit of all. Advocacy is what changes these policies and laws. She shared the first verse of the song “For Everyone Born.” For the ELCA, it is easy to have a mission statement. We are entrusted by Christ with the ministry of reconciliation. We are church. We are Lutheran. We are Church together. We are Church for the sake of the world, which means we are Church for the sake of the undocumented, for the sake of Tamir Rice, for the sake of the Puerto Ricans who have lost loved ones and continue to suffer from hurricane Maria, for the sake of those who are in prison. We are called to do more and to bear witness to people who struggle.

- c. The model of the global mission unit is accompaniment. It is about the ministry of reconciliation, not conversion. Advocacy is crucial to reconciliation. When we publicly stand up for policies that improve people's lives, we are in the process of reconciling ourselves with each other and with God. When we advocate justice and compassion, we are being Ambassadors for Christ.
 - d. Amanda concluded by noting that young people want to see churches living out the values that we preach; living out our calling to improve the lives of others.
40. Bishop Allende acknowledged Amanda as an example of what can happen when we give our young people room to speak and to act.
 41. Rachel Zinram and Jason Tysl, President and Treasurer of the Synod's Lutheran Youth Organization provided an update on LYO. They highlighted their various gatherings and activities. Positions are open on the Board for Southern and Eastern conferences. The next event for the Board members is to help with Synod day at the National Youth Gathering, which will feature over 500 youth from Northeastern Ohio Synod. They also highlighted their service project with Haven of Rest yesterday as a part of their summer gathering. Their report was punctuated by a rock-paper-scissors game that had the whole Assembly up and moving around the room.
 42. Bishop Allende encouraged our synod's young people to look into the Young Adults in Global Mission Program and encouraged congregations to lift up members to participate in that program.
 43. Chuck Mosberger presented the report of the Minutes Committee. They had reviewed the business of the day with the Secretary and found the minutes to be in order.
 44. Bishop Allende dismissed the Assembly to the inter-generational service project— packaging diapers for Haven of Rest and tying fleece blankets with LYO Board at 10:23am, to be followed by workshops at 11:45am, including: World Hunger, the Draft Statement on Women and Justice, Authentic Diversity/Cross-Cultural Conversations, and Lutheran Disaster Response/Lutheran Social Services.
 45. The Assembly was called back to order at 12:50pm
 46. Karen Kaufman of the Synod Resource Center presented the winners of various drawings.
 47. The Rev. Darla Ann Kratzer presented the report of the Reference and Counsel Committee:
 - a. Memorial 1 appears on pages 61-62 of the Assembly materials. It is recommended by the Reference and Counsel Committee for adoption. The Rev. Angel Jackson proposed an amendment.

SA18.06.07 Amendment to Resolution 1 to insert “Whereas the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches began ordaining women as soon as it was formed in 1976; and” after the first recital in Resolution 1 (moved by The Rev. Angel Jackson, St. John, McZena; seconded, carried).

SA18.06.08 To transmit the following memorial to the 2019 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (moved from the Reference and Counsel Committee seconded, carried):

WHEREAS in 1970 both the Lutheran Church in America and American Lutheran Church in their national conventions voted to ordain women; and

WHEREAS the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches began ordaining women as soon as it was formed in 1976; and

WHEREAS the ELCA rejoices in these actions of its predecessor church bodies and will recognize the 50th anniversary in 2020 of the ordination of women; and

WHEREAS we express our profound gratitude for the many and varied ways the gifts of ordained women have advanced God's mission through this church; and

WHEREAS we learned in the research related to the 45th anniversary of women's ordination of some progress but also significant disparities for women in the areas of preparation for ministry, all calls including first calls, mobility, compensation, ministry roles, and debt following seminary education (<http://search.elca.org/Pages/Results.aspx?k=45th+anniversary+of+women%27s+ordination>); and

WHEREAS the same research uncovered denigrating and discriminatory experiences of many ordained women, some particularly acute for ordained women of color; and

WHEREAS the church is called to reflect in church and society its roles of advocate and model for the respect, dignity, and equal rights due all women, including the ordained women of this church; and

WHEREAS this church is simultaneously addressing justice and women in its social statement under consideration and the 50th anniversary of the ordination of women;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT

We call upon all synods in their 2020 assemblies to include celebration and special recognition of ordained women upon the 50th anniversary of authorizing this ordination practice; and

We call upon our seminaries, colleges, campus ministries, outdoor ministries, social ministry organizations, synods, and congregations to highlight women preachers, teachers and speakers throughout 2020 in recognition of the diversity of gifts women's ordination has brought to our church; and

We call upon congregations throughout the ELCA to participate in the 50th anniversary of the ordination of women in our church through worship services, bible studies and other efforts to celebrate and recognize the importance and contributions of ordained women; and

We call upon all members of this church to examine our consciences, and confess our sins and complicity in whichever circumstances by the outright or silent actions women have faced including barriers, discrimination, or sexual harassment as they prepared for and served as ordained women in this church; and

We call upon this church to renew efforts in education on the intersection of the sins of sexism, racism, homophobia, transphobia, and classism, and develop healing interventions offering hope and support to those who experience these sins to the point of despair about ministry; and

We call upon our seminaries to include intentional coursework and resources to equip pastoral leaders in identifying and ministering in situations of gender-based discrimination and violence; and

We urge all congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization in 2020 to conduct a gender analysis wherein each can develop strategies to promote and protect gender equity and justice, with particular focus on addressing the areas of preparation for ministry, call process including first calls, mobility, compensation, ministry roles, and debt following seminary education; and

We call upon this church to establish goals and strategies in each synod of achieving for ordained women comparable compensation with that of ordained men in all calls by 2025, reporting the outcome of this action step at the Churchwide Assembly in 2026; and

We call upon this church to establish goals and strategies in each synod of achieving for ordained women access to ministry roles where women are currently underrepresented, with a particular focus on the challenges faced by women of color receiving viable first and second calls; and

We call upon the churchwide expression's Domestic Mission Unit to develop, undertake, and successfully complete a strategy specifically related to the debt of women of color after seminary; and

We call upon all candidacy committees to examine their practices in light of the findings in the 45th anniversary research; and

We request the Office of the Presiding Bishop to provide in 2025 updated research on achievement of these initiatives and other matters pertinent to the full and just participation of ordained women in this church; and

We request all church publications to plan features in 2020 on the ordination of women, lifting up the amazing talents and gifts this church has received from its ordained women, the barriers ordained women still experience in this church, and the steps outlined in this memorial to overcome these barriers; and

We invite the prayers of all members of this church for the successful outcome of these initiatives.

- b. Resolution 2 was on the subject of separation of families at the U.S. Border. The full resolution was made available in the app.

SA18.06.09 To approve the following resolution (submitted by The Rev. Scott Silcox (Our Saviour, Hinckley), The Rev. Patrick J. VanDeMotter (Good Shepherd, Conneaut), The Rev. Sharon Brown (Salem, Wooster), and The Rev. Erin Burns (Emmanuel, New Springfield) moved by the Reference and Counsel Committee, seconded, carried):

WHEREAS Presiding Bishop Eaton along with other religious leaders, issued a statement addressing concerns over a recent US government policy which has resulted in the separation of children from their parents when they come to our nation's border; and

WHEREAS, our own reading of scripture (Matthew 19:14) as well as our sense of human decency and morality leads us to conclude that this policy defies the will of God; and

WHEREAS, "the world community has a responsibility to aid nations that receive refugees and to help change the situations from which they have fled." (ELCA Social Statement, "For Peace in God's World." 1995); and

WHEREAS, as representations of Christ we need to provide mental, physical and emotional support for families.

WHEREAS the ELCA Churchwide strongly endorses the AMPARO activities accompanying minors; and

WHEREAS, we are called to be ambassadors for Christ showing God's grace and love into the world, we seek to provide safety for children and protect them from harm;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that we join our Presiding Bishop in calling for an end to this practice of separating children from their parents and/or guardians when they come across the border; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we encourage each brother and sister and every congregation to pray for the children and families that are suffering and will suffer due to this policy; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we continue praying and living out our baptismal calling, as we urge our sisters and brothers to contact and continue to press our congressional leaders to act on this policy until this practice is stopped.

c. Pr. Kratzer presented the 2018 Courtesy Resolution:

SA18.06.10 To approve the courtesy resolution

WHEREAS the Northeastern Ohio Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, gathered in assembly, called to be a church located in this world but with a presence in the power of God and Jesus Christ; and

WHEREAS we as Ambassadors for Christ are equipped and sent together to be messengers of reconciliation, spreading the gospel and deepening faith for all people; and

WHEREAS we, the body of Christ, engaging others in our relationship with God, seek to tell the story of God's love and grace through stewardship, mission support and interpretation, discipleship and evangelism:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Northeastern Ohio Synod in assembly extends its appreciation and thanks for the dedicated work and commitment of time to assembly planning coordinator Sony Gilroy and Assembly Planning committee members The Rev. Christy Buyok, Jane Koch, Larry Fenton, John Sleasman, Marilyn Matevia, Evan Buyok, worship leaders and musicians, and all others who helped to organize this assembly; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we give thanks for Mikka McCracken, Director of Planning and Engagement, ELCA World Hunger, for her presentations, insights, and encouragement; and for the Lutheran Youth Organization who carefully planned a concurrent young-peoples' event, led us in service projects, and will be leading us in worship; and that we pray for them as they leave for the National Youth Gathering; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we will, as congregations of the Northeastern Ohio Synod, pray for the Spirit-filled leadership and guidance in the many and various ministries of our Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, Bishop Abraham Allende, Synod officers, council, and staff; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we encourage every rostered and lay person participating in congregational life to identify and spiritually lift up those who have the God-given gifts for ministry to share the Good News of God, in Jesus Christ; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we thank those committed individuals who in their own way have risen to the challenge to proclaim and seek out disciples of Christ as they spread the word of God so all the world may believe; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we recognize the significant anniversaries and appreciate the faithful congregations and rostered leaders who have shared in the ministry of reconciliation of reconciliation to God and each other; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we affirm our commitment to be working advocates to support the needs of human beings experiencing hunger, oppression, injustice, poverty, abandonment, and exclusion throughout the world; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we support justice and full equality for all women, including women leaders and those who aspire to lead, and embrace the gifts and opportunities diversity brings; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that we give thanks that by grace we go forth with courage to be advocates, go forth and be ambassadors for Christ, go forth and be creators of justice, and be church for the sake of the world.

48. Bishop Allende recognized the members of the Synod Council whose terms are coming to a close: Cathy Byers, The Rev. Eric Edwards, Paul Lund, The Rev. Paula Maeder Connor, Ken Reinoehl, Susan Smith, and Rachel Zinram.
49. Bishop Allende concluded the business of assembly by encouraging us to share with our congregations what has happened here. The business closed at 1:12pm and moved to closing worship led by members of LYO, with Mikka McCracken preaching and Bishop Allende presiding. Worship concluded with the blessing of those travelling to Houston for the LYO gathering; the installation of The Rev. Julianne Smith as Director of Evangelical Mission; and the newly installed.
50. The assembly closed at 2:25pm.