

How to Vote

Voting in this year's synod assembly will be conducted through services provided by Turning Technologies, the firm that has provided the software and machines we have used in our in-person assemblies for some time. However, while some of the displays and methods may be familiar to those of you who have attended recent assemblies, the presentation will be quite different.

Providing certainty and security for the voting process was one reason that voting members were required to register in advance of the assembly, and are required to log into both a Zoom meeting (to identify their presence) and to the voting site (to provide unique identification). You should have received an acknowledgement of your registration with Turning by September 8 or 9, which would include a unique login id (password). Whenever you vote, you will be required to be logged into Turning (with your unique credentials) AND to provide a session/voting code that will be announced during the meeting (a general code at that time to establish that anyone voting is currently attending the meeting – a requirement of Ohio law for electronic meetings).

It is very important that you test your voting credentials through Turning BEFORE the assembly convenes on September 11. Waiting until the assembly starts to meet may mean that you will not complete the process before the first vote is opened, and thereby may miss your ability to vote until your login is verified. You can test your credentials by logging into Turning either via a web browser page (www.TTPoll.com) or through an app (TurningPoint) that can be downloaded to a smartphone or tablet. Please see the videos and instructions from Turning for that information. (Links are at the end of this instruction sheet.)

Please be sure to download and verify your use of the app or website prior to the assembly. Access is available as soon as you receive the id codes, with some test sessions set up for general survey questions. Testing your log-in early will allow you to contact help if needed before there is an active vote that you might miss. There will also be some "practice meetings" held in advance of the assembly, and the assembly "doors" will open at noon on September 11 to allow for final adjustments before the assembly formally begins.

You may also wish to review some of the instructional videos on this assembly, including the presentation on the Bishop's Election, since the procedures for the first two bishop ballots are particularly important and different from the usual patterns. That is not required, but may be helpful in explaining some of the terms that are used here.

Most voting procedures will be familiar to those of you who have previously attended assemblies, and are straightforward. Votes which are in response to motions or amendments, will generally offer three options: Yes, No, Abstain. The difference from the way this has been done with machines (or cards) is that the voting options will be displayed on your screen, and you will enter the response in the Response Box at the bottom of the screen. After you press the "send" icon, you will receive a message acknowledging receipt of your vote. Depending on your internet connection and speed, it may take a short time for you to receive the response. **If you do not receive this message, press the icon again, or immediately contact the help desk.** It is possible that it may take a few seconds for the votes to register,

especially if you are connected to the internet through a slow connection or via wireless. Please allow a *short* amount of time for the sent data to be received and acknowledged before presuming a failure.

If you change your mind or make a mistake, you may change your vote by changing the response field and hitting the send icon again, until voting is closed.

The first two ballots for bishop, because they involve many more choices, will be somewhat different.

For the first ballot, since any ELCA Minister of Word and Sacrament in good standing is eligible for election, the required response will be the entry of a name and enough information to uniquely identify the individual. To enable the Bishop Election Committee to download, sort, and count the votes as quickly as possible, please follow the following:

- The response should be divided into three separate sections by commas, as shown in the examples. The fields are Last Name, First Name, and Call/Congregation/Organization IN THAT ORDER.
- Please **do not** include any titles, just the names.
- Please be sure to enter the last name first: this helps the election committee tally the votes faster.
- If there can be confusion over which individual you are indicating, please be specific enough in the third field to enable unique identification. If the Bishop Election Committee cannot uniquely identify an individual, that vote must be ruled void. DO NOT leave the “call” field blank – just because there is only one person with a given first and last name on this synod’s roster does not mean there may not be another pastor with the same name elsewhere in the ELCA.
- Because of the tight schedule of this year’s assembly, please consider voting for a person on the first ballot only if you are willing to continue to vote for that person on subsequent ballots, until they are either elected, eliminated, or you change your mind based on the various presentations on Saturday. This is **only** a suggestion – as a voting member, you have full ability to vote for any Minister of Word and Sacrament in good standing on the Roster of the ELCA on the first ballot.

The second ballot will consist of all persons who received valid votes on the first ballot, and have not indicated that their names should be withdrawn. This will probably be a fairly long list, which will be distributed via email to all voting members at their registration address. This was another reason for asking for individual email addresses and registration information: you will need to be able to receive that email on Friday afternoon, with the list of individuals and their assigned number for voting on the second ballot.

- In accordance with provisions in the governing documents, individuals will appear on the second ballot in descending order of votes received, then alphabetical order. Numbers will be assigned in increasing value according to that rule.
- It is anticipated that there will be two-digit numbers assigned to each individual; in the unlikely event that more than 90 name appear, three-digit numbers will be assigned. This assures that all individuals require the same number of digits for votes to be entered, and thus will help with verification of vote entry.

- Please be sure to cross-reference the list of names and the assigned number. Names will NOT appear in the response box: please verify the number before you press the “send” icon. If you make a mistake, remember that you can change it before the polls close by resending a corrected number.

For the third and subsequent bishop ballots, the number of names will be small enough that all the voting information will appear on the display screen, as for other types of ballots. Therefore, there will be no more need to consult external information: all voting information will appear on your web page or voting app.

Please review the additional information and videos that are available. If you have additional questions, please send an email to assembly@neos-elca.org and you will be contacted. Thank you.