

**Minutes of the
Northeastern Ohio Synod Assembly
Thirty-Third Regular Assembly
September 11-12, 2020
Via Zoom Meeting Broadcast from John S. Knight Center, Akron**

Faithful Witness

Friday, September 11, 2020

1. The Zoom meeting platform opened at noon.
2. The Assembly began with welcoming remarks from Bishop Allende providing instructions on how to find help with the various technologies (Zoom and TurningPoint) involved in the Assembly. Opening Prayer began at 1:10pm and the Assembly was called to order at 1:21pm.
3. Bishop Allende led the Assembly in a practice vote to test the TurningPoint voting technology.
4. Bishop Allende welcomed the assembly voting members and recognized the following:
 - a. Deacon Sue E. Rothmeyer, Secretary of the ELCA.
 - b. Assembly Planning Coordinator, Sony Gilroy and Assembly Planning Committee: Tim Barrage, Larry Fenton, Jane Koch, The Rev. Jimmy Madsen, Marilyn Matevia, and John Sleasman. He gave special thanks to Sony, Marilyn, John, and Karen Kaufman for assistance working through the various contingencies concerning the electronic assembly and efforts well above and beyond their call of duty.
 - c. The Rev. Shelley Nelson-Bridger and Gail Goldsworth comprise the Reference and Counsel Committee. It was noted that the proposed deadline for resolutions that were not of an emergency nature has passed and no resolutions were received.
 - d. John Sleasman, the Synod Treasurer. It was noted that the deadline for proposed budget revisions has passed and no proposed changes were received. John will also be serving as Parliamentarian.
 - e. Bryan Penvose, Synod Vice President.
 - f. David Lenz, Synod Secretary and ELCA Church Council Representative.
 - g. Tim Barrage, who is taking care of the Powerpoint presentations and audio/visual materials, assisted by Mason Shamp
 - h. The Rev. Seth Bridger, Scott Daniels, Sheila Kidd, Tim Kreuger, The Rev. Karen Liddy, The Rev. Lucas McSurley, and Krista Smith comprise the Nominating Committee.
 - i. Gayle Adamek, Lito Belardo, and Erin O'Neill comprise the Credentials Committee.

- j. The Rev. Daniel Skillman and Doug Doza comprise the Elections Committee.
 - k. The Rev. James Watson and Kurt Hier comprise the Minutes committee.
 - l. Roger Long, The Rev. Julianne Smith, Stu Smith, Kevin Kampfer, Larry Fenton, and Jane Koch comprise the Zoom Floor Recognition Table.
 - m. Karen Kaufman, Stephanie Woods, Rachel Nunez, Lesli Eisenhart, and William Weidenbach comprise the help desk.
 - n. Katheryn Kollar and Deborah Pinnegar are our first call candidates. They will be ordained on October 3rd and October 31st respectively.
5. David Lenz presented the Rules of Procedure for Adoption noting the significant changes relative to prior years' rules of procedure due to the virtual assembly, namely surrounding deadlines for budget changes and resolutions and the nominating process.

SA20.09.01 To adopt the Rules of Procedure as previously distributed and proposed (Moved by council action; two-thirds vote required; carried 276-5 with 5 abstentions)

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. Because of the necessity of conducting or reporting items related to the Bishop Election, the Chair may declare such items to be Special Orders for the Day if needed.
- E. Motions shall be submitted to the secretary electronically, according to instructions provided in the pre-assembly materials and at the assembly 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.
- H. Because of the inability to add voting members after the authorized voting list has been finalized and transmitted to the voting application vendor prior to the assembly, the Credentials Committee will simply and singly report the final number of members authorized to receive voting credentials as the members in attendance at the assembly. The final assembly minutes will also show any information about the number of such individuals who did not at any time join the meeting or vote.

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. Nominations made from the floor of the virtual assembly must be submitted electronically, according to instructions provided at the assembly for that purpose. Since such nominations may be submitted at any time after

the opening of the assembly, if no nominations are received electronically prior to the time that the nominations committee has presented its official slate, the chair will declare nominations closed.

- 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 electronically, according to instructions provided in the pre-assembly materials for that purpose, to the Finance Committee by 12:00 noon on Friday, September 4, 2020. This will allow the Finance Committee to provide written responses and recommendation, which will be distributed in the Guidebook and website materials for assembly action. All proposals shall be in writing and shall include the amount of increase for a specific line item and/or the amount of decrease for a specific line item and the rationale for such change.

IV. Consideration of Resolutions

- A. Resolutions to be considered by the assembly shall be received in writing in the synod office by Monday, March 31, 2020 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. Because of the conditions of the virtual assembly, no resolutions may be submitted after the original deadline date, unless such a resolution is determined by the Reference and Counsel Committee to be of an **emergency** nature, in which case the committee may recommend to the assembly that debate at the assembly be considered. Such a recommendation for debate shall require a two-thirds vote for approval; if the assembly does not pass an enabling motion, the resolution shall be referred to the synod council. Resolutions of an emergency nature shall be submitted electronically, according to instructions provided at the assembly for that purpose.

V. Special Provisions for the Ecclesiastical Ballot at the Virtual Assembly

- A. The First Ecclesiastical Ballot for Bishop will be conducted through the use of a Turning Technologies short answer poll. Links to that poll, which may be accessed via a web address or via an app, will be provided to voting members who are attending the Zoom meeting at the time that the ballot is declared open. Instructions for voting via the Turning application are included with other assembly materials.
- B. The Second Ecclesiastical Ballot for Bishop, as well as the subsequent ballots, will also be conducted through the use of the Turning Technologies voting app or website, but will be in the form of a numeric response, rather than a poll. Instructions for voting via the Turning application are included with other assembly materials.

SA20.09.02 To adopt the Agenda as previously distributed and proposed (Moved by council action; carried 285-5 with 5 abstentions)

September 11

12:00 pm Zoom Opens
 Social Time for Voting Members

1:00 pm	Opening Prayer	
	Opening of Assembly & Call to Order	Bishop Abraham Allende
1:30 pm	Adoption of Agenda & Rules of Procedure	
	Synod Council Report	Bryan Penrose, Vice President
1:40 pm	Report of the Credentials Committee	Credentials Committee Chair
	Bishop Election Committee (BEC) Presentation	Bishop Election Committee (BEC) Chair
	Instructions for Ecclesiastical Ballot	
	Taizé Prayer	
	First Ballot for Bishop	
2:30 pm	General Ballot	Nominating Committee Chair
	Report of Elections Committee (General Ballot)	Elections Committee Chair
2:45 pm	Break	
3:00 pm	Bishop's Report Bishop Abraham Allende	
3:40 pm	Break	
3:50 pm	Ecumenical Greetings	
	Recognition of Significant Anniversaries	
	General Business	
4:45 pm	Report of BEC (1st Ballot for Bishop)	BEC Chair
4:55 pm	Synod Governing Documents Amendments	
5:00 pm	Deadline for Withdrawal from Ballot for Bishop	
5:15 pm	Break	
5:25 pm	Taizé Prayer	
	Second Ballot for Bishop	
5:40 pm	End of Day Announcements	Bishop Abraham Allende
	Report of BEC (2nd Ballot for Bishop), if available	BEC Chair
5:50 pm	Evening Prayer	
6:15 pm	Assembly Adjournment for the Day	

Saturday, September 12

8:00 am	Zoom Opens	
	Social Time for Voting Members	
9:00 am	Morning Prayer	
	Assembly Reconvenes	
9:20 am	Report of the BEC (2nd Ballot for Bishop), if not presented Friday	BEC Chair
9:30 pm	Adoption of Compensation Guidelines	Compensation Guidelines Committee
9:45 am	Treasurer's Report	John Sleasman, Treasurer
	Report of the Audit Committee	Audit Committee
	Presentation of Budget	Finance and Budget Committee
	Adoption of Budget	
10:15 am	Break	
10:30 am	Nominees for Bishop Address the Assembly	
11:15 am	Taizé Prayer	

	Third Ballot for Bishop	
	Report of BEC (3rd Ballot for Bishop)	BEC Chair
11:35 am	Break / Lunch	
12:15 pm	Q & A with Bishop Nominees	Bishop Election Committee
1:05 pm	Taizé Prayer	
	Fourth Ballot for Bishop	
	Report of BEC (4th Ballot for Bishop)	BEC Chair
1:20 pm	Remaining Business of the Assembly	
	Report of the Minutes Committee	Minutes Committee Chair
1:40 pm	Report of the Reference and Counsel Committee	Reference & Counsel Chair
1:55 pm	Bishop Nominees Address the Assembly	
	Taizé Prayer	
	Fifth Ballot for Bishop	
	Report of BEC (5th Ballot for Bishop)	BEC Chair
2:10 pm	Break	
2:20 pm	Newly Elected Bishop's Address	Bishop-elect
2:35 pm	Closing Worship	
	50-40-10 Anniversary Recognition	
	Installation of Newly Elected	
3:35 pm	Adjournment	

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6. Erin O'Neill, chair of the Credentials Committee presented the Credentials Committee report noting that 359 people were registered as voting members.
 7. Bishop Allende recognized The Rev. David Anderson, chair of the Bishop Election Committee. Pr. Anderson recognized all members of the committee. Deacon Ruth Anderson (Akron Wooster), The Rev. Katie Jacob (Canton Massillon), The Rev. Leonard Killings (Cleveland East), Katy Gill (Southern), Jasmine Steighner (Eastern), and Jonathan Stufft (Richland Ashland). He noted the changes that the Committee had to endure in the process of preparing for the Bishop Election, including converting the in-person conference meetings in late April to a mail-in balloting system. Ultimately, the Committee prepared a list of 11 names who have expressed willingness to be considered for the office of Bishop of the Northeastern Ohio Synod.
 8. Bishop Allende relinquished the chair to Deacon Sue Rothmeyer, Secretary of the ELCA who presented the procedures for the first ballot and brought greetings on behalf of Bishop Elizabeth Eaton to her home Synod. She noted that this Assembly includes both an election process and a discernment and call process. Of course, this call process does not look like a traditional congregation call process, nor does this Assembly look like a traditional Assembly. She noted that people throughout the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America are praying for our synod and this process as we carry it out over the next couple of days. She observed the many facets of the role of a Bishop:
 - a. First, the Bishop is a pastor to oversee the administration Word and Sacrament in this Synod and its congregations.

- b. A Bishop is a servant who is to coordinate the use of resources and work with congregations and colleagues in ministry.
 - c. A Bishop reminds us of our unity within the ELCA and with the one holy catholic and apostolic church. A bishop is accountable to the pastors and congregations of the synod, the synod as a whole, and the churchwide organization for our common ministry together.
 - d. A Bishop is the CEO of the Synod overseeing the work of the synod and its staff, oversees the roster of congregations, pastors, and deacons, and presiding at all synod assemblies.
 - e. A Bishop is the public leader of the Synod.
9. Secretary Rothmeyer led the Assembly in prayer as it entered into the process of preparing for the first ballot. Secretary Rothmeyer provided an overview of the balloting process and related technology and definition of a legal ballot. If someone achieves 75% of the legal ballots on the first ballot, he or she would be elected as bishop. Proxy and absentee ballots are not allowed.
10. Pr. Anderson gave the specific instructions for casting votes on ballot one. Secretary Rothmeyer clarified again that any member of the roster of ministers of Word and Sacrament in the ELCA is eligible to be nominated. The song “Veni, Sancte Spiritus” was led by Tim Elder and The Rev. Rebecca R. Zielke of Lord of Life, Canfield. Prayer before the ballot was led by Jasmine Steighner of the Eastern Conference.
11. The first ballot for bishop opened at 2:18pm and closed at 2:23pm. Results will be emailed to each voting member and published on the website as soon as available. Secretary Rothmeyer returned the chair to Bishop Abraham Allende.
12. Bishop Allende made a last call for any floor nominations before The Rev. Karen Liddy presented the report of the Nominating Committee.
- a. Synod Council Akron Wooster Clergy John Corsi and Kristina Heise
 - b. Synod Council Canton Massillon Lay: Susan Moseley and Ken Reinoehl
 - c. Synod Council Cleveland East Clergy: The Rev. Steven Bond
 - d. Synod Council Cleveland East Lay: Gayle Adamek and Paul Gochnour
 - e. Synod Council Cleveland West Lay: Susan Frantz
 - f. Synod Council Eastern Clergy: The Rev. Chelsea Spencer
 - g. Synod Council Richland-Ashland Lay: Richard Brenneman
 - h. Synod Council Southern Lay: Kevin Kampfner
 - i. Synod Council Young Adult Lay: Lydia Brooks, Chelsea Veigel
 - j. Synod Council Youth: Sarah Roth
 - k. Secretary: Matthew Beery, The Rev. Robert Ferro, and The Rev. Mark Kreemer
 - l. Discipline Committee Clergy: The Rev. Jon Paulus
 - m. Discipline Committee Clergy: The Rev. Randy O’Donnell

- n. Discipline Committee Lay: Edward Burns
 - o. Discipline Committee Lay: Sandra Humphrey and Edward Rehfus
 - p. Consultation Committee Clergy: The Rev. Chuck Knerem
 - q. Consultation Committee Lay: Chuck Mosberger
13. Bishop Allende declared nominations to be closed at 2:29pm.
14. Bishop Allende announced that there was a technical error in the first ballot for bishop. That ballot is now invalid and the Assembly was to take a 15-minute recess until the next ballot. The Assembly went into recess at 2:40pm. until 2:57pm.
15. The Assembly was called back to order at 2:57pm. Pr. Anderson led a prayer before the second casting of the first ballot for bishop and Secretary Rothmeyer conducted the ballot, which opened at 3:01pm. The ballot closed at 3:06pm.
16. Secretary Rothmeyer returned the chair to Bishop Allende, who relinquished the chair to Vice President Bryan Penvose. Bryan recognized Bishop Allende to give his report.
- a. Bishop Allende referenced his written report in the printed materials. He introduced the staff: Assistant to the Bishop The Rev. Karl Biermann, Assistant to the Bishop/Director for Evangelical Mission The Rev. Julianne Smith, Resource Specialist Karen Kaufman, Candidacy Coordinator The Rev. Angel Jackson, Congregation Resource Team Coordinator Deacon Mary Ann Schwabe, Administrative Assistant Marilyn Matevia, Office Administrator Sony Richardson-Gilroy, and Accountant Joy Hacker. Bishop Allende specifically recognized Joy Hacker who is stepping down after 33 years of service to the Synod and thanked her for keeping us on the straight and narrow financially.
 - b. Bishop Allende recognized the Ministers of Word and Sacrament who have joined our Synod from other synods since the last Assembly, including: The Rev. Marissa Harrison, The Rev. Jeremy Hollingshead, The Rev. Dawn Richie, The Rev. Richard Weaver, and the Rev. William Weidenbach, Jr. Katheryn Kollar is in her first call at St. Paul, Lucas and Pleasant Valley, Lucas. Deborah Pinnegar is in her first call at St. Paul, Bellville. Ordinations will be October 3rd and October 31st respectively.
 - c. Bishop Allende also recognized the members of the Worship Committee who coordinate the worship for the Assembly and the upcoming ordinations.
 - d. Bishop Allende also recognized and prayed for those Ministers of Word and Sacrament who have entered the Church Triumphant since the last assembly: The Rev. Dennis Engler, The Rev. John Furno, the Rev. Donald Hesterman, The Rev. Larry Houff, the Rev. Luther Lautenschlager, Deacon Louise Manke, The Rev. Donald R. Rice, and The Rev. Erwin Smuda.
 - e. Offering collected this year will be submitted to the ELCA COVID 19 Fund that was developed after the pandemic hit to help support those vulnerable congregations that have been in need. He noted that our synod has benefitted directly from these funds and is looking to give back through its Assembly offering.

- f. Next year's Assembly dates are Friday, June 11th and Saturday, June 12th 2021.
 - g. Bishop Allende described the challenge of staying in the present since announcing last September that he would not seek re-election. He acknowledged that the virtual assembly was not how he pictured his departure from the office of Bishop, but he thinks of the thousands who have died of COVID-19 without the opportunity to say good bye to loved ones and is grateful for the technology that allows him to at least say good-bye virtually to the people of the synod as he transitions to retirement.
 - h. Bishop Allende offered heart-felt reflections on the shock of being lifted up into the office of Bishop, the challenges of the fire at First Lorain and ministering to a congregation that lost a pastor due to sudden death, ministering to a young dying pastor, and closing a congregation before he had spent 4 months in the office; the milestones of being the first Latino Bishop elected outside of Puerto Rico, one of the first Bishops of color, and the first Bishop being elected after ordination through the TEEM program. He marveled at the change in the composition of the conference of Bishops in his six years.
 - i. He remembered fondly his ecumenical partners, especially The Most Reverend George Murry of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Youngstown who died in this last year. Bishop Allende remains hopeful that all tribes and races and languages may be one in Christ and that the church may live into this goal. This motivated him to serve as a co-convenor the ELCA's Task Force on a Strategy Toward Ethnic Diversity and his advocacy work.
 - j. Finally he thanked his wife Linda and his son David for journeying with him through these years of his journey as bishop. He gives thanks to God for the opportunity to serve in this ministry bringing all things done and left undone to the foot of the cross.
17. Bryan Penvose returned the chair to Bishop Allende. Bishop Allende recognized The Rev. Daniel Skillman as chair of the Elections Committee. Pr. Skillman presented the voting procedure. There are 10 positions for which candidates are unopposed. The following were elected en bloc 285-3 with 3 abstentions
- a. Synod Council Cleveland East Clergy: The Rev. Steven Bond
 - b. Synod Council Cleveland West Lay: Susan Frantz
 - c. Synod Council Eastern Clergy: The Rev. Chelsea Spencer
 - d. Synod Council Richland-Ashland Lay: Richard Brenneman
 - e. Synod Council Southern Lay: Kevin Kampfner
 - f. Synod Council Youth: Sarah Roth
 - g. Discipline Committee Clergy: The Rev. Jon Paulus
 - h. Discipline Committee Clergy: The Rev. Randy O'Donnell
 - i. Discipline Committee Lay: Edward Burns
 - j. Consultation Committee Clergy: The Rev. Chuck Knerem

- k. Consultation Committee Lay: Chuck Mosberger
18. Voting on the contested elections followed. Election Results for the first ballot were as follows:
- a. Synod Council Akron-Wooster Clergy: The Rev. John Corsi 117; The Rev. Kristina Heise 164. The Rev. Kristina Heise is elected.
 - b. Synod Council Canton Massillon Lay: Susan Moseley 196; Ken Reinoehl 88. Susan Moseley is elected.
 - c. Synod Council Cleveland East Lay: Gayle Adamek 131; Paul Gochnour 140. Paul Gochnour is elected.
 - d. Synod Council Young Adult: Lydia Brooks 134; Chelsea Veigel 139. Chelsea Veigel is elected.
 - e. Secretary: Matthew Beery 148, The Rev. Robert Ferro 91, and The Rev. Mark Kreemer 41. Matthew Beery is elected.
 - f. Discipline Committee Lay: Sandra Humphrey 163, Edward Rehfus 111. Sandra Humphrey is elected.
19. Bishop Allende declared a break at 4:00 and announced a return at 4:10pm.
20. Bishop Allende called the Assembly to order and presented ecumenical greetings from the following via recorded videos:
- a. The Rev. Joseph T. Hilinski of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Cleveland acknowledged they are welcoming their own bishop soon. He referenced the joint challenges and pains of the pandemic and the inability to be able to gather together for the Eucharist. He offered his thanks personally for his relationship with Bishop Allende.
 - b. The Rev. Jim Korda of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Youngstown. The Diocese of Youngstown entered into covenant on October 29, 2000 with the Northeastern Ohio Synod professing a common commitment of faith and commitment to act. We have worked in collaboration in an ecumenical spirit. He is looking forward to continuing this collaboration and being a faithful witness with the members of our synod and our new bishop.
 - c. The Rev. Tracy Smith-Malone, Bishop of the East Ohio Conference, United Methodist Church celebrates Bishop Allende's ministry and leadership. She prays for the wisdom and discernment for our synod to be God's agents of compassion, healing, reconciliation and hope. People and communities are grieving and hurting, and hatred and division are running rampant. Her conference join with our synod in being and making disciples of Jesus Christ, witnessing to God's light of justice and love and working for peace.
 - d. The Right Rev. Mark Hollingsworth, Jr. noted with sadness the inability to be physically present with us and was appreciative of the companionship of Bishop Allende. He expressed how the Synod is in our prayers as we discern a call for a new bishop.

- e. The Rev. Sharon K. Core, General Presbyterian, Presbytery of the Western Reserve congratulated the synod on its ability to continue its ministry digitally in these challenging times. As she lives through the challenges of the pandemic, she often asks herself “What strange grace have you experienced today?” She invites us to discover the strange graces and silver linings of the challenges of the world we face. She prays rest and refreshment for Bishop Allende on his retirement and blessings upon our synod for energy and courage in the work of justice and reconciliation.
 - f. The Rev. Dr. Jack Sullivan, Executive Director of the Ohio Council of Churches brings greetings aware of the pain in the community from natural disasters, pandemic, and systemic racism. The temptation is to go it alone in devising ministries and programs to address this pain, but he is glad that our synod understand how important it is for communions to work together and accomplish more together than any of us can do alone to bring hope and justice and healing. He prays for discernment as we choose our new leader.
21. Bishop Allende presented a video recognizing the significant anniversaries of ordinations and of congregations, identified on pages 103-104 of the pre-assembly materials, thanking these rostered leaders and congregations for their service and ministries. The honorees included:
- a. Clergy Celebrating 25th Anniversary:
 - i. The Rev. Scott Anderson
 - ii. The Rev. Laura Barbins
 - iii. The Rev. Donald Frantz II
 - iv. The Rev. Robert Henderson
 - v. The Rev. Bruce Roth
 - vi. The Rev. Gwendolyn Snell
 - b. Celebrating 40th Anniversary:
 - i. The Rev. Jerome Burce
 - ii. The Rev. David Connor
 - iii. The Rev. Larry Mackey
 - iv. The Rev. Michael Meranda
 - v. The Rev. William Michaels
 - vi. The Rev. Jon Paulus
 - c. Celebrating 50th Anniversary:
 - i. The Rev. Ronald Daley
 - ii. The Rev. Herbert Garnes III
 - iii. Deacon Marilyn Handshue

- iv. Deacon Joseph King
- v. Deacon Ellen Kreider
- vi. The Rev. Alan Nathan
- vii. The Rev. Donald Smith
- d. Celebrating 55th Anniversary:
 - i. The Rev. Thomas Baumgardner
 - ii. The Rev. David Hammel
 - iii. The Rev. Bruce Hathaway
 - iv. The Rev. Clyde McGee
 - v. The Rev. Richard Schluep
- e. Celebrating 60th Anniversary:
 - i. The Rev. Donald Pentz

2020 congregations celebrating anniversaries

- f. Congregations Celebrating 125th Anniversaries:
 - i. Good Shepherd, Conneaut
 - ii. Zion, Canton
- g. Congregations Celebrating 100th Anniversaries:
 - i. Trinity, Niles
- h. Congregations Celebrating 50th Anniversaries:
 - i. Lord of Life, Chagrin Falls

22. Bishop Allende recognized Bryan Penvose for the Synod Council report by video.

- a. Bryan described the changes necessary for the church to operate in the pandemic; gave thanks to synod staff, officers, and Council.
- b. He noted that the Synod Council reduced the amount of mission support given to the churchwide organization from 50% to 47.5%. This reduction will have impact on our ability to do meaningful ministry both within our synod and across the country. Bryan implored that our congregations be able to increase their giving a little and to at least give something in mission support to facilitate and demonstrate commitment to our work together.
- c. Synod Council continued its initiatives on ministry reform and restructuring. We approved 5 general committees to correspond to the 5 budget categories (1) Leadership, (2) Church in Society, (3) Congregational Life, (4) Faith in Life, and (5) Administration. The ministries and task forces will be housed under these umbrella committees. He asked for engagement of volunteers in these ministries and task forces.

- d. He thanked Karen Kaufman our Resource Specialist who will be marking 25 years on our synod staff this January. After 33 years of service Joy Hacker has resigned as synod accountant and we give thanks to her for her many years of faithful service and many years of clean financial reports. He also thanked Bishop Allende for his years of faithful witness in our Synod and his care for the young people, the refugee, the immigrant, and the outcast. He noted that we need to continue Bishop Allende's vision to include youth in our ministries and for lifting up the ELCA's AMMPARO strategy, for serving as the Co-Convener of the ELCA's Task Force on a Strategy Toward Authentic Diversity. To that end, Bryan also called on the people of our synod to work to deconstruct systemic racism and be willing to engage in anti-racism training and move toward authentic diversity to join in God's work in the world together.
23. Bishop Allende relinquished the chair to Sue Rothmeyer who recognized The Rev. David Anderson to provide a report of the results of the first ballot for Bishop. Total ballots 301; legal ballots 297; 223 required for election.
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|---------------------------------|----|
| a. The Rev. Karl Biermann | 49 |
| b. The Rev. Laura Barbins | 38 |
| c. The Rev. AngelaFreeman-Riley | 33 |
| d. The Rev. Lisa Arledge | 28 |
| e. The Rev. Bruce Roth | 26 |
| f. The Rev. Andrew Genszler | 24 |
| g. The Rev. Robert Cheyney | 22 |
| h. The Rev. Sherman Bishop | 13 |
| i. The Rev. Kevin Maxey | 9 |
| j. The Rev. Jonathan Eilert | 5 |
| k. The Rev. Kristina Heise | 5 |
| l. The Rev. Don King | 5 |
| m. The Rev. Julianne Smith | 5 |
| n. The Rev. Diana Thompson | 5 |
| o. The Rev. Jeff Goggins | 2 |
| p. The Rev. Robert Henderson | 2 |
| q. The Rev. Emlyn Ott | 2 |
| r. The Rev. Bob Springer | 2 |
| s. The Rev. Kimberly Vaughn | 2 |
| t. The Rev. Jim Watson | 2 |
| u. The Rev. Bob Abrams | 1 |

v. The Rev. Abraham Allende	1
w. The Rev. Mulba Borsay	1
x. The Rev. Seth Bridger	1
y. The Rev. Dan Caruso	1
z. The Rev. Lenny Duncan	1
aa. The Rev. Elizabeth Eaton	1
bb. The Rev. James Eckert	1
cc. The Rev. Robert Ferro	1
dd. The Rev. Herbert Garnes III	1
ee. The Rev. Tim Iseringhausen	1
ff. The Rev. Angel Jackson	1
gg. The Rev. Terrance Jacobs	1
hh. The Rev. Harold Jacobson	1
ii. The Rev. Jim Madsen	1
jj. The Rev. David Nevergall	1
kk. The Rev. Walter Taylor	1
ll. The Rev. Roger Willer	1

24. There is no election. The second ballot is scheduled for 5:25pm or as soon as possible. Withdrawals are requested by 5:10pm.

25. David Lenz presented a report from the ELCA Church Council, noting that he is one of 23 first-year members of the Council but expressing thanks for the opportunity to be among such a talented and capable group. He called attention to various items of business that have come before the Church Council this year:

- a. The Council has repealed the document “Vision and Expectations” from use in the ELCA for any purpose, while retaining “Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline” as the disciplinary document for the ELCA.
- b. The Council approved creation of the COVID-19 Response Fund, which has been used for grants to synods to support struggling congregations and ministries in their territory. He noted that the Northeastern Ohio Synod received a grant from this fund in the amount of \$7,500, which has been allocated to eight of our congregations.
- c. The Church Council approved a Social Message on Government and Civic Engagement in the United States, and David encouraged all ELCA members to read and discuss this statement as election season continues.
- d. David highlighted that Sunday, September 13th will be the annual ELCA “God’s Work. Our Hands.” Day of Service.

26. Jasmine Steighner, President-elect of the LYO Board made a presentation to Bishop Allende of a cross that is a collage of photos of him and the LYO Board. Bishop Allende was grateful for the growth, maturity, and leadership of the youth. He always is asking how we are involving young people in our congregations.

27. David Lenz presented the bylaw amendments, which included:

- a. Various modifications to bring the Synod Constitution in line with recommended but not required changes approved at the 2019 Churchwide Assembly;
- b. The repeal of S7.11.01 that required an annual assembly held in the first half of each year; and
- c. Modifications to S8.32.21 to eliminate the need for an oral Minutes Committee report at the assembly and reflect changes in technology and practice for how the minutes of the assembly are generated, reviewed, and approved.
- d. The changes for consistency required only a majority vote to pass, the other two items required a two-thirds vote.

SA20.09.03 To adopt the proposed revisions to the bylaws as printed (Moved by council action; two-thirds vote required; carried 271-4 with 2 abstentions)

S7.22. This synod may establish processes that permit retired rostered ministers, or those ~~designated as disabled~~ granted disability status, or on leave from call, on the roster of this synod to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with †S7.21.c. If the synod does not establish processes to permit the rostered leaders specified above to serve as voting members, they shall have voice but not vote in the meeting of the Synod Assembly.

S7.22.01 Individuals who are in good standing on ~~any of the rosters~~ of this synod and who are retired, ~~disabled~~, granted disability status, or on leave from call shall be voting members of the Synod Assembly.

S8.11.01 When authorized by the Synod Council in order to address special circumstances, the synod bishop may be compensated as an employee or contractor for specified services to another expression of this church. Such an arrangement may be terminated by the Synod Assembly or Synod Council if determined to be detrimental to the function of the office or if the special circumstances no longer apply.

S8.14. The ~~idea~~ synodical bishop may have such assistants as this synod shall from time to time authorize.

S10.08 *Robert's Rules of Order*, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of all meetings of the Synod Council.

S13.25. This synod may temporarily assume administration of a congregation upon its request or with its concurrence. Such synod administration shall continue only so long as necessary to

complete the purpose for which it was requested by the congregation or until the congregation withdraws consent to continued administration.

- S13.40 ~~Synodical~~ Authorized Worshiping Communities
- S14.14 Whenever members of a congregation move to such a distance that regular attendance at its services becomes impractical, it shall be the duty of the pastor to commend them, upon their consent, to the pastoral care of a ~~Lutheran~~ congregation nearer to their place of residence.
- S14.17. No minister of Word and Sacrament shall accept a call without first conferring with the bishop of this synod. A minister of Word and Sacrament shall respond with an answer of acceptance or declination to a letter of call within 30 days of receipt of such call. In exceptional circumstances with the approval of the bishop of this synod and the ~~chair~~ president of the Congregation Council of the congregation issuing the call, an additional 15 days may be granted to respond to a letter of call.
- S14.42. No minister of Word and Service shall accept a call without first conferring with the bishop of this synod. A minister of Word and Service shall respond with an answer of acceptance or declination to a letter of call within 30 days of receipt of such call. In exceptional circumstances with the approval of the bishop of this synod and the ~~chair~~ president of the Congregation Council of the congregation issuing the call, an additional 15 days may be granted to respond to a letter of call.
- S15.14. Except when such procedure would jeopardize current operations, a reserve amounting to no more than 16 percent of the sum of the amounts scheduled in the next year's budget for regular distribution to ~~synodical~~ causes shall be carried forward annually for disbursement in the following year in the interest of making possible a more even flow of income to such causes. The exact number of dollars to be held in reserve shall be determined by the Synod Council.
- S7.11.01 Regular meetings of the Synod Assembly shall be held in the first half of each calendar year.
- S8.32.21 The Minutes Committee shall review the minutes of the Assembly with the secretary and recommend a final draft for approval to the Synod Council ~~shall review the minutes of the last day of the Assembly.~~

28. A break was announced at 5:20pm.

29. The Assembly resumed at 5:31pm. Bishop Allende relinquished the chair to Secretary Rothmeyer.

- a. Again, 75% is required for election on the second ballot. The top seven nominees plus ties will appear on the third ballot.
- b. Pr. Anderson described the process of asking for prayer and reflection before voting. Votes were cast by entering the 2-digit number corresponding to the nominee for which one votes. Codes were posted online and were to be disseminated via email. It was noted that more than half of the nominees have withdrawn from the process.

- c. “Come, Creator Spirit, Come” was led by Deacon Ruth Anderson, Hannah Good, Emily Hall, Jeremy Howdyshell, and Dr. Marshall Thomas of Holy Trinity, Akron. The Rev. Leonard Killings led a prayer before the ballot.
 - d. The Rev. Mark Kreemer raised a point of order that the email with the voting codes for the nominees had not been received by the voting members. John Sleasman, as Parliamentarian ruled that the Procedures had been followed by posting the codes on the website, in the Zoom chat, and by Pr. Anderson reading them from the podium. Secretary Rothmeyer, as chair, concurred in the ruling, and during this ruling, the second email was received.
 - e. The ballot opened at 5:48pm. Ballot closed at 5:53pm.
30. Sue Rothmeyer returned the chair to Bishop Allende. Bishop Allende noted that we hope to have second ballot results available after the worship service. The Assembly adjourned to evening prayer at 5:51pm.
31. At 6:19pm after the close of the Evening Prayer, Bishop Allende recognized Pr. Anderson for the report of the Bishop Elections Committee. They were still verifying that every vote is being counted. The official report of the second ballot will be announced at 9:20am tomorrow morning. The Zoom meeting will reopen at 8:00am and the Assembly will re-convene at 9:00am.

September 12, 2020

32. Bishop Allende called the assembly back to order at 9:00am with announcements concerning technical support.
33. Morning prayer began at 9:03am including an Affirmation of Ministers of Word and Service. Morning prayer concluded at 9:22am.
34. Bishop Allende relinquished the chair to Secretary Rothmeyer, who recognized Pr. Anderson to present the results of the second ballot. Total ballots cast 318. Total legal votes 318. Ballots required for election 239.
- a. Karl Biermann 74
 - b. Laura Barbins 59
 - c. Angela Freeman-Riley 43
 - d. Robert Cheyney 34
 - e. Bruce Roth 32
 - f. Lisa Arledge 31
 - g. Sherman Bishop 10
 - h. Kevin Maxey 10
 - i. Kristina Heise 6
 - j. Diana Thompson 5
 - k. Bob Springer 4
 - l. Mulba Borsay 3

- m. Lenny Duncan 2
 - n. Jeff Goggins 2
 - o. Dan Caruso 1
 - p. James Eckert 1
 - q. Tim Iseringhausen 1
 - r. Terrance Jacob 0
35. The Revs. Karl Bierman, Laura Barbins, Angela Freeman-Riley, Robert Cheyney, Bruce Roth, Lisa Arledge, Sherman Bishop, and Kevin Maxey advance to the third ballot.
36. Bishop Allende recognized The Rev. Shelley-Nelson Bridger. The guidelines appeared on pages 77-90 of the pre-assembly materials. Recommended 1.6% increase to salary representing the 2019 COLA from the Social Security Administration. A \$310 increase is recommended annually for the additional year of service. Medical benefits at the Gold Plus level are also recommended. It was noted that federal tax law guidelines have impacted deductibility of certain expenses and congregations and clergy are advised to review the guidelines and consult with tax professionals.

SA20.09.04 To adopt the Compensation Guidelines as previously distributed and proposed (Moved by council action; carried 247-10 with 6 abstentions)

**NORTHEASTERN OHIO SYNOD 2021 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 2021 is \$40,157. This represents a 1.6% living adjustment to the 2020 minimum base cash salary recommendation, which was in turn based on the 2020 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 2.8% 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, copayments, and other medical expenses not covered by insurance.
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) 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 (nonparsonage):

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

- b. Minimum social security allowance for pastor living in parsonage:

$$\begin{array}{r}
 \text{Salary} \\
 \times \quad \underline{1.3 \text{ (housing equivalency factor)}} \\
 = \quad \text{Subtotal} \\
 + \quad \underline{\text{Furnishings/Utilities Allowance}} \\
 = \quad \text{Social Security Base} \\
 \times \quad \underline{7.65\% \text{ (employer rate)}} \\
 = \quad \text{Social Security Allowance}
 \end{array}$$

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 of an accountable reimbursement plan to reimburse the pastor for miles driven in service of the congregation is recommended. 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; 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 none are deductible for federal, 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 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 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 (Portico) (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.

**NORTHEASTERN OHIO SYNOD 2021 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 2021 is based on their level of education within the area of expertise as follows:

NO DEGREE	BACHELORS	MASTERS
\$36,270	\$42,010	\$43,535

This represents a 1.6% increase to the 2020 minimum base cash salary recommendation, as the Social Security Administration has set the 2020 cost of living allowance at 1.6%. 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

Tax treatment of consecrated Ministers of Word and Service differs from that of ordained Ministers of Word and Sacrament since deacons are not eligible for housing allowances that can be excluded from income taxes. This is reflected in the higher base guideline salaries for deacons compared to pastors with the same level of education.

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, copayments, and other medical expenses not covered by insurance.
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), INCLUDING MEDICARE

1. Normally a congregation will pay these taxes for deacons, as provided by Federal laws regulating the amount to be paid.
2. For 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.

- A. 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 is recommended. 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; 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 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 none are deductible for federal, state, city or school district income tax.

C. 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.

- 37. John Sleasman presented the Treasurer’s Report after requesting a point of personal privilege as Parliamentarian to recognize Marilyn Matevia and Sony Gilroy and their extensive work on the Assembly.
 - a. He called attention to the written reports that appeared on pages 112-118 of the pre-assembly materials.
 - b. John updated that the best guess is that we will be somewhat under on our mission support receipts and somewhat under in expenditures for the 2020-2021 fiscal year. The Synod’s receipt of a forgivable loan in the amount of \$82,832 from the Payroll Protection Program should cover any worse-than-budget position this year.
 - c. John called attention to his written closing remarks. He continues to see great potential in this Synod and in this church. We have seen highs and lows, but we will rise again, because that is the message of the church. All too often we have not risen equally. We must continue to remember and act upon this message as we go into the future.
- 38. Kevin Kampfer presented the Audit report, which appeared on pages 128-156. The report comes after meetings of the Audit Committee with Apple Growth Partners, our external auditors. The books have been found to be in good order in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.

39. Mike Davis, Chair of the Finance Committee presented the budget. He noted that the 2020-2021 budget was modified by the Synod Council in 2020 and is shown along with the 2021-2022 proposed budget for informational purposes. The 2021-2022 budget reflects the continued downward trend in mission support. Mr. Davis echoed the thanks from the Synod Council report for congregations' ongoing mission support in these challenging times, but encouraged additional support.
- a. The Committee made a thorough, line-by-line review of the proposed budget in light of changes that have occurred in recent years. This resulted in some increases and some cuts. The Committee recommends continuing mission support to the ELCA at the 47.5% level. It is acknowledged that COVID-19 pandemic may put additional pressure on income expectations. The current forecast for 2021-2022 is \$1,323,000 of income and \$1,363,000 of expenses and depreciation of approximately \$23,000, resulting in a deficit of approximately \$63,000. Also, with the election of a new bishop, there may be some shifting in emphasis and spending priorities. He noted that the budget is a priority roadmap established at one time, but circumstances can and do change.
 - b. The finance committee will continue to monitor the Synod's circumstances throughout the year and will recommend modifications if necessary, based on financial circumstances. Mr. Davis also recognized Joy Hacker for her many years of dedicated service. The committee is currently interviewing candidates for the synod accountant position. Mr. Davis appreciates those who have volunteered to step forward to join the Finance Committee and Audit Committee, and they hope to build out those committees as the accountant position is filled.

SA20.09.05 To adopt the Budget as presented (Moved by council action; carried 250-12 with 9 abstentions)

40. Bishop Allende declared a recess at 9:55am.
41. Bishop Allende called the Assembly back to order at 10:11am and relinquished the chair to Secretary Rothmeyer to introduce the nominees for bishop for their 5-minute addresses to the Assembly.
- a. The nominees spoke in the following order: The Rev. Kevin Maxey, The Rev. Angela Freeman-Riley, The Rev. Robert Cheyney, The Rev. Karl Biermann, The Rev. Bruce Roth, The Rev. Lisa Arledge, The Rev. Laura Barbins, and The Rev. Sherman Bishop.
 - b. Pr. Maxey delivered his full address and Pr. Freeman-Riley delivered most of her address until it was noted that there were significant audio problems on the Zoom transmission. Pr. Maxey was invited back to the podium to begin the process again at 10:23 after a sound check determined that audio was working appropriately again, and the nominees proceeded to address the assembly.
42. Pr. Anderson described the voting process for the third ballot, on which a two-thirds vote is necessary for election. The song "Nothing Can Trouble" was lead by Deacon Ruth Anderson, Hannah Good, Emily Hall, Jeremy Howdysell, and Dr. Marshall Thomas of Holy Trinity, Akron. Katy Gill led a prayer before the ballot.

43. The ballot opened at 11:09am. It was noted at 11:13am that some people were receiving error message through TurningPoint as they tried to submit their votes. At 11:17am, it was announced that it was believed that the problems had been resolved. Secretary Rothmeyer closed the ballot at 11:18am.
44. Secretary Rothmeyer presented the ELCA Synod Assembly video.
45. Pr. Anderson announced the results of the third ballot at 11:37pm. Total ballots cast were 323, and total legal ballots were 321. The number of votes required for election was 214.
 - a. The Rev. Laura Barbins 75
 - b. The Rev. Karl Biermann 63
 - c. The Rev. Angela Freeman-Riley 47
 - d. The Rev. Robert Cheyney 44
 - e. The Rev. Lisa Arledge 36
 - f. The Rev. Bruce Roth 32
 - g. The Rev. Sherman Bishop 18
 - h. The Rev. Kevin Maxey 6
46. The Rev. Laura Barbins, The Rev. Karl Biermann, and the Rev. Angela Freeman-Riley will appear on the fourth ballot. Secretary Rothmeyer declared the Assembly adjourned for lunch until 12:15pm.
47. Secretary Rothmeyer called the Assembly back to order at 12:17pm and recognized Pr. Anderson to begin the question-and-answer session. The order of answering questions was rotated among The Rev. Angela Freeman-Riley, The Rev. Laura Barbins, and The Rev. Karl Biermann. For the first question each had 2 minutes to respond; second question 2.5 minutes; 3rd question 2.5 minutes; 4th question 2.5 minutes; 5th question 2 minutes.
 - a. How will you model self-care for pastors, deacons, and laypersons?
 - b. What positive changes do you see in the church as a result of this time of pandemic, and how do you see those changes taking hold and bearing fruit?
 - c. Recognizing that there is avoidance in addressing issues of social justice, systemic racism, and race relations, how will you assist congregational leaders in addressing these issues?
 - d. How will you help shepherd congregations through times of change and conflict?
 - e. What excites you most about serving as bishop?
48. Pr. Anderson encouraged a round of applause in gratitude for the three nominees. He then explained the voting procedures for the 4th ballot, on which a sixty-percent vote is required for election. The song “Come and Pray with Us” was led by the vocalists from Holy Trinity, Akron. Jonathan Stufft led a prayer before the ballot.
49. Secretary Rothmeyer declared the ballot open at 12:57pm. The ballot was closed at 1:02pm.

50. Pr. Anderson announced the results of the third ballot at 1:31pm. Total ballots cast were 329, and total legal ballots were 317. The number of votes required for election was 191.
 - a. The Rev. Laura Barbins 110
 - b. The Rev. Angela Freeman-Riley 106
 - c. The Rev. Karl Biermann 101
51. The Rev. Laura Barbins and The Rev. Angela Freeman-Riley will appear on the fifth ballot. Secretary Rothmeyer returned the chair to Bishop Allende.
52. Bishop Allende recognized the people who are ending their time on Synod Council. The Rev. Laura Barbins, Kailyn Buyok, Helen DuPont, Larry Fenton, Secretary David Lenz, Edward Rehfus, The Rev. Scott Nellis, and Gayle Adamek.
53. Bishop Allende recognized The Rev. Shelley Nelson-Bridger, Chair of the Reference and Counsel committee. She reported that the Reference and Counsel Committee received no resolutions for consideration at this Assembly.
54. Bishop Allende relinquished the chair to Secretary Rothmeyer, who recognized Parliamentarian John Sleasman. There was a question raised in the Zoom chat concerning the discrepancy between the total vote and legal vote totals reported to the Assembly. John noted that when someone opens the app, they are a participant in the vote. If they do not cast a vote, it is considered an abstention, which does not count as a legal ballot.
55. The final two nominees for bishop were each recognized for final five-minute addresses to the Assembly. The Rev. Angela Freeman Riley addressed the Assembly first; The Rev. Laura Barbins second.
56. Pr. Anderson provided the instructions for casting the fifth ballot. The song “In the Lord I’ll Be Ever Thankful” was led by the vocalists from Holy Trinity, Akron. The Rev. Katie Jacob led a prayer before the ballot.
57. Secretary Rothmeyer declared the ballot open at 2:10pm. The ballot was declared closed at 2:14pm.
58. Pr. Anderson announced the results of the third ballot at 2:30pm. Total ballots cast were 331, and total legal ballots were 319. The number of votes required for election was 159.
 - a. The Rev. Laura Barbins 171
 - b. The Rev. Angela Freeman-Riley 148
59. The Rev. Laura Barbins is elected Bishop of the Northeastern Ohio Synod. Bishop-elect Barbins addressed the Assembly and gave thanks for the opportunity to serve in this new call, thanks to Bishop Allende for his six years of service, and thanks to her husband, Paul and four daughters. Secretary Rothmeyer thanked the various persons involved in leading the Assembly in the broadcast room and thanked Bishop Allende for his ministry. She returned the chair to Bishop Allende
60. Bishop Allende thanked Secretary Rothmeyer for her leadership in this Assembly and congratulated Pr. Barbins on her election. The Assembly adjourned to closing worship at

2:40pm. Installation of the newly elected occurred at 3:24pm as a part of the closing worship, and Bishop Allende declared the Assembly closed at 3:28pm.