

February 1, 2018

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

The Nominating Committee of the Florida-Bahamas Synod is preparing the slate of elections for the 2018 Synod Assembly on June 1-3, 2018. In preparation for those elections, we ask your help in identifying nominees to fill these important positions. In addition to Synod Council and Committee positions, we will be electing Voting Members to the 2019 Churchwide Assembly to be held in Milwaukee, August 5-10, 2019. As one who has had the experience and honor of serving as a Churchwide Voting Member in 2013, I highly encourage those who are interested to put their name forth for 2019.

2018 Synod Assembly Elections:

1. Synod Council Representatives (in good standing for a three year term)

 Southwest Mission District - Lay Female

 (Includes Lake, MidGulf, Tampa, Sun Coast, Gulf Coast & Caloosa Conferences)

 Southeast Mission District - Lay Male

 (Includes Miami-Dade, Broward-Bahamas, Tradewinds & Space Coast Conferences)

 North Mission District - Clergy

 (Includes 1st Coast, Heart of Florida, Pinelands, Panhandle & Flagler-Volusia Conferences)

 Youth – Male or Female – any mission district

*Nominees for the youth position shall be 15-18 years of age AND be a rising 9th through 11th Grader in school at the time of election*

 After all the open positions on Synod Council are elected, the need for an at-large member, if any, will be identified and announced.

2. ELCA 2019 Churchwide Assembly Voting Members (by conference)

(1) - Miami-Dade – Lay Female

(2) - Broward-Bahamas - Clergy

(3) - Tradewinds - Lay Male \*PCLE

(4) - Space Coast - \*\*Vice-President, Cheryl Stuart

 (5) - Flagler-Volusia - Clergy

(6) - First Coast - Lay Male

(7) - Lake – Lay Female

(8) - Heart of Florida - Clergy

(9) - Pinelands – Lay Male

(10) - Panhandle – Youth/Lay Female

(11) - Caloosa - Clergy

(12) - Mid-Gulf – Lay Male

(13) - Tampa – Lay Female

(14) - Sun Coast - Clergy

(15) - Gulf Coast – Lay Male

 \* A person of color or language other than English

A completed Nomination Data Form must be received at Synod Office no later than May 15, 2018. The form is available at http://www.fbsynod.com/ . After this deadline the Nominating Committee will work to assure that there are two nominations for each position. Additional nominations may be made from the floor of the assembly. Descriptions of the elected positions are below.

Your prayerful consideration of these opportunities for service is encouraged.

Yours in Christ

Tracy Moffatt, Chair

**Synod Council Representatives**

TheSynod Council sees to it that the mission and vision of the Synod are lifted up and carried forward.

Mission: **Share Christ, Make Disciples, Do Justice in the world.**

Vision: **To be deeply rooted in Christ, firmly grounded in Word and Sacrament, and joyfully sent for the sake of the world.**

A Synod Council member shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod. The term of office shall be three years. The Synod Council is the board of directors of the synod and serves as its interim legislative authority between meetings of the Synod Assembly.

The functions of synod council are:

* Trusteeship responsibilities on behalf of the synod
* Recommend program goals and budgets to meetings of the Synod Assembly
* Carry out the resolutions of the Synod Assembly
* Provide for an annual review of the roster of the rosters, receive and act upon recommendations regarding those persons whose status is subject to reconsideration.
* Issue letters of call to rostered persons
* Fill vacancies in elected positions until the next regular meeting of Synod Assembly
* Report its actions to regular meetings of Synod Assembly.

The Synod Council meets four times a year at various sites around the territory of the Synod.

**ELCA Churchwide Assembly August 5-10, 2019 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin**

* Reviews work of churchwide officers and units and acts on their proposals
* Reviews and considers proposals from synod assemblies
* Establishes churchwide policy
* Adopts a budget for the churchwide organization
* Elects officers, board members
* Establishes churchwide units
* Sole authority to amend the constitution and bylaws

**Churchwide Assembly Voting Members**

 Persons chosen as voting members of the Churchwide Assembly are given the responsibility of doing the work of the Churchwide Assembly on behalf of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.   They are not sent to participate as politicized delegates from some regional or agenda-specific caucus, as may be the case at a national party convention. They gather around Word and Sacrament to represent and serve on behalf of all of the members of the congregations in all of the synods of this one church.

**The Voting Member’s lodging, food, and transportation** are paid for by the ELCA. Sometimes there is a free afternoon or evening, and then the dinner is the responsibility of the voting member.
The Churchwide Assembly will take place August 5-10, 2019 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

**Voting at ELCA Churchwide Assembly**

 It is important to note and remember that no delegates will be present for the assembly. Voting members are not delegates, as the term is used in the context of some meetings such as political conventions! The terminology related to the legislative process of this church is no accident. The words, “Synod Assembly” and “Churchwide Assembly,” rather than convention, and “voting members,” rather than delegates, were deliberately chosen for our governing documents. These words not only fulfil certain legal requirements but also reflect the ecclesial understanding that the three primary expression of this church—congregation, synod, and churchwide organization—exist and serve within this one church. The congregation does not meet in convention; the members gather in worship, carry out service, and assemble occasionally and properly for governance decisions and elections. The people of this church in each of the 65 synods are not sent as delegates from a given caucus; they are not gathered to act as some politicized delegates to a regional party convention. Rather, they assemble as duly selected members of this church with voting responsibilities for governance and elections on behalf of the synod. The Synod Assembly is just that, an assembly of the people of this church gathered around Word and Sacrament, some of whom have been granted the responsibility of being voting members of the Synod Assembly.

 The people of this church, when gathered as voting members of the Synod Assembly, have the responsibility of electing the voting members of the Churchwide Assembly. Persons so chosen are given the responsibility of doing the work of the Churchwide Assembly on behalf of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. They are not sent to participate as politicized delegates from some regional or agenda-specific caucus at some national party convention. They gather around Word and Sacrament to represent and serve on behalf of all of the members of the congregations in all of the synods of this one church. The vocabulary that we use both shapes and reflects our understanding of this church. When we recognize and understand that our “congregations find their fulfilment in the universal community of the Church, and the universal Church exists in and through congregations” (ELCA churchwide constitutional provision 3.02.), then our awareness of the significance of being voting members in a given assembly may grow.

 After all, as we declare of the “Nature of the Church,” the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America “derives its character and powers both from the sanction and representation of its congregations and from its inherent nature as an expression of the broader fellowship of the faith” (also ELCA churchwide constitutional provision 3.02.). Indeed, we together affirm and declare the primary principle of organization for our church, namely: “The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be one church” (ELCA churchwide constitutional provision 5.01.).