



STANDING RULES OF PROCEDURE

The Florida-Bahamas Synod functions in assembly with Standing Rules of Procedure. Not all of these rules apply to an assembly with abbreviated agenda or when the assembly is functioning under rules for a special meeting.

I. Voting Members of Assembly

- A. Voting members must register and be wearing name badges to participate in the work of the Synod Assembly.
- B. All visitors must register and be wearing name badges to enter the assembly hall.
- C. Voting members shall not absent themselves from any sessions of the Synod Assembly without excuse.
- D. Only voting members and seminarians serving internships within this synod may be seated in the area designated for seating of Voting Members; assembly visitors must be seated in the designated visitors seating area.

II. Resolutions and Matters before the Assembly

- A. Resolutions and general motions not concerned with the business at hand must be submitted to the Committee of Reference and Counsel no later than 8:00 p.m. on the first day of the Assembly.
- B. Resolutions may be submitted to the Committee of Reference and Counsel by a congregation, conference, synodical committee, or 25 voting members of the Synod Assembly.
- C. Reports included in the Synod Assembly pre-mailings, assembly packets, or by electronic means shall be received by the Assembly by virtue of that fact without vote.
- D. Amendments made from the floor must be in written form, include the name of the maker, and be presented to the synod secretary in duplicate. One copy goes to the chair for presentation and one copy to the secretary for inclusion in the Minutes. Amendments to motions by substitution must be presented to the secretary in writing before they are placed on the floor orally.
- E. Resolutions under consideration by the assembly may be displayed by electronic means during the assembly.
- F. Debate on any one particular topic will be limited to ten minutes, with the possibility of extension of that time if so desired by the Assembly.
- G. Any Voting Member desiring to be recognized by the Chair shall be at a microphone.
 - 1. When recognized by the Chair, speakers will identify themselves by giving their name and their home congregation.
 - 2. Speakers will be identified by their green (pro) or red (con) card, indicating their positions on the issue of debate, and will be recognized in order, alternating between “pro” and “con” statements, if such opposing views are represented at the microphone. A speaker may raise a Point of Information or Order request to the chair by raising a white card.
 - 3. Each speaker on a topic will be permitted up to one minute. Unless there is new thought content, speakers are to refrain from repeating the opinions already offered by others.

- 4. No speaker will be allowed the privilege of the floor for a second time on a single topic of debate until all speakers on that same topic have had the opportunity to express their position.
- 5. One speaker may not yield time to another.
- 6. A member who has spoken on the pending question(s) may not move the previous question.
- H. During debate, expressions of approval or disapproval are never appropriate.
- I. A motion to end debate by moving the previous question shall apply only to the immediately preceding motion. A motion to end debate on all matters on the floor or more than the immediately pending question is not in order.
- J. At the discretion of the chair, voting on motions may be by electronic device. A vote taken by electronic device is deemed to be a ballot.
- K. The preamble or whereas clauses of a resolution are not debatable or amendable.

III. Elections

- A. Nominations from the floor must have prior written consent of the nominee and be conveyed on a Floor Nomination Information Sheet to be presented to the Secretary at the time of Nomination. A Florida Bahamas Synod Nominations Form - Floor Nominations with biographical data must also be presented to the Secretary at the time of nomination or by the established deadline.
- B. Write-in ballots will not be allowed. Any ballot submitted with a name other than for a properly nominated person will be declared illegal.
- C. At the discretion of the Chair, voting on elections may be by electronic device. Use of an electronic device in accord with Roberts Rules of Order, Section 45, is deemed to fulfill all requirements for election by ballot except in the first two ballots for the election of the bishop which shall be cast by paper ballot.
- D. The Chair may allow for the report of the Elections Committee whenever the Committee is ready to report, and a ballot shall take precedence over any other order of business.
- E. All voting members must be wearing their badges and be in their seats in the Voting Members section in order to vote. The doors to the meeting room are closed during the elections process.
- F. Only information concerning nominees on official Biographical Data Forms developed and distributed by the Nominating Committee will be permitted at the Assembly. No use of special handouts or display area distribution concerning nominees will be permitted.
- G. On the first ballot in the general election, names will appear in an order determined by draw by the chair of the Elections Committee. On the subsequent ballots, the names will be listed according to the number of votes received.
- H. In accord with the Synod Constitution (S9.08), in all elections except for the bishop, the names of the persons receiving the two highest numbers of votes, but not elected by a majority of the votes cast on a preceding ballot, shall be entered on the next ballot. In cases in which votes are cast in one segment of the ballot for multiple positions on a committee, board, or Synod Council, the number of names entered on the next ballot shall be two for each remaining position to be filled. The names shall be the persons receiving the highest numbers of votes, but not elected by a majority of the votes cast on a preceding ballot.
- I. A single ballot will be cast by the secretary for each position where there is only one name for the particular position.

IV. Committee of Reference and Counsel

- A. During the Assembly, the Committee of Reference and Counsel will manage all distribution of materials to the floor of the Assembly. Improperly distributed material will be confiscated.

- B. Regarding resolutions, the Committee of Reference and Counsel may:
 1. Report and recommend action on resolutions to the Synod Assembly;
 2. Refer resolutions to the Synod Council or other committees for consideration;
 3. Decline to refer resolutions not properly submitted and duly notify the assembly;
 4. Decline to refer, by a two-thirds vote, inappropriate resolutions and duly notify the assembly. The assembly may override this decision by adopting a motion to consider the declined resolution by majority vote. The motion to consider under this rule is not debatable.
 5. Present resolutions that may serve as a composite of several resolutions on a similar subject;
 6. Contact those submitting resolutions to seek clarity or advise of disposition of resolutions.
 7. Assure that resolutions of this assembly directed to the churchwide expression of the ELCA conform to the required language and procedures of that expression.
 8. Assure that the resolutions of this assembly conform to the Constitution, Bylaws, Continuing Resolutions, Standing Rules, and Parliamentary Authority of the Synod; that the language of resolutions is clear; that statements of fact are accurate; and that the preambles are relevant to the resolutions.
- C. Other duties of the Committee of Reference and Counsel include:
 1. To recommend any necessary special orders;
 2. To grant or deny permission to distribute printed matter not issued from the Synod Secretary;
 3. To give such assistance to the Bishop as the Bishop may desire.

V. Other Matters

- A. Guidelines concerning resolutions, credentials, nominations and elections that were mailed or made available on the synod’s web site to Assembly Voting Members prior to the Assembly, distributed at the assembly, or delivered by electronic means are in effect and govern the Assembly.
- B. Procedural questions not covered by these rules shall be decided on the basis of Robert’s Rules of Order, latest edition.

VI. Ministry Spending Plan (Budget Modification) Procedures

Proposed amendments to the budget must be submitted to the secretary of this synod in writing no later than the opening of Plenary Session **THREE**. **Each amendment or resolution to amend must be supported in writing by the signatures of twenty-five (25) voting members.** The secretary shall refer such proposed amendments to the Treasurer. During the consideration of the budget by the assembly the Treasurer or a member of the Executive Committee shall report on the implication of each proposed amendment.

- A. Any amendment to the budget that increases a current program proposal expense, or adds a current program proposal to the budget, must include the following:
 1. a corresponding decrease in some other current program proposal of the same amount; or an increase in revenues to offset the proposed expense.
 2. Any amendment to the budget that proposes an increase in revenues shall require an affirmative vote by **at least two-thirds of those present and voting.**
- B. A motion to approve the Synod Budget shall be made by the Treasurer of the Synod or the Treasurer’s designee.
- C. Votes to appropriate funds not approved by Synod Council:

Chapter S10.04. in the Florida-Bahamas Synod Constitution contains the following text:
Any proposal to appropriate funds, whether by amendment to the budget or otherwise, that is presented to a meeting of the Synod Assembly without the approval of the Synod Council, shall require a two-thirds vote for adoption.

- D. A balanced budget is the objective in preparing the budget. At Synod Assembly formal action is taken by means of a vote on a budget resolution coming to the Assembly from the Synod Council.

VII. Substitute Motions

A motion has been made, seconded, and stated by the chair. During the debate following the stated motion, a motion is made and seconded to substitute another motion for the pending motion. Though the substitute motion is termed a primary amendment, functionally it acts as a second main motion. The main motion is “perfected” by amendments, if any, and is then set aside for consideration of the substitute motion which may also be “perfected” by amendments.

The floor is open for debate on the merits of both the original text and the substitute, since it is necessary to determine the desirability of either motion.

After both the main motion and the proposed substitute motion are “perfected” and merits of both debated, the chair asks the Assembly if it is ready to vote to substitute the main motion by the proposed substitute.

- A. If the Assembly approves the substitution, the substitute motion supplants the main motion; the main motion no longer exists. The substitute motion, now the sole main motion, is now subject to debate and amendment by the Assembly before vote on the motion itself.
- B. If the assembly rejects the substitution of the substitute motion for the original motion, the original motion remains the main motion and is subject to debate and amendment before vote.
- C. Amendments to motions by substitution must be turned into the secretary in writing before they are placed on the floor orally.

Table of Parliamentary Procedure

<u>MOTION</u>	<u>NECESSARY</u>			<u>EFFECT</u>
	<u>DEBATABLE</u>	<u>VOTE</u>	<u>AMENDABLE</u>	
REGULAR:				
Item of Business (Main)	Yes	Majority	Yes	Presents an item of business in a form for proper convention decision.
PROCEDURAL:				
Lay on the Table	No	Majority	No	Permits consideration of more urgent business.
Call for the Previous Question	No	2/3	No	Ends the debate.
Limit or Extend Time for debate	No	2/3	Yes	As stated (May be reconsidered.)
Postpone to a Certain Time	Yes	Majority	Yes	To delay to a definite later time.
Refer	Yes	Majority	Yes	Postpones action by the body until report of committee
Amend or Substitute	Yes	Majority	Yes	Refines wording or meaning of main motion.
Point of Order	No	No vote	No	Obtains information.
Call for Division	No	No vote	No	Secures a standing vote.
Point of Privilege	No	No vote	No	Expresses rights of individual member.
Take from the table	No	Majority	No	Returns a prior motion for consideration.
Reconsider	Yes	Majority	No	Must be from member of prevailing side on previously considered motion.

Discipleship Assemblies

VIII. Addendum for Discipleship Assembly Standing Rules of Procedure

The governing documents of our synod state that "The Synod Council shall be responsible for all arrangements related to the meeting of the Synod Assembly". Under that and other authority, the Synod Council adopted Continuing Resolution [S7.13.A03.](#), which states "***Discipleship (formerly Faith and Family) assemblies shall be held on even-numbered years, unless special circumstances require the Synod Council to alter the nature of the business for a particular assembly, and normally fall on a Friday through Sunday schedule. Those assemblies which emphasize growth in faith and are chiefly non-legislative in nature shall be governed by provisions for special meetings of the Synod Assembly. The Executive Committee of the Synod Council may serve as the Committee for Reference and Counsel for such assemblies.***"

- A. At Discipleship Assemblies: The Assembly will function with rules for "special meetings" under which the stated agenda for action by the Assembly will be limited to budgetary consideration, necessary election procedures, and only such resolutions that may be brought to the Assembly by the Synod Council, the Executive Committee, or Committee of Reference and Counsel.
- B. Any resolution submitted by a source other than the Synod Council or the Executive Committee for consideration at a nonlegislative assembly will be referred to the Committee of Reference and Counsel under the provisions of Standing Rule IV. B.
- C. In accordance with Continuing Resolution SC.16.02.1 all Memorials from a congregation, a conference, or a synodical committee must be submitted to the Secretary of the Florida-Bahamas Synod, sixty (60) days before the Synod Assembly. Memorials presented at the Synod Assembly with signatures of 25 voting members of the Synod Assembly, will be referred to the Synod Council for consideration of a resolution by the Synod Council to the ELCA Church Council. The Committee of Reference and Counsel has authority to bring to the floor of the Assembly any memorial it considers to be of an urgent or compelling nature that the Synod Assembly should address immediately.

Information & Procedures for the Election of the Bishop

1. The process for the election of the synodical bishop is governed by S9.04. in the synod's constitution:
 - a. Required for election on the first ballot is 75 percent of the votes cast. If there is no election, the first ballot is considered a nominating ballot. The first and second ballots shall be cast as paper ballots.
 - b. All names of ELCA ordained ministers submitted on the first ballot appear on the second ballot, except those who request that their names be withdrawn according to the procedure provided below.
 - c. The third ballot is limited to the seven ELCA ordained ministers (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of votes on the second ballot. Required for election: Two-thirds of the votes cast.
 - d. The fourth ballot is limited to the five ELCA ordained ministers (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of votes on the third ballot. Required for election: Two-thirds of the votes cast.
 - e. The fifth ballot is limited to the three ELCA ordained ministers (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of votes on the fourth ballot. Required for election: 60 percent of the votes cast.
 - f. The sixth ballot is limited to the two ELCA ordained ministers (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of votes on the fifth ballot. Required for election: Majority of the votes cast.
 - g. The required margin for election on any subsequent ballot is a majority of the votes ~~cast~~.
2. An "ecclesiastical ballot" for the election of a bishop in synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is defined by the Church Council as an election process:
 - a. In which on the first ballot the name of any eligible individual may be submitted for nomination by a voting member of the assembly;
 - b. Through which the possibility of election to office exists on any ballot by achievement of the required number of votes cast by the voting members of the assembly applicable to a particular ballot;
 - c. That precludes spoken floor nominations;
 - d. In which the first ballot is the nominating ballot if no election occurs on the first ballot;
 - e. In which the first ballot defines the total slate of nominees for possible election on a subsequent ballot, with no additional nominations permitted;
 - f. That does not preclude, after the reporting of the first ballot, the right of persons to withdraw their names prior to the casting of the second ballot;
 - g. In which any name appearing on the second ballot may not be subsequently withdrawn;
 - h. That does not preclude an assembly's adoption of rules that permit, at a defined point in the election process and for a defined period of time, speeches to the assembly by nominees or their representatives and/or a question-and-answer forum in which the nominees or their representatives participate; and
 - i. In which the number of names that appear on any ballot subsequent to the second ballot shall be determined in accordance with provisions of the governing documents.

3. Following the report of the nominating ballot, an ordained minister whose name was submitted on the first ballot may withdraw her or his name from the ballot. This may be done by filing a form available from the secretary of the synod. The form must be filed with the secretary of the synod immediately following the plenary session in which the report of the first ballot for bishop is made.
4. Prior to the casting of the third ballot, the seven ordained ministers (plus ties) whose names appear on that ballot will complete the prescribed biographical form and provide brief written responses to questions that were formulated by the lay members of the Synod Council. Information submitted on the form will be duplicated and distributed to the voting members of the Synod Assembly.
5. Prior to the casting of the fourth ballot, the five ordained ministers (plus ties) whose names appear on that ballot will be invited to address the assembly with speeches limited to five minutes each. The sequence of the speakers will be determined by lot. A timekeeper will indicate to the speaker by a yellow card when 30 seconds of the allotted time remain. At the end of five minutes, the timekeeper will raise a red card and the nominee will end her or his comments.
6. Prior to the casting of the fifth ballot, the three ordained ministers (plus ties) whose names appear on that ballot will participate in three separate “town hall meeting” forums rotating across three meeting rooms with one-third of the voting members of the synod assembly present in each room.
 - a. Before the arrival of the candidates, the forum moderator in each room will review the procedures that will be followed.
 - b. Voting members present in the room who are interested in potentially asking questions of the candidates will be invited to write their names on slips of paper to be turned in to the moderator. The moderator will provide each such person with a question-form on which they are to write their question (30 words maximum).
 - c. The slips of paper with the names of potential questioners will be placed into a “basket” for random drawing.
 - d. The Executive Committee will provide two or three questions that each of the three candidates will be asked in each room to provide some opportunity for comparison of responses by the candidates to the questions. The candidate will be encouraged to respond to the question within a 2-minute timeframe. A time keeper will provide signals to the candidate regarding time.
 - e. In the remaining time, names will be drawn from the basket and the moderator will ask each questioner to read his/her question to the candidate. Again, the candidate will be encouraged to respond to each question within a 2-minute timeframe.
 - f. After 25 minutes, the candidates will rotate to the next room. The “town hall meeting” session will last approximately 90 minutes.
 - g. At the conclusion of the session, forum moderators will direct voting members back to the Assembly Hall for continuation of the assembly agenda.
7. Before the casting of each ballot, the churchwide representative presiding for the election of the bishop will lead the assembly in prayer for the guidance of the Holy Spirit in the calling of the pastor to be the bishop of the Florida-Bahamas Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.