



Recommendations: Election of the Presiding Bishop

Process for Election

The process for election of the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is governed by the applicable bylaws and the Rules of Organization and Procedure as adopted by the Churchwide Assembly.

The effect of the ballot on which an election takes place is the following action:

To elect _____ to a six-year term, commencing November 1, 2007, as presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Bylaw 19.31.01. specifies the process for nomination and election of the secretary, as follows:

The churchwide officers shall be elected as follows:

- a. The presiding bishop shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly by ecclesiastical ballot. Three-fourths of the votes cast shall be necessary for election on the first ballot. If no one is elected, the first ballot shall be considered the nominating ballot. Three-fourths of the votes cast on the second ballot shall be necessary for election. The third ballot shall be limited to the seven persons (plus ties) who received the greatest number of votes on the second ballot, and two-thirds of the votes cast shall be necessary for election. The fourth ballot shall be limited to the three persons (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of votes on the third ballot, and 60 percent of the votes cast shall be necessary for election. On subsequent ballots, a majority of the votes cast shall be necessary for election. These ballots shall be limited to the two persons (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of votes on the previous ballot.

Section 15 in the Rules of Organization and Procedure describe the process in further detail.

Duties and Responsibilities

The duties and responsibilities of the presiding bishop, as specified in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, are diverse and numerous:

13.21.

This church shall have a presiding bishop who, as its pastor, shall be a teacher of the faith of this church and shall provide leadership for the life and witness of this church. The presiding bishop shall be an ordained minister of this church. The presiding

bishop may be male or female, as may all other officers of this church. The presiding bishop shall:

- a. Be the president and chief executive officer of the corporation, overseeing the work of the churchwide organization.
- b. Be the chief ecumenical officer of this church and its primary representative in the national and international interchurch agencies in which this church holds membership.
- c. Provide for the preparation of the agenda for the Churchwide Assembly, Church Council, Executive Committee, Conference of Bishops, and Cabinet of Executives, and preside at the Churchwide Assembly.
- d. Provide leadership and care for the bishops of the synods.
- e. Supervise the work of the other officers.
- f. Provide for the preparation of the budget for the churchwide organization.
- g. Nominate and direct the work of the executive for administration.
- h. Coordinate and supervise the work of executives of churchwide units.
- i. Appoint members of all churchwide committees for which election procedures are not provided.
- j. Be responsible for the chaplaincies of this church in federal agencies, institutions, and armed forces and provide for the pastoral care of those called to these ministries.
- k. Recommend legal counsel to the Church Council.
- l. Serve as an advisory member, with voice but not vote, on all committees of this church and all boards or committees of churchwide units, or designate a person to serve as the presiding bishop's representative.

13.22.

The presiding bishop shall be elected by the Churchwide Assembly to a six-year term.

13.22.01.

The presiding bishop shall be elected as provided in Chapter 19 and shall take office on the first day of the third month after election.

13.22.02.

The presiding bishop shall be a full-time, salaried position.

13.22.A04.

Ecumenical representatives shall be chosen by the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America according to the following pattern:

- a. The presiding bishop, in consultation with the Executive Committee of the Church Council, shall appoint members of delegations to national and international inter-church entities in which this church holds membership.*
- b. The presiding bishop, in consultation with the Executive Committee of the Church Council, shall appoint members of inter-Lutheran, inter-faith, and ecumenical discussions, including bilateral dialogues and conversations, in which this church participates.*
- c. All such appointments shall be reported to the Church Council as information.*

15.11.C05.

To assist in the fulfillment of constitutional provision 13.21.j., the presiding bishop shall have a staff member appointed by the presiding bishop who shall be an assistant to the presiding bishop of this church to carry out duties related to the chaplaincies of this church in the U.S. armed forces, the Veterans Affairs Administration, and other federal agencies and institutions. The assistant to the presiding bishop for federal chaplaincy ministries shall:

- a. supervise the operation of the Bureau for Federal Chaplaincy Ministries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;*
- b. fulfill the requirements for endorsement of candidates for services in federal chaplaincies; and*
- c. seek periodically the advice and counsel of the inter-Lutheran committee for federal chaplaincies whose members of this church shall be appointed by the presiding bishop.*

15.11.02.

Administrative Team. The presiding bishop, secretary, treasurer, and executive for administration shall function as an administrative team, directed by the presiding bishop. This administrative team shall assist the presiding bishop in the fulfillment of the presiding bishop's responsibilities for oversight, management, supervision, and coordination in the operation of the churchwide organization.

14.21.05.

The Church Council, upon recommendation of the presiding bishop, shall submit budget proposals for approval by the Churchwide Assembly and authorize expenditures within the parameters of approved budgets.

11.33.

Leadership of this church shall be vested in the officers, the Churchwide Assembly, the Church Council, boards, and executive directors of churchwide administrative units. The full-time officers shall be the presiding bishop of this church, secretary of this church, and treasurer of this church

Other constitutional provisions and bylaws related to the role and responsibilities of the presiding bishop also apply. Those cited (above) provide the general overview of the office.