

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: SYNOD COUNCIL

### **1. What is the Synod Council?**

The Synod Council serves as the Synod's board of directors of the synod and acts as its legislative authority between meetings of the Synod Assembly. The Council may make decisions so long as they do not conflict with actions taken by the Synod Assembly, the Synod Constitution, or the constitution and bylaws of the ELCA.

### **2. How does the Synod Council do its work?**

The Synod Council exercises trusteeship over the Synod by setting policy and providing oversight of the synod's finances, assets, and personnel. The Council is responsible, among other things, to prepare and recommend long range and intermediate program goals and budgets for the Synod, to see that the resolutions of the Synod Assembly are carried out, to establish processes and receive reports concerning the issuance of letters of call, and the status of rostered ministers and personnel, and to report to the Synod Assembly the activities of the Synod Council. For more information on the responsibilities of the Synod Council, please see Section 10 of the Synod Constitution.

### **3. What are the expectations of members of the Synod Council? What spiritual gifts are important to service on the Synod Council?**

The Synod Council is a visionary and discerning body for the Synod and its churches. We are a "TELLing" Synod, whose mission is to Transform lives, through relational Evangelism that reaches out to the world, in missionary Leadership that tells the Lutheran story. The Synod Council's mission is to serve the Synod, its congregations, and the world at large by identifying ministry priorities, monitoring work, and creating accountability for the Synod's staff and ministries as they TELL the Good News of Jesus Christ to the world.

The spiritual gifts that are important to service in this ministry are discernment, prayer, and teaching. It is not necessary for one to have served on a Congregation Council, because the work of the Synod Council is not the implementation of particular ministry tasks. Rather, the Council's role is one of planning, oversight, and accountability so that the Synod and its congregations may tell "the good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ." (Acts 8:12b).

### **4. How frequently does the Synod Council meet? How long do the meetings last and where are they held? What is the term of office?**

According to the Synod Constitution, the Synod Council must meet at least three times per year, in September, January, and April. The regular meetings are held on Friday evenings and all day Saturday. The meetings are held at various churches throughout the Synod, in order to permit the members of the Council to become more familiar with the work and needs of the Synod's congregations. The Council generally holds a fourth meeting the morning before the Synod Assembly begins in June.

Council members serve for an initial three-year term and are eligible to be re-elected to a second three year term. The Youth position on Synod Council is a two year term

**5. Does the Synod reimburse travel expenses?**

Although service on the Synod Council is a volunteer position, the Synod reimburses Council members for reasonable and necessary overnight expenses (such as hotel rooms and meals) and reasonable travel expenses associated with their attendance at meetings. Receipts are required in order to obtain reimbursement.

**6. Why does the Synod ask whether candidates are persons of color or have a primary language other than English?**

The goal of the Synod and the ELCA is to be inclusive and diverse in every aspect of the church's ministry. Members in good standing of congregations in the Synod are therefore welcome to stand for election to open Synod Council positions, or positions as voting members for the Churchwide Assembly. In order to meet the Synod's goal of being diverse and inclusive, however, certain positions are designated for persons of color or whose primary language is other than English. We ask for this information to be sure that candidates for those positions are eligible to be elected to them.