

Proposed Constitution Changes Coming to the 2027 Synod Assembly

At the 2027 Southwestern Texas Synod Assembly, April 30–May 1, voting members will be asked to consider changes to our governing documents related to the Candidacy Committee. Because proposed constitutional changes must be announced at least six months before the assembly, we are sharing them now.

Our Candidacy Committee carries important responsibility on behalf of the synod and the whole church, accompanying and overseeing people preparing for rostered ministry in accordance with ELCA candidacy policies and procedures.

Currently, the synod constitution both establishes the committee and spells out details about its membership and work. The ELCA Model Constitution for Synods does not include a Candidacy Committee provision in the constitution itself. The proposal would therefore move the establishment of the committee into a **bylaw** and its more detailed structure and responsibilities into a **continuing resolution**.

This is not a proposal to eliminate or diminish the Candidacy Committee. Rather, it would give the synod greater flexibility to respond as churchwide candidacy structures and practices change, while continuing to provide clear structure and accountability for the committee's work.

The Proposed Changes

1. Remove the current constitutional provision, S11.05., concerning the Candidacy Committee.

2. Add the following bylaw:

S11.01.02 CANDIDACY COMMITTEE: There shall be a Candidacy Committee which shall act on behalf of the synod, its congregations, and the entire church in endorsing, supervising, examining and approving candidates for the rostered leadership of this church, in accordance with the standards, criteria, policies and procedures established from time to time by the appropriate unit of the churchwide organization.

3. Add the following continuing resolution:

S11.01.A27 The Candidacy Committee shall:

a. consist of a chairperson and as many members as deemed necessary from across the synod at large who shall be appointed by the Synod Council, the bishop or their appointee, and such other person(s) appointed by the appropriate unit of the churchwide organization in accordance with churchwide policies and procedures for candidacy. Terms of committee members appointed by the Synod Council shall be three years, and such persons may serve no more than three successive terms.

b. all members, including the bishop or bishop's appointee and the seminary faculty representative, are voting members of the committee; the Region 4 candidacy and leadership manager is an advisor to the committee with voice but no vote.

c. entrance, endorse, guide, supervise, examine and approve Word and Sacrament and Word and Service candidates for ordination or for reception from other church bodies, in accordance with churchwide policies and procedures for candidacy; and

d. perform such other functions related to the candidacy process as may be assigned to it by churchwide policies and procedures for candidacy or by the Synod Council.

These changes will come before voting members for action at the **April 30–May 1, 2027 Synod**

Assembly. Additional information about the proposal and the process for considering it will be included in assembly materials.