

## **21-02 Candidate Forums for Future Bishop Elections**

WHEREAS, the Holy Spirit's work includes but is not limited to synod assemblies, and

WHEREAS, an informed bishop's election would include time to get to know candidates for bishop outside of a few speeches in a single weekend, and

WHEREAS, several other synods, including the Metro Chicago Synod and Northwest Washington Synod, have shared information about candidates in ways beyond a written form, including Candidate or Nominee Forums well in advance of Synod Assembly, and

WHEREAS, our Synod Constitution currently prohibits any information beyond a written form: S9.04.03 reads - "Other means of organized advocacy or of circulating information about potential nominees for the office of bishop before or during the Synod Assembly shall not be permitted.", and

WHEREAS, this prohibition is not "standard" across the ELCA and is not included in the constitutions of nearby synods, including the Rocky Mountain Synod and the Sierra Pacific Synod, and

WHEREAS, our current process privileges those who are already well-known within the synod, and

WHEREAS, the ELCA's Toolkit for Synod Bishop's Elections says "It is desirable and useful to identify and discuss what the synod is looking for in terms of leadership and the desired attributes of a bishop and to recall the commitments of this church to raise up and support faithful, wise, and courageous leaders, including persons of color and women", and

WHEREAS, a more open process with Candidate Forums would provide opportunities for a wider range of bishop candidates to share and have their voices heard, and

WHEREAS, a more open process with Candidate Forums would allow rostered and a much wider range of lay members beyond voting members to learn about bishop candidates and ask critical questions of bishop candidates well in advance of Synod Assembly, therefore

RESOLVED, that the Southwest California Synod Council take the necessary steps to amend our constitution to remove line S9.04.03 "Other means of organized advocacy or of circulating information about potential nominees for the office of bishop before or during the Synod Assembly shall not be permitted." from our Synod Constitution, so that the Holy Spirit's work will not be constricted in this way and so that we can have Candidate Forums in the future.

Signed,

Rev. Matt Keadle, St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Los Angeles  
Rev. Tracy Williams, Holy Redeemer Lutheran Church, Bellflower  
Rev. Roderick Hines, Messiah Lutheran Church, Los Angeles  
Rev. John Miller, Ascension Lutheran Church, Another Level Ministries, LA;  
Chapel of Peace, Inglewood  
Rev. Caleb Crainer, St. Andrew's Lutheran Church, Los Angeles  
Rev. Ryan Chaddick, American Lutheran Church, Burbank  
Chelsea Kadovitz, Bethel Lutheran Church, Encino  
Rev. Joseph Castañeda Carrera MPP, Adore LA, Los Angeles

**What is the financial impact of this resolution on our synod budget? If expenditures are required, what are the sources of income anticipated to accomplish the purpose of the resolution?**

There should be no financial cost for this policy change.

**What are the personnel implications within our synod—or churchwide? Who will be responsible for implementation of the resolution?**

Synod Council will begin the necessary steps toward constitutional amendment.

**How does this resolution enhance and forward the mission of the church and our synod?**

The resolution liberates our synod to more equitably and effectively lift up leaders to lead us in mission.