

Discernment Information for Pastors discerning possible call to the Office of Bishop

- The election of a bishop is a call process, albeit a vastly different one than occurs in a congregation. Pastors discerning a possible call to the office of bishop are encouraged to identify (a) person(s) who can serve as prayer support/ chaplain for them throughout this process, including at assembly.
- Pastors identified as possessing the gifts for the office of bishop are encouraged to be in communication with their congregation, for reassurance and encouragement, regarding being identified thusly. Congregational members may experience anxiety if their pastor's name is identified and will need education regarding the process that will take place, including use of ecclesiastical ballot.
- Review "The Office and Ministry of the Bishop in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America: A Shared Vision of Episcopacy and a Relational Agreement". Usually referred to as the "Bishops Relational Agreement" within churchwide offices, it addresses both the responsibilities of a synod bishop and the relationship among members of the Conference of Bishops. It is important for those identified as possessing the gifts for the office of bishop to have an understanding of the issues that it addresses. Link: http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/2019_Toolkit_for_Synod_Bishop_Elections.pdf?_ga=2.239576906.834816481.1553562539-536424389.1553562539- click on Exhibit J.
- There are no expectations regarding where the bishop personally resides. Regular presence through the week in the synod office in Harrisburg is expected. It is also understood that it is necessary, at times, to travel extensively around the entire territory of the synod. National and occasionally international travel is expected for meetings of the Conference of Bishops, Bishops Academy, Konde Diocese and additional responsibilities.
- The financial compensation of the bishop exceeds the Minimum guidelines for 2019 at every year of ordination for salary and housing. It is also comparable with the compensation for the bishops of Region 8. The compensation also provides for health insurance, retirement contribution, continuing education and a travel allowance.
- Pastors identified as possessing the gifts for the office of bishop should be aware of issues and priorities arising from discussions at and prior to the 2018 Synod Assembly and the January conference assemblies. Review our Synod's Mission Snapshot at <https://www.lss-elca.org/wp-content/uploads/synod-assembly/2019/Mission-Snapshot-as-of-3-2-19.pdf> for information.
- Please be aware that our constitution requires background checks be performed following the election to bishop. For this reason, a disclosure form is requested from those providing bio forms to be posted. The Disclosure forms and Background checks are reviewed by the Vice President of the synod.

- Dates which already appear on the bishop's calendar are as follows:
 1. New Bishops' Orientation- generally takes place in late June-July, usually 3-4 days, in Chicago. Dates will be posted as soon as they are scheduled.
 2. ELCA Churchwide Assembly 8/4-10/2019
 3. Bishop's Convocation 10/17/19 (10/18/19 Certification program)
 4. Conference of Bishops 9/26- 10/1/19
 5. If knowledge of additional specific dates is needed, contact Debbie Clark, Executive Assistant to the Bishop