



## 2023 LCMS CONVENTION — ELECTION OF: VOTING DELEGATES AND ALTERNATES

### INSTRUCTIONS FOR CIRCUIT VISITORS

#### (A) ELECTORAL CIRCUIT FORUM REQUIREMENTS TO ELECT VOTING DELEGATES/ALTERNATES

As a circuit visitor, you are responsible for the proper conduct of your circuit's electoral circuit forum (Bylaws 3.1.2) and for its use of proper procedure in the election of voting delegates and alternate delegates to the LCMS national convention (Bylaw 3.1.2.1). It will be important to pay special attention to the following requirements.

##### **Circuit Forum Meeting Deadline**

Each electoral circuit forum (consisting of one visitation circuit or, if necessary, two adjacent circuits) must meet at your call as circuit visitor not later than nine (9) months prior to the opening date of the Synod convention (i.e., October 29, 2022) (Bylaw 3.1.2.1[a]). Failure to meet this absolute deadline will result in your circuit having no representation at the 2023 convention.

##### **Electronic Meeting Requirements**

An electoral circuit forum may *meet* via electronic means when an in-person meeting is burdensome, so long as the meeting is made available to all participants and opportunity is provided for an open and fair exchange of ideas and for secure, private, and confidential voting (see Bylaw 3.1.2.1[a] and [b]). This provision does not require an *actual meeting* by electronic means and is not satisfied, for example, by an email vote without a meeting.

##### **Notification to Congregations of Their Responsibilities**

Well in advance of the electoral circuit forum, you should remind every congregation in your circuit of its need to:

- Determine which pastor and which layperson shall represent it at the forum (Bylaw 3.1.2.1[c]). It is important to note that changes were made by the 2019 convention: In the case of *multiple-congregation parishes*, each parish sends one voting layperson and one called and installed pastor as voting representatives, together representing all the congregations of the parish. A congregation not contributing a lay voter may send an advisory representative, with voice but no vote.
- Should a *multi-congregation parish* involve *congregations having membership in different electoral circuits*, each lay representative, voting and advisory, shall attend the forum of that circuit of which the representative's congregation is a member. The pastoral delegate shall attend the forum of the circuit, within which he serves a congregation and within the district in which he holds membership, to which he is assigned by his district president. His eligibility for election as circuit delegate shall be within that circuit only. No multi-congregation parish is entitled to more than one pastoral and one lay voting representative because of its inclusion of congregations from different electoral circuits. No circuit shall elect as a lay delegate or alternate a member of any congregation that is served (in other than an assisting capacity) by a pastor elected as delegate or alternate. (This clarification has been proposed for addition to the Bylaws of the Synod by the Commission on *Handbook*.)
- Nominate one layperson (i.e., not a commissioned or ordained minister) from its own or one of the circuit's congregations to serve as the electoral circuit's lay delegate to the convention (Bylaw 3.1.2.1[e]). The name of the nominee must be submitted to you as circuit visitor *prior* to the day of the forum (Bylaw 3.1.2.1[e]).

##### **Voting Delegate Eligibility**

Regarding pastors, each pastor who is called and installed to a congregation of the circuit in other than an assisting capacity and who is not a specific ministry (SMP) pastor (Constitution Article IX; Bylaws 2.5.6 and 2.13.1) is eligible to be elected as a pastoral delegate or alternate to the Synod convention (Bylaw 3.1.2.1[d]). Regarding laypersons, only those laypersons, members of member congregations of the circuit, whose names were submitted prior to the day of the forum may be included on the slate of candidates for the lay delegate and alternate positions, since Bylaw 3.1.2.1(e) does not allow for nominations at the meeting. Licensed lay deacons are laypersons and may serve as lay voting delegates and alternates. Commissioned ministers may not serve as lay or pastoral voting delegates or alternates.

### Circuit Forum Election Process

You must follow the election process provided by Bylaw 3.1.2.1(d)–(h). It will be helpful if you read the provisions of Bylaw 3.1.2.1 at the meeting to make attendees aware of proper procedure. Attendance at the 2021–2022 district convention is not a requirement to serve as an LCMS convention delegate or alternate. Have on hand an ample supply of blank pieces of paper to serve as ballots or make adequate provision for an electronic means of voting that fulfills the requirements of Bylaw 3.1.2.1[b].

- During the election process, it will be important to bear in mind that when a congregation supplies a pastoral delegate or alternate, no congregation served by him (in other than an assisting capacity [Bylaw 2.5.6]) can supply another delegate or alternate, pastoral or lay (Bylaw 3.1.2.1[d][3]).
- Likewise, when a congregation supplies a lay delegate or alternate, that congregation's other lay members and any pastors serving it (again, in other than an assisting capacity) are excluded from election as delegate or alternate (Bylaw 3.1.2.1[e][3]).

### Privacy Notice

Another change in this triennium is due to 2019 Convention Resolution 9-04A, which removed the printing of delegate addresses from the *Convention Workbook*. When collecting their personal information for submission, inform delegates and alternates that their mailing addresses will no longer be published in the *Workbook*, but will still be important for official convention business mailings and will be required on registration forms. Strongly encourage delegates to supply an email address, which will be used only for official, convention-related business. Personal information gathered for the purpose of convention registration is not to be used or disseminated for any purpose other than official convention business, even by the district.

### Election Error Corrections

If an error is made by a circuit forum, the forum can meet again a second time to correct its error, so long as there is sufficient time to do so prior to the October 29, 2022, deadline for circuit forum delegate elections.

### Election Results Submission

*Immediately* following the forum, election results must be reported to the secretary of the district using the electronic auto-fill form available on the Synod convention website: <http://www.lcms.org/convention/registrations>.

## (B) ELECTORAL CIRCUIT ELECTIONS REPORT

As a circuit visitor responsible for reporting the results of your electoral circuit's voting delegate and alternate elections, you must use the electronic auto-fill **FORM I—Official Registration—Voting Delegates and Alternates** that is available on the LCMS convention website (<http://www.lcms.org/convention/registrations>).

### Complete Form I

This form must be filled out *completely*, providing *all* requested information, taking particular care to spell delegate and alternate delegate names correctly and to provide accurate address and email information, since this information will be used extensively prior to and following the convention.

### Submission

When completed, you should *retain a copy* for your circuit's files and then send the form electronically via email to your district's secretary for his review and certification (Bylaw 3.1.3.2).

### Voting Delegate Vacancy (Alternate Available)

In the event that a vacancy occurs in one of the voting delegate positions prior to the 2023 Synod convention, you must first verify that the elected alternate delegate continues to be available to serve and then *inform your district secretary* of the needed change of registration. The district secretary will submit the proper form to the Synod.

### Voting Delegate Vacancy (Alternate NOT Available)

In the event that a vacancy occurs in a voting delegate position and the duly elected alternate also is no longer available to attend the 2023 Synod convention, you must *inform your district secretary*, who will in turn inform your district president of his need to fill the vacancy by appointment — in consultation with you as circuit visitor (Bylaw 3.1.2.1[j]). Your district secretary will then inform the Synod of this change.

### Voting Delegate Vacancy (No Alternate Elected)

Reminder: In the event that a vacancy occurs in a voting delegate position and your circuit failed to elect an alternate at the circuit forum, your circuit will not be able to send a delegate to the 2023 Synod convention, since an appointment by a district president is possible only when an electoral circuit has filled both its delegate and alternate positions via circuit forum elections. In such case, you as circuit visitor must *inform your district secretary*, who will report to the Synod your elected delegate's inability to serve.

### Voting Delegate Address/Contact Info Changes

In the event there is an address change for an elected delegate from your circuit, as circuit visitor you must *inform your district secretary*, who in turn will report the change of address to the Synod.

## (C) IMPORTANT DEADLINE REMINDERS FOR CIRCUIT VISITORS

### IMPORTANT DEADLINES TO REMEMBER:

**One Day Prior to Circuit Forum**      **DEADLINE FOR LAY DELEGATE NOMINEES:** Names of nominees must be provided by congregations to you as circuit visitor at least one day prior to the day of the electoral circuit forum.

**October 29, 2022**      **ELECTORAL CIRCUIT MEETING DEADLINE:** You must hold your circuit forum for the election of delegates to the 2023 convention on or before this date. You should report results **immediately** following the meeting providing your district secretary with the names and addresses of voting delegates and alternates, pastoral and lay, submitted on **Form I—Official Registration—Voting Delegates and Alternates**.

**November 4, 2022**      **VOTING DELEGATE/ALTERNATE REGISTRATION DEADLINE:** By this date, your district secretary must have reported to the Secretary of the Synod the names and addresses of voting delegates and alternates, pastoral and lay, submitted by you to him on **Form I—Official Registration—Voting Delegates and Alternates**.

Thank you for the support for this certification process that you will be able to provide in your district.