

Notes Regarding The Proposed Amendments To Our Constitution

CHANGES IN TERMINOLOGY

Until this year, in addition to pastors, our church recognized three kinds of lay professional leadership: deaconesses, diaconal ministers, and associates in ministry. The Churchwide Assembly voted in August 2016 to merge these three into one category called Deacons and they are referred to as “Ministers of Word and Service.” Pastors are referred to as “Ministers of Word and Sacrament.” **The proposed amendments reflect these changes in terminology.**

CALLING A MINISTER OF WORD AND SERVICE

Deacons are like pastors, in that they are not hired but called. **There are many paragraphs added to section 9 that describe the process for calling a Minister of Word and Service.**

CHRISTIAN UNITY

The proposed amendments contain new paragraphs that reflect the ELCA’s longstanding commitment to serve Christian unity in the world, recognizes our relationship with the Lutheran World Federation, and allows for pastors from church with which we have full Communion relationships¹ to serve as a temporary pastor.

MEMBERS

The current Constitution includes four categories of members: baptized, confirmed, voting and associate. Many churches, however, experience the presence of ‘snow birds,’ and others who have homes in two places, etc. **Proposed amendments adds the category ‘Seasonal members,’ who are members of another ELCA congregation but desire to be active in another congregation. The amendments indicate how they may be given limited voting rights.**

BYLAW CHANGES

Amendment proposes that bylaw changes be approved by 2/3 vote rather than simple majority.

PARISH AUTHORIZATION

Should a congregation like ours determine that a formal connection with another church or churches would serve us all best, we can form what is called a parish and call a pastor and/or deacon to serve multiple churches in the parish. This section is currently not in our Constitution. It is in the current model Constitution. **The proposed amendments adds this section to the Mount Cross Constitution.**

1 - The Episcopal Church, The United Church of Christ, the Mennonite Church, the United Methodist Church, the Presbyterian Church, USA, and the Reformed Church in America.