



Sierra Pacific Synod

Office of the Bishop

TO: All Congregations and Rostered Ministers in the Sierra Pacific Synod
FROM: Jeffrey Pennington, Synod Council Secretary *Jeff A Pennington*
DATE: March 26, 2025
SUBJECT: 2025 Synod Assembly and voting members

The 2025 Sierra Pacific Synod Assembly will consist of three interrelated gatherings (meetings), including in-person regional gatherings throughout the month of May 2025, followed by an online business gathering on June 14, 2025 and an online budget gathering on November 1, 2025.

VOTING MEMBERS

- All ministers of Word and Sacrament under call on the roster of this synod and all ministers of Word and Service under call on the roster of this synod are expected to attend meetings of the Synod Assembly.
- Rostered ministers on the roster of this synod who are granted disability status or on-leave-from-call are permitted but not required to serve as voting members of the synod assembly.
- Ministers of Word and Sacrament from a church body with which a relationship of full communion exists who are under service in a congregation of this synod may serve as voting members.
- Those ministers on the Retired roster of the synod chosen as voting members according to S7.22.01. of the synod constitution may serve as voting members.
- ELCA interim pastors serving a congregation are considered “under call” for the purpose of Synod Assembly voting member status.
- A synod authorized worshipping community should send two lay voting members.
- The youth from the Sierra Pacific Synod Youth Committee shall be voting members of the Assembly.
- Synod officers and voting members of synod council who are not otherwise voting members of the Synod Assembly under †S7.21.

For congregations:

S7.21.A23. *Congregations may determine the number of lay voting members to the Synod Assembly using one of the following formulae:*

Formula A) Each congregation shall elect two lay voting members to the synod assembly. One additional voting member shall be elected by congregations having between 351 and 525 baptized members. Two additional voting members shall be elected by congregations having between 526 and 700 baptized members. Three additional voting members shall be elected by congregations having between 701 and 875 baptized members. Four additional voting members shall be elected by congregations having more than 875 baptized members. The number of

baptized members shall be determined by the most recent parochial report on file with the synod office.

or

Formula B) Each congregation shall elect two lay voting members for every rostered minister serving the congregation under a letter of call or extended service. If there is no rostered minister serving the congregation, the congregation shall elect two lay voting members.

Congregations are encouraged to include persons of color, persons whose primary language is other than English, youth (confirmed to age 17), and young adults (age 18 to 30) among their lay voting members to the synod assembly. (see †S6.04. and †S6.04.01.)

Regardless of the formula used, for congregations sending an even number of lay voting members, no more than half of the congregation's lay voting members should be of the same gender. For congregations sending one additional lay voting member (3 total), no more than two members should be of the same gender. For congregations sending three additional lay voting members (5 total), no more than three members should be of the same gender. (see †S6.04. and S6.04.A16.)

- S7.21.B23. *A. Congregations may send one additional lay voting member who is a person of color or person whose primary language is other than English.*
B. Congregations may send one additional lay voting member who is a youth or young adult. For purposes of the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this synod, the term "youth" means a voting member of a congregation who has not reached the age of 18 at the time of election or appointment for service. The term "young adult" means a voting member of a congregation between the ages of 18 and 30 at the time of election or appointment for service. If a congregation is sending a youth as part of the Sierra Pacific Synod Youth Committee (see S7.21.04.), the congregation may send a young adult.
C. For any additional lay voting members, congregations should take gender balance into consideration.

In electing voting members, congregations and SAWCs are strongly urged to take into consideration the need to ensure diversity and representational principles in elected leadership, as outlined in †S6.04., S6.04.A16., †S6.04.01., and †S6.04.02. of the *Sierra Pacific Synod Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions*, found online at <https://www.spselca.org/general-info>.

The same voting members should attend all three gatherings, i.e., the regional gathering most convenient to them, the business gathering, and the budget gathering. Therefore, congregations and SAWCs should elect voting members who are available to attend all three gatherings. In addition, given that the business gathering and budget gathering will be online (through Zoom, unless otherwise indicated), congregations and SAWCs should elect voting members comfortable with the Zoom platform.

Due to the nature of this year's assembly, there will be **no late or day-of registration**. Therefore, **voting members must be registered and payment made no later than Saturday, April 26, 2025**.