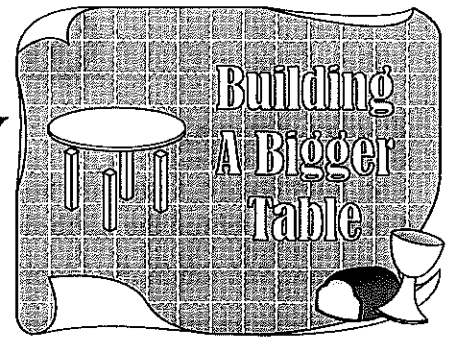


# THE 2019 NORTHWESTERN MINNESOTA SYNOD ASSEMBLY

CONCORDIA COLLEGE - MOORHEAD, MN  
JUNE 7-9, 2019



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## OPPORTUNITIES AT THE ASSEMBLY

1. Through vibrant worship, to recognize and praise God as the Master Table-Builder.
  2. By dwelling in God's Word, to understand how all Christians are called to welcome all persons to God's Table.
  3. Through Spirit-empowered discernment, to welcome a new bishop to our synod table.
  4. By learning together, to receive "blueprints" for building bigger tables back home.
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### KEYNOTE SPEAKER

DR. MICHAEL CHAN | *OLD TESTAMENT SCHOLAR*

Dr. Michael Chan is a professional photographer in Kingman, Arizona where he resides with his family. Previously he taught Old Testament at Luther Seminary, St Paul, for a number of years, starting in 2013. Michael earned his Ph.D at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia, and he has taught the Bible in many settings, both congregational and academic. While he is with us Dr. Chan will deliver three "TED-talk" Bible studies, exploring our synod assembly theme, Building A Bigger Table.

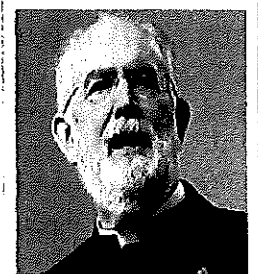
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### CHURCHWIDE REPRESENTATIVE

THE REV. WM CHRIS BOERGER | *SECRETARY, ELCA*

The Rev. Wm Chris Boerger was elected Aug. 16, 2013, to a six-year term as secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America. Following undergraduate studies at Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma, Washington, he received his Masters in Divinity from Christ Seminary SEMINEX in St. Louis, Missouri. Ordained on June 18, 1978, Rev. Boerger served congregations in Friday Harbor, Everett and Enmore--all in Washington state. In 2001, he was elected to the first of two terms as Bishop of the ELCA Northwest Washington Synod, based in Seattle, Washington. Over the years he has served as a member of the Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary Board of Regents; Liaison Bishop to the ELCA Church Council; ELCA Northwest Washington Synod Council; Advisory Bishop to the Interim Ministry Association; Board Member of the Washington Association of Churches; Advisory Board Member for the Lutheran Advocates for Maritime Ministry; and Member of the ELCA's Synodical and Churchwide Relations Committee.



# GENERAL INFORMATION

## LOCATION

The 2019 Synod Assembly will take place at Concordia College in Moorhead, MN - primarily in the Knutson Campus Center (on the north side of campus) and Memorial Auditorium (on the south side of campus).

ADDRESS: 901 8th St. S., Moorhead, MN. 56560 (Parking is available on-site)

## TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

All voting members must check-in 30 minutes before a bishop ballot in order to be eligible to vote

### **FRIDAY, JUNE 7, 2019**

1:00 p.m.	Check-in Begins .....	Memorial Auditorium
3:00 p.m.	Worship .....	Centrum of Knudson Campus Center
4:00 p.m.	Opening of the Assembly/Plenary I .....	Centrum of Knudson Campus Center
	Bishop Ballot #1 .....	
6:30 p.m.	Appreciation Banquet .....	Anderson Commons
8:30 p.m.	Report of Ballot #1 .....	Anderson Commons

### **SATURDAY, JUNE 8, 2019**

7:00 a.m.	Breakfast .....	Anderson Commons
8:00 a.m.	Check-in Continues .....	Memorial Auditorium
8:30 a.m.	Plenary II .....	Memorial Auditorium
	Bishop Ballot #2 .....	
11:30 a.m.	Lunch .....	Memorial Auditorium
	Luncheon for Honorees (by invitation) .....	
1:30 p.m.	Plenary III .....	Memorial Auditorium
	Report of Ballot #2 .....	
3:45 p.m.	Growth Groups .....	Memorial Auditorium
5:45 p.m.	Dinner .....	Memorial Auditorium
7:00 p.m.	Introduction & Questions with the Seven Nominees .....	Memorial Auditorium
8:30 p.m.	Reception with the Seven Nominees .....	Memorial Auditorium

### **SUNDAY, JUNE 9, 2019**

7:00 a.m.	Breakfast .....	Anderson Commons
8:00 a.m.	Check-in Continues .....	Memorial Auditorium
8:30 a.m.	Holy Communion Worship .....	Memorial Auditorium
9:45 a.m.	Plenary IV .....	Memorial Auditorium
	Bishop Ballot #3 .....	
	Report of Ballot #3 .....	
12:00 p.m.	Lunch .....	Memorial Auditorium
1:00 p.m.	Time with the Final 3 Nominees .....	Memorial Auditorium
1:30 p.m.	Plenary V .....	Memorial Auditorium
	Bishop Ballot #4 .....	
	Assembly Business .....	
	Report of Ballot #4 .....	
	Bishop Ballot #5 .....	
	Assembly Business .....	
	Report of Ballot #5: Bishop-Elect Announced .....	
	Conclusion of Business/Closing of the Assembly .....	

## **PRE-ASSEMBLY MATERIALS**

In addition to the information here, **pre-assembly materials will be posted on our synod website at [www.nwmnsynod.org](http://www.nwmnsynod.org)** as they become available. All pre-assembly information will be posted at least two weeks prior to the assembly. Voting members are responsible for reading these materials, downloading them to their own computer/tablet or printing materials they wish to bring to the assembly. Each congregation is responsible for ensuring its voting members have access to the pre-assembly materials.

## **ASSEMBLY DELIBERATIONS**

The deliberative business of the assembly this year will include the elections of a new Synod Bishop and a new Synod Vice President; elections of members for the Synod Council and the Synod Discipline Committee; consideration of resolutions; approval of synod budgets for the 2019 and 2020 fiscal years; approval of the 2020 Synod Compensation Guidelines; reception of reports from the Synod Bishop and the ELCA Churchwide Report; and such other business as may be presented by the Synod Council. **Because it is likely that business—including the final ballots for the bishop election—will not conclude until Sunday, June 9, it is crucial that all voting members plan to participate in all three days of the assembly.**

## **RECOGNITIONS**

Recognitions of anniversaries and retirements for rostered ministers, as well as congregations observing major anniversaries, will take place during Plenary II on the morning of Saturday, June 8, 2019—followed immediately by a special luncheon for honorees (by invitation).

## **THE OFFERING**

The Sunday morning worship offering will be divided between the work of the synod's Native Neighbors Table (50%) and the Northwestern Minnesota Synod Fund for Leaders Endowment (50%). Please make checks payable to the **Northwestern Minnesota Synod**.

## **MEALS & SNACKS**

The registration fee covers meals, snacks, and beverages throughout the entire event. This includes:

- Dinner on Friday & Saturday evening.
- Breakfast on Saturday & Sunday (Anderson Commons).
- Lunch on Saturday & Sunday at noon.
- Coffee and water throughout the event.

## **GROWTH GROUPS**

Late in the afternoon on Saturday, a series of Growth Groups (breakout sessions) on a variety of topics related to our assembly theme will be offered in various locations on the Concordia campus. Each Growth Group will be either 45-minutes or 90-minutes in length, with 45-minute sessions being offered twice. Descriptions for the Growth Groups can be found at [www.nwmnsynod.org/synodassembly](http://www.nwmnsynod.org/synodassembly) by no later than May 17.

## **CHILDCARE**

Childcare will be provided free-of-charge during the plenary sessions to all who need it. Childcare will not be available during meals or during the growth group session. Please indicate on your registration form that you intend to use the childcare, the number of children attending childcare, and the age(s) of your child(ren).

## **DIETARY & ACCESSIBILITY RESTRICTIONS**

Please indicate any restrictions regarding diet or accessibility on the registration form. We can't guarantee that these restrictions will be accommodated if received after Monday, May 27, 2019.

## **REGISTRATION**

Registration for Synod Assembly will be done completely online via [www.nwmnsynod.org/synodassembly](http://www.nwmnsynod.org/synodassembly). Both credit card and check payments will be accepted at registration. To ensure that resources are available for all Assembly attendees, pre-registration is required! **REGISTRATION OPENS ON MARCH 1, 2019.**

## **REGISTRATION FEES & RIGHTS**

For a detailed chart of registration fees and rights of individuals attending the assembly, please see the *Registration Fees & Rights* document available at [nwmnsynod.org/synodassembly](http://nwmnsynod.org/synodassembly).

## **VOTING MEMBERS**

A list of all congregations within the Northwestern Minnesota Synod and the number of voting members allotted can be found at [www.nwmnsynod.org/synodassembly](http://www.nwmnsynod.org/synodassembly).

## **ROSTERED MINISTERS UNDER CALL**

All ministers of Word and Sacrament and ministers of Word and Service serving under call on the roster of this synod and attending the Synod Assembly shall be voting members. Note: retired rostered ministers currently serving under contract as interim ministers in congregations shall also register under this category.

## **SYNODICALLY AUTHORIZED MINISTERS (SAMs)**

All Synodically Authorized Ministers are full voting members of the Synod Assembly.

## **LAY VOTING MEMBERS**

Congregations with fewer than 175 baptized members shall elect **a minimum of one** lay voting member and may elect up to two lay voting members (a male and a female).

Congregations with 175 or more baptized members shall elect **a minimum of two** lay voting members (one male and one female).

Congregations with 751 or more baptized members may register additional lay voting members (half male, half female) as described in the listing of congregations of the synod at [www.nwmnsynod.org/synodassembly](http://www.nwmnsynod.org/synodassembly).

## **LAY VOTING MEMBERS BETWEEN AGES 15 AND 30**

Confirmed youth who are voting members of their congregations may be elected by their congregations to serve as "regular" lay voting members of the synod assembly. Any congregation that has elected its minimum number of "regular" lay voting members may also elect an "additional voting member who is a confirmed voting member of that congregation up to the age of 30 years." (S7.21.B17). Only these additional youth or young adult voting members may register at this reduced rate.

## **VOTING MEMBERS (CONT.)**

### **ROSTERED MINISTERS NOT SERVING UNDER CALL**

Ministers of Word and Sacrament on the roster of the synod who are retired or disabled may register at a reduced rate and will have both voice and vote. Note: Congregations may not elect retired Ministers of Word and Sacrament as Lay Voting Members.

Ministers of Word and Service on the roster of the synod who are retired or disabled may register at a reduced rate, with voice but not vote. Exception: retired or disabled ministers of Word and Service may be elected by congregations as Lay Voting Members, with both voice and vote. The congregation, however, must register them at the full Lay Voting Member rate.

Rostered Ministers on a roster of the synod who are "on leave from call" may register at a reduced rate, with voice but not vote.

## **CONCORDIA COLLEGE HOUSING**

On-campus housing is available this year. Please see the *On-Campus Housing* document on the synod website at [www.nwmnsynod.org/synodassembly](http://www.nwmnsynod.org/synodassembly).

## **HOTEL SUGGESTIONS**

There are numerous quality hotels in the Fargo/Moorhead area that both convenient and affordable. Here are a few options that the Synod Office would suggest:

**MICROTEL**  
2915 12th St S  
Moorhead, MN 56560  
*6 minutes from Concordia*

**COURTYARD BY MARRIOTT**  
1080 28th Ave S  
Moorhead, MN 56560  
*5 minutes from Concordia*

**TRAVELODGE AND SUITES**  
3027 S Frontage Rd  
Moorhead, MN 56560  
*9 minutes from Concordia*

# **CONCORDIA HOUSING INFORMATION**

*Housing registration is due by April 22, 2019. No late housing registrations will be accepted.*

## **DESCRIPTION**

This year, Concordia College housing will be available to those who attend the assembly. Reservations will be honored on a first-come, first-served basis.

Housing will be within the Park Region dormitory on the north end of Concordia College's campus.

*This dormitory is air-conditioned.*

## **FEES**

	<b>Shared Room (Double)</b>	<b>Single Room</b>
<b>15-17 year olds</b>	\$45/night per person	Not Available
<b>Age 18 and older</b>	\$45/night per person	\$55/night per person

## **MARRIED PERSONS**

If you intend on staying on-campus with your spouse, you must register separately and indicate that you are intending to room with your spouse on the registration form. There is only one communal bathroom on each floor, and will be designated to one gender. Spouses of the gender not indicated will have to use the bathroom on a different floor.

## **YOUTH**

All youth attending the assembly are encouraged to stay in the Concordia College housing. Fellowship time, games, and events will be provided following the Friday night events. There will be at least one adult chaperone on each floor with youth under the age of 18. All youth (both voting members and visitors) will be able to participate in evening activities on Friday and Saturday, courtesy of the Lutheran Youth Organization (LYO).

## **SIGNING UP FOR HOUSING**

Concordia College housing must be signed up for by **April 22, 2019** via the form available on the synod website at [www.nwmnsynod.org/synodassembly](http://www.nwmnsynod.org/synodassembly). Signing up for housing will no longer be offered after that date under any circumstances due to Concordia College's housing policies.

## **CHECK-IN & CHECK-OUT**

All those who will be staying on-campus for housing will be required to check-in to their room and check-out of their room in accordance with Concordia College's policies. There will be multiple times offered to complete the check-in and check-out.

Failure to check-in during the specified times will result in the loss of your room and payment.

Failure to check-out during the specified times will result in an extra \$25 charge, and failure to return your room key or access card will result in an extra \$50 charge, both payable to the Northwestern Minnesota Synod. These charges do not include any fines that may be assessed by Concordia College, which will be the responsibility of the individual.

Adherence to Concordia College's policies is a requirement for on-campus housing. Please keep in mind that Concordia College is a non-smoking and dry campus.

# REGISTRATION FEES & RIGHTS

## REGISTRATION

Registration for Synod Assembly will be done completely online via [www.nwmsynod.org/synodassembly](http://www.nwmsynod.org/synodassembly). Both credit card and check payments will be accepted at registration. In order ensure that resources are available for all Assembly attendees, pre-registration is required!

*Registration will open on March 1, 2019!*

## CONGREGATIONAL VOTING MEMBERS

A list of all congregations within the Northwestern Minnesota Synod and the number of voting members allotted can be found at [www.nwmsynod.org/synodassembly](http://www.nwmsynod.org/synodassembly).

## REGISTRATION FEES & RIGHTS

	Early Reg. <sup>1</sup>	Late Reg.	Voting Rights	Speaking Rights
Rostered Minister Under Call / SAMs	\$180	\$210	Yes	Yes
Lay Voting Member <sup>2</sup>	\$180	\$210	Yes	Yes
Retired Pastor <sup>3</sup>	\$85	\$115	Yes	Yes
Retired Deacon <sup>4</sup>	\$85	\$115	No	Yes
Additional Youth Voting Member <sup>5</sup>	\$85	\$115	Yes	Yes
Rostered Minister "On-Leave from Call"	\$85	\$115	No	Yes
Visitor	\$85	\$115	No	No

<sup>1</sup> Early registration closes at 11:59 p.m. on May 1, 2019 .

<sup>2</sup> No minister of Word and Sacrament may be registered as a Lay Voting Member.

<sup>3</sup> Exception: retired pastors currently serving under contract as interim pastors shall register as "Rostered Ministers Under Call."

<sup>4</sup> Exception: as members of the laity, retired ministers of Word and Service may be registered as Lay Voting Members, but their congregations must pay the full Lay Voting Member registration fee.

<sup>5</sup> This applies only to additional lay voting members ages 15-30. If a confirmed youth or young adult is elected to fulfill the congregation's minimum number of lay voting members, he/she must be registered as Lay Voting Member.

**Note:** All congregations are expected to send voting members to synod assembly, and all costs for the assembly are paid out of registration fees. Congregations under 175 baptized members that register fewer than one lay voting member, or congregations with 175 or more baptized members that register fewer than two lay voting members, will be charged \$85 per absent member. This fee may be paid through the online registration form.

# Records Management

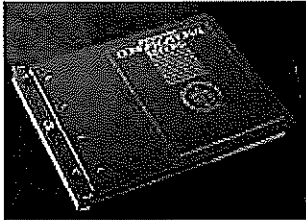
## Parish Register Maintenance



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
God's work. Our hands.

## Maintaining the Parish Register

### Advice for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



- [Becoming a Member](#)
- [Termination of Membership](#)
- [Other Records](#)

The *Model Constitution for Congregations* stipulates that the pastor of a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, "shall keep accurate parochial records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from the congregation; shall submit a summary of such statistics annually to the synod . . ." (\*C9.12.a. and b.) . These guidelines are prepared to assist pastors and other congregational leaders in their task of keeping a parish register.

### Care

Never leave your parish register vulnerable to destruction. Keeping a copy of the parish register, in the same or another format, will provide security for it today. However, for long term preservation you must select a format that is not dependent on hardware and software, that quickly become obsolete, in order to read it. For legal and historical purposes, consider one of the following means of securing your parish register:

### Duplication and dispersal

1. Maintain the traditional parish register in addition to the electronic database.
2. Print out once each year on acid-free paper the necessary reports that constitute a parish register and care for them as you would the traditional parish register.
3. Have microfilm copies of your parish register made at reasonable intervals.
4. Take digital photographs of the pages of the parish register.
5. Record all changes, such as accessions, transfers, deaths, or removal for inactivity, in the minutes of the annual Congregational Meeting.



## Retention

A duplicate copy in one of the above formats should be kept at a remote location, preferably a bank safe deposit box. Remember that digital information is not preserved by accident. If these methods are used, you must commit to reformatting the files as hardware and software change.

For additional information on the pros and cons of each of these formats please see the document, *A Comparison of Microfilming and Digital Preservation Technologies*.

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## Becoming a Member

**People are received into membership in a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in one of the following ways:**

1. Baptism (Infant)
2. Baptism (Adult)
3. Affirmation of Baptism (Confirmation)
4. Transfer
5. Associate Members
6. Restoration to Membership

### **Baptism (Infant)**

An individual becomes a member of the congregation the day the Sacrament of Holy Baptism is administered. If the immediate family members hold membership in another congregation, the child's membership should be transferred to that congregation. If a child, whose parents or guardians are members of your congregation, was baptized in another congregation, request transfer of the child's membership from that congregation.

If the child was baptized in an emergency situation, the date of that administration of the sacrament is entered into the parish register. It is recommended that the order for "Public Recognition of Baptism" (*Evangelical Lutheran Worship: Occasional Services for the Assembly*, page 69) be conducted in the congregation when the health of the child allows.

Traditionally the parish register includes the following information related to Baptisms:

- o Name and birth date of the child
- o Names of parents, including the maiden name of the mother (and an explanation of any hyphenated names)
- o Names of sponsors
- o Date of Baptism
- o Name of the presiding minister

## **Baptism (Adult)**

The Sacrament of Holy Baptism is administered to adults following a period of instruction in the Christian faith. In the case of adults, the date of Baptism is recorded in the parish register under both "baptism" and "confirmation," as the newly baptized adult becomes simultaneously a confirmed member and a voting member of the congregation.

## **Affirmation of Baptism (Confirmation)**

Confirmed members of the congregation are baptized persons who have publicly affirmed their baptismal covenant, following a period of instruction, and upon the approval of the Congregation Council (\* C8.03.). Such instruction should include information regarding what it means to become a member of a Lutheran congregation. Confirmed members also are those who have been received by adult baptism (see above), "or by transfer as confirmed members from other Lutheran congregations, or baptized persons received by affirmation of faith" (\*C8.02.). Upon affirmation of baptism, the person also becomes a voting member of the congregation.

The date entered into the parish register is the date on which the person publicly reaffirms the vows of baptism in the presence of the congregation, or the date on which the person was approved for membership by the Congregation Council in the event no public service was conducted.

## **Transfer**

When a person holding membership in another Lutheran congregation seeks to become a member of your congregation, that person should request in writing a letter of transfer to your congregation. If the letter has not arrived in a prescribed time, you may wish to telephone that congregation to provide a reminder. You may appropriately request the following information with the letter:

- o Date and place of Baptism
- o Date and place of Confirmation
- o How received into the congregation and when

The date entered into the parish register is normally the date on which the person is received publicly into the congregation through "Reception of Lutherans by Transfer" (Occasional Services, page 129). In the event that no public order was used, the date entered into the parish register is the date the letter of transfer was issued. If the person seeking membership in your congregation holds membership in a non-Lutheran congregation, a letter of transfer or release may not necessarily be issued, but you may request one. A period of instruction normally precedes reception into membership. The date entered into the parish register is the date on which the rite of Affirmation of Baptism (*Evangelical Lutheran Worship: Occasional Services*, page 89) was conducted. If no public rite was used, the date entered into the parish register is the date of the meeting of the Congregation Council at which the member was received.

If the person seeking membership in your congregation is received from a congregation that recently dissolved, the information listed above may be obtained from the parish register of the dissolved congregation; that parish register is located in the archives of the synod or of this church. The date entered into the parish register is the date on which the rite of Affirmation of Baptism (*Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, pages 234ff) was conducted. If no public rite is used, the date entered into the parish register is the date of the meeting of the Congregation Council at which the member was received.

### **Associate Members**

Associate members "are persons holding membership in other Lutheran [Christian] congregations who wish to retain such membership but desire to participate in the life and mission of this congregation"(\*C8.02.). Such members may participate in all aspects of the congregation's life except voting, and are not eligible for elected offices. The date entered into the parish register is the date on which the rite of Affirmation of Baptism (*Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, pages 234ff) was conducted. If no public rite is used, the date entered into the parish register is the date of the meeting of the Congregation Council at which the member was received.

### **Restoration to Membership**

People who once were confirmed as members of a Lutheran congregation, but later became inactive, are received into your congregation by Affirmation of Baptism (Restoration to Membership). Persons who are inactive members of a non-Lutheran congregation are received as members of your congregation by Affirmation of Baptism, normally following a period of instruction (see above). The date entered into the parish register is normally the date on which such persons were publicly received through the rite of Affirmation of Baptism [Restoration to Membership] (*Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, pages 234ff).

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### **Termination of Membership**

**Membership in a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran church in America is terminated in one of the following ways:**

1. Death
2. Resignation
3. Transfer or Release
4. Disciplinary Action
5. Removal from the Roll Due to Inactivity

### **Death**

Traditionally, the parish register includes the following information regarding the death of a member of the congregation.

- o Date and place of death
- o Cause of death

- o Date and place of funeral or memorial services)
- o Date and place of internment
- o Name of the presiding minister

The same information may be provided for non-members at whose funeral the pastor serves as presiding minister. The parish register should indicate whether the deceased is a member or a non-member.

While the use of an electronic database at once necessitates that the name of the deceased is removed from the roll of members of the congregation, the parish register retains the name, indicating as much of the information above as possible.

### **Resignation**

A member of the congregation may choose to resign membership in the congregation by means of a letter addressed to the Congregation Council or to the pastor. Notice of receipt of a letter of resignation may be printed in the minutes of the Congregation Council meeting, in a summary of Congregation Council actions printed in the parish newsletter, and in the minutes of the annual Congregational Meeting. The entry in the parish register reflects the date on the letter of resignation. While use of an electronic database necessitates that the name of the person who resigned be removed at once from the roll of members of the congregation, the parish register retains the name, indicating the date of resignation.

### **Transfer or Release**

When a member of the congregation seeks to join another Lutheran congregation, that individual requests that a letter of transfer be issued. The letter normally includes the following information:

- o Birth date and place
- o Baptism date and congregation
- o Confirmation date and congregation
- o Marriage history

When a member of the congregation seeks to join a non-Lutheran congregation, a decision must be made whether to issue a letter of transfer or a letter of release. A letter of release contains the same information as a letter of transfer. The bylaws of the congregation may indicate the conditions under which a letter of release is issued rather than a letter of transfer. The bylaws of the congregation also may indicate whether a letter of transfer or release must be approved by the Congregation Council.

The parish register reflects the date on which the Congregation Council action was taken, or, if Congregation Council action is not required, the date on which the letter of transfer or the letter of release was written.

While the use of an electronic database necessitates that the names of those who have transferred be removed at once from the roll of members of the congregation, the parish register retains the name, indicating the date of transfer or release.

## **Disciplinary Action**

The discipline of members of a congregation is governed by the provisions of Chapter 15 of the Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and by Chapter 20 of the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Notice of suspension from membership for a definite period of time, or exclusion from membership in the congregation is delivered to the member in writing. The parish register reflects the date on which the suspension or exclusion took effect.

A member under discipline is not granted a letter of transfer or a letter of release to another congregation. In the event such a letter is requested, a letter indicating that the person is under discipline appropriately may be sent.

While the use of an electronic database necessitates that the name of the member who is suspended or removed from membership be removed at once from the roll of members of the congregation, the parish register retains the name, indicating the date of suspension or removal as part of the permanent record.

When the member seeks reinstatement to the congregation, the decision to reinstate rests with the Congregation Council (\*C15.05.). The date of reinstatement entered into the parish register is normally the date on which the person was publicly received through the rite of Affirmation of Baptism [Restoration to Membership] (*Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, pages 234ff).

## **Removal from the Roll Due to Inactivity**

A definition of "inactivity" may be included in the bylaws of the congregation. Such definitions normally are framed to reflect a failure to engage in the privileges and duties of members of the congregation, which include, but are not limited to regular use of the means of grace, living a life in accordance with the Word of God, and supporting the mission and ministry of the congregation, the synod, and this church(\*C8.04).

Removal of a member of a congregation for inactivity occurs only after repeated attempts, over a period of at least two years, to ascertain whether the member desires to have his or her name removed from the roll of the congregation. Removal from the roll of the congregation is by action of the Congregation Council upon recommendation of the pastor. Notice of removal from the roll of membership in the congregation is recorded in the minutes of the Congregation Council and in the minutes of the annual Congregational Meeting. It also may be published, if it is the congregation's custom, in the parish newsletter or bulletin. The parish register reflects the date on which the removal was approved by the Congregation Council.

While the use of an electronic database necessitates that the name of the person be removed at once from the roll of members of the congregation, the parish register retains the name, indicating the date on which the person was removed from membership. Such a procedure respects the desire of this church that these people

"shall remain persons for whom the church has a continuing pastoral concern"(\*C8.05.).

Normally a person removed from the roster of members is not granted a letter of transfer or release. A letter indicating the dates of baptism, confirmation, marriage history, and the fact that the individual has been inactive in the life of the congregation may be issued, affording the new congregation the opportunity to receive the member by reaffirmation of faith.

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### **Other Records**

1. Marriages
2. Voting Members
3. Communicants

### **Marriages**

The parish register traditionally contains the following information related to marriages conducted in the congregation:

- o Name and birth date (baptismal date) of the bride
- o Name and birth date (baptismal date) of the groom
- o Names of witnesses
- o Date of the wedding
- o Name of the presiding minister

Pastors are cautioned not to enter the information related to marriages into the parish register or to sign any legal documents until the wedding ceremony has been completed.

### **Voting Members**

The parish register may contain a list of the voting members of the congregation. Voting members are defined by the Model Constitution for Congregations as "members who are confirmed members. Such confirmed members shall have communed and made a contribution of record during the current or preceding year" (\*C8.02.).The parish register may contain the date on which the member became a voting member, either by Affirmation of Baptism [Confirmation] or by letter of transfer from another congregation (see above).

### **Communicants**

In many congregations, persons are admitted to the Sacrament of Holy Communion prior to Affirmation of Baptism [Confirmation]. Reception of Holy Communion often follows a period of instruction appropriate to the age level of the member and after consultation with the pastor and the parents. The parish register may list the date on which the member first received Holy Communion.

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**Building usage research submitted by Steve Guttormson:**

Fergus Falls should be providing day care for an additional 294 children, according to a child care capacity gap analysis done last year. For many parents, the inaccessibility of local child care affects their ability to live and work here. While there is no one solution for the community, First Lutheran Church can make a difference. A small group of congregants, staff, and community members met to explore possibilities of freeing space within unused or underused parts of the building for a licensed provider. Before continuing the conversation, the group seeks input and guidance from the Church Council.