

RANK ORDER PROCESS FOR THE TWELFTH TRIENNIAL CONVENTION (2023)

WOMEN OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

Adopted by the churchwide executive board, October 2017

Background: Article VI, Section 6, Item 6 of the Synodical Women’s Organization Constitution provides that “a rank-order process established by the Churchwide Women’s Organization Executive Board shall be used” when electing voting members of a triennial convention.

At its October 2017 meeting, the churchwide executive board adopted the following rank order process for use in electing voting members to the Eleventh Triennial Convention (2020). It is identical to what was used in electing voting members for the Tenth Triennial Convention (2017). This rank order process is being used for the Twelfth Triennial Convention, and the voting member allocation is the same. The allocation is based on the number of active units in a synodical organization, and with the COVID-19 pandemic upending the activities of units, it only makes sense to base the allocation on pre-COVID numbers.

Rank Order Process

Our constitutions provide two criteria that need to be met in the election of voting members for the triennial convention:

1. as nearly as possible, at least 10% of the delegation shall be persons of color or whose primary language is other than English
2. at least one-fourth of the voting members shall be women attending the convention for the first time

The simplest way to achieve these criteria is to present a ballot with three tickets.

- Ticket A will be used to elect the number of women of color or whose primary language is other than English as set forth in the constitution;
- Ticket B will be used to elect the number of first time voting members as set forth in the constitution; and
- Ticket C will be used to elect the remaining number of nominees needed to complete the delegation.

The election(s) on Ticket A will be conducted first and resolved before moving to Ticket B. To be elected on Ticket A, a woman must receive a majority of votes (i.e., fifty percent of the votes cast, plus one). If an election does not occur on the first ballot, the number of nominees on the second (and all succeeding ballots) is limited to twice the number of voting members needed to be elected on that particular ticket.

Women not elected on Ticket A who would also be eligible as first time voting members will be listed on Ticket B.

The election(s) on Ticket B will occur next. To be elected on Ticket B, a woman must receive a majority of votes (i.e., fifty percent of the votes cast, plus one). If an election does not occur on the first ballot, the number of nominees on the second (and all succeeding ballots) is limited to twice the number of voting members needed to be elected on that particular ticket.

Women on either Ticket A or Ticket B who were not elected will be listed by descending order by vote count and will serve as alternates for the voting member(s) on their respective tickets. Women on either Ticket A or Ticket B who were not elected will also have their names added to Ticket C.

Ticket C will then consist of the names originally selected by the nominating committee for that ticket and the names of women who were on Ticket A and Ticket B who were not elected.

The election on Ticket C then follows. To be elected on Ticket C, a woman must receive a majority of votes (i.e., fifty percent of the votes cast, plus one). The convention will conduct as many ballots on Ticket C as are necessary to complete the delegation. The number of names on each successive ballot will be limited to twice the number of voting members remaining to be elected on that ticket.

The list of alternates on Ticket C will be established in this manner: the woman or women not being elected on the final ballot for Ticket C form the top list of alternates, listed in descending order by actual votes cast on that final ballot. If multiple ballots were needed on Ticket C, the woman or women not being elected on those ballots are added to the list of alternates, listed in descending order first by the number of the ballot and then by actual votes cast.

VOTING MEMBER ALLOCATION

Set by the churchwide executive board, April 2018

The following is based on the number of active units in a synodical organization. This information is taken directly from the Active Unit Assessment as provided by the synodical organizations. The deadline for updating the Active Unit Assessment was April 1, 2018.

Region/Synod	No. of Units reported for Eleventh Triennial Convention (2020) as of 4/19/2018	No. of Voting members to be elected <small>(does not include the SWO president)</small>	Synodical President	Total number of voting members allocated to the synodical organization
1A - Alaska Synod	7	2	1	3
1B - Northwest Washington	46	2	1	3
1C - Southwestern Washington	36	2	1	3
1D - Eastern Washington-Idaho	44	2	1	3
1E - Oregon	14	2	1	3
1F - Montana	78	4	1	5
2A - Sierra Pacific	44	2	1	3
2B - Southwest California	15	2	1	3
2C - Pacifica	47	2	1	3
2D - Grand Canyon	80	4	1	5
2E - Rocky Mountain	56	3	1	4
3A - Western North Dakota	126	6	1	7
3B - Eastern North Dakota	177	8	1	9
3C - South Dakota	67	3	1	4
3D - Northwestern Minnesota	192	8	1	9
3E - Northeastern Minnesota	121	5	1	6
3F - Southwestern Minnesota	221	9	1	10
3G - Minneapolis Area	45	2	1	3
3H - Saint Paul Area	13	2	1	3
3I - Southeastern Minnesota	101	5	1	6
4A - Nebraska	180	8	1	9
4B - Central States	152	7	1	8
4C - Arkansas - Oklahoma	9	2	1	3
4D - Northern Texas - Northern Louisiana	42	2	1	3
4E - Southwestern Texas	104	5	1	6

Region/Synod	No. of Units reported for Eleventh Triennial Convention (2020) as of 4/19/2018	No. of Voting members to be elected <small>(does not include the SWO president)</small>	Synodical President	Total number of voting members allocated to the synodical organization
4F - Texas/Louisiana Gulf Coast	44	2	1	3
5A - Metropolitan Chicago	34	2	1	3
5B - Northern Illinois	107	5	1	6
5C - Central/Southern Illinois	55	3	1	4
5D - Southeastern Iowa	55	3	1	4
5E - Western Iowa	106	5	1	6
5F - Northeastern Iowa	150	6	1	7
5G - Northern Great Lakes	11	2	1	3
5H - Northwest Synod of Wisconsin	155	7	1	8
5I - East Central Wisconsin	54	3	1	4
5J - Greater Milwaukee	50	2	1	3
5K - South Central Synod of Wisconsin	79	4	1	5
5L - LaCrosse Area	45	2	1	3
6A - Southeast Michigan	17	2	1	3
6B - North West Lower Michigan	68	3	1	4
6C - Indiana - Kentucky	69	3	1	4
6D - Northwestern Ohio	97	4	1	5
6E - Northeastern Ohio	83	4	1	5
6F - Southern Ohio	110	5	1	6
7A - New Jersey	27	2	1	3
7B - New England	85	4	1	5
7C - Metropolitan New York	62	3	1	4
7D - Upstate New York	21	2	1	3
7E - Northeastern Pennsylvania	31	2	1	3
7F - Southeastern Pennsylvania	80	4	1	5
8A - Northwestern Pennsylvania	49	2	1	3
8B - Southwestern Pennsylvania	80	4	1	5
8C - Allegheny	26	2	1	3
8D - Lower Susquehanna	38	2	1	3
8E - Upper Susquehanna	12	2	1	3
8F - Delaware - Maryland	46	2	1	3

Region/Synod	No. of Units reported for Eleventh Triennial Convention (2020) as of 4/19/2018	No. of Voting members to be elected <small>(does not include the SWO president)</small>	Synodical President	Total number of voting members allocated to the synodical organization
8G - Metropolitan Washington D.C.	16	2	1	3
8H - West Virginia - Western Maryland	43	2	1	3
9A - Virginia	56	3	1	4
9B - North Carolina	158	7	1	8
9C - South Carolina	92	4	1	5
9D - Southeastern	79	4	1	5
9E - Florida - Bahamas	113	5	1	6
9F - Caribbean	8	2	1	3

Women of the ELCA Churchwide Constitution

Article XI, Section 5, Item 1

“The voting members of the Triennial Convention shall be the officers of the churchwide women’s organization, the members of the churchwide executive board; one convener, coordinator, or co-chair of each synodical women’s organization; those women elected as voting members by the conventions of the synodical women’s organizations; and those appointed as ‘at large’ voting member by the churchwide organization.”

Article XI, Section 5, Item 2

“Each synodical women’s organization shall elect one voting member for every 25 congregational, intercongregational, or special units (or a fraction thereof) within the synodical women’s organization, and each synodical women’s organization shall have at least two elected voting members in addition to the president of the synodical women’s organization. At least 10 percent of the voting member body shall be persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English. As defined in ELCA continuing resolution 5.01.C00, “persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English” shall be understood to mean African American, Black, Arab and Middle Eastern, Asian and Pacific Islander, Latino, American Indian, and Alaska Native people. This definition, however, shall not be understood as limiting Women of the ELCA’s commitment to inclusive participation in its life and work.

Article XI, Section 5, Item 1 (above)

Officers of the Churchwide Women’s Organization	4
Members of the Churchwide Executive Board	11
Convener, coordinator, or co-chair of the synodical women’s organization	64
Voting Members elected by synodical conventions	226
At Large Voting Members	----
 Total number of voting members to the Twelfth Triennial Convention (2023) based on April 2018 numbers and updated size of churchwide executive board (excludes the unknown number of At Large voting members)	 305

Sample application of rank order process

For this sample application of the rank order process, we will work with a hypothetical synodical women's organization (SWO) known as the Katie Luther SWO. The Katie Luther SWO has 89 active congregational units, 3 active inter-congregational units and 1 special unit at the Von Bora Retirement Community, for a total of 93 units.

Under the constitution, this SWO is entitled to 4 voting members, in addition to the synodical president who serves as a voting member by virtue of her office, for a total delegation of 5. Four voting members must be elected.

The Katie Luther SWO nominating committee will present a slate of at least 8 names for the 4 voting member positions. Following the constitutional provisions, of the four voting member positions to be filled:

- At least one voting member should be a woman of color or whose primary language is other than English
- At least one voting member shall be a woman who has not previously served as a voting member of a triennial convention.

Let's assume that the Katie Luther SWO nominating committee received nominations from 15 of the 93 units in the SWO. The committee will examine those 15 nominations and from those 15 nominations, the committee will select at least 8 names to be presented as the nominees for voting members of the triennial convention.

Two situations could occur where the nominating committee needs to continue searching for nominees.

1. If the committee does not receive an adequate number of nominations to create a full slate, the nominating committee works with the synodical board to look for more nominees.
2. If the committee does not receive an adequate number of nominations that meet the constitutional criteria (Article VI, Section 6, Items 3 and 7), the nominating committee works with the synodical board to look for more nominees.

So, the nominating committee has 15 nominees. Looking at all the criteria, it decides to put forward 10 of those 15 women. The committee will establish 3 tickets.

- Ticket A will be used to elect one woman of color or whose primary language is other than English.

- Ticket B will be used to elect one first time voting member.
- Ticket C will be used to elect the remaining two voting members.

Here's a sample Ticket A.

BALLOT for
Voting Members to the Twelfth Triennial Convention, Women
of the ELCA

Ticket A (Woman of color of whose primary language is other than
English) Vote for 1

- Maria Gonzales
- Inge Paulsen
- Tanisha Smith

The election on Ticket A takes place. The woman receiving a majority of the votes (i.e., fifty percent of the votes cast, plus one) is elected.

Let's assume 50 voting members are at the Katie Luther SWO convention and voting.
The election results on Ticket A are:

Maria Gonzales	11
Inge Paulsen	12
Tanisha Smith	27

The outcome?

- Tanisha Smith is elected.
- Inge Paulsen is the alternate.
- If either Maria or Inge qualify as a "first time voting member" their names can be added to Ticket B. Otherwise, their names can be added to Ticket C.

Moving on to Ticket B, it would look like this. Let's assume that Maria Gonzales had not been a voting member before. Her name would be added to Ticket B.

BALLOT for
Voting members to the Twelfth Triennial Convention,
Women of the ELCA

Ticket B (First time voting member)

Vote for 1

- Tara Smith-Jones
- Brittany Majors Blank
- Melody Moskovitz
- Maria Gonzales

The election occurs and the 50 voting members vote in the following manner:

Tara Smith-Jones	15
Brittany Majors Blank	10
Melody Moskovitz	7
Maria Gonzales	18

No election occurs on the first ballot because no one received 26 votes or more (the number required to be elected).

Under the rank order process, the number of nominees on the second (and all succeeding ballots) is limited to twice the number of voting members needed to be elected on that particular ticket. Since 1 first time voting member must be elected, ballot #2 will be limited to 2 names – the two names receiving the most votes in the preceding ballot.

SECOND BALLOT for
Voting members to the Twelfth Triennial Convention,
Women of the ELCA

Ticket B (First time voting member)

Vote for 1

- Tara Smith-Jones
- Maria Gonzales

Now on the second ballot the election results look like this:

Tara Smith-Jones 32
Maria Gonzales 18

The outcome?

- Tara is elected.
- Maria is the alternate.
- Maria (along with Brittany and Melody) will be placed on Ticket C; Inge Paulsen (from Ticket A) will also be placed on Ticket C.

Now we move on to Ticket C.

BALLOT for
Voting Members to the Twelfth Triennial Convention,
Women of the ELCA

Ticket C

Vote for 2

- Abby Colson
- Mora Gall
- Anne Michaels
- Suzanne Wallace
- Brittany Majors Blank
- Melody Moskovitz
- Maria Gonzales
- Inge Paulsen

Inge, Maria, Melody and Brittany are added into Ticket C because they were not elected as voting members in Tickets A or B.

Now the SWO convention voting members have eight names before them and must elect two more voting members to complete the elections.

The 50 voting members produce the following election results:

Abby Colson 12
Mora Gall 27
Anne Michaels 13
Suzanne Wallace 6
Brittany Majors Blank 20

Melody Moskovitz 7
Maria Gonzales 5
Inge Paulsen 10

The outcome?

- Mora Gall is elected a voting member because she received 26 or more votes.
- A second ballot is required, and it will be limited to twice the number needed to elect which is 1. The two names on the second ballot are Brittany Majors Blank and Anne Michaels, the two women with the next highest votes on the first ballot of Ticket C.

SECOND BALLOT for
Voting member to the Twelfth Triennial Convention,
Women of the ELCA

Ticket C

Vote for 2

- Anne Michaels
 Brittany Majors Blank

The voting members vote on the second ballot of Ticket C, with the following results:

Anne Michaels 29
Brittany Majors Blank 21

The outcome?

- Anne Michaels is elected a voting member.
- Brittany Majors Blank is the first alternate on Ticket C.
- Additional alternates on Ticket C, in this order, are:
Abby Colson
Inge Paulsen
Melody Moskovitz
Suzanne Wallace
Maria Gonzales
(that order having been established by the vote count on Ballot One of Ticket C)

Looking then at the whole delegation, the election produced these results:

	Voting member (# votes)	Alternate (# votes)
Woman of color or whose primary language is other than English	Tanisha Brown (27)	Inge Paulsen (11)
First time voting member	Tara Smith-Jones (32)	Maria Gonzales (18)
Non-restricted	Mora Gall (27) Anne Michaels (29)	Brittany Majors Blank (21) Abby Colson (12) Inge Paulsen (10) Melody Moskowitz (7) Suzanne Wallace (6) Maria Gonzales (5)

Tanisha, Tara, Mora and Anne would serve as voting members along with the president of the Katie Luther SWO.

Should one of the voting members have to step down before the triennial convention, the SWO president would consult with the executive director to determine which alternate would serve. It is important to provide vote counts so that the alternate process is accurately followed.