Report of the Constitution Committee

The constitution committee of the Southeastern Iowa Synod ensures the currency, accuracy and integrity of the Southeastern Iowa Synod Constitution and the constitutions of its congregations.

One of the committee’s responsibilities is to review amendments and revisions to congregational constitutions to check for conformity with the ELCA’s Model Constitution for Congregations, where applicable, and to identify internal conflicts within the documents as they are amended. Congregations are encouraged to make these changes to their constitutions, especially as amendments to required sections of the Model Constitution are binding on congregations. It is helpful for the constitution committee to review the constitution prior to a Congregation Meeting is called to adopt or amend a congregation’s constitution. Members of this committee are available to help congregations in this process. Contact Lorraine Jordan (jordan@seiasynod.org) at the Southeastern Iowa Synod Office to begin the process.

There were a quite a few amendments to the Model Constitution for Congregations of the ELCA made at the 2019 Churchwide Assembly. We encourage congregations to download those amendments and a copy of the 2019 Model Constitution as they begin the process of amending the congregation’s constitution in order to comply with the current Model Constitution. They can be downloaded here: https://search.elca.org/Pages/results.aspx#k=model%20constitution%202019.

The committee also will continue to review the Synod Constitution with an eye toward clarifying points that need clarification, and to keeping the document updated as per action by both the Synod and Churchwide Assemblies. The required amendments to the Synod Constitution adopted by the 2019 Churchwide Assembly have been made to the Southeastern Iowa Synod Constitution, pursuant to section †18.11 of the Synod’s constitution. There are further, non-required, amendments that should be made by action of the Synod Assembly, but this will need to happen at a future Synod Assembly. There is one bylaw (S7.22.02.) which has been rendered null and void by the action of the 2019 Churchwide Assembly stating that deacons are now not considered laypersons.

The members of the constitution committee are: Pastor T. Edwards Breed (chair), Jerry Holton, Lois Lembke, Pastor Tim Olson, Sheri Passwater, Pastor Duane Miller (synod parliamentarian), and Bishop Michael Burk, ex officio.

Respectfully submitted,

Pastor T. Edwards Breed, Chair