



- Bishop-elect
- Installation Planning Committee

CRITICAL PLANNING DECISIONS

The presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is responsible for installing each bishop elected to serve in this church. The date for the installation of a bishop is determined in consultation with the presiding bishop in a conversation initiated by the Office of the Presiding Bishop. It is likely that the date has already been set by the time your synod receives a copy of this planning packet.

Establishing an Installation Planning Committee

A committee responsible for the oversight of all planning associated with the installation of a bishop should be appointed and in place prior to the election of a new bishop. The name and contact information for the chair should be provided to the ELCA Executive for Synodical Relations as soon as it is available (see “Where to Go for Answers” in the planning packet).

Selecting a Location for the Installation

The location for the installation of a bishop may be symbolically important for the synod, for the whole ELCA, and for the local community. Consider carefully the anticipated attendance for this event, and see “Planning Worship for the Installation of a Bishop” in the planning packet for some advantages and disadvantages of the different types of locations (church building, hotel ballroom, convention center, or auditorium). While it is important to factor the expenses associated with a particular setting into the decision-making, it is also important to consider issues of flexibility associated with the setting.

Remember that hospitality is integral to the church’s mission. The availability and careful use of sufficient space contributes to hospitality. In addition to needs related to the worship space, consider the space needs for:

- hanging coats, vesting, and securing personal belongings;
- assembling a large procession indoors in case of inclement weather;
- musicians and other leaders before the worship begins;
- receptions or meals (these may occur elsewhere); and
- child care.

When a church building or chapel is chosen as the location, some protocol concerns arise. These are minimal if the church chosen is associated with an ELCA congregation or related institution, such as a college. Consultation with the local pastor, institutional leader(s), and musicians is essential.

When the installation service is in a church building of another church body, special protocol must be observed. All the information related to utilizing a church building from another tradition should be assembled before making the location decision. For instance, a cathedral requires consultation with the diocese and bishop as well as with the cathedral congregation and its pastor. On these matters, a conversation with the ELCA Executive for Ecumenical and Inter-religious Relations is encouraged (see “Where to Go for Answers” in the planning packet).

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Worship Planning

Identify worship planners and provide them with the worship-related materials from this planning packet. **Designate** the recipient(s) of **the offering** that will be collected during the installation worship service. This designation provides an opportunity to highlight the partnership between synodical and churchwide ministries.

Other Possible Installations

This occasion rightly focuses on the ministry of the bishop. The installation of newly elected officers may occur at the concluding worship service during the assembly at which they were elected. New synod staff may be installed at other gatherings of the synod.

If a synod decides to install others at this time, it should occur after the new bishop is installed and the assembly has had the opportunity to offer its acclamation, but prior to the sharing of the peace. The newly installed bishop (rather than the presiding bishop) presides over any subsequent installations.

Inviting Guests

Hospitality suggests providing space for relaxation and socializing for out-of-town guests of the synod. This is especially true for the bishop-elect's spouse and family, as well as the spouses or families of other invited guests. Special guests should receive written invitations. These invitations should detail the events to which the guest is being invited, when and where they occur, appropriate dress, and whether they will be provided with transportation.

Special seating in the worship space should be reserved for the bishop-elect's family and invited guests.

It is appropriate, but not required, for the synod to invite local government officials to this celebration. If so, they should be afforded special seating.

Reception and Meals

Normally a reception that is open to everyone in attendance follows the installation. Planning for any other meals or refreshments should begin early. Meals for invited guests prior to or following the installation may be considered. Refreshments for those participating in the worship service should be provided.

Retiring Synodical Bishop

It is appropriate and important to involve a retiring synodical bishop in the events related to the installation. In the case where a synodical bishop failed to be re-elected to an additional term, sensitivity may be required in inviting her or his participation. In any event, the outgoing bishop should be given a public role in the rite of installation.

Other individuals who have previously served as bishop of the synod should be invited to attend and participate in the procession.