

# Litany of Discernment for the Election of a Bishop

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## *I. For use at the chief service in place of the Prayer of the Church*

P. In these months and days before our congregations, pastors and lay ministers meet in Assembly to elect a bishop, it is appropriate that we bring our prayers to almighty God, asking for discernment and guidance, that in all our deliberations and conversations, the Holy Spirit might be present and make known to us a chief shepherd of God's own choosing.

A. Let us pray. Gracious Lord, Heavenly Father, in all ages, you have raised up faithful servants to shepherd and guide your holy people and to make known your will among us. Increase in us the gifts of discernment and understanding in this time, that we might know and do your will as we prepare to elect a bishop for our church.

**C. Send your Holy Spirit among us, O Lord.**

A. Open our minds, our hearts, and our eyes that we might see as you see and choose as you choose a shepherd of faith and godliness.

**C. Send your Holy Spirit among us, O Lord.**

A. Open our ears and guide our tongues that, in all our conversations, our listening and speaking might be filled with your grace and favor.

**C. Send your Holy Spirit among us, O Lord.**

A. Raise up for us a chief shepherd to lead and guide the work of our Synod.

**C. Raise up a shepherd for us, O Lord.**

A. Call forth a shepherd of wisdom and strength for the duties of oversight and counsel.

**C. Raise up a shepherd for us, O Lord.**

A. Make known among us a shepherd of compassion and grace to care for our churches, our pastors and our leaders.

**C. Raise up a shepherd for us, O Lord.**

A. Bring forth a shepherd centered in Christ who can build up your Church and unite your faithful people.

**C. Raise up a shepherd for us, O Lord.**

A. Send us a shepherd of learning and understanding who can preach and teach, guard and interpret the apostolic faith of the Church of Jesus Christ.

**C. Raise up a shepherd for us, O Lord.**

A. Send us a shepherd who is filled with the Holy Spirit to encourage and support the mission and ministries of our synod.

**C. Raise up a shepherd for us, O Lord.**

P. Almighty God, you are our guide and our Good Shepherd. In you we place our hope and our trust. Hear the prayers of your faithful people and lead us in these days until you bring us to one mind and one heart in you and you show us that shepherd and bishop of your own choosing; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**C. Amen**

## 3 Prayers of Discernment

### *II. For use in worship as petitions, at meetings or personal devotions*

P. Lord God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to whom you revealed your power and might and promised your presence and blessing, be among us during this special time in the life of our church as we pray for a bishop to shepherd us. Reveal your power and might to us in our ministries, in our ministers, in our planning and in all our deliberations. Bless and guide our prayers and our labors that our mission and witness might be strong in you; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **C. Amen**

P. Send forth your Holy Spirit, O Lord, and raise up for us a shepherd of your own choosing: a bishop to lead and guide us, a shepherd of wisdom and strength, compassion and grace, holiness and learning, with vision and the commitment to build up your Church and unite your faithful people around the love of him who offered himself for us and for all the world, Jesus Christ our Lord. **C: Amen**

P. O Wise and Gracious God, when your chosen people Israel prayed for a leader, you sent the prophet Samuel to discern your will, not with the eyes of the faithless, not with the ears of the popular, not with the wisdom of humanity, but with the insight of faith and trust in you alone. As we prepare for the election of a bishop for our church, make our conversations holy, our listening attentive, our prayer fervent, our trust in you strong, and our insight filled with faith and knowledge of your will for our lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **C. Amen**