

Constitution for
Trinity Lutheran Church
Madison, South Dakota



of the Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America

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CODIFICATION EXPLANATION

The Constitution and Bylaws of Trinity Lutheran Church have been placed together in this document. Constitutional provisions are preceded by a “C” and two numbers, for example C4.01. Constitutional provisions preceded by an asterisk * are required provisions under the ELCA church-wide constitution, provisions 9.21 and 9.22. These asterisked provisions cannot be amended. Bylaw provisions are preceded with a “B” and three sets of numbers, for example B10.01.01.

Certain chapters are marked reserved and some section numbers are omitted. This is to allow for future amendments.

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*PREAMBLE

We, baptized members of the Church of Christ, responding in faith to the call of the Holy Spirit through the Gospel, desiring to unite together to preach the Word, administer the sacraments, and carry out God’s mission, do hereby adopt this constitution and solemnly pledge ourselves to be governed by its provisions. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Chapter 1.

NAME AND INCORPORATION

C1.01. The name of this congregation shall be Trinity Lutheran Church.

C1.02. For the purpose of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws, the congregation of *Trinity Lutheran Church* is hereinafter designated as “this congregation.”

C1.03. This congregation shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of South Dakota.

Chapter 2.

CONFESSION OF FAITH

***C2.01.** This congregation confesses the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

***C2.02.** This congregation confesses Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and the Gospel as the power of God for the salvation of all who believe.

- a. Jesus Christ is the Word of God incarnate, through whom everything was made and through whose life, death, and resurrection God fashions a new creation.
- b. The proclamation of God’s message to us as both Law and Gospel is the Word of God, revealing judgment and mercy through word and deed, beginning with the Word in creation, continuing in the history of Israel, and centering in all its fullness in the person and work of Jesus Christ.
- c. The canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the written Word of God. Inspired by God’s Spirit speaking through their authors, they record and announce God’s revelation centering in Jesus Christ. Through them God’s Spirit speaks to us to create and sustain Christian faith and fellowship for service in the world.

***C2.03.** This congregation accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life.

***C2.04.** This congregation accepts the Apostles’, Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds as true declarations of the faith of this congregation.

***C2.05.** This congregation accepts the Unaltered Augsburg Confession as a true witness to the Gospel, acknowledging as one with it in faith and doctrine all churches that likewise accept the teachings of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession.

***C2.06.** This congregation accepts the other confessional writings in the Book of Concord, namely, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles and the Treatise, the Small Catechism, the Large Catechism, and the Formula of Concord, as further valid interpretations of the faith of the Church.

***C2.07.** This congregation confesses the Gospel, recorded in the Holy Scripture and confessed in the ecumenical creeds and Lutheran confessional writings, as the power of God to create and sustain the Church for God’s mission in the world.

Chapter 3.

NATURE OF THE CHURCH

- ***C3.01.** All power in the Church belongs to our Lord Jesus Christ, its head. All actions of this congregation are to be carried out under his rule and authority.
- ***C3.02.** This church confesses the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church and is resolved to serve Christian unity throughout the world.
- ***C3.03.** The Church exists both as an inclusive fellowship and as local congregations gathered for worship and Christian service. Congregations find their fulfillment in the universal community of the Church, and the universal Church exists in and through congregations. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, therefore, derives its character and powers both from the sanction and representation of its congregations and from its inherent nature as an expression of the broader fellowship of the faithful. In length, it acknowledges itself to be in the historic continuity of the communion of saints; in breadth, it expresses the fellowship of believers and congregations in our day.
- ***C3.04.** This church, inspired and led by the Holy Spirit, participates in The Lutheran World Federation as a global communion of churches, engaging in faithful witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ and in service for the sake of God's mission in the world.
- ***C3.05.** The name Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA or "this church") as used herein refers in general references to this whole church, including its three expressions: congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization. The name Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is also the name of the corporation of the churchwide organization to which specific references may be made herein.

Chapter 4.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

- ***C4.01.** The Church is a people created by God in Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, called and sent to bear witness to God's creative, redeeming, and sanctifying activity in the world.
- ***C4.02.** To participate in God's mission, this congregation as a part of the Church shall:
 - a. Worship God in proclamation of the Word and administration of the sacraments and through lives of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, witness, and service.
 - b. Proclaim God's saving Gospel of justification by grace for Christ's sake through faith alone, according to the apostolic witness in the Holy Scripture, preserving and transmitting the Gospel faithfully to future generations.
 - c. Carry out Christ's Great Commission by reaching out to all people to bring them to faith in Christ and by doing all ministry with a global awareness consistent with the understanding of God as Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier of all.
 - d. Serve in response to God's love to meet human needs, caring for the sick and the aged, advocating dignity, justice and equity for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations, and standing in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, and committing itself to their needs.
 - e. Nurture its members in the Word of God so as to grow in faith and hope and love, to see daily life as the primary setting for the exercise of their Christian calling, and to use the gifts of the Spirit for their life together and for their calling in the world.

- f. Manifest the unity given to the people of God by living together in the love of Christ and by joining with other Christians in prayer and action to express and preserve the unity which the Spirit gives.

B4.02.01. This congregation invites all of its members and others, who are prepared to receive the Sacrament, to participate in Holy Communion.

B4.02.02. Preparation for Holy Communion will be provided for children of any age at a time determined through mutual conversation that includes the pastor, the child, and the parents or sponsors involved.¹

B4.02.03. It shall be made known to prospective participants that the belief of this congregation is:

- i. Participation in the Eucharist is the reception of “the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ under the bread and wine, instituted by Christ himself for us to eat and to drink.”²
- ii. We hold that a person is prepared to receive the Sacrament when they “trust in God’s promises given in the Lord’s Supper (‘for you’ and ‘for the forgiveness of sin’)”³

B4.02.04. Record of participation in Holy Communion shall be maintained.

***C4.03.** To fulfill these purposes, this congregation shall:

- a. Provide services of worship at which the Word of God is preached and the sacraments are administered.
- b. Provide pastoral care and assist all members to participate in this ministry.
- c. Challenge, equip, and support all members in carrying out their calling in their daily lives and in their congregation.
- d. Teach the Word of God.
- e. Witness to the reconciling Word of God in Christ, reaching out to all people.
- f. Respond to human need, work for justice and peace, care for the sick and the suffering, and participate responsibly in society.
- g. Motivate its members to provide financial support for the congregation’s ministry and the ministry of the other expressions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- h. Foster and participate in interdependent relationships with other congregations, the synod, and the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- i. Foster and participate in ecumenical relationships consistent with churchwide policy.

B4.03.01. As an expression of the unity of the church in Christ the congregation recognizes the desirability of conforming to the practices of other member congregations in using such forms of worship, including liturgies and hymn books, as are recommended by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Only such variations as are authorized by the congregation shall be permitted.

C4.04. This congregation shall develop an organizational structure to be described in the bylaws. The Congregation Council shall prepare descriptions of the responsibilities of each committee, task force, or other organizational group and shall review their actions. [Such descriptions shall be contained in continuing resolutions in the section on the Congregation Committees.]

¹ Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, *The Use of the Means of Grace*, (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1997), 41.

² *Luther’s Small Catechism*, (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2016).

³ Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, *The Use of the Means of Grace*, (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1997), 42.

***C4.05.** This congregation shall adopt and periodically review a mission statement which will provide specific direction for its programs.

***C4.06.** References herein to the nature of the relationship between the three expressions of this church—congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization—as being interdependent or as being in a partnership relationship describe the mutual responsibility of these expressions in God’s mission and the fulfillment of the purposes of this church as described in this chapter, and do not imply or describe the creation of partnerships, co-ventures, agencies, or other legal relationships recognized in civil law.

Chapter 5.

POWERS OF THE CONGREGATION

***C5.01.** The powers of this congregation are those necessary to fulfill its purpose.

***C5.02.** The powers of this congregation are vested in the Congregation Meeting called and conducted as provided in this constitution and bylaws. and to the extent conveyed by this constitution and bylaws.

***C5.03.** Only such authority as is delegated to the Congregation Council or other organizational units in this congregation’s governing documents is recognized. All remaining authority is retained by this congregation. This congregation is authorized to:

- a. call a minister of Word and Sacrament as provided in Chapter 9;
- b. terminate the call of a minister of Word and Sacrament as provided in Chapter 9;
- c. call a minister of Word and Service;
- d. terminate the call of a minister of Word and Service in conformity with the constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;
- e. adopt amendments to the constitution, as provided in Chapter 16, and amendments to the bylaws, as specified in Chapter 17, and continuing resolutions, as provided in Chapter 18;
- f. approve the annual budget;
- g. acquire real and personal property by gift, devise, purchase, or other lawful means;
- h. hold title to and use its property for any and all activities consistent with its purpose;
- i. sell, mortgage, lease, transfer, or otherwise dispose of its property by any lawful means;
- j. elect its officers, Congregation Council, and boards and committees for the exercise of their powers and authority, and require them to carry out their duties in accordance with the constitution, and bylaws, and continuing resolutions;
- k. and terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as provided in Chapter 6.

***C5.04.** This congregation shall elect from among its voting members laypersons to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly as well as persons to represent it at meetings of any conference, cluster, coalition, or other area subdivision of which it is a member. The number of persons to be elected by this congregation and other qualifications shall be as prescribed in guidelines established by the South Dakota Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Chapter 6

CHURCH AFFILIATION

***C6.01.** This congregation shall be an interdependent part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or its successor, and of the South Dakota Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. This congregation is subject to the discipline of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

- *C6.02.** This congregation accepts the Confession of Faith and agrees to the Purposes of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and shall act in accordance with them.
- *C6.03.** This congregation acknowledges its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in which:
- a. This congregation agrees to be responsible for its life as a Christian community.
 - b. This congregation pledges its financial support and participation in the life and mission of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - c. This congregation agrees to call pastoral leadership from the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in accordance with its call procedures except in special circumstances and with the approval of the bishop of the synod. These special circumstances are limited either to calling a candidate approved for the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or to contracting for pastoral services with a minister of Word and Sacrament of a church body with which the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America officially has established a relationship of full communion.
 - d. This congregation agrees to consider ministers of Word and Service for call to other staff positions in this congregation according to the procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - e. This congregation agrees to file this constitution and any subsequent changes to this constitution with the synod for review to ascertain that all of its provisions are in agreement with the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and with the constitution of the synod.
- *C6.04.** Affiliation with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is terminated as follows:
- a. This congregation takes action to dissolve.
 - b. This congregation ceases to exist.
 - c. This congregation is removed from membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America according to the procedures for discipline of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or in accordance with provision 9.23 of the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America.
 - d. The South Dakota Synod takes charge and control of the property of this congregation to hold, manage and convey the same on behalf of the synod pursuant to S13.24 of the synod constitution. This congregation shall have the right to appeal the decision to the next Synod Assembly.
 - e. This congregation follows the procedures outlined in *C6.05.
- *C6.05.** This congregation may terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America by the following procedure:
- a. A resolution indicating the intent to terminate its relationship must be adopted at two legally called and conducted special meetings of this congregation by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present at each meeting. The first such meeting may be held no sooner than 30 days after written notice of the meeting is received by the bishop of the synod, during which time this congregation shall consult with the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any. The times and manner of the consultation shall be determined by the bishop in consultation with the Congregation Council. Unless the bishop and/or the bishop's designees are a voting member of this congregation, they shall have voice but not vote at the meeting.
 - b. Within 10 days after the resolution has been voted upon at the first meeting, the secretary of this congregation shall submit a copy of the resolution to the bishop, attesting that the special meeting was legally called and conducted and certifying the outcome of the vote, and shall send copies of the resolution and certification to voting members of this congregation.
 - c. If the resolution was adopted by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present at the first meeting, the bishop of the synod and this congregation shall continue in consultation, as specified in paragraph

- a. above, during a period of at least 90 days after receipt by the bishop of the attestation and certification as specified in paragraph b. above.
 - d. If this congregation, after such consultation, is still considering termination of its relationship with this church, such action may be taken at a legally called and conducted special meeting by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present. Notice of the second meeting shall be sent to all voting members and to the bishop at least 10 days in advance of the meeting. Unless the bishop and/or the bishop's designees are voting members of this congregation, they shall have voice but not vote at the second meeting.
 - e. Within 10 days after the resolution has been voted upon, the secretary of this congregation shall submit a copy of the resolution to the bishop, attesting that the second special meeting was legally called and conducted and certifying the outcome of the vote, and shall send copies of the resolution and certification to the voting members of the congregation. If the resolution was adopted by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present at the second meeting, the relationship between the congregation and this church shall be terminated subject to Synod Council approval as required by paragraphs f. and g. below.
 - f. Unless this notification to the bishop also certifies that this congregation has voted to affiliate with another Lutheran denomination, this congregation shall be deemed an independent or non-Lutheran church, in which case *C7.04. shall apply.
 - g. This congregation shall abide by these covenants by and among the three expressions of this church:
 - 1) Congregations seeking to terminate their relationship with this church which fail or refuse to comply with each of the foregoing provisions in *C6.05. shall be required to receive Synod Council approval before terminating their membership in this church.
 - 2) Congregations which had been members of the Lutheran Church in America shall be required, in addition to complying with the foregoing provisions in *C6.05., to receive synodical approval before terminating their membership in this church.
 - 3) Congregations established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be required, in addition to complying with the foregoing provisions in *C6.05., to satisfy all financial obligations to this church and receive Synod Council approval before terminating their membership in this church.
 - h. If this congregation fails to achieve the required two-thirds vote of voting members present at this congregation's first meeting as specified in paragraph d. above, another attempt to consider termination of relationship with this church must follow all requirements of *C6.05 and may begin no sooner than six months after that first meeting at which the two-thirds vote was not achieved.
- *C6.06.** If this congregation considers relocation, it shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located and the appropriate unit of the churchwide organization before any steps are taken leading to such action. The approval of the Synod Council shall be received before any such action is taken.
- *C6.07.** If this congregation considers developing an additional site to be used regularly for worship, it shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located and the appropriate unit of the churchwide organization before any steps are taken leading to such action.

Chapter 7.

PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

- *C7.01.** If this congregation ceases to exist, title to undisposed property shall pass to the South Dakota Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- *C7.02.** If this congregation is removed from membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America according to its procedure for discipline or pursuant to 9.23. of the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, title to property shall continue to reside in this congregation.

- *C7.03.** If the voting members of this congregation present at a legally called and conducted special meeting of this congregation vote to transfer to another Lutheran church body, title to property shall continue to reside in this congregation, provided the process for termination of relationship in *C6.05. has been followed. Before this congregation takes action to transfer to another Lutheran church body, it shall consult with representatives of the South Dakota Synod.
- *C7.04.** If voting members of this congregation present at a legally called and conducted special meeting of this congregation vote to become independent or relate to a non-Lutheran church body, and have followed the process for termination of relationship in *C6.05., title to property of this congregation shall continue to reside in this congregation only with the consent of the Synod Council. The Synod Council, after consultation with this congregation by the by the synod process, may give approval to the request to become independent or to relate to a non-Lutheran church body, in which case title shall remain with the majority of this congregation. If the Synod Council fails to give such approval, title shall remain with those members who desire to continue as a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. In neither case does title to this congregation's property transfer to the synod.
- *C7.05.** Notwithstanding the provisions of *C7.02. and *C7.03. above, where this congregation has received property from the synod pursuant to a deed or other instrument containing restrictions under provision 9.71.a. of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, this congregation accepts such restrictions and:
- a. Shall not transfer, encumber, mortgage, or in any way burden or impair any right, title, or interest in the property without prior approval of the Synod Council.
 - b. Shall—upon written demand by the Synod Council, pursuant to †S13.23. of the constitution of the South Dakota Synod—reconvey and transfer all right, title, and interest in the property to the synod.

Chapter 8.

MEMBERSHIP

- *C8.01.** Members of this congregation shall be those baptized persons on the roll of this congregation at the time that this constitution is adopted and those who are admitted thereafter and who have declared and maintain their membership in accordance with the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.
- *C8.02.** Members shall be classified as follows:
- a. **Baptized** members are those persons who have been received by the Sacrament of Holy Baptism in this congregation, or, having been previously baptized in the name of the Triune God, have been received by certificate of transfer from other Christian congregations or by affirmation of faith.
 - B8.02.01.** A child, one or both of whose parents or guardians are members of the congregation, shall, upon receiving Baptism, become a baptized member.
 - B8.02.02.** A child, neither of whose parents or guardians are members of the congregation, shall upon receiving Baptism, become a baptized member of the congregation; unless for good reason he/she is to be a baptized member of another congregation, in which case his/her membership shall be transferred to that congregation.
 - B8.02.03.** A child baptized in another congregation shall be received as a baptized member in the congregation when a transfer has been received.
 - B8.02.04.** An unbaptized adult who has received instruction and has given evidence of an understanding and acceptance of the teachings of the Word of God as confessed by the Lutheran Church, shall, upon confession of faith and Baptism, become a baptized member of the congregation.

B8.02.05. When one or both parents of baptized children are received into the membership of the congregation, such children should be received as baptized members with the consent of the member parent or parents.

B8.02.06. Where a baptized child is an orphan or a ward of someone and these people move into the area served by this congregation, the child may be received as a baptized member when he/she is commended to the care of this congregation by the congregation which baptized the child.

B8.02.07. When the parents of a baptized child are not themselves members of the Lutheran Church but move into the area served by this congregation and desire to have their child put within the pastoral care of this congregation, the child may be received as a baptized member.

b. **Confirmed** members are baptized persons who have been confirmed in this congregation, those who have been received by adult baptism or by transfer as confirmed members from other Lutheran congregations, or baptized persons received by affirmation of faith.

B8.02.11. A baptized adult, not previously a confirmed member of a Lutheran congregation, shall become a confirmed member of this congregation after having received instruction, having given evidence of understanding of the teachings of the Word of God as confessed by the Lutheran Church, and having publicly affirmed his/her faith.

B8.02.12. A baptized member of the congregation shall become a confirmed member through the rite of confirmation; except that an adult who has become a baptized member in accordance with the provisions of Section 8.02.04 of the bylaws shall be considered a confirmed member without participation in the rite of confirmation.

B8.02.13. An applicant for membership who presents a Letter of Transfer which certifies that he/she is a confirmed member in good standing of a Lutheran congregation shall become a confirmed member of the congregation upon approval by the Congregation Council. The acceptance shall be reported to the congregation.

B8.02.14. A applicant for membership who presents evidence of confirmation in a Lutheran congregation but does not have a Letter of Transfer shall be admitted to confirmed membership when the Congregation Council has determined that he/she meets the standards of Christian faith and life indicated in the constitution and bylaws and when he/she has re-affirmed his/her faith before the congregation.

B8.02.15 In matters concerning transfer or acceptance of real property, a voting member shall be one who has attained the legal voting age in the State of South Dakota.

c. **Voting** members are confirmed members. Such confirmed members, during the current or preceding calendar year, shall have communed in this congregation and shall have made a contribution of record to this congregation. Members of this congregation who have satisfied these basic standards shall have the privilege of voice and vote at every regular and special meeting of this congregation. They shall not have voted as a seasonal member of another congregation of this church the previous two calendar months.

d. **Associate** members are persons holding membership in other Christian congregations who wish to retain such membership but desire to participate in the life and mission of this congregation, or

persons who wish to retain a relationship with this congregation while being members of other congregations. They have all the privileges and duties of membership except voting rights and eligibility for elected offices or membership on the Congregation Council of this congregation.

- e. **Seasonal** members are voting members of other congregations of this church who wish to retain such membership but desire to participate in the life and mission of this congregation, including exercising limited voting rights in this congregation. The Congregation Council may grant seasonal membership to such persons provided that this congregation is a member of a synod where the Synod Council has approved seasonal member voting on its territory. Such seasonal members shall have all the privileges and duties of voting members except that:
 - 1) they shall not be eligible for elected office in, or for membership on the Congregation Council or on a call committee of, this congregation.
 - 2) they shall not have the right to vote on any matter concerning or affecting the call or termination of call of any minister of this congregation;
 - 3) they shall not have the right to vote on any matter concerning or affecting the affiliation of this congregation with this church;
 - 4) they shall not be eligible to serve as voting members from this congregation of the Synod Assembly or the Churchwide Assembly;
 - 5) they shall not, even if otherwise permitted by this congregation, vote by proxy or by absentee ballot; and
 - 6) they shall not, within any two calendar month period, exercise voting rights in this congregation and in the congregation where they remain voting members.

***C8.03.** All applications for confirmed membership shall be submitted to and shall require the approval of the Congregation Council.

***C8.04.** It shall be the privilege and duty of members of this congregation to:

- a. make regular use of the means of grace, both Word and sacraments;
- b. live a Christian life in accordance with the Word of God and the teachings of the Lutheran church; and
- c. support the work of this congregation, the synod, and the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America through contributions of their time, abilities, and financial support as biblical stewards.

***C8.05.** Membership in this congregation shall be terminated by any of the following:

- a. death;
- b. resignation;
- c. transfer or release;
- d. disciplinary action in accordance with Chapter 20 of the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or
- e. removal from the roll due to inactivity in accordance with the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws. Such persons who have been removed from the roll of members shall remain persons for whom the Church has a continuing pastoral concern.

B8.05.01. The congregation shall, in the event of the removal of a member from the community it serves, encourage the member to request a transfer to a Lutheran congregation which can serve him/her effectively. Should the member fail to request a transfer, a Lutheran congregation in the community of his/her residence shall be notified.

B8.05.02. A confirmed member in good standing desiring to change his/her membership to another Christian congregation shall, upon request, receive a Letter of Transfer.

B8.05.03. A confirmed member who does not, for a period of one year, partake of Holy Communion, support the church with his/her offerings, and does not appear to desire to participate in the life and worship of the congregation shall be visited by the pastor and the congregation's officers and encouraged by them to active membership. If, during the second year, the confirmed member does not actively participate, his/her name shall be removed from the membership roster of the congregation by action of the Congregation Council but be retained on a responsibility list as one who is in special need of the congregation's prayer and concern. He/she shall be notified of the Council's action.

B8.05.04. A child, neither of whose parents or guardians is a member of the congregation, may be removed from the roster of baptized members if he/she fails to participate in the life and worship of the congregation including Sunday School and Confirmation ministry. Whenever possible, the parents (guardians) shall be notified of the Congregation Council's action.

Chapter 9.

THE PASTOR

***C9.01.** Authority to call a pastor shall be in this congregation by at least a two-thirds majority vote of voting members present and voting at a meeting legally called for that purpose. Before a call is issued, the officers, or a committee elected by the Congregation Council to recommend the call, shall seek the advice and help of the bishop of the synod.

***C9.02.** Only a member of the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or a candidate for the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament who has been recommended for this congregation by the synod bishop may be called as a pastor of this congregation.

- *C9.03.** Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,
- a. Every minister of Word and Sacrament shall:
 - 1) preach the Word;
 - 2) administer the sacraments;
 - 3) conduct public worship;
 - 4) provide pastoral care; and
 - 5) seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel;
 - 6) impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through available channels of effective communication.
 - 7) witness to the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation, and abroad; and
 - 8) speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and equity for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, and embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations.
 - b. Each ordained minister with a congregational call shall, within the congregation:
 - 1) offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead;
 - 2) offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead;
 - 3) relate to all schools and organizations of this congregation;
 - 4) install regularly elected members of the Congregation Council;
 - 5) with the council, administer discipline,

6) endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the ELCA churchwide organization and of the *South Dakota* Synod of the ELCA.

7) encourage adherence to covenantal relationship with this church as expressed in the Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

***C9.04.** The specific duties of the pastor, compensation, and other matters pertaining to the service of the pastor shall be included in a letter of call, which shall be attested by the bishop of the synod.

***C9.05.** The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between a minister of Word and Sacrament and this congregation shall be as follows:

- a. The call of this congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment, which shall be terminated only by the pastor's death or, following consultation with the synodical bishop, for the following reasons:
 - 1) mutual agreement to terminate the call or the completion of a call for a specific term;
 - 2) resignation of the pastor, which shall become effective, unless otherwise agreed, no later than 30 days after the date on which it was submitted;
 - 3) inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in this congregation in view of local conditions,
 - 4) inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in view of disability or incapacity of the pastor;
 - 5) suspension of the pastor through discipline for more than three months;
 - 6) resignation or removal of the pastor from the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament of this church;
 - 7) termination of the relationship between this church and the congregation;
 - 8) dissolution of the congregation or the termination of a parish arrangement; or
 - 9) suspension of this congregation through discipline for more than six months.provisions for termination of the mutual relationship
- b. When allegations of physical disability or mental incapacity of the pastor under paragraph a.4) above, or ineffective conduct of the pastoral office under paragraph a.3) above, have come to the attention of the bishop of this synod,
 - 1) the bishop in his or her sole discretion may investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson, or
 - 2) when such allegations have been brought to the synod's attention by an official recital of allegations by this Congregation Council or by a petition signed by at least one-third of the voting members of the congregation, the bishop personally shall investigate such conditions together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson.
- c. In case of alleged physical disability or mental incapacity under paragraph a.4) above, the bishop's committee shall obtain and document competent medical opinion concerning the pastor's condition. When a disability or incapacity is evident to the committee, the bishop of this synod may declare the pastorate vacant. When the pastorate is declared vacant, the Synod Council shall list the pastor on the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament with disability status. Upon removal of the disability and the restoration of the pastor to health, the bishop shall take steps to enable the pastor to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another appropriate call.
- d. In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of this congregation under paragraph a.3) above, the bishop's committee shall endeavor to hear from all concerned persons, after which the bishop together with the committee shall present their recommendations first to the

pastor and then to this congregation. The recommendations of the bishop's committee must address whether the pastor's call should come to an end and, if so, may suggest appropriate severance arrangements. The committee may also propose other actions that should be undertaken by this congregation and by the pastor, if appropriate. If the pastor and congregation agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action need be taken by the synod.

- e. If either party fails to assent to the recommendations of the bishop's committee concerning the pastor's call, this congregation may dismiss the pastor only at a legally called meeting after consultation with the bishop, either (a) by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee did not recommend termination of the call, or (b) by a majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee recommended termination of the call.
- f. If, in the course of proceedings described in paragraph c. or paragraph d. above, the bishop's committee concludes that there may be grounds for discipline, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action in accordance with the provisions of this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions.

***C9.06.** At a time of pastoral vacancy, an interim pastor shall be appointed by the bishop of the synod with the consent of this congregation or the Congregation Council.

***C9.07.** During the period of service, an interim pastor shall have the rights and duties in this congregation of a regularly called pastor and may delegate the same in part to a supply pastor with the consent of the bishop of the synod and this congregation or Congregation Council. The interim pastor and any rostered minister providing assistance shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a pastor. Unless previously agreed upon by the Synod Council, an interim pastor is not available for a regular call to the congregation served.

***C9.08.** This congregation shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to a former pastor before calling a successor. A pastor shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to this congregation before beginning service in a call to another congregation or employment in another ministry setting.

***C9.09.** When a pastor is called to serve in company with another minister or ministers, the privileges and responsibilities of each minister shall be specified in documents to accompany the call and to be drafted in consultation involving the ministers, the Congregation Council, and the bishop of the synod. As occasion requires, the documents may be revised through a similar consultation.

***C9.11.** With the approval of the bishop of the synod, this congregation may depart from *C9.05.a. and call a pastor for a specific term. Details of such calls shall be in writing setting forth the purpose and conditions involved. Prior to the completion of a term, the bishop or a designated representative of the bishop shall meet with the pastor and representatives of this congregation for a review of the call. Such a call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of *C9.05.a.

***C9.12.** The pastor of this congregation:

- a. shall keep accurate records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from the congregation;
- b. shall submit a summary of such statistics annually to the synod; and
- c. shall become a member of this congregation upon receipt and acceptance of the letter of call. In a parish of multiple congregations, the pastor shall hold membership in one of the congregations.

- *C9.13.** The pastor(s) shall submit a report of ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.
- *C9.14.** The parochial records of this congregation shall be maintained by the pastor and shall remain the property of this congregation. The secretary of this congregation shall attest in writing to the bishop of this synod that such records have been placed in the secretary's hands in good order by a departing pastor before the installation of that pastor in another call or approval of a request of a change in roster status.
- C9.15.** Under special circumstances, subject to the approval of the synodical bishop and the concurrence of this congregation, a minister of Word and Sacrament of a church body with which the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America officially has established a relationship of full communion may serve temporarily as pastor of this congregation under a contract between this congregation and the pastor in a form proposed by the synodical bishop and approved by this congregation.
- *C9.21.** Authority to call a deacon shall be in this congregation by at least a two-thirds vote of voting members present and voting at a meeting legally called for that purpose. Before a call is issued, the officers, or a committee elected by the Congregation Council to recommend the call, shall seek the advice and help of the bishop of the synod.
- *C9.22.** Only a member of the roster of Ministers of Word and Service of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or a candidate for the roster of Ministers of Word and Service who has been recommended for this congregation by the synodical bishop may be called as a deacon of this congregation.
- *C9.23.** Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, every minister of Word and Service shall:
- a. Be rooted in the Word of God, for proclamation and service;
 - b. Advocate a prophetic diakonia that commits itself to risk-taking and innovative service on the frontiers of the Church's outreach, giving particular attention to the suffering places in God's world;
 - c. Speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed advocating dignity, justice and equity for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, and embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations;
 - d. Equip the baptized for ministry in God's world that affirms the gifts of all people;
 - e. Encourage mutual relationships that invite participation and accompaniment of others in God's mission;
 - f. Practice stewardship that respects God's gift of time, talents, and resources;
 - g. Be grounded in a gathered community for ongoing diaconal formation;
 - h. Share knowledge of this church and its wider ministry of the gospel and advocate for the work of all expressions of this church; and
 - i. Identify and encourage qualified persons to prepare for ministry of the gospel.
- *C9.24.** The specific duties of the deacon, compensation, and other matters pertaining to the service of the deacon shall be included in a letter of call, which shall be attested by the bishop of the synod.
- *C9.25.** The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between a minister of Word and Service and a congregation shall be as follows:
- a. The call of a congregation, when accepted by a deacon, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment, which shall be terminated only by a deacon's death or, following consultation with the synodical bishop, for any of the following reasons:
 - 1) mutual agreement to terminate the call or the completion of a call for a specific term;

- 2) resignation of the deacon, which shall become effective, unless otherwise agreed, no later than 30 days after the date on which it was submitted;
 - 3) inability to conduct the ministry of Word and Service effectively in this congregation in view of local conditions;
 - 4) inability to conduct the office in view of disability or incapacity of the deacon;
 - 5) suspension of the deacon through discipline for more than three months;
 - 6) resignation or removal of the deacon from the roster of Ministers of Word and Service of this church;
 - 7) termination of the relationship between this church and this congregation;
 - 8) dissolution of this congregation or the termination of a parish arrangement; or
 - 9) suspension of this congregation through discipline for more than six months.
- b. When allegations of disability or incapacity of the deacon under paragraph a.4) above, or ineffective conduct of the office of minister of Word and Service under paragraph a.3) above, have come to the attention of the bishop of this synod,
- 1) the bishop who has sole discretion may investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson, or
 - 2) when such allegations have been brought to the synod's attention by an official recital of allegations by the Congregation Council or by a petition signed by at least one-third of the voting members of this congregation, the bishop personally shall investigate such conditions together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson.
- c. In case of alleged disability or incapacity under paragraph a.4) above, the bishop's committee shall obtain and document competent medical opinion concerning the deacon's condition. When a disability or incapacity is evident to the committee, the bishop of this synod may declare the position vacant. When the position is declared vacant, the Synod Council shall list the deacon on the roster of Ministers of Word and Service with disability status . Upon resumption of the ability to conduct the office effectively, the bishop shall take steps to enable the deacon to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another appropriate call.
- d. In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of this congregation under paragraph a.3) above, the bishop's committee shall endeavor to hear from all concerned persons, after which the bishop together with the committee shall present their recommendations first to the deacon and then to this congregation. The recommendations of the bishop's committee must address whether the deacon's call should come to an end and, if so, may suggest appropriate severance arrangements. The committee may also propose other actions that should be undertaken by this congregation and by the deacon, if appropriate. If the deacon and congregation agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action need be taken by the synod.
- e. If either party fails to assent to the recommendations of the bishop's committee concerning the deacon's call, this congregation may dismiss the deacon only at a legally called meeting after consultation with the bishop, either (a) by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee did not recommend termination of the call, or (b) by a majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee recommended termination of the call.
- f. If, in the course of proceedings described in paragraph c. or paragraph d. above, the bishop's committee concludes that there may be grounds for discipline, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action in accordance with the provisions of this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions.

***C9.26.** This congregation shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to a former deacon before calling a successor. A deacon shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to this congregation before beginning service in a call to another congregation or employment in another ministry setting.

- *C9.27.** When a deacon is called to serve in company with another rostered minister or other rostered ministers, the privileges and responsibilities of each rostered minister shall be specified in documents to accompany the call and to be drafted in consultation involving the rostered ministers, the Congregation Council, and the bishop of the synod. As occasion requires, the documents may be revised through a similar consultation.
- *C9.28.** With the approval of the bishop of the synod, this congregation may depart from *C9.25.a. and call a deacon for a specific term. Details of such calls shall be in writing setting forth the purpose and conditions involved. Prior to the completion of a term, the bishop or a designated representative of the bishop shall meet with the deacon and representatives of this congregation for a review of the call. Such a call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of *C9.25.a.
- *C9.29.** The deacon shall become a member of this congregation upon receipt and acceptance of the letter of call. In a parish of multiple congregations, the deacon shall hold membership in one of the congregations.
- *C9.31.** The deacon(s) shall submit a report of ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.

Chapter 10.

CONGREGATION MEETING

- C10.01.** This congregation shall have at least one regular meeting per year. The regular meeting(s) of the congregation shall be held at the time(s) specified in the bylaws. Consistent with the laws of the State of South Dakota, the bylaws shall designate one regular meeting per year as the annual meeting of this congregation.
- B10.02.01.** The annual meeting of the congregation shall be held during the month of January, the date to be set by the congregation council.
- C10.02.** A special Congregation Meeting may be called by the pastor(s), the Congregation Council, by action of the congregation at a duly called regular or special meeting or the president of this congregation, and shall be called by the president of the congregation or upon the written request of ten (10) percent of the voting members. The president of the Congregation Council shall call a special meeting upon request of the synodical bishop. The call for each special meeting shall specify the purpose for which it is to be held and no other business shall be transacted.
- C10.03.** Notice of all meetings of this congregation shall be given at the services of worship on the preceding two consecutive Sundays and by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law, to all voting members at least 10 days in advance of the date of the meeting.
- C10.04.** Ten (10) percent of the voting members shall constitute a quorum.
- C10.05.** Voting by proxy or by absentee ballot shall not be permitted.
- C10.06.** All actions approved by this congregation shall be by majority vote of those voting members present and voting, except as otherwise provided in this constitution or by state law.

- C10.07.** *Robert's Rules of Order*, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of all meetings of this congregation.
- C10.08.** This congregation may hold meetings by remote communication, including electronically and by telephone conference, as long as there is an opportunity for simultaneous aural communication or its equivalent. To the extent permitted by state law, notice of all meetings may be provided electronically.
- C10.09.** "Ex officio" as used herein means membership with full rights of voice and vote unless otherwise expressly limited.

Chapter 11.

OFFICERS

- C11.01.** The officers of this congregation shall be a president, vice-president, and secretary. The treasurer and financial secretary are to be appointed by the Congregation Council and are not officers.
- a Duties of the officers shall be specified in the bylaws.
 - b The officers shall be voting members of the congregation.
 - c Officers of this congregation shall serve similar offices of the Congregation Council and shall be voting members of the Congregation Council.
 - d If the treasurer is not selected from the elected membership of the church, the treasurer shall have a voice but not vote at the meetings of the Congregation Council.
- C11.02.** The congregation shall elect its officers and they shall be the officers of this congregation. The officers shall be elected by written ballot and shall serve for one year or until their successors are elected. Their terms shall begin at the close of the annual meeting at which they are elected.
- C11.03.** No officer shall hold more than one office at a time. No president or vice-president shall be eligible to serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office. Secretary may serve more than two consecutive terms.
- B11.01.01.** The president shall:
- a. Preside at all meetings of the congregation, the congregation council.
 - b. Coordinate the work of the committees (boards) and be an ex officio member without vote.
 - c. Carry out the will of the congregation as ordered by this constitution, bylaws, and resolutions of the congregation.
 - d. Deliver an annual report to the congregation.
 - e. Appoint members of the staff support committees.
 - f. Execute letters of call and sign any other instruments or documents which may be necessary as a result of legal action by the congregation or congregation council.
 - g. Serve as an active member of the Committee on Stewardship.
- B11.01.02.** The vice-president (president-elect) shall:
- a. Perform the duties of the president in the president's absence, incapacity, or at the president's request.
 - b. Vice-President shall serve on the Foundation Commission, but not chair the commission.
 - c. Select council members to lead devotions for each council meeting.
 - d. Serve as an active member of the Committee on Stewardship.

B11.01.03. The secretary shall:

- a. Record proceedings of the congregation and congregation council.
- b. Keep attendance record of each council meeting.
- c. Assist president on agenda items, calling to attention matters deferred or referred to committees for further study and recommendations.
- d. Maintain a register of congregation and congregation church council resolutions and policies.
- e. Execute letters of call to pastors on behalf of the congregation.
- f. Oversee the distribution of the annual report of the congregation and the congregation report to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- g. Notify the nominating committee of all offices to be filled 90 days prior to the annual meeting where elections are to take place.

B11.01.04. The treasurer shall:

- a. Supervise the financial procedures, records, and investments of the congregation. Serve as either a member of the Congregation, or be an agent of an outside firm, as recommended by the Trustees and approved by the Congregational Council.
- b. Render a monthly statement of income and expense compared to budget to the congregation council.
- c. All checks of the congregation require two signatures. Those named on the signature card are to be approved by the congregation council.
- d. Deliver an annual financial report to the congregation.

B11.01.05. The financial secretary shall:

- a. Direct the counting, depositing, and recording of all contributions, fees collected, gifts and bequests received.
- b. Reconcile each deposit to contributors' records.
- c. Issue quarterly statements to contributors.
- d. Keep individual giving records confidential.
- e. Prepare annual report to the congregation and stewardship committee.

B11.01.06 The past president shall

- a. Shall serve a one year term upon the conclusion of their term as president
- b. In the event unable to serve the position will remain vacant

Chapter 12.

CONGREGATION COUNCIL

C12.01. The Congregation Council shall consist of the minister(s), the president, the vice president, secretary, past president and the chair or designee of the Board of Deacons, chair or designee of the Board of Faith Formation, and chair or designee of the Board of Trustees. Each member of the council shall have only one vote. Any voting member of the congregation may be elected subject only to the limitations of the length of continuous service permitted in that office.

A member's place on the Congregation Council shall be declared vacant if the the member

- a) Ceases to be a voting member of this congregation or
- b) Is absent from four successive regular meetings of the Congregation council without cause.

Consistent with the laws of the state of South Dakota in which this congregation is incorporated, the congregation may adopt procedures for the removal of a member of the Congregation Council in other

circumstances. A member shall be elected to a specified position on the Congregation Council, with duties specified in the bylaws.

C12.02. The members of the Board of Deacons, Board of Faith Formation and Board of Trustees shall be eligible to serve no more than one full term on the same Board. Their terms shall begin at the close of the annual meeting at which they are elected. A full term shall be three consecutive years serving on the same Board. After a member has served a full term they are eligible to serve on another Board and/or Officer immediately.

C12.03. Should a member's place on the Congregation Council, a board or nominating committee be declared vacant, the Congregation Council shall appoint a successor until the next annual meeting. That appointed individual shall be eligible for nomination to fill out the remaining term or possible election to a full term.

C12.04. The Congregation Council shall have general oversight of the life and activities of this congregation, and in particular its worship life, to the end that everything be done in accordance with the Word of God and the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The duties of the Congregation Council shall include the following:

- a. To lead this congregation in stating its mission, to do long-range planning, to set goals and priorities, and to evaluate its activities in light of its mission and goals.
- b. To seek to involve all members of this congregation in worship, learning, witness, service, and support.
- c. To oversee and provide for the administration of this congregation to enable it to fulfill its functions and perform its mission.
- d. To maintain supportive relationships with the rostered minister(s) and staff and help them annually to evaluate the fulfillment of their calling or employment.
- e. To be examples individually and corporately of the style of life and ministry expected of all baptized persons.
- f. To promote a congregational climate of peace and goodwill, and, as differences and conflicts arise, to endeavor to foster mutual understanding.
- g. To arrange for pastoral service during the sickness or absence of the minister(s).
- h. To emphasize partnership with the synod and churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as well as cooperation with other congregations, both Lutheran and non-Lutheran, subject to established policies of the synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- i. To recommend and encourage the use of program resources produced or approved by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- j. To seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel.
- k. To oversee the operation of the Board of Deacons, the Board of Trustees, and the Board of Faith Formation.
- l. The Congregation Council shall not have the authority to buy, sell, or encumber real property unless specifically authorized to do so by a meeting of the congregation.
- m. The Congregation Council may enter into contracts of up to 5% of the total approved budget for items not included in the budget.
- n. The Congregation Council shall prepare an annual budget for adoption by this congregation and shall supervise the expenditure of funds in accordance therewith following its adoption.
- o. The Congregation Council shall ascertain that the financial affairs of this congregation are being conducted efficiently, giving particular attention to the prompt payment of all obligations and to the regular forwarding of benevolence monies to the synodical treasurer.

- p. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for this congregation's investments and its total insurance program.
- q. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the employment and supervision of the lay staff and non-ministerial staff of this congregation, with the Lead Pastor being the direct and immediate supervisor of all employees.

C12.05. The Congregation Council shall see that the provisions of this constitution and bylaws, and the continuing resolutions of the Congregation Council are carried out.

C12.06. The Congregation Council shall provide for an annual review of the membership roster.

C12.07. The Congregation Council shall submit a comprehensive report to this congregation at the annual meeting.

C12.08. The Congregation Council shall meet regularly, normally once a month. Special meetings may be called by the minister(s) or the president. Special meetings shall be called by the president at the request of at least one-half of Council members. Notice of each special meeting shall be given to all who are entitled to be present. The boards shall meet monthly at a time and place determined by each board.

C12.09. A quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of a majority of the members of the Congregation Council, including the minister(s) or interim pastor, except when the minister(s) or interim pastor requests or consents to be absent and has given prior approval to the agenda for a particular regular or special meeting, which shall be the only business considered at that meeting. Chronic or repeated absence of the minister(s) or interim pastor who has refused approval of the agenda of a subsequent regular or special meeting shall not preclude action by the Congregation Council, following consultation with the synodical bishop.

B12.01.01 The Board of Deacons: There shall be a Board of Deacons of four (4) members. The minister(s) shall be an advisory member by virtue of the office but without vote. The duties and responsibilities of the Board of Deacons shall be to provide spiritual leadership in the congregation, working with the minister(s), to guide the work, witness, worship, and service of the congregation in the world.

A. The congregation shall elect four (4) members to the Board of Deacons to positions set forth below. The Board will elect their chairperson and secretary at their first meeting following the annual meeting.

1) Sacraments and Services. This deacon shall work with the Altar Guild to facilitate the care of the altar, paraments, and linens, and to prepare the sanctuary for services, including preparing Holy Communion. They shall, also, assist the volunteer coordinator in identifying, inviting, and organizing volunteers for all areas of worship assistance, including greeters, ushers, lectors, acolytes, and Communion servers. In addition, this deacon shall develop programs that address the needs of individuals who are isolated or homebound.

2) Worship and Music. This deacon shall chair the worship committee and coordinate the music programs, including the choirs, cantors, soloists, ensembles, organists, and pianists. They shall, also, in cooperation with the pastor, organize and implement special services and various worship opportunities.

- 3) Life and Growth. This deacon shall initiate and implement programs to welcome and integrate new members into the life of this faith community, promote and encourage fellowship within the congregation, and coordinate service groups.
 - 4) Mission and Evangelism. This deacon shall work with the minister(s) to encourage and equip members to share God's love through word and deed, community outreach, fellowship, and service opportunities. They shall raise awareness of our ministry through marketing and communications via our website, social media, events, and advertising. In addition, this deacon shall promote world, synod, and local mission concerns, oversee the missionary sponsorship program, and assist the minister(s) in informing the congregation of work being done through the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America on the synodical and churchwide levels.
- B. Conduct regular meetings at such time and place as the Board shall determine.
 - C. Report its activities to the annual meeting of the congregation and at other times as the congregation may decide.

B12.01.02. The Board of Trustees: There shall be a Board of Trustees of four (4) members. The minister(s) shall be an advisory member by virtue of his/her office but without vote. The duties and responsibilities of the Board of Trustees shall be to have charge of the general management of all matters relating to legal and corporate affairs and to supervise the maintenance of the properties of the congregation. All legal documents shall be signed by the president and secretary of the congregation.

- A. The congregation shall elect four (4) members to the Board of Trustees to positions set forth below. The board will elect their chairperson and secretary at their first meeting following the annual meeting.
 - 1) Property. This trustee shall be responsible for the buildings, furnishings, equipment, and premises of the congregation. This shall include coordinating a regular review of the church sanctuary, education wing, offices, preschool areas, fellowship hall, kitchen, elevator and narthex and assist the Custodial and Maintenance Manager in implementing necessary maintenance and repairs.
 - 2) Stewardship. This trustee shall coordinate biblically based programs, events, and materials, which educate, encourage, and inspire the congregation to utilize all of the resources (time, talents, and assets) with which God has entrusted them to faithfully live out God's mission. This trustee will also oversee capital campaigns and fundraising initiatives for the needs of the congregation.
 - 3) Finance and Insurance. This trustee shall receive reports regularly from the Treasurer to ascertain that expenditures are within the budget approved by the congregation. Any expenditures in excess of 5% of the total voted budget must be approved by the congregation. In addition, this trustee shall coordinate a regular review and implementation of all insurance matters and church policies affecting insurance issues.
 - 4) Development. This trustee shall coordinate a regular review of future needs and aspirations in all areas of the congregation's ministry, including mission, outreach, programming, property, and staffing. This shall include reviewing and implementing the regular review recommendation of the Trustee of Property and overseeing all church-related construction projects.
- B. Conduct regular meetings at such time and place as the board shall determine.
- C. Report its activities to the annual meeting of the congregation and at other times as the congregation may decide.

B12.01.03. The Board of Faith Formation: There shall be a Board of Faith Formation of four (4) members. The minister(s) shall be an advisory member by virtue of his/her office but without vote. The duties and responsibilities of the Board of Faith Formation shall be to provide leadership and supervision of the faith formation, education, and youth programs of the congregation.

A. The congregation shall elect four (4) members to the Board of Faith Formation to positions set forth below. The board will elect their chairperson and secretary at their first meeting following the annual meeting.

- 1) Preschool and Early Childhood Faith Formation. This leader shall serve as a member of the preschool board of directors and act as liaison between the preschool board and the Board of Faith Formation.
- 2) Elementary Faith Formation. This leader shall assist the Faith Formation Director in initiating and implementing an effective teaching ministry which includes: the calling and training of teachers and leaders for our Sunday and vacation church schools, the preparing of curriculum (if needed) at the beginning of each semester, and periodic review of the curriculum being used.
- 3) Youth Faith Formation. This leader shall assist the Faith Formation Director in initiating and implementing programs to help young people, specifically middle school through high school and in campus ministries to participate fully in the mission of the congregation. This leader shall assist the Faith Formation Director and minister(s) in initiating and implementing the Confirmation program, periodically.
- 4) Adult Faith Formation. This leader shall assist the minister(s) in providing challenging and relevant study opportunities for adults, with the goal of having every confirmed member involved in some faith formation effort each year, and they shall also be responsible for the Church Library.

B. Conduct regular meetings at such time and place as the board shall determine.

C. Report its activities to the annual meeting of the congregation and at other times as the congregation may decide.

C12.13. The Congregation Council and its committees may allow members to participate in meetings by remote communication, including electronically and by telephone conference and, to the extent permitted by state law, notice of all meetings may be provided electronically.

Chapter 13.

CONGREGATION COMMITTEES

C13.01.

Section C13.01 intentionally omitted

C13.02. A **Nominating Committee** of six voting members of this congregation. Four members shall have terms of three years. Two members, if possible, shall be outgoing members of the Congregation Council, and shall serve a one year term. Members shall be elected by the congregation at the annual meeting. Members of the Nominating Committee are eligible for consecutive reelection.

B13.02.01. The lead pastor shall serve as convener and as an advisory member along with the vice-president:

- a. The chairperson of the nominating committee shall be appointed by the Congregation Council prior to the first meeting of the nominating committee.
- b. The nominating committee shall nominate one or more candidates for each position to be filled and shall secure the consent of each candidate.
- c. The list of nominees shall be announced to the congregation in conjunction with the announcements of the meeting of the congregation at which the elections are to take place.
- d. In addition to the candidates submitted by the nominating committee, additional nominations may be made from the floor with the consent of the candidate.
- e. The congregation council shall fill vacancies on the nominating committee.

C13.03. An **Audit Committee** of three voting members may be appointed by the Congregation Council. Audit Committee members shall not be members of the Congregation Council. Term of office shall be three years, with staggered terms. Members shall be eligible for reappointment.

C13.04. When a vacancy of a rostered minister position occurs, a **Call Committee** of seven voting members shall be appointed by the Congregation Council, one of whom is a high school student member of the congregation. Term of office will terminate upon installation of the newly called minister.

C13.05. Other committees of this congregation may be formed, as the need arises, by decision of the Congregation Council.

B13.01.01. Stewardship Committee. The Committee shall consist of the following members: Stewardship Trustee (Chair), President and Vice-President, Foundation Commission Chair, Trustees Chair, pastor(s), congregation Treasurer and Financial Secretary. Other congregation members may be appointed as needed to carry out the duties and responsibilities of the Committee. Specific duties and responsibilities of this Committee will include planning, promoting, publicizing and acknowledging stewardship on a year-round basis; and general coordination of all fundraising activities of the congregation.

B13.01.02. Mutual Ministry Committee may be appointed jointly by the president and the minister(s). The committee is to assist the minister (s) in their particular roles in the ministry of the congregation.

C13.06. Other committees and duties of committees of this congregation shall be specified in the bylaws of the congregation or continuing resolutions of the Congregation Council. Committees formed by action of the Congregation Council shall report to the Congregation Council.

B13.06.01. All committees formed by the Congregation Council shall have a stated purpose, a start date and a finish date in the establishing resolution.

C13.07. The minister(s) of this congregation shall be an *ex officio* member of all committees and boards of the congregation. The president of this congregation shall be an *ex officio* member of all committees and boards of the congregation, except the Nominating Committee.

C13.08. The Foundation Commission

A. There shall be a Foundation Commission of six (6) members, five of whom shall be nominated by the congregational nominating committee and elected by the Congregation Council at its February meeting for a five year term, staggered over five years. The vice-president of the congregation shall be the sixth member. The Foundation Commission shall elect a chair, secretary, and treasurer, with terms determined by vote of the commission members.

B. The duties and responsibilities of this commission shall be:

- 1) to receive and acknowledge all memorials; designated special gifts; endowments; bequests; and all other special gifts not designated for current operations.
- 2) to administer all endowed funds
- 3) to encourage the giving of special gifts, as specified in the bylaws.

Chapter 14.

ORGANIZATIONS WITHIN THE CONGREGATION

C14.01. All organizations within this congregation shall exist to aid it in ministering to the members of this congregation and to all persons who can be reached with the Gospel of Christ. As outgrowths and expressions of this congregation's life, the organizations are subject to the Congregation Council's oversight and direction. This congregation at its meeting shall receive reports concerning their membership, work, and finances.

C14.02. Special interest groups, other than those of the official organizations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, may be organized only after authorization has been given by the Congregation Council and specified in a continuing resolution.

Chapter 15.

DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS AND ADJUDICATION

***C15.01.** Persistent and public denial of the Christian faith, willful or criminal conduct grossly unbecoming a member of the Church of Christ, continual and intentional interference with the ministry of the congregation, or willful and repeated harassment or defamation of member(s) of the congregation is sufficient cause for discipline of a member. Prior to disciplinary action, reconciliation and repentance will be attempted following Matthew 18:15–17, proceeding through these successive steps, as necessary: a) private counsel and admonition by the pastor, b) censure and admonition by the pastor in the presence of two or three witnesses, c) written referral of the matter by the Congregation Council to the vice president of the synod, who will refer it to a consultation panel drawn from the Consultation Committee of the synod, and d) written referral of the matter by the consultation panel to the Committee on Discipline of the synod. If, for any reason, the pastor is unable to administer the admonitions required by paragraphs a. and b. hereof, those steps may be performed by another pastor chosen by the Congregation Council.

***C15.02.** The process for discipline of a member of the congregation shall be governed as prescribed by the chapter on discipline in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. If the counseling, censure, and admonitions pursuant to *C15.01. do not result in repentance and amendment of life, charges against the accused member(s) that are specific

and in writing may be prepared by the Congregation Council, signed, and submitted to the vice president of the synod. The vice president shall select from the synod's Consultation Committee a panel of five members (three laypersons and two rostered ministers of). A copy of the written charges shall be provided to the consultation panel and the accused member(s). The consultation panel, after requesting a written reply to the charges from the accused member(s), shall consider the matter and seek a resolution by means of investigation, consultation, mediation, or whatever other means may seem appropriate. The panel's efforts to reach a mutually agreeable resolution shall continue for no more than 45 days after the matter is submitted to it.

- ***C15.03.** If the consultation panel fails to resolve the matter, that panel shall refer the case in writing, including the written charges and the accused member's reply, to the Committee on Discipline of the synod for a hearing. A copy of the panel's written referral shall be delivered to the vice president of the synod, the Congregation Council, and the accused member(s) at the same time it is sent to the Committee on Discipline of the synod. The Executive Committee of the Synod Council shall then select six members from the Committee on Discipline to decide the case and shall appoint a member of the Synod Council to preside as nonvoting chair. Those six members, plus the nonvoting chair, comprise the discipline hearing panel for deciding the case. The Congregation Council and the accused member(s) are the parties to the case.
- ***C15.04.** The discipline hearing panel shall commence and conduct the disciplinary hearing in accordance with the provisions governing discipline of congregation members prescribed in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.
- ***C15.05.** By the vote of at least two-thirds of the members of the discipline hearing panel who are present and voting, one of the following disciplinary sanctions can be imposed:
 - a. suspension from the privileges of congregation membership for a designated period of time;
 - b. suspension from the privileges of congregation membership until the pastor and Congregation Council receive evidence, satisfactory to them, of repentance and amendment of life;
 - c. termination of membership in the congregation; or
 - d. termination of membership in the congregation and exclusion from the church property and from all congregation activities.
- ***C15.06.** The written decision of the discipline hearing panel shall be sent to the vice president of the synod, the accused member(s), and the Congregation Council as required by the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. The decision of the discipline hearing panel shall be implemented by the Congregation Council and recorded in the minutes of the next council meeting.
- ***C15.07.** No member of the congregation shall be subject to discipline a second time for offenses that a discipline hearing panel has heard previously and decided pursuant to this chapter.
- ***C15.10. Adjudication**
- ***C15.11.** When there is disagreement among factions within this congregation on a substantive issue that cannot be resolved by the parties, members of this congregation shall have access to the synodical bishop for consultation after informing the chair of the Congregation Council of their intent. If the consultation fails to resolve the issue(s), the Consultation Committee of the synod shall consider the matter. If the Consultation Committee of the synod shall fail to resolve the issue(s), the matter shall be referred to the Synod Council, whose decision shall be final.

Chapter 16. AMENDMENTS

- *C16.01.** Unless provision *C17.04. is applicable, those sections of this constitution that are not required, in accord with the *Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, may be amended in the following manner. Amendments may be proposed by at least 10% of the voting members or by the Congregation Council. Proposals must be filed in writing with the Congregation Council 60 days before formal consideration by this congregation at a regular or special Congregation Meeting called for that purpose. The Congregation Council shall notify the congregation's members by mail of the proposal together with the council's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the meeting. Notification may take place by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law.
- *C16.02.** An amendment to this constitution, proposed under *C16.01., shall:
- be approved at a legally called Congregation Meeting according to this constitution by a majority vote of those voting members present and voting and
 - be ratified without change at the next regular meeting of this congregation by a two-thirds majority vote of those present and voting; and
 - have the effective date included in the resolution and noted in the constitution
- *C16.03.** Any amendments to this constitution that result from the processes provided in *C16.01. and *C16.02. shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod. The synod shall notify the congregation of its decision to approve or disapprove the proposed changes; the changes shall go into effect upon notification that the synod has approved them.
- *C16.04.** This constitution may be amended to bring any section into conformity with a section or sections, either required or not required, of the *Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* as most recently amended by the Churchwide Assembly. Such amendments may be approved by a majority vote of those voting members present and voting at any legally called meeting of the congregation without presentation at a prior meeting of the congregation, provided that the Congregation Council has submitted by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law, notice to the congregation of such an amendment or amendments, together with the council's recommendations, at least 30 days prior to the meeting. Upon the request of at least two (2) voting members of the congregation, the Congregation Council shall submit such notice. Following the adoption of an amendment, the secretary of the congregation shall submit a copy thereof to the synod. Such provisions shall become effective immediately following the congregation's vote of approval.
- B16.04.01.** The doctrinal basis and the confessional subscription contained in Chapter 2, shall be unalterable; and no amendment to this constitution shall conflict therewith.

Chapter 17. BYLAWS

- *C17.01.** This congregation may adopt bylaws. No bylaw may conflict with this constitution.
- *C17.02.** Bylaws may be adopted or amended at any legally called meeting of this congregation with a quorum present by a majority two-thirds vote of those voting members present and voting.

***C17.03.** Changes to the bylaws may be proposed by any voting member provided, however, that such additions or amendments be submitted in writing to the Congregation Council at least 60 days before a regular or special Congregation Meeting called for that purpose and that the Congregation Council shall notify the congregation's members by mail of the proposal with the council's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the Congregation Meeting. Notification may take place by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law.

***C17.04.** Approved changes to the bylaws shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod.

Chapter 18.

CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

***C18.01.** The congregation, in a legally called meeting, or the Congregation Council may enact continuing resolutions. Such continuing resolutions may not conflict with the constitution or bylaws of this congregation.

***C18.02.** Continuing resolutions shall be enacted or amended by a majority vote of a meeting of the congregation or a two-thirds vote of all voting members of the Congregation Council.

Chapter 19.

INDEMNIFICATION

***C19.01.** Consistent with the provisions of the laws under which this congregation is incorporated, this congregation may adopt provisions providing indemnification for each person who, by reason of the fact that such person is or was a Congregation Council member, officer, employee, agent, or other member of any committee of this congregation, was or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending, or completed civil, criminal, administrative, arbitration, or investigative proceeding.

Chapter 20.

PARISH AUTHORIZATION

[Required provisions when congregation is part of a parish]*

C20.01. This congregation may unite in partnership with one or more other congregations recognized by the synod named in *C6.01. to form a parish. Except as provided in *C20.02. and *C20.03., a written agreement, developed in consultation with the synod and approved by the voting members of each congregation participating in the parish, shall specify the powers and responsibilities that have been delegated to a Parish Council. The Parish Agreement shall identify which congregation of the parish issues calls on behalf of the member congregations or shall establish a process for identifying which congregation issues calls on behalf of the member congregations.

C20.02. One congregation of a parish shall issue a call on behalf of the member congregations to a minister of Word and Sacrament or a candidate for the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament who has been recommended by the synodical bishop to serve the congregations of the parish. Such a call shall be approved prior to issuance by a two-thirds vote at a congregation meeting of each congregation forming the parish. If any congregation of the parish should fail to approve the call, the other congregations of the parish shall have the right to terminate the parish agreement.

- C20.03.** One congregation of a parish may issue a call on behalf of the member congregations to a minister of Word and Service or a candidate for the roster of Ministers of Word and Service who has been recommended by the synodical bishop to serve the congregations of the parish. Such a call shall be approved prior to issuance by a two-thirds vote at a congregational meeting of each congregation forming the parish. If any congregation of the parish should fail to approve the call, the other congregations of the parish shall have the right to terminate the parish agreement.
- C20.04.** Any one of the congregations of a parish may terminate the call of a pastor as provided in †S14.13 18.d. of the synodical constitution of the synod named in *C6.01. In such case, the other congregation(s) in the same parish shall have the right to terminate the parish arrangement.
- C20.05.** Any one of the congregations of the parish may terminate their relationship with a minister of Word and Service as provided in †S14.43.d. of the synodical constitution of the synod named in *C6.01. In such case, the other congregation(s) of the same parish shall have the right to terminate the parish agreement.
- C20.06.** Whenever a parish agreement is terminated, the call of any rostered minister serving that parish is terminated. Should any congregation that was formerly part of the parish agreement desire to issue a new call to that rostered minister, it may do so in accordance with the call process of this church.