

GRACE ENGLISH EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

CONSTITUTION, BYLAWS AND CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

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NOTATIONS

Throughout the constitution and bylaws there is a distinction between the words “congregation” and “church”. The word “congregation” refers to Grace English Evangelical Lutheran Church. Except for this congregation’s incorporated name, the word “church” refers to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Also, the word “synodical” has been replaced with the word “synod”. These changes are in accord with the 2019 update to the “Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America”.

Chapter *5.04. requires election (rather than choose) of congregational lay person voting members to serve as voting members of the Saint Paul Area 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.

Chapter *9.21. The word “deacon” has replaced “minister of Word and Service” in the Constitution.

Chapter 10.01. and Bylaw C10.01.01. Regular congregation meetings will continue to be scheduled in February and November, with agendas similar to past practice. The constitution requires that one regular meeting per year be designated as the annual meeting of this congregation. The February meeting is now designated the annual meeting. The November meeting remains designated as a semi-annual congregation meeting.

Bylaw C14.01.02. and Continuing Resolution C14.01E19. GRACE WOMEN OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA (WELCA) has been eliminated due to the dissolution of the organization.

Chapter *C15.11. addresses unresolved disagreements within the congregation. Members of the congregation may now petition the synod bishop, rather than have access to the synodical bishop, for consultation after informing the congregation’s president, rather than council chair, of intention to do so. Language was also added regarding disagreements involving the pastor, allowing the bishop to begin the process described in †S14.18.d. found in the St. Paul Area Synod’s constitution. This process empowers the bishop and bishop’s committee to make recommendations first to the pastor and then to the congregation to find a solution to the disagreement.

* Required Provision

MISSION STATEMENT

Grace Lutheran Church is a community of believers in
Jesus Christ who:

CELEBRATE the unconditional love and grace of
God;

PROVIDE Christian learning opportunities for all
ages;

SUPPORT all who need love and care;

SERVE the community and the world.

***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 Grace English Evangelical Lutheran Church.
- C1.02.** For the purpose of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws, the congregation of Grace English Evangelical Lutheran Church is hereinafter designated as “this congregation.”
- C1.11.** This congregation shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of Minnesota.

Chapter 2.

CONFESSION OF FAITH

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

C2.01.01. CONFLICTING LOYALTIES

This congregation will only seek worship and religious fellowship with organizations which confess faith in the Triune God and in Jesus Christ as the eternal Son of God incarnate who saves believers solely through their faith in God’s abundant and merciful grace.

Ceremonies of organizations whose goals, objectives and beliefs violate or are not in keeping with the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Saint Paul Area Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and Grace English Evangelical Lutheran Church shall not be held on the premises of this congregation.

The ministers of Word and Sacrament and Word and Service of this congregation shall not participate in ceremonies of organizations whose goals, objectives and beliefs are in violation of or are incompatible with the calling of a minister of Word and Sacrament or Word and Service of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

* Required provision

- *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 church-wide 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 and justice for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, standing with the poor and powerless, 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.

***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~~ this congregation's ministry and the ministry of ~~other parts~~ 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.

***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.

***C4.05.** This congregation shall ~~from time to time~~, 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.
- *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 **the this** congregation. **The This** congregation is authorized to:

 - a. call a pastor as provided in Chapter 9;
 - b. terminate the call of a pastor 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, 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 committees, and require them to carry out their duties in accordance with the constitution, bylaws and continuing resolutions; and
 - k. terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as provided in Chapter 6.
- *C5.04.** This congregation shall **choose 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 **the this** congregation and other qualifications shall be as prescribed in guidelines established by the Saint Paul Area Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- C5.05.** This congregation shall have an endowment fund that will operate as specified in this congregation's continuing resolutions. The purpose of the endowment fund is to provide for mission work and capital mortgage debt reduction beyond the operational budget of this congregation.

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 Saint Paul Area Synod **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 **the 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 **may be 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 in America.
 - d. The St. Paul Area 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.

- *C6.05.** ~~e.~~ This congregation follows the procedures outlined in *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 a two legally called and conducted special meetings of the this congregation by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present at each meeting. ~~Such~~ 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 the 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 he or she is a voting member of the this congregation, the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any, shall have voice but not vote at the first meeting.
 - b. The Within 10 days after the resolution has been voted upon at the first meeting, the secretary of the 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 ~~mail a copy~~ send copies of the resolution and certification to voting members of the this congregation. This notice shall be submitted within 10 days after the resolution has been adopted.
 - c. The 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 the this congregation shall continue in consultation, as specified in paragraph a. above, during a period of at least 90 days after receipt by the ~~synod of the notice~~ bishop of the attestation and certification as specified in paragraph b. above.
 - d. If the this congregation, after such consultation, still seeks to terminate its relationship 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 ~~mailed~~ sent to all voting members and to the bishop at least 10 days in advance of the meeting. Unless he or she is a voting member of the this congregation, the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any, shall have voice but not vote at the second meeting.
 - e. A copy of the resolution, attesting that the special meeting was legally called and conducted and certifying the outcome of the vote, shall be sent to the bishop within 10 days after the resolution has

been adopted, at which time the relationship between the congregation and this church shall be terminated subject to paragraph g. below.

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 the this congregation has voted by a two-thirds vote to affiliate with another Lutheran denomination, the this congregation will be conclusively presumed to be shall be deemed an independent or non-Lutheran church, in which case *C7.04. shall apply.
- ~~f. Notice of termination shall be forwarded by the bishop to the secretary of the ELCA, who shall report the termination to the Church-wide Assembly.~~
- 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 the this congregation's first meeting as specified in paragraph a. above, another special meeting to consider termination of relationship with this church may be called no sooner than six months after that first meeting. If this congregation or fails to achieve the required two-thirds vote of voting members present at the this congregation's second 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 second~~ the 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 ~~effected~~ 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 Saint Paul Area Synod ~~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 ~~two thirds of~~ 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 Saint Paul Area Synod ~~Synod.~~
- *C7.04. If ~~two thirds of~~ the 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 ~~established synodical~~ established by the synod, 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 Saint Paul Area 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.

C8.01.01. ADMSSION TO BAPTIZED MEMBERSHIP

Children, one or both of whose parents or guardians are members of this congregation, shall upon receiving Christian baptism, be received as baptized members of this congregation.

Children, neither of whose parents or guardians are members of this congregation, shall upon Christian baptism duly recorded as a ministerial act performed under the auspices of this congregation, be received as baptized members of this congregation unless there is an understanding that, for good reason, they will be enrolled as baptized members of another congregation, in which case notice of the baptism shall be sent to the congregation in which the child is to be enrolled as a baptized member.

Children baptized in other congregations shall be received as baptized members of this congregation upon admission of one or both parents or guardians to membership, by consent of one or both parents or guardians, or by action of the Congregation Council.

Unbaptized adults who have received instruction and have given evidence of having an adequate understanding and acceptance of the teachings of the Word of God as confessed by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, shall, upon confession of faith and Christian baptism duly recorded as a ministerial act performed under the auspices of this congregation, be received as baptized members of this congregation.

Associate and Seasonal persons may be accepted as members subject to the provisions of Chapter *C8.02.d. and *C8.02.e.

C8.01.02. ADMISSION TO CONFIRMED MEMBERSHIP

Baptized adults, not previously members of this congregation, who have received instruction and have given evidence of having adequate understanding and acceptance of the teachings of the Word of God as confessed by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, shall be admitted to confirmed membership through the rite of affirmation of faith.

Adults received as baptized members according to the provisions of C8.01.01. shall be recognized as confirmed members, at the discretion of the pastor, whether or not they have participated in the rite of affirmation of faith.

Children who are baptized members of this congregation shall be admitted to confirmed membership through participation in the rite of affirmation of faith.

C8.01.03. DISCONTINUANCE OF MEMBERSHIP

Members who move away shall be encouraged to transfer their membership. A confirmed member in good standing desiring to change membership to another congregation shall, upon request, receive a Letter of Transfer or a Letter of Release.

Confirmed members who do not, for a period of one year, partake of Holy Communion and support this congregation with their offerings, shall be contacted and/or visited by the pastor or appropriate Congregation Council Committee and encouraged to active membership. If during the second year, the confirmed member does not actively participate in Holy Communion and support this congregation with their offerings, his or her name shall be removed from the membership roster of this congregation.

Children, neither of whose parents or guardians are active members of this congregation, shall be removed from the baptized membership roll

if they fail to participate in the Christian education program of this congregation.

Members who have been removed from membership, resigned, transferred or who are definitely known to have become members of other congregations without transfer, have thereby terminated their membership in this congregation and have surrendered all membership rights.

***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 Lutheran congregations or by affirmation of faith.
- 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.
- 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 **the this** congregation as well as the other rights and privileges ascribed to voting members by the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws. They shall not have voted as a seasonal member of another congregation of this church in 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. These individuals have all the privileges and duties of membership except voting rights or other rights and privileges ascribed to voting members by the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.
- e. **Seasonal** members are voting members of other **ELCA** 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 the ELCA 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.

C8.02.01. COMMUNION PARTICIPATION

This congregation encourages all its members, who have been prepared to receive the sacrament, to participate regularly in Holy Communion.

Preparation for Holy Communion will be provided in accordance with the guidelines of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Participation in Holy Communion shall be open to all individuals according to God’s grace.

It shall be made known to prospective participants, through the bulletin or oral announcement, that this congregation believes;

- a. At the table of our Lord Jesus Christ, God nourishes faith, forgives sin, and calls us to be witnesses of the Gospel. In this sacrament the crucified and risen Christ is present, giving his true body and blood as food and drink. The real presence is a mystery.
- b. Forms of preparation for Holy Communion focus the community of faith both on the breadth of creation’s need for redemption and on the depth of God’s redemptive actions. Such forms of preparation are recommended, but not required, for that person “is worthy and well prepared who believes these words, ‘for you’ and ‘for the forgiveness of sin’”.
- c. A record of member participation in Holy Communion shall be maintained.

***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 church-wide 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 ELCA constitutional provision 20.41 and the accompanying bylaws 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.

Chapter 9.
ROSTERED MINISTER

- *C9.01. Authority to call a pastor 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 this congregation 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 the this congregation by the synodical 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;

- 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 distribution of its communications and publications 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 proclaiming God's love for the world.
- b. Each pastor with a congregational call shall, within the congregation:
- 1) offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead;
 - 2) relate to all schools and organizations of this congregation;
 - 3) install regularly elected members of the Congregation Council;
 - 4) with the council, administer discipline; and
 - 5) endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the ELCA churchwide organization and of the Saint Paul Area Synod Synod of the ELCA; and
 - 6) encourage adherence to covenantal relationship with this church as expressed in the Constitution, 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 the this congregation in view of local conditions;
 - 4) physical disability or mental 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~~ this congregation;
 - 8) dissolution of ~~the~~ this congregation or the termination of a parish arrangement; or
 - 9) suspension of ~~the~~ this congregation through discipline for more than six months.
- 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 the Congregation Council or by a petition signed by at least one-third of the voting members of ~~the~~ 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 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 ~~as disabled~~ 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 ~~the~~ 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 ~~the~~ 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 ~~the~~ 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, **the 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 **the 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. **related to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.**
- *C9.09.** When a pastor is called to serve in company with another pastor or pastors, the privileges and responsibilities of each pastor shall be specified in documents to accompany the call and to be drafted in consultation involving the pastors, 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, **the 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 **the 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 parochial records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from **the this** 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 his or her 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 **the this** congregation. The secretary of this congregation shall attest in writing to the bishop of this synod that such records have been placed in his or her hands in good order by a departing pastor before the installation of that pastor in another field of labor or the granting by the synod of retired status to the pastor **call or approval of a request for change in roster status.**

C9.14.01. PAROCHIAL AND PARISH RECORDS

The parochial and parish records of this congregation shall be and remain the property of this congregation. The pastor shall be responsible for the maintenance of the records, except as otherwise provided herein. The records shall consist of:

- a. The roster of baptized, confirmed and voting members.
- b. The ministerial acts performed by the pastor.
- c. The minutes of the meetings of this congregation and congregation council for which the secretary of this congregation shall be responsible.
- d. The financial records of this congregation for which the treasurer of this congregation shall be responsible.

Should this congregation be dissolved, its official records shall be deposited in the archives of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

- 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 **the this** congregation and the pastor in a form proposed by the synodical bishop and approved by **the this** congregation.

C9.16. – C9.20. are reserved for future use.

- *C9.21. Authority to call a **minister of Word and Service** **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 this congregation 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, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world, witnessing to the realm of God in the community, the nation, and abroad;
 - 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 **the ELCA** **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 this congregation, when accepted by a deacon, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment, which shall be terminated only by **the deacon'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 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) physical disability or mental 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 physical disability or mental 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 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 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 physical disability or mental 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 as disabled with disability status. Upon removal of the disability and the restoration of the deacon to health, 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 pre-

sent 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.** ~~The deacon shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to a former congregation before:~~

~~a. installation in another field of labor, or~~

~~b. the issuance of a certificate of dismissal or transfer.~~

The 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 his or her 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. ~~The semi annual meetings of this congregation shall be held at a time specified in the bylaws.~~

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 Minnesota, the bylaws shall designate one regular meeting per year as the annual meeting of this congregation.

C10.01A20. LOCATION OF CONGREGATION MEETING

These congregation meetings may be conducted on this congregation’s premises or via electronic means.

C10.01.01. SEMI-ANNUAL CONGREGATION MEETINGS

~~Semi annual meetings~~ A semi-annual meeting of this congregation shall be held during the ~~months~~ month of November and the annual meeting of this congregation shall be held during the month of February. Notice of the meetings shall be given by the Congregation Council as provided in this congregation’s ~~constitution~~ bylaws. In the event that a quorum is not present at the time of any ~~semi annual~~ meeting, the congregation president shall reschedule the meeting as soon as possible in accordance with the provisions set forth in the constitution for special meetings.

The order of business at the November semi-annual meeting shall be established by the Congregation Council and distributed to the voting members ten days prior to the meeting. The agenda shall include:

1. Call to order and welcome
2. Quorum call
3. Opening devotions
4. Acceptance of proposed meeting agenda
5. Acceptance of prior ~~semi annual or special~~ meeting minutes
6. Approval of operating budget for subsequent year

7. Election of officers, congregation council at-large members and congregation committee members
8. Unfinished business
9. New Business
10. Closing prayer
11. Adjournment

The order of business at the February ~~semi~~-annual meeting shall be established by the Congregation Council and distributed to the voting members ten days prior to the meeting. The agenda shall include:

1. Call to order and welcome
2. Quorum call
3. Opening devotions
4. Acceptance of proposed meeting agenda
5. Acceptance of prior ~~semi-annual or special~~ meeting minutes
6. Acceptance of annual reports of Pastor, Congregation President, congregation committees, congregation council committees and organizations
7. Unfinished business
8. New Business
9. Closing prayer
10. Adjournment

In the following cases, voting shall be by written ballot:

1. To adopt or amend the constitution, bylaws, or continuing resolutions of this congregation;
2. To exclude a member from this congregation or to remove a member from office in this congregation;
3. To sever membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;
4. To dispose of, encumber, or purchase real property; or
5. When requested by ten or more voting members present.

If more than one ballot is required in an election, a motion shall be in order to limit the balloting after the first ballot to the three candidates receiving the highest number of votes on the first ballot and, after the

second ballot, to limit the third ballot to the two candidates receiving the highest number of votes on the second ballot.

C10.02. A special Congregation Meeting may be called by the pastor, the Congregation Council, or the president of this congregation, and shall be called by the president of ~~the~~ this congregation upon the written request of five 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.

C10.02.01. SPECIAL CONGREGATION MEETINGS

Special meetings of this congregation shall be announced and conducted in accordance with this congregation's constitution. Additionally, any congregation meeting called to consider the purchase, disposal or encumbrance of real property must be called and held in conformity with such provisions of civil law as may be applicable.

C10.03. Notice of all ~~semi annual and special~~ meetings of this congregation, with the exception of those called to consider the purchase, disposal or encumbrance of real property, 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. Notice of meetings of this congregation called to consider the purchase, disposal or encumbrance of real property shall be given at the services of worship on the preceding four consecutive Sundays and by mail or electronic means to all voting members at least twenty days in advance of the date of the meeting in accordance with Minnesota Statute 315.12. A two-thirds majority of the voting members present and voting shall be required for adoption of a motion to purchase, dispose or encumber real property.

C10.04. Five 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 ~~the~~ 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. To the extent permitted by state law, notice of all meetings may be provided electronically.

Chapter 11. OFFICERS

- C11.01.** The officers of this congregation shall be a president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer.
- a. Duties of the officers shall be specified in the bylaws.
 - b. The officers shall be voting members of the this congregation.
 - c. Officers of this congregation shall serve similar offices of the Congregation Council and shall be voting members of the Congregation Council.

C11.01.01. DUTIES OF OFFICERS

The president, vice president, secretary and treasurer shall:

- a. Coordinate the congregation and congregation council meetings.
- b. Plan the agenda for all congregation and congregation council meetings.
- c. Along with the pastor, serve as the Executive Committee.

The president shall:

- a. Seek to preserve peace and harmony within the congregation.
- b. Serve as presiding officer of all congregation and congregation council meetings.
- c. Prepare a written report to the congregation annually on the state of the church.
- d. Perform the additional duties provided in the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this congregation and congregation council.
- e. Attend synod assemblies, conferences, and workshops and represent this congregation whenever possible.
- f. Call meetings for mutual consultation of the officers, congregation council and others as he or she sees fit.
- g. Along with the secretary, sign all legal documents on behalf of this congregation.

- h. Consult with and by formal approval of the congregation council on an annual basis, assign congregation council members as liaisons to all congregation and congregation council committees.

The vice president shall:

- a. Assume the presidency if the president dies, resigns or becomes incapacitated.
- b. Perform the additional duties as provided in the constitution, by-laws, and continuing resolutions of this congregation or congregation council.
- c. Attend synod assemblies, conferences, and workshops and represent this congregation whenever possible.

The secretary shall:

- a. Keep the minutes of the congregation and congregation council meetings.
- b. Supervise the preservation of the congregation archives, including:
 - 1. Legal and official documents and records.
 - 2. Proceedings of the congregation and congregation council meetings.
 - 3. The constitution, bylaws, continuing resolutions, rules of order, and other standing rules of this congregation, The Saint Paul Area Synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- c. Preserve significant papers and reports of all congregation and congregation council committees and task forces.
- d. Assist the pastor in compiling and submitting the annual parochial report to the Saint Paul Area Synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- e. Assist the pastor in compiling and submitting the annual report of the congregation.

- f. Along with the president, sign all legal documents on behalf of the congregation.
- g. Send out all call notices of congregation and congregation council meetings.
- h. Be responsible for the correspondence of the congregation council.
- i. Maintain an annual roster of membership for congregation council, congregation and congregation council committees and task forces.

The treasurer shall:

- a. Receive, disburse and account for the funds of this congregation.
- b. Present an audited financial report to the congregation at the February ~~semi~~-annual congregation meeting.
- c. Prepare and present such other reports to the congregation and congregation council as may be requested.

C11.02. The officers of the Congregation Council shall be elected at the November semi-annual congregation meeting by written ballot. An oral ballot may be substituted for the written ballot by consent of two-thirds of the voting members present and voting. Officers shall serve a term of two years or until their successors are elected. Their terms shall begin on January 1 following their election. Newly elected officers shall be installed at worship on a Sunday prior to the date they assume office.

C11.03. No officer shall hold more than one office at a time. No elected officer shall be eligible to serve more than two consecutive two-year terms in the same office.

The officers of the Congregation Council are eligible to serve no more than three consecutive two-year terms. The maximum years an individual may serve as either an officer or as an at-large member of the Congregation Council in either capacity may not exceed six consecutive years.

C11.04. Should an officer position be declared vacant, the Congregation Council shall elect from its membership, by majority vote, a successor to serve immediately until the next November semi-annual congregation meeting.

Chapter 12.

CONGREGATION COUNCIL

C12.01. The voting membership of the Congregation Council shall consist of the pastor(s), the deacon(s), the officers of the this congregation, and not more than seven nor fewer than three at-large members of the congregation. Any voting member of the this congregation may be elected, subject only to the limitation on the length of continuous service permitted in that office. A member's place on the Congregation Council shall be declared vacant if the member

- a) ceases to be a voting member of this congregation, or
- b) is absent from three successive regular meetings of the congregation Council without cause.

Consistent with the laws of the State of Minnesota, the this congregation may adopt procedures for the removal of a member of the Congregation Council in other circumstances.

C12.01B20. CONGREGATION COUNCIL VACANCY

In addition to the two criteria for declaring a vacancy on Council listed in C12.01., a vacancy shall be declared if a member of the Council submits a letter of resignation to the President, or is no longer able to fulfill their term.

C12.01A19. CONGREGATION COUNCIL

Membership:

The Congregation Council shall consist of the officers and five at-large members, with staggered terms in the initial election. The pastor(s) and deacon(s) shall, in addition, serve as a voting member of the Congregation Council.

Voting membership in this congregation shall be a requirement for membership on the Congregation Council. Other qualifications shall include the interest, ability and potential to show care and concern for the broad interests of this congregation and for the varied work of the congregation council committees.

Filling an unexpired term of less than one year shall not be considered a term of office.

Meetings:

Regular meetings of the Congregation Council shall be held monthly. Special meetings of the Congregation Council may be called as provided for in the constitution.

A member of the Congregation Council absent from two consecutive regular meetings of the Congregation Council shall be notified by the secretary.

Duties:

The Congregation Council shall have the authority to create Congregation Council Committees and task forces and to appoint their members. Duties of Congregation Council Committees and task forces shall be specified in the Continuing Resolutions.

The pastor(s), deacon(s) and Congregation Council president shall be ex-officio members of all Congregation Council Committees.

The Congregation Council shall annually review and evaluate the performance of the pastor's ministry and provide opportunities to mutually share the results of that evaluation for the improvement of his or her ministry. The Congregation Council shall also annually review and consider adjusting the compensation of the pastor for inclusion in the annual operating budget.

The Congregation Council shall be empowered to secure lay employees deemed necessary to carry on the work of this congregation. The Congregation Council shall annually review and evaluate the performance of the lay employees and provide opportunities to mutually share the results of that evaluation for the improvement of their duties and ministry. The Congregation Council shall also annually review and consider adjusting the compensation of the lay employees for the inclusion in the annual operating budget.

The Congregation Council is also empowered to secure the services of independent contractors by contract or agreement to assist in carrying out the work of the congregation.

The Congregation Council shall periodically review the receipts, disbursements, and financial condition of the church and assure that non-budgeted funds are received and expended as designated.

C12.01B19. CONGREGATION COUNCIL COMMITTEES

- a. A Business Management Committee shall oversee the business affairs of this congregation including annual budget development, accounting, investments, insurance coverage, technology, communications, money counting, service contracts and other related activities.
- b. The Community Connections Committee shall seek to develop relationships for all ages both within the congregation as well as outside its walls. This committee shall seek, invite and welcome new members into our congregational life as well as engage them in meaningful activities, helping them build connections to the congregation through worship, fellowship, study, and service. They shall encourage all members to be active in worship, education, fellowship, and ministry and facilitate opportunities for our homebound. For those members who have become inactive, this committee shall seek to draw them back to an active worship and faith life. This committee shall also develop social events that provide opportunities to invite our neighbors and friends into our church community. They shall seek to identify social needs, build awareness of them, and encourage the sharing of God's love through outreach awakening the development and use of spiritual gifts and growth in faith.
- c. A Human Resources Committee shall oversee and assist the Congregation Council with the employment of lay staff of the congregation including developing and maintaining a Personnel/Employment Handbook and job descriptions, the activities of employment including maintaining personnel files, pay and benefits, time away from work, performance and behavior expectations (employee evaluations), discipline and discharge, dispute resolution, ending of employment relationships and other related activities.
- d. A Lifelong Learning and Family Ministries Committee shall provide opportunities of spiritual growth for all ages from birth through death. These areas shall include intergenerational events as well as early childhood gatherings, Sunday School, Confirmation, Talk Points, Bible studies, life events, fellowship and service. Through these efforts, participants will build relationships with one another forming a sense of family within our congregation, grow closer to our God, and develop maturity concerning faith matters.
- e. A Missions Committee shall promote a congregational environment of concern, support and action on behalf of our local community, our Saint Paul Area Synod, and nationally and globally through the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

- f. A Property Management Committee shall be responsible and provide for the supervision, maintenance, repair, improvement, safeguarding and inventory of all church property and equipment.
- g. A Stewardship Committee shall provide for the financial and volunteer support of church programs including creation care and the importance of benevolence giving, the annual stewardship appeal and promotion of a year-round program of stewardship education.
- h. A Worship and Music Committee shall be aware of the parameters of worship that stands within the Lutheran tradition and meets the needs of our diverse body of worshipers and shall proclaim the Gospel through worship and music; and shall care for and maintain all space and equipment used in worship and music.

Congregation Council Committees shall:

- a. Elect from its membership a chairperson and a recorder
- b. Conduct regular meetings of the committee
- c. Perform assigned functions as indicated in the bylaws, continuing resolutions and the Policy and Procedures Manual
- d. Work in cooperation with the pastor and the Congregation Council
- e. Make recommendations to the Congregation Council regarding policy and procedural changes and report regularly to the Congregation Council on its activities.

C12.02. The at-large members of the Congregation Council shall be elected at the November semi-annual meeting of the congregation by written ballot. An oral ballot may be substituted for the written ballot by consent of two-thirds of the voting members present and voting. At-large members shall serve a term of three years or until their successors are elected. Their terms shall begin on January 1 following their election. They shall be installed at worship on a Sunday prior to the date they assume office. The at-large members of the Congregation Council are eligible to serve no more than two consecutive three-year terms. The maximum years an individual may serve as either an officer or as an at-large member of the Congregation Council in either capacity may not exceed six consecutive years.

C12.03. Should an at-large member's place on the Congregation Council be declared vacant, the Congregation Council shall elect, by majority vote, a successor until the next November semi-annual Congregation Meeting.

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 pastor.
- h. To emphasize ~~partnership with~~ **support of** 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.

C12.05. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the financial and property matters of this congregation.

- a. The Congregation Council shall be the board of directors of this congregation and, as such, shall be responsible for maintaining and protecting its property and managing its business and fiscal affairs. It shall have the powers and be subject to the obligations that pertain to such boards under the laws of the State of Minnesota, except as otherwise provided herein.
- b. 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~~ **this** congregation.
- c. The Congregation Council may enter into contracts of up to 3.0% of the general operating expense budget for items not included in the budget.
- d. The Congregation Council shall prepare a general operating budget for adoption by this congregation, shall supervise the expenditure of funds in accordance therewith following its adoption, and may incur obligations in excess of 5.0% of the anticipated receipts only after approval by a Congregation Meeting. The budget shall include this

congregation's full indicated share in support of the wider ministry being carried on in partnership collaboration with the synod and churchwide organization.

- e. 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 mission support monies to the synodical treasurer.
- f. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for this congregation's investments and its total insurance program.
- g. Committees and task forces of this congregation may be formed, as the need arises, by the Congregation Council, or by decision of this congregation as authorized in C13.08.

C12.05.01. USE OF PROPERTY

The property of this congregation shall be for the use of this congregation in its normal function as a Lutheran church and shall only be used in ways which are in harmony with congregation purposes. If groups or individuals not associated with this congregation desire to use church property, application shall be made to the Congregation Council for its approval.

- C12.06.** The Congregation Council shall see that the provisions of this constitution, its bylaws, and the continuing resolutions are carried out.
- C12.07.** The Congregation Council shall provide for an annual review of the membership roster.
- C12.08.** The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the employment and supervision of the pastoral and lay employees of this congregation. Nothing in this provision shall be deemed to affect the this congregation's responsibility for the call, terms of call, or termination of call of any employees who are on the roster of this church.
- C12.09.** The Congregation Council shall submit a comprehensive report to this congregation at the February semi-annual meeting.

C12.09.01. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES AND ORGANIZATIONS

All committees and organizations of this congregation shall submit reports of their programs and activities to the congregation secretary at least twenty one days prior to the February semi-annual meeting of this congregation for inclusion in the annual report for the congregation.

All committees and organizations of this congregation handling funds shall submit their accounts to the congregation treasurer at least twenty one days prior to the February semi-annual meeting of this congregation

for audit. The congregation treasurer shall include such accounts in a written report at that meeting.

- C12.11.** The Congregation Council shall normally meet once a month. Special meetings may be called by the pastor or the president, and shall be called by the president at the request of at least one-half of its members. A three day notice of each special meeting shall be given to all who are entitled to be present.
- C12.12.** A quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of a majority of the members of the Congregation Council, including the pastor or interim pastor, except when the pastor 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 pastor 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.
- C12.13.** The Congregation Council and its committees may hold 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.** The officers of this congregation and the pastor shall constitute the *Executive Committee*.
- C13.02.** A *Nominating Committee* shall consist of five voting members of this congregation, two of whom shall be elected by the Congregation Council from its own membership annually for one year and three of whom shall be elected at the November semi-annual congregation meeting for a three-year staggered term with a maximum of two consecutive terms. Their terms shall begin on January 1 following their election.
- C13.03.** An *Endowment Committee* shall consist of five voting members of this congregation elected at the November semi-annual congregation meeting. The five voting members shall be eligible to serve two consecutive three-year staggered terms. Their terms shall begin on January 1 following their election.
- C13.04.** An *Audit Committee* shall consist of three voting members of this congregation elected at the November semi-annual congregation meeting for a three-year staggered term. The committee members shall not be members of the Congregation Council or Business Management Committee. Members shall be eligible for re-election with no term limits. Their terms shall begin on January 1 following their election.

- C13.05.** A *Mutual Ministry Committee* shall consist of six voting members of this congregation appointed by the congregation president and rostered minister following the November semi-annual congregation meeting for a three-year staggered term with a two term limit. No member shall concurrently serve on the congregation council. One member shall be recommended annually by the president and have the approval of the rostered minister and one member shall be recommended annually by the rostered minister and have the approval of the president. Their terms shall begin on January 1 following their election.
- C13.06.** A *Special Gifts and Memorials Committee* shall consist of five voting members of this congregation elected at the November semi-annual congregation meeting. The five voting members shall be eligible to serve two consecutive three-year staggered terms. Their terms shall begin on January 1 following their election.
- C13.07.** When a ~~pastoral~~ vacancy occurs in a position for which this congregation calls a rostered minister, a *Call Committee* of six voting members of this congregation shall be recommended by the Nominating Committee and shall be elected by the congregation at a special congregation meeting. The term of office will terminate upon installation of the newly called ~~pastor~~ rostered minister.
- C13.08.** Committees and task forces of this congregation may be formed, as the need arises, by majority vote of the congregation at a Congregation Meeting, or by Congregation Council as authorized in C12.05.g.
- C13.09.** Duties of committees of this congregation shall be specified in the continuing resolutions.

C13.09C19. CONGREGATION COMMITTEE DUTIES

- a. An Executive Committee shall prepare all congregation and Congregation Council regular and special meeting agendas. They shall also address any significant or emergency matters requiring attention.
- b. A Nominating Committee shall at the direction of the Congregation President, be responsible for recruiting and nominating candidates for all elected offices within the congregation excluding members of the Mutual Ministry Committee.
- c. An Endowment Committee shall be the custodian of “The Grace Endowment Fund”. Its function shall be to manage the fund so as to enhance the mission outreach and reduce the capital mortgage debt of this congregation.
- d. An Audit Committee shall audit all financial records of this congregation, including all organizations which handle funds in the name of this church, and report findings, in writing, to the Congregation Council and in the February annual report for the congregation.

- e. A Mutual Ministry Committee shall enhance communications between and among staff and the congregation through mutual counsel, support and feedback of information. It shall further recommend steps to improve communications between this congregation and the Congregation Council with staff.
- f. A Special Gifts and Memorials Committee shall be the custodian of “The Grace Special Gifts and Memorials Fund”. Its function shall be to manage the fund so as to enhance the receipt and expenditure of unbudgeted operating, capital, special or other needs of the congregation.

Congregation Committees shall:

- a. Elect from its membership a chairperson and a recorder.
- b. Conduct regular meetings of the committee.
- c. Perform assigned functions as indicated in the constitution, bylaws, continuing resolutions and the Policy and Procedures Manual.
- d. Work in cooperation with the pastor and the Congregation Council.
- e. Make recommendations to the congregation regarding policy and procedural changes and report regularly to the Congregation Council its activities.

C13.10. The pastor and president of this congregation shall be *ex officio* members of all committees of the congregation, except the Mutual Ministry Committee.

C13.11. Should a member’s position on a congregation committee other than the Mutual Ministry Committee be declared vacant, the Congregation Council shall elect by majority vote a successor to serve immediately until the next November semi-annual congregation meeting.

Chapter 14.

ORGANIZATIONS WITHIN **THE THIS** 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 its oversight and direction. This congregation at its meetings shall determine their policies, guide their activities, and receive reports concerning their membership, work, and finances.

C14.01.01. XYZ’s (Xtra Years of Zest)

An organization of senior citizens (over 55) for spiritual and social fellowship.

C14.01D19. XYZ’S (Extra Years of Zest)

MEMBERSHIP:

All senior citizens of Grace Lutheran Church over the age of 55. There is no formal organization including officers, elections and voting.

PROGRAM:

Two or more volunteers with the assistance of the pastor plan the programs in September for the meetings which are held from September to June annually and held on the second Tuesday of each month at 1:30 PM in a church tower room.

FUNDS:

A free will offering is taken and held by a volunteer Treasurer. **this congregation's Treasurer.** Funds are used to defray program and trip costs.

DISSOLUTION:

In the event of dissolution, the distribution of the remaining funds shall be decided by the membership.

~~C14.01.02. GRACE WOMEN OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA (WELCA)~~

~~An organization of Grace Lutheran Church women for the purpose of mission growth, mission action and bible study.~~

~~C14.01E19. GRACE WOMEN OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA (WELCA)~~

~~**MEMBERSHIP:**~~

~~All women of Grace Lutheran Church~~

~~**ORGANIZATION:**~~

~~**COMMITTEE:**~~

~~1. Contact Person~~

~~2. Treasurer~~

~~3. Mission Growth~~

~~4. Mission Action~~

~~**CHAIR PERSON:**~~

~~1. Cradle Roll~~

~~2. Prayer Chain~~

~~3. Sunshine~~

~~4. Thanks Offering~~

~~**MEETINGS:**~~

~~The Bible Study/Service group meetings are held monthly from September to May. Studies come from the "Gather Magazine". In the June to August period, members meet only once for Bible study.~~

DUTIES OF COMMITTEES:

MISSION GROWTH shall promote membership and evangelism, and direct the program for the women of Grace and potential new members.

MISSION ACTION shall direct the programs of fellowship and services for the women of Grace and potential new members.

FUNDS:

Offering funds generated at the Bible study groups shall be designated as follows:

1. Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church
2. Women of Grace
3. Mission projects decided by committee

DISSOLUTION:

In the event of dissolution, the distribution of the remaining funds shall be decided by the current committee.

- 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~~ this congregation, or willful and repeated harassment or defamation of member(s) of ~~the~~ this 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 Executive Committee of the Congregation Council.

- *C15.02.** The process for discipline of a member of ~~the~~ this 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 ministers of Word and Sacrament). 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 **this** congregation; or
 - d. termination of membership in the **this** 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~~ **this** 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.~~

When there is disagreement between or among factions within this congregation on a substantive issue which cannot be resolved by the parties, members of this congregation may petition the synod bishop for consultation after informing the president of this congregation of their intent to do so. The synod bishop shall seek a timely resolution of the dispute. If the issue relates directly to the pastor, the bishop may begin the process in †S14.18.d. In all other matters, if the bishop's consultation fails to resolve the issue, the bishop shall refer the matter to the Consultation Committee of the synod, which shall undertake efforts to find an appropriate solution. If the Consultation Committee's efforts fail to resolve the dispute, the entire matter shall be referred to the Synod Council for adjudication by whatever process the Council deems necessary. The Synod Council's decision shall be final.

Chapter 16. AMENDMENTS

*C16.01. Unless provision *C16.04. 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 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~~ **this** congregation's members 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 **any** legally called **Congregation Meeting according to this constitution meeting of this congregation** by a majority vote of those voting members present and voting;
 - be ratified without change at the next **annual meeting regular meeting of this congregation held pursuant to C10.01.** by a two-thirds vote of those voting members present and voting; and
 - have the effective date included in the resolution² 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 this** 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 this** congregation without presentation at a prior meeting of **the this** congregation, provided that the Congregation Council has submitted by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law, notice to **the this** 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 this** congregation, the Congregation Council shall submit such notice. Following the adoption of an amendment, the secretary of **the this** congregation shall submit a copy thereof to the synod. Such provisions shall become effective immediately following a vote of approval.

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 two-thirds vote of those voting members present and voting.

² *Such an effective date must be stated in relation to the requirements of *C16.03. to allow time for **the synod/lead's** review of the amendment.*

- *C17.03. Changes to the bylaws may be proposed by any voting member, provided 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. The Congregation Council shall notify ~~the~~ **this** congregation's members 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~~ **Adopted or amended** bylaws shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod.

Chapter 18.
CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

- *C18.01. **The This** 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~~ **this** congregation or a two-thirds vote of all voting members of the Congregation Council.
- *C18.03. **Adopted or amended continuing resolutions shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod.**

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

- *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 the 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 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.
- *C20.03.** 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 the parish may terminate their relationship with the pastor as provided in †S14.18.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.
- *C20.05.** 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.

Appendix A.

CODIFICATION EXPLANATION

The Constitution is organized into chapters by general subject matter and codified as (a) constitutional provisions, (b) bylaws, and (c) continuing resolutions. Each provision is preceded by a capital “C.” If a constitutional provision is mandatory, it will be preceded by an asterisk, “*C.”

- a. Constitutional provisions are codified with two sets of numbers, preceded by a “C”: the chapter number, followed by a period, and a two-digit number. A period follows the two-digit number. Thus, one required constitutional provision related to “Membership” in Chapter 8 is codified as “*C8.02.” A provision in Chapter 12 relating to a report by the Congregation Council to the congregation at an annual meeting is codified as “C12.09.” Constitutional provisions are adopted and amended in accordance with Chapter 16 titled “Amendments.”
- b. Bylaw provisions follow constitutional provisions to which they apply. They are not intended to be organized in a separate document at the end of the constitutional provisions. Bylaws are codified with three sets of numbers: the chapter number (preceded by a “C”), the related constitutional provision number, and a two-digit number. There are periods after the chapter number, after the reference to the constitutional provision, and after the bylaw number. Thus, a bylaw provision related to “Membership” would be codified as “C8.01.01.” A bylaw relating to the contents of an annual report by the Congregation Council to the congregation at an annual meeting would be codified as “C12.09.01.” Because bylaws and continuing resolutions normally relate to specific practices and details of each congregation’s organization, operation, and life, there is not a model set of bylaws or continuing resolutions. Thus, each congregation has discretion and may develop its own bylaws and continuing resolutions, including bylaws and continuing resolutions under required constitutional provisions, but no such bylaw or continuing resolution may conflict with constitutional provisions in the *Model Constitution for Congregations*, the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, or the constitution of the synod, as indicated in *C6.03.e. Bylaws are adopted and amended in accordance with Chapter 17.
- c. Continuing resolutions are intended to provide descriptions of operational patterns and practices or of the ongoing responsibilities of committees or other units within the organizational structure of the congregation. They follow the relevant constitutional provision or bylaw to which they refer. Continuing resolutions also are codified with three sets of numbers, except that the third set is preceded by a capital letter. Thus, a continuing resolution describing congregational committees in Chapter 13 might be numbered “C13.09C19.” The initial numbers “C13.09” indicate that the continuing resolution relates to the designated constitutional provision, which in this case provides that the duties of congregational committees may be specified in bylaws or continuing resolutions. The final letter and numbers “C19” designate that this is the third continuing resolution “C” and the year that it was adopted, in this example 2019. Continuing resolutions are adopted and

amended in accordance with Chapter 18. Unlike constitutional provisions and bylaws which are adopted by the congregation at a legally called and conducted meeting, continuing resolutions may be adopted either by a congregational meeting or by the Congregation Council.

Certain numbers are missing from the numbering sequence in some chapters. These omissions are intentional. For example, in some chapters the number “.10.” and multiples thereof have been reserved for possible use as section headings in future editions.