

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS
Trinity Lutheran Church
Truman, MN
TO BE VOTED ON APRIL 6, 2014
Ratified, (date???)

***PREAMBLE**

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

Chapter 1.

NAME AND INCORPORATION

- C1.01.** The name of this congregation shall be Trinity Lutheran Church.
- C1.02.** For the purpose of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws, the congregation of Trinity Lutheran Church is hereinafter designated as "this congregation."
- C1.11.** 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.
- *C2.02.** 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

* Required provision

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. 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.
- *C3.03. The name Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA or “this church”) as used herein refers in general references to this whole church, including its three expressions: congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization. The name Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is also the name of the corporation of the churchwide organization to which specific references may be made herein.

Chapter 4.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

- *C4.01. The Church is a people created by God in Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, called and sent to bear witness to God’s creative, redeeming, and sanctifying activity in the world.
- *C4.02. To participate in God’s mission, this congregation as a part of the Church shall:
 - a. Worship God in proclamation of the Word and administration of the sacraments and through lives of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, witness, and service.
 - b. Proclaim God’s saving Gospel of justification by grace for Christ’s sake through faith alone, according to the apostolic witness in the Holy Scripture, preserving and transmitting the Gospel faithfully to future generations.
 - c. Carry out Christ’s Great Commission by reaching out to all people to bring them to faith in Christ and by doing all ministry with a global awareness consistent with the understanding of God as Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier of all.
 - d. Serve in response to God’s love to meet human needs, caring for the sick and the aged, advocating dignity and justice for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, and 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 congregation's ministry and the ministry of other parts 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 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 congregation. The 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 or terminate the call of associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers in conformity with the applicable policy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;
 - d. Adopt amendments to the constitution, as provided in Chapter 17, amendments to the bylaws, as specified in Chapter 16, and continuing resolutions, as provided in Chapter 18.
 - e. Approve the annual budget;
 - f. Acquire real and personal property by gift, devise, purchase, or other lawful means;
 - g. Hold title to and use its property for any and all activities consistent with its purpose;
 - h. Sell, mortgage, lease, transfer, or otherwise dispose of its property by any lawful means;
 - i. Elect its [officers][,] [and] Congregation Council, [boards, and committees,] and require [them] [the members of the council] to carry out their duties in accordance with the constitution[,] [and] bylaws[,] [and continuing resolutions]; and
 - j. Terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as provided in Chapter 6.
- *C5.04.** This congregation shall choose 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 congregation and other qualifications shall be as prescribed in guidelines established by the Southwestern Minnesota Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Chapter 6.

CHURCH AFFILIATION

- *C6.01.** This congregation shall be an interdependent part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or its successor, and of the Southwestern Minnesota 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 clergy roster 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 ordained ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or to contracting for pastoral services with an ordained minister 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 associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers for call to other staff positions in the 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 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.
 - d. This congregation follows the procedures outlined in *C6.05.
- *C6.05.** A congregation may terminate its relationship with this church by the following procedure:
- a. A resolution indicating the intent to terminate its relationship must be adopted at a legally called and conducted special meeting of the congregation by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present. 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 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 congregation, the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any, shall have voice but not vote at the meeting.
 - b. The secretary of the 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 of the resolution to voting members of the congregation. This notice shall be submitted within 10 days after the resolution has been adopted.
 - c. The bishop of the synod and the 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 as specified in paragraph b. above.
 - d. If the congregation, after such consultation, still seeks to terminate its relationship, 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 meeting shall be mailed 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 congregation, the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any, shall have voice but not vote at the 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 paragraphs g., h., and i. below. Unless this notification to the bishop also certifies that the congregation has voted by a two-thirds vote to affiliate with

another Lutheran denomination, the congregation will be conclusively presumed to be an independent or non-Lutheran church.

- f. Notice of termination shall be forwarded by the bishop to the secretary of this church, who shall report the termination to the Churchwide Assembly.
 - g. 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.
 - h. 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.
 - i. 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.
 - j. If a congregation fails to achieve the required two-thirds vote of voting members present at the 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 a congregation fails to achieve the required two-thirds vote of voting members present at the 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 meeting.
- *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.
- *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 Southwestern Minnesota 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, title to property shall continue to reside in this congregation.
- *C7.03.** If a two-thirds majority 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 Southwestern Minnesota Synod.

- *C7.04.** If a two-thirds majority 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 process, may give approval to the request to become independent or to relate to a non-Lutheran church body, in which case title shall remain with the majority of this congregation. If the Synod Council fails to give such approval, title shall remain with those members who desire to continue as a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Chapter 8.

MEMBERSHIP

- *C8.01.** Members of this congregation shall be those baptized persons on the roll of this congregation at the time that this constitution is adopted and those who are admitted thereafter and who have declared and maintain their membership in accordance with the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.
- *C8.02.** Members shall be classified as follows:
- a. **Baptized** members are those persons who have been received by the Sacrament of Holy Baptism in this congregation, or, having been previously baptized in the name of the Triune God, have been received by certificate of transfer from other 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 congregation.
 - d. **Associate** members are persons holding membership in other [Lutheran] [Christian] congregations who wish to retain such membership but desire to participate in the life and mission of this congregation, or persons who wish to retain a relationship with this congregation while being members of other congregations. They have all the privileges and duties of membership except voting rights and eligibility for elected offices or membership on the Congregation Council of this congregation.
- *C8.03.** All applications for confirmed membership shall be submitted to and shall require the approval of the Congregation Council.
- *C8.04.** It shall be the privilege and duty of members of this congregation to:
- a. make regular use of the means of grace, both Word and sacraments;
 - b. live a Christian life in accordance with the Word of God and the teachings of the Lutheran church; and

- c. support the work of this congregation, the synod, and the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America through contributions of their time, abilities, and financial support as Biblical stewards.

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

- a. death;
- b. resignation;
- c. transfer or release;
- d. disciplinary action in accordance with provision 20.40 and the accompanying bylaws;
- e. removal from the roll due to inactivity as defined in the 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.

THE PASTOR

***C9.01.** Authority to call a pastor shall be in this congregation by at least a two-thirds majority ballot vote of 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][the Congregation Council] to recommend the call, shall seek the advice and help of the bishop of the synod.

***C9.02.** Only a member of the clergy roster of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or a candidate for the roster of ordained ministers who has been recommended for the 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 ordained minister shall:
 - 1) Preach the Word;
 - 2) Administer the sacraments;
 - 3) Conduct public worship;
 - 4) Provide pastoral care; and
 - 5) 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 ordained minister with a congregational call shall, within the congregation:
 - 1) Offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead;
 - 2) Supervise all schools and organizations of this congregation;
 - 3) Install regularly elected members of the Congregation Council; and
 - 4) With the council, administer discipline.
- c. Every pastor shall:
 - 1) Strive to extend the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation, and abroad;
 - 2) Seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel;
 - 3) Impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through distribution of its periodicals and other publications; and

- 4) Endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and of the Southwestern Minnesota Synod of the ELCA.
- *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.**
- a. The call of a congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment, which shall be terminated only by death or, following consultation with the synodical bishop and 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 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 ordained ministers of this church;
 - 7) termination of the relationship between this church and the congregation;
 - 8) dissolution of the congregation or the termination of a parish arrangement; or
 - 9) suspension of the 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 the synod.
 - 1) the bishop in his or her sole discretion may, shall investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two ordained 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 congregation, the bishop personally shall investigate such conditions together with a committee of two ordained 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 disability or incapacity is evident to the committee, the bishop of the synod may declare the pastorate vacant and the pastor shall be listed on the clergy roster as disabled. Upon removal of the disability and 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 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 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 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 congregation may dismiss the pastor only at a legally called meeting after consultation with the bishop, either (a) by a two-thirds majority 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 simple 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 committee concludes that there may be grounds for disciplinary action, the bishop's 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 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 ordained pastor 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 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 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 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 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.

C9.20. Ecumenical pastoral ministry

C9.21. Under special circumstances, subject to the approval of the synodical bishop and the concurrence of this congregation, an ordained minister 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 congregation and the ordained minister in a form proposed by the synodical bishop and approved by the congregation.

Chapter 10.

CONGREGATION MEETING

C10.01. The annual meeting of this congregation shall be held at a time specified in the bylaws.

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 congregation upon the written request of 10 percent of the voting members. The president of the Congregation Council shall call a special meeting upon request of the synodical bishop. The call for each special meeting shall specify the purpose for which it is to be held and no other business shall be transacted.

C10.03. Notice of all meetings of this congregation shall be given at the services of worship on the preceding two consecutive Sundays or by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law, to all voting members at least 10 days in advance of the date of the meeting.

C10.04. Ten percent 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 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.

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 congregation
 - c. Officers of this congregation shall serve similar offices of the Congregation Council and shall be voting members of the Congregation Council.
- C11.02.** A vice-president shall be elected by the congregation at its annual meeting and shall serve for a one-year term as vice-president and shall automatically succeed to the office of president in the following year and shall serve in such capacity for only one year.
- C11.03.** A secretary and a treasurer shall be elected by the congregation at its annual meeting for a one year term, and shall not serve for a period of more than three successive terms, unless approved/voted on by the congregation.
- C11.04.** Terms of all offices shall begin at the close of the annual meeting at which they are elected. Newly elected officers shall be installed at worship the Sunday following the date they assume office.
- C11.05.** No officer shall hold more than one office at a time.
- C11.06** Should the offices of secretary or treasurer be declared vacant, the Congregation Council shall elect, by majority vote, a successor until the next annual meeting.
- C11.07** Should the office of president or vice-president be declared vacant, the office shall be filled under the following procedure:
- a. Vacancy of the office of president shall be filled by the vice-president.
 - b. Vacancy of the office of vice-president shall remain unfilled until succeeding annual meeting of the Congregation or filled by appointment of Congregation Council for remaining length of term.
Temporary appointed vice-president shall not succeed to president the following year unless voted to office by congregation at the annual meeting.
 - c. If both offices of president and vice-president are vacant, a special meeting of the congregation shall be called by the Congregation Council under the terms specified for special meetings for the sole purpose of electing these officers under the terms provided herein.

Chapter 12.

CONGREGATION COUNCIL

- C12.1.** The voting membership of the Congregation Council shall consist of one representative from each board and the officers of the congregation. Any voting members of the congregation may be elected, subject only to the limitation of 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.
- C12.02.** The members of the Congregation Council shall be elected by the congregation at its annual meeting to serve for three years or until their successors are elected. Such members shall be eligible to serve no more than two full terms consecutively. Their terms shall begin at the close of the annual meeting at which they are elected. Newly elected Congregation Council members shall be installed at worship the Sunday after the date they assume office.
- C12.03.** The pastor shall serve as an advisory member of the Congregation Council and shall be without vote.
- C12.04.** Should a member's place on the Congregation Council be declared vacant, the

Congregation Council shall elect, by majority vote, a successor until the next annual meeting.

C12.05. 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 function and perform its mission.
- d. To maintain supportive relationships with the pastor and staff and to help them annually to evaluate the fulfillment of their calling, appointment, 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 services during the sickness or absence of the pastor.
- h. To emphasize partnership with the synod and churchwide units 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.

C12.06. 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 the management of 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 Congregation meeting.
- c. The Congregation Council shall prepare an annual budget for adoption by this congregation, shall supervise the expenditure of funds in accordance therewith following this adoption, and may incur obligations no more than \$5000.00 in excess of the anticipated receipts only after approval by the Congregation Meeting. The budget shall include this congregation's full indicated share in support of the wider ministry being carried on in partnership with the Synod and churchwide organization.
- d. 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 benevolent monies to the Synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America treasurers.
- e. The Congregation council shall be responsible for this congregation's investments

and its total insurance program.

- C12.07.** The Congregation Council shall see that the provisions of this constitution, its by-laws and the continuing resolutions are carried out.
- C12.08.** The Congregation Council shall provide for an annual review of the membership roster.
- C12.09.** The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the appointment and supervision of salaried lay workers in this congregation.
- C12.10.** The Congregation Council shall submit a comprehensive report to this congregation at the annual meeting.
- C12.11.** The Congregation Council shall normally meet once a month, but not less than quarterly. Special meetings may be called by the pastor or the president, or at the request of at least one-half of its members. 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, except when the pastor requests or consents to be absent and has given prior approval to an agenda of routine matters which shall be the only business of the meeting.
- 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

CONGREGATIONAL COMMITTEES AND FINANCIAL SECRETARY

- C13.01.** The **Executive Committee** shall be the officers of this congregation with the pastor as advisory member.
- C13.02.** A **Nominating Committee** of six voting members of this congregation, two of whom shall be outgoing members of the Congregation Council, shall be elected at the annual meeting for a term of one year.
- C13.03.** An **Audit Committee** of two voting members shall be appointed by the Congregation Council. Audit Committee members shall not be members of the Congregation Council. They shall serve one year and may be eligible for reappointment.
- C13.04.** A **Financial Secretary** shall be appointed annually by the Congregation Council.
- C13.05.** When a pastoral vacancy occurs, a **Call Committee** of six voting members and one alternate shall be appointed by the Congregation Council. The Call Committee shall work with the Bishop of the Synod. Term of office will terminate at installation of the newly called pastor.
- C13.06.** Other congregation committees may be formed as need arises, by decision of the Congregation Council.
- C13.07** Duties of the congregational committees shall be specified in the bylaws.

Chapter 14.

ORGANIZATIONS WITHIN THE CONGREGATION

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

membership, work, and finances.

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

Chapter 15.

DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS AND ADJUDICATION

- *C15.01.** Persistent and public denial of the Christian faith, willful or criminal conduct grossly unbecoming a member of the Church of Christ, continual and intentional interference with the ministry of the congregation, or willful and repeated harassment or defamation of member(s) of the congregation is sufficient cause for discipline of a member. Prior to disciplinary action, reconciliation and repentance will be attempted following Matthew 18:15-17, proceeding through these successive steps, as necessary: a) private counsel and admonition by the pastor, b) censure and admonition by the pastor in the presence of two or three witness, 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 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 of the vice president of the synod. The vice president shall select from the synod's Consultation Committee a panel of five members (three lay persons and two clergy). 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 members(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 in the written charges and the accused member's reply, to the Committee on Discipline of the synod for a hearing. A copy of the panel's written referral shall be delivered to the vice president of the synod, the Congregation Council, and the accused member(s) at the same time it is sent to the Committee on Discipline of the synod. The Executive Committee of the Synod Council shall then select six members from the Committee on Discipline to decide the case, and shall appoint a member of the Synod Council to preside as nonvoting chair. Those six members plus the nonvoting chair comprise the discipline hearing panel for

deciding the case. The congregation Council and the accused member(s) are the parties to the case.

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

Chapter 16.

BYLAWS

- ***C16.01.** This congregation may adopt bylaws. No bylaw may conflict with this constitution.
- ***C16.02.** Bylaws may be adopted or amended at any legally called meeting of this congregation with a quorum present by a majority vote of those voting members present and voting.
- ***C16.03.** 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 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.

- *C16.04. Approved changes to the bylaws shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod.

Chapter 17.

AMENDMENTS

- *C17.01. Unless provision *C17.04. is applicable, those sections of this constitution that are not required, in accord with the *Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, may be amended in the following manner. Amendments may be proposed by at least 10% voting members or by the Congregation Council. Proposals must be filed in writing with the Congregation Council 60 days before formal consideration by this congregation at a regular or special Congregation Meeting called for that purpose. The Congregation Council shall notify the congregation's members 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.
- *C17.02. An amendment to this constitution, proposed under *C17.01., shall:
 - a. be approved at a legally called Congregation Meeting according to this constitution by a majority vote of those present and voting;
 - b. be ratified without change at the next annual meeting by a two-thirds majority vote of those present and voting; and
 - c. have the effective date included in the resolution¹ and noted in the constitution.
- *C17.03. Any amendments to this constitution that result from the processes provided in *C17.01. and *C17.02. shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod. The Synod shall notify the congregation of its decision to approve or disapprove the proposed changes; the changes shall go into effect upon notification that the synod has approved them.
- *C17.04. 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 simple majority vote of those voting members present and voting at any legally called meeting of the congregation without presentation at a prior meeting of the congregation, provided that the Congregation Council has submitted by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law, notice to the congregation of such an amendment or amendments, together with the council's recommendations, at least 30 days prior to the meeting. Upon the request of two-thirds voting members of the congregation, the Congregation Council shall submit such notice. Following the adoption of an amendment, the secretary of the congregation shall submit a copy thereof to the synod. Such provisions shall become effective immediately following a vote of approval.

Chapter 18.

CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

¹ Such an effective date must be stated in relation to the requirements of *C17.03. to allow time for synodical review of the amendment.

- ***C18.01.** The congregation in a legally called meeting or the Congregation Council may enact continuing resolutions. Such continuing resolutions may not conflict with the constitution or bylaws of this congregation.
- ***C18.02.** Continuing resolutions shall be enacted or amended by a majority vote of a meeting of the congregation or a two-thirds vote of all voting members of the Congregation Council.

- C18.03** The following resolution was passed on July, 11, 2012: This congregation may unite in partnership with one or more other congregations recognized by the Southwestern Minnesota Synod to form a parish. A two-thirds majority vote of all voting members present and voting, with a quorum present, at a duly called congregational meeting is required for approval.

Chapter 19.

INDEMNIFICATION

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

Chapter 20.

PARISH AUTHORIZATION

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

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

***C20.02.** Whenever a letter of call is being recommended for extension to an ordained minister of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or a candidate for the roster of ordained ministers who has been recommended to the congregation by the synodical bishop to serve the congregations of a parish, such letter of call shall be first approved by a two-thirds vote at congregational meetings of each of the congregations forming the parish. If any congregation of the parish should fail to approve extending this call, the other congregation(s) in the same parish shall have the right to terminate the parish arrangement.

***C20.03.** Any one of the congregations of a parish may terminate the call of a pastor as provided in †S14.13.d. of the synodical constitution of the synod named in *C6.01. In such case, the other congregation(s) in the same parish shall have the right to terminate the parish arrangement.

***C20.04.** Whenever a parish arrangement is terminated, the call of any rostered person serving that parish is terminated. Should any congregation that formerly was part of the parish arrangement desire to issue a new call to that rostered person, it may do so in accordance with the call process of this church.

BYLAWS

Part 1.

COMMUNION PARTICIPATION

- P1.01.** Participation in Holy Communion shall be open to members of this congregation who have been confirmed or who have received communion instruction. Trinity observes the “Open” Communion policy—all those believing in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior are welcome at our Lord’s table.
- P1.02.** Holy Communion requires sincere repentance, faith in Jesus Christ as Savior, and an earnest desire to amend one’s sinful life, as well as acceptance of the scriptural teaching of the Real Presence of Christ with His body and blood in the Sacrament.

Part 2.

CONFLICTING LOYALTIES

- P2.01.** While the buildings of the congregation shall be open to all people to share in its worship, instruction, pastoral care, and fellowship, the congregation rejects all fellowship with organizations, secret or open, which are avowedly religious or which practice forms of religion without confessing faith in the Triune God and in Jesus Christ as the eternal Son of God incarnate to be our only Savior from sin, and which thus teach salvation by works.
- P2.02.** Ceremonies of lodges or other such organizations shall not be permitted in the buildings or premises of the congregation; nor shall its pastor(s) or Lay assistant(s) take part in any such ceremonies wherever they are conducted.

Part 3.

MEMBERSHIP

- P3.01.** Baptized Members:
- a. A child, one or both of whose parents or guardians are members of the congregation, shall, upon receiving baptism become a baptized member.
 - b. A child, neither of whose parents or guardians is a member of the congregation, shall upon receiving Baptism become a baptized member of the congregation; unless for good reason he/she is to be a baptized member of another congregation, in which case his/her membership shall be transferred to that congregation.
 - c. A child baptized in another congregation shall be received as a baptized member in the congregation when a transfer has been received.
 - d. An unbaptized adult who has received instruction and has given evidence of an adequate understanding and acceptance of the teachings of the Word of God as confessed by the Lutheran Church, shall upon confession of faith and baptism become a baptized member of the congregation.
- P3.02.** Confirmed Members:

- a. A baptized adult, not previously a confirmed member of a Lutheran congregation shall become a confirmed member of the congregation after having received instruction and having given evidence of adequate understanding of the teachings of the Word of God as confessed by the Lutheran Church.
- b. A baptized member of the congregation shall become a confirmed member through the Rite of Confirmation; except that an adult who has become a baptized member in accordance with the provisions in P.3.01.d. shall be considered a confirmed member without participation in the Rite of Confirmation.
- c. An applicant for membership who presents a Letter of Transfer which certifies that he/she is a confirmed member in good standing of a Lutheran congregation shall become a confirmed member of the congregation.
- d. An applicant for membership who presents evidence of confirmation in a Lutheran congregation but does not have a Letter of Transfer shall be admitted to confirmed membership when the Congregation Council has determined that he/she meets the standards of Christian faith and life indicated in the constitution and bylaws.

P3.03. Voting Members:

The Congregation Council shall determine the roster of voting members of the congregation in accordance with the provisions of the constitution and bylaws. The term "in good standing" shall be defined to include:

- a. Those who partake of Holy Communion;
- b. Those who contribute to the congregation according to the congregation's records;
- c. Those who participate in the life and worship of the congregation.
- d. Any confirmed/reaffirmed member of the congregation.

P3.04. Discontinuance of Membership:

- a. The congregation shall, in the event of the removal of a member from the community it serves, encourage the member to request a transfer to a Lutheran congregation which can serve him/her effectively. Should the member fail to request a transfer, a Lutheran congregation in the community of his/her residence shall be notified.
- b. A confirmed member in good standing desiring to change his/her membership to another Lutheran congregation shall, upon request, receive a Letter of Transfer.
- c. A confirmed member who does not, for a period of one year, partake of Holy Communion, support the church with his/her offerings, and does not appear to desire to participate in the life and worship of the congregation shall be visited by the pastor and the congregation's officers and encouraged by them to active membership. If, during the second year, the confirmed member does not actively participate, his/her name shall be removed from the membership roster of the congregation but be retained on a responsibility list as one who is in special need of the congregation's prayer and concern.
- d. A child, neither of whose parents or guardians is a member of the congregation, may be removed from the roster of baptized members if he/she fails to participate in the life and the worship of the congregation.

P3.05. Discipline

In exercising discipline as provided in the constitution, the following shall be the procedure:

- a. A person who is requested to appear before the Congregation Council for possible discipline, shall be advised in writing no less than 10 days prior to the hearing. The written notice shall include the time and place of the hearing and shall specify the exact reason for the possible discipline. If a person fails to appear at the time and place without valid excuse, the Congregation Council may proceed with the hearing and may reach its conclusion in his/her absence.
- b. Should the person be found guilty by a two-thirds vote of the members of the Congregation Council, the Council shall impose one or more of the following:
 - 1.) Censure before the Congregation Council or the congregation;
 - 2.) Suspension from membership until proof is given of sufficient repentance and amendment;
 - 3.) Exclusion from membership and denial of the Sacraments.In the event of the imposition of 2.) and 3.) above, the action of the Congregation Council shall be in writing.

Part 4.

THE PASTOR

- P4.01.** When the congregation has voted to call a pastor, it shall issue a Letter of Call to the pastor-elect in a form approved by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. It shall be signed by the chairperson and the secretary of the meeting at which the Call was voted, and shall be attested by the signature of the Bishop of the Synod. A Call to a clergyperson to be an assistant pastor shall be issued only with the concurrence of the pastor of the congregation and in accordance with the provision of this paragraph.
- P4.02.** The call shall normally be for an indefinite time. A Call issued to an assistant pastor may be for a definite time.
- P4.03.** If a pastor receives a Call to another ministry, he/she shall consult the Congregation Council, or, if he/she desires, the congregation before reaching a decision. He/she shall announce his/her decision as quickly as possible, normally within three weeks. He/she shall notify the synod bishop of his/her decision. When a Call has been accepted, the pastor shall terminate his/her ministry as soon as feasible, normally within one month.

Part 5.

MEETINGS OF THE CONGREGATION

- P5.01.** Announcement of the time and place of the annual meeting of the congregation shall be made at two public services immediately preceding the meeting, said services to be at least a week apart. The annual meeting will be held on the third Sunday in January, weather permitting.
- P5.02.** The church rosters of voting, confirmed, and baptized members shall be available at each meeting of the congregation.
- P5.03.** The annual meeting shall receive reports from all the organizations of the congregation. Such reports, including a financial statement, shall be submitted in writing to the pastor or office administrator not less than ten days before such meeting.

- P5.04.** The annual meeting of the congregation shall elect a Nominating Committee of six members. The pastor shall serve as a convener and as an advisory member. The term of office of the members of the Nominating committee shall be one year. The Nominating Committee shall nominate one or more candidates for each office to be filled and shall secure the consent of each candidate. In addition to the candidates submitted by the Nominating Committee, additional nominations may be made from the floor. The Congregation Council shall fill vacancies on the Nominating committee.
- P5.05.** Unless otherwise ordered, parliamentary procedures shall be in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order.

Part 6.

DUTIES OF OFFICERS AND FINANCIAL SECRETARY

- P6.01.** The **president** shall preside at all meetings of the Congregation Council and of the congregation. The **vice-president** shall preside at such meetings in the absence of the president.
- P6.02.** The **secretary** shall keep and provide permanent record of the minutes of the Congregation Council and of the congregation's meetings and have custody of the Constitution, bylaws and continuing resolutions, and archives of the congregation.
- P6.03.** The **treasurer** shall have custody of all funds of the congregation. The treasurer shall receive and distribute such funds in accordance with the decisions of the Congregation Council.
- P6.04.** The **financial secretary** shall maintain record of all contributions and make regular reports to the Congregation Council and to the members as required by the Congregation Council.
- P6.05.** The **executive committee** consists of the president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer. The primary responsibilities of the executive committee shall be as follows:
- a. Oversight of Congregation Council organization.
 - b. Preparation of final budget proposal for presentation to the Congregation Council and subsequent annual meeting of the congregation.
 - c. Purchasing Policies.
 - d. Arrangements for auditing of church accounts by the Audit Committee
 - e. Responsibility for the credit standing of the congregation.
 - f. Legal matters including the signing and execution of legal documents as authorized by the Congregation Council or congregation.
 - g. Debt Management.
 - h. Custodian of insurance policies and recommendations for changes in such policies.
 - i. Provide for an annual salary and performance review of the office administrator and make recommendations to the Congregation Council for salary and benefit levels.
 - j. In the event of a long-term vacancy in the pastoral office, this committee with the Bishop of this Synod shall make arrangements for the usual function of this office.

Part 7.

ORGANIZATION OF CONGREGATION COUNCIL

- P7.01.** Each Congregation Council member shall be elected at the congregation's annual meeting to serve on one of the six working boards established under this bylaw. Rotation of these council members shall be maintained to allow for two new representatives on the Congregation Council each year, each serving three year terms.
- P7.02.** The working boards established shall be:
- a. Board of Education
 - b. Board of Church Properties
 - c. Board of Evangelism and Lay Ministry
 - d. Board of Stewardship
 - e. Board of Worship
 - f. Board of Youth Ministry
- P7.03.** There shall be a minimum of two other board members on each of the six boards elected by the congregation at its annual meeting. These board members shall be elected to serve for three years or until their successors are elected. Board members serving in their third year may chair their respective board. Such board members shall be eligible to serve no more than two full terms consecutively. Their terms shall begin at the close of the annual meeting at which they are elected. Newly elected board members shall be installed at worship the Sunday following the date they assume office.
- P7.04.** The number of board members of each working board shall be determined by the Congregation Council as it determines is necessary to carry out the responsibilities of each working board.
- P7.05.** A board member substituting for a regular council member may participate with voice and vote.

Part 8

RESPONSIBILITIES OF WORKING BOARDS

- P8.01.** The primary responsibilities of the **Board of Education** shall be as follows:
- a. Plan and administer the educational ministry and educational policies of the congregation including Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, Adult Education, and Youth Confirmation, with the pastor.
 - b. Selection, supervision and training of teachers and other personnel for the various educational ministries of this congregation.
 - c. Provide the necessary means and facilities for educational ministries.
 - d. Submit an annual budget request to the Executive Committee on the date requested.
- P8.02.** The primary responsibilities of the **Board of Church Properties** shall be as follows:
- a. Maintenance, upkeep and repair of the congregation's property.
 - b. Responsibility for housekeeping, storage, cleaning and appearance of the congregation's property.
 - c. Provide the necessary custodian services, recommending salary levels to the Executive Committee
 - d. Submit an annual budget request to the Executive Committee on the date requested.

- P8.03.** The primary responsibility of the **Board of Evangelism and Lay Ministry** shall be as follows:
- a. To direct the work of the congregation in bearing witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
 - b. Recruit, train and supervise individuals for the visitation of prospective members.
 - c. Review letters of transfer of applicants for membership from other Lutheran congregations.
 - d. With the pastor be responsible for the spiritual welfare of the individual and corporate membership of the congregation.
 - e. Responsible for a program of visitation of sick, aged, and shut-in members.
 - f. Orientation and integration of new members into the life of this congregation.
 - g. Concerned with the spiritual, emotional, and physical health and welfare of the pastor and family.
 - h. Submit an annual budget request to the Executive Committee on the date requested.
- P8.04.** The primary responsibilities of the **Board of Stewardship** shall be as follows:
- a. Responsibility for the financial support of the congregation's programs.
 - b. The direction and implementation of the congregation's on-going stewardship programs.
 - c. Recommend to the Executive Committee all benevolence contributions including those for the Synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - d. Submit an annual budget request to the Executive Committee on the date requested.
- P8.05.** The primary responsibilities of the **Board of Worship** shall be as follows:
- a. Arrangements incidental to the congregation's services of worship.
 - b. Assign and train assisting ministers for the Lord's Supper and other services as requested by the pastor.
 - c. Care of worship furnishings, vestments, and utensils in coordination with WELCA.
 - d. With the pastor make recommendation to the Congregation Council relative to the regular worship schedule.
 - e. Provide, train, and supervise ushers and greeters for the various worship services.
 - f. With other boards or individual members be responsible for the enhancement of the worship services and the church structure itself through the use of music and the arts.
 - g. Make recommendations to the Congregation Council relative to the selection and supervision of organists and choir directors.
 - h. Recommend salary levels for organists and choir directors to the Executive Committee.
 - i. Submit an annual budget request to the Executive Committee on the date requested.
- P8.06.** The primary responsibilities of the **Board of Youth Ministry** shall be as follows:
- a. Direct and supervise all youth activities in the congregation.
 - b. Involve the youth in the work of Christ in this congregation.
 - c. Provide for the spiritual growth and nurture of youth.
 - d. Promote Christian fellowship with youth from other congregations in this area...both Lutheran and non-Lutheran.

- e. Promote youth attendance at Conference, Synod and National Luther League gatherings.
- f. Promote Youth attendance at Bible Camp or related recreational activities.
- g. Submit an annual budget request to the Executive Committee on the date requested
- h. Submit a financial statement for the annual meeting report.

Part 9

MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION COUNCIL

- P9.01.** In addition to the provision of the constitution, the following shall govern the Congregation Council in the conduct of its meetings:
- a. A quorum for any regular or special meeting shall be a majority of the membership.
 - b. A member of the Congregation Council who is absent from two consecutive regular meetings shall be consulted by the president of the congregation. If he/she is absent from three consecutive regular meetings without valid excuse, the Congregation Council may declare the office vacant.
 - c. A special meeting may be called by the pastor, the president, or at least one-half of the members of the Congregation Council.

Part 10

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CONGREGATION COUNCIL

- P10.01.** In addition to the duties and responsibilities provided in the constitution, the Congregation Council shall:
- a. Conduct regular meetings normally once a month but, not less than once each quarter, at such time and place as the Congregation Council may determine.
 - b. Review the budget and submit it to the annual meeting of the congregation with its recommendation.
 - c. Exercise discipline in accordance with the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.
 - d. Report its activities to the annual meeting of the congregation and at such other times as the congregation may decide.
 - e. Oversee and advise the activities of the various boards within the congregation.

Part 11

PARISH RECORDS

- P11.01.** The records of the congregation shall be and remain the property of the congregation. The pastor shall be responsible for the maintenance of the records, except as otherwise provided herein. Upon the termination of his/her service to the

congregation, he/she shall have brought the records up to date prior to his/her departure. 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 and reports of the Synod and the Handbook of the Evangelical Lutheran church in America.
- d. The minutes of the meetings of the congregation and the Congregation Council, for which the office administrator of the congregation shall be responsible.
- e. The financial records of the congregation, for which the treasurer of the congregation shall be responsible.

P11.02. The pastor shall report to the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America such statistics as may be requested and shall annually report to the congregation a summary of his/her ministerial acts.

P11.03. Every family in the congregation shall be provided a copy of the current constitution and bylaws, and copies shall be made available to all new members of the congregation.