

# **CONSTITUTION OF WORD OF PEACE LUTHERAN CHURCH**

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Preamble	2
Chapter 1: Name and Incorporation	2
Chapter 2: Confession of Faith	2
Chapter 3: Nature of the Church	3
Chapter 4: Statement of Purpose	4
Chapter 5: Powers of the Congregation	5
Chapter 6: Church Affiliation	6
Chapter 7: Property Ownership	8
Chapter 8: Membership	9
Chapter 9: The Pastor	10
Chapter 10: Congregational Meeting	14
Chapter 11: Officers	15
Chapter 12: Executive Team	15
Chapter 13: Strategic Planning Team	18
Chapter 14: Congregational Teams	19
Chapter 15: Organizations within the Congregation	19
Chapter 16: Discipline of Members and Adjudication	19
Chapter 17: Bylaws	21
Chapter 18: Amendments	21
Chapter 19: Continuing Resolutions	22

# CONSTITUTION OF WORD OF PEACE LUTHERAN CHURCH ROGERS, MINNESOTA 55374

## **\*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 Word of Peace Lutheran Church.
- C1.02.** For the purpose of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws, the congregation of Word of Peace Lutheran Church congregation 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

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\* Required provision

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.** 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.

## **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 church wide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
  - i. Foster and participate in ecumenical relationships consistent with church wide policy.
- \*C4.04.** The Executive Team and/or the Strategic Planning Team shall prepare an organizational structure to be described in the Bylaws. The Executive Team 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 the Bylaws.
- \*C4.05.** This Congregation shall, from time to time, adopt a mission statement which will provide specific direction for its programs.

## **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 Annual Meeting called and conducted as provided in this Constitution and Bylaws.
- \*C5.03.** Only such authority as is delegated to the Executive Team 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 18, and amendments to the Bylaws, as specified in Chapter 17;
- 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, Executive Team, Strategic Planning Team, and Ministry Teams and require them to carry out their duties in accordance with the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Executive Team; 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 member's laypersons to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly as well as persons to represent it at meetings of any conference, cluster, coalition, or other area subdivision of which it is a member. The number of persons to be elected by this Congregation and other qualifications shall be as prescribed in guidelines established by the Synod.

## **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 Minneapolis Area 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.
  - 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.** This Congregation may terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America by the following procedure:

- a. A resolution indicating the desire of this Congregation to terminate its relationship must be adopted at a legally called and conducted special meeting of this Congregation by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present.
  - b. The Secretary of this Congregation shall submit a copy of the resolution to the Synodical Bishop and shall mail a copy of the resolution to voting members of this Congregation. This notice shall be submitted within 10 days after the resolution has been adopted.
  - c. The Bishop of the Synod shall consult with this Congregation during a period of at least 90 days.
  - d. If this Congregation, after consultation, still desires to terminate its relationship, such action may be taken at a legally called and conducted special meeting by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present, at which meeting the Bishop of the Synod or an authorized representative shall be present. Notice of the meeting shall be mailed to all voting members at least 10 days in advance of the meeting. (Voting shall be by secret ballot)
  - e. A certified copy of the resolution to terminate its relationship shall be sent to the Synodical Bishop, at which time the relationship between this Congregation and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be terminated.
  - f. Notice of termination shall be forwarded by the Synodical Bishop to the Secretary of this Church and published in the periodical of this Church.
  - g. Since this Congregation was established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, it shall be required, in addition to the foregoing provisions in \*C6.05., to receive Synodical approval before terminating its membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- \*C6.06.** If this Congregation considers relocation, it shall confer with the Bishop of the Synod in which it is territorially located before any steps are taken leading to such action. The approval of the Synod Council shall be received before any such action is affected.

## **Chapter 7.**

### **PROPERTY OWNERSHIP**

- \*C7.01.** If this Congregation ceases to exist, title to undisposed property shall pass to the Minneapolis Area 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. Before this Congregation takes action to transfer to another Lutheran church body, it shall consult with representatives of the Minneapolis Area 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, 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 who have during the current or preceding calendar year, communed and/or participated in the life and worship of this Congregation and/or made a contribution of record to this Congregation.
- d. **Associate** members are persons holding membership in other Christian congregations who wish to retain such membership but desire to participate in the life and mission of this Congregation, or persons who wish to retain a relationship with this Congregation while being members of other congregations. They have all the privileges and duties of membership except voting rights and eligibility for elected offices or membership on the Executive Team and Strategic Planning Team of this Congregation.

**\*C8.03.** All applications for confirmed membership shall be submitted to and shall require the approval of the Executive Team.

**\*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 by the Executive Team; or
- 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 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 Executive Team, Strategic Planning Team and Ministry Teams; and
    - 4) with the Executive Team, 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 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and of the Minneapolis Area 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, except in the case of the death of the pastor, shall be terminated only

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, 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, without reflection on the competence or the moral and spiritual character of the pastor;
  - 4) the physical or mental incapacity of the pastor;
  - 5) disqualification of the pastor through discipline on grounds of doctrine, morality, or continued neglect of duty;
  - 6) the dissolution of the congregation; or
  - 7) suspension of the congregation as a result of discipline proceedings.
- b. When allegations of physical or mental incapacity of the pastor or ineffective conduct of the pastoral office have come to the attention of the Bishop of the Synod, the Bishop in his or her sole discretion may, or when such allegations have been brought to the Synod's attention by an official recital of allegations by the Executive Team or by a petition signed by at least one-third of the voting members of the congregation, the Bishop shall, investigate such conditions personally in company with a committee of two ordained ministers and one layperson.
- c. In case of alleged physical or mental incapacity, competent medical testimony shall be obtained. When such disability is evident, the Bishop of the Synod with the advice of the committee shall declare the pastorate vacant. Upon the restoration of a disabled pastor to health, the Bishop of the Synod shall take steps to enable the pastor to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another field of labor.
- d. In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of the congregation, all concerned persons shall be heard, after which the Bishop of the Synod together with the committee described in \*C9.05.b. shall decide on the course of action to be recommended to the pastor and this Congregation. If they agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action shall be taken by the Synod. If either party fails to assent, the congregation may dismiss the pastor 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.

- e. If, in the course of proceedings described in \*C9.05.d., the committee concludes that there may be grounds for disciplinary action, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action to the Synodical Bishop, who may bring charges in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution and Bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Constitution of this Synod.
- f. If, following the appointment of the committee described in \*C9.05.b. or d., it should become apparent that the pastoral office cannot be conducted effectively in the congregation(s) being served by the ordained minister due to local conditions, the Bishop of the Synod may temporarily suspend the pastor from service in the congregation(s) without prejudice and with pay provided through a joint Synodical and church wide fund and with housing provided by the congregation.

**\*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 Executive Team.

**\*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 Executive Team. The interim pastor and any ordained pastor providing assistance shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a pastor.

**\*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 Executive Team, 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.

## **Chapter 10.**

### **CONGREGATIONAL MEETING**

- C10.01.** The Annual Meeting of this Congregation shall be held at a time specified in the Bylaws.
- C10.02.** A special Congregational Meeting may be called by the Senior Pastor, the Executive Team, or the President of this Congregation, and shall be called by the President of the Congregation upon the written request of three percent (3%) of the voting members. The call for each Special Congregational 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 to all voting members at least 10 days in advance of the date of the meeting. Notice of all meetings of this Congregation shall also be read at all public services of this Congregation held during the 10 days preceding the date of the meeting.
- C10.04.** Three percent (3%) of the voting members, as established in the previous Annual Report, shall constitute a quorum.
- C10.05.** Absentee voting will only be permitted in the elections of Executive Team, Strategic Planning Team and Ministry Team members. Voting by

proxy shall not be permitted. (In accordance with Part 7 of the Bylaws)

**C10.06.** All actions approved by the Congregation shall be by majority vote 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 elected officers of this Congregation shall be a president, vice president, treasurer and secretary.

- 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 Executive Team and shall be voting members of the Executive Team.

**C11.02.** The officers shall be elected by this Congregation by written ballot and shall serve for one year or until their successors are elected. Their terms shall begin at the close of the Annual Meeting at which they are elected.

**C11.03.** No officer shall hold more than one office at a time. No elected officer shall be eligible to serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office, except for the treasurer.

## **Chapter 12.**

### **EXECUTIVE TEAM**

**C12.01.** The voting members of the Executive Team shall consist of the officers of the Congregation, two (2) members at large from the Congregational membership as defined in Chapter 8 and the Senior Pastor. The two (2) Members at Large shall serve for one year with the option to serve one additional year consecutively. No Executive Team member shall serve a combination of positions for more than four (4) consecutive years, with the exception of the Senior Pastor.

**C12.02.** The two (2) Members at Large shall be voting members of the Congregation.

**C12.03.** The duties of the Executive Team shall include the following:

- a. To oversee and provide for the administration of this Congregation to enable it to fulfill its functions and perform its Vision and Mission.
- b. To maintain supportive relationships with the Pastor(s) and staff and

help them annually to evaluate the fulfillment of their calling or employment.

- c. To be examples individually and corporately of the style of life and ministry expected of all baptized persons.
- d. To promote a congregational climate of peace and goodwill, and, as differences and conflicts arise, to endeavor to foster mutual understanding.
- e. To arrange for pastoral service during the sickness or absence of the pastor.
- f. To emphasize partnership with the Synod and church wide 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.
- g. To recommend and encourage the use of program resources produced or approved by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

**C12.04.** The Executive Team shall be responsible for the financial and property matters of this Congregation.

- a. The Executive Team shall be the governance body 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 Executive Team shall not have the authority to buy, sell, or encumber real property unless specifically authorized to do so by a duly held meeting of the Congregation.
- c. The Executive Team may enter into contracts for unforeseen expenses of the Congregation of up to 5% of the total annual budget for items not included in the budget, provided that such contracts do not involve buying, selling or encumbering real property of the Congregation.
- d. The Executive Team shall prepare an annual budget for adoption by this Congregation, shall supervise the expenditure of funds in accordance therewith following its adoption, and may incur

obligations of more than three percent (3%) in excess of the anticipated receipts only after approval by a duly held 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 church wide organization.

- e. The Executive Team shall ascertain that the financial affairs of this Congregation are being conducted efficiently, giving particular attention to the prompt payment of all obligations and to the regular forwarding of benevolence monies to the Synod Treasurer.
- f. The Executive Team shall be responsible for this Congregation's investments and its total insurance program.

**C12.05.** The Executive Team shall see that the provisions of this Constitution, the Bylaws, and the Continuing Resolutions are carried out.

**C12.06.** The Executive Team shall provide for an annual review of the membership roster to maintain an accurate record of membership.

**C12.07.** The Executive Team shall be responsible for the employment and supervision of the salaried lay workers of this Congregation.

**C12.08.** The Executive Team shall submit a comprehensive report to this Congregation at the Annual Meeting.

**C12.09.** A quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of four (4) of the members of the Executive Team, except when such person 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.

**C12.10.** Special meetings may be called by the Senior Pastor or the President, and shall be called by the President 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.

**C12.11.** The Executive Team may approve additional terms for Ministry Team members at the request of the Ministry Team's staff liaison as needed.

**C12.12.** A member's place on the Executive Team shall be declared vacant if the member a) ceases to be a voting member of this Congregation or b) is absent from (3) successive regular meetings of the Executive Team without cause.

## **Chapter 13.**

### **STRATEGIC PLANNING TEAM**

- C13.01.** The members of the Strategic Planning Team, including a Chairperson, except the Pastor(s), shall be elected by written ballot to serve for two (2) years or until their successors are elected. Such members shall be eligible to serve no more than three (3) full terms consecutively. Their terms shall begin at the close of the Annual Meeting at which they are elected. Newly elected Strategic Planning Team members shall normally be installed at worship the Sunday following the date they were elected.
- C13.02.** Should a member's place on the Strategic Planning Team be declared vacant, the Strategic Planning Team shall elect, by majority vote, a successor until the next Annual Meeting.
- C13.03.** The Strategic Planning Team shall have general oversight of the life and activities of this Congregation 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 Strategic Planning Team shall include the following:
- a. To lead this Congregation in living its Vision and Mission.
  - b. To do long-range planning reflective of the Vision and Mission of the church, setting goals and priorities, and evaluating its activities in light of its Mission and goals.
  - c. To periodically re-evaluate the Vision and Mission and the goals and priorities of this Church.
  - d. To seek to involve all members of this Congregation in worship, fellowship, learning, witness, service, and support.
  - e. To be examples individually and corporately of the style of life and ministry expected of all baptized persons.
- C13.04.** The Strategic Planning Team shall normally meet six (6) times per year. Agendas and minutes from the meeting will be recorded and communicated to the Executive Team and staff. Special Meetings may be called by a Pastor or the Chairperson, and shall be called by the Chairperson 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.
- C13.05.** The Strategic Planning Team shall submit a comprehensive report to this Congregation at the Annual Meeting.

## **Chapter 14.**

### **CONGREGATIONAL TEAMS**

**C14.01.** The officers of this Congregation, the Senior Pastor and two (2) Members at Large shall constitute the ***Executive Team***.

**C14.02.** The Strategic Planning Team shall consist of not more than six (6) voting members of this Congregation, one Pastor and one Executive Team member.

**C14.03.** There shall be as many ministry teams as the Executive Team and Strategic Planning Team determine are necessary from time to time.

**C14.04.** There shall be as many Standing Committees as the Executive Team determines is necessary from time to time.

**C14.05.** When a pastoral vacancy occurs, a Call Committee shall be appointed by the Executive Team. The term of office of the Call Committee shall terminate at the installation of the newly-called pastor.

**C14.06.** Other committees may be appointed as the need arises, by decision of the Executive Team.

## **Chapter 15.**

### **ORGANIZATIONS WITHIN THE CONGREGATION**

**C15.01.** 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 Annual or specially called meeting shall determine their policies, guide activities, and receive reports concerning each organization's membership, work, and finances.

**C15.02.** 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 Executive Team.

## **Chapter 16.**

### **DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS AND ADJUDICATION**

**\*C16.01.** Denial of the Christian faith as described in this Constitution, conduct grossly unbecoming a member of the Church of Christ, or persistent trouble-making in this congregation are sufficient cause for discipline of a member. Prior to disciplinary action, reconciliation will be attempted following Matthew 18:15-17, proceeding through these successive

steps: a) private admonition by the Pastor, b) admonition by the Pastor in the presence of two or three witnesses, and c) citation to appear before the Executive Team.

**\*C16.02.**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*. A member charged with the offense shall appear before the Executive Team after having received a written notice, specifying the exact charges that have been made against the member, at least 10 days prior to the meeting.

**\*C16.03.**Members of the Executive Team who participate in the preparation of the written charges or who present evidence or testimony in the hearing before the Executive Team are disqualified from voting upon the question of the guilt of the accused member. Should the allegations be sustained by a two-thirds majority vote of the members of the Executive Team who are not disqualified but who are present and voting, and renewed admonition prove ineffectual, the Executive Team shall impose one of the following disciplinary actions:

- a. censure before the Executive Team or Congregation;
- b. suspension from membership for a definite period of time; or
- c. exclusion from membership in this Congregation. Disciplinary actions b. and c. shall be delivered to the member in writing.

**\*C16.04.**The member against whom disciplinary action has been taken by the Executive Team shall have the right to appeal the decision to the Synod Council. Such right may not be abridged and the decision of the Synod Council shall be final.

**\*C16.05.**Disciplinary actions may be reconsidered and revoked by the Executive Team upon receipt of a) evidence that injustice has been done or b) evidence of repentance and amendment.

**\*C16.10.Adjudication.** 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 President of the Executive Team 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 17.**

### **BYLAWS**

**\*C17.01.** This Congregation may adopt bylaws. No bylaw may conflict with this Constitution.

**\*C17.02.** Bylaws may be adopted or amended at any legally called meeting of this Congregation with a quorum present by a majority vote of those voting members present and voting.

**\*C17.03.** Changes to the Bylaws may be proposed by any voting member provided, however, that such additions or amendments be submitted in writing to the Executive Team at least 60 days before a regular or special Congregational Meeting called for that purpose and that the Executive Team notify the Congregation's members by mail of the proposal with the Executive Team's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the Congregational Meeting.

**\*C17.04.** Approved changes to the Bylaws shall be sent by the Secretary of this Congregation to the Synod.

## **Chapter 18.**

### **AMENDMENTS**

**\*C18.01.** 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 three percent (3%) of the voting members of this Congregation or by the Executive Team. Proposals must be filed in writing with the Executive Team sixty (60) days before formal consideration by this Congregation at its regular or special Congregational Meeting called for that purpose. The Executive Team shall notify the Congregation's members by mail of the proposal together with the Executive Team's recommendations at least thirty (30) days in advance of the meeting.

**\*C18.02.** An amendment to this Constitution, proposed under \*C18.01, shall:

- a. be approved at a legally called Congregational 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 resolution<sup>4</sup> and noted in the

Constitution.\*\*\*\*

**\*C18.03.**Any amendments to this Constitution that result from the processes provided in \*C18.01 and \*C18.02 shall be sent by the Secretary of this Congregation to the Synod. The amendment shall become effective within 120 days from the date of the receipt of the notice by the Synod unless the Synod informs this Congregation that the amendment is in conflict with the Constitution and Bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or the Constitution of the Minneapolis Area Synod of the ELCA.

**\*C18.04.**Whenever the *Model Constitution for Congregations* is amended by the Church wide Assembly, this Constitution may be amended to incorporate any such amendment by a simple majority vote of those voting members present and voting at any subsequent meeting of the Congregation without presentation at a prior meeting of the Congregation, provided that the Executive Team has submitted by mail notice to the Congregation of such an amendment or amendments, together with the Executive Team's recommendations, at least 30 days prior to the meeting. 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 19.**

### **CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS**

**\*C19.01.**The Executive Team may enact continuing resolutions. Such Continuing Resolutions may not conflict with the Constitution or Bylaws of this Congregation.

**\*C19.02.**Continuing Resolutions shall be enacted or amended by a two-thirds vote of all voting members of the Executive Team.

**C19.03.** Continuing Resolutions shall be documented in the minutes of the Executive Team Meeting or the Annual Meeting on the date they were enacted.

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<sup>4</sup> Such an effective date must be stated in relation to the requirements of \*C18.03 to allow time for Synodical review of the amendment.