



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

CONSTITUTION

FOR

FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH

OF THE

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN

CHURCH IN AMERICA[®]

2018

INTRODUCTION to the *Model Constitution for Congregations*

The *Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, like the other governing documents of this church, reflects the theology and polity of this church as it organizes itself to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, share the sacraments, reach out to the neighbor with good news and share the love of God in the world. Each expression of this church — churchwide, synod, and congregation — is held together in a relationship of interdependence that encourages each to respond to its context. These documents also demonstrate our commitment to seeing ourselves with others as part of the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. As such, the *Model Constitution for Congregations* is deeply rooted in Scripture, the Lutheran Confessions, and the history of this church and its predecessors.

The *Model Constitution for Congregations* was adopted by the Constituting Convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, as required by the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. This current edition of the *Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* contains changes adopted by all churchwide assemblies, including the fourteenth Churchwide Assembly in 2016. It is consistent with the requirements of the governing documents of the ELCA's churchwide organization and synods, and it provides organizational flexibility to recognize the context of local congregations.

► **Required provisions:** Sections of this constitution marked by an asterisk [*] are required when a congregation amends its governing documents. These sections must be used without alteration or amendment of the text in any manner (*i.e.*, neither additions nor deletions are permissible). This requirement is based on provision 9.52. in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. This provision requires that when a congregation of this church “wishes to amend any provision of its governing documents, the governing documents of that congregation shall be so amended to conform to 9.25.b.” in the churchwide constitution. Provisions in the *Model Constitution for Congregations* identified by an asterisk [*] are those required under ELCA constitutional provision 9.25.b.

► **Review by synod:** Each congregation of this church is to provide a copy of its governing documents, and any amendments thereto, to its synod. In accordance with ELCA bylaw 9.53.03., amendments to a congregation constitution become effective *only* when approved by the synod. This bylaw provides:

All proposed changes in the constitution or incorporation documents of a congregation shall be referred to the synod with which the congregation is affiliated. 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. The synod shall recognize that congregations may organize themselves in a manner which they deem most appropriate.

No governing document amendment will be approved by a synod if it conflicts with the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. In order to meet constitutional requirements and to avoid potential problems, all proposed amendments to a congregation's constitutional provisions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions should be submitted to the synod for review.

► **Amendment consistent with the Model Constitution for Congregations:** A congregation that amends its constitution to be in conformity with the *Model Constitution for Congregations* will report these changes to its synod. The amendments become effective upon adoption by the congregation, *C16.04. While synod approval is not required, it is wise to work with the synod in preparing to present these amendments to the congregational meeting.

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

- a. Constitutional provisions are codified with two sets of numbers, preceded by a “C”: the chapter number, followed by a period, and a two-digit number. A period follows the two-digit number. Thus, one required constitutional provision related to “Membership” in Chapter 8 is codified as “*C8.02.” A provision in Chapter 12 relating to a report by the Congregation Council to the congregation at an annual meeting is codified as “C12.09.” Constitutional provisions are adopted and amended in accordance with Chapter 16 titled “Amendments.”
- b. Bylaw provisions follow constitutional provisions to which they apply. They are not intended to be organized in a separate document at the end of the constitutional provisions. Bylaws are codified with three sets of numbers: the chapter number (preceded by a “C”), the related constitutional provision number, and a two-digit number. There are periods after the chapter number, after the reference to the constitutional provision, and after the bylaw number. Thus, a bylaw provision related to “Membership” would be codified as

“C8.02.01.” A bylaw relating to the contents of an annual report by the Congregation Council to the congregation at an annual meeting would be codified as “C12.09.01.” Because bylaws and continuing resolutions normally relate to specific practices and details of each congregation’s organization, operation, and life, there is not a model set of bylaws or continuing resolutions. Thus, each congregation has discretion and may develop its own bylaws and continuing resolutions, including bylaws and continuing resolutions under required constitutional provisions, but no such bylaw or continuing resolution may conflict with constitutional provisions in the *Model Constitution for Congregations*, the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, or the constitution of the synod, as indicated in *C6.03.e. Bylaws are adopted and amended in accordance with Chapters 16 and 17.

- c. Continuing resolutions are intended to provide descriptions of operational patterns and practices or of the ongoing responsibilities of committees or other units within the organizational structure of the congregation. They follow the relevant constitutional provision or bylaw to which they refer. Continuing resolutions also are codified with three sets of numbers, except that the third set is preceded by a capital letter. Thus, a continuing resolution describing congregational committees in Chapter 13 might be numbered “C13.07A13.” The initial numbers “C13.07” indicate that the continuing resolution relates to the designated constitutional provision, which in this case provides that the duties of congregational committees may be specified in bylaws or continuing resolutions. The final letter and numbers “A13” designate that this is the first continuing resolution “A” and the year that it was adopted, in this example 2013. Continuing resolutions are adopted and amended in accordance with Chapter 18. Unlike constitutional provisions and bylaws which are adopted by the congregation at a legally called and conducted meeting, continuing resolutions may be adopted either by a congregational meeting or by the Congregation Council.

► **Missing numbers:** You will notice that certain numbers are missing from the numbering sequence in some chapters. These omissions are intentional. For example, in some chapters the number “.10.” and multiples thereof have been reserved for possible use as section headings in future editions.

► **Selection of options:** Alternatives are provided in some places within the *Model Constitution for Congregations*. Alternatives are noted by brackets or blank lines. For example, constitutional provision *C9.01. offers the alternative of election of a call committee by the congregation or by the Congregation Council. Only one alternative should be chosen in each instance where brackets appear in the text. In other provisions, alternative provisions are provided. Thus, in Chapters 11 and 12, regarding “Officers” and “Congregation Council,” options are provided separated by the word “or.” Each congregation should select one of those options, subject to approval through the synod’s constitutional review process. Where a blank line appears, such as in C1.01. or C10.02., the appropriate word, phrase, or number determined by the individual congregation should be inserted.

► **References to church:** In the governing documents, “Church” with a capital letter refers to the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. The words “church” or “this church” in lowercase letters refer to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The specific congregation may be identified, as provided in C1.02., as “this congregation.”

► **Guidelines:** A list of guidelines for a congregation engaging in review and amendment of its constitution is available through each synod office and at ELCA.org.

► **Consultation and concluding comments:** Each synod has a process to review proposed amendments to congregational constitutions. The work of both congregations in amending their governing documents and the synod in reviewing proposed amendments is facilitated by consultation and cooperation *before* proposed amendments are acted upon by the congregation. In addition, each congregation should establish a process for periodic review of its governing documents. You are encouraged to contact your synod office to assist your congregation in its periodic review of governing document provisions and to assess whether problems may exist with respect to proposed amendments.

The important task of amending a constitution is challenging. It is, however, an essential endeavor that merits thoughtful work. In addressing your constitutional responsibilities, may God grant you and your colleagues wisdom, discernment, and commitment to the unity of this church in faithful witness to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Secretary Wm Chris Boerger
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
August 17, 2016

**MODEL CONSTITUTION
for
FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH
of the
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN
CHURCH IN AMERICA®**

-By-laws are denoted by BL and continuing resolutions by CR after the numbers.

***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 Faith Lutheran Church.
- C1.02.** For the purpose of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws, the congregation of Faith 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 Treatise, the Small Catechism, the Large Catechism, and the Formula of Concord, as further valid interpretations of the faith of the Church.

* Required provision

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

Chapter 3.

NATURE OF THE CHURCH

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

Chapter 4.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

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

- *C4.03. To fulfill these purposes, this congregation shall:
 - a. Provide services of worship at which the Word of God is preached and the sacraments are administered.
 - b. Provide pastoral care and assist all members to participate in this ministry.
 - c. Challenge, equip, and support all members in carrying out their calling in their daily lives and in their congregation.
 - d. Teach the Word of God.
 - e. Witness to the reconciling Word of God in Christ, reaching out to all people.
 - f. Respond to human need, work for justice and peace, care for the sick and the suffering, and participate responsibly in society.
 - g. Motivate its members to provide financial support for the 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.

-C4.05.01.CR 2018

“Moving Forward in Faith to provide spiritual and physical nourishment to all of God’s people”

- *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.

-C5.02.01 BL

Every Congregational Meeting (regular or special) shall be announced at the worship services on the two consecutive Sundays preceding the date of the meeting.

Order of Business at Congregational Meetings

- 1. Scripture and Prayer***
- 2. Minutes of previous Congregational Meeting***
- 3. Unfinished Business***
- 4. Treasurer’s Report***
- 5. Reports from Administrative Committees***
- 6. New Business***
- 7. State of the Parish Report by Pastor(s)***
- 8. Adjournment***

The President may, with the consent of the Voting membership, vary the above order in the interests of efficiency.

- *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 a minister of Word and Service;
 - d. terminate the call of a minister of Word and Service in conformity with the constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;
 - e. adopt amendments to the constitution, as provided in Chapter 16, amendments to the bylaws, as specified in Chapter 17, and continuing resolutions, as provided in Chapter 18;
 - f. approve the annual budget;
 - g. acquire real and personal property by gift, devise, purchase, or other lawful means;
 - h. hold title to and use its property for any and all activities consistent with its purpose;
 - i. sell, mortgage, lease, transfer, or otherwise dispose of its property by any lawful means;
 - j. elect its officers, and Congregation Council, boards, and committees, and require them to carry out their duties in accordance with the constitution, and bylaws, and continuing resolutions; and
 - k. terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as provided in Chapter 6.
- *C5.04.** This congregation shall choose 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.
- *C5.05.** This congregation shall have a mission endowment fund that will operate as specified in this congregation's bylaws. The purpose of the mission endowment fund is to provide for mission work beyond the operational budget of this congregation.

-C5.05.01BL

Endowment Funds Committee

The Endowment Funds Committee shall consist of up to five (5) members, including the elected Chairperson of the Committee.

1. Establishment

Faith Lutheran congregation, having been the recipient of bequests committing substantial money and property to its care and stewardship, established this Fund to provide for the trustworthy conservation and use of these dedicated gifts. This was accomplished by an amendment to the Articles of Incorporation adopted by the congregation at its annual meeting of January 19, 1982.

Faith Lutheran congregation affirms the scripture that, "As each has received a gift, employ it for one another as good stewards of God's varied grace, whoever renders service, as one who renders it by the strength which God supplies; in order that in everything God may be glorified." (I Peter 1:10-11)

With this as its guiding principle, the herein established shall endeavor,

- a. To earn the confidence and good will of potential donors for this vehicle for the sound management of dedicated gifts and bequests whether they be large or small.***
- b. To faithfully abide by the stated intention of the givers of gifts and bequests.***
- c. To keep permanent records of the gifts as well as the names of those who may be memorialized or honored.***
- d. To provide advice and counsel regarding acceptable tax-wise giving that may be beneficial both to the one making the gift or bequest as well as the Christ honoring mission of the church.***

2. **Purpose**
The purpose of this Fund shall be to receive gifts, and unless otherwise specifically designated by the donor thereof, hold the principal of such gifts according to the terms of these By-Laws and to expend the income there-from, less proper expenses, exclusively for religious, charitable and educational purposes either directly or by contributions to organizations duly organized and operated to carry on exclusively religious, charitable and educational activities.
 - a. *Colleges and Seminaries of the ELCA.*
 - b. *Church welfare and relief programs.*
 - c. *Lectureships and Seminars for Christian growth and developments.*
 - d. *Major repairs and improvements to our church and related properties.*
 - e. *Missions (local and world).*
3. **Limitations in the use of funds:**
 - a. *All monies, securities, or other properties shall be received, held, administered, and distributed in accordance with the requests or directions of the donor or donors thereof and with limitations and conditions attached by such donors.*
 - b. *If no direction be expressed, then the income of the same shall be used and disposed of in accordance with the provisions expressed in the by-laws with the following restrictions:*
 1. *The principal shall be perpetually maintained except that when extraordinary circumstances exist up to five (5%) percent per annum of the principal may be invaded and expended.*
 2. *No principal funds may be loaned to Faith Lutheran Congregation of Madison, Minnesota, nor shall any of the income be pledged or committed to Faith Lutheran Congregation prior to the actual receipt thereof in cash.*
 3. *No fund shall be used for normally budgeted operating expenses of Faith Lutheran Congregation.*
4. **Committee Officers:** *other than the elected Chair shall be a Vice Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer.*
5. **Duties of the Committee:**
 - a. *The Committee shall meet at least quarterly at the call of the director or more frequently as may be deemed by it for the best interests of the Fund. Special meetings may be called on two (2) days written or oral notice to the members of the Committee by the Chairperson or any two members. Each member is charged with knowledge of the contents of the minute book. If all members are not present, written consent or objections to the minutes by a member of the committee shall constitute his/her action, and shall have the same force and effect as though he/she had been present and voting at the meeting.*
 - b. *A quorum shall consist of three (3) members. The affirmative vote of a majority present and voting shall carry any motion or resolution.*
 - c. *The Committee shall establish written rules and regulations as may be necessary for the conduct of its business. It shall adopt standards and goals to guide in the expenditure of the income from the Fund which it may amend within the stated purposes of this Fund.*
 - d. *The Committee shall maintain accounts with banks and brokerage firms as it may by resolution authorize and determine. All checks and other documents transferring or expending any funds or assets in the Fund shall be executed by the Treasurer and either the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, or secretary of the committee.*
 - e. *At its discretion the committee may employ at the expense of the Fund such professional counseling on investments and legal matters as it deems to be for the best interest of the Fund. It is also empowered to employ a corporate trustee to invest assets of the Fund under customary agency relationships and to delegate to it in the name of Faith Lutheran Church any powers with reference to investment held by the committee.*
 - f. *The Committee shall present a report to the Congregational meetings and a written report annually. A printed annual report shall consist of a treasurer's accounting all receipts and disbursements for the period and a list of all assets in the Fund as of the end of the period. The written annual report should also include a report of the Committee's work from the Chairperson of the Committee.*

- g. *The Committee shall maintain complete and accurate books of accounts in accordance with standard accounting procedures and may employ such professional help as it deems necessary in this connection. It shall cause the books to be audited annually in the same manner as the books of the congregation's Treasurer.*
 - h. *The secretary shall maintain complete and accurate minutes of all the meetings of the committee and supply a copy thereof to each member within seven (7) days of the meetings.*
 - i. *No member of the Committee shall engage in any self-dealing or transactions with the Fund in which the member of the Committee has direct or indirect financial interest and shall at all times refrain from any contact in which his/her personal interests would conflict with the interest of the Fund.*
 - j. *No member of the Committee shall receive monetary compensation for services but shall be reimbursed for any actual and necessary out-of-pocket expenses incurred in relation to the Fund.*
 - k. *The Committee shall solicit either from another committee which may be formed under this Committee or from other Administrative Committees of the congregation, worthy mission project suggestions for undesignated interest funds in accordance with the purposes and limitations of this Fund. The Stewardship/Parish Fellowship Committee, and the Global Missions Committee shall be consulted annually for mission project suggestions.*
6. *Powers of the Committee*
- The Committee, or any successor or successors, is hereby authorized to have and exercise in its absolute discretion with reference to the Fund for and on behalf and in the name of Faith Lutheran Church to wit:*
- a. *To receive the income, profits, rents, and proceeds of the trust fund, and to collect and receipt for the same, and pay all administrative and other necessary expenses in connection with it.*
 - b. *To disburse the funds in accordance with the provisions of this article or at the sole discretion of the committee members, unless directed otherwise by the donor or donors.*
 - c. *To purchase or otherwise acquire, and to retain, whether originally a part of this Fund or subsequently acquired, any and all stocks, bonds, notes or other securities, or any variety of real or personal property, including stocks or interests in investment trusts, and engage in any capacity or form of business organization of any kind or character, as it may deem advisable and for the best interest of the Fund and the purposes for which it is established. Investments need not be diversified and may be made or retained with a view to a possible increase in value. The committee may at any time render liquid the Fund, in whole or in part, and hold cash or readily marketable securities of little or no yield for such period as they may deem advisable.*
 - d. *To sell, lease, pledge, mortgage, transfer, exchange, convert or otherwise dispose of, or grant options with respect to, any and all property at any time forming a part of the Fund, in such manner, at such time or times, and for such purposes, for such prices and upon such terms, credits, and conditions as it may deem advisable. Any lease may, by the Board, extend beyond the duration of the Fund.*
 - e. *To borrow money for any purpose connected with the protection, preservation, or improvement of the Fund whenever in its judgment is advisable.*
 - f. *To vote in person or by general or limited proxy with respect to any shares of stock or other securities held in the Fund, to consent, directly or through a committee or other agent, to the reorganization, consolidation, merger, dissolution or liquidation of any corporation in which the Fund may have any interest, or to the sale, lease, pledge, or mortgage of any property by or to any such corporation; and to make any payments to take any step which it may deem necessary or proper to enable it to obtain the benefit of any transaction.*
 - g. *To hold investments in the name of a nominee.*

- h. To pay, compromise, compound, adjust, submit to arbitration, sell or release any claims or demands related to the Fund against others or of others against the Fund as it shall deem advisable, including the acceptance of deeds or real property in satisfaction of bonds and mortgages, and to make any payments in connection therewith which it may deem advisable.*
- i. To determine whether and to what extent to maintain reserves for depreciation, obsolescence, taxes and other liabilities, and to make provision therefore.*
- j. To execute and deliver any and all instruments in writing which it may deem advisable to carry out any of the foregoing powers. All documents relating to the transfer or expenditures of any income or assets in the Fund or encumbrance thereof shall be signed by the Chairperson or Vice-chairperson and the Treasure. No party to any such instruments in writing by these persons shall be obligated to inquire into its validity, or be bound to see to the application by the Committee of any money or other property paid or delivered to it pursuant to the terms of any such instrument.*
- k. To determine income and principal; dividends or shares of stock payable in the stock of any class of the corporation declaring or authorizing the same shall be treated as principal, except that any dividends paid in lieu of periodic cash dividends or in lieu of recoupment of dividends defaulted or accumulated while the shares of stock are held in the Fund shall become income.*
- l. To receive rents, royalties, and cash dividends from wasting assets (including without limitation cash dividends paid by oil, coal, lumber, or mining companies), extraordinary cash dividends other than liquidating dividends, and dividends payable in the stock of a corporation other than the corporation declaring or authorizing the same shall be income.*
- m. To allocate the proceeds of the sale of unproductive or under-productive property, liquidating dividends and the right to subscribe to stock, and to add to the Fund as principle.*
- n. To manage in such a way that no sinking fund shall be created as to any security received or purchased at a premium or at a price in excess of the call or redemption price.*
- o. To retain any business interest, as shareholder, security holder, creditor, partner, proprietor, or otherwise, even though it may constitute all or a large portion of the Fund, to participate in the conduct of any business and take or delegate to others discretionary power to take any action with respect to its management which an individual could take as owner of the business, including the voting of stock, and the determination of all questions of policy; to execute partnership agreements and amendments thereto, to participate in any incorporation, reorganization, merger, consolidation, recapitalization, liquidation, or dissolution of any business or any change in its nature; to invest additional capital in, subscribe to or buy additional stock or securities, or make secured, unsecured, or subscribed loans of any business without independent investigation; to elect or employ, as directors, officers, employees, or agents of any business, and compensate any persons including a director, officer, or agent of a trustee; to deal with and act for any business in any capacity; and to sell or liquidate any interest in any business.*
- p. To manage in such a way as to not permit income to accumulate unreasonably but shall use it with all diligence to accomplish the Christian purposes for which this Fund has been established.*
- q. To administer and expend such other funds as may be given to Faith Lutheran Endowment Fund under all of the powers, authority, restrictions, and for the purposes, all as provided herein.*

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 roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in accordance with its call procedures except in special circumstances and with the approval of the bishop of the synod. These special circumstances are limited either to calling a candidate approved for the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or to contracting for pastoral services with a minister of Word and Sacrament of a church body with which the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America officially has established a relationship of full communion.
 - d. This congregation agrees to consider ministers of Word and Service for call to other staff positions in the 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 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 paragraph g. 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 the ELCA, who shall report the termination to the Churchwide Assembly.
 - g. This congregation shall abide by these covenants by and among the three expressions of this church:
 - 1) Congregations seeking to terminate their relationship with this church which fail or refuse to comply with each of the foregoing provisions in *C6.05. shall be required to receive Synod Council approval before terminating their membership in this church.
 - 2) Congregations which had been members of the Lutheran Church in America shall be required, in addition to complying with the foregoing provisions in *C6.05., to receive synodical approval before terminating their membership in this church.
 - 3) Congregations established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be required, in addition to complying with the foregoing provisions in *C6.05., to satisfy all financial obligations to this church and receive Synod Council approval before terminating their membership in this church.
 - h. If this congregation fails to achieve the required two-thirds vote of voting members present at the congregation's first meeting as specified in paragraph a. above, another special meeting to consider termination of relationship with this church may be called no sooner than six months after that first meeting. If this congregation 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 two-thirds of the voting members of this congregation present at a legally called and conducted special meeting of this congregation vote to transfer to another Lutheran church body, title to property shall continue to reside in this congregation, provided the process for termination of relationship in *C6.05. has been followed. Before this congregation takes action to transfer to another Lutheran church body, it shall consult with representatives of the Southwestern Minnesota Synod.
- *C7.04.** If two-thirds of the voting members of this congregation present at a legally called and conducted special meeting of this congregation vote to become independent or relate to a non-Lutheran church body and have followed the process for termination of relationship in *C6.05., title to property of this congregation shall continue to reside in this congregation only with the consent of the Synod Council. The Synod Council, after consultation with this congregation by the established synodical 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.

- C7.05.** Notwithstanding the provisions of *C7.02. and *C7.03. above, where this congregation has received property from the synod pursuant to a deed or other instrument containing restrictions under provision 9.71.a. of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, this congregation accepts such restrictions and:
- a. Shall not transfer, encumber, mortgage, or in any way burden or impair any right, title, or interest in the property without prior approval of the Synod Council.
 - b. Shall—upon written demand by the Synod Council, pursuant to †S13.23. of the constitution of the *Southwestern Minnesota Synod* re-convey and transfer all right, title, and interest in the property to the synod.

Chapter 8. MEMBERSHIP

- *C8.01.** Members of this congregation shall be those baptized persons on the roll of this congregation at the time that this constitution is adopted and those who are admitted thereafter and who have declared and maintain their membership in accordance with the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.
- *C8.02.** Members shall be classified as follows:
- a. **Baptized** members are those persons who have been received by the Sacrament of Holy Baptism in this congregation, or, having been previously baptized in the name of the Triune God, have been received by certificate of transfer from other 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 as well as the other rights and privileges ascribed to voting members by the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.
 - d. **Associate** members are persons holding membership in other Christian congregations who wish to retain such membership but desire to participate in the life and mission of this congregation. These individuals have all the privileges and duties of membership except voting rights or other rights and privileges ascribed to voting members by the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.
 - e. **Seasonal** members are voting members of other ELCA congregations who wish to retain such membership but desire to participate in the life and mission of this congregation, including exercising limited voting rights in this congregation. The Congregation Council may grant seasonal membership to such persons provided that this congregation is a member of a synod where the Synod Council has approved seasonal member voting on its territory. Such seasonal members shall have all the privileges and duties of voting members except that:
 - 1) they shall not be eligible for elected office in, or for membership on the Congregation Council or on a call committee of, this congregation;
 - 2) they shall not have the right to vote on any matter concerning or affecting the call or termination of call of any minister of this congregation;
 - 3) they shall not have the right to vote on any matter concerning or affecting the affiliation of this congregation with the ELCA;
 - 4) they shall not be eligible to serve as voting members from this congregation of the Synod Assembly or the Churchwide Assembly;
 - 5) they shall not, even if otherwise permitted by this congregation, vote by proxy or by absentee ballot; and
 - 6) they shall not, within any two-calendar month period, exercise voting rights in this congregation and in the congregation where they remain voting members.

- *C8.03. All applications for confirmed membership shall be submitted to and shall require the approval of the Congregation Council.
- *C8.04. It shall be the privilege and duty of members of this congregation to:
 - a. make regular use of the means of grace, both Word and sacraments;
 - b. live a Christian life in accordance with the Word of God and the teachings of the Lutheran church; and,
 - c. support the work of this congregation, the synod, and the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America through contributions of their time, abilities, and financial support as biblical stewards.
- *C8.05. Membership in this congregation shall be terminated by any of the following:
 - a. death;
 - b. resignation;
 - c. transfer or release;
 - d. disciplinary action in accordance with ELCA constitutional provision 20.41. and the accompanying bylaws; or
 - e. removal from the roll due to inactivity in accordance with the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.

Such persons who have been removed from the roll of members shall remain persons for whom the Church has a continuing pastoral concern

Chapter 9.
ROSTERED MINISTER

- *C9.01. Authority to call a pastor shall be in this congregation by at least a two-thirds vote of voting members present and voting at a meeting legally called for that purpose. Before a call is issued, the officers, or a committee elected by the Congregation Council to recommend the call, shall seek the advice and help of the bishop of the synod.
- *C9.02. Only a member of the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or a candidate for the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament who has been recommended for 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 minister of Word and Sacrament shall:
 - 1) preach the Word;
 - 2) administer the sacraments;
 - 3) conduct public worship;
 - 4) provide pastoral care;
 - 5) seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel;
 - 6) impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through distribution of its communications and publications;
 - 7) witness to the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation, and abroad; and
 - 8) speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world.
 - b. Each pastor with a congregational call shall, within the congregation:
 - 1) offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead;
 - 2) relate to all schools and organizations of this congregation;
 - 3) install regularly elected members of the Congregation Council;
 - 4) with the council, administer discipline; and
 - 5) endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the ELCA churchwide organization and of the 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. The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between a minister of Word and Sacrament and this congregation shall be as follows:

- a. The call of this congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment, which shall be terminated only by death or, following consultation with the synodical bishop, for the following reasons:
 - 1) mutual agreement to terminate the call or the completion of a call for a specific term;
 - 2) resignation of the pastor, which shall become effective, unless otherwise agreed, no later than 30 days after the date on which it was submitted;
 - 3) inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in the congregation in view of local conditions;
 - 4) physical disability or mental incapacity of the pastor;
 - 5) suspension of the pastor through discipline for more than three months;
 - 6) resignation or removal of the pastor from the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament of this church;
 - 7) termination of the relationship between this church and the 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 this synod,
 - 1) the bishop in his or her sole discretion may investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson, or
 - 2) when such allegations have been brought to the synod's attention by an official recital of allegations by the Congregation Council or by a petition signed by at least one-third of the voting members of the congregation, the bishop personally shall investigate such conditions together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson.
- c. In case of alleged physical disability or mental incapacity under paragraph a.4) above, the bishop's committee shall obtain and document competent medical opinion concerning the pastor's condition. When a disability or incapacity is evident to the committee, the bishop of this synod may declare the pastorate vacant. When the pastorate is declared vacant, the Synod Council shall list the pastor on the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament as disabled. Upon removal of the disability and the restoration of the pastor to health, the bishop shall take steps to enable the pastor to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another appropriate call.
- d. In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of the 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 vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee did not recommend termination of the call, or (b) by a majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee recommended termination of the call.
- f. If, in the course of proceedings described in paragraph c. or paragraph d. above, the bishop's committee concludes that there may be grounds for discipline, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action in accordance with the provisions of this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions.

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

- *C9.07. During the period of service, an interim pastor shall have the rights and duties in the congregation of a regularly called pastor and may delegate the same in part to a supply pastor with the consent of the bishop of the synod and this congregation or Congregation Council. The interim pastor and any rostered minister providing assistance shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a pastor. Unless previously agreed upon by the Synod Council, an interim pastor is not available for a regular call to the congregation served.
- *C9.08. This congregation shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to a former pastor before calling a successor. A pastor shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to this congregation before beginning service in a call to another congregation or employment in another ministry setting related to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- *C9.09. When a pastor is called to serve in company with another pastor or pastors, the privileges and responsibilities of each pastor shall be specified in documents to accompany the call and to be drafted in consultation involving the pastors, the Congregation Council, and the bishop of the synod. As occasion requires, the documents may be revised through a similar consultation.
- *C9.11. With the approval of the bishop of the synod, the 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.
- C9.15. Under special circumstances, subject to the approval of the synodical bishop and the concurrence of this congregation, a minister of Word and Sacrament of a church body with which the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America officially has established a relationship of full communion may serve temporarily as pastor of this congregation under a contract between the congregation and the pastor in a form proposed by the synodical bishop and approved by the congregation.
- *C9.21. Authority to call a minister of Word and Service shall be in this congregation by at least a two-thirds vote of voting members present and voting at a meeting legally called for that purpose. Before a call is issued, the officers, or a committee elected by the Congregation Council to recommend the call, shall seek the advice and help of the bishop of the synod.
- *C9.22. Only a member of the roster of Ministers of Word and Service of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or a candidate for the roster of Ministers of Word and Service who has been recommended for this congregation by the synodical bishop may be called as a deacon of this congregation.
- *C9.23. Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, every minister of Word and Service shall:
 - a. Be rooted in the Word of God, for proclamation and service;
 - b. Advocate a prophetic diakonia that commits itself to risk-taking and innovative service on the frontiers of the Church's outreach, giving particular attention to the suffering places in God's world;

- c. Speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world, witnessing to the realm of God in the community, the nation, and abroad;
 - d. Equip the baptized for ministry in God's world that affirms the gifts of all people;
 - e. Encourage mutual relationships that invite participation and accompaniment of others in God's mission;
 - f. Practice stewardship that respects God's gift of time, talents, and resources;
 - g. Be grounded in a gathered community for ongoing diaconal formation;
 - h. Share knowledge of the ELCA and its wider ministry of the gospel and advocate for the work of all expressions of this church; and
 - i. Identify and encourage qualified persons to prepare for ministry of the gospel.
- *C9.24.** The specific duties of the deacon, compensation, and other matters pertaining to the service of the deacon shall be included in a letter of call, which shall be attested by the bishop of the synod.
- *C9.25.** The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between a minister of Word and Service and a congregation shall be as follows:
- a. The call of this congregation, when accepted by a deacon, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment, which shall be terminated only by death or, following consultation with the synodical bishop, for the following reasons:
 - 1) mutual agreement to terminate the call or the completion of a call for a specific term;
 - 2) resignation of the deacon, which shall become effective, unless otherwise agreed, no later than 30 days after the date on which it was submitted;
 - 3) inability to conduct the ministry of Word and Service effectively in this congregation in view of local conditions;
 - 4) physical disability or mental incapacity of the deacon;
 - 5) suspension of the deacon through discipline for more than three months;
 - 6) resignation or removal of the deacon from the roster of Ministers of Word and Service of this church;
 - 7) termination of the relationship between this church and this congregation;
 - 8) dissolution of this congregation or the termination of a parish arrangement; or
 - 9) suspension of this congregation through discipline for more than six months.
 - b. When allegations of physical disability or mental incapacity of the deacon under paragraph a.4) above, or ineffective conduct of the office of minister of Word and Service under paragraph a.3) above, have come to the attention of the bishop of this synod,
 - 1) the bishop in his or her sole discretion may investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson, or
 - 2) when such allegations have been brought to the synod's attention by an official recital of allegations by the Congregation Council or by a petition signed by at least one-third of the voting members of this congregation, the bishop personally shall investigate such conditions together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson.
 - c. In case of alleged physical disability or mental incapacity under paragraph a.4) above, the bishop's committee shall obtain and document competent medical opinion concerning the deacon's condition. When a disability or incapacity is evident to the committee, the bishop of this synod may declare the position vacant. When the position is declared vacant, the Synod Council shall list the deacon on the roster of Ministers of Word and Service as disabled. Upon removal of the disability and the restoration of the deacon to health, the bishop shall take steps to enable the deacon to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another appropriate call.
 - d. In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of this congregation under paragraph a.3) above, the bishop's committee shall endeavor to hear from all concerned persons, after which the bishop together with the committee shall present their recommendations first to the deacon and then to this congregation. The recommendations of the bishop's committee must address whether the deacon's call should come to an end and, if so, may suggest appropriate severance arrangements. The committee may also propose other actions that should be undertaken

- by this congregation and by the deacon, if appropriate. If the deacon and congregation agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action need be taken by the synod.
- e. If either party fails to assent to the recommendations of the bishop's committee concerning the deacon's call, this congregation may dismiss the deacon only at a legally called meeting after consultation with the bishop, either (a) by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee did not recommend termination of the call, or (b) by a majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee recommended termination of the call.
 - f. If, in the course of proceedings described in paragraph c. or paragraph d. above, the bishop's committee concludes that there may be grounds for discipline, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action in accordance with the provisions of this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions.
- *C9.26.** The deacon shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to a former congregation before:
- a. installation in another field of labor, or
 - b. the issuance of a certificate of dismissal or transfer.
- *C9.27.** When a deacon is called to serve in company with another rostered minister or other rostered ministers, the privileges and responsibilities of each rostered minister shall be specified in documents to accompany the call and to be drafted in consultation involving the rostered ministers, the Congregation Council, and the bishop of the synod. As occasion requires, the documents may be revised through a similar consultation.
- *C9.28.** With the approval of the bishop of the synod, this congregation may depart from *C9.25.a. and call a deacon for a specific term. Details of such calls shall be in writing setting forth the purpose and conditions involved. Prior to the completion of a term, the bishop or a designated representative of the bishop shall meet with the deacon and representatives of this congregation for a review of the call. Such a call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of *C9.25.a.
- *C9.29.** The deacon shall become a member of this congregation upon receipt and acceptance of the letter of call. In a parish of multiple congregations, the deacon shall hold membership in one of the congregations.
- *C9.31.** The deacon(s) shall submit a report of his or her ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.

Chapter 10.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

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

-C10.01.01 BL *The Regular meetings of the Voting Membership shall be held on the Sunday previous to the third Thursday of November.*

Dates and times of all Congregational Meetings shall be set by the Church Council.

The November Congregational Meeting shall include the consideration and acceptance of the budget for the upcoming year, election of officers and will include annual reports of the congregation. Installation of new officers will take place in January.

All members of the congregation may attend the meetings of the congregation and may, with the consent of the voting membership submit recommendations, or participate in a discussion of any given item of business before the voting members.

Restrictions Pertaining to Congregational Meetings

- 1.** *Attending Voting members of a properly called Congregational meeting shall constitute a quorum, except as otherwise provided in this Constitution and By-Laws for dealing with certain specific situations herein defined.*
- 2.** *In the event of a tie vote, the President shall cast the deciding ballot.*

Recessing a Meeting.

A meeting of the congregation may by majority vote recess to reconvene at a specified time and place. A meeting may also recess to reconvene upon call; provided however, that the time and place of such a reconvened meeting be announced at a public service of the congregation, or written notice be mailed to the voting members not less than three (3) days in advance of the reconvened meeting.

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 1/3 number of the average weekly church service attendance of voting members. The president of the Congregation Council shall call a special meeting upon request of the synodical bishop. The call for each special meeting shall specify the purpose for which it is to be held, and no other business shall be transacted.

-C10.02.01 BL

- 1. Special meetings of the congregation may be called by the Pastor(s) the President of the Congregation or at the request of ten (10) voting members of the congregation, or the Bishop of the Southwestern Minnesota Synod.***
- 2. Official notice of a special meeting of the congregation shall be in writing and shall be posted conspicuously in the place where the congregation customarily worships. Such notice shall state the time, the place, and the purpose of the meeting. It shall be signed by the President of the congregation.***

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

C10.04. 1/3 percent of the average weekly church service attendance of 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, a 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.
- d. If the Congregation Council elects its officers, the president, vice president, and secretary shall be selected from the elected membership of the Congregation Council. [If the treasurer is not selected from the elected membership of the Congregation Council, the treasurer shall have voice but not vote at the meetings of the Congregation Council.]

-C.11.01.01 BL

Duties of Officers

1. President

- a. The President of the congregation shall preside at all meetings of the Voting Membership. He/She shall enforce the Constitution and By-Laws of the congregation and carry out the expressed will of the congregation as embodied in the resolutions of the Voting Membership.***
- b. All Committees, auxiliaries, groups, etc., in the congregation shall be responsible to the President, and he/she shall be welcome at***

any and all meetings of such groups, either in person or as represented by such person or persons as he/she may appoint. President may appoint an auditing committee, personnel committee, and constitutional advisory committee to assist him/her in management of church affairs. Funds needed for operational expenses of these committees may be expended from the budget of the Lay Ministry/Evangelism Committee as approved each year by the Congregational Meeting any other ad hoc committees to the duties of the Vice President, as needed. The President along with the Vice President and/or Treasurer acting as Church Trustees have vested in their respective positions the authority to act on all personnel matters recommended to them by the Personnel Committee, including the final decision to hire, fire, and administer discipline to staff, except to the Pastor (s).

The President along with the Vice President and/or Treasurer acting as Church Trustees shall execute all legal documents, enter into and sign contracts, loan agreements, and other legal papers on behalf of the Faith Lutheran Congregation of Madison, MN upon receipt of an approved resolution from one of the various administrative committees.

- c. He/she shall also call and preside over the meetings of the Church Council and shall endeavor to coordinate the functions, plans, and activities of the congregation in all its parts for the total furtherance of the work of Christ's Kingdom in our midst.*

- d. Secretary:*

The President assigns and supervises the work of the Secretary.

The Secretary shall be present at all meetings of the congregation and at all meetings of the Church Council and shall enter the minutes of all meetings of said groups in a permanent record book over his or her signature. He/ she shall conduct all official correspondence of the congregational Committees under the supervision of the President. In general, he/she shall perform all the duties normally pertaining to his/her office and such additional duties as the congregation may delegate to him/her.

- e. Auditing Committee*

The President shall appoint an Auditing Committee consisting of any two qualified confirmed members of the congregation other than the Treasurer and Financial Secretary to audit the financial records of the congregation. The President shall submit the Audit Committee's report at the January meeting of the Voters Assembly each year.

- f. The Executive Committee*

The Executive Committee consists of the elected officers, appointed treasurer, and the Pastor (s), and shall meet as needed to plan, organize, and direct the work of the administrative committees, as needed.

- g. The Personnel Committee*

The Personnel Committee shall consist of the three voting members of the congregation. The work of the committee is to develop and review personnel policies, recommend the hiring and firing of staff, except for the Pastor (s), recommend discipline as appropriate, write job position descriptions, conduct annual employee performance reviews, set salary and fringe benefit levels, recommend cost of living increases, and to consult with various committees in all these matters as it relates to that committee's specific staff, assignment(s).

- 2. Vice President**

The Vice President of the congregation in the absence of the President, shall act for and instead of the President. The Vice President shall be available for whatever duties the President shall assign to him/her as the President's representative.

3. **Treasurer**
 - a. *Shall be responsible for accurate recording of congregational receipts and disbursements and budgeted and actual expenditures according to proper accounting procedures and, as deemed advisable, shall suggest for congregational consideration improved methods and systems for keeping financial records.*
 - b. *Shall present a written, duplicated financial report at Congregational Meetings and a preliminary report at the Church Council meetings. Information for the reports will be given to the Financial Secretary for entry in the computer and printed reports will most often be done by the Financial Secretary.*
 - c. *Shall submit permanent financial records for annual audit.*
 - d. *Shall be responsible for monthly remission of offerings for missions and church agencies and for prompt payment of salaries and bills authorized by the congregation or the Committees and Chairpersons as duly constituted sources.*
 - e. *Shall coordinate the flow of monies from the treasury to the various Committees in such a way that an adequate balance is retained for the payment of salaries and other regularly recurring expenses.*
 - f. *Shall remit to the professional workers of the church for documented expenses while attending professional workshops, conferences, conventions, etc., approved by the Committee under whose jurisdiction they function.*
 - g. *Shall receive from the Financial Secretary a report of all monies received through worship services, special offerings, or any other source and duly record the same.*
 - h. *Shall sign all checks for payment of bills, salaries, or other financial commitments of the congregation of any sort.*
 - i. *Shall have available for all Committees a current record of their accrued disbursements and budget allotment.*
 - j. *Shall have the authority to work out with salaried workers of the congregation a breakdown of the worker's total compensation into salary and fringe benefits as the worker requests.*

C11.02. The congregation shall elect its officers and they shall be the officers of the congregation. The officers shall be elected by written ballot and shall serve for two years or until their successors are elected. Their terms shall begin in January after installation.

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.

Chapter 12.

CONGREGATION COUNCIL

C12.01. The voting membership of the Congregation Council shall consist of the pastor, the officers of the congregation, and 5 members of the congregation, at least one of whom shall be a youth and at least one of whom shall be a young adult. Any voting member of the congregation may be elected, subject only to the limitation on the length of continuous service permitted in that office. A member's place on the Congregation Council shall be declared vacant if the member a) ceases to be a voting member of this congregation or b) is absent from four successive regular meetings of the Congregation Council without cause. Consistent with the laws of the state in which this congregation is incorporated, the congregation may adopt procedures for the removal of a member of the Congregation Council in other circumstances.

C12.02. The members of the Congregation Council except the pastor shall be elected by written ballot to serve for 2 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.

-C12.02.01 BL Election Procedure

The Voting Membership shall, at its January Congregational meeting, elect by ballot and simple majority, the following officers in the order herein indicated:

1. *A President*
2. *One Vice President, and Treasurer (appointed)*
3. *Secretary, five (5) members of the congregation, along with delegates to*

the Green Lake Bible Camp Annual Meeting, Madison Lutheran Home Annual Meeting and voting members to the Southwestern Minnesota Synod Assembly.

- C12.03.** 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.
- C12.04.** The Congregation Council shall have general oversight of the life and activities of this congregation, and in particular its worship life, to the end that everything be done in accordance with the Word of God and the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The duties of the Congregation Council shall include the following:
- a. To lead this congregation in stating its mission, to do long-range planning, to set goals and priorities, and to evaluate its activities in light of its mission and goals.
 - b. To seek to involve all members of this congregation in worship, learning, witness, service, and support.
 - c. To oversee and provide for the administration of this congregation to enable it to fulfill its functions and perform its mission.
 - d. To maintain supportive relationships with the rostered minister(s) and staff and help them annually to evaluate the fulfillment of their calling or employment.
 - e. To be examples individually and corporately of the style of life and ministry expected of all baptized persons.
 - f. To promote a congregational climate of peace and goodwill and, as differences and conflicts arise, to endeavor to foster mutual understanding
 - g. To arrange for pastoral service during the sickness or absence of the pastor.
 - h. To emphasize partnership with the synod and churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as well as cooperation with other congregations, both Lutheran and non-Lutheran, subject to established policies of the synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - i. To recommend and encourage the use of program resources produced or approved by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - j. To seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel.
- C12.05.** The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the financial and property matters of this congregation.
- a. The Congregation Council shall be the board of directors of this congregation and, as such, shall be responsible for maintaining and protecting its property and managing its business and fiscal affairs. It shall have the powers and be subject to the obligations that pertain to such boards under the laws of the State of Minnesota, except as otherwise provided herein.
 - b. The Congregation Council shall not have the authority to buy, sell, or encumber real property unless specifically authorized to do so by a meeting of the congregation.
 - c. The Congregation Council may enter into contracts of up to **\$5000** for items not included in the budget.
 - d. The Congregation Council 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 **10%** in excess of the anticipated receipts only after approval by a Congregation Meeting. The budget shall include this congregation's full indicated share in support of the wider ministry being carried on in partnership with the synod and churchwide organization.
 - e. The Congregation Council shall ascertain that the financial affairs of this congregation are being conducted efficiently, giving particular attention to the prompt payment of all obligations and to the regular forwarding of benevolence monies to the synodical treasurer.
 - f. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for this congregation's investments and its total insurance program.
- C12.06.** The Congregation Council shall see that the provisions of this constitution, and its bylaws, and the continuing resolutions are carried out.
- C12.07.** The Congregation Council shall provide for an annual review of the membership roster.
- C12.08.** The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the employment and supervision of the staff of this congregation. Nothing in this provision shall be deemed to affect the congregation's responsibility for the call, terms of call, or termination of call of any employees who are on a roster of this church.
- C12.09.** 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. Special meetings may be called by the pastor or the president, and shall be called by the president at the request of at least one-half of its members. 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 [senior] pastor or interim pastor, except when the pastor or interim pastor requests or consents to be absent and has given prior approval to the agenda for a particular regular or special meeting, which shall be the only

business considered at that meeting. Chronic or repeated absence of the pastor or interim pastor who has refused approval of the agenda of a subsequent regular or special meeting shall not preclude action by the Congregation Council, following consultation with the synodical bishop.

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

Chapter 13.

CONGREGATION COMMITTEES

C13.01. The officers of this congregation and the pastor shall constitute the *Executive Committee*.

C13.02. A *Nominating Committee* of six voting members of this congregation, two of whom, if possible, shall be outgoing members of the Congregation Council, shall be elected at the annual meeting for a term of one year. Members of the Nominating Committee are not eligible for consecutive re-election.

-C13.02.01 BL

. Nomination Procedure

1. *At the November Congregational Meeting, the Church Council shall announce its selection of three (3) (minimum) qualified Confirmed Members who, together with the Pastor, shall serve as the Nominating Committee for the upcoming year. At this meeting, the Church members may submit to the Committee the names of possible candidates for office.*
2. *The Nominating Committee shall prepare a list of candidates drawn from among confirmed members of the congregation. This list shall then be made available to the confirmed members of the congregation at least three weeks prior to the Congregational Meeting.*
3. *Following the publication of the Nominating Committee's list, any confirmed member of the congregation may submit to the Committee additional names for inclusion on the list, and such names shall be placed in nomination by the Committee along with the candidates already chosen, provided:*
 - A. *That such names shall be submitted at least 10 days before the date of The Congregational Meeting.*
 - B. *That the Nominating Committee, through consultation with the Pastor (s) shall have investigated the status of the proposed candidates and found them spiritually eligible for office and willing to serve.*

C13.03. An *Audit Committee* of three voting members shall be elected by the Congregation Council. Audit Committee members shall not be members of the Congregation Council. Term of office shall be three years, with one member elected each year. Members shall be eligible for re-election.

C13.04. *Mutual Ministry Committee(s)* (in the absence of a mutual ministry committee, the duties shall be fulfilled by the executive committee) shall be appointed jointly by the president [vice president¹] and the rostered minister. Term of office shall be two years, with three members to be appointed each successive year.

-C13.04.01 BL

1. *Pray for the Pastor (s) and other spiritual leaders, and encourage them in his or her work. And proclaim the Gospel to all the people.*
2. *Be concerned about the Spiritual, emotional and physical health and welfare of the Pastor (s) and his or her family (adequate compensation, housing, free time, vacation, assistance in times of illness), and to that end specifically review these items once a year. Assist the Pastor (s) in counseling with difficult cases in finding peaceful and God-pleasing solutions to personnel problems within the congregation.*

C13.05. When a pastoral vacancy occurs, a *Call Committee* of six voting members shall be elected by the Congregation Council. Term of office will terminate upon installation of the newly called pastor.

C13.06. Other committees of this congregation may be formed, as the need arises, by decision of the Congregation Council.

C13.07. Duties of committees of this congregation shall be specified in the bylaws.

¹ For use if the pastor is president of the congregation under two of the options in C11.02.

-C13.07.01 BL

The Administrative Committees

- 1. General Duties and Powers of Administrative Committees**
 - a. Each Administrative Committee shall submit a report of its activities at each regular meeting of the Congregation, and on such other occasions as the Congregational Meeting shall require. Such reports shall include specific recommendations (if any) for congregational action and/or approval.**
 - b. Each Administrative Committee shall be empowered to administer all funds set aside for its work by budget appropriation or by special resolution of the Congregational Meeting, provided that the Council may, at its discretion, restrict such expenditures to conform with the actual financial condition of the congregation at any given time.**
- 2. Organization and Meetings of Administrative Committees**
 - a. Each Administrative Committee shall be under the direct control and supervision of the Chairperson of that Committee. Following the election of the Chairperson of each Committee and the number of Committee members required, the Chairperson of the respective Committee shall designate and appoint from among the Committee members at his or her own discretion those individuals who are to be responsible for various phases of the work of that Committee. Such appointments are to be made within two weeks of the date of their election, and notification of such appointments is to be given to the President of the Congregation for publication to the members in the manner he or she deems most advisable.**
 - b. The time and frequency of the Committee meetings shall be monthly. More or less meetings shall be at the discretion of the Chairperson of the Committee and its members, except that, for good and sufficient reason, either the President of the congregation or the Pastor (s) may call a meeting of the Committee at any time. Meetings thus called shall be classified as special meetings, and each person involved shall be notified of the date, time and purpose of such a meeting.**

C13.08. The pastor of this congregation shall be *ex officio* a member of all committees and boards of the congregation. The president of this congregation shall be *ex officio* a member of all committees and boards of the congregation, except the Nominating Committee.

-C13.08.01 BL ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEES

A. The Discipleship Committee

The nature of duties of this Committee requires that men and women noted for their Christian maturity, zeal and experience in the spiritual work of the Kingdom of Christ shall be elected to membership. The Committee shall consist of up to eight (8) members, including the elected Chairperson of the Committee.

The basic objectives of this Committee are the spiritual welfare of the Pastor (s) and congregation members, individually and corporately.

That the objectives of this Committee may be carried out, the Committee, either corporately or through specifically designated individuals, shall:

- 1. Insure that the congregation functions in accordance with the established doctrine of the Church as listed in Chapter 2 of the Constitution (Confession).**
- 2. Investigate cases of severe financial need within the congregation and make specific recommendations to the Pastor(s) and the Stewardship/Parish Fellowship Committee.**
- 3. Be responsible for a friendly personal welcome of visitors by Greeters at worship and for orientation and integration of new members. Be conscious of the atmosphere of friendliness in the congregation toward members and visitors and suggest ways and means of improvement.**
- 4. Be present for periodic training as determined by the Pastor(s) and this Committee.**
- 5. For administrative purposes and program development coordinate the total work of the Faith Lutheran Church Women with the mission of the congregation.**
- 6. Provide and/or promote subscriptions to church periodicals.**
- 7. The Church office staff assignments, services and supplies are under the direction of this Committee.**
- 8. Encourage prayer in church and homes for sincere evangelistic concern toward all people inside and outside the church.**

9. *Foster a climate of evangelism that encourages congregation members informally and spontaneously to share Christ with one another.*
10. *Emphasize evangelism through an intensive every-member education program annually.*
11. *Maintain an ongoing visitation program, offering people more than membership in a church – a saving relationship with Jesus Christ.*
12. *Periodically sponsor dinners, fellowship nights, etc., in conjunction with other Committees which will serve the cultivation, reception, orientation, and integration of new families or individuals.*
13. *Submit an annual budget request in the form and at the time requested by the Stewardship/Parish Fellowship Committee.*

B. *The Worship Committee*

The Worship Committee shall consist of up to nine (9) members including the elected Chairperson.

The basic objectives of this Committee are planning and overseeing of all worship activities of the congregation.

That the objectives of this Committee may be carried out, the Committee, either corporately or through specifically designated individuals, shall:

1. *Supervise and work with the musicians of the congregation.*
2. *Provide for worship assistants such as communion assistants, lay readers, etc., supply pastors, and guest speakers as needed.*
3. *Staff, train and supervise the ushering staff.*
4. *Set the time, schedule and number of communion services in conjunction with the Pastor(s) and the Voting Membership.*
5. *Approve and disapprove new forms of worship, liturgies, and hymns for use in Public Worship.*
6. *Work with and oversee the Altar Guild in the care, use and maintenance of the sacred vessels, the altar, the altar furnishings, and vestments.*
7. *Maintain an adequate supply of expendable items for worship such as communion cards, pencils, communion wine and wafers, baptismal napkins, candles, etc., in conjunction with the Altar Guild.*
8. *Coordinate with the Altar Guild all church and chancel decorations, and the distribution of altar flowers to the sick and shut-ins.*
9. *Assist in planning the worship services.*
10. *Supervise the budgeted allotment for the selections and procurement of appropriate music, supervision of choirs, and other related matters.*
11. *Arrange and publicize special services as required.*
12. *Submit an annual budget request in the form and at the time requested by the Stewardship/Parish Fellowship Committee.*

C. *Education/Youth Committee*

The Committee of Education and youth shall consist of up to eight (8) members including an elected chairperson.

The basic objectives of this committee are to plan and administer policies to select personnel for the various programs, to provide the necessary means and facilities of the programs and to direct and supervise the entire educational program of the congregation. To involve the young people of the congregation in the work of Christ for spiritual growth and genuine Christian fellowship through activities.

The objectives of this Committee may be carried out either corporately or through specifically designated individuals, shall:

1. *Be responsible for the Christian nurture of children, youth and adults in the congregation and through them in the community and beyond.*
2. *Establish objectives set policies for and supervise the education program and youth activities. I.e. Sunday School, First Communion, Confirmation, Vacation Bible School, Adult classes, fund raisers, Jesus trip, and other planned activities.*
3. *Provide for the active expression of Christian love and concern as an integral part of the total education program and youth activities.*

4. *Approve curriculum and analyze performance of each education department, class or organization and seek constant improvement*
5. *Continually review existing programs to determine whether all age groups are being served and recommend revisions and additions as deemed advisable.*
6. *Make annual analysis by age groups to determine the degree of participation the total membership of the congregation in its total educational program*
7. *Maintain a “people accounting system” to record member’s participation in the educational program and to follow up with the uninvolved.*
8. *Be concerned for the assimilation of the newly confirmed youth and members of the congregation into the appropriate levels of study and activities.*
9. *Work with organizations and other committee to coordinate educational activities within and outside of the congregation.*
10. *Provide for the recruitment of pupil and youth for the educational programs and bringing others to faith in Jesus Christ.*
11. *Encourage increasing participation of every member in Bible study, privately and in formal and informal groups.*
12. *Delegate administration of education programs to qualified persons.*
13. *Exercise leadership in gathering lists of candidates for the vacancies in the teaching staff and arrange for background checks.*
14. *Enlist, train, place and continue to train lay teachers and leaders as the congregation needs require.*
15. *Establish a system of commendation for and recognition of faithful service by all persons involved in the educational task and leaders of youth activities of the congregation.*
16. *Strengthen families as basic units of Christian Education and closely relate programs to the homes and learning in the homes.*
17. *Consider special classes, conferences, retreats and participation in congregational organizations such as Women of the ELCA and Men’s group.*
18. *Consider provisions of special education opportunities for cognitively delayed and handicapped persons.*
19. *Study and adopt or adapt helps suggested by the education departments of the Synod or National Church*
20. *Establish and maintain in conjunction with other committees a continuing program for the recruitment of full- time workers in the church at large.*
21. *Annually examine the educational facilities and equipment and make recommendations to the Church property committee as to upkeep, repairs, and replacements needed as well as new equipment.*
22. *Check the safety of educational facilities i.e. steps, handrails, lights, exits, housekeeping on a regular basis.*
23. *Prepare and submit an annual budget request in the form and at the time requested by the Stewardship/Parish Fellowship Committee.*
24. *To maintain a Cradle Roll by identifying and keeping in contact with parents of children between birth and their entrance to Sunday School.*
25. *Plan and carry out together with other concerned committees a year-round program for the young people of the congregation.*
26. *Provide opportunities for the involvement as servants in the life of the community such as civic, school, cultural, humanitarian, recreational and social groups.*

D. *The Stewardship & Parish Fellowship Committee*

The Stewardship & Parish Fellowship Committee will consist of up to eight (8) members, including the elected Chairperson of the Committee.

The basic objectives of the Stewardship/Parish Fellowship Committee is to initiate programs for the development of good stewardship attitudes in the members of the congregation in regard to time, talents, and treasures, to provide for the training and utilization of members of the congregation for the work of Christ’s Kingdom, and to ensure the financial stability of the congregation and its work through a developed program of dedicated, proportionate, first-fruits giving.

That the objectives of this Committee may be carried out, the Committee, either corporately or through specifically designated individuals, shall:

1. *Study the Scriptural principles regarding the total stewardship calling of the Christian*

- as a member of family, as a neighbor and citizen, and as a member of the congregation and share these insights with congregation members.
- 2. Contact and encourage new members for service to the congregation; find and utilize the talents of present members for use in Christ's work.
- 3. Maintain a program to discover and enlist the talents God has given members, old, and new, young people and adults.
- 4. Be responsible for maintenance of a congregational talent file at all times, and provide for the immediate recording of the talents and abilities of incoming members.
- 5. Provide opportunities for the development of talents (training courses, workshops, and the like.)
- 6. Conduct an intensive program annually to challenge every member personally with basic Biblical stewardship principles and practices.
- 7. Encourage the Gospel-motivated practice of joyous, worshipful, liberal, proportionate, first fruits giving in response to received blessings and recognized needs.
- 8. Annually give every member an opportunity to make a commitment of his or her financial resources for the Lord's work through the congregation.
- 9. Support missions and charities through an ongoing program of mission information and education through educational agencies, committees, and organizations, rallies, festivals, videos, letters, and tracts, appearances of missionaries, and the like.
- 10. Administer the congregation's Emergency Relief Fund in conjunction with the Lay Ministry/Evangelism Committee.
- 11. Enlist a Visitation Committee in conjunction with the Pastor (s).
- 12. Annually prepare and submit as part of the budget of this Committee a selected list of charities for the congregation and suggest the source of revenue designated for that purpose.
- 13. Evaluate and make recommendations for gifts of love by individuals and the congregation as a whole.
- 14. Screen all outside appeals for funds and make the appropriate recommendations to the Congregational Meeting or initiate the necessary action appropriate to such an appeal.
- 15. Review, accept, or decline all offers of non-solicited gifts to the congregation.
- 16. Be concerned, together with the Treasurer and Financial Secretary, for safe deposit and recording of all funds, monthly remissions of offerings for missions and church agencies, and prompt payment of salaries and bills as authorized by the congregation and the appropriate committees.
- 17. Evaluate the offerings of the congregation regularly, and share these evaluations with the members of the congregation.
- 18. Encourage stewardship programs in the organizations of the congregation.
- 19. Work with the Global Missions Committee to establish mission projects annually.
- 20. Annually review the budgeting procedures of the congregation in conjunction with the Treasurer and Financial Secretary and recommend to the congregation any necessary improvements or revisions.

E. The Church Properties Committee

The Church Properties Committee shall consist up to (5) members, including the elected Chairperson.

The basic objectives of this Committee are the proper maintenance and repair of church property, the representation of the congregation in all legal matters, and the general protection of the congregation against loss or damage of whatever nature.

That the objectives of this Committee may be carried out, either corporately or through specifically designated individuals, shall:

- 1. *Make an annual inspection of church properties and equipment and authorize repairs, improvements, or replacements up to the sum allocated in the annual budget, provided the money is available in Capital Improvement Funds. If funds are not available or the limit is exceeded then the Committee shall bring the request to the Congregational Meeting for the necessary action.*
- 2. *Conduct an annual inventory of all church properties, equipment, and maintenance supplies, including acquisition date and approximate value of each item.*

3. *Carry out all resolutions of the Congregational Meeting on purchases, repairs, replacement of church property and equipment in conjunction with the Financial Secretary.*
4. *Determine and engage, with congregational approval, adequate custodial help. The Committee shall also meet periodically with custodians to discuss the care of the buildings, needs and problems in custodial service, and the like.*
5. *Prepare for the custodial help, a detailed list of the required daily and weekly, monthly or annual maintenance of the facilities and equipment of the congregation.*
6. *Determine and establish policies governing the use of church property and equipment.*
7. *Make and issue keys for church property, and keep and review annually a list of keys issued.*
8. *Supervise, control, and recommend adequate storage facilities for all church property, equipment, and supplies and the orderly maintenance of the same.*
9. *Annually check the adequacy of all types of insurance for church property and equipment and negotiate insurance contracts.*
10. *Check all property twice a year for fire hazards.*
11. *Enlist work crews for special repair, improvement, cleaning, painting, decorating, landscaping and other projects.*
12. *Arrange for immediate repairs of an urgent nature and all normal repairs and alterations for which budget funds have been allocated.*
13. *Obtain legal information necessary for the wise consideration of contracts.*
14. *Negotiate service contracts for organ, office machines, and the like.*
15. *Make an annual inventory of official documents in safekeeping, and enter it in the official minutes of the congregation.*
16. *Obtain legal information on the laws governing nonprofit organizations.*
17. *Set all policies and fees for rental, use and lending of church properties.*
18. *Submit an annual budget request to the Stewardship/Fellowship Committee in the form and at the time requested by the Committee.*
19. *Be responsible for and administer the affairs of the Cemetery Association. The Church Properties Committee shall appoint a Cemetery Committee to consist of four persons to serve for an indefinite period of time and shall appoint persons to fill vacancies when they occur. The Cemetery Committee shall:*
 - a) *appoint one of its members as President and another member as Treasurer of the committee.*
 - b) *determine the amount to be charged for cemetery lots and burial fees for perpetual care.*
 - c) *handle the sale of cemetery lots and give receipts to the purchasers of lots for payment thereof.*
 - d) *maintain a diagram of cemetery lots and coordinate the same with local mortician.*
 - e) *properly maintain the church cemeteries, including regular grass mowing.*
 - f) *prepare an annual financial report, which shall be presented to the Church Properties Committee, which board shall present it to the congregation at its annual meeting.*

F. The Global Missions Committee

Faith Lutheran understands itself to be a part of a global mission partnership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. We are working together with churches in more than 40 countries in Asia, Africa, Europe, Latin America, and the South Pacific. Through these relationships, members of Faith Lutheran are partners in mission with members of other Christian churches throughout the world.

The Global Missions Committee shall consist of up to eight (8) members, including the elected Chairperson of the Committee.

The basic objective of this Committee is to challenge the people of Faith Lutheran to embrace our mission calling by becoming more knowledgeable about the needs of all our sisters and brothers in the whole world, thereby committing ourselves to the proclamation of God's everlasting love known most fully in Jesus Christ our Lord, and committing ourselves to listening

for the cries of the people, to responding with the compassion of Jesus, and to laboring diligently for liberation and reconciliation, and committing ourselves to care for all that God has created: the air, the water, the land, its bounty, plants and animals and people.

That the objectives of this Committee may be carried out, the Committee, either corporately or through specifically designated individuals, shall promote the ongoing global mission of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in a variety of ways:

- 1. Committee members will participate in training opportunities and become well informed on the needs and meaning of global mission.*
- 2. Encourage the pastor and other leaders to keep the concern of global mission before the congregation.*
- 3. Inform the congregation of development in global mission and interpret these so that members can understand and apply them.*
- 4. Continue the support of an ELCA missionary, amount to be determined in the annual budget.*
- 5. The promoting of financial gifts, material gifts, and personnel to the global missions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.*
- 6. The possible goal of encouraging and facilitating representatives of our own congregation to visit our mission areas for observation and enrichment for the future growth of our involvement in global mission in our own congregation.*
- 7. The possible goal of bringing Lutherans from other mission areas to our congregation for our mutual growth in faith and for the encouragement of our participation in their mission efforts.*
- 8. Secure mission materials for the Christian education program of the congregation.*
- 9. Work with the women's organization and Faith Builders or other groups within the congregation. Recommend specific projects for these groups.*
- 10. Initiate or participate in adult and youth study programs focusing on global concerns.*
- 11. Plan and initiate Mission Events in our congregation.*
- 12. Special educational emphasis annually of at least one mission area in which we are proclaiming the Gospel through the global mission of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. This emphasis should be done in all age groups and organizations of the congregation.*
- 13. Encourage and facilitate participation by members in Global Mission Events sponsored by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.*
- 14. Maintain & coordinate the serving of Coffee hour after the worship on Sundays and other occasions as requested by any Administrative Committee or the Church Council.*

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.

-C14.01.01 CR

“Faith Builders”, an organization established to provide service to others, both locally and nation-wide. Faith Builders membership is not limited to members of Faith Lutheran Church. The organization has a treasurer that maintains it's bank account. A member of the Audit Committee reviews the account annually.

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

Chapter 15.

DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS AND ADJUDICATION

***C15.01.** Persistent and public denial of the Christian faith, willful or criminal conduct grossly unbecoming a member of the Church of Christ, continual and intentional interference with the ministry of the congregation, or willful and repeated harassment or defamation of member(s) of the congregation is sufficient cause for discipline of a member. Prior to disciplinary action, reconciliation and repentance will be attempted following Matthew 18:15–17, proceeding through these successive steps, as necessary: a) private counsel and admonition by the pastor, b) censure and admonition by the pastor in the presence of two or three witnesses, c) written referral of the matter by the

Congregation Council to the vice president of the synod, who will refer it to a consultation panel drawn from the Consultation Committee of the synod, and d) written referral of the matter by the consultation panel to the Committee on Discipline of the synod. If, for any reason, the pastor is unable to administer the admonitions required by paragraphs a. and b. hereof, those steps may be performed by another pastor chosen by the 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 to the vice president of the synod. The vice president shall select from the synod's Consultation Committee a panel of five members (three laypersons and two ministers of Word and Sacrament). A copy of the written charges shall be provided to the consultation panel and the accused member(s). The consultation panel, after requesting a written reply to the charges from the accused member(s), shall consider the matter and seek a resolution by means of investigation, consultation, mediation, or whatever other means may seem appropriate. The panel's efforts to reach a mutually agreeable resolution shall continue for no more than 45 days after the matter is submitted to it.
- *C15.03. If the consultation panel fails to resolve the matter, that panel shall refer the case in writing, including the written charges and the accused member's reply, to the Committee on Discipline of the synod for a hearing. A copy of the panel's written referral shall be delivered to the vice president of the synod, the Congregation Council, and the accused member(s) at the same time it is sent to the Committee on Discipline of the synod. The Executive Committee of the Synod Council shall then select six members from the Committee on Discipline to decide the case and shall appoint a member of the Synod Council to preside as nonvoting chair. Those six members, plus the nonvoting chair, comprise the discipline hearing panel for deciding the case. The Congregation Council and the accused member(s) are the parties to the case.
- *C15.04. The discipline hearing panel shall commence and conduct the disciplinary hearing in accordance with the provisions governing discipline of congregation members prescribed in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.
- *C15.05. By the vote of at least two-thirds of the members of the discipline hearing panel who are present and voting, one of the following disciplinary sanctions can be imposed:
 - a. suspension from the privileges of congregation membership for a designated period of time;
 - b. suspension from the privileges of congregation membership until the pastor and Congregation Council receive evidence, satisfactory to them, of repentance and amendment of life;
 - c. termination of membership in the congregation; or
 - d. termination of membership in the congregation and exclusion from the church property and from all congregation activities.
- *C15.06. The written decision of the discipline hearing panel shall be sent to the vice president of the synod, the accused member(s), and the Congregation Council as required by the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. The decision of the discipline hearing panel shall be implemented by the Congregation Council and recorded in the minutes of the next council meeting.
- *C15.07. No member of the congregation shall be subject to discipline a second time for offenses that a discipline hearing panel has heard previously and decided pursuant to this chapter.
- *C15.10. **Adjudication**
- *C15.11. When there is disagreement among factions within this congregation on a substantive issue that cannot be resolved by the parties, members of this congregation shall have access to the synodical bishop for consultation after informing the chair of the Congregation Council of their intent. If the consultation fails to resolve the issue(s), the Consultation Committee of the synod shall consider the matter. If the Consultation Committee of the synod shall fail to resolve the issue(s), the matter shall be referred to the Synod Council, whose decision shall be final.

Chapter 16.

AMENDMENTS

- *C16.01. Unless provision *C16.04. is applicable, those sections of this constitution that are not required, in accord with the *Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, may be amended in the following manner. Amendments may be proposed by at least 2/3 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.

- *C16.02. An amendment to this constitution, proposed under *C16.01., shall:
 - a. be approved at a legally called Congregation Meeting according to this constitution by a majority vote of those voting members present and voting;
 - b. be ratified without change at the next annual meeting by a two-thirds vote of those voting members present and voting; and
 - c. have the effective date included in the resolution² and noted in the constitution.
- *C16.03. Any amendments to this constitution that result from the processes provided in *C16.01. and *C16.02. shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod. The synod shall notify the congregation of its decision to approve or disapprove the proposed changes; the changes shall go into effect upon notification that the synod has approved them.
- *C16.04. This constitution may be amended to bring any section into conformity with a section or sections, either required or not required, of the *Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* as most recently amended by the Churchwide Assembly. Such amendments may be approved by a majority vote of those voting members present and voting at any legally called meeting of the congregation without presentation at a prior meeting of the congregation, provided that the Congregation Council has submitted by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law, notice to the congregation of such an amendment or amendments, together with the council's recommendations, at least 30 days prior to the meeting. Upon the request of at least two (2) voting members of the congregation, the Congregation Council shall submit such notice. Following the adoption of an amendment, the secretary of the congregation shall submit a copy thereof to the synod. Such provisions shall become effective immediately following a vote of approval.

Chapter 17.

BYLAWS

- *C17.01. This congregation may adopt bylaws. No bylaw may conflict with this constitution.
- *C17.02. Bylaws may be adopted or amended at any legally called meeting of this congregation with a quorum present by a two-thirds vote of those voting members present and voting.
- *C17.03. Changes to the bylaws may be proposed by any voting member, provided that such additions or amendments be submitted in writing to the Congregation Council at least 60 days before a regular or special Congregation Meeting called for that purpose. The Congregation Council shall notify the congregation's members of the proposal with the council's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the Congregation Meeting. Notification may take place by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law.
- *C17.04. Approved changes to the bylaws shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod.

Chapter 18.

CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

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

Chapter 19.

INDEMNIFICATION

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

² Such an effective date must be stated in relation to the requirements of *C16.03. to allow time for synodical review of the amendment.

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 the Parish Council. The Parish Agreement shall identify which congregation of the parish issues calls on behalf of the member congregations or shall establish a process for identifying which congregation issues calls on behalf of the member congregations.
- *C20.02.** One congregation of a parish shall issue a call on behalf of the member congregations to a minister of Word and Sacrament or a candidate for the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament who has been recommended by the synodical bishop to serve the congregations of the parish. Such a call shall be approved prior to issuance by a two-thirds vote at a congregational meeting of each congregation forming the parish. If any congregation of the parish should fail to approve the call, the other congregations of the parish shall have the right to terminate the parish agreement.
- *C20.03.** One congregation of a parish may issue a call on behalf of the member congregations to a minister of Word and Service or a candidate for the roster of Ministers of Word and Service who has been recommended by the synodical bishop to serve the congregations of the parish. Such a call shall be approved prior to issuance by a two-thirds vote at a congregational meeting of each congregation forming the parish. If any congregation of the parish should fail to approve the call, the other congregations of the parish shall have the right to terminate the parish agreement.
- *C20.04.** Any one of the congregations of the parish may terminate their relationship with the pastor as provided in †S14.18.d. of the synodical constitution of the synod named in *C6.01. In such case, the other congregation(s) of the same parish shall have the right to terminate the parish agreement.
- *C20.05.** Any one of the congregations of the parish may terminate their relationship with a minister of Word and Service as provided in †S14.43.d. of the synodical constitution of the synod named in *C6.01. In such case, the other congregation(s) of the same parish shall have the right to terminate the parish agreement.
- *C20.06.** Whenever a parish agreement is terminated, the call of any rostered minister serving that parish is terminated. Should any congregation that was formerly part of the parish agreement desire to issue a new call to that rostered minister, it may do so in accordance with the call process of this church.

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