



VISION STATEMENT

**BE THE BODY OF CHRIST: WELCOMING ALL, INSPIRED BY GOD,
AND SENT OUT TO LIVE OUR FAITH.**

MISSION: LED BY THE SPIRIT TO SHARE GOD'S GRACE.

Codification Format:

C1.01 designates a constitutional provision

C1.01.a designates a subsection

C1.01.01 designates a bylaw

C1.01.A## designates a continuing resolution, where "A" identifies the first continuing resolution of the year and "##" designates the year it was made

**CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS OF FAITH
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH**

**886 NORTH SHORE DRIVE
FOREST LAKE, MN 55025**

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

Chapter 2.

CONFESSION OF FAITH

- C2.01.** This congregation confesses the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- C2.02.** This congregation confesses Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and the Gospel as the power of God for the salvation of all who believe.
 - a. Jesus Christ is the Word of God incarnate, through whom everything was made and through whose life, death, and resurrection God fashions a new creation.
 - b. The proclamation of God's message to us as both Law and Gospel is the Word of God, revealing judgment and mercy through word and deed, beginning with the Word in creation, continuing in the history of Israel, and centering in all its fullness in the person and work of Jesus Christ.
 - c. The canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the written Word of God. Inspired by God's Spirit speaking through their authors, they record and announce God's revelation centering in Jesus Christ. Through them God's Spirit speaks to us to create and sustain Christian faith and fellowship for service in the world.
- C2.03.** This congregation accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life.
- C2.04.** This congregation accepts the Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds as true declarations of the faith of this congregation.
- C2.05.** This congregation accepts the Unaltered Augsburg Confession as a true witness to the Gospel, acknowledging as one with it in faith and doctrine all churches that likewise accept the teachings of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession.
- C2.06.** This congregation accepts the other confessional writings in the Book of Concord, namely, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles and the Treatise, the Small Catechism, the Large Catechism, and the Formula of Concord, as further valid interpretations of the faith of the Church.
- C2.07.** This congregation confesses the Gospel, recorded in the Holy Scripture and confessed in the ecumenical creeds and Lutheran confessional writings, as the power of God to create and sustain the Church for God's mission in the world.

Chapter 3.

NATURE OF THE CHURCH

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

Chapter 4.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

- C4.01.** The Church is a people created by God in Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, called and sent to bear witness to God's creative, redeeming, and sanctifying activity in the world.
- C4.02.** To participate in God's mission, this congregation as a part of the Church shall:
- a. Worship God in proclamation of the Word and administration of the sacraments and through lives of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, witness, and service.
 - b. Proclaim God's saving Gospel of justification by grace for Christ's sake through faith alone, according to the apostolic witness in the Holy Scripture, preserving and transmitting the Gospel faithfully to future generations.
 - c. Carry out Christ's Great Commission by reaching out to all people to bring them to faith in Christ and by doing all ministry with a global awareness consistent with the understanding of God as Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier of all.
 - d. Serve in response to God's love to meet human needs, caring for the sick and the aged, advocating dignity and justice for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, and standing with the poor and powerless, and committing itself to their needs.
 - e. Nurture its members in the Word of God so as to grow in faith and hope and love, to see daily life as the primary setting for the exercise of their Christian calling, and to use the gifts of the Spirit for their life together and for their calling in the world.
 - f. Manifest the unity given to the people of God by living together in the love of Christ and by joining with other Christians in prayer and action to express and preserve the unity which the Spirit gives.
- C4.03.** To fulfill these purposes, this congregation shall:
- a. Provide services of worship at which the Word of God is preached and the sacraments are administered.
 - b. Provide pastoral care and assist all members to participate in this ministry.
 - c. Challenge, equip, and support all members in carrying out their calling in their daily lives and in their congregation.
 - d. Teach the Word of God.
 - e. Witness to the reconciling Word of God in Christ, reaching out to all people.
 - f. Respond to human need, work for justice and peace, care for the sick and the suffering, and participate responsibly in society.
 - g. Motivate its members to provide financial support for the congregation's ministry and the ministry of other parts of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

- h. Foster and participate in interdependent relationships with other congregations, the synod, and the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- i. Foster and participate in ecumenical relationships consistent with churchwide policy.

C4.04. This congregation shall develop an organizational structure to be described in the bylaws. The Congregation Council shall prepare descriptions of the responsibilities of each committee, task force, or other organizational group and shall review their actions.

C4.04.01 The church staff organization will be published to the congregation.

C4.05. This congregation shall, from time to time, adopt a mission statement which will provide specific direction for its programs.

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

Chapter 5.

POWERS OF THE CONGREGATION

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

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

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

- a. call a pastor as provided in Chapter 9;
- b. terminate the call of a pastor as provided in Chapter 9;
- c. call a minister of Word and Service;
- d. terminate the call of a minister of Word and Service; in conformity with the applicable policy 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 Congregation Council, boards, and committees, and require them to carry out their duties in accordance with the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions; and
- j. terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as provided in Chapter 6.

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

C5.05. This congregation shall have an endowment fund that will operate as specified in this constitution’s bylaws. The purpose of endowment fund is to provide for mission work beyond the operational budget of this congregation.

C5.05.01 Endowment Fund Requirements

In order to carry out the purpose of Faith Lutheran Church there will be an Endowment Fund to enable the further extension of the work of the Church. The purpose of this fund is to enhance the charitable, educational and religious missions of Faith Lutheran Church apart from the general operation of the congregation; so that no portion of the income generated by the Fund shall be used for the annual operating budget of the congregation

- a) The committee shall consist of seven members; six members shall be elected at the annual congregational meeting, all of whom shall be voting members of Faith Lutheran Church. In addition, the Senior Pastor shall be a member of the committee. Terms for the six elected members, except as herein limited, shall be three years. Upon adoption of this resolution by the congregation, it shall elect six members to the Committee, two for a term of three years, two for a term of two years and two for a term of one year. Thereafter, at each annual meeting, the congregation shall elect the necessary number for a term of three years. No member may serve more than two consecutive three year terms. After a lapse of one year, former Committee members may be re-elected. The Congregation Council shall nominate its representative when it elects its executive committee members and report it in the same manner. In the event of a vacancy on the Committee, the Congregational council shall appoint a member to fill the vacancy until the next annual meeting of the congregation, at which time the congregation shall elect a member to fulfill the remaining term of the vacancy.
- b) The committee shall meet at least quarterly, or more frequently as deemed by it in the best interest of the Fund.
- c) A quorum shall consist of four members. When only four members are present, a unanimous vote shall be required to carry any motion or resolution.
- d) The Committee shall elect from its membership a chairperson, recording secretary and financial secretary.
 - 1) The chairperson, or member designated by the chairperson, shall preside at all Committee meetings
 - 2) The recording secretary of the Committee shall maintain complete and accurate minutes of all meetings and supply a copy thereof to each member of the Committee. Each member shall keep a complete copy of minutes to be delivered to his or her successor
 - 3) The recording secretary shall also supply a copy of the minutes to the Church Council.
 - 4) The financial secretary of the Committee shall work with the congregation's Business Administrator in maintaining and coordinating complete and accurate accounts for the Fund and shall sign checks and all other necessary documents on behalf of the congregation in furtherance of the purposes of the Fund. The books shall be audited annually by a certified public accountant or other appropriate person who is not a member of the Committee.
- e) The Committee shall report on a quarterly basis to the Church Council and, at each annual or duly called special meeting of the congregation, shall render a full and complete account of the administration of the Fund during the preceding year.
- f) The Committee may request other members of the congregation to serve as advisory members and, at the expense of Fund income, may provide for such professional counseling on investments or legal matters as it deems to be in the best interest of the Fund.
- g) Members of the Committee shall not be liable for any losses which may be incurred upon the investments of the assets of the Fund except to the extent such losses shall have been caused by bad faith or gross negligence. No member shall be personally liable as long as he/she acts in good faith and with ordinary prudence. Each member shall be liable only for his/her own willful misconduct or omissions, and shall not be liable for the acts or omissions of any other member.
- h) No member shall engage in any self-dealing or transactions with the Fund in which the member has direct or indirect financial interest and shall at all times refrain from any conduct in which his/her personal interests would conflict with the interest of the Fund. No member shall receive any compensation for his or her work on the Committee.
- i) Recommendations to hold, sell, exchange, rent, lease, transfer, convert, invest, reinvest, and in all other respects to manage and control the assets of the Fund, including stocks, bonds, debentures, mortgages, notes, or other securities, as in their judgment and discretion they deem wise and prudent, are to be made by the Committee.
- j) Gifts to the Fund - At the time of the adoption of this resolution, all assets of the present Faith Endowment Fund are to be transferred to this newly created Faith Endowment Fund. The Committee shall promote and encourage gifts to the Fund.
 - 1) The Fund shall seek major lifetime gifts and gifts which become effective upon or after the death of a donor;
 - 2) The Committee shall not promote annual gifts because fundraising by the Fund should not conflict with annual stewardship giving;
 - 3) Real Estate, corporate stocks or bonds or other property given to the Fund, without designation as to their investment or use may be sold at the discretion of the Committee at such time and in such manner as it

- desires. However, real estate, corporate stocks or bonds or other such property given to the Fund may be retained in its existing form, unless the donor has specifically designated otherwise;
- 4) The Committee may refuse any gift which might have an adverse effect on the well-being of the Fund, or which is inconsistent with the purposes of the Church;
 - 5) Designated Gifts,
 - i. The committee shall have the prerogative of accepting and distributing funds in accordance with the donor's instructions insofar as they are consistent with the mission and purpose of Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church;
 - ii. In order for such designated gifts to be effective, there must be a starting gift of \$5,000 and the income from the principal must support, on its own, the purpose for which it was given;
 - iii. The donor may advise the Committee on the distribution of said funds for as long as the donor is living;
 - iv. If the purpose of such designated gift no longer exists, and the donor can no longer be contacted, the Designated gift monies will be transferred to the general Faith Endowment Fund;
 - v. All assets are to be held in the name of the Faith Endowment Fund of Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church.
 - g) Distribution of income
 - 1) The Committee shall determine what principal and income are according to generally accepted accounting principles. Income shall include interest and dividend income, and any realized capital gain income. The Committee shall work with its advisors to make this determination.
 - 2) The intent of this resolution that approximately 75% of the Fund's income be distributed each year, with the remaining 25% retained in order to grow the principal. Recognizing that there are changes both up and down in markets, this intention will be implemented by distributing 5% of the Fund's beginning principal each year. The committee may from time to time alter the 5% figure to more properly reflect the 75% gifting intention.
 - 3) Distributions from the Fund shall be made annually and at such other times as deemed necessary and/or feasible to accomplish the following purposes.
 - i. Up to 30% to new ministry opportunities within our congregation, including, but not limited to: scholarships; startup costs of new program ministries and/or staffing; new materials or equipment; or other opportunities within the congregation which will encourage Christian growth in faith, fellowship, service or outreach and (on a matching basis with members of the congregation) for capital improvements, debt reduction, or building program of Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church
 - ii. Up to 30% for outreach into the community as an expression of our membership in, and responsible partnership with, our community in meeting the needs of all its citizens. Such outreach shall include, but not be limited to, grants to the fire, police, emergency EMT squad; library; school; hospital; community center and recreational facilities; the food pantries and clothing thrift shops. Attention will be given to care for persons in spiritual or economic need through agencies and institutions to which this congregation relates.
 - iii. Up to 25% for outreach into the communities of our state through the serving arms of the church, including but not limited to, grants for ELCA Colleges and seminaries, social service agencies, institutions and agencies to which this congregation relates, and to special programs or designated funds for those people in our state and/or parish area who are in spiritual and/or economic need.
 - iv. Up to 25% for missions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in this continent and worldwide including, but not limited to, programs to the ELCA for new congregational development in North America, professional leadership, educational ministries, global mission, ecumenism, media evangelism, and capital financing.
 - v. Consistent with the Fund purpose of enhancing the charitable, educational and religious missions of Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church, and within the arenas and percentages defined above, the beneficiaries of and the amounts distributed from this Faith Endowment Fund will be at the discretion of the Committee.
 - vi. These Guidelines and the designated recipients shall be approved by the Committee and reported to the Church Council quarterly and reported annually to the congregation.

h) Distribution of Principal

- 1) When, in the opinion of the Committee, circumstances are so dire and of such an emergency nature that the future of the congregation is at stake, and that the only recourse seems to be the use of the Fund principal, the Committee may, upon two-thirds majority vote, recommend such authorizing action to the congregation.

Chapter 6.

CHURCH AFFILIATION

- C6.01.** This congregation shall be an interdependent part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or its successor, and of the St. Paul Area Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. This congregation is subject to the discipline of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- C6.02.** This congregation accepts the Confession of Faith and agrees to the Purposes of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and shall act in accordance with them.
- C6.03.** This congregation acknowledges its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in which:
- a. This congregation agrees to be responsible for its life as a Christian community.
 - b. This congregation pledges its financial support and participation in the life and mission of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - c. This congregation agrees to call pastoral leadership from the roster of minister/s 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 minister/s of Word and Sacrament of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or to contracting for pastoral services with 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 paragraphs g., h., and i. below. Unless this notification to the bishop also certifies that the congregation has voted by a two-thirds vote to affiliate with another Lutheran denomination, the congregation will be conclusively presumed to be an independent or non-Lutheran church.
- f. Notice of termination shall be forwarded by the bishop to the secretary of 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 units 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 affected.

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 units 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 St. Paul Area Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

C7.02. If this congregation is removed from membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America according to its procedure for discipline, title to property shall continue to reside in this congregation.

C7.03. If 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 St. Paul Area 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 C.7.03. 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 St. Paul Area Synod — reconvey and transfer all right, title, and interest in the property to the synod.

Chapter 8. MEMBERSHIP

- C8.01.** Members of this congregation shall be those baptized persons on the roll of this congregation at the time that this constitution is adopted and those who are admitted thereafter and who have declared and maintain their membership in accordance with the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.
- C8.02.** 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 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 20.40 and the accompanying bylaws; or
 - e. removal from the roll due to inactivity as defined in the bylaws.
- Such persons who have been removed from the roll of members shall remain persons for whom the Church has a continuing pastoral concern.

C8.05.e.01 Any confirmed member who, despite pastoral care and counseling, has failed for a period of two years to receive Holy Communion may be removed from the roll of confirmed members by the Congregation Council. Such persons may be restored by the Congregation Council to the roll of confirmed members when they receive the Lord's Supper and enter once more upon the other rights and obligations of membership in this congregation.

Chapter 9.

ROSTERED MINISTER

- C9.01.** Authority to call a pastor shall be in this congregation by at least a two-thirds vote of voting members present and voting at a meeting legally called for that purpose. Before a call is issued, the officers, or a committee elected by this congregation to recommend the call, shall seek the advice and help of the bishop of the synod.
- C9.02.** Only a member of the Minister/s of Word and Sacrament roster of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or a candidate for the roster of Minister 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; and
 - 5) seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel;
 - 6) impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through 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 Congregation Council, administer discipline, and
 - 4) endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the ELCA churchwide organization and of the St. Paul Area Synod of the ELCA.
- C9.04.** The specific duties of the pastor, compensation, and other matters pertaining to the service of the pastor shall be included in a letter of call, which shall be attested by the bishop of the synod.

- C9.05.** 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 a 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.
- C9.10** **Reserved**
- 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, an ordained minister of a church body with which the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America officially has established a relationship of full communion may serve temporarily as pastor of this congregation under a contract between the congregation and the ordained minister in a form proposed by the synodical bishop and approved by the congregation.
- C16-C20** **Reserved**
- 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 [this congregation][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 a 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.

CONGREGATION MEETING

- C10.01.** The annual meeting of this congregation shall be held at a time specified in the bylaws.
- C10.01.01** The annual meeting of the congregation shall be held no earlier than December 1 of the current year and no later than January 31 of the following year. The exact date will be determined by the council.
- C10.02.** A special Congregation Meeting may be called by the pastor, the Congregation Council, or the president of this congregation, and shall also be called by the president of the congregation upon the written request of 10 percent of the voting members. The president of the Congregation Council shall call a special meeting upon request of the synodical bishop. The call for each special meeting shall specify the purpose for which it is to be held, and no other business shall be transacted.
- C10.03.** Notice of all meetings of this congregation shall be given at the services of worship on the preceding two consecutive Sundays and by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law, to all members at least 10 days in advance of the date of the meeting.
- C10.03.01** The Council shall ensure that all Minnesota statutes related to the calling of a congregational meeting by a religious corporation for the purpose of the sale of land or structures are followed. These statutes may differ from this constitution and must be followed.
- C10.04.** 10% of voting membership shall constitute a quorum.
- C10.05.** Voting by absentee ballot shall not be permitted.
- C10.06.** All actions approved by the congregation shall be by majority vote of those voting members present and voting, except as otherwise provided in this constitution or by state law.
- C10.07.** *Robert's Rules of Order*, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of all meetings of this congregation.

Chapter 11.

OFFICERS

- C11.01.** The officers of this congregation shall be a president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer.
- a. Duties of the officers shall be specified in the bylaws.

C11.01.01 The officers of this congregation shall be elected by the Congregation Council from its membership at the organizing meeting immediately following the congregational annual meeting each year. The officers and duties are as follows:

- a) President. The President shall preside at all meetings of the congregation and Congregation Council and be responsible for following constitutional procedures. The President is basically the chief executive officer of the congregation. According to C13.08, the president will serve as an ex-officio member of all committees and boards of the congregation except the Nominating Committee.
- b) Vice-President. The Vice-President shall serve in any role designated by the President and will preside at all meetings of the congregation and Congregation Council in the President's absence.
- c) Secretary. The Secretary shall keep minutes of meetings of the congregation and Congregation Council, disseminate them appropriately and in a timely manner, and preserve them in an orderly fashion for future reference. The Secretary shall be the constitutional contact with the Saint Paul Area Synod relative to any changes made in Faith's Constitution or at such times when the synod may recommend that congregations make changes in the constitution.
- d) Treasurer. The treasurer shall oversee proper record keeping as it relates to income and expenses handled by the congregation. The treasurer shall oversee good bookkeeping methods and the safe storing of records and documents.

- b. Officers of this congregation shall serve similar offices of the Congregation Council and shall be voting members of the Congregation Council.
- c. The officers shall be elected by written ballot from the membership of the Congregation Council.
 - 1) The officers term shall begin at the close of the meeting at which they are elected
 - 2) The officers shall serve for one year or until their successors are elected.

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

Chapter 12.

CONGREGATION COUNCIL

C12.01. The voting membership of the Congregational Council shall consist of the pastor(s) and not more than 12 members of the congregation. 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(s) shall be elected by written ballot to serve for 3 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.

C12.03. Should a member's place on the Congregation Council be declared vacant, the Congregation Council may 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 Trustees of this congregation, and as such shall be responsible for maintaining and protecting its property and the management of its business and fiscal affairs. It shall have the powers and be subject to the obligations that pertain to such boards under the laws of the State of Minnesota, except as otherwise provided herein.
 - b. The Congregation Council shall not have the authority to buy, sell, or encumber real property unless specifically authorized to do so by a meeting of the congregation.
 - c. The Congregation Council may enter into contracts of up to \$5,000.00 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 \$20,000 in excess of the anticipated receipts only after approval by a Congregation Meeting. The one exception to the \$20,000.00 limit is that the Council shall have the authority to incur a non-budgeted obligation of up to \$100,000.00, provided that one hundred percent of those funds have already been raised and deposited in a Congregation bank account with the sole purpose to satisfy the non-budgeted obligation. 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, 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.
- C12.10.** Reserved
- 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 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 up to 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. The responsibilities consist of identifying candidates for the following year council elections. Members of the Nominating Committee are not eligible for consecutive re-election.

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.

13.03.A16 (Continuing Resolution) Audit Procedures:

The annual financial review will encompass a 3 year cycle. An internal review of controls and procedures will be performed in two of those years. An external financial review will be performed every three years or as required to satisfy external sources of funds.

C13.04 Reserved

C13.05. When a pastoral vacancy occurs, a **Call Committee** of at least 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 and organization of the **committees** of this congregation shall be specified in the continuing resolutions.

C13.07.B16 (Continuing Resolution) Ministry Areas:

In Matthew 22:37 it says, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind." We express this love through five values, which we use to define areas of ministry in our congregation. The Congregational Council authorizes the organization of committees and teams into the following **Ministry Areas** for execution of the church business:

- a) **Worship** - The center of our life together is **worship** – where music, proclamation of the word of God, and sacraments are woven together connecting us with God.
 - i) There shall be a **Worship and Music Committee**. This committee shall assist the Congregation Council in seeing that the worship services are conducted regularly and in accordance with the liturgy of the ELCA, which competent ushers are recruited and trained, and hymnals and other devotional materials are provided and properly cared for. This committee shall supervise and strive to advance the welfare and effective service of the choirs of the congregation. It shall arrange for the care of paraments, vestments and musical instruments and, in consultation with the pastor(s), the organist and the choir directors, it shall furnish the music supplies appropriate for use in worship services of a Congregation of the ELCA.
- b) **Learning** - All Christian disciples seek to grow deeper in their faith through **learning**, by Bible reading, devotions, study and sharing faith in relationships.
- c) **Witness** - We proclaim the good news of God in Christ through our **witness** to the world - in both words and actions as we work for justice and peace.
 - i) There shall be a **Stewardship Committee**. This committee will help God's people at Faith Lutheran Church grow in their relationship with Jesus through the use of the time, talents and finances God has entrusted to them.
- d) **Service** - We provide for the effective operation of the congregation and its ministries, **servicing** the organization as a whole.
 - i) There shall be a **Church Property Committee**. This committee shall see to the proper maintenance and protection of all property of the congregation and shall take care that the same is kept in good repair and is adequately insured.
 - ii) There shall be a **Finance Committee**. The Treasurer of the Council Executive Committee will serve on this committee as member ex officio. This committee shall prepare a draft budget for the succeeding year, including this congregation's full indicated share in support of the wider ministry being carried out on its behalf by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the St. Paul Area Synod, and shall submit such draft budget to the Congregation Council for its action and later presentation to a congregational meeting. The committee shall exercise oversight of all financial affairs of the

congregation to make sure that they are being conducted efficiently, giving particular attention to the prompt payment of all obligations and the regular forwarding of benevolence monies to the Synodical treasurer. It shall, subject to the approval of the Congregation Council, be responsible for the congregation's investment, and shall also provide for annual audits of the accounts of the Financial Manager and Financial Recorder as well as the accounts of the schools and organizations within the congregation.

- iii) There shall be a **Personnel Committee**. This committee shall be in charge of interviewing and recommending to the Congregation Council the hiring and dismissal of all employees, other than rostered leaders, employed by the church. The committee shall also develop job descriptions for the employees, and with the pastors, appraise the work of these employees and other work as directed by the Congregational Council
- e) Support - We provide **support** for individuals and families all along their journey of faith, following the example of Jesus Christ.
- f) Committee and Team Rules/Requirements
 - 1) Must have a defined point person. If there are officers, they shall be elected from within the committee. A roster of participants will be requested annually.
 - 2) Must have a defined mission statement submitted annually.
 - 3) Must identify within a Ministry Area of the church, supported by an assigned Council Liaison.
 - 4) Must communicate with their assigned Council Liaison at least quarterly.
 - 5) Must follow Faith Lutheran's Church Funds Handling Policy.
 - 6) A report to the congregation will be requested annually. A group or team report may be included as part of a supervising committee report.
 - 7) If the group keeps minutes, meeting minutes should be supplied to the Council Liaison.
 - 8) Council reserves the right and responsibility to make changes to the committee and its members in the event of impassible conflict that prevents the committee from meeting its obligations and mission.
- g) Guidelines/Recommendations
 - 1) Recommended to have a minimum of four members.
 - 2) Recommended that meetings begin after 5 pm or as decided by all committee members. Needs to be inclusive of all members.
 - 3) If the group functions as a committee with elected officers, the committee chair shall not serve more than three consecutive years, unless re-elected by the committee or appointed by the Rostered Leader.

C13.08. The senior 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.

Chapter 14.

ORGANIZATIONS WITHIN THE CONGREGATION

C14.01. All official organizations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America 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 Council at its meeting shall determine their policies, guide their activities, and receive reports concerning their membership, work, and finances.

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

C14.02.D16 (Continuing Resolution)

- a) A list of other special interest groups recognized by the Church Council will be published for the congregation. The list should be reviewed and updated as required, but at least annually. To be recognized as an organization of Faith Lutheran, a submittal identifying the purpose and primary contact must be approved by a member of the Congregation Council Executive Committee and provided to office staff to update the published list of organizations
- b) Rules and Requirements
 - 1) Each small group needs to review and define its mission statement, and provide this along with a contact person annually to the Council. Council/staff will use this information for the website, communications, and invitations to committee/group meetings
- c) Guidelines and Recommendation
 - 1) Write and submit an annual report to the congregation if desired
 - 2) Provide update to the church office/communications team regarding group activities

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 lay persons 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:
- suspension from the privileges of congregation membership for a designated period of time;
 - suspension from the privileges of congregation membership until the pastor and Congregation Council receive evidence, satisfactory to them, of repentance and amendment of life;
 - termination of membership in the congregation; or
 - termination of membership in the congregation and exclusion from the church property and from all congregation activities.
- Disciplinary actions shall be delivered to the member in writing.
- 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 Congregation 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 25 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 Congregation Council's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the meeting. Notification may take place by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law.
- C16.02.** An amendment to this constitution, proposed under C16.01, shall:
- be approved at a legally called Congregation Meeting according to this constitution by a majority vote of those present and voting;
 - be ratified without change at the next annual meeting by a two-thirds vote of those voting members present and voting; and
 - have the effective date included in the resolution¹ and noted in the constitution.***
- C16.03.** Any amendments to this constitution that result from the processes provided in C17.01. and C17.02. shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod. The synod shall notify the congregation of its decision to approve or disapprove the proposed changes; the changes shall go into effect upon notification that the synod has approved them.
- 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

¹Such an effective date must be stated in relation to the requirements of C16.03. to allow time for synodical review of the amendment.

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 Congregation 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 Congregation Council's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the Congregation Meeting. Notification may take place by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law.
- C17.04.** Approved changes to the bylaws shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod.

Chapter 18. CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

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

Chapter 19. INDEMNIFICATION

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

Chapter 20. PARISH AUTHORIZATION

- C20.01.** This congregation may unite in partnership with one or more other congregations recognized by the synod named in C6.01. to form a parish. Except as provided in C20.02. and C20.03., a written agreement, developed in consultation with the synod and approved by the voting members of each congregation participating in the parish, shall specify the powers and responsibilities that have been delegated to a Parish Council. The Parish Agreement shall identify which congregation of the parish issues calls on behalf of the member congregations or shall establish a process for identifying which congregation issues calls on behalf of the member congregations.
- C20.02.** One congregation of a parish shall issue a call on behalf of the member congregations to a minister of Word and Sacrament or a candidate for the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament who has been recommended by the synodical bishop to serve the congregations of the parish. Such a call shall be approved prior to issuance by a two-thirds vote at a 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 a parish may terminate their relationship with the pastor as provided in †S14.13.d. of the synodical constitution of the synod named in C6.01. In such case, the other congregation(s) in the same parish shall have the right to terminate the parish arrangement.
- C20.05.** 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.

BY-LAWS TO THE CONSTITUTION and CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS were placed within the document within the appropriate referenced section