



**CONSTITUTION, BYLAWS, AND CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS**

**THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THE REDEEMER**

**500 Pearl Street, Lancaster, Pennsylvania 17602  
(Office at 818 Fifth Street)  
Amended May 2021**

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## **CONSTITUTION NUMBERING SYSTEM**

The constitution is arranged by chapters.

An asterisk (\*) preceding a heading or number indicates that the text is required by the ELCA and cannot be altered or amended.

The constitution contains constitutional provisions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions.

Constitutional provisions are coded with two sets of numbers, such as C2.07.

Bylaws are coded with three sets of numbers, such as C8.04.01.

Continuing resolutions are also coded with three sets of numbers, except that the third set is preceded by a capital letter, such as C13.07.A05. The “A” indicates it is the first continuing resolution for the year adopted, and the number following the letter indicates the year it was adopted, 2005, in this example.

### **\*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 the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, Lancaster, Pennsylvania.
- C1.02.** For the purpose of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws, the congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Redeemer is hereinafter designated as "this congregation."
- C1.11.** This congregation shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of Pennsylvania.
- C1.12 .** The seal of this congregation represents the legal name of the church and the date of incorporation (1904), encircled with a wreath.

## **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.
- 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.
  - 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.
  - 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 Scriptures 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 this congregation's ministry and the ministry of the other expressions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
  - h. Foster and participate in interdependent relationships with other congregations, the synod, and the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
  - i. Foster and participate in ecumenical relationships consistent with churchwide policy.
- \*C4.04.** This congregation shall develop an organizational structure to be described in the bylaws. The Congregation Council shall prepare descriptions of the responsibilities of each committee, task force, or other organizational group and shall review their actions. Such descriptions shall be contained in continuing resolutions in the section on the Congregation Council.
- \*C4.05.** This congregation shall adopt and periodically review a mission statement which will provide specific direction for its programs.
- \*C4.06.** References herein to the nature of the relationship between the three expressions of this church—congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization—as being interdependent or as being in a partnership relationship describe the mutual responsibility of these expressions in God's mission and the fulfillment of the purposes of this church as described in this chapter, and do not imply or describe the creation of partnerships, co-ventures, agencies, or other legal relationships recognized in civil law.

## **Chapter 5.**

### **POWERS OF THE CONGREGATION**

- \*C5.01.** The powers of this congregation are those necessary to fulfill its purpose.
- \*C5.02.** The powers of this congregation are vested in the Congregation Meeting called and conducted as provided in this constitution and bylaws.
- \*C5.03.** Only such authority as is delegated to the Congregation Council or other organizational units in this congregation's governing documents is recognized. All remaining authority is retained by this congregation. This congregation is authorized to:
- a. call a pastor as provided in Chapter 9;
  - b. terminate the call of a pastor as provided in Chapter 9;
  - c. call a minister of Word and Service;
  - d. terminate the call of a minister of Word and Service in conformity with the constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;
  - e. adopt amendments to the constitution, as provided in Chapter 16, amendments to the bylaws, as specified in Chapter 17, and continuing resolutions, as provided in Chapter 18;
  - f. approve the annual budget;
  - g. acquire real and personal property by gift, devise, purchase, or other lawful means;

- h. hold title to and use its property for any and all activities consistent with its purpose;
- i. sell, mortgage, lease, transfer, or otherwise dispose of its property by any lawful means;
- j. elect its officers, Congregation Council, and committees, and require them to carry out their duties in accordance with the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions; and
- k. terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as provided in Chapter 6.

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

## **Chapter 6.**

### **CHURCH AFFILIATION**

**\*C6.01.** This congregation shall be an interdependent part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or its successor, and of the Lower Susquehanna 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 this congregation according to the procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- e. This congregation agrees to file this constitution and any subsequent changes to this constitution with the synod for review to ascertain that all of its provisions are in agreement with the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and with the constitution of the synod.

**\*C6.04.** Affiliation with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is terminated as follows:

- a. This congregation takes action to dissolve.
- b. This congregation ceases to exist.

- c. This congregation is removed from membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America according to the procedures for discipline of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or in accordance with provision 9.23. of the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- d. The Lower Susquehanna Synod takes charge and control of the property of this congregation to hold, manage, and convey the same on behalf of the synod pursuant to †S13.24. of the synod constitution. This congregation shall have the right to appeal the decision to the next Synod Assembly.
- e. 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 two legally called and conducted special meetings of this congregation by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present at each meeting. The first such meeting may be held no sooner than 30 days after written notice of the meeting is received by the bishop of the synod, during which time this congregation shall consult with the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any. The times and manner of the consultation shall be determined by the bishop in consultation with the Congregation Council. Unless he or she is a voting member of this congregation, the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any, shall have voice but not vote at the first meeting.
- b. Within 10 days after the resolution has been voted upon at the first meeting, the secretary of this congregation shall submit a copy of the resolution to the bishop, attesting that the special meeting was legally called and conducted and certifying the outcome of the vote, and shall send copies of the resolution and certification to voting members of this congregation.
- c. If the resolution was adopted by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present at the first meeting, the bishop of the synod and this congregation shall continue in consultation, as specified in paragraph a. above, during a period of at least 90 days after receipt by the bishop of the attestation and certification as specified in paragraph b. above.
- d. If this congregation, after such consultation, is still considering termination of its relationship with this church, such action may be taken at a legally called and conducted special meeting by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present. Notice of the second meeting shall be sent to all voting members and to the bishop at least 10 days in advance of the meeting. Unless he or she is a voting member of this congregation, the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any, shall have voice but not vote at the second meeting.
- e. Within 10 days after the resolution has been voted upon, the secretary of this congregation shall submit a copy of the resolution to the bishop, attesting that the second special meeting was legally called and conducted and certifying the outcome of the vote, and shall send copies of the resolution and certification to the voting members of this congregation. If the resolution was adopted by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present at the second meeting, the relationship between the congregation and this church shall be terminated subject to Synod Council approval as required by paragraphs f. and g. below.
- f. Unless this notification to the bishop also certifies that this congregation has voted to affiliate with another Lutheran denomination, this congregation shall be deemed an independent or non-Lutheran church, in which case \*C7.04. shall apply.

- 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 synod 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 the congregation fails to achieve the required two-thirds vote of voting members present at this congregation's first meeting as specified in paragraph a. above or fails to achieve the required two-thirds vote of voting members present at this congregation's second meeting as specified in paragraph d. above, another attempt to consider termination of relationship with this church must follow all requirements of \*C6.05. and may begin no sooner than six months after the meeting at which the two-thirds vote was not achieved.

**\*C6.06.** If this congregation considers relocation, it shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located and the appropriate unit of the churchwide organization before any steps are taken leading to such action. The approval of the Synod Council shall be received before any such action is taken.

**\*C6.07.** If this congregation considers developing an additional site to be used regularly for worship, it shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located and the appropriate unit of the churchwide organization before any steps are taken leading to such action.

## **Chapter 7.**

### **PROPERTY OWNERSHIP**

**\*C7.01.** If this congregation ceases to exist, title to undisposed property shall pass to the Lower Susquehanna Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

**\*C7.02.** If this congregation is removed from membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America according to its procedure for discipline or pursuant to 9.23. of the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, title to property shall continue to reside in this congregation.

**\*C7.03.** If 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 Lower Susquehanna Synod.

**\*C7.04.** If 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 process established by the synod, may give approval to the request to become independent or to relate to a non-Lutheran church body, in which case title shall remain with the majority of this congregation. If the Synod Council fails to give such approval, title shall remain with those members who desire to continue as a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. In neither case does title to this congregation's property transfer to the synod.

- \*C7.05.** Notwithstanding the provisions of \*C7.02. and \*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 Lower Susquehanna 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 this congregation as well as the other rights and privileges ascribed to voting members by the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws. They shall not have voted as a seasonal member of another congregation of this church in the previous two calendar months.
  - d. **Associate** members are persons holding membership in other Lutheran 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 congregations of this church who wish to retain such membership but desire to participate in the life and mission of this congregation, including exercising limited voting rights in this congregation. The Congregation Council may grant seasonal membership to such persons provided that this congregation is a member of a synod where the Synod Council has approved seasonal member voting on its territory. Such seasonal members shall have all the privileges and duties of voting members except that:

- 1) they shall not be eligible for elected office in, or for membership on the Congregation Council or on a call committee of, this congregation;
- 2) they shall not have the right to vote on any matter concerning or affecting the call or termination of call of any minister of this congregation;
- 3) they shall not have the right to vote on any matter concerning or affecting the affiliation of this congregation with this church;
- 4) they shall not be eligible to serve as voting members from this congregation of the Synod Assembly or the Churchwide Assembly;
- 5) they shall not, even if otherwise permitted by this congregation, vote by proxy or by absentee ballot; and
- 6) they shall not, within any two-calendar month period, exercise voting rights in this congregation and in the congregation where they remain voting members.

**\*C8.03.** 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.

**C8.04.01.** Privileges and duties of members of this congregation also include, as befit their age, health, and abilities:

- a. joining faithfully in the services of worship of this congregation;
- b. studying the Holy Scriptures and practicing family and private devotion;
- c. partaking faithfully of Holy Communion;
- d. presenting of children by their parents and/or guardians for Holy Baptism in early infancy and diligently nurturing them in the Christian faith in home and in the schools provided by this congregation;
- e. participating faithfully in educational programs provided by this congregation;
- f. leading a Christian life of loving service, humility, and peace as is fitting for those whom the Holy Spirit has called to faith and discipleship; and
- g. promoting the unity and welfare of this congregation as a family of God, endeavoring through admonition and encouragement to edify one another.

**\*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 Chapter 20 of the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;

- 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.

**C8.05.01.**

Termination Procedures

- a. Transfers - A member desiring to transfer to another Lutheran congregation shall apply to the pastor(s). Upon approval by the pastor(s) and the Evangelism Committee, a letter of transfer shall be issued by the pastor(s). The Evangelism Committee shall report all transfers to this congregation via church publications and to this congregation at the next regular meeting of that body.
- b. Joining other churches - Those desiring to unite with other non-Lutheran congregations shall apply to the pastor(s) for a certificate of standing or release. This shall be approved by the Evangelism Committee and reported to this congregation at the next regular meeting of that body and also via church publications. In cases where voting members of this congregation have joined a non-Lutheran congregation without an official letter of transfer, they shall, upon the decision of the pastor(s) and the Evangelism Committee, be deemed to have terminated their membership in this congregation, forfeiting all rights and privileges of such membership. Their names shall be removed from the membership list of this congregation.
- c. Moving - This congregation shall encourage members who move from the community which this congregation serves to transfer to a Lutheran congregation which can serve them effectively and in which they can participate faithfully. A Lutheran congregation in the new community in which such members live shall be notified of their move by the Evangelism Committee.
- d. Whereabouts Unknown - The pastor(s) and the Evangelism Committee shall remove from the membership list of this congregation the names of members whose whereabouts are unknown and cannot be established within a period of six months. These names shall be placed in a file designated "Whereabouts Unknown." Such removals shall be reported at the next regular meeting of this congregation.
- e. Inactivity - When members have failed to receive communion in this congregation and have failed to make a contribution of record during the current or preceding year, they may be removed from the roll of members by this congregation, upon recommendation by the Congregation Council. This procedure will take place after such members have been counseled about the matter, if possible.

**C8.05.02.**

Responsibilities of this congregation for fostering faithful membership shall include:

- a. Proper instruction in the Word of God and the teaching of the Lutheran Church prior to reception as confirmed members.
- b. Transfer of membership to another Lutheran congregation or the issuing of a certificate of standing and/or release to another congregation at the request of the confirmed member; such transfer of membership or issuing of a certificate of standing and/or release should be granted to baptized but unconfirmed children at the request of their parents.
- c. Encouraging members who move from the community which this congregation serves to transfer to a Lutheran congregation which can serve them effectively and in which they can participate regularly. A Lutheran congregation in the new community in which such members live shall be notified of their move.

- d. Continuing concern and conscientious pastoral care for members, in an effort to encourage fulfillment of their duties and responsibilities, when they do not partake of Holy Communion, support the church with their offerings, or appear to desire to participate in the life and worship of 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 the Congregation Council to recommend the call, shall seek the advice and help of the bishop of the synod.
- C9.01.01.** Election of a Pastor  
Prior to authorizing any appointed body to make salary offers, the Congregation Council shall propose to this congregation, for approval, salary and emolument ranges based on recommended base salary and housing allowance guidelines determined each year by the Lower Susquehanna Synod Assembly. Any proposed revisions must be brought before a Congregation Meeting for approval prior to the election date.
- C9.01.02.** Election of a pastor shall be by written ballot at a properly called Congregation Meeting presided over by the bishop of the synod or the bishop's appointee. Balloting shall be limited at any one meeting to a single nomination presented by the Congregation Council with at least two-thirds of the council's members concurring.
- C9.01.03.** Upon election, the Congregation Council shall execute a call accordingly and forward the same to the person elected. Unless otherwise agreed, the call shall normally become invalid unless a definite answer is received within thirty days after its receipt. If a nominee fails of election or declines the call, the Congregation Council shall make another nomination at a subsequent meeting.
- \*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 this congregation by the synod 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 available channels of effective communication;
    - 7) witness to the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation and abroad; and
    - 8) speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world.
  - b. Each pastor with a congregational call shall, within the congregation:
    - 1) offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead;
    - 2) relate to all schools and organizations of this congregation;
    - 3) install regularly elected members of the Congregation Council;
    - 4) with the council, administer discipline;

- 5) endeavor to increase the support given by this congregation to the work of the churchwide organization and of the Lower Susquehanna Synod; and
- 6) encourage adherence to covenantal relationship with this church as expressed in the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.

**C9.03.01.** The pastor(s) shall ultimately be responsible for the training, assignment and supervision of any lay assistant(s).

**\*C9.04.** The specific duties of the pastor, compensation, and other matters pertaining to the service of the pastor shall be included in a letter of call, which shall be attested by the bishop of the synod.

**\*C9.05.** The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between a minister of Word and Sacrament and this congregation shall be as follows:

- a. The call of this congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment, which shall be terminated only by the pastor's death or, following consultation with the synod 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 this congregation in view of local conditions;
  - 4) physical disability or mental incapacity of the pastor;
  - 5) suspension of the pastor through discipline for more than three months;
  - 6) resignation or removal of the pastor from the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament of this church;
  - 7) termination of the relationship between this church and 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 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 this congregation, the bishop personally shall investigate such conditions together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson.
- c. In case of alleged physical disability or mental incapacity under paragraph a.4) above, the bishop's committee shall obtain and document competent medical opinion concerning the pastor's condition. When a disability or incapacity is evident to the committee, the bishop of this synod may declare the pastorate vacant. When the pastorate is declared vacant, the Synod Council shall list the pastor on the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament with disability status. Upon removal of the disability and the restoration of the pastor to health, the bishop shall take steps to enable the pastor to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another appropriate call.

- d. In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of this congregation under paragraph a.3) above, the bishop's committee shall endeavor to hear from all concerned persons, after which the bishop together with the committee shall present their recommendations first to the pastor and then to this congregation. The recommendations of the bishop's committee must address whether the pastor's call should come to an end and, if so, may suggest appropriate severance arrangements. The committee may also propose other actions that should be undertaken by this congregation and by the pastor, if appropriate. If the pastor and congregation agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action need be taken by the synod.
- e. If either party fails to assent to the recommendations of the bishop's committee concerning the pastor's call, this congregation may dismiss the pastor only at a legally called meeting after consultation with the bishop, either (a) by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee did not recommend termination of the call, or (b) by a majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee recommended termination of the call.
- f. If, in the course of proceedings described in paragraph c. or paragraph d. above, the bishop's committee concludes that there may be grounds for discipline, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action in accordance with the provisions of this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions.

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

**\*C9.07.** During the period of service, an interim pastor shall have the rights and duties in this congregation of a regularly called pastor and may delegate the same in part to a supply pastor with the consent of the bishop of the synod and this congregation or Congregation Council. The interim pastor and any rostered minister providing assistance shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a pastor. Unless previously agreed upon by the Synod Council, an interim pastor is not available for a regular call to the congregation served.

**\*C9.08.** This congregation shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to a former pastor before calling a successor. A pastor shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to this congregation before beginning service in a call to another congregation or employment in another ministry setting.

**\*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, this congregation may depart from \*C9.05.a. and call a pastor for a specific term. Details of such calls shall be in writing setting forth the purpose and conditions involved. Prior to the completion of a term, the bishop or a designated representative of the bishop shall meet with the pastor and representatives of this congregation for a review of the call. Such a call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of \*C9.05.a.

**\*C9.12.** The pastor of this congregation:

- a. shall keep accurate parochial records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from this congregation;

- b. shall submit a summary of such statistics annually to the synod; and
- c. shall become a member of this congregation upon receipt and acceptance of the letter of call. In a parish of multiple congregations, the pastor shall hold membership in one of the congregations.

**C9.12.01.** The pastor(s) shall provide a written summary of statistics described in \*C9.12.a. above annually to members of this congregation.

**\*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 this congregation. The secretary of this congregation shall attest in writing to the bishop of this synod that such records have been placed in his or her hands in good order by a departing pastor before the installation of that pastor in another call or approval of a request for change in roster status.

**C9.15.** Under special circumstances, subject to the approval of the synod 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 this congregation and the pastor in a form proposed by the synod bishop and approved by this congregation.

**\*C9.21.** Authority to call a deacon shall be in this congregation by at least a two-thirds vote of voting members present and voting at a meeting legally called for that purpose. Before a call is issued, the officers, or a committee elected by 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 synod 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 this church and its wider ministry of the gospel and advocate for the work of all expressions of this church; and
- i. Identify and encourage qualified persons to prepare for ministry of the gospel.

**\*C9.24.** The specific duties of the deacon, compensation, and other matters pertaining to the service of the deacon shall be included in a letter of call, which shall be attested by the bishop of the synod.

**\*C9.25.**

The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between a minister of Word and Service and a congregation shall be as follows:

- a. The call of this congregation, when accepted by a deacon, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment, which shall be terminated only by the deacon's death or, following consultation with the synod 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 with disability status. Upon removal of the disability and the restoration of the deacon to health, the bishop shall take steps to enable the deacon to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another appropriate call.
- d. In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of this congregation under paragraph a.3) above, the bishop's committee shall endeavor to hear from all concerned persons, after which the bishop together with the committee shall 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.** This congregation shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to a former deacon before calling a successor. A deacon shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to this congregation before beginning service in a call to another congregation or employment in another ministry setting.

**\*C9.27.** When a deacon is called to serve in company with another rostered minister or other rostered ministers, the privileges and responsibilities of each rostered minister shall be specified in documents to accompany the call and to be drafted in consultation involving the rostered ministers, the Congregation Council, and the bishop of the synod. As occasion requires, the documents may be revised through a similar consultation.

**\*C9.28.** With the approval of the bishop of the synod, this congregation may depart from \*C9.25.a. and call a deacon for a specific term. Details of such calls shall be in writing setting forth the purpose and conditions involved. Prior to the completion of a term, the bishop or a designated representative of the bishop shall meet with the deacon and representatives of this congregation for a review of the call. Such a call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of \*C9.25.a.

**\*C9.29.** The deacon shall become a member of this congregation upon receipt and acceptance of the letter of call. In a parish of multiple congregations, the deacon shall hold membership in one of the congregations.

**\*C9.31.** The deacon(s) shall submit a report of his or her ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.

## **Chapter 10.**

### **CONGREGATION MEETING**

**C10.01.** This congregation shall have at least one regular meeting per year. The regular meeting(s) of this congregation shall be held at the time(s) specified in the bylaws. Consistent with the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the bylaws shall designate one regular meeting per year as the annual meeting of this congregation.

#### **C10.01.01. Regular Meetings**

Regular meetings of the voting membership of this congregation shall be conducted every November and every May, on or about the second Sunday of the month. Dates and times of all Congregation Meetings shall be set by the Congregation Council. The May meeting shall include election of council members and other leaders. The November meeting shall include the presentation of the budget for the coming year, the presentation of the goals for the coming year, and, during an election year, the election of the nominating committee.

All confirmed members of this congregation may attend the meetings of this 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 membership.

- C10.01.02** Annual Meeting  
The November regular meeting shall be considered the annual meeting.
- C10.02.** A special Congregation Meeting may be called by the senior pastor, the Congregation Council, or the president of this congregation, and shall be called by the president of this 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 synod 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. This letter shall contain the definition of a voting member. The posting of such notice in the regular mail, with the regular postage affixed or paid, sent to the last known address of such members shall be sufficient.
- C10.04.** Twenty-five percent of the voting members shall constitute a quorum.
- C10.05.** Voting by proxy or by absentee ballot shall not be permitted.
- C10.06.** All actions approved by this congregation shall be by majority vote of those members present and voting, except as otherwise provided in this constitution or by state law.
- C10.07.** *Robert's Rules of Order*, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of all meetings of this congregation.
- C10.07.01.** Order of Business at Regular Meetings  
Regular meetings of the voting membership shall proceed as follows:
- a. call to order
  - b. Scripture reading and/or prayer
  - c. read definition of a voting member
  - d. minutes of previous meeting(s), including special meetings
  - e. treasurer's report
  - f. unfinished business
  - g. reports from special committees
  - h. reports from committees
  - i. new business
  - j. state of the parish report by pastor(s)
  - k. closing with prayer
  - l. adjournment
- C10.07.02.** The president may, with the consent of the voting members, vary the order in the interest of efficiency.
- C10.07.03.** In the event of a tie vote, the president shall cast the deciding ballot.
- C10.08.** This congregation may hold meetings by remote communication, including electronically and by telephone conference, as long as there is an opportunity for simultaneous aural communication. To the extent permitted by state law, notice of all meetings may be provided electronically.

## **Chapter 11. OFFICERS**

- C11.01.** The officers of this congregation shall be a president, vice president(s), secretary, and treasurer.
- a. Duties of the officers shall be specified in the bylaws.
  - b. The officers shall be voting members of this congregation.
  - c. Officers of this congregation shall serve similar offices of the Congregation Council and shall be voting members of the Congregation Council.
- C11.01.01.** The president of this congregation shall preside at all meetings of the voting membership. The president shall enforce the constitution of this congregation and shall carry out the expressed will of this congregation. These enforcements shall include the authority to execute all contracts and other legal documents which are required to fulfill such expressed will. All committees and groups in this congregation shall be responsible to the president. The president shall be welcome at any and all meetings of such groups either in person or represented by such person or persons as the president may appoint. The president shall also call and preside over the meetings of the Congregation Council and shall endeavor to coordinate the functions, plans, and activities of this congregation in all its parts for the total furtherance of the work of Christ's Kingdom in our midst. The president shall submit the Audit Committee's report at the May meeting of the voting membership in each year. The president, in conjunction with the pastor(s), shall nominate to the Congregation Meeting persons to serve as voting members to the synod assembly, instructing them to make a report to this congregation at its November meeting.
- C11.01.02.** The secretary shall be present at all meetings of this congregation and at all meetings of the Congregation Council and shall enter the minutes of all meetings of said groups in a permanent record book over the secretary's signature. The secretary shall conduct all official correspondence of the committees under the supervision of the president. In general, the secretary shall perform all the duties normally pertaining to the secretary's office and such additional duties as the voting membership may delegate.
- C11.01.03.** The vice president(s) of this congregation, in the absence of the president, shall act for and in the stead of the president. They shall be available for whatever duties the president shall assign to them.
- C11.01.04.** The treasurer shall:
- a. Accurately record congregational receipts, disbursements, and budgeted expenditures according to proper accounting procedures, and, if needed, suggest improved methods of managing church finances for congregational consideration;
  - b. Assist the Budget Coordinator in preparing a budget for each year, and present it for Congregation Council approval at the Congregation Council meeting prior to the November Congregation Meeting.
  - c. Submit permanent financial records for annual audit;
  - d. Remit monthly offerings for missions and church agencies and for the prompt payment of salaries and bills authorized by the congregation or the Committees and Directors.
  - e. Coordinate the flow of money from the treasury to the various Committees in such a way that an adequate balance is retained for the payment of salaries and recurring expenses;
  - f. Remit to the professional staff or lay workers of the congregation the documented expenses while attending professional workshops, conferences, or conventions, as approved by the Committees under whose jurisdiction they function;

- g. Sign all checks for payment of bills, salaries, or other financial commitments of the congregation;
- h. Submit monthly to all Committees a current record of their accrued disbursements and budget allotment;
- i. Pay federal, state, and local payroll taxes in a timely and accurate manner, and furnish W-2 forms to all employees at the end of the tax year.

**C11.02.** The officers shall be elected by this congregation and shall serve for two years. The term shall begin on June 1 and end on May 31.

**C11.03.** No officer shall hold more than one office at a time. No elected officer, except the treasurer, 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(s), deacon(s), the officers of this congregation, and committee directors. Any voting member of this congregation may be elected, subject only to the limitation on the length of continuous service permitted in that office. A member's place on the Congregation Council shall be declared vacant if the member a) ceases to be a voting member of this congregation or b) is absent from four successive regular meetings of the Congregation Council without cause. Consistent with the laws of the state in which this congregation is incorporated, this congregation may adopt procedures for the removal of a member of the Congregation Council in other circumstances.

**C12.01.01.** Any officer or director of this congregation who willfully neglects the duties of his/her office may be deposed by a two-thirds majority vote of the voting members present in a regular meeting of this congregation. The Congregation Council shall initiate such disciplinary actions. When an office is made vacant by deposition, or by disciplinary action of the incumbent, a successor to such officer or director, if not immediately elected by this congregation, shall be appointed by the council until an election is held at the next regular Congregation Meeting.

**C12.02.** The members of the Congregation Council except the pastor(s) and the deacon(s) shall be elected at a legally called meeting of this congregation during the month of May. Their term of office shall be for 2 years, with the term of office beginning on June 1 and ending on May 31. Newly elected Congregation Council members shall be installed at worship the Sunday prior to the date they assume office.

**C12.02.01.** **Nomination Procedures**  
At the November congregation meeting in the year prior to election of officers and committee members, the Congregation Council shall announce its selection of four voting members who, together with the pastor(s), shall serve as the Nominating Committee. At this meeting, the voters may submit to the nominating Committee the names of possible candidates for office.

**C12.02.02.** The Nominating Committee, after the November Congregation Meeting, shall prepare a list of potential nominees for office, including those from the list submitted by the voting members at the November Congregation Meeting. This list of these potential nominees shall then be made available to members of this congregation at least three weeks prior to the May meeting.

- C12.02.03.** Following the publication of the Nominating Committee's list, any voting member of this 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 ten days before the date of the May congregation meeting, and
  - b. that the Nominating Committee, through consultation with the pastor(s) and the Evangelism Committee, shall have investigated the proposed candidates and found them spiritually eligible for office in accordance with \*C8.04.
- C12.02.04.** The Nominating Committee, at least one week before the date of the May meeting, shall post conspicuously on the church bulletin board the list of candidates for the offices to be elected; these include:
- President
  - Two Vice Presidents
  - Treasurer
  - Secretary
  - Directors of the various Committees
  - Committee members as necessary to complete the membership of each committee.
- C12.02.05.** Election Procedures
- From the list of candidates for each elective office submitted by the Nominating Committee, the voting membership shall, at its May meeting, elect by simple majority, the following officers in the order herein indicated:
- a. a president;
  - b. two vice presidents;
  - c. Treasurer;
  - d. secretary
  - e. directors, specifically nominated for the directorship of committees listed in chapter C13.07.
  - f. committee members to the number required to complete the membership of each of the committees. The determination of the number of members required on each committee shall be an annual function of the Congregation Council and shall be decided no later than the January meeting of that body. Only candidates defeated for office may be placed in nomination by the voting members at the election meeting for any office not yet filled.
- C12.02.06.** Installation of Officers - Term of Office
- The newly elected officers, directors, and committee members shall be installed on or before the first Sunday in June. Directors and committee members shall assume their duties of office on the day of their installation. The term of office of all directors and committee members shall be two years, terminating on the day of the next scheduled installation during the second year of their terms. Directors may succeed themselves in the same directorate only once.
- 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. Individuals who have served less than one-half of a regular term shall be eligible for nomination and possible election to a full term.

**C12.03.01.** Vacancies

- a. Committee Members - Any committee vacancies occurring within the two-year term of office shall be filled by the appointment of the Congregation Council. The president shall report all such appointments at the next regular Congregation Meeting and see to it that such appointments are publicized in the next issue of this congregation's newsletter.
- b. Committee Directors - If a vacancy should occur in the position of the director of a committee during the two-year term of office, the president will appoint an interim director of that committee who will function in the capacity until the next regular Congregation Meeting, at which time this congregation will take official action to fill that vacancy for the remainder of the unexpired term. In such cases the Congregation Council shall present to this congregation the name or names of qualified persons for congregational action; the president shall see to it that any new appointment is reported in the next issue of this congregation's newsletter.
- c. President and Vice President(s) - If a vacancy should occur in the position of president or vice president(s) during the two-year term of office, the Congregation Council shall appoint an interim officer who will function in the capacity until the next regular Congregation Meeting, at which time this congregation will take official action to fill that vacancy for the remainder of the unexpired term. In such cases the Congregation Council shall present to this congregation the name or names of qualified persons for congregational action for appointment to that office. After congregational action, the president shall see to it that any new appointment is reported in the next issue of this congregation's newsletter.

**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 support of the synod and churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as well as cooperation with other congregations, both Lutheran and non-Lutheran, subject to established policies of the synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- i. To recommend and encourage the use of program resources produced or approved by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- j. To seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel.

- k. Serve as the point of liaison between the pastor(s), the officers of this congregation, and the various committees in planning the total work of this congregation
- l. Settle jurisdictional dispute among the several committees.
- m. Present to this congregation at its November meeting, a yearly plan of activity for the entire congregation, as well as long range plans for the development and expansion of Christ's work in our midst.
- n. Prepare the agenda for the congregation meetings.
- o. Set the dates and times for the congregation meetings.
- p. Develop a list of candidates for the Nominating Committee to be elected at the November congregation meeting in the year prior to the election of officers and committee members.
- q. Fill unexpired terms or shortages of committee members by appointment.

**C12.04.01.** The Congregation Council is not primarily a decision-making body but serves as a forum where the activities of the Committees may be discussed, evaluated, and coordinated, and where all such activities may be integrated into an overall congregational program. The Congregation Council may serve the congregation in other specific ways as directed by the Congregation Meeting and in accordance with this constitution, bylaws and continuing resolutions.

**C12.04.02.** The Congregation Council shall keep a permanent set of minutes for each meeting, and such minutes shall be the property of this congregation.

**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 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 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 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 this congregation.
- c. The Congregation Council may enter into contracts of up to \$15,000 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 \$15,000 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 collaboration with the synod and churchwide organization.
- e. The Congregation Council shall ascertain that the financial affairs of this congregation are being conducted efficiently, giving particular attention to the prompt payment of all obligations and to the regular forwarding of mission support monies to the synod 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 this 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 in January, April, August, and October. 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 senior 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 senior 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 synod 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(s) shall constitute the **Executive Committee**.
- C13.02. A **Nominating Committee** of the pastor(s) and four voting members of this congregation, two of whom, if possible, shall be outgoing members of the Congregation Council, shall be elected at the November meeting prior to an election year for a term of one year. The voting members of the Nominating Committee are not eligible for consecutive reelection.
- C13.03. An **Audit Committee** of three voting members, other than the Treasurer and the Financial Secretary, shall be appointed by the Congregation Council president. 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 reelection.
- 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 and the rostered minister. Term of office shall be two years, with three members to be appointed each successive year.
- C13.05. When a vacancy occurs in a position for which this congregation calls a rostered minister, 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 rostered minister.
- 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 continuing resolutions.
- C13.07.A05. Each Committee shall submit a report of its activities at each regular Congregation Meeting and on such other occasions as the voting members shall require. Such reports shall include specific recommendations (if any) for congregational action and/or approval.

**C13.07.B05.** Each Committee shall initiate and carry out such activities and programs within this congregation as will enable it to effectively perform the functions and duties assigned to it by the constitution, or by specific resolution of the voting members.

**C13.07.C05.** Each committee shall be empowered to administer all funds set aside for its work by budget appropriation or by special resolution of this congregation, provided that the Congregation Meeting may at its discretion, restrict such expenditures to conform with the actual financial condition of this congregation at any given time. Each committee shall be jointly and severally liable for all expenditures not authorized either by the budget or by special resolution of this congregation.

**C13.07.D05.** Each committee shall keep a permanent set of minutes for each meeting, and such minutes shall be the property of this congregation.

**C13.07.E05.** Each committee shall be under the direct control and supervision of the director of that committee. Following the election of the director of each committee and the number of committee members required, the director of the respective committee shall designate and appoint from among the committee members at his/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 this congregation for publication to the members in the manner deemed most advisable.

**C13.07.F05.** The time and frequency of committee meetings shall be monthly or at the discretion of the director of that committee and the committee members, except that, for good and sufficient reason, either the president of this 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.

**C13.07.G05** MUTUAL MINISTRY COMMITTEE

The Mutual Ministry Committee acts as a representative of this congregation to its staff of employees, nurturing a good employer-employee relationship, and ministering to the needs of the staff as they relate to employment of Redeemer.

The Committee shall:

- 1) serve as a mediator between the paid staff and this congregation through the appropriate committee(s), referring all matters concerning job performance to the appropriate committee with recommendations.
- 2) annually review and update the job descriptions for all paid staff.
- 3) make recommendations to the Congregation Council with respect to the employment and termination of paid staff, other than the Pastor(s).
- 4) submit to the Stewardship Committee, in the form and at the time required, salary proposals and recommended benefits for all paid staff.
- 5) be concerned about the spiritual, emotional, and physical health and welfare of the pastor(s) and other staff and their families (adequate compensation, housing, free time, vacation, assistance in time of illness), and to that end specifically review these items once a year.

**C13.07.H05** EVANGELISM COMMITTEE

The Evangelism Committee reaches out to members and non-members of the church to lead them to a more fulfilling involvement with Christ and his church. The committee also interacts with local and international projects to spread the Word of God and encourage involvement with the church.

The Committee shall:

- 1) share with the pastors the work of proclaiming the Gospel to all peoples.
- 2) be aware of and adopt or adapt suggestions by the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission Unit of the synod and ELCA.
- 3) encourage prayer in church and home for all peoples, both within and without the church community.
- 4) work with the entire church body to make members and visitors feel welcome when they come to worship.
- 5) work with the Christian Education Committee to encourage participation of Bible-based education programs.
- 6) work with the Publicity/AV Committee to inform the community of church related services, programs, and events that identify this congregation with the Gospel of Christ.
- 7) reach out to our neighbors – local, community and worldwide – sharing the good news of the Bible and sharing resources as agreed upon by this congregation.
- 8) evaluate the effectiveness of programs sponsored by the committee each year and make adjustment as needed.
- 9) submit to the Stewardship Committee, in the appropriate format and at the time requested, a budget request for the upcoming year's work.

**C13.07.I05 PARISH FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE**

The Parish Fellowship Committee strengthens the fellowship between congregation members spiritually and socially, integrates new members into the life of this congregation, builds mutual cooperation, trust, and enjoyment among the members of this congregation.

The Committee shall:

- 1) plan, supervise, and implement larger gatherings of this congregation from time-to-time throughout the year;
- 2) maintain contact with other committees and church groups, suggesting to them ways of furthering the work of their committees through fellowship and drawing from them requests and suggestions for fellowship activities;
- 3) maintain an adequate group of willing workers who will help to plan, coordinate, and execute the work necessary for the successful accomplishment of fellowship goals;
- 4) plan, schedule, and coordinate all parish camping experiences in conjunction with the appropriate committees;
- 5) develop policies and rules for the use of the facilities at the functions sponsored by these other committees;
- 6) maintain a schedule of activities within this congregation's facilities and approve, or disapprove, in conjunction with the Church Properties Committee, requests for such activities in the best interest of this congregation;
- 7) set all policies, in conjunction with the Church Properties Committee for rental, use, and lending of church equipment;
- 8) be responsible for organizing and coordinating the regular weekly socials following all worship services on Saturdays and Sundays;
- 9) submit, at the time and in the form required, an annual budget as requested by the Stewardship Committee;
- 10) replenish and maintain equipment and supplies for the ongoing promotion of fellowship in this congregation.

**C13.07.J05 STEWARDSHIP & PARISH ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE**

The Stewardship & Parish Administration Committee initiates programs for the development of good stewardship attitudes in the members of this congregation with regard to time, talents, and treasures. The Committee ensures the financial stability of this congregation through a developed program of dedicated, proportionate, first fruits giving.

The Committee shall:

- 1) maintain a congregational talent file, record the talents and abilities of new members, and work with other Committees to enlist members for service to this congregation;
- 2) encourage the Gospel-motivated practice of joyous, worshipful, liberal, proportionate first fruits giving in response to received blessings and recognized needs;
- 3) annually give every member an opportunity to make a commitment of his or her treasure for the ministry of this congregation and the church at large;
- 4) initiate an annual preparation and presentation to this congregation of a biblically and theologically sound budget, determine anticipated receipts, and recommend the budget for adoption by this congregation;
- 5) review, accept, or decline all offers of non-solicited gifts to this congregation;
- 6) evaluate various programs for endowments, remembrance of this congregation in wills, bequests, and the like, and suggest ways of implementation to the Director of Publicity/Audio Visual as well as supplying workers at his/her request;
- 7) annually review, with all committees, the adequacy of all types of insurance for church property, equipment, vehicles, and activities; purchase and/or renew all insurances required for property, equipment and activities; prepare and submit timely and proper insurance claims.
- 8) Administer this congregation's Good Samaritan Fund.
- 9) submit to the Stewardship Committee, in the appropriate format and at the time requested, a budget request for the upcoming year's work.

**C13.07.K05 WORSHIP AND MUSIC COMMITTEE**

The Worship and Music Committee plans, administers, and supervises the corporate worship life of this congregation, determines policies pertaining to this congregation's corporate worship, selects and supervises volunteer personnel, and provides the necessary means and facilities for corporate worship.

The Committee shall:

- 1) ensure that the services of God's house are conducted regularly and in accordance with the liturgy of the ELCA;
- 2) review, with the Mutual Ministry Committee, the job descriptions of the ministerial staff;
- 3) supervise the musical staff of this congregation;
- 4) staff, train and schedule the ushering staff;
- 5) staff, train and schedule the acolytes;
- 6) staff, train and schedule the communion assistants;
- 7) staff, train and schedule the lay readers;
- 8) approve (and then implement) or disapprove new forms of worship, liturgies, and hymns for use in public worship;
- 9) supervise the Altar Guild in the care, use, and maintenance of the sacred vessels, the altar, the altar furnishings, and the vestments;

- 10) 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;
- 11) coordinate with the Decor Committee all church and chancel decorations and with Altar Guild the distribution of altar flowers to the sick and homebound;
- 12) supervise the budgeted allotment for the selections and procurement of appropriate music, supervision of choirs, and other related matters in conjunction with the music staff;
- 13) maintain and supervise adequate nursery facilities and personnel;
- 14) submit, at the time and in the form required, an annual budget as requested by the Stewardship Committee.

**C13.07.L05 CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

The Christian Education Committee plans, administers, and supervises the total educational program of this congregation, determines policies, selects personnel for the various programs, and provides the necessary means and facilities for these programs to do so.

The Committee shall:

- 1) be responsible for the Christian nurture of adults, children, and youth in this congregation and, through them, in the community beyond;
- 2) establish objectives, set policies for, and supervise the total educational program for this congregation, including Sunday Church School, Vacation Church School, confirmation classes, Bible classes, and all other educational groups;
- 3) provide, and/or recommend curriculum for all educational groups, constantly seeking improvement in content of material and methodology of teaching;
- 4) provide for active expression of Christian love and concern as an integral part of the total education program;
- 5) encourage the faithful participation of every congregation member in Bible study, privately and in group study;
- 6) maintain accurate information as to the degree of participation of the total membership of this congregation in its educational program and encourage the participation in the education program of uninvolved members. This will include a permanent and up-to-date file of all children and youth (including Cradle Roll) of this congregation by age, grade level, and the like;
- 7) recruit, train, and provide continuing education for teachers and leaders in this congregation's educational ministry program;
- 8) establish a system of commendation for and recognition of faithful service by all person involved in the educational task of this congregation;
- 9) work with the Youth Ministry Committee for the assimilation of newly confirmed youth into educational classes and activities;
- 10) work with the Evangelism Committee for the assimilation of new members into the educational program of the church;
- 11) annually examine the educational facilities and equipment, and make recommendations to the Church Properties Committee as to upkeep, repairs, and replacements needed as well as new equipment needed;
- 12) submit, at the time and in the form required, an annual budget as requested by the Stewardship Committee;

- 13) establish and maintain, in conjunction with other Committees, a continuing program for the recruitment of full-time workers in the church such as pastors, teachers, associates in ministry, and the like;
- 14) seek to introduce periodicals, books, and family devotion guides of the ELCA into the homes of this congregation;
- 15) maintain, improve, and cultivate the use of the church library;
- 16) provide for and promote the use of audio visual materials;
- 17) provide special classes, courses, conferences, and retreats as needed for growth in Christian Education.

**C13.07.M05 YOUTH MINISTRY COMMITTEE**

The Youth Ministry Committee involves the young people of this congregation in the work of Christ, provides for their spiritual growth and nurture, and promotes genuine Christian fellowship for the young people of this congregation.

The Committee shall:

- 1) promote attendance and involvement of this congregation's youth at all youth activities;
- 2) provide for the continuing spiritual growth of the young people of this congregation through Bible study, prayer, and Christian service;
- 3) plan and carry out, together with other concerned committees, a year 'round program for the young of the congregation;
- 4) involve youth leaders from all parts of this congregation's work in developing a planned parish program for young people;
- 5) develop a program for the social fellowship of both young people and the young adults of this congregation, including various recreational programs;
- 6) plan and observe, together with the Pastor(s) a yearly congregational Youth Ministry Worship and Recognition Sunday, where young people lead the worship service and all young people who are active in parish service of all types are recognized;
- 7) provide, together with the Publicity/Audio Visual Committee, for the public recognition of various youth achievements and accomplishments;
- 8) plan and coordinate activities for youth with other people's groups outside this congregation, particularly with other Lutheran young people's groups at various levels;
- 9) in conjunction with the Evangelism Committee, train and involve the young people of this congregation in bringing others to faith in Christ;
- 10) provide counseling for the spiritual, moral, social and vocational development of young people;
- 11) for administrative purposes and program development, supervise the work of all youth and young adult groups in this congregation;
- 12) recruit, as the need presents itself, advisors for the various youth groups;
- 13) submit, at the time and in the form required, an annual budget as requested by the Stewardship Committee.

**C13.07.N05 SOCIAL MINISTRY COMMITTEE**

The Social Ministry Committee extends Christian compassion and helpfulness to persons of all ages in need of aid for body, mind and spirit. Included are our ill, aged, challenged, underprivileged, abused, displaced, homeless, hungry, imprisoned, lonely and bereaved brothers and sisters throughout God's world.

The Committee shall:

- 1) study social conditions within this congregation, neighborhood, local community, nation and world and seek ways to respond to these conditions through advocacy and appropriate involvement, always following Christ's calling to our role of servanthood.
- 2) plan a year 'round program of projects and service to involve members of this congregation in addressing hurts and needs. Included will be the World Hunger Appeal; Lutheran World Relief; needs made known to us by the ELCA or the Lower Susquehanna Synod; social and spiritual services for the homebound, those in hospitals, homes for the aging, prisons and other institutions in the community; and support of local food and clothing banks.
- 3) coordinate an annual Harvest Home Service and its distribution, both in conjunction with the Pastors; the collection and distribution of sick room equipment; and this congregation's blood bank membership. This Committee shall also review and screen all appeals for funds and make the appropriate recommendations concerning the appeals, always giving priority to those coming from the ELCA and the Lower Susquehanna Synod.
- 4) serve as liaison between this congregation and church and community organizations and auxiliaries such as the Lancaster County Council of Churches, Church Women United, Luther Acres auxiliary, and Church World Service and to promote the projects and services of these groups.
- 5) submit, at a time and in the form required, an annual budget as requested by the Stewardship & Parish Administration Coordinator.

**C13.07.O05** PROPERTY COMMITTEE

The Property Committee shall:

- 1) oversee all maintenance and repairs to the church property.
- 2) perform minor repairs on church property and get bids from outside contractors on major repairs.
- 3) check the fire alarm system, fire extinguisher, and their use, exit lights, and also check the buildings for fire hazards.
- 4) work with Parish Fellowship Committee on the use and rental of the building.
- 5) submit, at the time and in the form required, an annual budget as requested by the Stewardship Committee.

**C13.07.P05** AUDIO VISUAL AND PUBLICITY COMMITTEE

The Audio Visual and Publicity Committee makes available to this congregation equipment and recordings for audio and visual presentations and publicizes the work of this church and of Christ.

The Committee, either corporately or through specifically designated individuals, shall:

- 1) record on audio, CD, and/or video tapes the activities of Redeemer in worship, fellowship, education and service;
- 2) work with Parish Fellowship to plan and hold public opportunities to view and/or hear videos and recordings which portray and otherwise favorably represent the values of the Christian Church;
- 3) in concert with the Social Ministry Committee distribute the above recordings to those unable to participate due to injuries, sickness or other restrictive circumstances;
- 4) keep the various committees apprised of opportunities for using the audio, CD and video recorders and presentation equipment;

- 5) keep this congregation informed about use of the hearing-impaired system in concert with Worship and Music;
- 6) maintain audio and video equipment owned by the church;
- 7) oversee content for outdoor signage on the church property;
- 8) work for enhancement of this congregation's image through news media;
- 9) assist other boards in developing publicity items;
- 10) maintain a scrapbook with newspaper articles about Redeemer;
- 11) submit, at the time and in the form required, an annual budget as requested by the Stewardship Committee.

**C13.07.Q05 TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE**

The Transportation Committee provides transportation for the various functions and services of worship of this congregation. This is done because of our limited parking space around the church and it serves a double purpose: to enhance our worshipers' experience by making access easier to the church and to assist the church in being a good neighbor in the community by keeping parking open for residents living in the vicinity.

The Committee shall:

- 1) provide transportation for weekly services as needed between the parking area and the church;
- 2) have vehicles available for use for the Youth Group, Choices and other church functions as needed;
- 3) provide for maintenance and inspections requirements of vehicle or vehicles used to transport;
- 4) arrange for volunteers from this congregation to serve as drivers.
- 5) submit to the Stewardship Committee, in the appropriate format and at the time requested, a budget request for the upcoming year's work.

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

**Chapter 14.**

**ORGANIZATIONS WITHIN THIS CONGREGATION**

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

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

**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 this congregation, or willful and repeated harassment or defamation of member(s) of this congregation is sufficient cause for discipline of a member. Prior to disciplinary action, reconciliation and repentance will be attempted following Matthew

18:15–17, proceeding through these successive steps, as necessary: a) private counsel and admonition by the pastor, b) censure and admonition by the pastor in the presence of two or three witnesses, c) written referral of the matter by the Congregation Council to the vice president of the synod, who will refer it to a consultation panel drawn from the Consultation Committee of the synod, and d) written referral of the matter by the consultation panel to the Committee on Discipline of the synod. If, for any reason, the pastor is unable to administer the admonitions required by paragraphs a. and b. hereof, those steps may be performed by another pastor chosen by the Executive Committee of the Congregation Council.

**\*C15.02.** The process for discipline of a member of this congregation shall be governed as prescribed by the chapter on discipline in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. If the counseling, censure, and admonitions pursuant to \*C15.01. do not result in repentance and amendment of life, charges against the accused member(s) that are specific and in writing may be prepared by the Congregation Council, signed, and submitted to the vice president of the synod. The vice president shall select from the synod’s Consultation Committee a panel of five members (three laypersons and two ministers of Word and Sacrament). A copy of the written charges shall be provided to the consultation panel and the accused member(s). The consultation panel, after requesting a written reply to the charges from the accused member(s), shall consider the matter and seek a resolution by means of investigation, consultation, mediation, or whatever other means may seem appropriate. The panel’s efforts to reach a mutually agreeable resolution shall continue for no more than 45 days after the matter is submitted to it.

**\*C15.03.** If the consultation panel fails to resolve the matter, that panel shall refer the case in writing, including the written charges and the accused member’s reply, to the Committee on Discipline of the synod for a hearing. A copy of the panel’s written referral shall be delivered to the vice president of the synod, the Congregation Council, and the accused member(s) at the same time it is sent to the Committee on Discipline of the synod. The Executive Committee of the Synod Council shall then select six members from the Committee on Discipline to decide the case and shall appoint a member of the Synod Council to preside as nonvoting chair. Those six members, plus the nonvoting chair, comprise the discipline hearing panel for deciding the case. The Congregation Council and the accused member(s) are the parties to the case.

**\*C15.04.** The discipline hearing panel shall commence and conduct the disciplinary hearing in accordance with the provisions governing discipline of congregation members prescribed in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.

**\*C15.05.** By the vote of at least two-thirds of the members of the discipline hearing panel who are present and voting, one of the following disciplinary sanctions can be imposed:

- a. suspension from the privileges of congregation membership for a designated period of time;
- b. suspension from the privileges of congregation membership until the pastor and Congregation Council receive evidence, satisfactory to them, of repentance and amendment of life;
- c. termination of membership in this congregation; or
- d. termination of membership in this congregation and exclusion from the church property and from all congregation activities.

- \*C15.06.** The written decision of the discipline hearing panel shall be sent to the vice president of the synod, the accused member(s), and the Congregation Council as required by the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. The decision of the discipline hearing panel shall be implemented by the Congregation Council and recorded in the minutes of the next council meeting.
- \*C15.07.** No member of this congregation shall be subject to discipline a second time for offenses that a discipline hearing panel has heard previously and decided pursuant to this chapter.
- \*C15.10.** **Adjudication**
- \*C15.11.** When there is disagreement between or among factions within this congregation on a substantive issue which cannot be resolved by the parties, members of this congregation may petition the synod bishop for consultation after informing the president of this congregation of their intent to do so. The synod bishop shall seek a timely resolution of the dispute. If the issue relates directly to the pastor, the bishop may begin the process in †S14.18.d. In all other matters, if the bishop's consultation fails to resolve the issue, the bishop shall refer the matter to the Consultation Committee of the synod, which shall undertake efforts to find an appropriate solution. If the Consultation Committee's efforts fail to resolve the dispute, the entire matter shall be referred to the Synod Council for adjudication by whatever process the Council deems necessary. The Synod Council's decision shall be final.

## Chapter 16.

### AMENDMENTS

- \*C16.01.** Unless provision \*C16.04. is applicable, those sections of this constitution that are not required, in accord with the *Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, may be amended in the following manner. Amendments may be proposed by at least 5 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 this congregation's members of the proposal together with the council's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the meeting. Notification may take place by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law.
- \*C16.02.** An amendment to this constitution, proposed under \*C16.01., shall:
- be approved at any legally called meeting of this congregation by a majority vote of those voting members present and voting;
  - be ratified without change at the next regular meeting of this congregation held pursuant to C10.01. by a two-thirds vote of those voting members present and voting; and
  - have the effective date included in the resolution<sup>1</sup> 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 this congregation of its decision to approve or disapprove the proposed changes; the changes shall go into effect upon notification that the synod has approved them.
- \*C16.04.** This constitution may be amended to bring any section into conformity with a section or sections, either required or not required, of the *Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* as most recently amended by the Churchwide Assembly. Such amendments may be approved by a majority vote of those voting

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<sup>1</sup> Such an effective date must be stated in relation to the requirements of \*C16.03. to allow time for synod review of the amendment.

members present and voting at any legally called meeting of this congregation without presentation at a prior meeting of this congregation, provided that the Congregation Council has submitted by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law, notice to this congregation of such an amendment or amendments, together with the council's recommendations, at least 30 days prior to the meeting. Upon the request of at least two (2) voting members of this congregation, the Congregation Council shall submit such notice. Following the adoption of an amendment, the secretary of this congregation shall submit a copy thereof to the synod. Such provisions shall become effective immediately following a vote of approval.

**C16.04.01** The sections of this constitution marked with an asterisk must be used without alteration or amendment of the text in any manner (neither deletions nor additions.)

## **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 this congregation's members of the proposal with the council's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the Congregation Meeting. Notification may take place by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law.

\***C17.04.** Adopted or amended bylaws shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod.

## **Chapter 18.**

### **CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS**

\***C18.01.** This congregation in a legally called meeting or the Congregation Council may enact continuing resolutions. Such continuing resolutions may not conflict with the constitution or bylaws of this congregation.

\***C18.02.** Continuing resolutions shall be enacted or amended by a majority vote of a meeting of this congregation or a two-thirds vote of all voting members of the Congregation Council.

\***C18.03.** Adopted or amended continuing resolutions shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod.

## **Chapter 19.**

### **INDEMNIFICATION**

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

## **Chapter 20.**

### **PARISH AUTHORIZATION**

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

- \*C20.01.** This congregation may unite 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 synod 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 synod 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 synod 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 synod 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.