



# **CONSTITUTION, BYLAWS, AND CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS**

**FOR**

**GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH OF WOODSTOCK, INC.,**

**OF THE  
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA®**

**NOVEMBER 2025**



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## **Introduction to the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church of Woodstock, Inc., of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

This constitution is based on the *Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. The *Model Constitution for Congregations* was adopted by the Constituting Convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, as required by the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. The current edition of the *Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* contains changes adopted by all churchwide assemblies, including the seventeenth Churchwide Assembly in 2025. It is consistent with the requirements of the governing documents of the ELCA's churchwide organization and synods, and it provides organizational flexibility to recognize the context of local congregations.

In addition to the constitution of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, this document contains bylaws and continuing resolutions, which relate to specific practices and details of the congregation's organization, operation, and life. Each congregation has discretion and may develop its own bylaws and continuing resolutions, but no such bylaw or continuing resolution may conflict with constitutional provisions in the *Model Constitution for Congregations*, the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, or the constitution of the synod.

Each congregation of the ELCA is to provide a copy of its governing documents, and any amendments thereto, to its synod. In accordance with ELCA bylaw 9.53.03., amendments to a congregation constitution become effective *only* when approved by the synod. No governing document amendment will be approved by a synod if it conflicts with the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.

### **Codification Explanation**

Sections of this constitution marked with an asterisk (\*) come directly from the *Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. These sections are required and must be used without alteration or amendment of the text in any manner (*i.e.*, neither additions nor deletions are permissible).

The constitution is organized into chapters by general subject matter and codified as (a) constitutional provisions, (b) bylaws, and (c) continuing resolutions. Each provision is preceded by a capital "C." If a constitutional provision is mandatory, it will be preceded by an asterisk, "\*C."

- a. Constitutional provisions are codified with two sets of numbers, preceded by a "C": the chapter number, followed by a period, and a two-digit number. A period follows the two-digit number. (Example: C1.01.) Constitutional provisions are adopted and amended in accordance with Chapter 16 titled "Amendments."
- b. Bylaw provisions follow constitutional provisions to which they apply. Bylaws are codified with three sets of numbers: the chapter number (preceded by a "C"), the related constitutional provision number, and a two-digit number. There are periods after the chapter number, after the reference to the constitutional provision, and after the bylaw number. (Example: C1.11.01.) Bylaws are adopted and amended in accordance with Chapters 16 and 17.
- c. Continuing resolutions are intended to provide descriptions of operational patterns and practices or of the ongoing responsibilities of committees or other units within the organizational structure of the congregation. They follow the relevant constitutional provision or bylaw to which they refer. Continuing resolutions also are codified with three sets of numbers, except that the third set is preceded by a capital letter. The letter indicates the order of the continuing resolution ("A" being the first); the following number represents the year in which it was adopted. (Example: C12.12.A05.) Unlike constitutional provisions and bylaws, which are adopted by the congregation at a legally called and conducted meeting, continuing resolutions may be adopted either by a congregational meeting or by the Congregation Council.

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

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**CHURCH IN AMERICA®**

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**\*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 Good Shepherd Lutheran Church of Woodstock, Inc.
- C1.02.** For the purpose of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws and continuing resolutions, the congregation of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church of Woodstock, Inc., is hereinafter designated as "this congregation."
- C1.11.** This congregation shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of Georgia.
- C1.11.01.** The corporate seal of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church (hereinafter referred to as Good Shepherd, this congregation, or the church) shall be a circle containing a smaller circle. Within the larger circle and around the outside of the smaller circle shall be the words "GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH, WOODSTOCK, GA." Around the inside of the inner circle shall be the words "INCORPORATED 9-21-89." Forming a circle under the incorporation date shall be the words "EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA." In the center of the circle formed by the words "EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA" shall be a cross. To the left of the cross shall be three flames. To the right of the cross shall be three interlocking rings.

**Chapter 2.**

**CONFESSION OF FAITH**

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

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\* Required provision

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

### **Chapter 3.**

#### **NATURE OF THE CHURCH**

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

### **Chapter 4.**

#### **STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

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

- i. Foster and participate in ecumenical relationships consistent with churchwide policy.
- \*C4.04.** This congregation shall develop an organizational structure to be described in the bylaws. The Congregation Council shall prepare descriptions of the responsibilities of each committee, task force, or other organizational group and shall review their actions. Such descriptions shall be contained in continuing resolutions in the section on the Congregation Committees.
- \*C4.05.** This congregation shall adopt and periodically review a mission statement which will provide specific direction for its programs.
- C4.05.01.** MISSION STATEMENT: We are called, gathered and blessed to be a community and instrument of grace for all sheep of the Good Shepherd.
- \*C4.06.** References herein to the nature of the relationship between the three expressions of this church—congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization—as being interdependent or as being in a partnership relationship describe the mutual responsibility of these expressions in God’s mission and the fulfillment of the purposes of this church as described in this chapter, and do not imply or describe the creation of partnerships, co-ventures, agencies, or other legal relationships recognized in civil law.

## **Chapter 5.**

### **POWERS OF THE CONGREGATION**

- \*C5.01.** The powers of this congregation are those necessary to fulfill its purpose.
- \*C5.02.** The powers of this congregation are vested in the Congregation Meeting called and conducted as provided in this constitution and bylaws.
- \*C5.03.** Only such authority as is delegated to the Congregation Council or other organizational units in this congregation’s governing documents is recognized. All remaining authority is retained by the congregation. The congregation is authorized to:
  - a. call a pastor as provided in Chapter 9;
  - b. terminate the call of a pastor as provided in Chapter 9;
  - c. call a minister of Word and Service;
  - d. terminate the call of a minister of Word and Service in conformity with the 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 Congregation Council, 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 or the Congregation Council shall choose from among the voting members of the congregation 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 and other qualifications shall be as prescribed in guidelines established by the Southeastern Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- C5.05.** This congregation shall have a mission endowment fund that will operate as specified in this congregation’s bylaws and Endowment Fund Policy. The purpose of the mission endowment fund is to provide for mission work beyond the operational budget of this congregation.
- C5.05.01** The Endowment Committee is responsible for oversight of the mission endowment fund using guidance from the Endowment Policy.
  - a. The Endowment Committee shall be comprised of 3 or more voting members in total, elected by the Congregation Council at the first meeting of each year.
  - b. The Endowment Committee shall select officers.
  - c. The pastor and president of the congregation shall be *ex-officio* members of the Endowment Committee.

- d. The Endowment Committee members shall serve for a term of two (2) years, with a limit of two (2) consecutive terms. Terms will be established on a staggered basis.
  - 1. At each annual meeting, this congregation shall elect the necessary number for a term of two years.
  - 2. After a member has served two consecutive terms, she/he shall be eligible for re-elections after one two-year hiatus.
  - 3. If a member of the Endowment Committee is unable to fulfill their term, the Congregation Council shall appoint a member for the remainder of that term. until the next annual meeting.
- e. A quorum shall be met when a majority of members are present.

## **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 Southeastern Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. This congregation is subject to the discipline of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- \*C6.02.** This congregation accepts the Confession of Faith and agrees to the purposes of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and shall act in accordance with them.
- \*C6.03.** This congregation acknowledges its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in which:
  - a. This congregation agrees to be responsible for its life as a Christian community.
  - b. This congregation pledges its financial support and participation in the life and mission of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
  - c. This congregation agrees to call pastoral leadership from the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in accordance with its call procedures except in special circumstances and with the approval of the bishop of the synod. These special circumstances are limited either to calling a candidate approved for the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or to contracting for pastoral services with a minister of Word and Sacrament of a church body with which the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America officially has established a relationship of full communion.
  - d. This congregation agrees to consider ministers of Word and Service for call to other staff positions in the congregation according to the procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
  - e. This congregation agrees to file this constitution and any subsequent changes to this constitution with the synod for review to ascertain that all of its provisions are in agreement with the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and with the constitution of the synod.
- \*C6.04.** Affiliation with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may be terminated as follows:
  - a. This congregation takes action to dissolve.
  - b. This congregation ceases to exist.
  - c. This congregation is removed from membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America according to the procedures for discipline of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or in accordance with provision 9.23 of the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
  - d. The Southeastern Synod of the ELCA 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 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 the bishop and/ or the bishop's designee are a voting member of this congregation, they shall have voice but not vote at the first meeting.

- b. Within 10 days after the resolution has been voted upon in the first meeting, the secretary of the congregation shall submit a copy of the resolution to the bishop, attesting that the special meeting was legally called and conducted and certifying the outcome of the vote, and shall 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 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 the congregation, after such consultation, is still considering terminating 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 this bishop and/or the bishop's designee are a voting members of the congregation, they shall have voice but not vote at the 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, shall send copies of the resolution to the voting members of the 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 synodical approval before terminating their membership in this church.
  - 3) Congregations established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be required, in addition to complying with the foregoing provisions in \*C6.05., to satisfy all financial obligations to this church and receive Synod Council approval before terminating their membership in this church.
- h. If this congregation fails to achieve the required two-thirds vote of voting members present at 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 effected.

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

## **Chapter 7.**

### **PROPERTY OWNERSHIP**

**\*C7.01.** If this congregation ceases to exist, title to undisposed property shall pass to the Southeastern 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 two-thirds of the voting members of this congregation present at a legally called and conducted special meeting of this congregation vote to relate 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 relate to another Lutheran church body, it shall consult with representatives of the Southeastern 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 \*C7.03. above, where this congregation has received property from the synod pursuant to a deed or other instrument containing restrictions under provision 9.71.a. of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, this congregation accepts such restrictions and:
- 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.
  - Shall—upon written demand by the Synod Council, pursuant to †S13.23. of the constitution of the Southeastern 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:
- 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.
  - 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.
  - Voting** members are confirmed members. Such confirmed members, during the current or preceding calendar year, shall have communed in this congregation and shall have made a contribution of record to this congregation. Members of this congregation who have satisfied these basic standards shall have the privilege of voice and vote at every regular and special meeting of the congregation as well as the other rights and privileges ascribed to voting members by the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws. They shall not have voted as a seasonal member of another congregation of this church in the previous two calendar months.
  - 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.
  - Seasonal** members are voting members of 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:
    - they shall not be eligible for elected office in, or for membership on the Congregation Council or on a call committee of, this congregation;
    - 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;
    - they shall not have the right to vote on any matter concerning or affecting the affiliation of this congregation with the ELCA;
    - they shall not be eligible to serve as voting members from this congregation of the Synod Assembly or the Churchwide Assembly;
    - they shall not, even if otherwise permitted by this congregation, vote by proxy or by absentee ballot; and

- 6) they shall not, within any two calendar month period, exercise voting rights in this congregation and in the congregation where they remain voting members.
- \*C8.03.** All applications for confirmed membership shall be submitted to and shall require the approval of the Congregation Council.
- \*C8.04.** It shall be the privilege and duty of members of this congregation to:
  - a. make regular use of the means of grace, both Word and sacraments;
  - b. live a Christian life in accordance with the Word of God and the teachings of the Lutheran church; and
  - c. support the work of this congregation, the synod, and the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America through contributions of their time, abilities, and financial support as biblical stewards.
- \*C8.05.** Membership in this congregation shall be terminated by any of the following:
  - a. death;
  - b. resignation;
  - c. transfer or release;
  - d. disciplinary action in accordance with Chapter 20 of the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; or
  - e. removal from the roll due to inactivity in accordance with the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.
 Such persons who have been removed from the roll of members shall remain persons for whom the Church has a continuing pastoral concern.
- C8.05.01.** A confirmed member who fails to commune and make a contribution of record for one year shall be removed from the active and voting membership rolls but maintained on the inactive membership rolls. Said member is returned to the active and voting membership rolls by communing and making a contribution of record in the same year. When a confirmed member's status remains inactive for more than two years, that member may be removed from the roll by action of the Congregation Council..

## **Chapter 9.**

### **ROSTERED MINISTER**

- \*C9.01.** Authority to call a pastor shall be in this congregation by at least a two-thirds vote of voting members present and voting at a meeting legally called for that purpose. Before a call is issued, the officers, or a committee elected by the Congregation Council to recommend the call, shall seek the advice and help of the bishop of the synod.
- \*C9.02.** This congregation may call as a pastor only:
  - a. a member of the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;
  - b. or a candidate for the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament who has been recommended for the congregation by the synodical bishop.
- \*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, proclaiming God's love for the world, advocating dignity, justice, and equity for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, and embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations.
  - b. Each pastor with a congregational call shall, within the congregation:
    - 1) offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead;
    - 2) relate to all schools and organizations of this congregation;
    - 3) install regularly elected members of the Congregation Council;
    - 4) with the council, administer discipline; and
    - 5) endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the ELCA churchwide organization and of the Southeastern Synod of the ELCA; 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*.

- \*C9.04.** The specific duties of the pastor, compensation, and other matters pertaining to the service of the pastor shall be included in a letter of call, which shall be attested by the bishop of the synod.
- \*C9.05.** The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between a minister of Word and Sacrament and this congregation shall be as follows:
- a. The call of this congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment, which shall be terminated only by death or, following consultation with the synodical bishop, for any of the following reasons:
    - 1) mutual agreement to terminate the call or the completion of a call for a specific term;
    - 2) resignation of the pastor, which shall become effective, unless otherwise agreed, no later than 30 days after the date on which it was submitted;
    - 3) inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in the congregation in view of local conditions;
    - 4) inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in view of disability or incapacity of the pastor;
    - 5) suspension of the pastor through discipline for more than three months;
    - 6) resignation or removal of the pastor from the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament of this church;
    - 7) termination of the relationship between this church and the congregation;
    - 8) dissolution of the congregation or the termination of a parish arrangement;
    - 9) suspension of the congregation through discipline for more than six months.
  - b. When allegations of disability or 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, who has sole discretion, may investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson, or
    - 2) when such allegations have been brought to the synod's attention by an official recital of allegations by the Congregation Council or by a petition signed by at least one-third of the voting members of the congregation, the bishop personally shall investigate such conditions together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson.
  - c. In case of alleged disability or incapacity under paragraph a.4) above, the bishop's committee shall obtain and document competent medical opinion concerning the pastor's condition. When a disability or incapacity is evident to the committee, the bishop of this synod may declare the pastorate vacant. When the pastorate is declared vacant, the Synod Council shall list the pastor on the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament as disabled. Upon resumption of the ability to conduct the office effectively, the bishop shall take steps to enable the pastor to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another appropriate call.
  - d. In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of the congregation under paragraph a.3) above, the bishop's committee shall endeavor to hear from all concerned persons, after which the bishop together with the committee shall present their recommendations first to the pastor and then to the congregation. The recommendations of the bishop's committee must address whether the pastor's call should come to an end and, if so, may suggest appropriate severance arrangements. The committee may also propose other actions that should be undertaken by the congregation and by the pastor, if appropriate. If the pastor and congregation agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action need be taken by the synod.
  - e. If either party fails to assent to the recommendations of the bishop's committee concerning the pastor's call, the congregation may dismiss the pastor only at a legally called meeting after consultation with the bishop, either (a) by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee did not recommend termination of the call, or (b) by a majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee recommended termination of the call.
  - f. If, in the course of proceedings described in paragraph c. or paragraph d. above, the bishop's committee concludes that there may be grounds for discipline, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action in accordance with the provisions of this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions.
- \*C9.06.** At a time of pastoral vacancy, an interim pastor may be appointed by the bishop of the synod with the consent of this congregation or the Congregation Council.
- \*C9.07.** During the period of service, an interim pastor shall have the rights and duties in the congregation of a regularly called pastor and may delegate the same in part to a supply pastor with the consent of the bishop of the synod and this congregation or Congregation Council. The interim pastor and any rostered minister providing assistance shall refrain

from exerting influence in the selection of a pastor. Unless previously agreed upon by the Synod Council, an interim pastor is not available for a regular call to the congregation served.

- \*C9.08. This congregation shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to a former pastor before calling a successor. A pastor shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to this congregation before beginning service in a call to another congregation or employment in another ministry setting
- \*C9.09. When a pastor is called to serve in company with another pastor or pastors, the privileges and responsibilities of each pastor shall be specified in documents to accompany the call and to be drafted in consultation involving the pastors, the Congregation Council, and the bishop of the synod. As occasion requires, the documents may be revised through a similar consultation.
- \*C9.11. With the approval of the bishop of the synod, the congregation may depart from \*C9.05.a. and call a pastor for a specific term. Details of such calls shall be in writing setting forth the purpose and conditions involved. Prior to the completion of a term, the bishop or a designated representative of the bishop shall meet with the pastor and representatives of the congregation for a review of the call. Such a call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of \*C9.05.a.
- \*C9.12. The pastor of this congregation:
  - a. shall keep accurate records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from the congregation;
  - b. shall submit a summary of such statistics annually to the synod; and
  - c. shall become a member of this congregation upon receipt and acceptance of the letter of call. In a parish of multiple congregations, the pastor shall hold membership in one of the congregations.
- \*C9.13. The pastor(s) shall submit a report of ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.
- \*C9.14. The parochial records of this congregation shall be maintained by the pastor and shall remain the property of the congregation. The secretary of this congregation shall attest in writing to the bishop of this synod that such records have been placed in the secretary's hands in good order by a departing pastor before the installation of that pastor in another call or an approval of a request for a change of 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 synodical bishop may be called as a deacon of this congregation.
- \*C9.23. Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, every minister of Word and Service shall:
  - a. Be rooted in the Word of God, for proclamation and service;
  - b. Advocate a prophetic diakonia that commits itself to risk-taking and innovative service on the frontiers of the Church's outreach, giving particular attention to the suffering places in God's world;
  - c. Speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed proclaiming God's love for the world, advocating dignity, justice and equity for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized and embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations.
- \*C9.24. The specific duties of the deacon, compensation, and other matters pertaining to the service of the deacon shall be included in a letter of call, which shall be attested by the bishop of the synod.

- \*C9.25.** The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between a minister of Word and Service and a congregation shall be as follows:
- a. The call of this congregation, when accepted by a deacon, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment, which shall be terminated only by death or, following consultation with the synodical bishop, for any of 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) inability to conduct the office effectively in view of disability or 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 disability or 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, who has 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 disability or 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 resumption of the ability to conduct the office effectively, 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 ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.

## **Chapter 10.**

### **CONGREGATION MEETING**

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

**C10.01.01.** The congregation's annual meeting shall be held in two parts with the first of the fiscal year occurring in the fall on a day and time to be set by the Congregation Council and the second of the fiscal year occurring in the spring on a day and time to be set by the Congregation Council. Business at the fall meeting shall include, but not be limited to, election of members of the Congregation Council and any other business required by the constitution. Business at the spring meeting shall include, but not be limited to, approval of the congregation's annual budget (for the next fiscal year, July 1-June 30) and any other business required by the constitution.

**C10.02.** A special Congregation Meeting may be called by the pastor, the Congregation Council, or the president of this congregation, and shall be called by the president of the congregation upon the written request of twenty percent (20%) of the average weekly worship attendance. 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 to all voting members at least 10 days in advance of the date of the meeting..

**C10.04.** Twenty percent (20%) of the average weekly worship attendance shall constitute a quorum.

**C10.05.** Voting by proxy or by absentee ballot shall not be permitted.

**C10.06.** All regular business by the 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.

**C10.08.** 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 or its equivalent. To the extent permitted by state law, notice of all meetings may be provided electronically.

**C10.09.** "*Ex officio*" as used herein means membership with full rights of voice and vote unless otherwise expressly limited.

**C10.10** Family members of this congregation's staff who reside in the staff member's household shall not be permitted to participate or vote in the portion of the congregation meeting pertaining to the budget.

## **Chapter 11.**

### **OFFICERS**

**C11.01.** The officers of this congregation shall be a president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, and financial secretary.

a. Duties of the officers shall be specified in the bylaws.

b. The officers shall be voting members of the congregation.

c. Officers of this congregation shall be voting members of the Congregation Council

d. If the Congregation Council elects its officers, -the president, vice president, and secretary shall be elected from the elected membership of the Congregation Council.

e. The treasurer and financial secretary may be elected from the elected membership of the Congregation Council or may be appointed from the congregation's membership, in which case they will serve as consultants to the Council with voice but no vote.

**C11.01.01.** Duties of Officers

A. The President

1. The president of this congregation shall serve a one-year term in office and may not be eligible to serve more than two consecutive terms.

2. The president shall preside over all meetings of this congregation, the Congregation Council, and any other congregation assemblies called for the purpose of conducting church business.

3. The president shall be an *ex officio* member of all church committees.
  4. The president, with Congregation Council approval, shall have the power to appoint committee members to special committees created by the Congregation Council.
- B. The Vice President
1. The vice president shall serve a one-year term in office and may not be eligible to serve more than two consecutive terms.
  2. The vice president shall perform the duties of the president during any absences of the president or at the direction of the president.
  3. The vice president shall perform such duties as assigned by this congregation, president, or Congregation Council.
- C. The Secretary
1. The secretary shall serve a one-year term of office and may not be eligible to serve more than two consecutive terms.
  2. The secretary shall record the minutes of all Congregation Meetings and maintain a permanent record in the archives.
  3. The secretary shall record the minutes of all Congregation Council meetings and maintain a permanent record in the archives.
  4. The secretary shall keep a record of all congregation policies, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this congregation.
  5. The secretary shall be responsible for the official correspondence of the congregation.
  6. The secretary shall keep a current record of all officers, Congregation Council members, and committee members elected by this congregation together with the respective terms of office.
  7. The secretary shall, in advance of every meeting, provide members of the Congregation Council with the minutes of the previous meeting.
  8. The secretary shall perform other duties as directed by the president, the Congregation Council, or this congregation.
- D. The Treasurer
1. The treasurer shall serve a term of two years and may be reappointed for a second term of two years by the Congregation Council.
  2. The treasurer shall maintain and keep an accurate record and account of all church monies received through the financial secretary.
  3. The treasurer shall make payment of all expenses authorized by the congregation or the Congregation Council.
  4. The treasurer shall pay current obligations: (1) in accordance with standard business practices at the first of each month, or by the date specified; (2) as directed by this congregation or the Congregation Council.
  5. The treasurer shall render a full written report of this congregation's financial condition to the congregation at the annual meeting and to the Congregation Council monthly.
  6. The treasurer shall prepare and submit the books for an audit near the end of the fiscal year.
  7. The treasurer shall assure that all specifically designated funds are distributed properly.
  8. The treasurer shall perform any and all other duties as directed or assigned by this congregation or the Congregation Council.
  9. The treasurer may appoint, with approval of the Congregation Council, an assistant treasurer. The assistant treasurer shall act as the treasurer in the treasurer's absence and perform other duties as assigned by the treasurer.
  10. The treasurer shall not serve as an offering counter of the congregation.
  11. The treasurer shall review the financial policy of the congregation annually and make any necessary recommendations to the Congregation Council as needed to update the policy.
- E. The Financial Secretary
1. The financial secretary shall serve a term of two years and may be reappointed by the Congregation Council.
  2. The financial secretary shall maintain and keep an accurate record and account of all monies received from contributing members and other sources.
  3. The financial secretary shall render a full written report of this congregation's income to this congregation at the annual meeting and to the Congregation Council monthly.
  4. The financial secretary shall ensure that members receive an annual written report of individual contributions.

5. The financial secretary may appoint, with the approval of the Congregation Council, an assistant financial secretary. The assistant financial secretary shall act as the financial secretary in the financial secretary's absence and perform other duties as assigned by the financial secretary.

6. The financial secretary shall be responsible for training and supervision of offering counters for the congregation.

**C11.02.** The Congregation Council shall elect its officers, and they shall be the officers of the congregation. The president, vice president, and secretary shall be elected by written ballot and serve a term of one year, and the treasurer and financial secretary shall serve a term of two years. The term shall begin on January 1<sup>st</sup> and end on December 31<sup>st</sup>.

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

## **Chapter 12.**

### **CONGREGATION COUNCIL**

**C12.01.** The voting membership of the Congregation Council shall consist of the pastor(s), the officers of the congregation, and not more than nine members of the congregation, one of whom may be a youth or young adult. Any voting member of the congregation may be elected, subject only to the limitation on the length of continuous service permitted in that office, and subject to the limitations as set forth in the bylaws of this constitution. 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 two regular meetings of the Congregation Council without cause. Consistent with the laws of the state in which this congregation is incorporated, the congregation may adopt procedures for the removal of a member of the Congregation Council in other circumstances.

**C12.01.01.** Voting members of the Congregation Council shall be elected at the fall meeting of this congregation so that the make-up of the Congregation Council will be an odd number. Any voting member of the congregation may be elected to the Congregation Council unless:

1. another family member, such as a spouse, a child, or a sibling, is a member of the Congregation Council; this restriction does not apply to the youth member.

2. the member is a paid employee of the congregation or is a family member of a paid employee of the congregation; this exception does not apply to the pastor(s) but does apply to their family members.

**C12.02.** The members of the Congregation Council except the pastor(s) shall be elected by written ballot to serve for two years or until their successors are elected. The youth member of the Congregation Council shall be elected to serve for one year or until a successor is elected. All members of the Congregation Council shall be eligible to serve no more than two full terms consecutively. Their terms shall begin on January 1<sup>st</sup> and end on December 31<sup>st</sup>.

**C12.03.** Should a member's place on the Congregation Council be declared vacant, the Congregation Council shall elect, by majority vote, a successor for the remainder of the vacant term. The successor's term shall not count towards the two consecutive term limit.

**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. To constitute, as needed, task forces which shall be for a specific purpose and for a specified period of time, concluding with a report to Council for consideration.

**C12.05.** The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the financial and property matters of this congregation.

- a. The Congregation Council shall be the board of trustees of this congregation and, as such, shall be responsible for maintaining and protecting its property and managing its business and fiscal affairs. It shall have the powers and be subject to the obligations that pertain to such boards under the laws of the State of Georgia, except as otherwise provided herein.
- b. The Congregation Council shall not have the authority to buy, sell, or encumber real property unless specifically authorized to do so by a meeting of the congregation.
- c. The Congregation Council may enter into contracts of up to 5% of the annual budget for items not included in the budget without congregational approval.
- 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 5% of the annual budget in excess of the anticipated receipts only after approval by a Congregation Meeting. The budget shall include this congregation's full indicated share in support of the wider ministry being carried on in partnership with the synod and churchwide organization.
- e. The Congregation Council shall ascertain that the financial affairs of this congregation are being conducted efficiently, giving particular attention to the prompt payment of all obligations and to the regular forwarding of benevolence monies to the synod.
- f. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for this congregation's investments and its total insurance program.

**C12.05.01.** In an emergency situation where the property or business of the congregation is at risk, the Congregation Council as the "...board of trustees of this congregation..." (C12.05.), shall have authority to act to protect such property or business even in the event the protection of such property or business exceeds the 5% of annual budget spending limitation set forth in C12.05.d. The Congregation Council shall then report such action to the congregation by making announcements at Sunday services the following two Sundays after said action, including notification of the action in the next published newsletter, and sending electronic notification to the congregation within five business days of the action.

**C12.06.** The Congregation Council shall see that the provisions of this constitution, its bylaws, and the continuing resolutions are carried out.

**C12.07.** The Congregation Council shall provide for an annual review of the membership roster.

**C12.08.** The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the employment and supervision of the staff of this congregation. Nothing in this provision shall be deemed to affect the congregation's responsibility for the call, terms of call, or termination of call of any employees who are on a roster of this church.

**C12.09.** The Congregation Council shall submit a comprehensive report to this congregation at the annual meeting.

**C12.11.** The Congregation Council shall normally meet once a month but no less than 10 times per year. 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. Special meetings may be held electronically or by teleconference.

**C12.12.** A quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of a majority of the members of the Congregation Council, including the pastor or interim pastor, except when the pastor or interim pastor requests or consents to be absent and has given prior approval to the agenda for a particular regular or special meeting, which shall be the only business considered at that meeting. Chronic or repeated absence of the pastor or interim pastor who has refused approval of the agenda of a subsequent regular or special meeting shall not preclude action by the Congregation Council, following consultation with the synodical bishop.

**C12.13.** The Congregation Council and its committees may hold meetings by remote communication, including electronically and by telephone conference, as long as there is an opportunity for simultaneous aural communication or its equivalent. 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 three or more voting members of this congregation, two of whom, if possible, shall be outgoing members of the Congregation Council, shall be elected at the annual meeting for a term of one year. Members of the Nominating Committee are not eligible for consecutive re-election.

- C13.03.** An *Audit Committee* of three or more voting members shall be elected by the Congregation Council. Audit Committee members shall not be members of the Congregation Council. Term of office shall be three years, with one member elected each year. Members shall be eligible for re-election. No member shall be eligible for more than two consecutive terms.
- C13.04.** A *Mutual Ministry Committee* (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 pastor(s). Term of office shall be three years, with two members to be appointed each successive year, one member to be appointed by the pastor(s) and one member to be appointed by the president.
- C13.04.A12.** Members of the Mutual Ministry Committee cannot serve more than one three-year term without at least a one-year recess between terms. Members of the Mutual Ministry Committee may not simultaneously serve on the Congregation Council or the Personnel Committee or have a family member serving on the Congregation Council or Personnel Committee.
- C13.05.** When a pastoral vacancy occurs, a *Call Committee* of five or six voting members shall be elected by the Congregation Council. Term of office will terminate upon installation of the newly called pastor.
- C13.06.** Other committees or organizational structures of this congregation may be formed, as the need arises, by decision of the Congregation Council.
- C13.06.A12.** The *Personnel Committee* is appointed by the Congregation Council. Members of the Personnel Committee may not be paid employees of the congregation or a family member of a paid employee of the congregation, with the exception of the pastor(s), but not their family members. Members of the Personnel Committee may not simultaneously serve on the Mutual Ministry Committee or have a family member serving on the Mutual Ministry Committee.
- C13.07.** Duties of committees or organizational structures of this congregation shall be specified in the continuing resolutions.

#### **C13.07.A18. Committee Descriptions**

##### **CONGREGATIONAL CARE COMMITTEE**

Purpose: In partnership with the church leadership and the congregation, to be responsible for supporting ministries that provide care and opportunities for involvement for the members of GSLC, always with the goal of facilitating the spiritual growth of the individual and their connectedness to the body of Christ.

Specifics:

- 1) Provide support for existing ministries such as, but not limited to: Prayer Circle, meals for congregational members in need (also as needed following funeral/memorial services), and prayer shawls.
- 2) Implement and support Small Group Ministries and facilitate establishing additional ministries that increase the connectedness of members of the congregation and welcome those looking to belong to a vital, dynamic body of Christ.
- 3) Submit, at the time and in the form required, an annual budget as requested by the Finance Committee.

##### **FACILITIES AND MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE**

Purpose: In cooperation with the pastor of the congregation, to supervise and provide proper maintenance and repair to church property and the general protection of the congregation against loss or damage of whatever nature.

Specifics:

- 1) Make a quarterly inspection of church properties, facilities and equipment using an approved checklist, a summary report of which is formally submitted to the Congregation Council identifying recommendations, needed repairs, improvements, or replacements.
- 2) Carry out all requests by the Congregation Council on purchases, repairs, replacement of church property and equipment.
- 3) Responsible for the care of the building and property, their needs and problems.
- 4) Supervise, control and recommend adequate storage facilities for all church property, equipment, and supplies and the orderly maintenance of the same.
- 5) Enlist work crews for special repair, improvement, cleaning, painting, decorating, landscaping and other projects.
- 6) Arrange for immediate repairs of an urgent nature and all normal repairs and alterations for which budget funds have been allocated.
- 7) Submit an annual budget request to the Finance Committee in the form and at the time requested by that committee.

#### FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

Purpose: To provide ways to strengthen the fellowship between congregation members; to bring new members into the life of the congregation; and to build cooperation, trust, and enjoyment among the members of the congregation.

Specifics:

- 1) Provide regular fellowship gatherings after early and late services.
- 2) Greet new members, confirmands, and staff with Fellowship receptions. Invite visitors to these activities. Thank them for coming and ask them to come again.
- 3) Provide receptions to commemorate hellos and goodbyes, GSLC milestones and anniversaries.
- 4) Provide receptions to honor members after memorial services at the family's request.
- 5) Submit a timely and accurate budget in an appropriate format as requested by the Finance Committee.
- 6) Remain flexible and responsive to developing needs in this ministry.
- 7) . Encourage active participation in fellowship activities by all members of the congregation beyond attending. Helping to set up/clean up, serve, or bringing a dish fosters a sense of belonging and community.
- 8) Stay in contact with the congregation, Pastor, Council, and committees and evolve to meet their needs.
- 9) Evaluate our efforts to best utilize resources and achieve more.

#### FINANCE COMMITTEE

Purpose: In cooperation with the Treasurer and pastor of the congregation, to support the ministry of the church through financial planning and oversight.

Specifics:

- 1) Be responsible for the ongoing oversight of the financial affairs of the congregation.
- 2) In conjunction with the Congregation Council and the Stewardship Committee, prepare and present to the congregation an annual budget.
- 3) Regularly review the financial affairs of the congregation, including offerings, contracts and service agreements, payment of salaries and bills, and disbursement of special funds.
- 4) Support the staff and the Congregation Council by obtaining financial and legal information necessary for consideration of contracts, deeds and the like.
- 5) Annually check the adequacy of all types of insurance for church property and equipment and negotiate insurance contracts.
- 6) Provide other support as requested by the Congregation Council.

#### OUTREACH COMMITTEE

Purpose: To promote, in cooperation with the Pastor and Outreach Chairperson, all welcome, awareness, promotion, advocacy, and outreach service of this congregation. Or alternately, to share the Good News with those outside of the congregation and those in need.

Specifics:

- 1) Foster a climate that encourages congregation members to share their faith with others.
- 2) Promote and direct a congregation-wide atmosphere of welcome.
- 3) Study and adopt or adapt suggestions of the outreach programs of the ELCA.
- 4) Assist the Council in determining community needs we can address and provide direct assistance to people in the community in ways that have a positive impact in their lives and well being.
- 5) Support local charities through congregational funds and volunteers.
- 6) Develop and implement programs to meet specific community needs.
- 7) Foster support for missions and charities through an ongoing program of mission information and education through agencies, committees, and organizations such as ELCA World Hunger Appeal, ELCA Global Mission, Inspiritus, etc.
- 8) Promote awareness of ELCA Social Statements and Messages, and share individual and congregational opportunities to support ELCA efforts to advocate for the common good.
- 9) To function effectively, the committee should have a minimum of five members.
- 10) Submit an annual budget as requested by the Finance Committee.

#### PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Purpose: To make recommendations to the Congregation Council, in cooperation with the pastor as head of staff, that will enable decisions to carry out the obligations of the congregation as an employer.

Specifics:

- 1) Make recommendations to the Congregation Council that specifically support sections C12.04.c and C12.04.d of the Constitution and Bylaws: To oversee and provide for the administration of this congregation to enable it to fulfill its functions and perform its mission (C12.04.c); to maintain supportive relationships with the pastor(s) and staff and help them annually to evaluate the fulfillment of their calling or employment (C12.04.d)
- 2) Responsible in partnership with the Finance Committee for annually reviewing all compensation provided for the pastors and other paid staff, and ensuring that appropriate action is taken by the Congregation Council regarding such compensation and are included in the budget.
- 3) Responsible for issues with legal implications, such as ensuring, as much as possible, that the congregation is providing a safe and secure working environment and that the staff is compliant with any safety policies and procedures of the congregation.
- 4) Work with all parties involved to be sure that lines of authority are clear, and that employees are enabled to carry out those aspects of ministry that have been entrusted to them.
- 5) Review letters of call for pastors and other paid staff offer letters with specific attention to the sections on compensation, on specific job responsibilities, and on other employment terms. Recommendation for approval is then made to the Congregation Council.
- 6) Ensure that the Performance Assessment process is conducted in a regular and timely manner, and in a spirit of fairness and equity for all staff.
- 7) Provide clear and up-to-date human resources policies and procedures to the Congregation Council initially for approval and then provided in writing to all paid and volunteer staff.
- 8) Periodically audit the safety of the congregation's working environment, including interviews with the pastor and staff about problem areas. Changes, as needed, are then made to the Congregation Council.
- 9) Ensure that personnel files have been created and maintained for every staff member and volunteer, including job descriptions and a description of their duties and responsibilities.
- 10) Responsible to the congregation to keep abreast of the most current relevant personnel laws and regulations from federal, state and local government agencies.
- 11) Responsible to keep current with the most recent actions of the synod on personnel policies and procedures.
- 12) Ensure that all committee activities are coordinated with other Congregation Council committees and the Mutual Ministry Committee to clarify areas of responsibility and avoid overlap in areas related to church personnel.

#### STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

Purpose: To nurture a culture of generosity and abundance mindset within the congregation. To share stories that inspire members to generously share their time, talents, and treasures to support the church's ministries and build God's Kingdom. To provide opportunities for members to discover and develop their gifts, and to encourage responsible and joyful financial stewardship.

Specifics:

- 1) Develop programs to help members identify, cultivate, and share the unique talents and passions God has blessed them with to serve the church's mission.
- 2) Partner with members to maintain an up-to-date record of the skills, experience, and interests of the congregation to better match members' gifts with ministry needs. Promptly reach out to new members to learn about and record their talents.
- 3) Offer regular training, workshops, and resources to equip members to live out their gifts in service to the church and community.
- 4) Annually engage members in meaningful reflection and study on the Biblical principles of stewardship, generosity, and abundance.
- 5) Encourage members to give joyfully, sacrificially, and proportionally in response to God's blessings as an act of worship and gratitude. Move from a scarcity mindset to one of abundance and trust in God's provision
- 6) Provide opportunities for every member to make an annual financial commitment to support the ministries of the congregation. Focus on the impact and vision rather than dollar goals.

- 7) Promote a stewardship culture across all ministries, groups and ages within the church through education, testimonies, and resources.
- 8) Annually submit a budget proposal to the Finance Committee to responsibly fund the Stewardship initiatives.

#### WORSHIP & MUSIC COMMITTEE

Purpose: In partnership with the pastor and Director of Music, to provide input on and support for all worship services of this congregation, and all activities directly related to these services.

Specifics:

- 1) Provide worship assistants, substitute pastors and guest speakers as needed.
- 2) Staff, train, and supervise: ushers, greeters, acolytes, lay readers, communion assistants, assisting ministers, or any other worship assistants.
- 3) Provide an Altar Guild for the care, use and maintenance of the sacred vessels, the altar, the altar furnishings, and vestments. The Altar Guild maintains an adequate supply of expendable items for worship such as but not limited to communion wine and bread, baptismal napkins, and candles.
- 4) Organize Seasonal Planning Teams to provide sensory enhancement of the worship space when appropriate.
- 5) Coordinate with the Altar Guild and Seasonal Planning Team all church and chancel decorations.
- 6) Manage the committee budget.
- 7) Prepare and submit an annual budget request in the form and at the time requested by the Finance Committee.

#### YOUTH AND FAMILY MINISTRY COMMITTEE

Purpose: Working with church leadership, create, support and aids in the implementation of the Youth and Family Ministry of the congregation.

Specifics:

- 1) Ensure that there are ministries for the Christian nurture of children, youth and families in the congregation, and through them, in the community beyond.
- 2) On a regular basis, review existing ministries to ensure that they are aligned with the mission priorities of Good Shepherd. In cooperation with other committees, consider and implement special opportunities that serve the congregation's mission priorities and appeal to a diversity of needs and interests.
- 3) Create and sustain multiple opportunities for members of all ages to grow in understanding of faith, including but not limited to Bible studies, Sunday school classes, VBS, Confirmation, and service trips.
- 4) Assist with recruiting and training of lay leaders for various Youth and Family ministries as necessary. This includes, but is not limited to, Sunday School, VBS, Bible study, Confirmation, and programs for elementary, middle school, high school, and college youth.
- 5) Prepare and submit an annual budget to fund Committee ministries and committee action plans as requested by the Finance Committee. Submit also to the Stewardship Committee a list of time and talent volunteer opportunities.
- 6) Coordinate recognition of milestones and life achievements for members of the congregation.
- 7) Conduct a bi-annual review of the Child and Youth Protection Policy and recommend changes to the Congregation Council. Present a summary of the policy to parents and older youth
- 8) Involve youth in the planning of Youth and Family Ministry programs and integrate youth into the service opportunities in the congregation, including worship.
- 9) Plan and coordinate activities for youth serving outside the congregation, in the community, nation, and world. Partnerships with other ELCA congregations, the Southeastern Synod, and the ELCA churchwide organization are encouraged.
- 10) In order to function effectively, the committee should maintain a minimum membership of three members plus one staff member (if the Y & F Ministry position is filled). Any member of the committee may serve as Chair.

**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 THE CONGREGATION**

- C14.01.** All organizations within this congregation shall exist to aid it in ministering to the members of this congregation and to all persons who can be reached with the Gospel of Christ. As outgrowths and expressions of this congregation's life, the organizations are subject to its oversight and direction. This congregation at its meeting shall determine their policies, guide their activities, and receive reports concerning their membership, work, and finances.
- C14.02.** Special interest groups, other than those of the official organizations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, may be organized only after authorization has been given by the Congregation Council.

#### **Chapter 15.**

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

- \*C15.01.** Persistent and public denial of the Christian faith, willful or criminal conduct grossly unbecoming a member of the Church of Christ, continual and intentional interference with the ministry of the congregation, or willful and repeated harassment or defamation of member(s) of the congregation is sufficient cause for discipline of a member. Prior to disciplinary action, reconciliation and repentance will be attempted following Matthew 18:15–17, proceeding through these successive steps, as necessary:
- private counsel and admonition by the pastor,
  - censure and admonition by the pastor in the presence of two or three witnesses,
  - 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
  - written referral of the matter by the consultation panel to the Committee on Discipline of the synod. If, for any reason, the pastor is unable to administer the admonitions required by paragraphs a. and b. hereof, those steps may be performed by another pastor chosen by the Executive Committee of the Congregation Council.
- \*C15.02.** The process for discipline of a member of the congregation shall be governed as prescribed by the chapter on discipline in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. If the counseling, censure, and admonitions pursuant to \*C15.01. do not result in repentance and amendment of life, charges against the accused member(s) that are specific and in writing may be prepared by the Congregation Council, signed, and submitted to the vice president of the synod. The vice president shall select from the synod's Consultation Committee a panel of five members (three laypersons and two rostered ministers). A copy of the written charges shall be provided to the consultation panel and the accused member(s). The consultation panel, after requesting a written reply to the charges from the accused member(s), shall consider the matter and seek a resolution by means of investigation, consultation, mediation, or whatever other means may seem appropriate. The panel's efforts to reach a mutually agreeable resolution shall continue for no more than 45 days after the matter is submitted to it.
- \*C15.03.** If the consultation panel fails to resolve the matter, that panel shall refer the case in writing, including the written charges and the accused member's reply, to the Committee on Discipline of the synod for a hearing. A copy of the panel's written referral shall be delivered to the vice president of the synod, the Congregation Council, and the accused member(s) at the same time it is sent to the Committee on Discipline of the synod. The Executive Committee of the Synod Council shall then select six members from the Committee on Discipline to decide the case and shall appoint a member of the Synod Council to preside as nonvoting chair. Those six members, plus the nonvoting chair, comprise the discipline hearing panel for deciding the case. The Congregation Council and the accused member(s) are the parties to the case.
- \*C15.04.** The discipline hearing panel shall commence and conduct the disciplinary hearing in accordance with the provisions governing discipline of congregation members prescribed in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.
- \*C15.05.** By the vote of at least two-thirds of the members of the discipline hearing panel who are present and voting, one of the following disciplinary sanctions can be imposed:
- suspension from the privileges of congregation membership for a designated period of time;
  - suspension from the privileges of congregation membership until the pastor and Congregation Council receive evidence, satisfactory to them, of repentance and amendment of life;
  - termination of membership in the congregation; or
  - termination of membership in the congregation and exclusion from the church property and from all congregation activities.

- \*C15.06. The written decision of the discipline hearing panel shall be sent to the vice president of the synod, the accused member(s), and the Congregation Council as required by the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. The decision of the discipline hearing panel shall be implemented by the Congregation Council and recorded in the minutes of the next council meeting.
- \*C15.07. No member of the congregation shall be subject to discipline a second time for offenses that a discipline hearing panel has heard previously and decided pursuant to this chapter.
- \*C15.10. **Adjudication**
- \*C15.11. When there is disagreement among factions within this congregation on a substantive issue that cannot be resolved by the parties, members of this congregation 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 \*C9.05.d. In all other matters, if the bishop's consultation fails to resolve the issue(s), 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 twenty 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 Synod should be consulted for guidance during this process. The Congregation Council shall notify the congregation's members of the proposal together with the council's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the meeting. Notification may take place by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law.
- \*C16.02. An amendment to this constitution, proposed under \*C16.01., shall:
  - a. be approved at a legally called Congregation Meeting according to this constitution by a majority vote of those voting members present and voting and;
  - b. be ratified unchanged at the next annual meeting of this congregation by a two-thirds vote of those voting members present and voting; and
  - c. have the effective date included in the resolution and noted in the constitution.
- \*C16.03. Any amendments to this constitution that result from the processes provided in \*C16.01. and \*C16.02. shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod. The synod shall notify the congregation of its decision to approve or disapprove the proposed changes; the changes shall go into effect upon notification that the synod has approved them.
- \*C16.04. This constitution may be amended to bring any section into conformity with a section or sections, either required or not required, of the *Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* as most recently amended by the Churchwide Assembly. Such amendments may be approved by a majority vote of those voting members present and voting at any legally called meeting of the congregation without presentation at a prior meeting of the congregation, provided that the Congregation Council has submitted by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law, notice to the congregation of such an amendment or amendments, together with the council's recommendations, at least 30 days prior to the meeting. Upon the request of at least two voting members of the congregation, the Congregation Council shall submit such notice. Following the adoption of an amendment, the secretary of the congregation shall submit a copy thereof to the synod. Such provisions shall become effective immediately following the congregation's vote of approval.

## Chapter 17.

### BYLAWS

- \*C17.01. This congregation may adopt bylaws. No bylaw may conflict with this constitution.
- \*C17.02. Bylaws may be adopted or amended at any legally called meeting of this congregation with a quorum present by a two-thirds vote of those voting members present and voting.
- \*C17.03. Changes to the bylaws may be proposed by any voting member, provided that such additions or amendments be submitted in writing to the Congregation Council at least 60 days before a regular or special Congregation Meeting called for that purpose. The Congregation Council shall notify the congregation's members of the proposal with the

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

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

## **Chapter 18.**

### **CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS**

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

- \*C20.01. This congregation may unite in partnership with one or more other congregations recognized by the synod named in \*C6.01. to form a parish. Except as provided in \*C20.02. and \*C20.03., a written agreement, developed in consultation with the synod and approved by the voting members of each congregation participating in the parish, shall specify the powers and responsibilities that have been delegated to the Parish Council. The Parish Agreement shall identify which congregation of the parish issues calls on behalf of the member congregations or shall establish a process for identifying which congregation issues calls on behalf of the member congregations.
- \*C20.02. One congregation of a parish shall issue a call on behalf of the member congregations to a minister of Word and Sacrament or a candidate for the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament who has been recommended by the synodical bishop to serve the congregations of the parish. Such a call shall be approved prior to issuance by a two-thirds vote at a congregation meeting of each congregation forming the parish. If any congregation of the parish should fail to approve the call, the other congregations of the parish shall have the right to terminate the parish agreement.
- \*C20.03. One congregation of a parish may issue a call on behalf of the member congregations to a minister of Word and Service or a candidate for the roster of Ministers of Word and Service who has been recommended by the synodical bishop to serve the congregations of the parish. Such a call shall be approved prior to issuance by a two-thirds vote at a congregation 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 \*C9.05.d. of the synodical constitution of the synod named in \*C6.01. In such case, the other congregation(s) of the same parish shall have the right to terminate the parish agreement.
- \*C20.05. Any one of the congregations of the parish may terminate their relationship with a minister of Word and Service as provided in \*C9.25d. of the synodical constitution of the synod named in \*C6.01. In such case, the other congregation(s) of the same parish shall have the right to terminate the parish agreement.
- \*C20.06. Whenever a parish agreement is terminated, the call of any rostered minister serving that parish is terminated. Should any congregation that was formerly part of the parish agreement desire to issue a new call to that rostered minister, it may do so in accordance with the call process of this church.