



# Constitution, **Bylaws** **And** **Continuing Resolutions**

For

House of Prayer Lutheran Church  
**6039 North 40<sup>th</sup> Street, Oakdale, MN 55128**  
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## INTRODUCTION

The constitution of House of Prayer Lutheran Church is based on the Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, originally adopted by the Constituting Convention of the ELCA in 1987 and amended by the 1989, 1991, 1993, 1995, 1997, 1999, 2001, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2012 and **2019** Churchwide Assemblies. The ELCA model is consistent with the requirements of the constitutional governing documents of the ELCA's churchwide organization and synods.

The constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of House of Prayer Lutheran Church have been incorporated into one document. The document is divided into chapters, with each chapter containing constitution provisions, bylaws and any related continuing resolutions. This format, designed for clarity and ease of reference, has been used for the constitutions of the ELCA and the Saint Paul Area Synod.

In this document, constitution provisions are preceded by the letter "C" to distinguish them from comparable ones in the churchwide and synod documents. The "C" is followed by a two-digit chapter number and a two-digit provision number. In some chapters, certain numbers are missing from the numbering sequence. For example, C9.10. does not appear; this reflects the numbering style in the Model Constitution for Congregations, in which the number ".10." and multiples thereof have been reserved for possible use in future editions.

Those sections that are preceded by an asterisk (\*) correspond to provisions in the ELCA model that are required to be incorporated in the House of Prayer Lutheran Church constitution without alteration.

Bylaws are designated by the chapter number, the related constitutional provision number, and an additional two-digit number. (C10.01.01)

Continuing resolutions, adopted by this congregation or the Congregation Council pursuant to Chapter 18, may be incorporated into this document. These are designated by three sets of numbers. The first set indicates the chapter; the second set indicates the subject; and the third set indicates the year in which the resolution was adopted, followed by a letter indicating the order of the resolution. **(C13.04.A12)**

**CONSTITUTION, BYLAWS &  
CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS FOR  
HOUSE OF PRAYER LUTHERAN CHURCH**

City of Oakdale, Washington County, State of Minnesota

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

**CHAPTER 2. CONFESSION OF FAITH**

- \*C2.01. This congregation confesses the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- \*C2.02. This congregation confesses Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and the Gospel as the power of God for the salvation of all who believe.
  - a. Jesus Christ is the Word of God incarnate, through whom everything was made and through whose life, death, and resurrection God fashions a new creation.
  - b. The proclamation of God's message to us as both Law and Gospel is the Word of God, revealing judgment and mercy through word and deed, beginning with the Word in creation, continuing in the history of Israel, and centering in all its fullness in the person and work of Jesus Christ.
  - c. The canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the written Word of God. Inspired by God's Spirit speaking through their authors,

they record and announce God's revelation centering in Jesus Christ. Through them God's Spirit speaks to us to create and sustain Christian faith and fellowship for service in the world.

- \*C2.03. This congregation accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life.
- \*C2.04. This congregation accepts the Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds as true declarations of the faith of this congregation.
- \*C2.05. This congregation accepts the Unaltered Augsburg Confession as a true witness to the Gospel, acknowledging as one with it in faith and doctrine all churches that likewise accept the teachings of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession.
- \*C2.06. This congregation accepts the other confessional writings in the Book of Concord, namely, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles and the Treatise, the Small Catechism, the Large Catechism, and the Formula of Concord, as further valid interpretations of the faith of the Church.
- \*C2.07. This congregation confesses the Gospel, recorded in the Holy Scriptures and confessed in the ecumenical creeds and Lutheran confessional writings, as the power of God to create and sustain the Church for God's mission in the world.

### CHAPTER 3. NATURE OF THE CHURCH

- \*C3.01. All power in the Church belongs to our Lord Jesus Christ, its head. All actions of this congregation are to be carried out under his rule and authority.
- \*C3.02. The 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 The 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 part of the Church shall:
  - a. Worship God in proclamation of the Word and administration of the sacraments and through lives of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, witness, and service.
  - b. Proclaim God's saving Gospel of justification by grace for Christ's sake through faith alone, according to the apostolic witness in the Holy Scripture, preserving and transmitting the Gospel faithfully to future generations.
  - c. Carry out Christ's Great Commission by reaching out to all people to bring them to faith in Christ and by doing all ministry with a global awareness consistent with the understanding of God as Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier of all.
  - d. Serve in response to God's love to meet human needs, caring for the sick and the aged, advocating dignity and justice for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, and standing with the poor and powerless, and committing itself to their needs.
  - e. Nurture its members in the Word of God so as to grow in faith and hope and love, to see daily life as the primary setting for the exercise of their Christian calling, and to use the gifts of the Spirit for their life together and for their calling in the world.

- f. Manifest the unity given to the people of God by living together in the love of Christ and by joining with other Christians in prayer and action to express and preserve the unity which the Spirit gives.
- \*C4.03. To fulfill these purposes, this congregation shall:
- a. Provide services of worship at which the Word of God is preached and the sacraments are administered.
  - b. Provide pastoral care and assist all members to participate in this ministry.
  - c. Challenge, equip, and support all members in carrying out their calling in their daily lives and in their congregation.
  - d. Teach the Word of God.
  - e. Witness to the reconciling Word of God in Christ, reaching out to all people.
  - f. Respond to human need, work for justice and peace, care for the sick and the suffering, and participate responsibly in society.
  - g. **Amendment 8/2019**; Motivate its members to provide financial support for **this** congregation's ministry and the ministry of **the other expressions** of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
  - h. Foster and participate in interdependent relationships with other congregations, the synod, and the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
  - i. Foster and participate in ecumenical relationships consistent with church wide policy.
- \*C4.04. **Amendment 8/26/13**; This congregation shall develop an organization structure to be described in the bylaws. The Congregation Council shall prepare descriptions of the responsibilities of each committee, task force, or other organizational group and shall review their **actions**.
- \*C4.05. **Amendment 8/2019**; This congregation shall, **adopt and periodically review** a mission statement, which will provide specific direction for its programs.
- \*C4.06. References herein to the nature of the relationship between the three expressions of this church – congregations, synods, and 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 purpose 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. **Amendment 8/2019**; Only such authority as is delegated to the Congregation Council or other organizational units in this congregation's governing documents is recognized. All remaining authority is retained by this congregation. **This** congregation is authorized to:
  - a. Call a pastor as provided in Chapter 9;
  - b. Terminate the call of a pastor as provided in Chapter 9;
  - c. Call a minister of Word and Service;
  - d. Terminate the call of a minister of Word and Service in conformity with the constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;
  - e. Adopt amendments to the constitution, as provided in Chapter 16, amendments to the bylaws, as specified in Chapter 17, and continuing resolutions, as provided in Chapter 18;
  - f. Approve the annual budget.
  - g. Acquire real and personal property by gift, devise, purchase, or other lawful means;
  - h. Hold title to and use its property for any and all activities consistent with its purpose;
  - i. Sell, mortgage, lease, transfer, or otherwise dispose of its property by any lawful means;
  - j. Elect its officers, and Congregation Council, boards and committees, and require them to carry out their duties in accordance with the constitution, bylaws and continuing resolutions; and
  - k. Terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as provided in Chapter 6.

- \*C5.04. **Amendment 8/2019**; This congregation shall **elect** from among its voting members laypersons to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly as well as persons to represent it at meetings of any conference, cluster, coalition, or other area subdivision of which it is a member. The number of persons to be elected by this congregation and other qualifications shall be prescribed in guide-lines established by the Saint Paul Area Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- C5.05. **Prior Amendment**; This congregation shall have a mission endowment fund that will operate as specified in this congregation's bylaws. The purpose of the mission endowment fund is to provide for mission work beyond the operational budget of this congregation.

## CHAPTER 6. CHURCH AFFILIATION

- \*C6.01. **Amendment 8/2019**; This congregation shall be an interdependent part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or its successor, and of the **Saint Paul Area Synod** of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. This congregation is subject to the discipline of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- \*C6.02. This congregation accepts the Confession of Faith and agrees to the purposes of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and shall act in accordance with them.
- \*C6.03. This congregation acknowledges its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in which:
- a. This congregation agrees to be responsible for its life as a Christian community.
  - b. This congregation pledges its financial support and participation in the life and mission of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
  - c. This congregation agrees to call pastoral leadership from the roster of 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. **Amendment 8/2019**; This congregation agrees to consider ministers of Word and Service for call to other staff positions in **this** congregation according to the procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- e. This congregation agrees to file this constitution and any subsequent changes to this constitution with the synod for review to ascertain that all of its provisions are in agreement with the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and with the constitution of the synod.

\*C6.04. **Amendment 8/2019**; Affiliation with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is terminated as follows:

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

c. **Amendment 8/2019**; 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. **Amendment 8/2019**; **The Saint Paul Area Synod takes charge and control of the property of this congregation to hold, manage, and convey the same on behalf of the synod pursuant to +S13.24. of the synod constitution. This congregation shall have the right to appeal the decision to the next Synod Assembly.**

e. **Amendment 8/2019**; **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 procedures:

- a. **Amendment 8/2019**; A resolution indicating the intent to terminate its relationship must be adopted at two legally called and conducted special meetings of **this** congregation by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present **at each meeting. The first such** meeting may be held no sooner than 30 days after written notice of the meeting is received by the bishop of the synod, during which time **this** congregation shall consult with the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any. The times and manner of the consultation shall be determined by the bishop in consultation with the Congregation Council. Unless he or she is a voting member of this

congregation, the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any, shall have voice but not vote at the **first** meeting.

- b. **Amendment 8/2019**; Within 10 days after the resolution has been voted upon at the first meeting, the secretary of **this** congregation shall submit a copy of the resolution to the bishop, attesting that the special meeting was legally called and conducted certifying the outcome of the vote, and shall send copies of the resolution and certification to voting members of **this** congregation.
- c. **Amendment 8/2019**; If the resolution was adopted by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present at the first meeting, the bishop of the synod and **this** congregation shall continue in consultation, as specified in paragraph a. above, during a period of at least 90 days after receipt by the bishop of the attestation and certification as specified in paragraph b. above.
- d. **Amendment 8/2019**; If this congregation, after such consultation, **is still** considering termination of its relationship with this church, such action may be taken at a legally called and conducted special meeting by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present. Notice of the **second** meeting shall be **sent** to all voting members and to the bishop at least 10 days in advance of the meeting. Unless he or she is a voting member of **this** congregation, the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any, shall have voice but not vote at the **second** meeting.
- e. **Amendment 8/2019**; Within 10 days after the resolution has been voted upon, the secretary of this congregation shall submit a copy of the resolution to the bishop, attesting that the second special meeting was legally called and conducted and certifying the outcome of the vote, and shall send copies of the resolution and certification to the voting members of 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. **Amendment 8/2019**; 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. **Amendment 8/2019**; This congregation shall abide by these covenants by and among the three expressions of this church:

1) **Prior Amendment**; 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) **Amendment 8/2019**; Congregations which had been members of the Lutheran Church in America shall be required, in addition to complying with the foregoing provisions in \*C6.05., to receive synod approval before terminating their membership in this church.

3) **Amendment 8/2019**; Congregations established by the Evangelic Lutheran Church in America shall be required, in addition to complying with the foregoing provisions in \*6.05., to satisfy all financial obligations to this church and receive Synod Council approval before terminating their membership in this church.

h. **Amendment 8/2019**; 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 \*C06.05., and may begin no sooner than six months **after the meeting at which the two-thirds vote was not achieved**.

\*C6.06. **Amendment 8/26/13 and 8/2019**; If this congregation considers relocation, it shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located and the appropriate **unit** of the churchwide organization before any steps are taken leading to such action. The approval of the Synod Council shall be received before any such action is **taken**.

\*C6.07. **Amendment 8/26/13**; 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. **Amendment 8/2019**; If this congregation ceases to exist, title to undisposed property shall pass to the Saint Paul Area Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- \*C7.02. **Amendment 8/2019**; 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 **Amendment 8/2019**; If the voting members of this congregation present at a legally called and conducted special meeting of this congregation vote to transfer to another Lutheran church body, title to property shall continue to reside in this congregation, provided the process for termination of relationship in \*C6.05. has been followed. Before this congregation takes action to transfer to another Lutheran church body, it shall consult with representatives of the Saint Paul Area Synod.
- \*C7.04. **Amendment 8/2019**; 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 **Amendment 8/2019**; Notwithstanding the provisions of \*C7.02. and \*C7.03. above, where this congregation has received property from the synod pursuant to a deed or other instrument containing restrictions under provision 9.71.a. of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, this congregation accepts such restrictions and:
- a. **Amendment 8/2019**; Shall not transfer, encumber, mortgage, or in any way burden or impair any right, title, or interest in the property without prior approval of the Synod Council.
  - b. **Amendment 8/2019**; Shall - upon written demand by the Synod Council,

pursuant to +S13.23. of the constitution of the Saint Paul Area Synod reconvey and transfer all right, title, and interest in the property to the synod.

## CHAPTER 8. MEMBERSHIP

- \*C8.01. Members of this congregation shall be those baptized persons on the roll of this congregation at the time that this constitution is adopted and those who are admitted thereafter and who have declared and maintain their membership in accordance with the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.
- \*C8.02. Members shall be classified as follows:
- a. **Baptized** members are those persons who have been received by the Sacrament of Holy Baptism in this congregation, or, having been previously baptized in the name of the Triune God, have been received by certificate of transfer from other Lutheran congregations or by affirmation of faith.
  - b. **Confirmed** members are baptized persons who have been confirmed in this congregation, those who have been received by adult baptism or by transfer as confirmed members from other Lutheran congregations, or baptized persons received by affirmation of faith.
  - c. **Prior Amendment & 8/2019; Voting** members are confirmed members. Such confirmed members, during the current year or preceding calendar year, shall have communed in this congregation and shall have made a contribution of record to this congregation. Members of this congregation who have satisfied these basic standards shall have the privilege of voice and vote at every regular and special meeting of this congregation as well as the other rights and privileges ascribed to voting members by the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws. They shall not have voted as a seasonal member of another congregation of this church in the previous two calendar months.
  - d. **Prior Amendment & 8/2019; Associate** members are persons holding membership in other **Christian** congregations who wish to retain such membership but desire to participate in the life and mission of this congregation. These individuals have all the privileges and duties of membership except voting rights or other rights and privileges ascribed to voting members by the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.
  - e. **Prior Amendment & 8/2019; Seasonal** members are voting members of other congregations of this church who wish to retain such membership but desire to participate in the life and mission of this congregation, including

exercising limited voting rights in this congregation. The Congregation Council may grant seasonal membership to such persons provided that this congregation is a member of a synod where the Synod Council has approved seasonal member voting on its territory. Such seasonal members shall have all the privileges and duties of voting members except that:

- 1) **Prior Amendment & 8/2019;** They shall not be eligible for elected office in, or for membership on the Congregation Council or on a call committee of, this congregation;
- 2) **Prior Amendment & 8/2019;** They shall not have the right to vote on any matter concerning or affecting the call or termination of call of any minister of this congregation;
- 3) **Prior Amendment & 8/2019;** They shall not have the right to vote on any matter concerning or affecting the affiliation of this congregation with this church;
- 4) **Prior Amendment & 8/2019;** They shall not be eligible to serve as voting members from this congregation of the Synod Assembly or the Churchwide Assembly;
- 5) **Prior Amendment & 8/2019;** They shall not, even if otherwise permitted by this congregation, vote by proxy or by absentee ballot; and
- 6) **Prior Amendment & 8/2019;** 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, synod, and the church wide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America through contributions of their time, abilities, and financial support as biblical stewards.

- \*C8.05. Membership in this congregation shall be terminated by any of the following:
- a. Death;
  - b. Resignation;
  - c. Transfer or release;
  - d. **Amendment 8/26/13**; Disciplinary action in accordance with Chapter 20 of the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;
  - e. **Prior Amendment**; Removal from the roll due to inactivity in accordance with the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.

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

## CHAPTER 9. THE PASTOR

- \*C9.01. **Prior Amendment**; 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. **Prior Amendment & 8/2019**; Only a member of the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or a candidate for the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament who has been recommended for **this** congregation by the **synod** bishop may be called as a pastor of this congregation.
- \*C9.03. Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,
- a. Every minister of Word and Sacrament shall:
    - 1) Preach the Word;
    - 2) Administer the sacraments;
    - 3) Conduct public worship;
    - 4) Provide pastoral care;

- 5) Seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel;
  - 6) **Amendment 8/2019**; Impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through available channels of effective communication;
  - 7) **Prior Amendment**; Witness to the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation, and abroad; and
  - 8) **Prior Amendment**; Speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world.
- b. Each pastor with a congregational call shall, within the congregation:
- 1) Offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead;
  - 2) Relate to all schools and organizations of this congregation;
  - 3) Install regularly elected members of the Congregation Council;
  - 4) With the council, administer discipline;
  - 5) **Amendment 8/2019**; Endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the churchwide organization and of the Saint Paul Area Synod; and
  - 6) **Amendment 8/2019**; 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. **Amendment 8/26/13 & 8/2019**; The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between a minister of Word and Sacrament and this congregation shall be as follows:
- a. **Amendment 8/2019**; The call of a congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment which, shall be terminated only by the pastor's death or, following consultation with the synod bishop, for the following reason:
    1. **Amendment 8/2019**; Mutual agreement to terminate the call or the completion of a call for a specific term;

2. **Amendment 8/26/13**; 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. **Amendment 8/26/13 & 8/2019**; Inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in this congregation in view of local **conditions**;
  4. **Amendment 8/26/13**; **Physical disability**, or mental incapacity of the pastor;
  5. **Amendment 8/26/13**; **Suspension** of the pastor through discipline **for more than three months**;
  6. **Amendment 8/26/13 & 8/2019**; Resignation or removal of the pastor from the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament of this church;
  7. **Amendment 8/26/13 & 8/2019**; Termination of the relationship between this church and this congregation;
  8. **Amendment 8/26/13 & 8/2019**; **Dissolution of this** congregation or the termination of a parish arrangement; or
  9. **Amendment 8/2019**; Suspension of **this** congregation through discipline for more than six months.
- b. **Amendment 8/26/13**; When allegations of physical **disability** or mental incapacity of the pastor **under paragraph a.4) above**, or ineffective conduct of the pastoral office **under paragraph a.3) above**, have come to the attention of the bishop of the synod,
- 1) **Prior Amendment**; The bishop in his or her sole discretion **may investigate** such conditions personally **together** with a committee of two **rostered** ministers and one layperson, or
  - 2) **Prior Amendment & 8/2019**; 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** members and one layperson.
- c. **Amendment 8/26/2013 & 8/2019**; In case of alleged physical **disability** or mental incapacity under paragraph a.4) above, the bishop's committee shall **obtain and document** competent medical **opinion concerning the pastor's condition**. When a disability or **incapacity** is evident **to the committee**, the bishop of the synod may declare the pastorate vacant. When the

pastorate is declared vacant, the Synod Council shall list the pastor on the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament with disability status. Upon removal of the disability and restoration of the pastor to health, the bishop shall take steps to enable the pastor to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another appropriate call.

- d. **Amendment 8/26/13 & 8/2019**; In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of this congregation under paragraph a.3) above, the bishop's committee shall endeavor to hear from all concerned persons, after which the bishop together with the committee shall present their recommendations first to the pastor and then to this congregation. The recommendations of the bishop's committee must address whether the pastor's call should come to an end and, if so, may suggest appropriate severance arrangements. The committee may also propose other actions that should be undertaken by this congregation and by the pastor, if appropriate. If the pastor and congregation agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action need be taken by the synod.
- e. **Amendment 8/26/13 & 8/2019**; If either party fails to assent to the recommendations of the bishop's committee concerning the pastor's call, this congregation may dismiss the pastor only at a legally called meeting after consultation with the bishop, either (a) by a two-thirds majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee did not recommend termination of the call, or (b) by a majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee recommended termination of the call.
- f. **Prior Amendment**; If, in the course of proceedings described in paragraph c. or paragraph d. above, the bishop's committee concludes that there may be grounds for discipline, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action in accordance with the provisions of this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions.

- \*C9.06. At a time of pastoral vacancy, an interim pastor shall be appointed by the bishop of the synod with the consent of this congregation or the Congregation Council.
- \*C9.07. **Prior Amendment & 8/2019**; During the period of service, an interim pastor shall have the rights and duties in this congregation of a regularly called pastor and may delegate the same in part to a supply pastor with the consent of the bishop of the synod and this congregation or Congregation Council. The interim pastor and any rostered minister providing assistance shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a pastor. Unless previously agreed upon by the Synod Council, an interim pastor is not available for a regular call to the congregation served.

- \*C9.08. **Amendment 8/2019**; 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. **Amendment 8/2019**; With the approval of the bishop of the synod, this congregation may depart from \*C9.05.a. and call a pastor for a specific term. Details of such calls shall be in writing setting forth the purpose and conditions involved. Prior to the completion of a term, the bishop or a designated representative of the bishop shall meet with the pastor and representatives of **this** congregation for a review of the call. Such a call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of \*C9.05.a.
- \*C9.12. The pastor of this congregation:
- a. **Amendment 8/2019**; Shall keep accurate parochial records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from **this** congregation;
  - b. Shall submit a summary of statistics annually to the synod; and
  - c. Shall become a member of this congregation upon receipt and acceptance of the letter of call. In a parish of multiple congregations, the pastor shall hold membership in one of the congregations.
- \*C9.13. The pastor(s) shall submit a report of his or her ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.
- \*C9.14. **Amendment 8/2019**; The parochial records of this congregation shall be maintained by the pastor and shall remain the property of this congregation. The secretary of this congregation shall attest in writing to the bishop of this synod that such records have been placed in his or her hands in good order by a departing pastor before the installation of that pastor in another **call or approval of a request for change in roster status**.

- \*C9.15. **Amendment 8/2019**; 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. **Amendment 8/2019**; 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. **Amendment 8/2019**; Only a member of the roster of Ministers of Word and Service of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or a candidate for the roster of Ministers of Word and Service who has been recommended for this congregation by the **synod** bishop may be called as a deacon of this congregation.
- \*C9.23. Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, every minister of Word and Service shall:
- a. Be rooted in the Word of God, for proclamation and service;
  - b. Advocate a prophetic diakonia that commits itself to risk-taking and innovative service on the frontiers of the Church's outreach, giving particular attention to the suffering places in God's world;
  - c. Speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world, witnessing to the realm of God in the community, the nation, and abroad;
  - d. Equip the baptized for ministry in God's world that affirms the gifts of all people;
  - e. Encourage mutual relationships that invite participation and accompaniment of others in God's mission;
  - f. Practice stewardship that respects God's gift of time, talents, and resources;
  - g. Be grounded in a gathered community for ongoing diaconal formation;
  - h. **Amendment 8/2019**; Share knowledge **of this church** and its wider ministry of

the gospel and advocate for the work of all expressions of this church;  
and;

- i. Identify and encourage qualified persons to prepare for ministry of the gospel.
- \*C9.24. The specific duties of the deacon, compensation, and other matters pertaining to the service of the deacon shall be included in a letter of call, which shall be attested by the bishop of the synod.
- \*C9.25. The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between a minister of Word and Service and a congregation shall be as follows:
- a. **Amendment 8/2019:** The call of this congregation, when accepted by a deacon, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment, which shall be terminated only by **the deacon's** death or, following consultation with the synod bishop, for the following reasons:
    - 1) Mutual agreement to terminate the call or the completion of a call for a specific term;
    - 2) Resignation of the deacon, which shall become effective, unless otherwise agreed, no later than 30 days after the date on which it was submitted;
    - 3) Inability to conduct the ministry of Word and Service effectively in this congregation in view of local conditions;
    - 4) Physical disability or mental incapacity of the deacon;
    - 5) Suspension of the deacon through discipline for more than three months;
    - 6) Resignation or removal of the deacon from the roster of Ministers of Word and Service of this church;
    - 7) Termination of the relationship between this church and this congregation;
    - 8) Dissolution of this congregation or the termination of a parish arrangement; or
    - 9) Suspension of this congregation through discipline for more than six months.

- b. When allegations of physical disability or mental incapacity of the deacon under paragraph a.4) above, or ineffective conduct of the office of minister of Word and Service under paragraph a.3) above, have come to the attention of the bishop of this synod,
- 1) The bishop in his or her sole discretion may investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson, or
  - 2) When such allegations have been brought to the synod's attention by an official recital of allegations by the Congregation Council or by a petition signed by at least one-third of the voting members of this congregation, the bishop personally shall investigate such conditions together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson.
- c. **Amendment 8/2019**; In case of alleged physical disability or mental incapacity under paragraph a.4) above, the bishop's committee shall obtain and document competent medical opinion concerning the deacon's condition. When a disability or incapacity is evident to the committee, the bishop of this synod may declare the position vacant. When the position is declared vacant, the Synod Council shall list the deacon on the roster of Ministers of Word and Service **with disability status**. Upon removal of the disability and the restoration of the deacon to health, the bishop shall take steps to enable the deacon to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another appropriate call.
- d. In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of this congregation under paragraph a.3) above, the bishop's committee shall endeavor to hear from all concerned persons, after which the bishop together with the committee shall present their recommendations first to the deacon and then to this congregation. The recommendations of the bishop's committee must address whether the deacon's call should come to an end and, if so, may suggest appropriate severance arrangements. The committee may also propose other actions that should be undertaken by this congregation and by the deacon, if appropriate. If the deacon and congregation agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action need be taken by the synod.
- e. If either party fails to assent to the recommendations of the bishop's committee concerning the deacon's call, this congregation may dismiss the deacon only at a legally called meeting after consultation with the bishop, either (a) by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee did not recommend termination of the call, or (b) by a majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee recommended termination of the call.

- f. If, in the course of proceedings described in paragraph c. or paragraph d. above, the bishop's committee concludes that there may be grounds for discipline, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action in accordance with the provisions of this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions.
- \*C9.26. **Amendment 8/2019**; This congregation shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to a former deacon before calling a successor. A deacon shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to this congregation before beginning service in a call to another congregation or employment in another ministry setting.
- \*C9.27. When a deacon is called to serve in company with another rostered minister or other rostered ministers, the privileges and responsibilities of each rostered minister shall be specified in documents to accompany the call and to be drafted in consultation involving the rostered ministers, the Congregation Council, and the bishop of the synod. As occasion requires, the documents may be revised through a similar consultation.
- \*C9.28. With the approval of the bishop of the synod, this congregation may depart from \*C9.25.a. and call a deacon for a specific term. Details of such calls shall be in writing setting forth the purpose and conditions involved. Prior to the completion of a term, the bishop or a designated representative of the bishop shall meet with the deacon and representatives of this congregation for a review of the call. Such a call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of \*C9.25.a.
- \*C9.29. The deacon shall become a member of this congregation upon receipt and acceptance of the letter of call. In a parish of multiple congregations, the deacon shall hold membership in one of the congregations.
- \*C9.31. The deacon(s) shall submit a report of his or her ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.

## CHAPTER 10. CONGREGATION MEETING

- C10.01. **Amended 8/2019**; This congregation shall have at least one regular meeting per year. The regular meeting(s) of the congregation shall be held at the time(s) specified in the bylaws. Consistent with the laws of the State of Minnesota, the bylaws shall designate one regular meeting per year as the annual meeting of this congregation.
- C10.02. **Prior Amendment**: 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 ten percent of the voting members. The president of the Congregation Council shall call a special meeting upon request of the synod bishop. The call for each special meeting shall specify the purpose for which it is to be held, and no other business shall be transacted.

- C10.03. **Prior Amendment:** Notice of all meetings of this congregation shall be given at the services of worship on the preceding two consecutive Sundays and by mail or **electronic means, as permitted by state law**, to all (voting) members at least 10 days in advance of the date of the meeting.
- C10.04. 10% voting members shall constitute a quorum.
- C10.05. Voting by proxy or by absentee ballot shall not be permitted.
- C10.06. **Prior Amendment:** All actions approved by **this** congregation shall be by majority vote of those voting members present and voting, except as otherwise provided in this constitution or by state law.
- C10.07. *Robert's Rules of Order*, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of all meetings of this congregation.
- C10.08. **Amendment 8/2019:** This congregation may hold meetings by remote communication, including electronically and by telephone conference, as long as there is an opportunity for simultaneous aural communication. To the extent permitted by state law, notice of all meetings may be provided electronically.

## CHAPTER 11. OFFICERS

- C11.01 The officers of this congregation shall be a president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer.
- a. **Prior Amendment:** The officers shall be voting members of this congregation.
  - b. **Prior Amendment;** Officers of this congregation shall serve similar offices of the Congregation Council and shall be voting members of the Congregation Council.
  - c. Duties of the officers shall be specified in the bylaws.
- C11.01.01. The duties of the President shall be as follows:
- a. Ensure that the various committees are functioning and receiving necessary support from the Council, church staff and this Congregation;

- b. Chair meetings of the congregation, Congregation Council and Executive Committee;
- c. Together with the Executive Committee, set the agenda for meetings in 11.01.01.b, seeing that the agenda and reports are distributed;
- d. Adhere to *Roberts's Rules of Order* in conducting the business;
- e. Serves as an advisory member of all Standing Committees and Congregation Committees except for the Audit Committee;
- f. Appoint necessary additional committees.

C11.01.02. The duties of the Vice President shall be as follows:

- a. Assist the president in seeing that all officers and committees operate according to their duties;
- b. Chair meetings of the congregation, the Congregation Council, and the Executive Committee in the President's absence;
- c. In the event that the presidency is declared vacant, serve as President until the next legally called Congregation Meeting;
- d. Serve on any active Call Committee as the Congregation Council representative.
- e. Serve as chairperson of the Ministry Board;
- f. Perform other duties or special projects as delegated by the Congregation Council.

C11.01.03. The duties of the Secretary shall be as follows:

- a. Serve as the official correspondent for this congregation;
- b. Keep the minutes of the Congregation Council, congregation meetings and oversee the records of the congregation, including up-to-date copies of the constitution, bylaws and continuing resolutions, which shall be available to the membership;
- c. Distribute the minutes and agendas before meetings in accordance with the constitution. Oversee the church office in collecting and distributing these materials and assuring that they are properly archived;

- d. Oversee the publication of adapted/condensed Congregation Council minutes to be communicated to the congregation in the newsletter or other means.

C11.01.04. The duties of the Treasurer shall be as follows:

- a. Oversee the work of the financial administrator;
- b. Work with the financial secretary to see that all worship offerings are counted, deposited, and recorded.
- c. Work with the financial administrator to pay all bills promptly, as approved in the budget, by the Congregation Council, or by the congregation;
- d. **Amendment 2019;** Oversee adherence to this congregation's guidelines regarding financial accountability (particularly as detailed in C12.05.a, C13.04.02., and C13.04.05.);
- e. With financial secretary and financial administrator, compile financial reports each month, including year-to-date figures for current year, for the Congregation Council and the congregation;
- f. Provide written financial reports including a summary of all receipts and disbursements for the congregation at its annual meeting;
- g. Ensure a satisfactory audit prior to annual meetings, and follow-up on concerns of the Audit Committee;
- h. Serve on the Finance Ministry and Stewardship Ministry;

C11.02. **Amendment 8/2019;** The congregation shall elect its officers and they shall be the officers of this congregation. The officers shall be elected by written ballot and shall serve for two years or until their successors are elected. Their terms shall begin at the close of the annual meeting in which they are elected.

C11.03. **Amendment 8/2019;** 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. **Amended 2019**; The voting membership of the Congregation Council shall consist of the pastor(s), the officers of this congregation, and 5 members of this congregation. Any voting member of this congregation may be elected, subject only to the limitation on the length of continuous service permitted in that office. A member's place on the Congregation Council shall be declared vacant if the member a) ceases to be a voting member of this congregation or b) is absent from four successive regular meetings of the Congregation Council without cause. Consistent with laws of the state in which this congregation is incorporated, this congregation may adopt procedures for the removal of a member of the Congregation Council in other circumstances.
- C12.02. **Amended 8/2019**; The members of the Congregation Council, except the pastor(s), shall be elected by written ballot to serve two years or until their successors are elected. Such members shall be eligible to serve no more than two full terms consecutively. Their terms shall begin at the close of the annual meeting at which they are elected.
- C12.03. **Amended 8/2019**; Should a member's place on the Congregation Council be declared vacant, the Congregation Council shall elect, by majority vote, a successor until the next annual meeting.
- C12.04. The Congregation Council shall have general oversight of the life and activities of this congregation, and in particular its worship life, to the end that everything be done in accordance with the Word of God and the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The duties of the Congregation Council shall include the following:
- a. To lead this congregation in stating its mission, to do long-range planning, to set goals and priorities, and to evaluate its activities in light of its mission and goals.
  - b. To seek to involve all members of this congregation in worship, learning, witness, service, and support.
  - c. To oversee and provide for the administration of this congregation to enable it to fulfill its functions and perform its mission.
  - d. To maintain supportive relationships with the rostered ministers and staff and help them annually to evaluate the fulfillment of their calling, appointment, 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 organizations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as well as cooperation with other congregations, both Lutheran and non-Lutheran, subject to established policies of the synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- i. To recommend and encourage the use of program resources produced or approved by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- j. To seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel.

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

- a. The Congregation Council shall be the board of directors of this congregation and, as such, shall be responsible for maintaining and protecting its property and the management of its business and fiscal affairs. It shall have the powers and be subject to the obligations that pertain to such boards under the laws of the State of Minnesota, except as otherwise provided herein.
- b. **Prior Amendment:** The Congregation Council shall not have the authority to buy, sell, or encumber real property unless specifically authorized to do so by a legally called meeting of this congregation.
- c. **Amended 2019;** The Congregation Council may enter into contracts of up to 2% of the annual congregation expense budget for items not included in the budget.
- d. **Amended 2019;** 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 2% in excess of the anticipated receipts only after approval by a Congregation Meeting. The budget shall seek to include this congregation's full indicated share in support of the wider

ministry being carried on in collaboration with the synod and church-wide organization.

- e. **Amendment 8/2019**; The Congregation Council shall ascertain that the financial affairs of this congregation are being conducted efficiently, giving particular attention to the prompt payment of all obligations and to the regular forwarding of mission support monies to the synod treasurer.
  - f. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for this congregation's investments and its total insurance program.
- C12.06. The Congregation Council shall see that the provisions of this constitution, its bylaws, and continuing resolutions are carried out.
- C12.07. The Congregation Council shall provide for an annual review of the membership roster.
- C12.08. **Amendment 8/2019**; The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the employment and supervision of staff of this congregation. Nothing in this provision shall be deemed to affect this congregation's responsibility for the call, terms of call, or termination of call of any employees who are on a roster of this church.
- C12.09. The Congregation Council shall submit a comprehensive report to this congregation at the annual meeting.
- C12.11. The Congregation Council shall normally meet once a month. Special meetings may be called by the pastor or the president and shall be called by the President at the request of at least one-half of its members. Notice of each special meeting shall be given to all who are entitled to be present.
- C12.12. **Amendment 8/2019**; 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 synod bishop.
- C12.13 **Amendment Added 2019**; The Congregation Council and its committees may hold meetings by remote communication, including electronically and by telephone conference and, to the extent permitted by state law, notice of all meetings may be provided electronically.

## CHAPTER 13. MINISTRY BOARD, MINISTRY TEAMS, AND CONGREGATIONAL COMMITTEES

- C13.01. The officers of this congregation and the pastor shall constitute the **Executive Committee**.
- C13.01.01 **Amendment 9/2019**; The following committees and ministry teams shall report directly to the Executive Committee and may also be requested to report to the Congregation Council: Audit Committee, Call Committee, Nominating Committee, Personnel Committee.
- C13.02. **Amendment 8/2019**; There shall be a Ministry Board to lead the ministry of this congregation, which is organized and conducted through ministry teams that are established, coordinated and supported by the Ministry Board.
- C13.02.01. The Ministry Board shall be led by the Vice President, or his/her designee, and shall consist of the pastor, the Vice President and a minimum of four members at-large elected by the congregation. If there is an increase in the size and or activity in the congregation, more at-large members may be added, if requested by the Ministry Board and approved by the Congregation Council.
- a. Two members at-large of the Ministry Board shall be elected by the congregation at each annual meeting to serve for two years. Their terms shall begin at the close of the meeting in which they are elected. At-large elected members of the Ministry Board shall be eligible to serve up to two elective terms consecutively.
  - b. In the first year following adoption of this bylaw section, the vice president and two members at-large of the Ministry Board shall be elected to two-year terms. The four Congregation Council members, not completing their current terms, shall serve at-large on the Ministry Board for one year. In the second year following adoption, two members shall be elected. Thereafter, this bylaw section shall cease to be in effect and terms of elected members of the Ministry Board shall be as in C13.02.01.a.
- C13.02.02. The Ministry Board shall lead the ministry of this congregation in light of the congregation's mission as articulated by the Congregation Council, and endeavor to further the achievement of long-range plans, goals, and priorities set out by the Congregation Council.
- a. At the first meeting of the Ministry Board following elections at the annual meeting, Ministry Team leaders shall be determined.
  - b. The Ministry Board shall meet in its entirety at least quarterly and shall

determine the frequency and form of its other meetings. The Ministry Board shall determine the time and place of its meetings, its internal organization, and the method of recording and maintaining records of its decisions and activities.

- c. The Ministry Board shall reorganize ministry teams at their discretion.
- d. The work of the Ministry Board shall be subject to budgeting and reporting requirements which the Congregation Council shall determine and revise from time to time.
- e. The Ministry Board shall submit a comprehensive report to the Congregation Council each year and shall present the report to this congregation at the annual meeting. The report shall include, among other information, a list of all existing ministry teams.

C13.02.03 The Ministry Board shall establish and support ministry teams to develop and carry out both ongoing and new programs and activities of this congregation and shall provide coordination and communication among its ministry teams.

- a. There shall be the following ministries:

Administrative/Financial Ministry Team:

- Finance Ministry
- Memorial Ministry
- Property Ministry

Lifelong Learning Ministry Team:

- Christian Education Ministry
- Youth Ministry

Mission Ministry Team:

- Global Mission Ministry
- Ministry Growth and Outreach
- Service Ministry
- Women of Hope

Worship Ministry Team:

- Altar Guild
- Stewardship Ministry
- Worship and Music Planning Ministry

- b. The Ministry Board shall establish additional ministry groups to

develop and carry out both ongoing and new programs and activities of this congregation.

- c. The Ministry Board shall be responsible for the recruitment and enlisting of members of each ministry team. All members of this congregation, and persons who are not members of the congregation, may be members of or participate in ministry teams, subject to the policies and procedures of the Congregation Council or the Ministry Board.
- d. Each ministry team shall be associated with a member of the Ministry Board, who shall serve as a primary resource for the ministry team.
- e. The actions of each ministry team, and any task force or subcommittee established by a ministry team, shall be included in a written report to the Ministry Board for review. Such reports shall be forwarded to the Congregation Council for review.

C13.02.04. **Amendment 8.2019**; Should a member's place on the Ministry Board be declared vacant, the Congregation Council shall elect by majority vote a successor until the next annual meeting, or legally called congregational meeting.

C13.03 **Amendment 8/2019**; Duties of the congregation ministries shall be specified in the bylaws.

C13.04.01. Altar Guild

Members of the Altar Guild are ministers of the liturgy. Members work in cooperation with the Pastor(s) and the Worship and Music Planning Team. This ministry involves preparing the worship place with the furnishings, appointments, vessels, elements, linens, and paraments used in the liturgy.

C13.04.02. **Audit Committee Bylaw Amendment dated 1/29/17**;  
Audit Committee

An Audit Committee of three voting members shall be appointed by the Executive Committee. The Audit Committee shall audit the books of the congregation's primary and secondary accounts, including but not limited to **checking, brokerage, Global Mission Ministry checking, and Women of Hope checking**. Findings of the Audit Committee shall be presented to the congregation at the annual meeting and the Congregation Council shall be responsible for acting on recommendations of the Audit Committee. Primary accounts shall be audited annually. Secondary accounts shall be audited at least bi-annually. The members of the Audit

Committee shall not be members of the Congregation Council or the Finance Ministry members with signatory authority for primary or secondary accounts. Term of office will be one year. Members shall be eligible for reappointment.

C13.04.03. Call Committee

**Amendment 8/2019**; When a pastoral vacancy occurs, a Call Committee of at least six members, but not more than ten members, shall be elected by the Congregation Council. Term of office will terminate upon the installation of the newly called pastor.

C13.04.A12. Following the installation of the newly called pastor, an advisory committee shall be formed which may include members of the call committee.

C13.04.04. **Council Amendment 11/10/15: Christian Education Ministry Bylaw Amendment 1/16/16:**  
Christian Education Ministry

The Christian Education Ministry, in association with the pastor, shall promote the deepening of our relationships with God/Jesus Christ/Holy Spirit through our educational programs including Sunday School, Confirmation, Faith Matters (adult education), and Bible studies for all age groups; it shall seek to **strengthen** Sunday and weekday events; seek to **strengthen** our mission field beyond our own members; and seek to **strengthen** inter-generational mentoring for people of all ages. One of the primary aims of the Christian Education Ministry shall be to deepen discipleship opportunities in the world to the attention of all persons of the congregation.

C13.04.05. **Finance Ministry Bylaw Amendment 1/25/15, restated 1/26/16:**  
Finance Ministry

- a. **Amendment 8/2019**; The Treasurer and Financial Secretary shall be members of this ministry. The President and Pastor shall be ex-officio members. Additional members, no less than 3, shall be appointed by the Congregation Council.
- b. **Council Amendment 6/9/15; 8/26/13 & 1/16/16**; Appointment to the Finance Ministry shall be for two years. No member shall serve more than two consecutive terms. During the first year of the Ministry Board at least one appointment shall be a one-year appointment so that terms on this ministry will be staggered.
- c. **Amendment 8/2019**; This ministry shall prepare a draft budget for the succeeding year, including this congregation's full indicated share in

support of the wider ministry being carried on in its behalf by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the synod, and shall submit such draft budget to the Congregation Council for its action and later presentation to the congregational meeting.

- d. The Finance Ministry shall oversee any financial accounts intended for longer term than the annual operating budget, including any accounts that hold securities (stock, bonds, mutual funds, insurance policies, etc.).
- e. The Finance Ministry shall exercise oversight of all the financial affairs of the congregation in keeping with the direction of the Congregation Council. (See Chapter 12, C12.05.a.)
- f. There shall be a Financial Secretary, appointed by the Executive committee, who shall receive all monies of this congregation, keep an itemized account of all transactions, and deposits all monies in the name of this congregation in a bank duly designated by it.
  - a. **Council amendment 6/9/15; 8/26/13 & 1/16/16;** The Financial Secretary shall be Chair of the Finance Ministry.
  - b. The Council Treasurer, Financial Secretary and Pastor shall have the authority to make stock transactions.
- g. **Council Amendment 6/9/15; 8/26/13 & 1/16/16;** The Council recommends that the Finance Ministry meet quarterly. Additionally, a meeting can be called at any time, and can be requested by the Chairperson or any other member of the Finance Ministry team. A simple majority of members are needed for a quorum to conduct business.
- h. **Council Amendment 6/9/15; 8/26/13 & 1/16/16;** Conflicts of Interest: A Finance Ministry member who has donated stock may recuse oneself and not participate in discussions concerning particular gift(s) of stock which the member has made.

#### C13.04.06. Global Mission Ministry

The Global Mission Ministry is charged with encouraging House of Prayer members to live out their faith in mission here in Oakdale as well as in the world. This Ministry is responsible for maintaining the relationship with our companion congregation in Ifunda, Tanzania. This Ministry will educate, promote and offer new opportunities for members to be involved in mission.

C13.04.07. Memorial Ministry

The Memorial Ministry keeps records of donations to the church, by family and friends, of loved ones who have passed away. The Memorial Ministry is responsible for deciding how these gifts are spent. Memorial money is used to beautify and enhance our worship areas and church.

C13.04.08. Ministry Growth and Outreach

The main purpose of this Ministry is to encourage members to live out their faith and tell the Christian story in their neighborhoods. This Ministry shall be responsible for reaching out to new members, orienting welcoming them, creating connections and/or opportunities to engage in the Ministry of House of Prayer.

C13.04.09. Nominating Committee

A Nominating Committee comprised of the outgoing members or members appointed by the Executive Committee shall serve as the annual Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee will attempt to secure candidates for specific vacancies on the Congregation Council.

C13.04.10. **Council Amendment 12/15/15; Personnel Committee Bylaw Amendment 1/16/16;**  
Personnel Committee

A Personnel Committee shall consist of the President, Pastor, immediate past-President and 3 members appointed jointly by the President and the Pastor. The immediate past-President shall serve as chairperson of the committee. The term of office shall be two years, with one member appointed the February following a presidential election and two members appointed the following year. The Personnel Committee shall assure that all staff have an annual review with their supervisor. They shall establish necessary policies and advise supervisors of policies, employment laws and best practices. Any paid or non-paid staff person may meet in confidence with the Personnel Committee without the presence of the Pastor and/or the supervisor of that person upon request. The Personnel Committee shall also provide feedback opportunities for the Pastor. The Personnel Committee shall report and be responsible to the Executive Committee.

C13.04.11. Property Ministry

The Property Ministry shall see to the proper maintenance and protection of all property of the congregation, and shall take care that the same is kept in good repair.

#### C13.04.12. Service Ministry

The purpose of the Service Ministry shall be to extend Christian compassion and helpfulness to all persons in need of aid in body or soul. It shall strive to enlist in these efforts as many as possible of the individual members and organizations of the congregation. The Service Ministry shall further have the responsibility of seeking opportunities to bring the cleansing and healing light of Christian truth to bear upon critical problems.

#### C13.04.13. Stewardship Ministry

The Treasurer shall be a member ex-officio. It shall be the function of the Stewardship Ministry to evoke and promote the expression of Christian faith in daily living; to teach the Christian use of money; to diffuse knowledge of this congregation's local, national and world-wide ministries, and to lead all its members to higher levels of proportionate giving for the Lord's work. The Stewardship Ministry shall also be responsible for the annual Estimate of Giving Appeal and other congregational efforts which lead to informed and grateful giving.

#### C13.04.14. Women of Hope

Women of Hope (WOH) is the women's ministry of House of Prayer Lutheran Church. As a community, it follows the W/ELCA guidelines of Mission: Community, Growth and Action. Women of Hope plays a key role in hospitality – related ministry at HOP. WOH maintains the kitchen, including stocking it with supplies, and assists in serving the church and its members when there is a need, including providing refreshments for church functions not covered by any other ministry. Bible studies and other events are held for the spiritual growth and fellowship of women.

#### C13.04.15. Worship and Music Planning Ministry

The Worship and Music Planning Ministry shall work as liaisons with all Worship and Music Teams, such as choirs, musicians, altar guild, ushers, greeters, acolytes, assisting ministers, lectors, etc. to provide meaningful, engaging, Spirit filled worship. This Ministry shall also be evaluating regular liturgies and special events.

#### C13.04.16. Youth Ministry

The Youth Ministry shall be responsible to the areas of Middle, Senior, and Post High School youth of this church. Encouragement shall be given to our youth to participate in life and ministry of the church, both

within and reaching beyond our membership into the community. All confirmed youth are eligible to serve on standing committees.

- C13.05. This congregation will strive to have youth and young adults involved in the membership of each organization or committee in this congregation, where appropriate.
- C13.06. The Ministry Board shall work with the ministry teams in creating and maintaining a policies and procedures manual for the congregation. The manual shall be kept in a place available for all involved person to be able to reference and follow. The manual shall be provided for all paid staff members.

#### CHAPTER 14. ORGANIZATIONS WITHIN THIS CONGREGATION

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

#### CHAPTER 15. DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS AND ADJUDICATION

- \*C15.01. **Amendment 8/26/13 & 8/2019;** Persistent and public denial of the Christian faith, willful or criminal conduct grossly unbecoming a member of the Church of Christ, continual and intentional interference with the ministry of this congregation, or willful and repeated harassment or defamation of member(s) of this congregation is sufficient cause for discipline of a member. Prior to disciplinary action, reconciliation and repentance will be attempted following Matthew 18:15-17, proceeding through these successive steps, as necessary; a) private counsel and admonition by the pastor, b) censure and admonition by the pastor in the presence of two or three witnesses, c) written referral of the matter by the Congregation Council to the vice president of the synod, who will refer it to a consultation panel drawn from the Consultation Committee of the synod, and d) written referral of the matter by the consultation panel to the Committee on Discipline of the synod. If, for any reason, the pastor is unable to administer the admonitions required by paragraphs a. and b. hereof, those steps may

be performed by another pastor chosen by the Executive Committee of the Congregation Council.

- \*C15.02. **Amendment 8/26/13 & 8/2019:** The process for discipline of a member of this congregation shall be governed as prescribed by the chapter on discipline in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. If the counseling, censure, and admonitions pursuant to \*C15.01. do not result in repentance and amendment of life, charges against the accused member(s) that are specific and in writing may be prepared by the Congregation Council, signed, and submitted to the vice president of the synod. The vice president shall select from the synod's Consultation Committee a panel of five members (three lay-persons and two ministers of Word and Sacrament). A copy of the written charges shall be provided to the consultation panel and the accused member(s). The consultation panel, after requesting a written reply to the charges from the accused member(s), shall consider the matter and seek a resolution by means of investigation, consultation, mediation, or whatever other means may seem appropriate. The panel's efforts to reach a mutually agreeable resolution shall continue for no more than 45 days after the matter is submitted to it.
- \*C15.03. **Amendment 8/26/13:** 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. **Amendment 8/26/13:** 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. **Amendment 8/26/13:** By the vote of at least two-thirds of the members of the discipline hearing panel who are present and voting, one of the following disciplinary sanctions can be imposed:
- a. Suspension from the privileges of congregation membership for a designed period of time;

- b Suspension from the privileges of congregation membership until the pastor and Congregation Council receive evidence, satisfactory to them, of repentance and amendment of life;
  - c. **Amendment 8/2019**; Termination of membership in this congregation; or
  - d. **Amendment 8/2019**; Termination of membership in this congregation and exclusion from the church property and from all congregation activities.
- \*C15.06. **Amendment 8/26/13**; 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. **Amendment 8/26/13 & 8/2019**; No member of this congregation shall be subject to discipline a second time for offenses that a discipline hearing panel has heard previously and decided pursuant to this chapter.
- \*C15.10. Adjudication
- \*C15.11. **Amendment 8/2019**; When there is disagreement between or among factions within this congregation on a substantive issue which cannot be resolved by the parties, members of this congregation may petition the synod bishop for consultation after informing the president of this congregation of their intent to do so. The synod bishop shall seek a timely resolution of the dispute. If the issue relates directly to the pastor, the bishop may begin the process in †S14.18.d. In all other matters, if the bishop's consultation fails to resolve the issue, the bishop shall refer the matter to the Consultation Committee of the synod, which shall undertake efforts to find an appropriate solution. If the Consultation Committee's efforts fail to resolve the dispute, the entire matter shall be referred to the Synod Council for adjudication by whatever process the Council deems necessary. The Synod Council's decision shall be final.

## CHAPTER 16. AMENDMENTS

- \*C16.01. **Amendment 8/2019**; Unless provision \*C16.04. is applicable, those sections of this constitution that are not required, in accord with the *Model Constituion for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, may be amended in the following manner. Amendments may be proposed by at least 5 voting members or by the Congregation Council. Proposals must be filed in writing with the Congregation Council 60 days before formal consideration by this congregation at a regular or special Congregation Meeting called for that purpose. The Congregation Council shall notify this

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

\*C16.02. **Amendment 8/2019;** An amendment to this constitution, proposed under \*C16.01., shall:

a. **Amendment 8/2019;** Be approved at any legally called meeting of this congregation by a majority vote of those voting members present and voting;

b. **Amendment 8/2019;** Be ratified without change at the next regular meeting of this congregation held pursuant to C10.01 by a two-thirds vote of those voting members present and voting; and

c. Have the effective date included in the resolution<sup>2</sup> and noted in the constitution.

\*C16.03. **Amendment 8/26/13 & 8/2019;** Any amendments to this constitution that result from the processes provided in \*C16.01. and \*C16.02. shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod. The synod shall notify this congregation of its decision to approve or disapprove the proposed changes; the changes shall go into effect upon notification that the synod has approved them.

\*C16.04. **Amendment 8/2019;** 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 this congregation without presentation at a prior meeting of this congregation, provided that the Congregation Council has submitted by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law, notice to this congregation of such an amendment or amendments, together with the council's recommendations, at least 30 days prior to the meeting. Upon the request of at least two (2) voting members of this congregation, the Congregation Council shall submit such notice. Following the adoption of an amendment, the secretary of this congregation shall submit a copy thereof to the synod. Such provisions shall become effective immediately following a vote of approval.

<sup>2</sup> Such an effective date must be stated in relation to the requirements of \*C16.03. to allow time for synod review of the amendment.

## 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. **Amendment 8/2019;** Changes to the bylaws may be proposed by any voting member, provided that such additions or amendments be submitted in writing to the Congregation Council at least 60 days before a regular or special Congregation Meeting called for that purpose. The Congregation Council shall notify this congregation's members of the proposal with the council's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the Congregation Meeting. Notification may take place by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law.
- \*C17.04. **Amendment 8/2019;** Adopted or amended bylaws shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod.

## CHAPTER 18. CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

- \*C18.01. **Amendment 8/2019;** This congregation in a legally called meeting or the Congregation Council may enact continuing resolutions. Such continuing resolutions may not conflict with the constitution on bylaws of this congregation.
- \*C18.02. **Amendment 8/2019;** Continuing resolutions shall be enacted or amended by a majority vote of a meeting of this congregation or a two-thirds vote of all voting members of the Congregation Council.
- \*C18.03. **Amendment 8/2019;** 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 congregations may adopt provisions providing indemnification for each person who, by reason of the fact that such person is or was a Congregation Council member, officer, employee, agent, or other member of any committee of this congregation, was or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending, or completed civil, criminal, administrative, arbitration, or investigative proceeding.

## Chapter 20. PARISH AUTHORIZATION

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

- \*C20.01. **Amendment 8/2019**; This congregation may unite with one or more other congregations recognized by 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 Congregation.
- \*C20.02. **Amendment 8/2019**; One congregation of a parish shall issue a call on behalf of the member congregations to a minister of Word and Sacrament or a candidate for the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament who has been recommended by the synod bishop to serve the congregations of the parish. Such a call shall be approved prior to issuance by a two-thirds vote at a congregational meeting of each congregation forming the parish. If any congregation of the parish should fail to approve the call, the other congregations of the parish shall have the right to terminate the parish agreement.
- \*C20.03. **Amendment 8/2019**; One congregation of a parish may issue a call on behalf of the member congregations to a minister of Word and Service or a candidate for the roster of Ministers of Word and Service who has been recommended by the synod bishop to serve the congregations of the parish. Such a call shall be approved prior to issuance by a two-thirds vote at a congregational meeting of each congregation forming the parish. If any congregation of the parish should fail to approve the call, the other congregations of the parish shall have the right to terminate the parish agreement.
- \*C20.04. **Amendment 8/2019**; Any one of the congregations of the parish may terminate their relationship with the pastor as provided in †S14.18.d. of the synod constitution of the synod named in \*C6.01. In such case, the other congregation(s) of the same parish shall have the right to terminate the parish agreement.
- \*C20.05. **Amendment 8/2019**; Any one of the congregations of the parish may terminate their relationship with a minister of Word and Service as provided in †S14.43.d. of the synod constitution of the synod named in \*C6.01. In such case, the other congregation(s) of the same parish shall have the right to terminate the parish agreement.

\*C20.06. Amendment 8/2019; 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.