

CONSTITUTION
OF
ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH
WILLISTON, OHIO
THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

January 2010

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 *Saint John Evangelical Lutheran Church of Williston, Ohio*.

C1.02 For the purpose of this constitution and accompanying bylaws, the St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church congregation is hereinafter designated as "this congregation."

C1.11 This congregation is a corporation, not for profit, under the laws of the State of Ohio.

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.
- 02.07 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 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.

Chapter 4

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

C4.01 The Church is a people created by God in Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, called and sent to bear witness to God's creative, redeeming, and sanctifying activity in the world.

C4.02 To participate in God's mission, this congregation as a part of the Church shall:

- a. Worship God in proclamation of the Word and administration of the sacraments and through lives of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, witness, stewardship, 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 aged, advocating dignity and justice for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, standing with the poor and powerless, and committing itself to their needs.
- e. Nurture its members in the Word of God so as to grow in faith and hope and love, to see daily life as the primary setting for the exercise of their Christian calling, and to use the gifts of the Spirit for their life together and for their calling in the world.
- f. Manifest the unity given to the people of God by living together in the love of Christ and by joining with other Christians in prayer and action to express and preserve the unity which the Spirit gives.

C4.03 To fulfill these purposes, this congregation shall:

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

- g. Motivate its members to provide financial support for the congregation's ministry and the ministry of other parts of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - h. Foster and participate in interdependent relationships with other congregations, the synod and the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - i. Foster and participate in ecumenical relationships consistent with church-wide policy.
- C4.04 This congregation shall develop an organizational structure to be described in this constitution and in the bylaws. The Congregation Council shall prepare descriptions of the responsibilities of each committee, task force, or other organizational groups and shall review their actions. (Such descriptions shall be contained in the bylaws).
- C4.05 This congregation shall, from time to time, adopt a mission statement, which will provide specific direction for its programs.

Chapter 5

POWERS OF THE CONGREGATION

- C5.01 The powers of this congregation are those necessary to fulfill its purpose.
- C5.02 The powers of this congregation are vested in the Congregation Meeting called and conducted as provided in this constitution and bylaws.
- C5.03 Only such authority as is delegated to the Congregation Council or other organizational units in the congregation's governing documents is recognized. All remaining authority is retained by the congregation. The congregation is authorized to:
- a. call a pastor as provided in Chapter 9;
 - b. terminate the call of a pastor as provided in Chapter 9;
 - c. call or terminate the call of associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal minister, in conformity with the applicable policy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - d. adopt amendments to the constitution, as provided in Chapter 17, and amendments to the bylaws, as specified in Chapter 16;
 - e. approve the annual budget;
 - f. acquire real and personal property by gift, devise, purchase, or other lawful means;
 - g. hold title to and use its property for any and all activities consistent with its purpose;
 - h. sell, mortgage, lease, transfer, or otherwise dispose of its property by any lawful means;

- i. elect its officers and Congregation council, boards, and committees as are specified in the bylaws and require them to carry out their duties in accordance with the constitution, bylaws and continuing resolutions;
 - j. terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as provided in Chapter 6.
- C5.04 This congregation shall choose from among its voting members, laypersons to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly as well as persons to represent it at meetings of any conference, cluster, coalition, or other area subdivision of which it is a member. The number of persons to be elected by the congregation and other qualifications shall be as prescribed in guidelines established by the Northwestern Ohio Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- C5.05 This congregation shall have a special needs endowment fund that will operate as specified in this congregation's bylaws and continuing resolutions.

Chapter 6
CHURCH AFFILIATION

- C6.01 This congregation shall be an interdependent part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or its successor, and the Northwestern Ohio 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 clergy roster 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.
 - d. This congregation agrees to consider associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers for call to other staff positions in the congregation according to the procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

- e. This congregation agrees to file this constitution and any subsequent changes to this constitution with the synod for review to ascertain that all of its provisions are in agreement with the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and/or with the constitution of the synod.

C6.04 Affiliation with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may be terminated as follows:

- a. This congregation takes action to dissolve.
- b. This congregation ceases to exist.
- c. This congregation is removed from membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America according to the procedure for discipline of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- d. This congregation follows the procedure outlined in C6.05.

C6.05 This congregation may terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America by the following procedure:

- a. A resolution indicating the desire of this congregation to terminate its relation must be adopted at a legally called and conducted special meeting of this congregation by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present.
- b. The secretary of this congregation shall submit a copy of the resolution to the synodical bishop and shall mail a copy of the resolution to voting members of the congregation. This notice shall be submitted within 10 days after the resolution has been adopted.
- c. The bishop of the synod shall consult with this congregation during a period of at least 90 days.
- d. If this congregation, after consultation, still desires to terminate its relationship, such action may be taken at a legally called and conducted special meeting by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present, at which meeting the bishop of the synod or an authorized representative shall be present. Notice of the meeting shall be mailed to all voting members at least 10 days in advance of the meeting.
- e. A certified copy of the resolution to terminate its relationship shall be sent to the synodical bishop, at which time the relationship between this congregation and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be terminated.
- f. Notice of termination shall be forwarded by the synodical bishop to the secretary of this church and published in the periodical of this church.

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

Chapter 7

PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

- C7.01 If this congregation ceases to exist, title to undisposed property shall pass to the Northwestern Ohio Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- C7.02 If this congregation is removed from membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America according to its procedure for discipline, title to property shall continue to reside in this congregation.
- C7.03 If a two-thirds majority of the voting members of this congregation present at a legally called and conducted special meeting of this congregation vote to transfer to another Lutheran church body, title to property shall continue to reside in this congregation. Before this congregation takes action to transfer to another Lutheran church body, it shall consult with representatives of the Northwestern Ohio Synod.
- C7.04 If a two-thirds majority of the voting members of this congregation present at a legally called and conducted special meeting of this congregation vote to become independent or relate to a non-Lutheran church body, 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 the congregation by an established synodical process, may give approval to the request to become independent or to relate to a non-Lutheran church body, in which case title shall remain with the majority of the 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.

Chapter 8

MEMBERSHIP

- C8.01 Members of this congregation shall be those baptized persons on the roll of the 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. Active

1. **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.
2. **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.
3. **Voting** members are confirmed members. Such confirmed members, during the current or preceding calendar year, shall have communed in this congregation and shall have made a contribution of record to this congregation. Members of this congregation who have satisfied these basic standards shall have the privilege of voice and vote at every regular and special meeting of the congregation.
4. **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, or persons who wish to retain a relationship with this congregation while being members of other congregations. They have all the privileges and duties of membership except voting rights and eligibility for elected offices or membership on the Congregation Council of this congregation.

b. Inactive

1. Any baptized or confirmed member that has not contributed or attended for the last three years. These persons shall remain persons for whom the Church has a continuing pastoral concern.

C8.03 All applications for confirmed membership shall be submitted to and shall require the approval of the Congregation Council.

C8.04 It shall be the privilege and duty of members of this congregation to:

- a. make regular use of the means of grace, both Word and sacraments;
- b. live a Christian life in accordance with the Word of God and the teachings of the Lutheran church; and
- c. support the work of this congregation, the synod, and the 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. disciplinary action by the Congregation Council

Chapter 9 THE PASTOR

C9.01 Authority to call a pastor shall be in this congregation, by at least two-thirds majority ballot vote of members present and voting, at a meeting legally called for that purpose. Before a call is issued the officers or a committee elected by the Congregation Council to recommend the call, shall seek the advice and help of the bishop of the synod.

C9.02 Only a member of the clergy roster of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or a candidate for the roster of ordained ministers who has been recommended for the congregation by the synodical bishop may be called as a pastor of this congregation.

C9.03 Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

a. Every ordained minister shall:

1. Preach the Word;
2. administer the sacraments;
3. conduct public worship;
4. provide pastoral care; and
5. 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 ordained minister with a congregational call shall, within the congregation:

1. offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed and bury the dead;
2. act as advisor to all schools and organizations of this congregation;
3. install regularly elected members of the Congregation Council; and
4. with the council, administer discipline.

c. Every pastor shall:

1. strive to extend the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation, and abroad;
2. seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel;
3. impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through distribution of its periodicals and other publications; and

4. endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in American (ELCA) and of the Northwestern Ohio Synod of the ELCA.

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

- C9.05 a. The call of a congregation when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment which, except in the case of the death of the pastor, shall be terminated only following consultation with the synodical bishop and for the following reasons:
1. mutual agreement to terminate the call or the completion of a call for a specific term;
 2. resignation of the pastor, which shall become effective, unless otherwise agreed, 30 days after the date on which it was submitted;
 3. inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in the congregation in view of local conditions, without reflection on the competence or the moral and spiritual character of the pastor;
 4. the physical or mental incapacity of the pastor;
 5. disqualification of the pastor through discipline on grounds of doctrine, morality, or continued neglect of duty;
 6. the dissolution of the congregation; or
 7. suspension of the congregation as a result of discipline proceedings.
- b. When allegations of physical or mental incapacity of the pastor or ineffective conduct of the pastoral office have come to the attention of the bishop of the synod, the bishop in his or her sole discretion may, or when such allegations have been brought to the synod's attention by an official recital of allegations by the Congregation Council or by a petition signed by at least one-third of the voting members of the congregation, the bishop shall, investigate such conditions personally in company with a committee of two ordained ministers and one layperson.
- c. In case of alleged physical or mental incapacity, competent medical testimony shall be obtained. When such disability is evident, the bishop of the synod with advice of the committee shall declare the pastorate vacant. Upon the restoration of a disabled pastor to health, the bishop of the synod shall take steps to enable the pastor to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another field of labor.

- d. In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of the congregation, all concerned persons shall be heard, after which the bishop of the synod together with the committee described in C9.05b, shall decide on the course of action to be recommended to the pastor and the congregation. If they agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action shall be taken by the synod. If either party fails to assent, the congregation may dismiss the pastor 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 simple majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee recommended termination of the call.
 - e. If, in the course of proceedings described in C9.05d, the committee concludes that there may be grounds for disciplinary action, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action to the synodical bishop, who may bring charges in accordance with the provisions of the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the constitution of this synod.
 - f. If, following the appointment of the Committee described in C9.05b or d, it should become apparent that the pastoral office cannot be conducted effectively in the congregation being served by the ordained minister due to local conditions, the bishop of the synod may temporarily suspend the pastor from service in the congregation without prejudice; with pay provided through a joint synodical and churchwide fund and with housing provided by the congregation.
- C9.06 At a time of pastoral vacancy, an interim pastor shall be appointed by the bishop of the synod with the consent of this congregation or the Congregation Council.
- C9.07 During the period of service, an interim pastor shall have the rights and duties in the congregation of a regularly called pastor and may delegate the same in part to a supply pastor with the consent of the bishop of the synod and this congregation or Congregation Council. The interim pastor and any ordained pastor providing assistance shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a pastor.
- C9.08 This congregation shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to a former pastor before calling a successor. A pastor shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to this congregation before beginning service in a call to another congregation or employment in another ministry setting related to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

- C9.09 When a pastor is called to serve in company with another pastor or pastors, the privileges and responsibilities of each pastor shall be specified in documents to accompany the call and to be drafted in consultation involving the pastors, the Congregation Council, and the bishop of the synod. As occasion requires, the documents may be revised through a similar consultation.
- C9.11 With the approval of the bishop of the synod, the congregation may depart from C9.05a and call a pastor for a specific term. Details of such calls shall be in writing setting forth the purpose and conditions involved. Prior to the completion of a term, the bishop or a designated representative of the bishop shall meet with the pastor and representatives of the congregation for a review of the call. Such a call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of C9.05a.
- C9.12 The pastor of this congregation:
- a. shall keep accurate parochial records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, transferred, inactive, as well as any members dismissed for disciplinary actions or for any other reasons.
 - b. shall submit a summary of such statistics annually to the synod; and
 - c. shall become a member of this congregation upon receipt and acceptance of the letter of call. (In a parish of multiple congregations, the pastor shall hold membership in one of the congregations.)
- C9.13 The pastor(s) shall submit a report of his or her ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.
- C9.14 The parochial records of this congregation shall be maintained by the pastor and shall remain the property of the congregation. The secretary of this congregation shall attest in writing to the bishop of this synod that such records have been placed in his or her hands in good order by a departing pastor before the installation of that pastor in another field of labor or the granting by the synod of retired status to the pastor.
- C9.20 Ecumenical pastoral ministry
- C9.21 Under special circumstance, subject to the approval of the synodical bishop and the concurrence of this congregation, an ordained minister of a church body with which the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America official has established a relationship of full communion may serve temporarily as pastor of the congregation under a contract between the congregation and the ordained minister in a form proposed by the synodical bishop and approved by the congregation.

Chapter 10
CONGREGATION MEETING

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

C10.02 A special Congregation Meeting may be called by the pastor, the Congregation Council or the president of this congregation, and shall be called by the president of the congregation upon the written request of 5% of the voting members. The call for each special meeting shall specify the purpose for which it is to be held and no other business shall be transacted.

C10.03 Notice of all meetings of this congregation shall be given at the services of worship on the preceding two consecutive weekend services and by mail to all voting members at least 10 days in advance of the date of the meeting. The posting of such notice in a newsletter sent to the last known address of such members should be sufficient.

C10.04 Ten percent of voting members shall constitute a quorum.

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

C10.06 All actions approved by the congregation shall be by majority vote of those voting members present and voting except as otherwise provided in the constitution or by state law.

C10.07 *Robert's Rules of Order*, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of all meetings of this congregation.

Chapter 11
OFFICERS

C11.01 The officers of this congregation shall be a president, vice president, secretary, treasurer and financial secretary. They shall serve similar offices of the Congregation Council and shall be voting members of the Congregation Council.
a. Duties of the officers shall be specified in the bylaws.

C11.02 The vice-president shall be elected by the congregation by written ballot, and after serving two years in this office, shall succeed to the office of president for a period of two years.

C11.03 The congregation shall elect the officers and board members by written ballot as determined by the constitution and the bylaws. They shall serve for a term of two years, or until their successors are elected. Their terms shall begin at the close of the annual meeting at which they are elected.

C11.04 Duties of the officers and the board chair shall be specified in the bylaws.

C11.05 All voting members of the congregation who are of legal age to enter into contracts in the State of Ohio are eligible to be elected as an officer or board chair, except that no officer or board chair shall hold more than one such position at a time, and no officer or board chair shall be eligible to serve more than two consecutive terms in the same position.

C11.06 Terms of office of the officers shall be staggered, so that the terms of approximately half of the officers and half of the board chairs shall begin each year. The schedules of these terms shall be defined in the bylaws.

Chapter 12 CONGREGATION COUNCIL

C12.01 The voting membership of the Congregation Council shall consist of the pastor(s), the officers of the congregation, and the committee Chairs. Any voting member of the congregation may be elected, subject only to the limitation on the length of continuous service permitted in that office. A member's place on the Congregation Council shall be declared vacant if the member:

- a. ceases to be a voting member of this congregation or
- b. is absent from four successive regular meetings of the Congregation Council without cause. Consistent with the laws of the state of Ohio, the congregation may adopt procedures for the removal of a member of the Congregation Council in other circumstances.

C12.02 The members of the Congregation Council, except the pastor(s), shall be elected at a legally called meeting of the congregation during the month of January. Their term of office shall be for two years, with the term of office beginning after installation. Newly elected Congregation Council members shall be installed at worship the Sunday prior to the date they assume office.

C12.03 Should a member's place on the congregation Council be declared vacant, the Congregation Council shall elect, by majority vote, a successor until the next annual meeting. Individuals who have served less than one-half of a regular term shall be eligible for nomination and possible election to a full term.

C12.04 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 pastor(s) 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 conflict arise, to endeavor to foster mutual understanding.
- g. To arrange for pastoral service during the sickness or absence of the pastor.
- h. To emphasize partnership with the synod and church wide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as well as cooperation with other congregations, both Lutheran and non – Lutheran, subject to established policies of the synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- i. To recommend and encourage the use of program resources produced or approved by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- j. To seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel.

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

- a. The Congregation Council shall be 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 Ohio, except as otherwise provided herein.
- b. The Congregation Council shall not have the authority to buy, sell, or encumber real property unless specifically authorized to do so by a meeting of the congregation.

- c. The Congregation Council may enter into contracts of up to five percent of the budget for items not included in the budget.
- d. The Congregation Council shall prepare an annual budget for adoption by this congregation, shall supervise the expenditure of funds in accordance therewith following its adoption, and may incur obligations of more than five percent of the budget in excess of the anticipated receipts only after approval by a Congregation Meeting. The budget shall include this congregation's full-indicated share in support of the wider ministry being carried on in partnership with the synod and church-wide organization.
- e. The Congregation Council shall ascertain that the financial affairs of this congregation are being conducted efficiently, giving particular attention to the prompt payment of all obligations and to the regular forwarding of benevolence monies to the synodical treasurer.
- f. The Congregation council shall be responsible for this congregation's investments and its total insurance program.

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

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

C12.08 The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the employment and supervision of the salaried lay workers of this congregation.

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

C12.11 The Congregation Council shall normally meet once a month. Special meetings may be called by the pastor or the president, and shall be called by the president at the request of at least one-half of its members. Notice of each special meeting shall be given to all who are entitled to be present.

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

Chapter 13
CONGREGATION COMMITTEES

- C13.01 The officers of this congregation and the pastor shall constitute the Executive Committee
- C13.02 A Nominating Committee shall consist of five voting members of this congregation.
- a. Four members shall be elected at large by the congregation at the time of the general elections, and shall serve a term of one year.
 - b. The Vice President shall serve on and Chair the Committee.
 - c. Members of the Nominating Committee shall not stand for election to any elected office during their term of office.
- C13.03 The Audit Committee of three voting members shall be elected by the Congregation Council when deemed necessary by council or Finance. Audit Committee members shall not be members of the Congregation Council. Term of office shall be terminated upon completion of the audit. (See bylaw B8.03)
- C13.04 The Staff Support Committee shall consist of three voting members appointed jointly by the Executive Committee and approved by the Congregation Council. Term of office shall be three years, one member to be appointed in each successive year. Reappointment to an unlimited term as long as the person prefers to serve. Committee members will hold no other office in the congregation council during their term. The start process will be with one member appointed for one year, one member appointed for two years and one member appointed for three years.
- C13.05 When a pastoral vacancy occurs, a Call Committee of six voting members shall be appointed by the Congregation Council, with the president being ex-officio member (with vote). Term of office will terminate upon installation of the newly called pastor.
- C13.06 Other committees of this congregation may be formed, as the need arises, by decision of the Congregation Council.
- C13.07 Duties of committees of this congregation shall be specified in the bylaws.
- C13.08 The pastor of this congregation shall be an ex-officio member (with vote) of all committees and boards of the congregation with the exception of the Call Committee. The President of this congregation shall be an ex-officio member (with vote) of all committees and boards of the congregation.

Chapter 14
ORGANIZATIONS WITHIN THE CONGREGATION

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

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

Chapter 15
DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS

C15.01 Denial of the Christian faith as described in this constitution, conduct grossly unbecoming a member of the church of Christ, or persistent trouble making in this congregation are sufficient cause for discipline of a member. Prior to disciplinary action, reconciliation will be attempted following Matthew 18: 15-17, proceeding through these successive steps:

- a. private admonition by the pastor;
- b. admonition by the pastor in presence of two or three witnesses; and
- c. citation to appear before the Congregation Council.

If for any reason, the pastor is unable to administer the admonitions required by a. and b. hereof, the president (if not the pastor) or vice president shall administer such admonitions.

C15.02 The process for discipline of a member of the congregation shall be governed as

prescribed by the chapter on discipline in the Constitution Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. If discipline against a member proceeds beyond counseling and admonition by the pastor, charges against the accused member(s) that are specific and in writing shall be prepared by members of the congregation who shall sign the charges as the accuser(s). The written charges shall be filed with the pastor, who shall advise the Congregation Council of the need to issue a written citation to the accused and the accusers that specifies the time and place of the hearing before the Congregation Council. The written charges shall accompany the written citation to the accused. A member charged with the offense shall appear before the Congregation Council after having received a written citation at least ten days prior to the meeting. If the member charged with the offense fails to appear at the scheduled hearing, the Congregation Council may proceed with the hearing and may pass judgment in the member's absence.

C15.03 Members of the Congregation Council who participate in the preparation of the written charges or who present evidence or testimony in the hearing before the Congregation Council are disqualified from voting upon the question of the guilt of the accused member. Should the allegations be sustained by a two-thirds majority vote of the members of the Congregation Council who are not disqualified but who are present and voting, and renewed admonition prove ineffectual, the council shall impose one of the following disciplinary actions:

- a. censure before the council or congregation;
- b. suspension from membership for a definite period of time; or
- c. exclusion from membership in this congregation.

Disciplinary actions b. and c. shall be delivered to the member in writing

C15.04 The member against whom disciplinary action has been taken by the Congregation Council shall have the right to appeal the decision to the Synod Council. Such right may not be abridged and the decision of the Synod Council shall be final.

C15.05 Disciplinary actions may be reconsidered and revoked by the Congregation Council upon receipt of;

- a. evidence that injustice has been done; or
- b. evidence of repentance and amendment.

C15.06 For disciplinary actions in this congregation, “due process” shall be observed as specified in 20.41.04 in the Constitution, Bylaws, and continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in American.

C15.07 No member of a congregation shall be subject to discipline for offenses that the Congregation Council has previously heard and decided, unless so ordered by the Synod council after an appeal.

C15.10 Adjudication

C15.11 When there is disagreement among factions within this congregation on a substantive issue that cannot be resolved by the parties, members of this congregation shall have access to the synodical bishop for consultation after informing the chair of the Congregation Council of their intent. If the consultation fails to resolve the issue(s), the matter shall be referred to the Synod Council, whose decision shall be final.

Chapter 16
BYLAWS

- C16.01 This congregation may adopt bylaws. No bylaw may conflict with this constitution.
- C16.02 Bylaws may be adopted or amended at any legally called meeting of this congregation with a quorum present by a majority vote of those voting members present and voting.
- C16.03 Changes to the bylaws may be proposed by any voting member provided; however, 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 must notify the congregation's members by mail of the proposal with the council's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the Congregation Meeting.
- C16.04 Approved changes to the bylaws shall be sent by the secretary of this Congregation to the synod.

Chapter 17
AMENDMENTS

- C17.01 Unless provision C17.04 is applicable those sections of this constitution that are not required in accord with the *Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, may be amended in the following manner. Amendments may be proposed by at least 5 percent of the voting members or by the Congregation Council. Proposals must be filed in writing with the Congregation Council 60 days before formal consideration by this congregation at a regular or special Congregation Meeting called for that purpose. The Congregation Council shall notify the congregation's members by newsletter of the proposal together with the council's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the meeting.
- C17.02 An amendment to this constitution, proposed under C17.01 shall;
- a. be approved at a legally called Congregation Meeting according to this constitution by a majority vote of those present and voting.
 - b. be ratified without change at the next annual meeting by a two-thirds majority vote of those present and voting; and
 - c. have the effective date included in the resolution and noted in the constitution.

C17.03 Any amendments to this constitution that result from the processes provided in C17.01 and c17.02 shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod. The amendment shall become effective within 120 days from the date of the receipt of the notice by the synod unless the synod informs this congregation that the amendment is in conflict with the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or the constitution of the Northwest Ohio Synod of the ELCA.

C17.04 This constitution may be amended to bring any section into conformity with a section or sections, either required or not required, of the Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America – as most recently amended by the Churchwide Assembly – by a simple majority vote of those voting members present and voting at any legally called meeting of the congregation without presentation at a prior meeting of the congregation, provided that the Congregation Council has submitted by mail notice to the congregation of such an amendment or amendments, together with the council's recommendation, at least 30 days prior to the meeting. Upon the request of 5% voting members of the congregation, the Congregation Council shall submit such notice. Following the adoption of an amendment, the secretary of the congregation shall submit a copy thereof to the synod. Such provisions shall become effective immediately following a vote of approval.

Chapter 18

CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

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

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

Chapter 19

INDEMNIFICATION

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

Bylaws of St John Lutheran Church
Williston, Ohio

Section 1 PARISH RECORDS

B1.01 The records of the congregation shall be and remain the property of the congregation. The officers of the congregation shall be responsible for the maintenance of the records as provided herein. The records shall be brought up to date prior to each annual meeting of the congregation, and upon termination of such officer's service to the congregation, prior to his or her departure.

B1.02 The records of the congregation shall consist of:

- a. Accurate parochial records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, transferred, inactive as well as any disciplinary actions shall be kept by the Pastor.C9.12
- b. The ministerial acts performed by all pastors, for which the Senior Pastor shall be responsible.C9.13
- c. The Minutes and report of the synod and the Parochial Records, for which the Secretary shall be responsible.C9.14
- d. The minutes of the meetings of the congregation and the Congregation Council, for which the Secretary shall be responsible.B5.03
- e. The contributions records, for which the Financial Secretary shall be responsible.B5.05
- f. The financial records of the congregation, for which the Treasurer shall be responsible.B5.04

B1.03 The Senior Pastor shall report to the synod and to the Secretary of the ELCA such statistics as may be requested and shall annually report to the congregation a summary of his ministerial acts.

Section 2 BUSINESS MEETINGS

B2.01 The annual meeting of the congregation shall be held during the month of January.

B2.02 Business meetings of the Congregation Council shall be held monthly at a time determined by the Council. The first meeting of a newly elected council shall take office at the first Council Meeting in February.

B2.03 Business meetings of the official Boards of the Congregation shall be held monthly at a time determined by each Board. Its current Chairman shall call the initial or organizing meeting of the Board within one month following the annual meeting of the congregation for the election of the chair.

- B2.04 Regular and Special Committees shall meet as necessary to carry out the purpose for which they have been created.
- B2.05 Minutes shall be kept of each regular or special business meeting by the Secretary for meetings of the congregation and Congregation Council. The Board and Committee chairs shall appoint a secretary to keep minutes of each regular or special business meeting. Board and committee minutes are to be given to the Congregation Council Secretary prior to the next monthly board meeting.
- B2.06 Except as otherwise provided in the Constitution and bylaws, a quorum for all business meetings shall consist of one-half of the members of the Board or Committee.

Section 3 RELATIONSHIP TO THE NORTHWESTERN OHIO SYNOD

- B3.01 The Congregation, according to the Synod rules for representation shall elect Delegates to the annual Synod Assembly. The Congregation council shall appoint a substitute for any delegate that cannot attend the Assembly. Delegates shall provide the Secretary with a copy of Minutes and other relevant documents to be retained with the congregational records.
- B3.02 The Congregation Council shall appoint appropriate representatives and/or visitors to Synod or Conference meetings, workshops and other activities, and shall encourage attendance and participation in these activities by other members of the congregation.
- B3.03 Organizations within the congregation are encouraged to participate in Synod and Conference activities appropriate to their organization.

Section 4 ELECTIONS

- B4.01 Election of officers, board chairs, and those committees' personnel who are elected by the congregation shall be by written ballot at the annual meeting of the congregation. The nominating committee shall make nominations for all positions to be filled, and the congregation shall make provision for additional nominations.
- B4.02 The vice-president after serving two years in this office, shall succeed to the office of the president for a period of two years. (c11.02). Start process will be elected as vice-president for one year and succeed to the office of the president.
- B4.03 Term of office shall begin in even-numbered years for the Financial Secretary And terms of office for the Treasurer and Secretary shall begin in odd-numbered years..

B4.04 Boards of Evangelism, Christian Community Life, Stewardship, Property, Parish Education, Finance and Worship Life will elect two members each year for a two year term. Terms of office shall begin in odd-numbered years for the Treasure and Secretary.

Section 5 DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF OFFICERS

B5.01 President

The president of the congregation shall preside over all regular and special meetings of the congregation and the Congregation Council.

- a. Shall have general supervisory responsibility for the day-to-day activities of the congregation.
- b. Shall with the Congregation Council make appointments to the vacancies of committees of the congregation.
- c. The president shall assure that there is Council representation at all Committee meetings.
- d. Preside at meetings of congregation and Congregation Council and conduct meetings according to Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition.
- e. See that the resolutions and actions taken by the congregation and congregation council are carried out.
- f. Secure pastoral services in the event of an emergency.
- g. Serve as ex-officio member (with vote) of all ministries and committees of the Congregation.
- h. Work with Vice President on all issues that may span presidents' terms.
- i. Perform additional duties as assigned by congregation and/or congregation council.
- j. President with consultation with Pastor will have the authority to cancel service.

B5.02 Vice-President

The vice-president shall assist the president in the performance of the assigned duties and in the absence of the president perform the duties of the president at all meetings of the congregation and the Congregation Council.

- a. Shall become the president in the case that the office of the president becomes vacant. (c11.02)
- b. Serve as Synod representative for congregation.
- c. Assist all Board Chairpersons as necessary and become acquainted with duties of each Board.
- d. Perform additional duties as assigned by congregation and/or congregation council.
- e. Serve as chairman of the nominating committee.
- f. Attend leadership training.

B5.03 Secretary

The Secretary shall keep official minutes of all meetings of the Congregation and Congregation Council, preserving the minutes permanently in the congregation's archives.

- a. Shall keep the minutes and report of the Synod and the Parochial Records.
- b. Shall send official correspondence of the congregation at the direction of the president of the Congregation Council.
- c. Be responsible for the attendance sheet at meetings of congregation.
- d. Read the minutes of previous meetings and make any necessary corrections.
- e. Keep official minutes of all congregation and congregation council meetings.
- f. Email a copy of the minutes to the church secretary so that they are included in the next monthly Congregation Council meeting.
- g. Put a summary of the minutes in the Forerunner each month.
- h. Attend leadership-training events.
- i. Maintain current list of council membership and have available for each meeting.
- j. Maintain Council meeting attendance and notify members after two consecutive absences with cause.
- k. Notify officers, board members, and committee members of their election as needed.
- l. In the absence of the President and Vice-President, call meetings to order and preside until the immediate election of a chairperson pro tem.
- m. Perform additional duties as assigned by the congregation and/or Congregation Council.

B5.04 Treasurer

The treasurer shall keep all financial records of the congregation, except those for which the financial Secretary is responsible, and disburse the monies as directed by the Congregation Council. This office shall

- a. Perform or oversees all bookkeeping functions.
- b. Files all required Federal and State tax forms.
- c. Prepare/review monthly financial reports for Congregation Council.
- d. Reports annually to congregation with balance sheet for the year and provides requested financial information.
- e. Serves as member of the Finance Committee.
- f. Serves as member of the Endowment Committee.
- g. Assists in preparation of annual budget.
- h. Performs additional duties as assigned by the congregation and/or Congregation Council.

B5.05 Financial Secretary

The financial secretary shall maintain a record of offerings and contributions,

- a. Review monthly income reports provided by church secretary including:
 - General fund offerings
 - Memorial contributions
 - Dedicated accounts
 - Special offerings
 - Other
- b. Assist in resolving any individual member offering issues.
- c. Order and distribute annual offering envelopes.
- d. Distribute personal giving records quarterly and provide members with an annual summary report.
- e. Report contribution progress during council and congregational meetings
 - Comparison vs. budget
 - Comparison vs. prior year
 - Report any anomalies that could cause potential fluctuations in giving
- f. Provide assistance during the annual budget process.
- g. Serve as a member of the finance board.
- h. Understand stewardship committee objectives and their financial giving impact.
- i. Performs additional duties as assigned by the congregation and/or Congregation Council.

Section 6 MEMBERSHIP OF THE BOARDS

B6.01 Each Board shall consist of four (4) members elected by the congregation for a term of two (2) years: two (2) elected each year. Members are eligible for reelection for a second term. After two (2) terms, there must be a one-year lapse before serving in any office or board. The start process will be with one member elected for one year, one member elected for two years.

B6.02 Each board is responsible for selecting its own chairperson and secretary annually. The Chairperson of each board shall be a member of the Congregation Council. It is encouraged that a person not serve as Chairperson during the first year of elected term. The Congregation Council shall approve any exception.

B6.03 No person shall serve on more than one Board or office at any time. (C11.05).

Section 7 SPECIFIC DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF BOARDS
(Refer to Chapters 11 through 13 of the Constitution)

B7.01 The Board of Christian Community Life

This board is responsible for coordinating fellowship of all organizations and groups of the congregation and community.

- a. Establish and direct such programs and activities that will strengthen and promote Christian faith and fellowship at all age levels in keeping within the objectives and mission of the congregation.
- b. Assist and counsel members of the congregation in conjunction with the pastors.
- c. Be responsible, along with the Pastor(s), for visitation of the sick and shut-in.
- d. Assist new members to adjust to the life and ministries of St. John, helping them in the discovery and use of spiritual gifts and talents.
- e. Foster and participate in interdependent and ecumenical relationships with other congregations, the Synod and the ELCA.
- f. Seek congregational guidance with the Board of Property concerning organizational activities, fund raising programs, non-religious events or programs for the use of the church.
- g. Provide oversight, direction and assistance to all organizations of the congregations and their activities, this to include:
 - a. Giving the organization or activity a voice at a Congregation Council Meeting.
 - b. When requested, assisting organizations in preparation and presentation of budget needs to the Finance Board and/or gathering and disbursing of funds.
- h. Coordinate and oversee programs for various groups in the congregation including, but not limited to: Youth, seniors, men, women, young couples, etc. Such activities may include bowling, softball, dart ball, etc.
- i. Encourage and promote the prayer chain.
- j. Coordinate fellowship programs for the congregation and its various units.
- k. Plan seminars and educational activities for the congregation (i.e. marriage, living will).
- l. Serve as the communicator for the social service agencies of our synod.
- m. Emphasize partnership with synod and church wide organizations of the ELCA as well as cooperation with other congregations both Lutheran and non –Lutheran, subject to established policies of the Synod and the ELCA.
- n. Investigate social needs in the local area and educate the congregation to respond through advocacy and action
- o. Increase awareness of Lutheran mission activity in the local area, the United States, and abroad through educational activities.
- p. Maintain a program for collecting and distributing food, clothing, etc., for the needy or homeless.
- q. Prepare activity reports for the Congregation Council and the congregation.
- r. Prepare articles for the congregation’s publications.

- s. Prepare a recommended budget and monitor disbursements.
- t. Prepare Annual Report of activities and plans for the Annual Meeting.
- u. Form committees as necessary to carry out duties and responsibilities, and appoint members from within or outside of the Board membership. Committees shall be directly responsible to the Board and through the Board and its Chairman to the Congregation Council and to the Congregation.

B7.02 The Board of Evangelism

Study, review and encourage the use of evangelism programs and resources for spreading the redeeming and healing Gospel of Jesus Christ to those, especially in this community, who have not already acknowledged acceptance of such faith.

- a. Inform the congregation of the work being done through the wider church and encourage participation through benevolent giving
- b. Organize, promote and execute a follow-up program for prospective members with the aim of sharing our life and faith in Christ.
- c. Be responsible for the purchase and use of literature conducive to the promotion of our Christian concepts.
- d. Organize and promote special evangelism programs such as retreats, workshops and preaching missions.
- e. Develop programs and take steps necessary to aid in the assimilation and integration of new members into the life and programs of the congregation.
- f. Develop and provide a program of outreach that would aim at making the community aware of what we have to offer as the people of God at St. John
- g. In conjunction with the Pastor, accomplish an annual review of the membership roster to determine the baptized, confirmed and voting members of the congregation. This committee shall report to the Congregation Council at the June meeting those persons who do not fulfill the criteria for membership as defined. After sufficient attempts have been made by the committee to encourage and invite these members to renew their relationship, any member, who has not attended or communed, shall be considered that they have removed themselves from active membership. At that time, that member shall be placed on the Inactive and Responsibility list of the congregation. C12.07
- h. Contact persons on the Inactive and Responsibility Lists of the congregation to encourage these persons to renew their relationship with the church.
- i. Encourage members of the congregation to participate actively in small group fellowship and Bible study.
- j. Maintain a list of members wishing to receive the Sunday morning worship recordings, and be responsible for seeking persons to deliver these recordings on a regular basis.
- k. Prepare activity reports for the Congregation Council and the congregation.

- l. Prepare articles for the congregation's publications.
- m. Prepare a recommended budget and monitor disbursements.
- n. Prepare Annual Report of activities and plans for the Annual Meeting.
- o. Form committees as necessary to carry out duties and responsibilities, and appoint members from within or outside of the Board membership. Committees shall be directly responsible to the Board and through the Board and its Chairman to the Congregation Council and to the Congregation.

B7.03 The Board of Parish Education

Establish a Christian educational program for the congregation

- a. Suggest and promote home Bible study groups and suggest appropriate materials.
- b. Provide materials appropriate for small groups.
- c. Establish, maintain, promote and coordinate a Christian educational program for the congregation, such as, Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, Children's Christmas program, adult Bible Studies, Rally Sunday, Easter Egg Hunt, Easter Breakfast, etc.
- d. Review, order and purchase all Christian materials and supplies for all Congregational and Sunday school classes, catechism classes, VBS, adult Bible classes and programs.
- e. Provide adult education programs including: Bible studies for all ages, Contemporary discussion issues, Family educational programs, inter-generational educational opportunities.
- f. Seek to develop learning programs for the shut-ins.
- g. Seek to introduce church periodicals and books of family devotions and study into the homes of congregational members.
- h. Submit annually the name of a qualified individual to congregation Council to be called as the Sunday School Superintendent. Such person shall serve as a member of the Board for the period of two years with two-year reappointment.
- i. Superintendent shall, count offerings, submit offering and attendance to church secretary. Maintain birthday list. Support teacher's needs. Attend Parish Education meetings. Other duties as assigned.
- j. Select carefully and prayerfully all teachers.
- k. Plan a teacher appreciation.
- l. Assist the pastor(s) in developing a training program for teachers and leaders.
- m. Assist the Pastor(s) in developing pre-communion and pre-confirmation programs.
- n. Be responsible for assigning the necessary classrooms for all programs under its jurisdiction.
- o. Approve and support youth group activities and youth groups.
- p. Recommend to Council the hiring of Youth Director and supervise such help.
- q. Develop, maintain, and review the job description for the Youth Director.

- r. Perform an annual review with Youth Director and report review to the council and Finance committee for any wage change.
- s. Recommend to Council where Christmas Program and Birthday offerings will go.
- t. Establish and oversee the opening for the Sunday school classes each Sunday.
- u. Assist the pastor with
 - Catechism curriculum
 - Creating a catechism syllabus for grades 6 – 8
 - Setting expectation for confirmation
 - Reviewing the names of the 8th grade confirmation students who have completed their expected work
 - Present to council the names of the catechism students they recommend to be Confirmed.
 - Order the Bibles, flowers, pictures and robes for confirmation.
 - Present each Catechism student who gets confirmed a Bible with his/her name printed on the front cover.
- v. Maintain a Cradle Roll of baptized infants up through the age of three. Contact parents and invite them to engage their children in Sunday school activities and assist the Evangelism Board in maintaining the active baptized membership rolls.
- w. Prepare activity reports for the Congregation Council and the congregation.
- x. Prepare articles for the congregation's publications.
- y. Prepare a recommended budget and monitor disbursements.
- z. Prepare Annual Report of activities and plans for the Annual Meeting.
- aa. Form committees as necessary to carry out duties and responsibilities, and appoint members from within or outside of the Board membership. Committees shall be directly responsible to the Board and through the Board and its Chairman to the Congregation Council and to the Congregation.

B7.04 The Board of Stewardship

- a. Institute and maintain programs and courses of action for the promotion of Christian stewardship aptitudes and practices in the congregation, which will involve the time, talent, and treasure of its members.
- b. The Stewardship Committee shall service the congregation in encouraging the membership to be faithful in their privilege of being stewards of God's gifts.
- c. Promote the study of scriptural principles of Christian stewardship. Develop and maintain a resource listing of the scriptures that promote stewardship. Share this periodically with the congregation.

- d. Conduct an annual program of stewardship to give each member the opportunity to make a commitment of his or her time, talents, and treasure to God's work.
- e. Secure commitments of time, talents, and money and record these commitments for further use. Make this list available to all boards and committees. Seek out and encourage new members of the congregation to establish Stewardship goals early in their membership.
- f. Responsibly present the needs of time, talent, and treasures to the congregation.
- g. To develop, in accordance with scriptural principles of stewardship, a program to present before the membership the call to be stewards of God's gifts.
- h. From time to time, attend or provide workshops on the theory, theology and practice of current and historic modes of outreach.
- i. Prepare activity reports for the Congregation Council and the congregation.
- j. Prepare articles for the congregation's publications.
- k. Prepare a recommended budget.
- l. Prepare Annual Report of activities and plans for the Annual Meeting.
- m. Form committees as necessary to carry out duties and responsibilities, and appoint members from within or outside of the Board membership. Committees shall be directly responsible to the Board and through the Board and its Chairman to the Congregation Council and to the Congregation.

B7.05 The Board of Finance

The primary responsibility of this Board is to oversee and supervise all the congregation and its various organizations' financial and budgetary transactions to assure all are handled accurately and efficiently.

- a. The Finance Committee is comprised of the Finance Chairperson, the Financial Secretary, the Treasurer, and from three to five members of the congregation. The Finance Committee meets a minimum of once a month to review the finances of the congregation and act on fiscal matters as may be required. The church secretary is responsible for the day-to-day bookkeeping of the congregation and is invited to attend the Finance Committee meetings quarterly to answer the committee's questions and provide input as necessary.

- b. The Finance Chairperson:
 - a. Chairs the Finance Committee and conducts the committee meetings.
 - b. Recruits and coordinates counters from the congregation for the counting, handling, and recording of all offerings.
 - c. Provides counter roles and responsibilities with the assistance of the Finance Committee to minimize financial risk to the congregation. This includes:
 - 1. Determination and implementation of efficient counting process to ensure easy posting of information to financial records.
 - 2. Establishing proper checks and balances.
 - 3. Establishing deposit process
 - 4. Defining and ensuring separation of duties
- c. Is the coordinating body for all the financial consideration/fiscal planning of the congregation and its various organizations.
- d. Evaluate and report membership-giving trends to council, the Stewardship Board and for the congregation annual meeting.
- e. Reviews summaries of the congregation's finances monthly and ensures that said reports balance with bank statements.
- f. Receives reports of the budget needs for the support of the various congregational boards and organizations.
- g. Prepares and recommends to church council an annual budget for submission to the congregation. Said budget is to include the congregation's indicated share in support of synodical and church wide ministries of the agencies of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- h. Present the budget to the Congregation Council at least 30 days prior to the Congregational meeting.
- i. Request and assemble the budget requests from other Boards and develop a Congregational budget annually. (Congregational approval is required for obligations of more than five percent of the budget in excess of the anticipated receipts.)
- j. Works with Parish Education, Worship Life, Property, and the Executive Committee to recommend to Congregation Council the salaries and fringe benefits together with basic work and vacation policies for clergy and lay employees.
- k. Responsible for the congregation's investments, insurance, bookkeeping, and banking procedures under the direction of the Congregation Council.
- l. Assist the Property Board to ensure adequate insurance coverage is obtained at a competitive price.
- m. See that all financial obligations of the congregation are paid promptly and that benevolence moneys are forwarded monthly to the synod.
- n. Arranges for outside audits of the accounts of the Treasurer and the Financial Secretary as well as for the accounts of all organizations within the congregation every five years.

- o. Is responsible for the handling, counting, recording and banking procedures for offerings of every worship service, including Sunday school.
- p. Arrange for secure and responsible handling and timely depositing of all incoming funds and for timely posting to membership records.
- q. Establish the fiscal year 1 January through 31 December.
- r. Prepare a financial informational report for mailing to the membership, to accompany the Financial Secretary's quarterly statements.
- s. Keep membership informed of needs and responses.
- t. Provide needed assistance to the Treasurer.
- u. Arrange for appropriate bond for the Treasurer.
- v. Prepare activity reports for the Congregation Council and the congregation.
- w. Prepare articles for the congregation's publications.
- x. Prepare Annual Report of activities and plans for the Annual Meeting.
- y. Form committees as necessary to carry out duties and responsibilities, and appoint members from within or outside of the Board membership. Committees shall be directly responsible to the Board and through the Board and its Chairman to the Congregation Council and to the Congregation.
- z. Supervise disbursements of endowment, mission and memorial gifts or funds
 - 1. Endowment Fund Committee:
 - a. The Endowment Committee will operate under the Board of Finance as a subcommittee consisting of five to seven members including a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and a secretary. The Board of Finance shall appoint the Endowment Committee for a term of 4 years with reappointment to an unlimited term as long as the person prefers to serve. The Treasurer will also be a member of this committee. The chairperson will report their committee activities to the Board of Finance on a quarterly basis.
 - b. The Endowment Committee will be responsible for communicating to and educating the Congregation about the Endowment Fund. This would include, preparing brochures about the Fund and its purpose, report quarterly to the finance board about the gifts received and disbursements made, preparation of an annual report to be included in the annual congregation report. Information in this report should include investment information about receipts, expenses and disbursements.

- c. The Treasurer shall maintain the books of receipts, expenses and disbursements for the Fund. The treasurer shall attend the Endowment Committee meeting and prepare quarterly reports for the committee and for the Board of Finance chairperson who will need to report the activities of the Endowment Committee.
- d. The Endowment Committee shall determine what is principal (bequests, estates, insurance, etc.) and income (interest, dividends, etc.) according to accepted accounting procedures. Principal and income will be accumulated until the Fund reaches \$100,000 at which time, only the income portion of the Fund above \$100,000 can be dispersed. If additional principal is received after the \$100,000 level is reached, only the income portion can be dispersed. The principal portion would not be disbursed and the Fund balance would remain above \$100,000.
- e. The Endowment Committee along with the Treasurer shall have the power to hold, sell, exchange, rent, lease, transfer, convert, invest, reinvest, and in all other respects to manage and control the assets of the fund as in their judgment and discretion they deem wise and prudent. In no event should the committee be required to make physical separation of the fund in order to conform with the directions of any donor, but it may establish such separate accounts in its accounting records as it may deem necessary or desirable. The Congregational Council shall have final approval of such activities.
- f. The Endowment Committee should establish the list of organizations and programs to be considered for the disbursement of income. This includes, but is not limited to outreach in the community, social service programs, congregational programs, as well as individuals or programs that are in spiritual or economic need. Congregation Council shall approve this list prior to any disbursement of income.
- g. The Endowment Committee will be responsible for determination of who will receive the distribution of income and the percentage they will receive. Congregation Council will have final authority on disbursements. Prior calendar year income for the Fund should be distributed by September 1.

- h. When in the opinion of the Endowment Committee circumstances are so dire and of such an emergency nature that the future of the congregation is at stake and that the only recourse seems to be that use of the fund principal, the Committee may, upon majority vote, recommend such authorizing action to the congregation. The congregation may, upon recommendation by the Committee, decide when and if any fund principal shall be used, by majority vote at a legally called congregational meeting.

2. Memorial Committee

- a. Memorial Committee will be a subcommittee under the Board of Finance consisting of three to five members with one elected Board of Finance member..
- b. Implements communication/disbursement plan approved by Board of Finance to ensure timely memorial fund decisions.
- c. Communicates with appropriate Boards for items involving property and worship enhancements.
- d. Reports activities and makes purchase recommendations to Board of Finance.
- e. Board of Finance has final decision on purchases, except individual items over five percent of the budget which require Congregation Council approval.
- f. Board of Finance informs Church Council of purchase decisions during regular meetings.

B7.06 The Board of Property

The primary responsibility of this Board is the care and repair of all church property and facilities. Develop a schedule of repairs, painting and preventative maintenance. Make regular inspections of the properties of this congregation to assess conditions and set priorities for continuing maintenance and insurance in order to keep the properties in good repair. Provide proper security of building and facilities.

- a. Prepare guidelines and regulations, subject to the approval of Congregation Council, for use and rental of property and facilities. Reviewing and/or setting of rental fees for the use of the property or facilities for such functions as weddings, receptions, sporting events, dinners, meetings, or other activities as necessary. Receiving and acting on all requests for non-congregational use of property or facilities.
- b. Maintain an inventory of property and equipment and make recommendations to the Finance Board concerning the valuation of property and adequacy of insurance coverage.

- c. On a regular basis, report to Council on the condition and use of church property and recommend improvements, renovations, etc., as needed to the council.
- d. Report to Council as to the need for all materials, and the duties and recommended compensation for all personnel related to the repair and maintenance of church property.
- e. Be responsible for snow removal from parking lot and walks as necessary.
- f. Take necessary action to engage and supervise contract personnel i.e. exterminators, trash disposal, lawn maintenance, if applicable, etc.
- g. Recommend to Congregation Council the hiring of the custodian and supervise such help.
- h. Develop, maintain and review the job description for the Custodian.
- i. Perform an annual review with Custodian and report review to the council and Finance committee for any wage change.
- j. Acceptable performance of inside and outside custodians shall be the responsibility of the Property Chairman.
- k. Coordinate and supervise all volunteer help for special work projects. Members of this board should be notified of projects to be done by other boards.
- l. Closely monitor all Board of Property items in budget, watch for all abnormalities keeping expenses as low as possible, and approve expenditures, for emergency and normal repairs and upkeep.
- m. Recruit members of the congregation to serve on the furnishing committee. The function of this committee will be to supervise purchases of the furnishings at both the parsonage and the church building and grounds.
- n. Appoint Technology Coordinator for a period of two years and may have a two-year reappointment.
 - 1. The Technology Coordinator to maintain all technical equipment for the church. This includes but is not limited to computers, server(s), computer software programs, software licensing, computer networking, copier(s), printer(s), audiovisual equipment, website, ISP, email hosting, and phone systems. (All software purchased and installed on Church's computer systems must have a valid license key and agree with the EULA of such software vendors.)
 - 2. Technology Coordinator may enter into maintenance contracts with service companies on technical equipment only, as specified (n.1) with the consent of the Property chair and Congregation Council.
 - 3. Technology Coordinator shall keep an accurate inventory of all technical assets and submit to Property Chair when requested.

4. Coordinator oversees sound/visual system operators and shall provide the Worship Life Chair with a list of operators a month in advance for worship services.
 5. Coordinator shall prepare an annual budget of required equipment/software for the Property Chair to be included in the property budget.
 6. All Staff and Boards must submit a request for technical equipment through the Technology Coordinator before any equipment/software purchase is made.
- o. Prepare activity reports for the Congregation Council and the congregation.
 - p. Prepare articles for the congregation's publications.
 - q. Prepare a recommended budget and monitor disbursements.
 - r. Prepare Annual Report of activities and plans for the Annual Meeting.
 - s. Form committees as necessary to carry out duties and responsibilities, and appoint members from within or outside of the Board membership. Committees shall be directly responsible to the Board and through the Board and its Chairman to the Congregation Council and to the Congregation.

B7.07 The Board of Worship Life

This Board is responsible for the worship life of this congregation.

- a. Work with the Pastor and other appropriate staff to assure effective, orderly and spiritually uplifting worship and communion services having their basis in the Word of God.
- b. This committee shall serve the congregation by developing and creating a meaningful and caring atmosphere within the worship.
- c. Assist the Pastor in developing season worship themes for the main festival seasons of the church year: Advent, Christmas, Lent and Holy Week, Easter, Pentecost, Reformation, Thanksgiving.
- d. Develop policies and programs in the area of music, worship and performing arts for the congregation spiritual enrichment.
- e. Make recommendations of worship times and services to the congregation council for congregational vote.
- f. Be responsible, in consultation and approval of the Pastor, for all liturgical appointments in the worship area.
- g. Assist the appropriate music staff to discover and use the talent existing within the congregation.
- h. Procure and maintain adequate instruments, materials and equipment to carry out its responsibilities.

- i. WELCA representative to coordinate the preparation of the altar and paraments for each service, preparation of the sacramental elements, procurement and care of vestments and sacramental linens, and oversee the purchasing of necessary candles, wine, wafers, and flowers. Coordinate the maintenance of the acolyte gowns, banners and communion albs.
- j. Responsible for the care and maintenance of the choir robes.
- k. Responsible for coordination of the flower chart and selection of the florist.
- l. Provide appropriate hymnals and other worship materials.
- m. Recruit and train members of the congregation as Acolytes, Communion Assistants, Greeters, sound system assistants, Lay Readers, Nursery Attendants, and Ushers.
- n. Appoint persons to coordinate each of these areas of ministry: Music Coordinator and Worship Assistant Coordinator. Define the responsibilities of each of its subcommittee's members
- o. Appoint nursery coordinator whose responsibility will be to recruit attendants and schedule them when required, as well as purchasing necessary supplies. Provide a clean and healthy nursery. See that responsibilities for these positions are reviewed annually.
- p. Be responsible for the personal welcome of visitors at worship.
- q. Arrange with the President for pastoral services in case of illness/vacation of pastor.
- r. Recruit and recommend for hiring the organists, bell directors and choir directors of this congregation to the Church Council and supervise their ministry.
- s. Develop, maintain and review the job description for the organists, choir directors and bell directors and supervise their ministry.
- t. Perform an annual review with organists, choir directors, and bell directors and report review to the council and Finance committee for any wage change.
- u. Prepare activity reports for the Congregation Council and the congregation.
- v. Prepare articles for the congregation's publications.
- w. Prepare a recommended budget
- x. Prepare Annual Report of activities and plans for the Annual Meeting.
- y. Form committees as necessary to carry out duties and responsibilities, and appoint members from within or outside of the Board membership. Committees shall be directly responsible to the Board and through the Board and its Chairman to the Congregation Council and to the Congregation.

B7.08 Other Boards that may be established in these bylaws shall have their Duties and Responsibilities defined in this Section of the Bylaws.

Section 8 DUTIES OF THE CONGREGATION COMMITTEES

B8.01 The Executive Committee (c13)

The Executive Committee, together with the Pastor(s) and Congregation Council, shall see the provisions of the constitution, its bylaws and continuing resolutions are carried out. This includes the following:

- a. This committee shall consist of the officers of the Congregation, President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Financial Secretary and the Pastor.
- b. Long range planning.
- c. Setting goals and priorities.
- d. Developing programs, mission statements, which provide specific direction for the congregation.
- e. Evaluating Congregational activities, in light of its mission and goals.
- f. Annually or when the need arises, counsel with the Pastors regarding Pastoral performance.
- g. Appoint The Staff Support Committee.
- h. Arrange for notice of all congregational meetings.
- i. Seek to involve all members in worship, learning, witness, service and support.
- j. Assuring that an outside audit is completed every five years.
- k. Assure that a call committee is appointed in accordance with C13.05 & C6.03) when necessary.
- l. Recommend to Congregation Council the hiring of the Office staff and supervise such help.
- m. Develop, maintain and review the job description(s) for the office Staff.
- n. Perform an annual review with the office staff and report review to the council and Finance committee for any wage change.
- o. Prepare articles for the congregation's publications.
- p. Prepare reports for the council and/or the congregation.
- q. File the constitution and any subsequent changes by the Congregation Council to the constitution with the Synod for their review to ascertain that it is in agreement with the constitution of the synod.

B8.02 The Nominating Committee (C13.02)

The primary responsibility of this committee is to recruit members of the congregation as nominees to serve on the Congregation Council. This will require:

Securing nominee's consent to serve.

Assuring nominees are eligible to serve.

- a. This committee shall be responsible for publishing a list of the nominations to the congregation for the church newsletter (Forerunner) prior to elections.
- b. The committee shall strive for a cross-section of the membership, seeking to include all aspects of the membership.
- c. The committee shall distribute a copy of the duties of each board or office from the constitution to each candidate.
- d. This committee shall endeavor not to place more than two immediate family members on the executive committee.
- e. The committee shall consist of the Vice President (chair) and four voting members of the congregation.
- f. The committee shall submit to the Church Council, one month before the Congregational meeting, a list of nominees recommended for election.
- g. The committee shall also see to the printing of the ballots for the annual Congregational meeting once approved by the Church Council.
- h. Supervise the elections, i.e., printing of the ballot, counting the ballots, notifying the President and the Congregation of the results, and destroying the ballots when authorized.

B8.03 The Audit Committee is under the direction of the Finance Board. (c13.03)

B8.04 The Staff Support Committee (c13.04)

This committee shall seek to be a support group for the pastor and staff.

- a. It shall be a three-member committee appointed by the Executive Committee and approved by the congregation council. (c13.04)
- b. It shall meet at least four (4) times a year for study, discussion, and evaluation of the ministry of this congregation, its pastor, and its staff.
- c. It shall seek synodical help in areas of concern but shall also observe the rule of confidentiality as appropriate.
- d. It shall make recommendations to the Congregation Council only upon approval of a majority of persons involved.
- e. It shall conduct periodic surveys regarding the ministry of the Congregation and its staff, using appropriate judgment in the publication of results and only with the approval of a majority involved.

B8.05 The Call Committee

(Constitution C6.03 and C13.05)

When a pastoral vacancy occurs, a Call Committee of six voting members shall be appointed by the Congregation Council. Term of office will terminate upon installation of the newly called pastor. This committee reports to the congregation council. The President shall be an ex-officio(with vote) of this committee.

B8.06 Constitution and Bylaws shall be reviewed and/or updated every five years beginning after the approval of the constitution written in 2009.