

**TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
CONSTITUTION**

ADOPTED JANUARY 1993

AMENDED JANUARY 26, 1997

CODIFICATION EXPLANATION

The provisions of the Constitution, the Bylaws, and the Continuing Resolutions that pertain to the same matter should be placed together for clarity in use. A numerical codification indicates general subject, constitutional provisions, bylaw provisions, and continuing resolutions.

All provisions in the Model Constitution for Congregations are prefaced with “C” to distinguish these provisions from comparable ones in the synodical and churchwide constitutions.

Major sectors are designated as chapters. The chapter designation becomes the first number in the codification sequence and is followed by a period. Thus provisions in “Chapter 8. Membership” are preceded by “8.”.

Constitutional provisions are codified with two sets of numbers: the chapter number and a two-digit number preceding the second period in the codification. Thus one constitutional provision relating to the Membership is codified C8.02.

Bylaw provisions are codified with three sets of numbers: the chapter number, the related constitutional provision number, and a two-digit number. Thus one bylaw provision related to Membership would be codified C8.02.01.

Continuing resolutions also are codified with three sets of numbers except that the third set is preceded by a capital letter. Thus a continuing resolution might be numbered C13. to designate the chapter; C13.07 to designate the subject matter within the chapter; and the third set might be numbered A90. in the codification C13.07.A90. to indicate by the “A” that it is the first continuing resolution regarding that subject and by the “90” that was adopted in 1990.

When many related provisions are parts of a unit that are considered inseparable, they are normally lettered “a”, “b”, “c”, etc. When related provisions are part of a unit but considered separable, such as a list of duties, they are normally numbered in sequence. If the related provisions cannot be clearly judged to be separable or inseparable, preference will be given to a number sequence.

If chapter numbers are considered the major sequence number, constitution numbers as a fraction of the chapter number, and bylaw numbers as a fraction of the constitution number, then the codification can be said to provide a progressive sequence. Thus C5.01. will precede C5.03.10, and C9.11.16 will precede C9.13.

In these governing documents, “Church” with a capital letter is used in reference to the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. In references to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the words “church” and “this church” in lower case letters are employed.

Sections of this constitution marked by an asterisk [*] are required when a congregation amends its governing documents. These sections must be used without alteration or amendment of the text in any manner (i.e., neither additions nor deletions are permissible).

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT NUMBERING SYSTEM

As you work with the Model Constitution for Congregations, you may notice that certain numbers seem to be missing from the numbering sequence in some chapters. This is intentional. In the style followed here, the number “.10.” and multiples thereof have been reserved for possible use as section headings in future editions. Therefore, in the sequence, for example, of Chapters 1, 9, and 12, these “.10.” numbers do not appear.

Table of Contents

*Preamble

Chapter 1 Name and Incorporation

Chapter 2 Confession of Faith

Chapter 3 Nature of the Church

Chapter 4 Statement of Purpose

Chapter 5 Powers of the Congregation

Chapter 6 Church Affiliation

Chapter 7 Property Ownership

Chapter 8 Membership

Chapter 9 ~~The Pastor~~[Rostered Minister](#)

Chapter 10 Congregation Meeting

Chapter 11 Officers

Chapter 12 Congregation Council

Chapter 13 Congregation Committees

Chapter 14 Organizations within the Congregation

Chapter 15 Discipline of Members and Adjudication

Chapter 16 ~~Amendments~~[Bylaws](#)

Chapter 17 [Bylaws](#) ~~Amendments~~

Chapter 18 Continuing Resolutions

Chapter 19 Indemnification

Chapter 20 Miscellaneous

*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 Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church.
- C1.02. For the purpose of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws, the congregation of Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church is hereinafter designated as “this congregation.”
- C1.03. For the purpose of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws [and continuing resolutions], the Evangelical Lutheran Church may be referred to as the “ELCA” or as “the church”. Except in references to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, “Church” with a capital “C” refers to the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church.
- C1.04. For the purpose of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws [and continuing resolutions], the Northwest Washington Synod may be referred to as the “the NWW Synod” or “the synod.”
- C1.05. For the purpose of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws [and continuing resolutions], the bishop of the Northwest Washington Synod may be referred to as the “the bishop.”
- C1.06. This congregation shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of Washington.
- C1.06.01. This congregation was incorporated January 24, 1904.
- C1.06.02. The seal of this congregation uses the incorporated name of the congregation, with the addition of the word, “Sola Fide.”

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

Chapter 4 STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

- *C4.01. The Church is a people created by God in Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, called and sent to bear witness to God’s creative, redeeming, and sanctifying activity in the world.
- *C4.02. To participate in God’s mission, this congregation as a part of the Church shall:
 - a. Worship God in proclamation of the Word and administration of the sacraments and through lives of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, witness, and service.
 - b. Proclaim God’s saving Gospel of justification by grace for Christ’s sake through faith alone, according to the apostolic witness in the Holy Scripture, preserving and transmitting the Gospel faithfully to future generations.

c. Carry out Christ's Great Commission by reaching out to all people to bring them to faith in Christ and by doing all ministry with a global awareness consistent with the understanding of God as Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier of all.

d. Serve in response to God's love to meet human needs, caring for the sick and the aged, advocating dignity and justice for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, and standing with the poor and powerless, and committing itself to their needs.

e. Nurture its members in the Word of God so as to grow in faith and hope and love, to see daily life as the primary setting for the exercise of their

Christian calling, and to use the gifts of the Spirit for their life together and for their calling in the world.

f. Manifest the unity to the people of God by living together in the love of Christ and by joining with other Christians in prayer and action to express and preserve the unity which the Spirit gives.

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

a. Provide services of worship at which the Word of God is preached and the sacraments are administered.

b. Provide pastoral care and assist all members to participate in this ministry.

c. Challenge, equip, and support all members in carrying out their calling in their daily lives and in their congregation.

d. Teach the Word of God.

e. Witness to the reconciling Word of God in Christ, reaching out to all people.

f. Respond to human need, work for justice and peace, care for the sick and the suffering, and participate responsibly in society.

g. Motivate its members to provide financial support for the congregation's ministry and the ministry of other parts of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

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

i. Foster and participate in ecumenical relationships consistent with churchwide policy.

*C4.04. This congregation shall develop an organizational structure to be described in the bylaws. The Congregation Council shall prepare descriptions of the responsibilities of each committee, task force, or other organizational groups and shall review their actions. Such descriptions shall be contained in continuing resolutions in the section on the Congregation ~~Council~~Committees.

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

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

Chapter 5. POWERS OF THE CONGREGATION

- *C5.01. The powers of this congregation are those necessary to fulfill its purpose.
- *C5.02. The powers of this congregation are vested in the Congregation Meeting called and conducted as provided in this constitution and bylaws.
- *C5.03. Only such authority as is delegated to the Congregation Council or other organizational units in this congregation's governing documents is recognized. All remaining authority is retained by the congregation. The congregation is authorized to:
- a. call a pastor as provided in Chapter 9;
 - b. terminate the call of a pastor as provided in Chapter 9;
 - c. call [a minister of Word and Service](#);
 - d. ~~or terminate the call of a minister of Word and Service, associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers~~ in conformity with the [constitution applicable policy](#) of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;
 - e. adopt amendments to the constitution, as provided in Chapter ~~167~~, and amendments to the bylaws, as specified in Chapter ~~176~~, and continuing resolutions, as provided in Chapter 18.
 - f. approve the annual budget;
 - g. acquire real and personal property by gift, devise, purchase, or other lawful means;
 - h. hold title to and use its property for any and all activities consistent with its purpose;
 - i. sell, mortgage, lease, transfer, or otherwise dispose of its property by any lawful means;
 - j. elect its Congregation Council, and require the members of the council to carry out their duties in accordance with the constitution, and bylaws; and
 - k. terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as provided in Chapter 6.
- *C5.04. This congregation annually 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 Northwest Washington Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Chapter 6. CHURCH AFFILIATION

- *C6.01. This congregation shall be an interdependent part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America of its successor, and of the Northwest Washington 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 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 ~~ordained~~ [Ministers of Word and Sacrament](#) of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or to contracting for pastoral services with an ~~ordained~~ [minister of Word and Sacrament](#) of a church body with which the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America officially has established a relationship of full communion.
 - d. This congregation agrees to consider ~~associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal~~ [ministers of Word and Service](#) for call to other staff positions in the congregation according to the procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - e. This congregation agrees to file this constitution and any subsequent changes to this constitution with the synod of review to ascertain that all of its provisions are in agreement with the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and with the constitution of the synod.

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

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

*C6.05. ~~This~~ A congregation may terminate its relationship with [the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America](#) ~~this church~~ by the following procedure:

- a. A resolution indicating the intent to terminate its relationship must be adopted at a legally called and conducted special meeting of this congregation by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present. Such meeting may be held no sooner than 30 days after written notice of the meeting is received by the bishop of the synod, during which time the congregation shall consult with the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any. The times and manner of the consultation shall be determined by the bishop in consultation with the ~~congregation-Congregation council~~ [Council](#). Unless he or she is a voting member of the congregation, the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any, shall have voice but not vote at the meeting.
- b. The secretary of the congregation shall submit a copy of the resolution to the bishop, attesting that the special meeting was legally called and conducted and certifying the outcome of the vote, and shall mail a copy of the resolution to voting members of the congregation. This notice shall be submitted within 10 days after the resolution has been adopted.
- c. The bishop of the synod and the congregation shall continue in consultation, as specified in paragraph a. above, during a period of at least 90 days after receipt by the synod of the notice as specified in paragraph b. above.

d. If the congregation, after such consultation, still seeks to terminate its relationship, such action may be taken at a legally called and conducted special meeting by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present. Notice of the meeting shall be mailed to all voting members and to the bishop at least 10 days in advance of the meeting. Unless he or she is a voting member of the congregation, the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any, shall have voice but not vote at the meeting.

e. A copy of the resolution, attesting that the special meeting was legally called and conducted and certifying the outcome of the vote, shall be sent to the bishop within 10 days after the resolution has been adopted, at which time the relationship between the congregation and this church shall be terminated subject to paragraphs g., h., and i. below. Unless this notification to the bishop also certifies that the congregation has voted by a two-thirds vote to affiliate with another Lutheran denomination, the congregation will be conclusively presumed to be an independent or non-Lutheran church.

f. Notice of termination shall be forwarded by the bishop to the secretary of ~~this church~~ the ELCA who shall report the termination to the Churchwide Assembly.

g. This congregation shall abide by these covenants by and among the three expressions of this church:

1) Congregations seeking to terminate their relationship with this church which fail or refuse to comply with each of the foregoing provisions in *C6.05. shall be required to receive Synod Council approval before terminating their membership in this church.

~~h. 2)~~ Congregations which had been members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be required, in addition to complying with the foregoing provisions in *C6.05., to receive synodical approval before terminating their membership in this church.

~~3) i.~~ Congregations established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be required, in addition to complying with the foregoing provisions in *C6.05., to satisfy all financial obligations to this church and receive Synod Council approval before terminating their membership in this church.

~~h.~~ If ~~this~~ congregation fails to achieve the required two-thirds vote of voting members present at the congregation's first meeting as specified in paragraph a. above, another special meeting to consider termination of relationship with this church may be called no sooner than six months after that first meeting. If ~~this~~ congregation fails to achieve the required two-thirds vote of voting members present at the congregation's second meeting as specified in paragraph d. above, another attempt to consider termination of relationship with this church must follow all requirements of *C6.05. and may begin no sooner than six months after that second meeting.

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

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

Chapter 7 PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

*C7.01. If this congregation ceases to exist, title to undisposed property shall pass to the Northwest Washington 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, provided the process for termination of *C6.05. has been followed. Before this congregation takes action to transfer to another Lutheran church body, it shall consult with representatives of the Northwest Washington 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 and have followed the process for termination of relationship in *C6.05., title to property of this congregation shall continue to reside in this congregation only with the consent of the Synod Council. The Synod Council, after consultation with this congregation by the established synodical process, may give approval to the request to become independent or to relate to a non-Lutheran church body, in which case title shall remain with the majority of this congregation. If the Synod Council fails to give such approval, title shall remain with those members who desire to continue as a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Chapter 8 MEMBERSHIP

- *C8.01. Members of this congregation shall be those baptized persons on the roll of this congregation at the time that this constitution is adopted and those who are admitted thereafter and who have declared and maintain their membership in accordance with the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.
- *C8.02. Members shall be classified as follows:
- a. **Baptized** members are those persons who have been received by the Sacrament of Holy Baptism in this congregation, or, having been previously baptized in the name of the Triune God, have been received by certificate of transfer from other Lutheran congregations or by affirmation of faith.
 - b. **Confirmed** members are baptized persons who have been confirmed in this congregation, those who have been received by adult baptism or by transfer as confirmed members from other Lutheran congregations, or baptized persons received by affirmation of faith.
 - c. **Voting** members are confirmed members. Such confirmed members, during the current or preceding calendar year, shall have communed in this congregation and shall have made a contribution of record to this congregation. Members of this congregation who have satisfied these basic standards shall have the privilege of voice and vote at every regular and special meeting of the congregation as well as the other rights and privileges ascribed to voting members by the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.
 - d. **Associate** members are persons holding membership in other Christian congregations who wish to retain such membership but desire to participate in the life and mission of this congregation, ~~or persons who wish to retain a relationship with this congregation while being members of other congregations. They~~ 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~~ and eligibility for elected offices or membership on the Congregation Council of this congregation.
 - e. **Seasonal** members are voting members of other ELCA congregations who wish to retain such membership but desire to participate in the life and mission of this congregation, including

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

1) they shall not be eligible for elected office in, or for membership on the Congregation Council or on a call committee of, this congregation;

2) they shall not have the right to vote on any matter concerning or affecting the call or termination of call of any minister of this congregation;

3) they shall not have the right to vote on any matter concerning or affecting the affiliation of this congregation with the ELCA;

4) they shall not be eligible to serve as voting members from this congregation of the Synod Assembly or the Churchwide Assembly;

5) they shall not, even if otherwise permitted by this congregation, vote by proxy or by absentee ballot; and

6) they shall not, within any two calendar month period, exercise voting rights in this congregation and in the congregation where they remain voting members.

f. Inactive members are those who been classified as such by the Church Council when they have neither received Holy Communion nor made a contribution of record to the congregation within the preceding year. An inactive member shall be restored by the Church Council to the active roll of confirmed members when he or she again receives the Lord's Supper and makes a contribution of record to the congregation.

*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. join regularly in the worship services of this congregation;~~

~~d. present children by their parents and/or guardians for Holy Baptism in early infancy and diligently nurture them in the Christian faith in the home and in the schools provided by the congregation.~~

ec. support the work of this congregation, the synod, and the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America through contributions of their time, abilities, and financial support as biblical stewards.

C8.04.01 Responsibilities of the congregation for fostering faithful membership shall include:

a. proper instruction in the Word of and the teachings of the Lutheran Church prior to reception as confirmed members;

b. transfer of membership to another Lutheran congregation or the issuing of a certificate of standing and/or release to another evangelical congregation at the request of the confirmed

members; (such transfer of membership or issuing of a certificate of standing and/or release should be granted to baptized or un-confirmed children.)

*C8.05. Membership in this congregation shall be terminated by any of the following:

- a. death;
- b. resignation;
- c. transfer or release;
- d. disciplinary action in accordance with ELCA constitutional provision 20.401, and the accompanying bylaws; or by the Congregation Council; or
- e. removal from the roll due to inactivity in accordance with the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws as defined in the bylaws. by the church council when a member has failed to receive Holy Communion and to make a contribution of record for a period of two consecutive calendar years. This procedure will take place after such members have been counseled about the matter, if possible.

Such persons who have been removed from the roll of members shall remain persons for whom the church has a continuing pastoral concern.

C8.05.01 If a confirmed member has neither communed nor made a contribution of record for two or more years, he or she may be removed from the roll of confirmed members by the Congregation Council due to inactivity.

C8.05.02 Note that removal of a person from the roll of baptized members of the congregation does not affect the validity of that person's baptism.

Chapter 9 THE PASTOR/ROSTERED MINISTER

*C9.01. Authority to call a pastor shall be in this congregation by at least a two-thirds ~~majority ballot~~ 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. Only a member of the ~~clergy~~-roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or a candidate for the roster of ~~ordained m~~Ministers of Word and Sacrament who has been recommended for the congregation by the synodical bishop may be called as a pastor of this congregation.

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

a. Every ~~ordained~~-minister of Word and Sacrament shall:

- 1) preach the Word;
- 2) administer the sacraments;
- 3) conduct public worship;
- 4) provide pastoral care;
- 5) seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel;

6) impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through distribution of its communications and publications;

7) witness to the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation, and abroad; and

8) speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world.

b. Each pastor with a congregational call shall, within the congregation:

1) offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead;

2) relate to all schools and organizations of this congregation;

3) install regularly elected members of the Congregation Council;

4) with the council, administer discipline; and

5) endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the ELCA churchwide organization and of the Northwest Washington Synod of the ELCA.

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

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

a. The call of ~~a~~-this 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 by death or, 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, no later than 30 days after the date on which it was submitted.

3) inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in the congregation in view of local conditions, ~~without reflection on the competence or the moral and spiritual character of the pastor;~~

4) the physical disability or mental incapacity of the pastor;

~~5) disqualification of the pastor through discipline on grounds of doctrine, morality, or continued neglect of duty;~~

5) suspension of the pastor through discipline for more than three months;

6) resignation or removal of the pastor from the roster of ~~ordained~~ Ministers of Word and Sacrament of this church;

7) termination of the relationship between this church and the congregation;

68) ~~the~~ dissolution of the congregation; or the termination of a parish arrangement; or

~~79) suspension of the congregation through as a result of discipline proceedings for more than six months.~~

b. When allegations of physical disability or mental incapacity of the pastor under paragraph a.4) above, or ineffective conduct of the pastoral office under paragraph a.3) above, have come to the attention of the bishop of the synod,

1) the bishop in his or her sole discretion may investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two ~~ordained~~rostered ministers and one layperson, or

2) ~~, 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 personally shall; investigate such conditions together personally in company with a committee of two ordained rostered ministers and one layperson.

c. In case of alleged physical disability or mental incapacity under paragraph a.4) above, the bishop's committee shall obtain and document competent medical opinion testimony shall be obtained concerning the pastor's condition. When such a disability or incapacity is evident to the committee, the bishop of ~~the this~~ synod may with the advice of the committee shall declare the pastorate vacant and the pastor shall be listed on the clergy roster as disabled. When the pastorate is declared vacant, the Synod Council shall list the pastor on the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament as disabled. Upon removal of the disability and the restoration of the 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 appropriate call.

d. In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of the congregation under paragraph a.3) above, the bishop's committee shall endeavor to hear from all concerned persons, all concerned persons shall be heard, after which the bishop of the synod together with the committee shall present their recommendations first described in *C9.05.b. shall decide on the course of action to be recommended to the pastor and then to the congregation. The recommendations of the bishop's committee must address whether the pastor's call should come to an end and, if so, may suggest appropriate severance arrangements. The committee may also propose other actions that should be undertaken by the congregation and by the pastor, if appropriate. If the pastor and congregation they agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action need shall be taken by the synod.

e. If either party fails to assent to the recommendatons of the bishop's committee concerning the pastor's call, the congregation may dismiss the pastor only at a legally called meeting after consultation with the bishop, either (a) by a ~~1~~ 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 2) ~~(b)~~ by a simple majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee recommended termination of the call.

ef. If, in the course of proceedings described in paragraph c. or paragraph d. above, *C9.05.d., the bishop's 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 this church's the constitution, and bylaws, and continuing resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the constitution of this synod.

f. If, following the appointment of the committee described in *C9.05.b or d., it should become apparent that the pastoral office cannot be conducted effectively in the congregation(s) 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(s) without prejudice and with pay provided through a joint synodical and churchwide fund and with housing provided by the congregation(s).

- *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 of 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~~rostered minister providing assistance shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a pastor. Unless previously agreed upon by the Synod Council, an interim pastor is not available for a regular call to the congregation served.
- *C9.08. This congregation shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to a former pastor before calling a successor. A pastor shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to this congregation before beginning service in a call to another congregation or employment in another ministry setting related to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- *C9.09. When a pastor is called to serve in company with another pastor or pastors, the privileges and responsibilities of each pastor shall be specified in documents to accompany the call and to be drafted in consultation involving the pastors, the Congregation Council, and the bishop of the synod. As occasion requires, the documents may be revised through a similar consultation.
- *C9.~~10~~11. With the approval of the bishop of the synod, the congregation may depart from *C9.05.a. and call a pastor for a specific term. Details of such calls shall be in writing setting forth the purpose and conditions involved. Prior to the completion of a term, the bishop or a designated representative of the bishop shall meet with the pastor and representatives of the congregation for a review of the call. Such a call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of *C9.05.a.
- *C9.~~11~~12. The pastor of this congregation:
- a. shall keep accurate parochial records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from the congregation;
 - b. shall submit a summary of such statistics annually to the synod; and
 - c. shall become a member of this congregation upon acceptance of the letter of call.
- *C9.~~12~~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.~~13~~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.
- *C9.21. Authority to call a minister of Word and Service shall be in this congregation by at least a two-thirds vote of voting members present and voting at a meeting legally called for that purpose. Before a call is issued, the officers, or a committee elected by [this congregation][the Congregation Council] to recommend the call, shall seek the advice and help of the bishop of the synod.
- *C9.22. Only a member of the roster of Ministers of Word and Service of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or a candidate for the roster of Ministers of Word and Service who has been recommended for this congregation by the synodical bishop may be called as a deacon of this congregation.

- *C9.23. Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, every minister of Word and Service shall:
- a. Be rooted in the Word of God, for proclamation and service;
 - b. Advocate a prophetic diakonia that commits itself to risk-taking and innovative service on the frontiers of the Church's outreach, giving particular attention to the suffering places in God's world;
 - c. Speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world, witnessing to the realm of God in the community, the nation, and abroad;
 - d. Equip the baptized for ministry in God's world that affirms the gifts of all people;
 - e. Encourage mutual relationships that invite participation and accompaniment of others in God's mission;
 - f. Practice stewardship that respects God's gift of time, talents, and resources;
 - g. Be grounded in a gathered community for ongoing diaconal formation;
 - h. Share knowledge of the ELCA and its wider ministry of the gospel and advocate for the work of all expressions of this church; and
 - i. Identify and encourage qualified persons to prepare for ministry of the gospel.

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

*C9.25. The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between a minister of Word and Service and a congregation shall be as follows:

a. The call of a congregation, when accepted by a deacon, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment, which shall be terminated only by death or, following consultation with the synodical bishop, for the following reasons:

1) mutual agreement to terminate the call or the completion of a call for a specific term;

2) resignation of the deacon, which shall become effective, unless otherwise agreed, no later than 30 days after the date on which it was submitted;

3) inability to conduct the ministry of Word and Service effectively in this congregation in view of local conditions;

4) physical disability or mental incapacity of the deacon;

5) suspension of the deacon through discipline for more than three months;

6) resignation or removal of the deacon from the roster of Ministers of Word and Service of this church;

7) termination of the relationship between this church and this congregation;

8) dissolution of this congregation or the termination of a parish arrangement; or

9) suspension of this congregation through discipline for more than six months.

b. When allegations of physical disability or mental incapacity of the deacon under paragraph a.4) above, or ineffective conduct of the office of minister of Word and Service under paragraph a.3) above, have come to the attention of the bishop of this synod,

1) the bishop in his or her sole discretion may investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson, or

2) when such allegations have been brought to the synod's attention by an official recital of allegations by the Congregation Council or by a petition signed by at least one-third of the voting members of this congregation, the bishop personally shall investigate such conditions together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson.

c. In case of alleged physical disability or mental incapacity under paragraph a.4) above, the bishop's committee shall obtain and document competent medical opinion concerning the deacon's condition. When a disability or incapacity is evident to the committee, the bishop of this synod may declare the position vacant. When the position is declared vacant, the Synod Council shall list the deacon on the roster of Ministers of Word and Service as disabled. Upon removal of the disability and the restoration of the deacon to health, the bishop shall take steps to enable the deacon to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another appropriate call.

d. In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of this congregation under paragraph a.3) above, the bishop's committee shall endeavor to hear from all concerned persons, after which the bishop together with the committee shall present their recommendations first to the deacon and then to this congregation. The recommendations of the bishop's committee must address whether the deacon's call should come to an end and, if so, may suggest appropriate severance arrangements. The committee may also propose other actions that should be undertaken by this congregation and by the deacon, if appropriate. If the deacon and congregation agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action need be taken by the synod.

e. If either party fails to assent to the recommendations of the bishop's committee concerning the deacon's call, this congregation may dismiss the deacon only at a legally called meeting after consultation with the bishop, either (a) by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee did not recommend termination of the call, or (b) by a majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee recommended termination of the call.

f. If, in the course of proceedings described in paragraph c. or paragraph d. above, the bishop's committee concludes that there may be grounds for discipline, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action in accordance with the provisions of this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions.

*C9.26. The deacon shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to a former congregation before:

a. installation in another field of labor, or

b. the issuance of a certificate of dismissal or transfer.

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

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

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

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

Chapter 10 CONGREGATION MEETING

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

C10.01.01. Normally the annual meeting will be held in the month of January.

C10.02. A special Congregation Meeting may be called by the pastor, the Congregation Council, or the president of this congregation, and shall be called by the president of the congregation upon the written request of twenty percent (20%) of the 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 (2) consecutive Sundays and by mail to all voting members at least ten (10) days in advance of the date of the meeting. The posting of such notice in the regular mail, with the regular postage affixed or paid, sent to the last known address of such members shall be sufficient. Electronic notice of meetings may be provided in addition to notice by regular mail.

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

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

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

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

Chapter 11 OFFICERS

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

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

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

c. Officers of this congregation shall serve similar offices of the Congregation Council and shall be voting members of the Congregation Council.

d. If the Congregation Council elects its officers, the president, vice president, and secretary shall be selected from the elected membership of the Congregation Council. The Treasurer will be selected by the membership of the Congregation Council. If the treasurer is not an elected

member of the Congregational Council, the treasurer shall have voice but not vote at the meetings of the Congregational Council.

- C11.01.01. **The president** shall preside at meetings of the congregation and the Congregation Council, and shall perform such other duties as the Congregation Council delegates, so long as they do not violate the constitution and bylaws. In the event of the president's inability to serve, the vice-president shall preside.
- C11.01.02. **The vice-president** shall act for the president in his or her absence and shall perform such other duties as the Congregation Council delegates, so long as they do not violate the constitution and bylaws.
- C11.01.03. **The secretary** shall keep accurate minutes of all meetings of the congregation, which shall be preserved permanently in its archives. The secretary shall, with the approval of the Congregation Council, make provision for the safe-keeping of the archives. The secretary shall perform such other duties as the Congregation Council delegates, so long as they do not violate the constitution and bylaws.
- C11.01.04. **The treasurer** shall keep the books of account of the congregation; and shall receive from the financial secretary all funds and disburse them on proper orders, making monthly remittance or benevolence receipts to the synod. The treasurer shall perform such other duties as the Congregation Council delegates, so long as they do not violate the constitution and bylaws.
- C11.01.05. **The treasurer** and **the financial secretary** shall make written report of all financial transactions to the

Congregation Council monthly and to the congregation, together with a satisfactory audit, at its annual meetings.
- C11.01.06. There shall be a **financial secretary**, who shall receive and keep record of all income from contributing members and other sources. The financial secretary shall be elected by the Congregation Council. The financial secretary shall not be an officer of the congregation.
- C11.01.07. All financial officers and other persons determined by the Congregation Council shall maintain corporate surety, in amounts determined by the Congregation Council, for which the premium shall be paid by the congregation. Fidelity coverage provided by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall fulfill this requirement.
- C11.02. The Congregation Council shall elect its officers and they shall be the officers of the congregation. The officers shall be elected by written ballot and shall serve for one year or until their successors are elected. Their terms shall begin at the close of the meeting at which they are elected.
- C11.03. No officer shall hold more than one office at a time, with the exception of the treasurer. No elected officer shall be eligible to serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office.

Chapter 12. CONGREGATION COUNCIL

- C12.01. The voting membership of the Congregation Council shall consist of the pastor(s), the officers of the congregation, and not more than 12 members of the congregation. Any voting member of the congregation may be elected, subject only to the limitation on the length of continuous service permitted in that office. A member's place on the Congregation Council shall be declared vacant if the member a) ceases to be a voting member of this congregation or b) is absent from four successive regular meetings of the Congregation Council without cause.
- C12.01.01 An associate in ministry serving in this congregation under a letter of appointment also shall be a member of the Congregation Council.

- C12.02. The members of the Congregation Council except the pastor(s) shall be elected by written ballot to serve for 3 years or until their successors are elected. Such members shall be eligible to serve no more than two full term consecutively. Their terms shall begin at the close of the annual meeting at which they are elected. They will be installed at worship the Sunday after 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 end of the 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 or employment.
 - e. To be examples individually and corporately of the style of life and ministry expected of all baptized persons.
 - f. To promote a congregational climate of peace and goodwill and, as differences and conflicts arise, to endeavor to foster mutual understanding.
 - g. To arrange for pastoral service during the sickness or absence of the pastor.
 - h. To emphasize partnership with the synod and churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as well as cooperation with other congregations, both Lutheran and non-Lutheran, subject to established policies of the synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - i. To recommend and encourage the use of program resources produced or approved by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - j. To seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel.
- C12.05. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the financial and property matters of this congregation.
- a. The Congregation Council shall be the board of 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 Washington, except as otherwise provided therein.
 - 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 \$1,000 for items not included in the budget.

d. The Congregation Council shall prepare an annual budget for adoption by this congregation, shall supervise the expenditure of funds in accordance therewith following its adoption, and may incur obligations of more than \$2,500 in excess of the anticipated receipts only after approval by a Congregation Meeting. The budget shall include this congregation's full indicated share in support of the wider ministry being carried on in partnership with the synod and churchwide organization.

e. The Congregation Council shall ascertain that the financial affairs of this congregation are being conducted efficiently, giving particular attention to the prompt payment of all obligations and to the regular forwarding of benevolence monies to the 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, and the continuing resolutions are carried out.

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

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

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

C12.11. The Congregation Council shall normally meet once a month. 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 of six (6) voting members of this congregation, two of whom, if possible, shall be outgoing members of the Congregation Council, shall be elected at the annual meeting for a term of one (1) year. Members of the Nominating Committee are not eligible for consecutive reelection.

C13.03. An Audit Committee of three voting members shall be elected by the Congregation Council. Audit Committee members shall not be members of the Congregation Council. Term of office shall be three years, with one member elected each year. Members shall be eligible for reelection.

~~agreeable resolution shall continue for no more than 45 days after the matter is submitted to it. 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 member(s) 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 (10) days prior to the meetings. 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:~~

- ~~_____ a. censure before the council of 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.~~

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

*C15.04. ~~The 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. 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. ~~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. By the vote of at least two-thirds of the members of the discipline hearing panel who are present and voting, one of the following disciplinary sanctions can be imposed:~~
 - ~~a. suspension from the privileges of congregation membership for a designated period of time;~~
 - ~~b. suspension from the privileges of congregation membership until the pastor and Congregation Council receive evidence, satisfactory to them, of repentance and amendment of life;~~

c. termination of membership in the congregation; or

d. termination of membership in the congregation and exclusion from the church property and from all congregation activities.

*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 America. The written decision of the discipline hearing panel shall be sent to the vice president of the synod, the accused member(s), and the Congregation Council as required by the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The decision of the discipline hearing panel shall be implemented by the Congregation Council and recorded in the minutes of the next council meeting.~~

*C15.07. No member of ~~a~~the congregation shall be subject to discipline a second time for offenses that ~~the Congregation Council~~a discipline hearing panel has ~~previously~~previously heard and decided, ~~unless so ordered by the Synod Council after an appeal pursuant to this chapter.~~

*C15.10. **Adjudication**

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

Consultation Committee of the synod shall consider the matter. If the Consultation Committee of the synod shall fail to resolve the issue(s), the matter shall be referred to the Synod Council, whose decision shall be final.

~~Chapter 16.~~ 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, 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 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. Notification may take place by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law.~~

~~*C16.04. Approved changes to the bylaws shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod.~~

Chapter ~~16~~7 AMENDMENTS

*C~~16~~7.01. Unless provision *C16.04. is applicable, ~~Th~~hose sections of this constitution that are not required, in accord with the *Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, may be amended in the following manner. Amendments may be proposed by at least twenty (20) voting members or by the Congregation Council. Proposals must be filed in writing with the Congregation Council sixty (60) days before formal consideration by this congregation at a regular or special Congregation Meeting called for that purpose. The Congregation Council shall notify the congregation’s members of the proposal ~~by mail~~ together with the council’s recommendations at least thirty (30) days in advance of the meeting. Notification may take place by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law.

- *C167.02. An amendment to this constitution, proposed under *C167.01., shall:
- a. be approved at a legally called Congregation Meeting according to this constitution by a majority vote of those [voting members](#) present and voting;
 - b. be ratified without change at the next annual meeting by a two-thirds ~~majority~~ vote of those [voting members](#) present and voting; and
 - c. have the effective date included in the resolution and noted in the constitution.
- *C167.03. Any amendments to this constitution that result from the processes provided in *C167.01. and *C167.02. 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 Washington Synod of the ELCA. The synod shall notify the congregation of its decision to approve or disapprove the proposed changes; the changes shall go into effect upon notification that the synod has approved them.~~
- *C167.04. This constitution may be amended to bring any section into conformity with a section or sections, either required or not required, of the *Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* as most recently amended by the Churchwide Assembly. Such amendments may be approved by a ~~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 ~~or electronic means, as permitted by state law,~~ notice to the congregation of such an amendment or amendments, together with the council's recommendations, at least 30 days prior to the meeting. Upon the request of ~~20 at least two (2)~~ voting members of the congregation, the Congregation Council shall submit such notice ~~and call such a meeting.~~ Following the adoption of an amendment, the secretary of the congregation shall submit a copy thereof to the synod. ~~Such an effective date must be stated in relation to the requirements of *C17.03. to allow time for synodical review of the amendment.~~

Such provisions shall become effective immediately following a vote of approval.

Chapter 17. BYLAWS

- *C17.01. This congregation may adopt bylaws. No bylaw may conflict with this constitution.
- *C17.02. Bylaws may be adopted or amended at any legally called meeting of this congregation with a quorum present by a two-thirds ~~majority~~ vote of those voting members present and voting.
- *C17.03. Changes to the bylaws may be proposed by any voting member, provided that such additions or amendments be submitted in writing to the Congregation Council at least 60 days before a regular or special Congregation Meeting called for that purpose. The Congregation Council shall notify the congregation's members of the proposal with the council's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the Congregation Meeting. Notification may take place by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law.
- *C17.04. Approved changes to the bylaws shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod.

Chapter 18 CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

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

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

Chapter 19 INDEMNIFICATION

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

Chapter 20 MISCELLANEOUS

C20.01. All members of this congregation shall, subject to proper scheduling, be entitled to the use of the church buildings for purposes of marriage, funerals, receptions or other family affairs, free of charge.

C20.02. Non-profit service organizations, whose purpose are not in conflict with the Christian Faith, may be granted use of our church facilities by the Congregation Council at minimal rates established to recover the cost of utilities.

C20.03. Non-members may be granted use of the church buildings at the discretion of the pastor and Congregation Council, provided said use not be in conflict with the Christian Faith and the ministry of this parish.

C20.04. Standing committees shall be education, worship, stewardship, outreach, and staff support.

C20.05. Memorial funds should be used only for the purposes designated by the donor, or if such a specific purpose is not designated, for such purpose as the Congregation Council may designate and approve by a majority vote.

This constitution adopted January 1993
Amended January 2, 2012
Revised December 5, 2012