

Constitution of University Lutheran Church of Hope

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 the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Chapter 1. Name and Incorporation

1.1 The name of this congregation shall be "University Lutheran Church of Hope."

1.2 [For the purpose of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws, the congregation of University Lutheran Church of Hope is hereinafter designated as "this congregation."](#)

1.3 This congregation shall be incorporated under the [Laws of the State of Minnesota](#).

Deleted: provisions of [Chapter 317A of Minnesota Statutes](#).

Chapter 2. Confession of Faith

Deleted: ¶

2.1 This congregation confesses the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

2.2 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.

2.3 This congregation accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testament as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life.

2.4 This congregation accepts the Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds as true declarations of the faith of this congregation.

2.5 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.

2.6 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.

2.7 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

3.1 All power in the Church belongs to our Lord Jesus Christ, its head. All actions of the congregation are to be carried out under his rule and authority.

Deleted: H

3.2 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.

Deleted: This church

Chapter 4. Statement of Purpose

4.1 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.

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

- a. Worship God in proclamation of the Word and administration of the sacraments and through lives of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, witness, and service.
- b. Proclaim God's saving Gospel of justification by grace for Christ's sake through faith alone, according to the apostolic witness in the Holy Scripture, preserving and transmitting the Gospel faithfully to future generations.
- c. Carry out Christ's Great Commission by reaching out to all people to bring them to faith in Christ and by doing all ministry with a global awareness consistent with the understanding of God as Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier of all.
- d. Serve in response to God's love to meet human needs, caring for the sick and the aged, advocating dignity and justice for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, and standing with the poor and powerless, and committing itself to their needs.
- e. Nurture its members in the Word of God so as to grow in faith and hope and love, to see daily life as the primary setting for the exercise of their Christian calling, and to use the gifts of the Spirit for their life together and for their calling in the world.
- f. Manifest the unity given to the people of God by living together in the love of Christ and by joining with other Christians in prayer and action to express and preserve the unity which the Spirit gives.

4.3 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 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.

Deleted: S

4.4 This congregation shall develop an organizational structure to be described in the bylaws. The Vision and Governance Board shall prepare descriptions of the responsibilities of each committee, task force, or other organizational group and shall review their actions.

Deleted: Board of Commissioners

Deleted: s

Deleted: not included in the bylaws

Deleted: of all organizational groups.

4.5 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

5.1 The powers of this congregation are those necessary to fulfill its purpose.

5.2 The powers of this congregation are vested in the Congregational Meeting called and conducted as provided in this constitution and bylaws.

5.3 Only such authority as is delegated to the Vision and Governance Board 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:

Deleted: Board of Commissioners

a. ~~call~~ a pastor as provided in Chapter 9;

Deleted: C

b. ~~terminate~~ the call of a pastor as provided in Chapter 9;

Deleted: T

c. call or terminate the call of associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers in conformity with the applicable policy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;

Deleted: Appoint or terminate the appointment

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;

Deleted: ¶
d

f. ~~Acquire~~ real and personal property by gift, devise, purchase, or other lawful means;

Deleted: A

Deleted: e

g. Hold title to and use its property for any and all activities consistent with its purpose;

Deleted: f

h. sell, mortgage, lease, transfer, or otherwise dispose of its property by any lawful means;

Deleted: g

Deleted: S

i. elect its officers, its Vision and Governance Board and members of its Standing and Special Committees and require them to carry out their duties in accordance with the constitution and bylaws; and

Deleted: h

Deleted: E

Deleted: the

Deleted: Board of Commissioners

j. terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as provided in Chapter 6.

Deleted: c

Deleted: i

Deleted: T

5.4 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 Minneapolis Area Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Chapter 6. Church Affiliation

6.1 This congregation shall be an interdependent part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or its successor, and of the Minneapolis Area Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. This congregation is subject to the discipline of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Deleted: applicable synod

6.2 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.

6.3 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.

Deleted: appointment

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 or with the constitution of the synod.

Deleted: Synod

6.4 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 Section 6.5.

Deleted: The

Deleted: The

Deleted: The

Deleted: The

6.5 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 relationship 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.

Deleted: is

Deleted: ing

Deleted: 7.1 Title to congregational business records and all real and personal property acquired by the congregation, its organizations, or individuals for use by the congregation and its organizations, shall be held by the congregation as a corporation. ¶
7.2 Real property shall not be purchased, disposed of, or encumbered in any manner except by resolution adopted by a majority vote of the members present and voting at a duly called meeting of the congregation. ¶

Deleted: 3

Deleted: the

6.6 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

7.1 If ~~this~~ congregation ceases to exist, title to undisposed property shall pass to the Minneapolis Area Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

7.2 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 the congregation.

Deleted: 4

Deleted: the

7.3 If a two-thirds majority of the voting members of the 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 Minneapolis Area Synod.

Deleted: 5

Deleted: regularly

Deleted: the

Deleted: the

Deleted: the

7.4 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 the congregation shall continue to reside in the 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.

Deleted: 6

Deleted: the

Deleted: regularly

Deleted: the

Deleted: the

Deleted: the

7.5 Notwithstanding the provisions of 7.4 and 7.5 above, where this congregation has received property from the synod pursuant to a deed or other instrument containing restrictions under provision 9.71a of the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, this congregation accepts such restrictions and:

a. Shall not transfer, encumber, mortgage, or in any way burden or impair any right, title, or interest in the property without prior approval of the Synod Council.

b. Shall – upon written demand by the Synod Council, pursuant to S13.23. of the constitution of the Minneapolis Area Synod – reconvey and transfer all right, title, and interest in the property to the synod.

Chapter 8. Membership

8.1 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 the bylaws.

Deleted: the

Deleted: the

8.2 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.

Deleted: who have been baptized in the name of the Triune God and who have been received by the congregation.

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.

Deleted: the Lutheran faith and received into membership by the congregation, or baptized members received into membership by the congregation 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.

Deleted: who

Deleted: or

Deleted: during the immediately preceding two-year period.

d. **Associate** members are persons holding membership in other 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 Vision and Governance Board of this congregation.

Deleted: those who wish to participate in the congregational life of the University Lutheran Church of Hope, but wish to retain their voting membership in their home congregation. Associate members may not serve as commissioners but they may serve as commission members and vote at commission meetings. Associate members may not vote at congregational meetings, but they have the right to speak at such meetings.

Deleted: Board of Commissioners.

8.3 All applications for confirmed membership shall be submitted to and shall require the approval of the Vision and Governance Board.

Deleted: Board of Commissioners.

8.4 It shall be the privilege and duty of members of the congregation to:

a. make regular use of the means of grace, both Word and sacraments;

Deleted: M

b. live a Christian life in accordance with the Word of God and the teachings of the Lutheran church; and

Deleted: L

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

Deleted: S

Deleted: the

8.5 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 Vision and Governance Board; or

e. removal from the roll due to inactivity as defined in the bylaws.

Deleted: 8.5 Members who have not communed or made a contribution of record for a period of two years shall be placed on an inactive list. Reasonable and concerned attempts shall be made to reach them. Those who wish to maintain membership with the congregation shall be reinstated to active membership. Those who do not wish to maintain membership or who cannot be located shall be declared inactive. ¶

Deleted: 6

Deleted: D

Deleted: R

Deleted: T

Deleted: or

Deleted: D

Deleted: Board of Commissioners

Deleted: the congregation.

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

8.7 This section shall be interpreted so that membership shall not be dependent upon factors such as age, gender, race, socioeconomic or marital status, physical or mental capacities or sexual orientation.

Chapter 9. The Pastors

9.1 Authority to call a pastor shall be in this congregation by at least a two-thirds majority ballot vote of members present and voting at a meeting legally called for that purpose. Before a call is

Deleted: regularly

issued, the officers, or a committee elected by this congregation to recommend the call, shall seek the advice and help of the bishop of the synod.

9.2 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.

Deleted: it

9.3 Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,

a. Every ordained minister shall:

Deleted: e

1. preach the Word;

Deleted:

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

2. administer the sacraments;

Deleted: ,

3. conduct public worship;

Deleted: ,

4. provide pastoral care; and

Deleted:

Deleted: ,

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

Deleted: ,

Deleted: shall

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;

Deleted: ,

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

2. supervise all schools and organizations of this congregation;

Deleted: the

3. install regularly elected members of the Vision and Governance Board; and

Deleted: shall

Deleted: Board of Commissioners

4. with the Board, administer discipline.

Deleted: ,

Deleted: w

c. Every pastor shall:

1. strive to extend the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation, and abroad;

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

2. seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel;

Deleted:

3. impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through distribution of its periodicals and other publications; and

Deleted: and strive to extend the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation, and abroad; shall

4. endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and of the Minneapolis Area synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Deleted: shall

9.4 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,

Deleted: .

9.5

Deleted: ¶

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;~~

Deleted: M

Deleted: of years

2. ~~resignation of the pastor, which shall become effective, unless otherwise agreed, 30 days after the date on which it was submitted;~~

Deleted: R

Deleted: ;

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

Deleted: I

4. ~~the physical or mental incapacity of the pastor;~~

Deleted: T

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

Deleted: D

Deleted: or

6. ~~the dissolution of the congregation; or~~

Deleted: T

7. ~~suspension of the congregation as a result of discipline proceedings.~~

Deleted: .

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 Vision and Governance Board 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 lay person.~~

Deleted: In the case of alleged

Deleted: it shall be the responsibility of the bishop of the synod, when such difficulties are personally known or

Deleted: Board of Commissioners

Deleted: ,

Deleted: to

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 the 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 which 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 Section 9.5(b) 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 regularly 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.~~

Deleted: at a regularly called meeting after consultation with the bishop

Deleted: .

Deleted: The foregoing procedure shall never be invoked when questions of doctrine, morality, or continued neglect of duty are involved, all such cases being treated as disciplinary matters.

e. ~~If, in the course of proceedings described in 9.5(d), 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 9.5(b), 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 and with pay provided through a joint synodical and churchwide fund and with housing provided by the congregation.

Deleted: in the course of the proceedings

Deleted: churchwide/synod

9.6 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 Vision and Governance Board.

Deleted: may be called by the congregation at the recommendation of the Board of Commissioners in consultation with the Bishop of the Minneapolis Area Synod.

9.7 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 Vision and Governance Board. The interim pastor and any ordained pastor providing assistance shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a pastor.

Deleted: .

9.8 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.

9.9 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 Vision and Governance Board, and the bishop of the synod. As occasion requires, the documents may be revised through a similar consultation.

Deleted: Board of Commissioners

9.1 With the approval of the bishop of the synod, the congregation may depart from Section 9.5(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 Section 9.5(a).

Deleted: 0

Deleted: of years

9.12 The pastor of this congregation:

Deleted: 1

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

Deleted:

b. shall submit a summary of such statistics annually to the synod; and

Deleted: , and

c. shall become a member of the 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.

Deleted: d.

9.13 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.

Deleted: 12

9.14 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.

Chapter 10. Vision and Governance Board

Deleted: Board of Commissioners

10.1 The business of the congregation shall be managed by a Vision and Governance Board consisting of the officers and Members-at-Large. Terms of office and duties of the officers and Members-at-Large shall be as specified in the bylaws.

Deleted: ¶

Deleted: Board of Commissioners

Deleted: commissioners

Deleted: commissioners

Deleted: articles and

Chapter 11. Discipline of Members and Adjudication

11.1 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 the presence of two or three witnesses, and c) citation to appear before the Vision and Governance Board. 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.

Deleted: the

Deleted: a

Deleted: a

Deleted: Board of Commissioners.

11.2 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 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 Vision and Governance Board 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 Vision and Governance Board. The written charges shall accompany the written citation to the accused. A member charged with the offense shall appear before the Vision and Governance Board after having received a written citation, at least 10 days prior to the meeting. If the member charged with the offense fails to appear at the scheduled hearing, the Vision and Governance Board may proceed with the hearing and may pass judgment in the member's absence.

Deleted: Board of Commissioners

Deleted: notice

Deleted: specifying the exact charges that have been made against the member,

11.3 Members of the Vision and Governance Board who participate in the preparation of the written charges or who present evidence or testimony in the hearing before the Vision and Governance Board 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 Vision and Governance Board who are not disqualified but are present and voting, and renewed admonition prove ineffectual, the Board shall impose one of the following disciplinary actions:

Deleted: Board of Commissioners

a. Censure before the Board or congregation;

b. Suspension from membership for a definite period of time; or

c. Exclusion from membership in this congregation.

Deleted: the

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

11.4 The member against whom disciplinary action has been taken by the Vision and Governance Board 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.

Deleted: Board of Commissioners

Deleted: congregation

Deleted: . The member is encouraged to consult with the Minneapolis Area Synod staff during disciplinary action.

11.5 Disciplinary actions may be reconsidered and revoked by the Vision and Governance Board upon receipt of a) evidence that injustice has been done or b) evidence of repentance and amendment.

Deleted: Board of Commissioners

11.6 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.

11.7 No member of a congregation shall be subject to discipline for offenses that the Vision and Governance Board has previously heard and decided, unless so ordered by the Synod Council after an appeal.

11.10 Adjudication

11.11 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 President of the Vision and Governance Board 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 12. Bylaws

12.1 The congregation may adopt bylaws. No bylaw may conflict with this constitution.

12.2 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.

12.3 Changes to the bylaws may be proposed by any voting member provided, however, that such additions or amendments be submitted in writing to the Vision and Governance Board at least 60 days before a regular or special Congregation Meeting called for that purpose and that the Vision and Governance Board 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.

12.4 Approved changes to the bylaws shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod.

Chapter 13. Amendments

13.1 Unless provision 13.4 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 fifty voting members or by the Vision and Governance Board. Proposals must be filed in writing with the Vision and Governance Board 60 days before formal consideration by this congregation at a regular or special Congregation Meeting called for that purpose. The Vision

Deleted: Congregation Council

Deleted: Congregation Council

and Governance Board shall notify the congregation's members by mail of the proposal together with the Board's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the meeting.

Deleted: council'

13.2 An amendment to this constitution, proposed under 13.1, shall:

Deleted: Any amendment to this constitution must be presented in writing to the congregation at least thirty days before the annual meeting or a special meeting called for that purpose. ¶

a. be approved at a legally called Congregation Meeting according to this constitution by a majority vote of those present and voting;

Deleted: proposed

b. be ratified without change at the next annual meeting by a two-thirds majority vote of those present and voting; and

Deleted: meeting of the congregation

c. have the effective date included in the resolution¹ and noted in the constitution.

Deleted: three-fourths

Deleted: of the

13.3 Any amendments to this constitution that result from the processes provided in 13.1 and 13.2 shall be sent by the secretary of the 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 the congregation that the amendment is in conflict with the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, or the constitution of the Minneapolis Area Synod of the ELCA.

Deleted: s

Deleted: cast; and

Deleted: (which shall occur not less than nine months after the first vote)

Deleted: of the

Deleted: s cast.

Deleted: for review

Deleted: synod.

13.4 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 Vision and Governance Board has submitted by mail 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 fifty voting members of the congregation, the Vision and Governance Board 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.

Deleted: This constitution was adopted by the congregation¶

Chapter 14. CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

14.1 The congregation in a legally called meeting or the Vision and Governance Board may enact continuing resolutions. Such continuing resolutions may not conflict with the constitution or bylaws of this congregation.

14.2 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 Vision and Governance Board.

Chapter 15. INDEMNIFICATION

15.1 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 Vision and Governance Board 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.

Deleted: C

Deleted: 7

Deleted: 3.

¹ Such an effective date must be stated in relation to the requirements of *13.03 to allow time for synodical review of the amendment.

