

CONSTITUTION

and

BYLAWS

Of

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
(ELCA)

SHIREMANSTOWN PA

Approved by Congregation November 17, 2013

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PREAMBLE

We, baptized members of the Church of Christ, responding in faith to the call of the Holy Spirit through the Gospel, desiring to unite together to preach the Word, administer the sacraments, and carry out God's mission, do hereby adopt this constitution and solemnly pledge ourselves to be governed by its provisions. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Chapter 1.

NAME AND INCORPORATION

C1.01. The name of this congregation shall be "ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH"
Shiremanstown, PA

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

C1.03. This congregation shall be incorporated under the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

C1.04. The Seal of this congregation presents the words: St. John's Lutheran Church, Shiremanstown, Pa. Incorporated 1875.

Chapter 2.

CONFESSION OF FAITH

*C2.01. This congregation confesses the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

*C2.02. This congregation confesses Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and the Gospel as the power of God for the salvation of all who believe.

- a. Jesus Christ is the Word of God incarnate, through whom everything was made and through whose life, death, and resurrection God fashions a new creation.
- b. The proclamation of God's message to us as both Law and Gospel is the Word of God, revealing judgment and mercy through word and deed, beginning with the Word in creation, continuing in the history of Israel, and centering in all its fullness in the person and work of Jesus Christ.
- c. The canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the written Word of God. Inspired by God's Spirit speaking through their authors, they record and announce God's revelation centering in Jesus Christ. Through them God's Spirit speaks to us to create and sustain Christian faith and fellowship for service in the world.

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

Chapter 3. NATURE OF THE CHURCH

- *C3.01. All power in the Church belongs to our Lord Jesus Christ, its head. All actions of this congregation are to be carried out under his rule and authority.
- *C3.02. The Church 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. This church, 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.
- *C3.03. 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 given to the people of God by living together in the love of Christ and by joining with other Christians in prayer and action to express and preserve the unity which the Spirit gives.

- *C4.03. To fulfill these purposes, this congregation shall:
 - a. Provide services of worship at which the Word of God is preached and the sacraments are administered.

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

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

- d. Teach the Word of God.
 - e. Witness to the reconciling Word of God in Christ, reaching out to all people.
 - f. Respond to human need, work for justice and peace, care for the sick and the suffering, and participate responsibly in society.
 - g. Motivate its members to provide financial support for the congregation's ministry and the ministry of other parts of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - h. Foster and participate in interdependent relationships with other congregations, the synod, and the 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 ministry team, team coordinator, 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 Ministry Teams.
- *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 the congregation's governing documents is recognized. All remaining authority is retained by the congregation. The congregation is authorized to:
- a. call a pastor(s) as provided in Chapter 9;
 - b. terminate the call of a pastor(s) as provided in Chapter 9.
 - 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;
 - d. adopt amendments to the constitution, as provided in Chapter 17, amendments to the bylaws, as specified in Chapter 16, and continuing resolutions, as provided in Chapter 18.
 - e. approve the annual budget;
 - f. acquire real and personal property by gift, devise, purchase, or other lawful means;
 - g. hold title to and use its property for any and all activities consistent with its purpose;
 - h. sell, mortgage, lease, transfer, or otherwise dispose of its property by any lawful means;
 - i. elect its Congregation Council, and require them to carry out their duties in accordance with the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions;
 - j. terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as provided in Chapter 6.
- *C5.04. This congregation shall choose from among its voting members lay persons 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 Lower Susquehanna 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 or its successor, and of the Lower Susquehanna Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. This congregation is subject to the discipline of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- *C6.02. This congregation accepts the Confession of Faith and agrees to the Purposes of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and shall act in accordance with them.
- *C6.03. This congregation acknowledges its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in which:
 - a. This congregation agrees to be responsible for its life as a Christian community.
 - b. This congregation pledges its financial support and participation in the life and mission of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - c. This congregation agrees to call pastoral leadership from the clergy roster of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in accordance with its call procedures except in special circumstances and with the approval of the bishop of the synod. These special circumstances are limited either to calling a candidate approved for the roster of ordained ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or to contracting for pastoral services with an ordained minister 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 for call to other staff positions in the congregation according to the procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - e. This congregation agrees to file this constitution and any subsequent changes to this constitution with the synod for review to ascertain that all of its provisions are in agreement with the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or with the constitution of the synod.
- *C6.04. Affiliation with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may be terminated as follows:
 - a. This congregation takes action to dissolve.

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

*C6.05. A congregation may terminate its relationship with 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 the congregation by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present. Such meeting may be held no sooner than thirty (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 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 ten (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 ninety (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 ten (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 ten (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, who shall report the termination to the Churchwide Assembly.
- g. 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. Congregations which had been members of the Lutheran Church in America shall be required, in addition to complying with the foregoing provisions in *C6.05., to receive synodical approval before terminating their membership in this church.
- 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.
- j. If a 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 (6) months after that first meeting. If a 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 (6) months after that second meeting.

*C6.06. If this congregation is considering relocation, it shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located and the appropriate program 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 affected.

*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 program 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 Lower Susquehanna 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 relationship in *C6.05 has been followed. Before this congregation takes action to transfer to another Lutheran church body, it shall consult with representatives of the Lower Susquehanna Synod.
- *C7.04. If a two-thirds majority of the voting members of this congregation present at a legally called and conducted special meeting of this congregation vote to become independent or relate to a non-Lutheran church body, title to property of this congregation shall continue to reside in this congregation only with the consent of the Synod Council. The Synod Council, after consultation with the congregation by 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 the congregation. If the Synod Council fails to give such approval, title shall remain with those members who desire to continue as a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- C7.05. Notwithstanding the provisions of *C7.02. and *C.7.03. above, where this congregation has received property from the synod pursuant to a deed or other instrument containing restrictions under provision 9.71.a. of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, this congregation accepts such restrictions and:
 - a. 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 Lower Susquehanna Synod—reconvey and transfer all right, title, and interest in the property to the synod.

Chapter 8.
MEMBERSHIP

*C8.01. Members of this congregation shall be those baptized persons on the roll of the congregation at the time that this constitution is adopted and those who are admitted thereafter and who have declared and maintain their membership in accordance with the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.

*C8.02. Members shall be classified as follows:

- a. 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 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.
- d. Associate members are persons holding membership in other Lutheran congregations who wish to retain such membership but desire to participate in the life and mission of this congregation or who wish to retain a relationship with this congregation while being members of other congregations.

C8.02.01 They have all the privileges and duties of membership except voting rights and eligibility for elected offices or membership on the Congregation Council of this congregation. Members of non-Lutheran congregations who desire an associate membership in the life and mission of this congregation, may serve on ministry teams or as ministry team coordinators, or teach only after approval has been given by the pastor(s) and the Congregation Council.

*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 confirmed members of this congregation to:

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

- b. live a Christian life in accordance with the Word of God and the teachings of the Lutheran church; and
- c. support the work of this congregation, the synod, and the churchwide organization through contributions of their time, abilities, and financial support as biblical stewards.

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

- a. death;
- b. resignation;
- c. transfer or release;
- c. disciplinary action in accordance with provision 20.40 and the accompanying bylaws; and
- d. removal from the roll due to inactivity as defined in the bylaws.

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

C8.05.01. Congregation Council may, following appropriate notification and counseling (if possible) of members who have not received the Sacrament of Holy Communion and made a contribution of record for a period of two (2) consecutive years, act to remove said persons from the roll of members. This procedure shall take place only when there is a pastor under call to serve this congregation or with the approval of the bishop of the synod. Such persons who have been removed from the roll of members shall remain persons for whom the church has a continuing pastoral concern.

Chapter 9. THE PASTOR(S)

*C9.01. Authority to call a pastor(s) 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 issued, the officers or a committee elected by the Congregation Council to recommend the call, shall seek the advice and help of the bishop or synod.

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

- *C9.03. Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, every ordained minister shall preach the Word, administer the sacraments, conduct public worship, provide pastoral care, and shall speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world. Each ordained minister with a congregational call shall, within the congregation, offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead; supervise all schools and organizations of the congregation; install regularly elected members of the Congregation Council, and with the council, administer discipline. Every pastor shall strive to extend the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation, and abroad; seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel and impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through distribution of its periodicals and other publications; and endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and of the Lower Susquehanna Synod of the ELCA.
- *C9.04. The specific duties of the pastor(s), compensation, and other matters pertaining to the service of the pastor(s) shall be included in a letter of call, which shall be attested by the bishop of the synod.
- *C9.05. a. The call of a congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment which, 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 pastor, which shall become effective, unless otherwise agreed, no later than thirty (30) days after the date on which it was submitted;
 - 3) inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in the congregation in view of local conditions;
 - 4) physical disability, or mental incapacity of the pastor;
 - 5) suspension of the pastor through discipline for more than three months;
 - 6) resignation or removal of the pastor from the roster of ordained ministers of this church;
 - 7) termination of the relationship between this church and the congregation;
 - 8) dissolution of the congregation or the termination of a parish arrangement;
or
 - 9) suspension of the congregation through discipline 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 this synod,
 - 1) the bishop in his or her sole discretion may investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two ordained ministers and one layperson.
 - 2) when such allegations have been brought to the synod's attention by an official recital of allegations by the congregation council or by a petition signed by at least one-third of the voting members of the congregation, the bishop personally shall investigate such conditions together with a committee of two ordained 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 pastor's condition. When a disability or incapacity is evident to the committee, the bishop of the synod may declare the pastorate vacant and the pastor shall be listed on the clergy roster as disabled. Upon removal of the disability and restoration of the pastor to health, the bishop shall take steps to enable the pastor to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another appropriate call.
- d. In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of the congregation under paragraph a.3) above, the bishop's committee shall endeavor to hear from, all concerned persons after which the bishop together with the committee shall present their recommendations first to the pastor and then to the congregation. The recommendations of the bishop's committee must address whether the pastor's call should come to an end and, if so, may suggest appropriate severance arrangements. The committee may also propose other actions that should be undertaken by the congregation and by the pastor, if appropriate. If the pastor and congregation agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action need be taken by the synod.
- e. If either party fails to assent to the recommendations of the bishop's committee concerning the pastor's call, the congregation may dismiss the pastor only at a legally called meeting after consultation with the bishop, either (a) by a two-thirds 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.
- 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 disciplinary action, the committee shall make recommendations concerning

disciplinary action in accordance with the provisions of this church's constitution, bylaws and continuing resolutions.

- C9.05.01 When a pastor of this congregation desires to terminate this ministry, a letter of resignation shall be submitted to Congregation Council for report to the congregation. Unless otherwise agreed by Congregation Council and pastor, the resignation shall normally become effective two (2) months after the date on which it is submitted.
- *C9.06. At a time of pastoral vacancy, an interim pastor may be appointed by the bishop of the synod with the consent of this congregation or the Congregation Council.
- *C9.07. During the period of service, an interim pastor shall have the rights and duties of a regularly called pastor and may delegate the same in part to a supply pastor with the consent of the bishop of the synod and this congregation or Congregation Council. The interim pastor and any ordained pastor providing assistance shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a pastor. 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.
- *C9.11. With the approval of the bishop of the synod, the congregation may depart from *C9.05.a. and call a pastor(s) 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(s) and representatives of the congregation for a review of the call. Such call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of *C9.05.a.
- *C9.12. The pastor(s) shall keep accurate parochial records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from the congregation, shall submit a summary of such statistics annually to the synod, and shall become a member of this congregation upon receipt and acceptance of the letter of call. In a parish of

multiple congregations, the pastor shall hold membership in one of the congregations.

- *C9.13. The pastor(s) shall submit a report of his or her ministry to the bishop of the synod at least ninety (90) days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.
- *C9.14. The parochial records of this congregation shall be maintained by the pastor and shall remain the property of the congregation. The secretary of this congregation shall attest in writing to the bishop of this synod that such records have been placed in his or her hands in good order by a departing pastor before the installation of that pastor in another field of labor or the granting by the synod of retired status to the pastor.

Chapter 10.

CONGREGATION MEETING

- C10.01. The annual meeting of this congregation shall be held at a time specified in the continuing resolutions.
 - C10.01.A13 The annual congregational meeting shall be held during the month of November.
- C10.02. A special Congregation Meeting may be called by the pastor(s), the Congregation Council, or the president of this congregation, and shall be called at the written request of forty (40) voting members. The president of the Congregation Council shall call a special meeting upon request of the synodical bishop. The call for each special meeting shall specify the purpose for which it is to be held and no other business shall be transacted.
- C10.03. Notice of all meetings of this congregation shall be given at the services of worship on the preceding two consecutive Sundays and by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law, to all confirmed members at least ten (10) days in advance of the date of the meeting.
- C10.04. Sixty (60) voting members shall constitute a quorum.
- C10.05. Voting by proxy or by absentee ballot shall not be permitted.
- CI0.06. All actions by the congregation shall be by majority vote of those voting members present and voting, except as otherwise provided in this constitution.
- CI0.07. 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 president, vice-president, executive secretary, financial manager and financial secretary.

- a. All officers shall be voting members of the congregation. If any of them ceases to be such, their office shall at once be declared vacant by the council, which shall fill the vacancy for the unexpired term.
- b. The president, vice-president and executive secretary shall be members of the Congregation Council. The other officers, if not members of Congregation Council, shall be accorded the privilege of voice without vote in its meetings.
- c. The president shall chair the congregation and the Congregation Council. In the event of the president's inability to perform the duties of this office, the vice-president shall preside.
- d. The executive secretary shall keep accurate minutes of all meetings of the congregation and council, which shall be preserved permanently in its archives. A recording secretary may be appointed.
- e. The financial manager shall keep the books of account of the congregation, shall receive all funds and disburse them on proper orders, make monthly remittance of benevolence receipts to the treasurer of synod and make written report of all transactions to the Congregation Council monthly and to the congregation together with a satisfactory audit, annually.
- f. The financial secretary shall receive and keep records of all income from contributing members and other sources.
- g. All officers and financial personnel shall have benefit of surety bond, payable by ELCA or the congregation.

C11.02. The officers shall be elected by the Congregation Council.

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

Chapter 12.
CONGREGATION COUNCIL

C12.01. The Congregation Council shall consist of the pastor(s), the elders as provided in C12.03, ~~seven (7)~~ **nine (9)** elected members of the congregation, ~~and two (2) ministry team coordinators elected at a meeting of ministry coordinators in~~

~~**October** of the year preceding the start of the new two (2) year **term to be approved by the congregation at the November Congregational Meeting.** The two (2) ministry team coordinators shall not be eligible to serve as officers of Congregation Council.~~ Any voting member of the congregation at least eighteen (18) years of age or older 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 two (2) successive regular meetings of the Congregation Council without prior notice.

C12.02. The members of the Congregation Council except the pastor(s) and the elders shall be elected by written ballot to serve for three (3) years. No member shall be eligible to serve consecutive full terms. Vacancy occurring ad-interim shall be filled by Congregation Council. A member shall be ineligible for election or appointment until one (1) full year has elapsed from the expiration of a previous full term. Any member serving less than twelve (12) months is eligible to be elected to a full term. Term shall begin as provided in the Bylaws.

C12.02.A13 Nominations for elected members of Congregation Council shall be made by the council. One (1) nomination shall be presented for every vacancy to be filled. Members of the congregation are permitted, and encouraged, to make a like number of nominations.

- a. Council nominations shall be announced to the congregation on the first Sunday in October.
- b. Members of the congregation desiring to nominate persons shall present names to the nominating committee no later than the third Sunday in October so that the committee may determine the eligibility of said persons, and may be assured of the nominee's acceptance to stand for nomination.
- c. Council and congregational nominees shall again be announced the Sunday prior to the annual congregational meeting.
- d. On the Sunday before the November congregational meeting, a written brief biographical sketch of council and congregational nominees, including at least three (3) items of personal participation at the congregational or community level, shall be presented to the congregation.

Newly elected Congregation Council members shall be installed at a worship service the third Sunday in December. Their term of office shall begin January 1st.

There shall be a reorganization meeting of the Congregation Council during the January Council meeting for the sole purpose of electing its officers; elect a

member to the board of trustees; and establish as many ministry teams and ministry team coordinators as the local and wider concerns of the congregation shall require in order to fulfill the congregation's functions as described in Chapter 4 of the Constitution.

Eligible to vote at the meeting described in item 4a are pastor(s), elders(s) and presently serving Congregation Council members. The Senior Pastor shall preside at this meeting.

C12.03. An elected member of this Congregation Council who has served for a total of twenty (20) years or more may be elected an elder. An elder shall hold office for life and recognition of their office shall be shown the highest honor and respect and shall be accorded all the privileges of an elected member. At the meeting of the congregation the number of elders to be elected shall be determined by resolution on recommendation of the Congregation Council.

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: 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.

C12.04.a.A13 The fundamental mission of St. John's Lutheran Church, indeed the very reason for its existence, is identical to the mission of the Christian church universal; namely to do that which Christ commissioned us to do--carry the good news of God's redemptive and reconciling love to all persons. Thus, we the people of God, live to be the instruments of the Holy Spirit in obedience to the commission of our Lord, and our mission is:

- a. To respond to God in worship by giving thanks and praise for life in the daily gifts of his grace; by praying for the needs of the people everywhere, and offering our lives in daily vocation and service to our neighbors;
- b. to sustain and uphold the faith of our members, recognizing that as ministers of reconciliation we desire to grow in our love and sensitivity to the needs of our neighbors;
- c. to reach out into the world to win others to the Body of Christ, realizing that witness to the Gospel involves both words and deeds;
- d. to interpret God's word as it relates to contemporary events in our society, offering God's total message of judgment and grace; and

- e. to recognize that all we have belongs to God and to be faithful stewards of it--the earth, our lives, the Gospel.

This Mission Statement shall be the basis of any review of the life and ministry of the congregation and upon which new functions or goals are established.

- 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.

C12.04.c.A13 The Congregation Council may select an archivist who shall be responsible for all books and papers of historical value except the church records, which shall be in the care of the pastor(s).

No books, papers or periodicals which are valuable and contain information concerning the history of the congregation shall be destroyed or loaned, except by permission of the pastor(s) and the Congregation Council.

- d. To maintain supportive relationships with the pastor(s) and staff and help them annually to evaluate the fulfillment of their calling, appointment, or employment.
- e. To be examples individually and corporately of the style of life and ministry expected of all baptized persons.
- f. To promote a congregational climate of peace and goodwill and, as differences and conflicts arise, to endeavor to foster mutual understanding.
- g. To arrange for pastoral service during the sickness or absence of the pastor(s).
- h. To emphasize partnership with the synod and churchwide units 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 have care of all the property of the church, both real and personal, except funds received from endowment and bequests, and shall be responsible for said property. It shall be responsible for the management of the business and fiscal affairs of the church. It shall have the powers and be subject to the obligation that pertains to such boards under the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, except as otherwise provided herein.
- b. The Congregation Council shall not have the authority to buy, sell, or encumber real property unless specifically authorized to do so by a meeting of the congregation.
- c. The Congregation Council 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 more than ten percent (10%) 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.
- d. 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.

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

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

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

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

C12.10. The Congregation Council shall normally meet once a month. Special meetings may be called by the pastor(s) or the president, and shall be called at the request of at least one-half of its members. The pastor(s) or the president may call an

Executive Session of Congregation Council if necessary. Notice of each special meeting shall be given to all who are entitled to be present.

- C12.10.A13 The Congregation Council shall normally meet the ~~first~~ **second** Tuesday of each month.
- C12.11. A quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of a majority of the members of the Congregation Council, including the pastor(s) or interim pastor. The only exception to this is if and when the pastor(s) or interim pastor requests or consents to be absent, and has given prior approval to an agenda of routine matters which shall be the only business of the meeting. In this exceptional case, a quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of a majority of the elected members of the Congregation Council.
- C12.12 The Congregation Council and its committees may hold meetings by remote communication, including electronically and by telephone conference, and, to the extent permitted by state law, notice of all meetings may be provided electronically.

Chapter 13.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES ~~AND MINISTRY TEAMS~~

- C13.01 There shall be a board of trustees responsible for the investments of all funds received from endowments and bequests. Such investments that are made shall be limited to investments that are authorized for trust funds in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, unless the instrument creating such endowment or bequest shall provide otherwise, and only on approval of a majority vote of the trustees.
- C13.02. The trustees shall see that all property of the church, both real and personal, is adequately insured.
- C13.03. This board shall be comprised of five (5) members. The Congregation Council shall annually elect from among the voting members of the congregation one trustee for a term of five (5) years, the term to become effective January 1st. The tenure shall be so arranged that one-fifth of the terms expire annually. A trustee shall be eligible to serve no more than two (2) consecutive terms. A member shall be ineligible for election or appointment until one (1) full year has elapsed from the expiration of previous two (2) consecutive terms. Any vacancy occurring during a term shall at once be filled by the Congregation Council for the unexpired term.
- C13.04. The officers of the Congregation Council shall be comprised of the president, vice president, and executive secretary **and member at large**. Other members include ~~four (4) at large members, two (2) ministry coordinators, and the~~

~~pastor(s). Congregation Council shall also function as an executive committee and perform the functions outlined in the bylaws. The ministry team coordinators shall not be eligible to serve as officers of the Congregation Council.~~ Other members of council include five (5) elected members and all called staff.

~~C13.04.A13 In order to support and facilitate the mission of the Church, there shall be Ministry Team Coordinator positions including, but not limited to: Coordinator of Worship; Coordinator for Learning; Coordinator for Witness; Coordinator for Administration; Coordinator of Service Ministries; Coordinator of Fellowship; and Day Care Coordinator. With the exception of the Day Care Coordinator, who shall be the Day Care Director, said coordinators shall be elected by a majority of the Congregation Council for a term of two (2) years upon the nomination of one or more Council members. The coordinators will meet once a month at a day and time of their choosing. The coordinators shall, by a majority vote, elect two (2) coordinators to serve on the Congregation Council, subject to approval by the congregation at the November Congregational meeting and consistent with the rules and provisions of Chapter 12 of the Constitution. Coordinators may serve no more than two (2) consecutive terms. All congregation ministry teams shall be composed of a ministry team coordinator and one or more lay members of the congregation. The pastor(s) and the council president shall have voice and vote in all ministry teams. The duties of all ministry teams shall be assigned by the Congregation Council, along with such instructions as in its judgment are in the best interest of the congregation. All actions of ministry teams shall be subject to review by the council and ministry team coordinators. Congregation Council may from time to time amend by continuing resolution the description or function of the Ministry Teams or Ministry Team Coordinator positions.~~

~~The Congregation Council will take the place of the former Executive Committee and perform the following duties:~~

- ~~a. The Council President will develop agendas for Congregation Council and congregation meetings.~~
- ~~b. The Council will approve use of facilities.~~
- ~~c. The Council will serve as mediation committee.~~
- ~~d. The Council will evaluate staff members, both ordained and non-ordained, and make recommendations to the Coordinator for Administration for budget purposes.~~

C13.05a. A Nominating Committee for the purpose of preparing a slate of the Congregation Council nominees, shall be appointed by the president, and be comprised of the pastor(s) and three (3) members of the Congregation Council.

C13.05b. A Nominating Committee for the purpose of preparing a slate of nominees for congregational officers ~~and ministry team coordinators~~, appointed by the council president, shall be comprised of the pastor(s) and three members, one of whom shall be elected from the council members. No retiring council member shall be eligible.

C13.06. An Audit Committee of three (3) voting members shall be elected by the Congregation Council. Audit Committee members shall not be members of the Congregation Council. Term of office will be one (1) year. Members shall be eligible for re-election.

C13.07. When a pastoral vacancy occurs, a Call Committee of six (6) voting members shall be appointed by the Congregation Council. Term of office will terminate at installation of the newly-called pastor.

~~C13.08. Other ministry teams and/or ministry team coordinators may be formed as the need arises, by decision of the Congregation Council.~~

~~C13.09. Duties of the ministry teams and ministry team coordinators shall be specified in the continuing resolutions.~~

~~C13.09.A13—~~

~~Coordinator of Worship (formerly the Worship Committee)~~

~~This Coordinator shall assist the Congregation Council in the area of worship and music. This person shall also assist the various teams related to Worship and Music so that worship services of God's house are conducted regularly and in accordance with the liturgy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. This coordinators' teams may include but are not limited to: Choirs, contemporary worship service bands, the altar guild, usher/greeter teams, sponsorship team nursery team, acolyte team, lector/deacon team, contemporary worship team, decorating team, summer service team, flower delivery team, bulletin team, sanctuary technology team, and any other teams necessary to lead and guide worship~~

~~Coordinator for Learning (formerly the Parish Education Committee)~~

~~This Coordinator along with the pastor(s) shall lead the teams associated with education and learning within the congregation. These teams shall teach using materials published or approved by the Lutheran Church. These teams shall also encourage qualified persons to seek church vocations. These teams may include but are not limited to: Adult Education, Christian and Youth, Bible Study Teams, Confirmation, First Communion, Youth Ministry, VBS, Day Care, and any other necessary teams to promote learning in the church~~

~~Coordinator for Witness (formerly Outreach and Nurture and Mission Committees)~~

~~This Coordinator shall encourage all members of the congregation to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ, to awaken the spiritually indifferent, and to reach out to the unchurched. These teams may include but are not limited to: the Mission Team, New Members' Team, Young Adult Letter Team, Hospitality Team,~~

Evangelism Task Force, Prayer Shawl Ministry, Outreach and Nurture Team, and any other team with a focus on witness.

~~Coordinator for Administration (formerly Stewardship, Finance, Property, Cemetery, and Public Relations)~~

~~— This Coordinator shall lead teams to care for the financial and administration parts of the church. These functions will include care of the buildings and physical assets, oversight of the finances, budget preparation, congregational stewardship, and technology development. The teams may include but are not limited to: data entry, office support, Thrivent, Trustees, Stewardship, Audit, Finance and Budget, Money Stewards, Money Counters, envelope preparation team, care of the cemeteries, care of the church property, computer hardware and networking, church publicity, and any other teams necessary for the administration of the church.~~

~~Coordinator of Service Ministries (formerly Social Ministry)~~

~~— This coordinator shall lead the teams to extend Christian compassion and helpfulness to the ill, aged, the poor, economically disenfranchised, imprisoned, and those in need of assistance. These teams will contribute to Christian solutions in communities both at home and throughout the world. These teams may include but are not limited to: Social Ministry, Helping Hands, Funeral Support Team, Greeting Card Senders, Food and Baked Goods suppliers, and any other teams to assist in the care of the needy among us.~~

~~Coordinator of Fellowship (formerly Congregational Life)~~

~~— This Coordinator assists in our efforts to provide social functions and activities to bring people together in an atmosphere of Christian fellowship. These teams include but are not limited to: coffee cart team, ice cream social, church picnic, potluck luncheons, walking group, Men's Ministry, Women's Ministry, SAGE, Coffee for Six, softball, darts, blanket-making team, and summer golf event.~~

~~Day Care Coordinator~~

~~— This coordinator works to insure a quality Christian-centered Day Care program. The Day Care Director shall be the coordinator working with the Parent Board and with the Congregation Council. The Day Care Coordinator shall be the current Day Care Director.~~

Chapter 14.

ORGANIZATIONS WITHIN THE CONGREGATION

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

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

Chapter 15.

DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS

- *C15.01. Persistent and public denial of the Christian faith, willful or criminal conduct grossly unbecoming a member of the Church of Christ, continual and intentional interference with the ministry of the congregation, or willful and repeated harassment or defamation of member(s) of the congregation is sufficient cause for discipline of a member. Prior to disciplinary action, reconciliation and repentance will be attempted following Matthew 18:15 – 17, proceeding through these successive steps, as necessary: a) private counsel and admonition by the pastor, b) censure and admonition by the pastor in the presence of two or three witnesses, c) written referral of the matter by the Congregation Council to the vice president of the synod, who will refer it to a consultation panel drawn from the Consultation Committee of the synod, and d) written referral of the matter by the consultation panel to the Committee on Discipline of the synod. If, for any reason, the pastor is unable to administer the admonitions required by paragraphs a, b, hereof, those steps may be performed by another pastor chosen by the Executive Committee of the Congregational Council.
- *C15.02. The process for discipline of a member of the congregation shall be governed as prescribed by the chapter on discipline in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. If the counseling, censure, and admonitions pursuant to C15.01 do not result in repentance and amendment of life, charges against the accused member(s) that are specific and in writing may be prepared by the Congregation Council, signed, and submitted to the vice president of the synod. The vice president shall select from the synod's Consultation Committee a panel of five members (three lay persons and two clergy). A copy of the written charges shall be provided to the consultaion panel and the accused member(s). The consultation panel, after requesting a written reply to the charges from the accused member(s), shall consider the matter and seek a resolution by means of investigation, consultation, mediation, or whatever other means may seem appropriate. The panel's efforts to reach a mutually agreeable resolution shall continue for no more than 45 days after the matter is submitted to it.
- *C15.03. If the consultation panel fails to resolve the matter, that panel shall refer the case in writing, including the written charges and the accused member's reply, to the Committee on Discipline of the synod for a hearing. A copy of the panel's written referral shall be delivered to the vice president of the synod, the Congregation Council, and the accused member(s) at the same time it is sent to the Committee on Discipline of the synod. The Executive Committee of the

Synod Council shall then select six members from the Committee on Discipline to decide the case, and shall appoint a member of the Synod Council to preside as nonvoting chair. Those six members plus the nonvoting chair comprise the discipline panel for deciding the case. The Congregation Council and the accused member(s) are the parties to the case.

- *C15.04. The discipline hearing panel shall commence and conduct the disciplinary hearing in accordance with the provisions governing discipline of congregation members prescribed in the *Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.
- *C15.05. By the vote of at least two-thirds of the members of the discipline hearing panel who are present and voting, one of the following disciplinary sanctions can be imposed:
 - 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. The written decision of the discipline hearing panel shall be sent to the vice president of the synod, the accused member(s), and the Congregation Council as required by the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The decision of the discipline hearing panel shall be implemented by the Congregation Council and recorded in the minutes of the next council meeting.
- C15.07. No member of the congregation shall be subject to discipline a second time for offenses that a discipline hearing panel has heard previously and decided pursuant to this chapter.
- *C15.10. Adjudication
- *C15.11. When there is disagreement among factions within this congregation on a substantive issue that cannot be resolved by the parties, members of this congregation 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, however, that such additions or amendments be submitted in writing to the Congregation Council at least sixty (60) days before a regular or special Congregation Meeting called for that purpose. The Congregation Council shall notify the members of the proposal with the Council's recommendations at least thirty (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 (recording/executive) of this congregation to the synod.

Chapter 17.
AMENDMENTS

- *C17.01. Unless provision *C17.04 is applicable, those sections of this constitution that are not required, in accord with the Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, may be amended in the following manner. Amendments may be proposed by at least four (4) 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 its regular or special congregation meeting called for that purpose. The Congregation Council shall notify the members of the proposal 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.
- *C17.02. A proposed amendment to this constitution, proposed under *C17.01, shall:
 - a. be approved at a legally called Congregation Meeting according to this constitution by a majority vote of those present and voting;
 - b. be ratified without change at the next annual meeting by a two-thirds majority vote of those present and voting; and

- c. have the effective date included in the resolution and noted in the constitution.
- *C17.03. Any amendments to this constitution that result from the processes provided in *C17.01 and *C17.02 shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod. The 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.
- *C17.04. This constitution may be amended to bring any section into conformity with a section or sections, either required or not required, of the Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as most recently amended by the Churchwide Assembly. 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 thirty (30) days prior to the meeting. Upon the request of sixty (60) voting members of the congregation, the Congregation Council shall submit such notice. Following the adoption of an amendment, the secretary of the congregation shall submit a copy thereof to the synod. Such provisions shall become effective immediately following a vote of approval.

Chapter 18.

CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

- *C18.01 The congregation in a legally called meeting or the Congregation Council may enact continuing resolutions. Such continuing resolutions may not conflict with the constitution or bylaws of this congregation.
- *C18.02. Continuing resolutions shall be enacted or amended by a majority vote of a meeting of the congregation or by a two-thirds vote of all voting members of the Congregation Council.
- C18.03. The Congregation Council may enact continuing resolutions which describe the function of the various ministry teams, **and the organizational structure** ~~ministry team coordinators or organizations~~ of this congregation.
- C18.04. The Congregation Council may define or amend the functions and description of the ministry teams and ~~ministry team coordinator positions~~ **and the organizational structure** by continuing resolution without the need for formal amendment under this Chapter.

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.