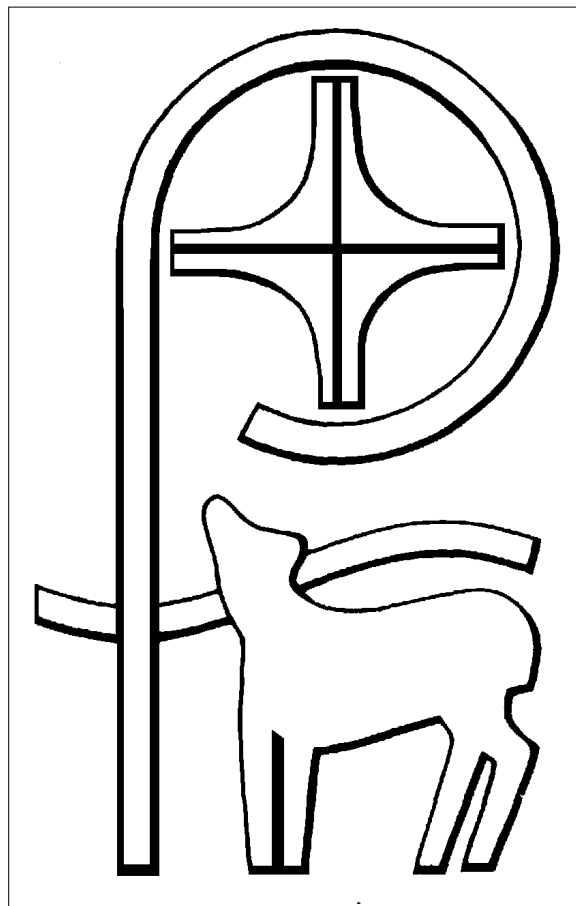


# GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH CONSTITUTION



Last Updated: March 2017



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### CONSTITUTION

---

Preamble		2
Chapter 1	Name and Incorporation	2
Chapter 2	Confession of Faith	2
Chapter 3	Nature of the Church	3
Chapter 4	Statement of Purpose	3
Chapter 5	Powers of the Congregation	5
Chapter 6	Church Affiliation	6
Chapter 7	Property Ownership	9
Chapter 8	Membership	9
Chapter 9	The Pastor	11
Chapter 10	Congregation Meeting	17
Chapter 11	Officers	17
Chapter 12	Congregation Council	18
Chapter 13	Congregation Committees	20
Chapter 14	Organizations within the Congregation	21
Chapter 15	Discipline of Members	21
Chapter 16	Bylaws	22
Chapter 17	Amendments	22
Chapter 18	Continuing Resolutions	24
Chapter 19	Indemnification	24
Chapter 20	Parish Authorization	24

### BYLAWS

---

Chapter 1	Communion Participation	26
Chapter 2	Conflicting Loyalties	26
Chapter 3	Membership	26
Chapter 4	Pastoral Call	28
Chapter 5	Meetings	29
Chapter 6	Congregational Council	30

### CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

---

Chapter 1	Congregation Council	31
Chapter 2	Committee Responsibilities	32
	Executive Committee	32
	Audit Committee	33
	Carol Manley Endowment Fund	34
	Christian Education Committee	35
	Evangelism Committee	37
	Fellowship Committee	38
	Finance Committee	39
	Personnel Committee	40
	Property Committee	41
	Service Committee	42
	Stewardship Committee	43
	Worship and Music Committee	44
	Youth Committee	45

# CONSTITUTION FOR GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

## 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 Good Shepherd Lutheran Church.
- C1.02.** For the purpose of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws, the Good Shepherd congregation is hereinafter designated as "this congregation."
- C1.03.** This congregation shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of Illinois.

## 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.** **This church confesses the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church and is resolved to serve Christian Unity throughout the world.**
- C3.03** The Church exists both as an inclusive fellowship and as local congregations gathered for worship and Christian service. Congregations find their fulfillment in the universal community of the Church, and the universal Church exists in and through congregations. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, therefore, derives its character and powers both from the sanction and representation of its congregations and from its inherent nature as an expression of the broader fellowship of the faithful. In length, it acknowledges itself to be in the historic continuity of the communion of saints; in breadth, it expresses the fellowship of believers and congregations in our day.
- C3.04** This church, inspired and led by the Holy Spirit, participates in the Lutheran World Federation as a global communion of churches, engaging in faithful witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ and in service for the sake of God's mission in the world.

**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 church wide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- i. Foster and participate in ecumenical relationships consistent with church wide policy.

- C4.04.** This congregation shall develop an organizational structure to be described in the bylaws. The Congregation Council shall prepare descriptions of the responsibilities of each committee, task force, or other organizational groups and shall review their actions. *\*[Such descriptions shall be contained in continuing resolutions in the section on the Congregation Council.]*
- C4.05.** This congregation shall, from time to time, adopt a mission statement which will provide specific direction for its programs.

**Chapter 5.**  
**POWERS OF THE CONGREGATION**

- C5.01.** The powers of this congregation are those necessary to fulfill its purpose.
- C5.02.** The powers of this congregation are vested in the Congregation Meeting called and conducted as provided in this constitution and bylaws.
- C5.03.** Only such authority as is delegated to the Congregation Council or other organizational units in this congregation's governing documents is recognized. All remaining authority is retained by the congregation. The congregation is authorized to:
- a. call a minister of Word and Sacrament; as provided in Chapter 9;
  - b. terminate the call of a minister of Word and Sacrament as provided in Chapter 9;
  - c. call or terminate the call of a minister of Word and Service in conformity with the constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;
  - d. adopt amendments to the constitution, as provided in Chapter 17, and amendments to the bylaws, as specified in Chapter 16, and amendments to the 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 officers, Congregation Council, boards, and committees, and require the members of the Council to carry out their duties in accordance with the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions; and
  - j. terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as provided in Chapter 6.

**C5.04.** This congregation shall choose from among its voting members laypersons to serve as voting members of the Central/Southern Illinois 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 Central/Southern Illinois 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 Central/Southern Illinois Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. This congregation is subject to the discipline of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

**C6.02.** This congregation accepts the Confession of Faith and agrees to the Purposes of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and shall act in accordance with them.

**C6.03.** This congregation acknowledges its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in which:

- a. This congregation agrees to be responsible for its life as a Christian community.
- b. This congregation pledges its financial support and participation in the life and mission of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- c. This congregation agrees to call pastoral leadership from the roster of ministers of Word and Sacrament of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in accordance with its call procedures except in special circumstances and with the approval of the bishop of the synod. These special circumstances are limited either to calling a candidate approved for the roster of ministers of Word and Sacrament of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or to contracting for pastoral services with a minister of Word and Sacrament of a church body with which the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America officially has established a relationship of full communion.
- d. This congregation agrees to consider ministers of Word and Service for appointment to other staff positions in the congregation according to the procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- e. This congregation agrees to file this constitution and any subsequent changes to this constitution with the synod for review to ascertain that all of its provisions are in agreement with the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and with the constitution of the synod.

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



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

**C6.05.** This 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 two-thirds 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 this 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 ELCA shall be terminated.
- f. Notice of termination shall be forwarded by the synodical bishop to the secretary of this congregation and published in the periodical of this congregation.
- g. Notice of termination shall be forwarded by the Bishop to the secretary of the ELCA, who shall report the termination to the Church wide Assembly.
- h. Since this congregation was established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, it shall be required, in addition to the foregoing provisions in C6.05., to receive synodical approval before terminating its membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- i. If this congregation fails to achieve the required two-thirds vote of voting members

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

- C6.06.** If this congregation is considering 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 affected.

## **Chapter 7.**

### **PROPERTY OWNERSHIP**

- C7.01.** If this congregation ceases to exist, title to undisposed property shall pass to the Central/Southern Illinois 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 two-thirds 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 Central/Southern Illinois Synod.
- C7.04.** If two-thirds of the voting members of this congregation present at a legally called and conducted special meeting of this congregation vote to become independent or relate to a non-Lutheran church body and have followed the process for termination of relationship in C6.05, title to property of this congregation shall continue to reside in this congregation only with the consent of the Synod Council. The Synod Council, after consultation with this congregation by the established synodical process, may give approval to the request to become independent or to relate to a non-Lutheran church body, in which case title shall remain with the majority of this congregation. If the Synod Council fails to give such approval, title shall remain with those members who desire to continue as a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

## **Chapter 8.**

### **MEMBERSHIP**

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

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

- a. Baptized members are those persons who have been received by the Sacrament of Holy Baptism in this congregation, or, having been previously baptized in the name of the Triune God, have been received by certificate of transfer from other Lutheran congregations or by affirmation of faith.
- b. Confirmed members are baptized persons who have been confirmed in this congregation, those who have been received by adult baptism or by transfer as confirmed members from other Lutheran congregations, or baptized persons received by affirmation of faith.
- c. Voting members are confirmed members. Such confirmed members, during the current or preceding calendar year, shall have communed in this congregation and shall have made a contribution of record to this congregation. Members of this congregation who have satisfied these basic standards shall have the privilege of voice and vote at every legally called meeting of the congregation as well as the other rights and privileges ascribed to voting members by the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.
- d. Associate members are persons holding membership in other Christian congregations who wish to retain such membership but desire to participate in the life and mission of this congregation, these individuals have all the privileges and duties of membership except voting rights or other rights and privileges ascribed to voting members by the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.
- e. Seasonal members are voting members of other ELCA congregations who wish to retain such membership but desire to participate in the life and mission of this congregation, including exercising limited voting rights in this congregation. The Congregation Council may grant seasonal membership to such persons provided that this congregation is a member of a synod where the Synod Council has approved seasonal member voting on its territory. Such seasonal members shall have all the privileges and duties of voting members except that:
  - 1) they shall not be eligible for elected office in, or for membership on the Congregation Council or on a call committee of, this congregation;
  - 2) they shall not have the right to vote on any matter concerning or affecting the call or termination of call of any minister of this congregation;
  - 3) they shall not have the right to vote on any matter concerning or affecting the affiliation of this congregation with the ELCA;
  - 4) they shall not be eligible to serve as voting members from this congregation of the Synod Assembly or the Church wide Assembly;
  - 5) they shall not, even if otherwise permitted by this congregation, vote by proxy or by absentee ballot; and
  - 6) they shall not, within any two calendar month period, exercise voting rights in this congregation and in the congregation where they remain voting members.

**C8.03.** All applications for confirmed membership shall be submitted to and shall require the approval by the Pastor and/or the Congregation Council.

- C8.04.** It shall be the privilege and duty of members of this congregation to:
- a. make regular use of the means of grace, both Word and sacraments;
  - b. live a Christian life in accordance with the Word of God and the teachings of the Lutheran church; and
  - c. support the work of this congregation, the synod, and the church wide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America through contributions of their time, abilities, and financial support as biblical stewards.

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

- a. death;
- b. resignation;
- c. transfer or release;
- d. disciplinary action by the Congregation Council; or
- e. removal from the roll due to inactivity in accordance with the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.

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.**

### **ROSTERED MINISTER**

- C9.01.** Authority to call a Pastor shall be in this congregation by at least a two-thirds vote of voting members present and voting at a meeting legally called for that purpose. Before a call is issued, the officers, or a committee elected by this congregation to recommend the call, shall seek the advice and help of the bishop of the synod.
- C9.02.** Only a member of the roster of ministers of Word and Sacrament of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or a candidate for the roster of ministers of Word and Sacrament who has been recommended for the congregation by the synodical bishop may be called as a Pastor of this congregation.
- C9.03.** Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,
- a. Every minister of Word and Sacrament shall:
    - 1) preach the Word;
    - 2) administer the sacraments;
    - 3) conduct public worship;
    - 4) provide pastoral care;

5) witness to the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation and abroad; and  
6) speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world.

- b. Each pastor with a congregational call shall, within the congregation:
- 1) offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead;
  - 2) install regularly elected members of the Congregation Council; and
  - 3) with the Council, administer discipline;
  - 4) as spiritual leader of the congregation, shall be an advisory member of the Congregation Council and an advisory member of all other boards, committees, and organizations of the congregation.
- c. Every Pastor shall:
- 1) seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel and strive to extend the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation, and abroad;
  - 2) impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through distribution of its periodicals and other publications; and
  - 3) endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to work of the ELCA church-wide organization and of the Central/Southern Illinois Synod of the ELCA.

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

- C9.05.**
- a. The call of the congregation, when accepted by a minister of Word and Sacrament, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment which, except in the case of the death of the Pastor, shall be terminated only following consultation with the synodical bishop and for the following reasons:
- 1) mutual agreement to terminate the call or the completion of a call for a specific term;
  - 2) resignation of the Pastor, which shall become effective, unless otherwise agreed, 30 days after the date on which it was submitted;
  - 3) inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in the congregation in view of local conditions, without reflection on the competence or the moral and spiritual character of the Pastor;
  - 4) the physical or mental incapacity of the Pastor;
  - 5) disqualification of the Pastor through discipline on grounds of doctrine, morality, or continued neglect of duty or resignation or removal of the pastor from the roster of ministers of Word and Sacrament of the ELCA;
  - 6) the dissolution of the congregation; or
  - 7) suspension of the congregation as a result of discipline proceedings.
- b. When allegations of physical or mental incapacity of the Pastor or ineffective conduct of the pastoral office have come to the attention of the bishop of the synod, the bishop in his or her sole discretion may, or when such allegations have been brought to the synod's attention by an official recital of allegations by the Congregation Council or by a petition signed by at least one-third of the voting

members of the congregation, the bishop shall, investigate such conditions personally in company with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson.

- c. In case of alleged physical or mental incapacity, competent medical testimony shall be obtained. When such disability is evident, the bishop of the synod with the advice of the committee shall declare the pastorate vacant. When the pastorate is declared vacant, the Synod Council shall list the pastor on the roster of ministers of Word and Sacrament Upon the restoration of a disabled Pastor to health, the bishop of the synod shall take steps to enable the Pastor to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another field of labor.
- d. In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of the congregation, all concerned persons shall be heard, after which the bishop of the synod together with the committee described in C9.05.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 legally called meeting after consultation with the bishop, either (a) by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee did not recommend termination of the call, or (b) by a majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee recommended termination of the call.
- e. If, in the course of proceedings described in \*C9.05.d., the committee concludes that there may be grounds for discipline, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action to the synodical bishop, who may bring charges in accordance with the provisions of the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the constitution of this synod.
- f. If, following the appointment of the committee described in \*C9.05.b. or d., it should become apparent that the pastoral office cannot be conducted effectively in the congregation(s) being served by the ordained minister due to local conditions, the bishop of the synod may temporarily suspend the Pastor from service in the congregation(s) without prejudice and with pay provided through a joint synodical and church wide fund and with housing provided by the congregation(s).

**C9.06.** At a time of pastoral vacancy, an interim Pastor shall be appointed by the bishop of the synod with the consent of this congregation or the Congregation Council.

**C9.07.** During the period of service, an interim Pastor shall have the rights and duties in the congregation of a regularly called Pastor and may delegate the same in part to a supply Pastor with the consent of the bishop of the synod and this congregation or Congregation Council. The interim Pastor and any rostered minister providing assistance shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a Pastor.

**C9.08.** This congregation shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to a former Pastor before calling a successor. A Pastor shall make satisfactory settlement of

all financial obligations to this congregation before beginning service in a call to another congregation or employment in another ministry setting related to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

- C9.09.** When a Pastor is called to serve in company with another Pastor or Pastors, the privileges and responsibilities of each Pastor shall be specified in documents to accompany the call and to be drafted in consultation involving the Pastors, the Congregation Council, and the bishop of the synod. As occasion requires, the documents may be revised through a similar consultation.
- C9.10.** With the approval of the bishop of the synod, the congregation may depart from C9.05.a. and call a Pastor for a specific term. Details of such calls shall be in writing setting forth the purpose and conditions involved. Prior to the completion of a term, the bishop or a designated representative of the bishop shall meet with the Pastor and representatives of the congregation for a review of the call. Such a call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of C9.05.a.
- C9.11.** The Pastor of this congregation:
- a. shall keep accurate parochial records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from the congregation;
  - b. shall submit a summary of such statistics annually to the synod; and
  - c. shall become a member of this congregation upon receipt and acceptance of the letter of call. In a parish of multiple congregations, the Pastor shall hold membership in one of the congregations.
- C9.12.** The Pastor(s) shall submit a report of his or her ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.
- C9.13.** The parochial records of this congregation shall be maintained by the Pastor and shall remain the property of the congregation. The secretary of this congregation shall attest in writing to the bishop of this synod that such records have been placed in his or her hands in good order by a departing Pastor before the installation of that Pastor in another field of labor or the granting by the synod of retired status to the Pastor.
- C9.14.** Authority to call a minister of Word and Service shall be in this congregation by at least a two-thirds vote of voting members present and voting at a meeting legally called for that purpose. Before a call is issued, the officers, or a committee elected by the Congregation Council to recommend the call, shall seek the advice and help of the bishop of the synod.
- C9.15.** Only a member of the roster of ministers of Word and Service of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or a candidate for the roster of ministers of Word and Service who has been recommended for this congregation by the synodical bishop may be called as a deacon of this congregation.
- C9.16.** Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,

every minister of Word and Service shall:

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

**C9.17.** The specific duties of the deacon, compensation, and other matters pertaining to the service of the deacon shall be included in a letter of call, which shall be attested by the bishop of the synod.

**C9.18.** The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between a minister of Word and Service and a congregation shall be as follows:

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

- 1) mutual agreement to terminate the call or the completion of a call for a specific term;
- 2) resignation of the deacon, which shall become effective, unless otherwise agreed, no later than 30 days after the date on which it was submitted;
- 3) inability to conduct the ministry of Word and Service effectively in this congregation in view of local conditions;
- 4) physical disability or mental incapacity of the deacon;
- 5) suspension of the deacon through discipline for more than three months;
- 6) resignation or removal of the deacon from the roster of ministers of Word and Service of this church;
- 7) termination of the relationship between this church and this congregation;
- 8) dissolution of this congregation or the termination of a parish arrangement; or
- 9) suspension of this congregation through discipline for more than six months.

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

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



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

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

e. If either party fails to assent to the recommendations of the bishop's committee concerning the deacon's call, this congregation may dismiss the deacon only at a legally called meeting after consultation with the bishop, either (a) by a two-thirds 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 discipline, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action in accordance with the provisions of this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions.

**C9.19.** The deacon shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to a former congregation before:

- a. installation in another field of labor, or
- b. the issuance of a certificate of dismissal or transfer.

**C9.20.** When a deacon is called to serve in company with another rostered minister or other rostered ministers, the privileges and responsibilities of each rostered minister shall be specified in documents to accompany the call and to be drafted in consultation involving the rostered ministers, the Congregation Council, and the bishop of the synod. As occasion requires, the documents may be revised through a similar consultation.

**C9.21.** With the approval of the bishop of the synod, this congregation may depart from C9.25.a. and call a deacon for a specific term. Details of such calls shall be in writing setting forth the purpose and conditions involved. Prior to the completion of a term, the bishop or a designated representative of the bishop shall meet with the deacon and representatives of this congregation for a review of the call. Such a call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of C9.25.a.

**C9.22.** The deacon shall become a member of this congregation upon receipt and acceptance of the letter of call. In a parish of multiple congregations, the deacon shall hold membership in one of the congregations.

**C9.23.** The deacon(s) shall submit a report of his or her ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.

**Chapter 10.**  
**CONGREGATION MEETING**

- C10.01.** The annual meeting of this congregation shall be held at a time specified in the bylaws.
- C10.02.** A special Congregation Meeting may be called by the Pastor, the Congregation Council, or the president of this congregation, and shall be called at the written request of twenty-five voting members. The call for each special meeting shall specify the purpose for which it is to be held and no other business shall be transacted.
- C10.03.** Notice of all meetings of this congregation shall be given at the services of worship on the preceding two consecutive Sundays and by mail to all voting members at least 10 days in advance of the date of the meeting. The posting of such notice in the regular mail, with the regular postage affixed or paid, sent to the last known address of such members shall be sufficient.
- C10.04.** Voting by proxy or by absentee ballot shall not be permitted.
- C10.05.** All actions approved by the congregation shall be by majority vote of those voting members present and voting except as otherwise provided in this constitution.
- C10.06.** A meeting of the congregation may by majority vote recess to reconvene at a specified time and place. A meeting may also recess to reconvene upon call, provided, that the time and place of such a reconvened meeting is announced at a public service of the congregation. If no public services are to be held, written notice must be mailed to the voting members not less than seven days in advance of the reconvened meeting.
- C10.07.** *Robert's Rules of Order*, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of all meetings of this congregation.

**Chapter 11.**  
**OFFICERS**

- C11.01.** The officers of this congregation shall be a president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer.
- a. Duties of the officers shall be specified in the bylaws.
  - b. The officers shall be voting members of the congregation.
  - c. Officers of this congregation shall serve similar offices of the Congregation Council and shall be voting members of the Congregation Council.
- C11.02.** The officers shall be elected by the Congregation Council by written ballot and shall serve for one year. The term shall begin on August 1 and end on July 31.
- C11.03.** No officer shall hold more than one office at a time.

**Chapter 12.**  
**CONGREGATION COUNCIL**

- C12.01.** The voting membership of the Congregation Council shall consist of the Pastor(s) and not more than twelve members of the congregation. Any voting member of the congregation may be elected, subject only to the limitation on the length of continuous service permitted in that office. A member's place on the Congregation Council shall be declared vacant if the member a) ceases to be a voting member of this congregation or b) is absent from three successive regular meetings of the Congregation Council without cause.
- C12.02.** In addition to the requirements of congregational membership stated in Chapter 8 of the Constitution, qualifications for membership on the Congregation Council shall include such practical ability as is needful in promoting the various interests of the congregation as outlined in the duties of the various committees of the Council.
- C12.03.** The members of the Congregation Council (except the Pastor) shall be elected at a legally called meeting of the congregation during the month of May or June by written ballot. Members shall be eligible to serve no more than two full terms consecutively. Their term of office shall be for two years with the term of office beginning on August 1 and ending on July 31. Newly elected Congregation Council members shall be installed at worship near the date they assume office.
- C12.04.** As soon as possible after the annual election to the Congregation Council, the Council shall elect the officers and committees prescribed by the Constitution and Bylaws, and the officers and committees so chosen shall serve until their successors are elected and installed.
- C12.05.** One representative from the Parish Nurses, WELCA, and the confirmed youth shall be Advisory members of the Congregation Council.
- C12.06.** Should a member's place on the Congregation Council be declared vacant, the Congregation Council shall elect, by majority vote, a successor to complete the term of the vacancy.
- C12.07.** The Congregation Council shall have general supervision of the life and activities of this congregation, and in particular its worship life, to the end that everything be done in accordance with the Word of God and the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The duties of the Congregation Council shall include the following:
- a. To lead this congregation in stating its mission, to do long-range planning, to set goals and priorities, and to evaluate its activities in light of its mission and goals.
  - b. To seek to involve all members of this congregation in worship, learning, witness, service, and support.
  - c. To oversee and provide for the administration of this congregation to enable it to

fulfill its functions and perform its mission.

- d. To maintain supportive relationships with the Pastor and staff to encourage appropriate regular review and evaluation 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 sickness or absence of the Pastor.
- 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.

**C12.08.** The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the financial and property matters of this congregation:

- a. The Congregation Council shall be the board of directors of this congregation, and as such shall be responsible for maintaining and protecting its property and the management of its business and fiscal affairs. It shall have the powers and be subject to the obligations that pertain to such boards under the laws of the State of Illinois, except as otherwise provided herein.
- b. The Congregation Council shall not have the authority to buy, sell, or encumber real property unless specifically authorized to do so by a meeting of the congregation.
- c. The Congregation Council may enter into contracts of up to \$10,000 for items not included in the budget.
- d. The Congregation Council shall approve the annual budget prepared by the Finance Committee for adoption by this congregation, shall supervise the expenditure of funds in accordance therewith following its adoption, and may incur obligations more than 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 church wide organization.
- e. The Congregation Council shall ascertain that the financial affairs of this congregation are being conducted efficiently, giving particular attention to the prompt payment of all obligations and to the regular forwarding of benevolence

monies to the synodical treasurer.

f. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for this congregation's investments and its total insurance program.

**C12.09.** The Congregation Council shall see that the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws and the continuing resolutions are carried out.

**C12.10.** The Congregation Council shall provide for at least an annual review of the membership roster.

**C12.11.** The Congregation Council shall submit a comprehensive report to this congregation at the annual meeting.

**C12.12.** The Congregation Council shall normally meet once a month. A special meeting may be called by the Pastor or the president, or by any four members of the Congregation Council. The person or persons calling a special meeting of the Congregation Council shall give at least four days notice to each member. Said notice may be given orally or by phone or by written notice mailed to the last known address of the party to be notified. The minutes of all special meetings shall indicate the method of notice employed and all members of the Congregation Council shall be presumed to have received adequate notice unless they indicate otherwise at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Council.

**C12.13.** A quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of a majority of the members of the Congregation Council, including the Pastor or interim Pastor, except when such person 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.

### **Chapter 13.**

#### **CONGREGATION COMMITTEES**

**C13.01.** The officers of this congregation and the Pastor shall constitute the Executive Committee.

**C13.02.** A Nominating Committee of six voting members of this congregation, two of whom, if possible, shall be outgoing members of the Congregation Council, shall be elected at the annual meeting for a term of one year. Members of the Nominating Committee are not eligible for consecutive reelection. The Pastor shall serve as advisory member.

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

**C13.04.** When a pastoral vacancy occurs, the Congregation Council may serve as the Call Committee or may appoint a Call Committee, not to exceed fifteen. Term of office will terminate at installation of the newly-called Pastor.

**C13.05.** Other congregation committees may be formed as the need arises, by decision of the Congregation Council.

**C13.06.** Duties of congregation committees shall be specified in the continuing resolutions.

#### **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 and specified in a continuing resolution.

#### **Chapter 15.**

### **DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS**

**C15.01.** Denial of the Christian faith as described in this constitution, conduct grossly unbecoming a member of the Church of Christ, or persistent trouble-making in this congregation are sufficient cause for discipline of a member. Prior to disciplinary action, reconciliation will be attempted following Matthew 18:15-17, proceeding through these successive steps: a) private admonition by the Pastor, b) admonition by the Pastor in the presence of two or three witnesses, and c) citation to appear before the Congregation Council.

**C15.02.** A member charged with the offense shall appear before the Congregation Council having received a written notice, specifying the exact charges that have been made against the member, at least 10 days prior to the meeting.

**C15.03.** Should the allegations be sustained by a two-thirds majority vote of the members of the Congregation Council and renewed admonition prove ineffectual, the Council shall impose one of the following disciplinary actions:

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

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

- C15.04.** The member against whom disciplinary action has been taken by the Congregation Council shall have the right to appeal the decision to the Synod Council. Such right may not be abridged and the decision of the Synod Council shall be final.
- C15.05.** Disciplinary actions may be reconsidered and revoked by the Congregation Council upon receipt of a) evidence that injustice has been done or b) evidence of repentance and amendment.

## **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 two-thirds vote of those voting members present and voting.
- C16.03.** Changes to the bylaws may be proposed by any voting member provided, however, that such additions or amendments be submitted in writing to the Congregation Council at least 60 days before a legally called Congregation Meeting for that purpose and that the Congregation Council notify the members of the proposal with its recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the Congregation Meeting.
- C16.04.** Approved changes to the bylaws shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod.

## **Chapter 17.**

### **AMENDMENTS**

- C17.01.** Unless provision C17.04. is applicable, those sections of this constitution that are not required, in accord with the *Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, may be amended in the following manner. Amendments may be proposed by at least six (6) voting members or by the Congregation Council. Proposals must be filed in writing with the Congregation Council 60 days before formal consideration by this congregation at a regular or special Congregation Meeting called for that purpose. The Congregation Council shall notify the congregation's members of the proposal together with the council's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the meeting. Notification may take place by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law.
- C17.02.** An amendment to this constitution, proposed under C17.01., shall:
- a. be approved at a legally called Congregation Meeting according to this constitution by a majority vote of those voting members present and voting;
  - b. be ratified without change at the next annual meeting by a two-thirds majority vote of those voting members present and voting; and
  - c. have the effective date included in the resolution and noted in the constitution.
- 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 Church wide Assembly. Such amendments may be approved by a simple majority vote of those voting members present and voting at any legally called meeting of the congregation without presentation at a prior meeting of the congregation, provided that the Congregation Council has submitted by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law, notice to the congregation of such an amendment or amendments, together with the council's recommendations, at least 30 days prior to the meeting. Upon the request of at least two (2) 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 Council may enact continuing resolutions which describe the function of the various committees or organizations of this congregation.
- C18.02.** Continuing resolutions shall be enacted or amended by a two-thirds vote of all voting members of the Congregation Council.

## **Chapter 19.**

### **INDEMNIFICATION**

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

## **Chapter 20.**

### **PARISH AUTHORIZATION**

- C20.01.** This congregation may unite in partnership with one or more other congregations recognized by the synod named in C6.01. to form a parish. Except as provided in C20.02. and C20.03., a written agreement, developed in consultation with the synod and approved by the voting members of each congregation participating in the parish, shall specify the powers and responsibilities that have been delegated to the Parish Council. The Parish Agreement shall identify which congregation of the parish issues calls on behalf of the member congregations or shall establish a process for identifying which congregation issues calls on behalf of the member congregations.
- C20.02.** One congregation of a parish shall issue a call on behalf of the member congregations to a minister of Word and Sacrament or a candidate for the roster of ministers of Word and Sacrament who has been recommended by the synodical bishop to serve the congregations of the parish. Such a call shall be approved prior to issuance by a two-



thirds vote at a congregational meeting of each congregation forming the parish. If any congregation of the parish should fail to approve the call, the other congregations of the parish shall have the right to terminate the parish agreement.

- C20.03.** One congregation of a parish may issue a call on behalf of the member congregations to a minister of Word and Service or a candidate for the roster of ministers of Word and Service who has been recommended by the synodical bishop to serve the congregations of the parish. Such a call shall be approved prior to issuance by a two-thirds vote at a congregational meeting of each congregation forming the parish. If any congregation of the parish should fail to approve the call, the other congregations of the parish shall have the right to terminate the parish agreement.
- C20.04.** Any one of the congregations of the parish may terminate their relationship with the pastor as provided in S14.18.d. of the synodical constitution of the synod named in C6.01. In such case, the other congregation(s) of the same parish shall have the right to terminate the parish agreement.
- C20.05.** Any one of the congregations of the parish may terminate their relationship with a minister of Word and Service as provided in S14.43.d. of the synodical constitution of the synod named in C6.01. In such case, the other congregation(s) of the same parish shall have the right to terminate the parish agreement.
- C20.06.** Whenever a parish agreement is terminated, the call of any rostered minister serving that parish is terminated. Should any congregation that was formerly part of the parish agreement desire to issue a new call to that rostered minister, it may do so in accordance with the call process of this church.

## BYLAWS

### Chapter 1. COMMUNION PARTICIPATION

- B1.01.** Admission to the Sacrament is by invitation of the Lord, presented through the church to those who are baptized. It is the practice of the church to administer Holy Communion to those who, in its judgment, are ready to participate. Worthy participation requires sincere repentance, faith in Jesus Christ as Savior, and an earnest desire to amend one's sinful life, as well as acceptance of the scriptural teaching regarding the Real Presence of Christ with His Body and Blood in the Sacrament.
- B1.02.** Record of participation in Holy Communion shall be entered upon the books of the congregation. If a member of another congregation communes, notice shall be sent to that congregation.

### Chapter 2. CONFLICTING LOYALTIES

- B2.01.** This congregation rejects organizations, secret and open, which are avowedly religious or which practice forms of religion without confessing faith in the Triune God and in Jesus Christ as the eternal Son of God incarnate to be our only Savior from sin.
- a. Ceremonies of such organizations shall not be permitted in the church or on the church premises of this congregation.
  - b. The Pastor of this congregation shall take no part in any such ceremonies even if they are conducted outside of the church premises.

### Chapter 3. MEMBERSHIP

- B3.01.** Admission to baptized membership:
- a. Children, one or both of whose parents or guardians are members of this congregation, shall, upon receiving Christian Baptism, be received as baptized members of this congregation.
  - b. Children, with the consent of their nonmember parents or guardians, shall be received as baptized members of this congregation.
  - c. Children baptized in other Christian congregations shall be received as baptized members of this congregation upon admission of one or both parents or guardians to membership, or by consent of one or both parents or guardians or by action of the Congregation Council. Adults baptized in other Christian congregations shall be received as baptized members of this congregation upon Affirmation of Baptism.

- d. Unbaptized adults who have received instruction and have given evidence of having an adequate understanding and acceptance of the teachings of the Word of God as confessed by the Lutheran Church, shall, upon confession of faith and Christian Baptism duly recorded as a ministerial act performed under the auspices of this congregation, be received as baptized members of this congregation.

**B3.02.** Admission to confirmed membership:

- a. Baptized adults, not previously members of the congregation, who have received instruction and have given evidence of having adequate understanding and acceptance of the teachings of the Word of God as confessed by the Lutheran Church, shall be admitted to confirmed membership through the Affirmation of Baptism.
- b. However, adults received as baptized members according to the provisions of Chapter B3.01, d of this part of the Bylaws shall be recognized as confirmed members.
- c. Children who are baptized members of the congregation shall be admitted to confirmed membership through Affirmation of Baptism.
- d. Applicants for membership presenting letters of transfer showing them to be confirmed members in good standing in other Lutheran congregations shall be admitted to confirmed membership upon acceptance of their letters of transfer by the Congregation Council and / or Pastor and the reporting of their names to the congregation.
- e. Applicants for membership who present evidence of confirmation in a Lutheran congregation but do not have letters of transfer shall be admitted to confirmed membership when the Congregation Council and / or Pastor has determined that they meet the standards of Christian faith and life indicated in the Constitution and Bylaws.

**B3.03.** Admissions to voting membership. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for determining the voting membership in accordance with the qualifications specified in the Constitution and Bylaws.

**B3.04.** Pastoral care of members:

- a. Members who move away shall be encouraged to transfer their membership. A confirmed member in good standing desiring to change membership to another Lutheran congregation shall, upon request, receive a letter of transfer.
- b. A confirmed member who in the judgment of the Congregation Council and in the absence of extenuating circumstances shows no interest in attending church services and does not partake of Holy Communion according to the congregation's records, for a period of two years, shall be presumed no longer to desire membership, shall lose the right to vote, and shall not be counted in the membership statistics of the

congregation. However, his or her name and record shall be kept in the inactive files for a period of at least two years thereafter. Such a person shall be encouraged to take part in the congregational life, or to transfer elsewhere, as the situation may indicate to be advisable.

- c. Members who have been dropped from the rolls, or who have resigned, and members who have transferred to other Lutheran congregations or who are definitely known to have become members of other congregations without transfer, have thereby terminated their membership in the congregation and have surrendered all membership rights.
- d. Persons who have been removed from membership for reasons of discipline shall be restored with all rights and privileges when they repent and ask forgiveness through the Pastor and the Congregation Council. Both acts of discipline and restoration shall be made known to all communicant members by whatever method the Pastor and the Council deem most suitable.

#### **Chapter 4.** **PASTORAL CALL**

- B4.01.** When the congregation has voted to call a Pastor, it shall issue a Letter of Call to the Pastor-elect, in a form approved by the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America. It shall be signed by the president and the secretary of the congregation and shall be attested by the signature of the bishop of the Synod. Calls to Pastors to positions of assistance to the Pastor shall be issued in consultation with the Pastor and in accordance with the provisions of this paragraph.
- B4.02.** The Call shall normally be for an indefinite time.
- B4.03.** Upon receipt of a Call to another congregation, the Pastor shall consult with his / her congregation, or at least with the Congregation Council before coming to a decision. He / she should attempt to reach a decision as quickly as possible, normally within twenty-one days. The Pastor shall thereupon notify his / her present congregation and the bishop of the synod. When a release has been granted and the Call accepted, the Pastor shall terminate the ministry here and transfer to the new field of service as quickly as feasible, normally within thirty days.
- B4.04.** A desire for a change in pastorate by either congregation or Pastor shall be brought to the attention of the bishop of the Synod, who shall advise in the matter in accordance with this Constitution and with the established procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- B4.05.** The congregation requires that its Pastor shall be loyal to the faith and purpose of the congregation, as stated in Chapters C2 and C4 of this Constitution.

**B4.06.** Pastors qualified according to C9.02 of this Constitution may occasionally perform pastoral functions in this congregation with the approval of the congregation and its Pastor or in the case of a vacancy in the pastorate, with the approval of the congregation and the bishop of the synod.

## **Chapter 5. MEETINGS**

### **B5.01.** The Annual Meeting

- a. The annual meeting of the congregation shall be held in the month of August of each year on such date as shall be specified by the Congregation Council and if the Council shall fail to designate a day for the annual meeting, then said meeting shall be held on the last Sunday of August at the usual place of worship.
- b. Announcement of the time and place of the annual meeting of the congregation shall be made at two public services immediately preceding the meeting, said services to be at least a week apart, and in such publications as the congregation or the Pastor may periodically issue; or by written notice to the voting members mailed at least ten days in advance of the meeting.
- c. A quorum for the conduct of business at annual and special congregational meetings shall consist of the voting members present.
- d. The order of business at the annual meeting shall be:
  - 1) Opening devotion
  - 2) Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting
  - 3) Reports of Pastor, Congregation Council, treasurer, committees and others
  - 4) Approval of budget
  - 5) Unfinished business
  - 6) New business
  - 7) Closing prayer

### **B5.02.** Procedure at the annual or special meetings.

- a. In the following cases voting shall be by written ballot:
  - 1) To elect the members of the Congregation Council.
  - 2) To adopt or amend the articles of incorporation, Constitution, or Bylaws of the congregation.
  - 3) To call a Pastor or to request his / her resignation.
  - 4) To excommunicate a member from the congregation or to remove a member from office in the congregation.
  - 5) To sever membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
  - 6) To dispose of, encumber, or purchase real property.
  - 7) When requested by ten or more voting members present.In all other cases voting shall be by voice or show of hands.

- b. In an election where one position is vacant the elected candidate will be the individual receiving the most votes. In elections where more than one position is to be filled the elected candidates shall be those who receive the most votes. Additional ballots shall be used to decide all elections where ties preclude the naming of an elected candidate.

**Chapter 6.**  
**CONGREGATION COUNCIL**

- B6.01.** Committees of the Congregation Council. The Congregation Council shall elect from its own membership or otherwise committees for evangelism, worship, stewardship, education, fellowship, service, youth, property and management and shall also have authority to appoint such other committees as may from time to time be necessary or advisable.
- B6.02.** Duties of officers of the Congregation Council.
- a. The President shall preside over meetings of the Congregation Council; in the absence of the President and Vice President, the meeting shall choose its own chairperson.
  - b. The Secretary shall keep the minutes of the Council and of the congregation and shall maintain and preserve its archives.
  - c. The Treasurer shall be bonded and shall be custodian of all funds of the congregation; and shall disburse all such funds in accordance with the decisions of the congregation or the Congregation Council. He or she shall present an audited report to the annual congregational meeting and such other reports to the Council as may be required.
  - d. It shall be the duty of the President and Secretary to sign all legal documents as directed by the Council.

## CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

### Chapter 1. CONGREGATION COUNCIL

#### CR1.01. Responsibilities:

- a. To serve on the Executive Committee or to chair a committee of the Council, and to keep the congregation informed on a regular basis of the committee's activities.
- b. To recruit members for their assigned committee, submit the names of persons to the Council for approval, schedule committee meetings (normally held on the third Tuesday of the month), and provide direction to the committee.
- c. To be responsible for devotions and dessert at one regular Council meeting, typically held the second Tuesday of each month.
- d. To be responsible for the selection and training of the persons who count and sort the offerings and the creation of appropriate procedures for the performance of those duties with the advice of the Audit and Finance Committees.
- e. To present any proposed revisions in their assigned committee's continuing resolutions to the Council for approval.
- f. To submit a written report of activities of their assigned committee to the Council at its regular monthly meetings.
- g. To serve the congregation as described in Chapter 12 of the Constitution.

**Chapter 2.**  
**COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES**

**CR2.01. Executive Committee:**

The Executive Committee, as outlined in Chapter 11, Section 11.01 of this Constitution shall consist of the Pastor, President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary of the Congregation Council.

Officers of the Council, who serve on the Executive Committee, will be elected at the June or July meeting of the Council.

**Responsibilities:**

- a. Meet monthly prior to the Council meetings to set an agenda.
- b. Strive to create an environment in which a free exchange of ideas may occur at the Council, committee, and congregation meetings.
- c. May assign officers to act as liaison to specific committees in order to identify their needs and concerns, and to provide coordination with the other committees and the Executive Committee. (The Pastor serves as an advisory member of all committees.)
- d. May recommend policy or program activities for consideration by the Council in any areas of its responsibility.
- e. Meet upon call by the President or the Pastor to deal with emergency situations between meetings of the Council.



**CR2.02. Audit Committee:**

The mission of the Audit Committee is to examine the records of the Treasurer and the Financial Secretary at the close of each fiscal year to confirm that their summary reports accurately reflect financial results for the General or Operating Fund, the Property Improvement or Building Fund and any other additional funds existing or subsequently established when requested by the Congregation Council. The committee may reference and implement some of the audit procedures outlined in the "Congregation Audit Guide" of the ELCA.

**Responsibilities:**

- a. Randomly select and examine one test month each fiscal year.
- b. For the Treasurer: Randomly select a sufficient number of payments (minimum 15) for the test month to assure that vouchers have been properly approved, correct expense accounts charged, vouchers marked paid and each check traced to bank statements.
- c. For the Financial Secretary: Trace each member's envelope receipts for the test month to deposit slips and to bank statements and reconcile total receipts to month-end financial report totals.
- d. Confirm that bank statements are being reconciled monthly.
- e. Select one test month to reconcile payroll with tax records and confirm that tax payments are being made in a timely manner.
- f. Prepare a detailed report for the Congregation Council summarizing audit procedures followed including any recommendations for Council consideration.
- g. Prepare a condensed audit statement for the Annual Report to be submitted to members prior to, or as soon as possible following, the annual congregational meeting.

**CR2.03. Carol Manley Endowment Fund:**

A Carol Manley Endowment Fund Committee of five voting members of this congregation shall be appointed by the Congregation Council. The term of office will be three years with the first slate of members serving staggered terms. Each year following the first, two members will be appointed with one appointed every third year. Members are eligible for only two consecutive terms. At all times at least one member of the committee shall serve on the Congregation Council. In the event of a vacancy on the committee prior to the expiration of a member's term, the Congregation Council shall fill the vacancy. In addition to the elected members, the Pastor of the congregation shall be an advisory, with voice and vote, member of the committee. The Treasurer of the congregation shall maintain the account of the Carol Manley Endowment Fund and serve as an advisory, without voice or vote, member of the committee. The Chairperson of the committee shall be elected by the members of the committee each year. The purpose of the committee shall be to implement the guidelines of the endowment fund. The Committee shall meet at least two times each year and at least four members shall be required to constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

**The duties of the Carol Manley Endowment Fund Committee shall include the following:**

- a. To fulfill the purpose of the Carol Manley Endowment Fund, the Committee shall provide distributions of interest, earnings and principal beyond the operating budget of this congregation to Youth ministries as stated below:
  - 1) To help fund sponsorship for the cost of sending High School Youth to the tri-annual Youth Gathering.
  - 2) For extraordinary youth programs/ministry initiatives.
- b. To determine how the Fund assets will be invested, including the asset allocation. The investment objective will be to provide long-term growth. When Fund assets reach \$25,000, the fund may be invested in the ELCA Endowment Fund Pooled Trust. No committee member shall invest the assets in a way that would bring private benefit to that individual. The committee shall report annually to the Congregation Council on any and all activity within the Fund. Current balance, additions, distributions and any other activity should be included with the report. Annual accounting and a report of ministries supported through the Fund shall be distributed to the Congregation in its Annual Report.
- c. To encourage gifts to the Carol Manley Endowment Fund through education and promotion of the Fund.
- d. To receive and celebrate gifts given for youth ministry through the Carol Manley Endowment Fund. The committee has the discretion to accept or decline a gift deemed to be in the best interest of the Fund and the congregation.

In the absence of gross negligence or fraud, no member of the Congregation Council or Endowment Fund Committee shall be personally liable for the actions or omissions with respect to the Carol Manley Endowment Fund.

#### **CR2.04. Christian Education Committee:**

The mission of the Christian Education committee is to plan and administer the education program of the congregation. The committee will work with the Pastor to provide an appropriate environment for the development of the wide-ranging educational activities of the congregation. Programs of study begin with educational offerings at the pre-school level and expand through the various adult study opportunities.

A comprehensive educational program should include encouraging all age groups to participate in some aspects of Christian education through programs of study, including Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, Confirmation, and adult study groups. The committee is also responsible for recruiting, training, supporting, coordinating, and recognizing teachers and others necessary to carry out these educational activities. The committee also plans and provides a Christmas program for Sunday School age children.

#### **Responsibilities:**

- a. Pastor – because of the need to make policy and personnel decisions based on an in-depth knowledge of Lutheran theology and membership base, has responsibility for:
  - 1) Adult instruction in the Lutheran faith.
  - 2) Confirmation instruction, including recruitment, training, and guidance of lay catechists.
  - 3) Selection of Superintendent (or Co-Superintendents) of Sunday School, in consultation with the Chair and members of the Christian Education Committee.
  - 4) Selection of the Vacation Bible School Director, in consultation with the Chair and members of the Christian Education Committee.
  - 5) Selection or approval of leaders of adult study groups, provided either during the Sunday School hour or at other times during the week.
  
- b. Chair of Christian Education Committee:
  - 1) Select and recruit Sunday School teachers and substitute teachers, in consultation with and assistance from the Superintendent(s) of the Sunday School and members of the committee.
  - 2) Select and order educational materials, in consultation with the Pastor and the Superintendent(s) of the Sunday School and the Vacation Bible School Director(s).
  - 3) Recruit a Director of Children's Christmas Program, in consultation with the Pastor.
  - 4) Call meetings of the Christian Education Committee to discuss policy, administration, and issues related to the educational programs of the congregation.
  - 5) Administer the financial needs of the Christian Education Committee in order that the materials and supplies are available for instruction.
  
- c. Superintendent (or Co-Superintendents) of Sunday School:
  - 1) Administer the Sunday morning Sunday School program, which includes providing both a physical and spiritual environment for education.
  - 2) Arrange and conduct meetings of the Sunday School staff to communicate schedules, special programs, and stewardship projects, and to seek advice on

future planning.

- 3) Recruitment of music leaders for the opening of Sunday School.
- 4) Work with the Pastor to provide in-service training for teachers.

d. Vacation Bible School Director(s):

- 1) Recruit staff to carry out the Vacation Bible School program.
- 2) Give general direction and leadership to planning and administering the Vacation Bible School.
- 3) Select and order materials and supplies needed, in consultation with the Pastor and the Chair of the Christian Education Committee.

**CR2.05. Evangelism Committee:**

The mission of the Evangelism Committee is to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the comfort of God's family to as many people as possible within our church, the local community, and beyond as far as we can reasonably outreach. The committee will look for ways to make the congregation aware of sharing this message with others.

**Responsibilities:**

- a. Train callers and schedule calling on members, visitors, and others as follows:
  - 1) Members: Contact new members within six months to determine how they are integrating.
  - 2) Visitors: Schedule members to serve as "Doorstep Deacons" to call on visitors within 24-48 hours of their first visit to our church. Follow-up contacts shall be made by staff, committee members, and callers.
  - 3) Others: Visit people new to the area who may be looking for a church home, referrals from ELCA office, or other prospects.
- b. Greet members or visitors as they arrive with a warm word of welcome.
- c. Assist with publicity concerning our ministry by helping with seasonal invitations, signs, posters, or brochures for Lenten, Easter, Thanksgiving, Advent, or Christmas services and for Vacation Bible School. Give our service schedules to community business establishments and place weekly and special service ads in local newspapers.
- d. Continue the tradition of "Name Tag Sunday" one Sunday each month to allow members and visitors to place names with faces.
- e. Assist staff with orientation and reception of new members and subsequent follow ups regarding integration of their time and talents with committee work and other parish assignments.
- f. Keep the congregation informed of and involved in the committee's work.

**CR2.06. Fellowship Committee:**

The mission of the Fellowship Committee is to strengthen the fellowship that is established in our baptism among all congregation members spiritually and socially. The committee will strive to help in the integration of new members into the life of the congregation and the general nourishing of mutual cooperation, trust, and enjoyment among all members of the congregation.

This committee shall consist of at least six (6) members, including the elected chairperson from the Congregation Council. The chairperson is responsible for securing all committee members.

Members must be willing workers who will help coordinate and execute the work necessary to the successful accomplishment of fellowship goals.

**Responsibilities:**

- a. Maintain contact with other committees, both suggesting to them ways of furthering the work of their committees through fellowship and drawing from them requests and suggestions for fellowship activities.
- b. Review and adopt or adapt materials and ideas from various sources which will bring congregation members into personal contact in groups such as family nights, plays, and talent shows.
- c. Provide for the integration of new members and their families into the congregation.
- d. Provide a general atmosphere of friendliness among the members on a smaller scale by suggesting to groups ways of bringing their members into meaningful, personal relationships.
- e. Plan, supervise, and implement larger gatherings of the congregation from time to time throughout the year which will further the fellowship of the congregation such as:
  - 1) Doughnuts for Sunday Worship
  - 2) Round Table dinners
  - 3) Special events such as visiting choirs, church officers and/or conferences
  - 4) Pictorial directory
  - 5) Lenten suppers
  - 6) Ice Cream Social
  - 7) Potlucks, brunches and/or church dinners
  - 8) Annual congregation picnic
  - 9) Summer activities

**CR2.07. Finance Committee:**

The mission of the Finance Committee is to oversee cash management including banking relationships and investment policy; to maintain adequate accounting records for income and expense; budget preparation; insurance and risk management; and to review and approve legal documents referred by the Council that obligates financial resources of the church.

**Responsibilities:**

- a. To oversee church funds and to establish or change bank relationships as directed by the Congregation Council.
- b. To recommend to Council the investment of excess or idle funds in FDIC-insured financial institutions.
- c. To prepare revenue and expenditure budgets for the General Fund each fiscal year and as requested by the Council for other existing funds or funds subsequently established.
- d. To review monthly financial reports from the Treasurer, to compare budget against actual revenue and expenditure statements on a quarterly basis, and to analyze variances.
- e. To review annual Audit Committee reports and to address their recommendations.
- f. To annually review insurance in force and to confirm that coverages are adequate.
- g. To examine before execution any lease, contract, loan agreement, or other legal document incurring debt obligations referred for review by the Council.

**CR2.08. Personnel Committee:**

The mission of the Personnel Committee is to maintain a legal and uniform policy for the administration of recruiting, hiring, supervising and evaluating those persons employed by Good Shepherd Lutheran Church. The Personnel Committee will develop and annually review the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church Human Resource Policy (as developed from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Human Resource Policy). The objective of the policy is to provide a positive work environment for the administration and staff in the joint pursuit of the mission of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church.

The Personnel Committee shall consist of three members to be appointed by the President of the Congregation Council. Each member will serve a term of three years. One member of the Committee will be appointed each fiscal year.

The Personnel Committee's authority shall be limited to recommending policies and procedures for approval by the Council of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church and interpreting approved policies and procedures.

**Responsibilities:**

- a. Meet one time each fiscal year to audit personnel files for the purpose of validating compliance and meet at any other time deemed necessary by the Pastor or the Congregation Council of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church.
- b. Recommend and monitor the required policy of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church as it relates to all personnel issues including, but not limited to an established and uniform practice of recruiting, interviewing, and hiring employees.
- c. Recommend official position descriptions and any amendments deemed necessary by the Pastor and/or the Council.
- d. Recommend uniform evaluation procedures and materials.
- e. Annually audit personnel files and provide written verification to the Council that all procedures and policies are followed.
- f. Provide counsel to the Pastor, Council and employees of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church on personnel matters, interpret the Personnel Policy and offer opinion on possible resolution to conflict or grievance inasmuch as it relates to the Personnel Policy.



**CR2.09. Property Committee:** The mission of the Property Committee is to provide a safe, clean, and comfortable environment along with the necessary physical assets for Good Shepherd Lutheran Church to fulfill the church's mission statement.

**Responsibilities:**

- a. To oversee the physical maintenance of the building, contents, grounds, parking lots, driveways, and all equipment necessary to maintain these assets.
- b. To guide the custodial staff in the performance of their duties, including supply and maintenance matters.
- c. To arrange for outside contractors or volunteers to perform needed repairs and maintenance including snow removal and lawn care when needed.
- d. To schedule and supervise spring and fall cleanup days including evaluations to determine special projects to be completed on those days.
- e. To review monthly budget reports, to track expenditures, and to analyze variances.
- f. To review and recommend fees for the use of church facilities for weddings, dinners, receptions, and other community activities.

**CR2.10. Service Committee:**

We, a congregation of called believers, desire to share our resources, both time and treasure, with others in the church, the community, and the world. Our service takes many forms, all designed to challenge and involve Good Shepherd Lutheran Church and its members in serving the global community.

**Responsibilities:**

- a. Allocation of budgeted receipts to community, church, and worldwide organizations.
- b. Recommend designation of offerings received at special services.
- c. Consider special requests for assistance, respond to natural calamities, and participate in ELCA initiatives.
- d. Serve the community with weekly food deliveries, coordinated through empty tomb and made by Good Shepherd members.
- e. Oversee staples and canned goods which are stored in the Loaves and Fishes pantry and encourage food donations from members.
- f. Further opportunities include: empty tomb home maintenance, Samaritans, and Winter Shelter volunteers.

**CR2.11. Stewardship Committee:**

The mission of the Stewardship Committee is to encourage members of Good Shepherd to seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit when as individuals and families we determine what portion of the gifts first given to us shall be returned for the work of our provider and Savior, through Good Shepherd and other agencies that do His work. It is the primary duty of this committee to identify and implement studies and programs that promote growth in giving to fund the programs.

**Responsibilities:**

- a. Conduct the annual Stewardship Drive. Select, plan, and organize a program or campaign to emphasize our individual need to grow in giving.
- b. Present Temple Talks that ask our members to pray for the courage to grow in stewardship and to give details of the annual program.
- c. Assist with developing a letter to the congregation and help to prepare the mailings.
- d. Assist with new member orientation by informing new members of the work of the Stewardship Committee.
- e. Make member visits to carry through the stewardship program.
- f. Attend monthly meetings to plan the program and funding requests.

**CR2.12. Worship and Music Committee:**

The mission of the Worship and Music Committee is to support the worship services of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in order to strengthen and enrich the spiritual life of the congregation.

**Responsibilities:**

- a. To provide choir, organ, and special instrumental music appropriate to the church calendar.
- b. To recruit, train, and provide ushers at the worship services for the comfort and safety of the congregation.
- c. To provide regular communion opportunities.
- d. To schedule and train volunteers for altar care.
- e. To recruit and schedule lay readers.
- f. To provide inspirational banners and seasonal decorations.
- g. To purchase necessary books, music, forms, sacramental supplies, and all other materials needed for the worship service.
- h. To promote the participation of as many congregation members as possible in the worship life of the church, wherever their talents and interests lie.
- i. To provide a choir director.
- j. To provide a musician for worship services and other events requiring music.
- k. To offer any other assistance that may enhance the worship activities of the congregation.

**CR2.13. Youth Committee:**

The mission of the Youth Committee is to involve the young people (specifically ages K-12) of the congregation in Christ's work on earth, provide for their spiritual growth, strengthen family relationships, nurture their personal relationship with God, and promote Christian fellowship.

The mission will be advanced through programs of worship, study, service, fellowship, recreation, and outreach. Members of the Youth Committee will work with staff, adult volunteers, and parents to develop and direct these programs.

Year-round programs will have various dimensions, reflecting:

1. the interests and capabilities of three age-groups which correspond to the school grades K-5, 6-8, and 9-12;
2. the inclusion of multi-generational programs to enhance youth involvement within the entire congregational community.

**Responsibilities:**

- a. Develop programming that accomplishes the objectives of the mission statement.
- b. Coordinate activities of GSLC youth with other congregations' youth groups, especially with other Lutheran groups at various age levels.
- c. Encourage youth to participate in governing the congregation through regular youth presence at monthly Council and committee meetings, attending the annual congregational meeting, and exercising their right to vote upon reaching voting age.
- d. Collaborate with other Council committees to provide opportunities for GSLC youth to participate in all elements of congregational life.
- e. Work with congregational members to encourage their involvement in and support of youth ministries.
- f. Engage staff, participants and adult volunteers in both planning and implementation in order to achieve well organized and beneficial events.
- g. Effectively manage youth finances to allow for the maximum involvement of all youth.