

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH OF OUR SAVIOR BY-LAWS

ARTICLE I-VOTERS' ASSEMBLY

- A. The regular meeting of the voters' assembly shall be held once during each calendar year on the last Sunday in September. Date and time shall be set by the church council and announced at worship services on the two Sundays preceding the meeting date.
- B. Notification shall contain the slate of nominees for election and the agenda, including the proposed financial plan/ budget.
- C. Special meetings may be called by the pastor, the chairman, or 10 voting members of the congregation by notifying the congregational president. Notice of date and time of such meeting and the nature of the business to be transacted shall be given on the two Sundays preceding the date of the meeting or by notification addressed to voting members.
- D. Election Procedure:
 - 1. The voting members present shall constitute a quorum.
 - 2. Voting may be by written ballot.
 - 3. A simple majority is all that is required.
 - 4. In the event of a tie vote, the president shall cast the deciding ballot
- E. All communicant members of the congregation may attend the voters' assembly and may submit recommendations or participate in the discussion, nonmembers may attend but may not vote.
- F. Installation & Terms of Office
 - 1. Newly elected officers and at-large council members shall be installed on the third Sunday in January and shall assume their duties immediately.
 - 2. The term of office of all officers and at-large council members shall be two (2) years.
 - 3. The head deacon shall be elected for a 4-year term, will also chair the board of deacons, shall be nominated with the pastor's approval and elected by the voters' assembly.

<u>Term Starts in Odd Years</u>	<u>Term Starts in Even Years</u>
President	Vice president
Treasurer	Recording Secretary
Financial Secretary	Head Trustee
2 at-large council members	
Head Deacon	1 at-large council member

ARTICLE II - THE PASTORAL OFFICE

- A. The calling of pastor(s).

A list of properly qualified candidates for the office of pastor, each of whom is fully committed without any reservation whatsoever to the Confessional Standard of Article III of this constitution, shall be prepared by the board of deacons and publicly announced to the congregation gathered for worship on two (2) successive Sundays or by mail at least ten (10) days prior to the congregational assembly at which the Divine Call shall be extended. Additional nominations may be submitted to the deacons by communicant members of the congregation as long as such additional nominations are submitted at least two (2) weeks prior to the congregational assembly at which the Divine Call is to be extended. The counsel and assistance of a called and ordained pastor (usually the Circuit Counselor), firmly and without reservation committed to the Confessional Standard of Article III, shall be included in the process of examining, nominating, and approving candidates for the Office of pastor (see Titus 1 :5).

Following open discussion of each nominee, the members of the congregational assembly shall be asked to approve each candidate presented by the board of deacons. Objections to any candidate shall be

reasonable and justifiable. Unanimous approval of each candidate for the office of pastor shall be required to include the man on the final slate of nominees prior to the selection of the candidate to whom the Divine Call shall be extended. Then, following the example of the Apostles in Acts 1:15-26 and recognizing that a faithful pastor is a gift from the risen Christ (Ephesians 4:11), a prayer shall be offered that the Lord of the Harvest would bless the calling of a new pastor, and the name of one of the approved candidates shall be selected by lot. The Divine Call shall be extended to the selected candidate with thanksgiving to God. If a Call is issued requesting a candidate from a seminary, Synodical procedure shall be followed:

B. Administration of pastor's office

The pastor shall:

- a. Preach the Word of God in its truth and purity and in accordance with the confessional writings.
- b. Administer the Holy Sacraments and the Office of the Keys according to Christ's institution and in agreement with an orthodox book of forms and the regulations and customs of the Lutheran Church.
- c. Instruct the Catechumens only according to Luther's Small Catechism and an orthodox exposition of the same.
- d. Perform all special acts of his office, i. e., marriages, burials, etc., only according to an orthodox book of forms.
- e. Privately also correct and admonish the members of the congregation according to the Word of God and their individual needs.
- f. Supervise the day school of the congregation.
- g. Set an example to the congregation in a blameless life.

C. Reasons and procedures for the removal of a pastor from office.

1. A Call from God to serve another congregation. The congregation shall grant the pastor a peaceful release from his Call.
2. Death.
3. Accident or illness. If, due to prolonged incapacity, the pastor is no longer able to serve as pastor, the board of deacons may respectfully request his resignation. If the pastor refuses to resign his office when requested by the board of deacons, a special meeting of the congregational assembly shall be called. All adult assembly members shall be notified of this special meeting by public announcement in the regular Divine Service on the two (2) preceding Sundays or by mail at least ten (10) days in advance. A two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the adult assembly members present at the meeting shall be required to remove a pastor from his office. The president shall request for a unanimous decision.
4. Unfaithfulness to God's Word by persistent adherence to false doctrine, a scandalous or immoral life, or a willful neglect of or refusal to exercise properly the "Power of the Keys" (Treatise.. "The Power and Jurisdiction of Bishops'). If such charges are made, the board of deacons shall carefully investigate the matter on the basis of God's Word. Should the charges be substantiated by clear evidence, the pastor shall be given opportunity to repent. If the pastor refuses to repent, he shall be given opportunity to resign his office. If the pastor refuses to resign his office when requested by the board of deacons, a special meeting of the congregational assembly shall be called. All assembly members shall be notified of this special meeting by public announcement in the regular Divine Service on the two (2) preceding Sundays or by mail at least ten (10) days in advance. A two-thirds (2/3) majority of the adult assembly members present at the meeting shall be required to remove a pastor from his office. The

board of deacons, in considering any charges against the pastor, shall secure the counsel of faithful pastor(s) in order that doctrinal matters may be considered in accordance with God's Word and that all proceedings may be carried out in a manner befitting the honor due the office of the Holy Ministry. The president shall request for a unanimous decision.

ARTICLE III - DUTIES OF OFFICERS

A. President

1. To preside at the voters' assembly, and church council meetings.
2. To be an ex-officio member of all committees, attending any whenever he deems it appropriate.
3. He shall keep order in the meetings, see that the constitution and by-laws of the congregation are upheld, and carry out the expressed will of the congregation as embodied in the resolutions of the voters' assembly. He may vote in elections, but may not vote on matters of business or issues except to break a tie vote. He shall supervise the proper functioning of all committees and boards of the congregation and shall be welcome to any meetings of the same.
4. To work closely with the pastor in promoting the congregation's annual plan and keeping the officers, council, committee's members, and organizations informed concerning the program.

B. Vice President

1. To fulfill the duties of the president should the latter be unable to do so, the vice-president shall perform all the duties of the president in the latter's absence. In case of death or resignation by the president, the vice-president shall succeed him in office for the remainder of the term.
2. To appoint a committee consisting of two qualified communicant members of the congregation other than the treasurer or financial secretary to audit the financial records of the congregation, said report to be submitted to the annual voter's assembly.
3. Along with the president, to serve as an ex-officio member of all committees.
4. To chair the nominating committee along with two other members of the congregation.

C. Recording Secretary

1. To keep records of all proceedings of the voters' assembly and church council meetings. Minutes of each meeting shall be distributed to council members and made available upon request.
2. To keep a record of attendance of voters at the voters' assemblies.
3. The secretary shall record the minutes of the voters' assembly and church council meetings, conduct all official correspondence, maintain an official congregational archive, and keep an official copy of the constitution and by-laws, complete with any additions or amendments and other official documents.

D. Treasurer.

The duties of the treasurer shall be: to keep or supervise the keeping of suitable books of account covering all income and disbursements; He/she submits monthly reports of the same to the church council and/or congregation; the treasurer shall also submit all financial records each year to the auditing committee; the treasurer of the congregation makes disbursements as authorized by the congregation and church council, fixed and regular without order or upon authorization signed by the chairman or such other authorized persons.

E. Financial Secretary

1. To record all contributions by members of the congregation and nonmembers and distribute to the treasurer, pastor, secretary, and council president.
2. To summarize monthly receipts by categories on a form approved by the council and distribute this to the treasurer, council president, and the pastor.
3. To issue statements to members summarizing their offerings for each calendar quarter and year-to-date if requested. A summary of such statements shall be prepared by categories so that totals may be reconciled.

ARTICLE IV - DUTIES OF AT-LARGE COUNCIL MEMBERS

1. To attend council meetings faithfully.
2. To bring ideas and concerns of the congregation to the council.
3. To initiate and/or carry out activities and programs within the congregation as will enable it to effectively accomplish the ministry goals of the congregation.

ARTICLE V - DUTIES OF THE BOARD OF DEACONS

A. Pastoral Care:

1. To pray for the pastor and other spiritual leaders.
2. To encourage the pastor in his work by word and action.
3. To be concerned about the spiritual, emotional, and physical health and welfare of the pastor and his family (adequate compensation, housing, free time, vacation, assistance in times of illness), etc.

B. Worship of the congregation:

1. To insure that the congregation functions in accordance with the established doctrine of the church as listed in Article III of the constitution.
2. To plan and publicize the services for the year, including communion and special services as needed.
3. To review new forms of worship, liturgies, and hymns for use in public worship.
4. To provide for vicars, assistants, substitute pastors and guest speakers as needed.
5. To assist the pastor with communion distribution, reading of Scripture, preaching, etc, as needed.
6. To recruit, train, supervise the ushering staff.
7. With the altar guild:
 - a. To maintain an adequate supply of expendable items for worship such as communion cards, pencils, communion wine and wafers, baptismal napkins, candles, etc.
 - b. To coordinate the distribution of altar flowers to the sick and shut-ins.

C. Administration

To be concerned about the spiritual, emotional, and physical health and welfare of the congregation and assist the pastor in these matters of the congregation.

D. Other deacons

The head deacon and the pastor shall select a minimum of two other male members of the congregation in good standing to serve a two-year term, number of terms unlimited.

ARTICLE VI- TRUSTEES

A. Composition

The head trustee shall be elected by the congregation to a 2 year term. Given the authority of the head

trustee in temporal matters of this congregation this position is open for male members. All other trustees are designated by the head trustee subject to the pastor's approval. These positions are open to all voting members of the congregation in good standing.

B. Duties

The trustees are responsible for maintaining the property and possession of the church and keeping it in good repair and for signing any legal documents pertaining to those matters. All expenditures regular or otherwise are subject to budget limitations in accordance with council and congregation approval.

ARTICLE VII- CHURCH COUNCIL

A. Composition

The church council shall include the 5 elected officers, 3 at-large members, head deacon, and head trustee all elected by the voters' assembly, a Dorcas representative, and the pastor (non-voting).

B. Meetings:

1. Monthly or as otherwise determined by council.
2. Additional meetings may be called by the congregational president or pastor as needed.
3. Council members present shall constitute a quorum.
4. Meetings of the council will be open and any member of the church is welcome to bring their questions and concerns prescheduled and at the time designated on the agenda.

C. Duties:

1. To write policies and procedures to be available upon request.
2. To appoint the nominating committee as required.
3. To prepare the agenda for the voters' assembly.
4. To report to the annual voters' assembly on organizational and financial condition of the congregation.
5. To present to the congregation at the annual voters' assembly the year's plan of activity for the entire congregation in the form of the annual financial operating plan as well as long-range plans for the development and expansion of Christ's work in our midst, in our community, and throughout the world.
6. To fill unexpired terms or shortages of personnel by appointment.
7. The principal duty of the church council shall be to coordinate the program and activities of the various departments of the congregation. It shall also have the power to act on behalf of the congregation between meetings of the voters' assembly within limitations established meeting of the voters' assembly, and may authorize up to \$5000 for each non-budgeted expenditure.

ARTICLE VIII - DISCIPLINE AND REMOVAL FROM MEMBERSHIP

All discipline in this congregation shall be administered in accordance Matthew 18: 15-20. The purpose of any disciplinary action is to renew a member's relationship with the Lord and the church. A member shall be considered self-excluded when unresponsive to the witness and ministry of the church.

Section 1: Removal from membership

A. Church leaders (officers, deacons, trustees, board and committee chairman)

Any member of the church council or those holding board and committee chair positions may be deposed for persistent adherence to false doctrine, sinful and offensive life and conduct, willful neglect of official duties, or the protracted incapacity to perform the functions of their office. Charges on any of these counts shall be carefully investigated by the pastor in consultation with the board of deacons. All charges must be substantiated by clear evidence and corroborated by at least two witnesses. The individual will first

be given an opportunity to repent and amend his/her ways and, if necessary and proper, to resign his/her position. Such opportunity having been given and declined, the board of deacons in conjunction with the church council, shall notify the voting membership of the situation, and submit the matter for action at a regular or special meeting of the congregation. A two-thirds majority vote of the voting members present, shall be required to depose a person.

B. Pastor/Called Teacher(s):

The only sufficient grounds for deposing a pastor shall be persistent adherence to false doctrine, sinful and offensive life and conduct, willful neglect of official duties, or the protracted incapacity to perform the functions of the sacred office. Charges on any of these counts shall be carefully investigated by the board of deacons. Should such charges be substantiated by clear evidence and corroborated by at least two witnesses, the pastor shall first be given an opportunity to repent and amend his ways and, if necessary and proper, to resign his position as shepherd of the congregation. Such opportunity having been given and declined, the board of deacons, with the concurrence of the Church council, shall consult with the appropriate Officers of the District of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod for assistance and guidance in handling this matter in a Christian manner in accord with ARTICLE II. C. 4. of by-laws .
(1 Tim. 1:1-7, 5:19; Tit. 1:6-9)

Section 2: Removal from membership

A. Transfers:

A member desiring transfer to another Lutheran congregation with which we are in fellowship shall apply to the pastor. Upon approval by the pastor and in consultation with the board of deacons, a letter of transfer shall be issued by the pastor and reported via church publications or at the next regular meeting the voters' assembly.

B. Joining Other Church Denominations:

In cases where communicant members of this congregation have joined a congregation with which we are not in fellowship, they shall, upon the decision of the pastor and in consultation with the board of deacons shall be granted a peaceful release, which shall be reported at the next regular meeting of the voters' assembly.

C. Self-Exclusion:

Members should notify the pastor of a planned, extended absence.
See: Mt 18:15-20; ARTICLE V. D. 3. of the constitution

D. Excommunication:

See: Mt 18:15-20; ARTICLE V. D. 4. of the constitution

E. Death:

Upon notification of the death of a member, the pastor will update the church records and notify the congregation at the next regular meeting of the voters' assembly.

To God alone be the Glory

Amendments

ARTICLE III - DUTIES OF OFFICERS

E. Financial Secretary

1. To record all contributions by members of the congregation and nonmembers.

Stated section is amended as listed in this document, on September 25, 2011.