

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

OF

Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church  
of Camp Hill, Pennsylvania

Amended at Congregational Meeting  
January 23, 2005

# CONSTITUTION

## \*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 the Holy Spirit.

## CHAPTER 1.

### NAME AND INCORPORATION

C1.01. The name of this congregation shall be Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church of Camp Hill, Pennsylvania.

C1.02. For the purpose of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws, the Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church of Camp Hill, Pennsylvania congregation is hereinafter designated as "this congregation."

C1.11. This congregation shall be incorporated under the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

C1.12. The seal of the congregation shall be:

The Trinity Ev. Lutheran Church of Camp Hill  
Incorporated  
1898  
Cumbd. Co., PA.

The pastor shall be the custodian of the seal of the corporation.

## CHAPTER 2.

### CONFESSION OF FAITH

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

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

- a. Jesus Christ is the Word of God incarnate, through whom everything was made and through whose life, death, and resurrection God fashions a new creation.
- b. The proclamation of God's message to us as both Law and Gospel is the Word of God, revealing judgment and mercy through word and deed, beginning with the Word in creation, continuing in the history of Israel, and centering in all its fullness in the person and work of Jesus Christ.

- c. The canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the written Word of God. Inspired by God's Spirit speaking through their authors, they record and announce God's revelation centering in Jesus Christ. Through them God's Spirit speaks to us to create and sustain Christian faith and fellowship for service in the world.
- \*C2.03. This congregation accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life.
- \*C2.04. This congregation accepts the Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds as true declarations of the faith of this congregation.
- \*C2.05. This congregation accepts the Unaltered Augsburg Confession as a true witness to the Gospel, acknowledging as one with it in faith and doctrine all churches that likewise accept the teachings of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession.
- \*C2.06. This congregation accepts the other confessional writings in the Book of Concord, namely, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles and the Treatise, the Small Catechism, the Large Catechism, and the Formula of Concord, as further valid interpretations of the faith of the Church.
- \*C2.07. This congregation confesses the Gospel, recorded in the Holy Scriptures and confessed in the ecumenical creeds and Lutheran confessional writings, as the power of God to create and sustain the Church for God's mission in the world.

### CHAPTER 3.

#### NATURE OF THE CHURCH

- \*C3.01. All power in the Church belongs to our Lord Jesus Christ, its head. All actions of this congregation are to be carried out under his rule and authority.
- \*C3.02. The Church exists both as an inclusive fellowship and as local congregations gathered for worship and Christian service. Congregations find their fulfillment in the universal community of the Church, and the universal Church exists in and through congregations. 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.

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 churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
  - i. Foster and participate in ecumenical relationships consistent with churchwide policy.
- \*C4.04. This congregation shall develop an organizational structure to be described in the bylaws and continuing resolutions of the congregation or of the Congregation Council. The Congregation Council shall prepare descriptions of the responsibilities of each committee, task force, or other organizational group and shall review their actions.
- \*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 pastor, as provided in Chapter 9;
  - b. terminate the call of a pastor; as provided in Chapter 9;
  - c. appoint or terminate the appointment of associates in ministry in conformity with the applicable policy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;
  - d. acquire real and personal property by gift, devise, purchase, or other lawful means;

- e. hold title to and use its property for any and all activities consistent with its purpose;
- f. sell, mortgage, lease, transfer, or otherwise dispose of its property by any lawful means;
- g. elect its Congregation Council and require it to carry out its duties in accordance with the constitution and bylaws;
- h. terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, as provided in Chapter 6.

## CHAPTER 6. CHURCH AFFILIATION

- \*C6.01. This congregation shall be an interdependent part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or its successor, and of the Lower Susquehanna Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. This congregation is subject to the discipline of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- \*C6.02. This congregation accepts the Confession of Faith and agrees to the Purposes of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and shall act in accordance with them.
- \*C6.03. This congregation acknowledges its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in which:
  - a. This congregation agrees to be responsible for its life as a Christian community.
  - b. This congregation pledges its financial support and participation in the life and mission of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
  - c. This congregation agrees to call pastoral leadership from the clergy roster of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in accordance with its call procedures except in special circumstances and with the approval of the bishop of the synod.
  - d. In the event that this congregation agrees to consider associates in ministry for other staff positions in the congregation, it will do so 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 a two-thirds majority of the voting members present.
- b. The secretary of this congregation shall submit a copy of the resolution to the synodical bishop and shall mail a copy of the resolution to voting members of this congregation. This notice shall be submitted within ten days after the resolution has been adopted.
- c. The bishop of the synod shall consult with this congregation during a period of at least ninety 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 ten days in advance of the meeting.
- e. A certified copy of the resolution to terminate its relationship shall be sent to the synodical bishop, at which time the relationship between this congregation and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be terminated.
- f. Notice of termination shall be forwarded by the synodical bishop to the secretary of this church and published in the periodical of this church.
- g. This congregation 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.

- \*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 effected.

CHAPTER 7.  
PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

- \*C7.01. If this congregation ceases to exist, title to undisposed property shall pass to the Lower Susquehanna Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- \*C7.02. If this congregation is removed from membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America according to its procedure for discipline, title to property shall continue to reside in this congregation.
- \*C7.03. If a two-thirds majority of the voting members of this congregation present at a regularly called and conducted special meeting of this congregation vote to transfer to another Lutheran church body, title to property shall continue to reside in this congregation. Before this congregation takes action to transfer to another Lutheran church body, it shall consult with representatives of the Lower Susquehanna Synod.
- \*C7.04. If a two-thirds majority of the voting members of this congregation present at a regularly called and conducted special meeting of this congregation vote to become independent or relate to a non-Lutheran church body, title to property of this congregation shall continue to reside in this congregation only with the consent of the Synod Council. The Synod Council, after consultation with 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 shall have communed and made a contribution of record during the current or preceding year.
- 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. They have all the privileges and duties of membership except voting rights and eligibility for elected offices or membership on the Congregation Council of this congregation.

\*C8.03. All applications for confirmed membership shall be submitted to and shall require the approval of the Congregation Council.

\*C8.04. It shall be the privilege and duty of members of this congregation to:

- a. make regular use of the means of grace, both Word and sacraments;
- b. live a Christian life in accordance with the Word of God and the teachings of the Lutheran church; and
- c. support the work of this congregation, the synod, and the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America through contributions of their time, abilities, and financial support as biblical stewards.

\*C8.05. 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 as defined in the bylaws.

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

CHAPTER 9.  
THE PASTOR

- \*C9.01. Authority to call a pastor shall be in this congregation by at least a two-thirds majority ballot vote of members present and voting at a meeting called for that purpose. Before a call is issued, the officers, or a committee approved by the Congregation Council to recommend the call, shall seek the advice and help of the bishop of the synod.
- \*C9.02. Only a member of the clergy roster of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or who has been recommended for it by the synodical bishop may be called as a pastor of this congregation.
- \*C9.03. Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,
- a. Every ordained minister shall:
    - (1) preach the Word;
    - (2) administer the sacraments;
    - (3) conduct public worship;
    - (4) provide pastoral care; and
    - (5) 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 ordained minister with a congregational call shall, within the congregation:
    - (1) offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead;
    - (2) supervise all schools and organizations of this congregation;
    - (3) install regularly elected members of the Congregation Council; and
    - (4) with the council, administer discipline.
  - 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 the work of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and this Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Synod.

\*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. The pastor shall be deemed to be a member of this congregation when called.

- \*C9.05. a. The call of a congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment which, except in the case of the death of the pastor, shall be terminated only following consultation with the synodical bishop and for the following reasons:
- (1) mutual agreement to terminate the call or the completion of a call for a specific term;
  - (2) resignation of the pastor;
  - (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;
  - (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 ordained 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. 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 C9.05b 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 by a two-thirds majority vote of the voting members present at a duly called meeting after consultation with the bishop.
  - e. If, in the course of proceedings described in C9.05d, the committee concludes that there may be grounds for disciplinary action, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action to the synodical bishop who may bring charges, in accordance with the provisions of the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the constitution of this synod.
  - f. If, following the appointment of the committee described in C9.05b or C9.05d, it should become apparent that the pastoral office cannot be conducted effectively in the congregation being served by the ordained minister due to local conditions, the bishop of the synod may temporarily suspend the pastor from service in the congregation without prejudice and with pay provided through a joint churchwide/synod fund and with housing provided by the congregation.
- \*C9.06. At a time of pastoral vacancy, an interim pastor may be appointed by the bishop of the synod with the consent of this congregation or the Congregation Council.
- \*C9.07. During the period of service, an interim pastor shall have the rights and duties in the congregation of a regularly called pastor and may delegate the same in part to a supply pastor with the consent of the bishop of the synod and this congregation or Congregation Council. The interim pastor and any ordained pastor 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.
- \*C9.09. When a pastor is called to serve in company with another pastor or pastors, the privileges and responsibilities of each pastor shall be specified in documents to accompany the call and to be drafted in consultation involving the pastors, the Congregation Council, and the bishop of the synod. As occasion requires, the documents may be revised through a similar consultation.

- \*C9.11. With the approval of the bishop of the synod, the congregation may depart from C9.05a 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 call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of C9.05a.
- \*C9.12. The pastor shall keep accurate parochial records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from the congregation, and shall submit a summary of such statistics annually to the synod.
- \*C9.13. The pastor(s) shall submit a report of his or her ministry to the bishop of the synod at least once each year in a manner established by the bishop of the synod.
- \*C9.14. In his/her rights and duties, the pastor shall be assisted by such assistant or associate pastors as shall be called by the congregation and by such other administrative assistants and staff as shall be provided by the Congregation Council.
- \*C9.15. As soon as practicable upon entering upon his/her duties, a pastor of this congregation shall be duly installed in office by the bishop of the synod or the bishop's appointee. The pastor shall be a member of this congregation effective on the first date of official service after a call has been extended and accepted.

## 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 3% of 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 ten days in advance of the date of the meeting. The posting of such notice sent to the last known address of such members shall be sufficient.
- C10.04. Five percent of voting members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at a congregation meeting.
- C10.05. Voting by proxy or by absentee ballot at a congregation meeting shall not be permitted.
- C10.06. All actions by the congregation shall be by majority vote except as otherwise provided in this constitution.

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

## CHAPTER 11. OFFICERS

C11.01. The officers of this congregation shall be a lay president, a vice-president, a secretary, a financial secretary and a treasurer. They shall be elected annually by the Congregation Council from the active roll of voting members. The Congregation Council may establish/fill such other positions as it deems appropriate in the management of the affairs of the congregation.

C11.02. The Congregation Council shall elect its officers and they shall be the officers of the congregation.

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 pastors and as many members as the congregation may by bylaws provide. 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 two regularly scheduled meetings of the Congregation Council without cause.

C12.02. The members of the Congregation Council except the pastor(s) shall be elected to serve for three years and the terms of one-third of them shall expire each year. Such members shall not be eligible to serve an additional full term until a period of one year of time has elapsed since the first term. Their terms shall begin at the close of the annual meeting at which they are elected. Persons serving a partial term of less than three years shall be eligible for election to a succeeding full term.

C12.03. Should a member's place on the Congregation Council be declared vacant, the Congregation Council shall elect, by majority vote, a successor to fill the vacancy for the unexpired term.

C12.04. The Congregation Council shall have general oversight of the life and activities of this congregation, and in particular its worship life, to the end that everything be done in accordance with the Word of God and the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The duties of the Congregation Council shall include the following:

- a. to lead this congregation in stating its mission, to do long-range planning, to set goals and priorities, and to evaluate its activities in light of its mission and goals.
- b. to seek to involve all members of this congregation in worship, learning, witness, service, and support.
- c. to oversee and provide for the administration of this congregation to enable it to fulfill its functions and perform its mission.
- d. to maintain supportive relationships with the pastor(s) and staff and help them annually to evaluate the fulfillment of their calling or employment.
- e. to be examples individually and corporately of the style of life and ministry expected of all baptized persons.
- f. to promote a congregational climate of peace and goodwill and, as differences and conflicts arise, to endeavor to foster mutual understanding.
- g. to arrange for pastoral service during the sickness or absence of the pastor.
- h. to emphasize partnership with the synod and churchwide units of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as well as cooperation with other congregations, both Lutheran and non-Lutheran, subject to established policies of the synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- i. to recommend and encourage the use of program resources produced or approved by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- j. to seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel.

C12.05. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the financial and property matters of this congregation. The Congregation Council shall be the board of trustees 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 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, except as otherwise provided herein.

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

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

C12.08. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the appointment and supervision of the salaried lay workers of this congregation.

- C12.11. The Congregation Council shall normally meet once a month. Special meetings may be called by the pastor or the president, and shall be called at the request of at least 40% of its members. Notice of each special meeting shall be given to all who are entitled to be present. Council may decide to cancel its monthly meetings of July and August in any year.
- C12.12. A quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of a majority of the elected members of the Congregation Council.
- C12.13. Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedures of all meetings of the Congregation Council.

### CHAPTER 13.

#### DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS AND ADJUDICATION

- \*C13.01. 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.
- \*C13.02. A member charged with the offense shall appear before the Congregation Council after having received a written notice, specifying the exact charges that have been made against the member, at least ten days prior to the meeting.
- \*C13.03. 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.
- \*C13.04. 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.
- \*C13.05. 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.

- \*C13.06 When there is disagreement among factions within this congregation on a substantive issue that cannot be resolved by the parties, members of this congregation shall have access to the synodical bishop for consultation after informing the chair of the Congregation Council of their intent. If the consultation fails to resolve the issue(s), the Consultation Committee of the synod shall consider the matter. If the Consultation Committee of the synod shall fail to resolve the issue(s), the matter shall be referred to the Synod Council, whose decision shall be final.

## CHAPTER 14 BYLAWS

- \*C14.01. This congregation may adopt bylaws. No bylaw may conflict with this constitution.
- \*C14.02. Bylaws may be adopted or amended at any legally called meeting of this congregation with a quorum present by a two-thirds majority vote of those voting members present and voting.
- \*C14.03. No alterations or amendments to these bylaws shall be made unless they be presented, in writing, to the Congregation Council and read at a public service two weeks prior to the Congregation Meeting at which they are to be acted upon and adopted by a two-thirds majority. In lieu of reading the proposed amendment or amendments, they may be posted in a public place within the church for a period of at least two weeks prior to such meeting with public announcement of their location made at the morning services on two or more Sundays prior to such meeting at which actions will be taken.
- \*C14.04. Approved changes to the bylaws shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod.

## CHAPTER 15. AMENDMENTS

- \*C15.01. Amendments to this constitution may be proposed by at least ten voting members or by the Congregation Council. Proposed amendments must be filed in writing with the Congregation Council sixty days before formal consideration by this congregation at its regular or special meeting called for that purpose. The Congregation Council shall notify the members of this congregation of proposed amendments, together with the recommendation of the Congregation Council, at least two weeks in advance of the meeting of the congregation at which action will be taken. Such notification may be given by posting the proposed amendments and the recommendation of the Congregation Council in a public place within the church for a period of at least two weeks prior to such meeting with public announcement of their location made at the morning services on two or more Sundays prior to such meeting at which action will be taken.

- \*C15.02. A proposed amendment to this constitution shall:
- a. be approved at a properly called meeting according to this constitution by a two-thirds majority vote of those present and voting;
  - b. be ratified at the next annual meeting by a two-thirds majority vote of those present and voting; and
  - c. have the effective date included in the resolution and noted in the constitution.
- \*C15.03. Any amendments to this constitution shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod. The amendment shall become effective within 120 days from the date of the receipt of the notice by the synod unless the synod informs this congregation that the amendment is in conflict with the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, or the constitution of the Lower Susquehanna Synod of the ELCA.
- \*C15.04. Whenever the Model Constitution for Congregations is amended by the Churchwide Assembly, this constitution may be amended to reflect any such amendment by a simple two-thirds majority vote at any subsequent meeting of the congregation without presentation at a prior meeting of the congregation, provided that the Congregation Council has submitted by mail notice to the congregation of such an amendment or amendments at least 30 days prior to the meeting. Following the adoption of an amendment, the secretary for the congregation shall submit a copy thereof to the synod, consistent with \*C15.03.

## CHAPTER 16. CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

- \*C16.01. The Congregation Council may enact continuing resolutions which describe the function of the various committees or organizations of this congregation.
- \*C16.02. Continuing resolutions shall be adopted by a majority vote of all voting members of the Congregation Council.

## BYLAWS

### BYLAWS - SECTION 1: TIME AND PLACE OF MEETINGS

The regular congregation meeting shall be held annually in January at a place designated by the Congregation Council.

### BYLAWS - SECTION 2: CONGREGATION YEAR

The congregation and fiscal year shall begin January 1 and end December 31 of each year.

### BYLAWS - SECTION 3: CONGREGATION MEETINGS

1. At the annual congregation meeting, the pastor, staff, treasurers, and the officers of the various organizations and schools within the congregation shall submit in writing their respective annual reports.
2. The lay president of the Congregation Council shall preside at all congregation meetings. In the absence of the lay president, the vice president shall preside.
3. All issues involving the calling of a pastor or other professional to the church staff, and monetary matters requiring approval of the congregation, excluding approval of the annual budget, shall be acted upon by written ballot only.

### BYLAWS - SECTION 4: MEMBERS

Responsibilities of the congregation for fostering faithful membership shall include:

- a. proper instruction in the Word of God and the teaching of the Lutheran church prior to reception as confirmed members.
- b. transfer of membership to another Lutheran congregation or the issuing of a certificate of standing and/or release to another evangelical congregation at the request of the confirmed member; such transfer of membership or issuing of a certificate of standing and/or release should be granted to baptized but unconfirmed children at the request of their parents.
- c. encouraging members who move from the community which the congregation serves to transfer to a Lutheran congregation which can serve them effectively and in which they can participate regularly. A Lutheran congregation in the new community in which such members live shall be notified of their move.
- d. continuing concern and conscientious pastoral care for members, in an effort to encourage fulfillment of their duties and responsibilities, when they do not partake of Holy Communion, support the church with their offerings, or appear to desire to participate in the life and worship of the congregation. When such members

have failed to receive Holy Communion and to make a contribution of record for a period of two consecutive calendar years, they may be removed from the roll of members by the Congregation Council. This procedure will take place only when there is a pastor under call to serve this congregation or with the approval of the bishop of the synod, after such members have been counseled about the matter, if possible.

#### BYLAWS - SECTION 5: THE CONGREGATION COUNCIL

1. At a meeting in December, the Congregation Council shall nominate one nominee for each vacancy in the Congregation Council and the congregation at the annual meeting may nominate from persons present or from those who have previously given consent any number of nominees for the vacancies in the Congregation Council. The nominees of the Congregation Council shall be made known to the congregation at least two weeks prior to the annual meeting. The election shall be limited to those nominated.
2. All members of the Congregation Council properly elected shall be installed by the pastor at the next public service following their election or as soon thereafter as possible.
3. In addition to those duties of Congregation Council described in Chapter 12 of the constitution, the duties of the Congregation Council shall include:
  - a. to see that the services of God's house are held at the proper times and conducted in accordance with the order of the church; that the pure Word of God is preached as the church confesses it; and that the Sacraments are properly administered.
  - b. to provide the program of Educational Ministry for the entire congregation, and exercise the responsibility for the promotion, organization and supervision of schools, agencies and auxiliaries of the congregation.
  - c. to assist the pastor(s) in the performance of the duties of the office, particularly in the care of the sick and needy, in the cultivation of harmony among the members, and in the promotion of the general welfare of the congregation.
  - d. to assist in exercising discipline in the name of the congregation whenever necessary.
  - e. to elect from the members of congregation the voting members who shall attend the meetings of conference and synod. There shall also be elected an alternate who shall act in the absence of a voting member.
  - f. to provide to worthy students of the congregation spiritual encouragement and support as they advance in all types of church careers.

- g. to fill all temporary vacancies in the various offices necessary for the proper conduct of the business of the church, and the right to approve all volunteer workers of the congregation.

4. The officers of the Congregation Council shall be as follows:

- a. The lay president shall be an ex officio chair of the Congregation Council. In the president's absence or at the president's request the vice president shall preside.

The Congregation Council annually at its regular meeting in November shall elect from its members a lay president-elect who shall be its chief officer for the next fiscal year. The lay president so elected may not succeed himself or herself.

- b. The Congregation Council annually shall elect from its members a vice president who shall assist the lay president in matters of administration and preside at the meetings of Congregation Council in the absence of the president. The office of vice-president is not necessarily an office of succession to presidency.
- c. The Congregation Council annually shall elect from its members a secretary who shall record the minutes of all meetings of the Congregation Council and of the Congregation meeting in a record book provided for that purpose. Said person shall also serve as archivist for the congregation.
- d. The Congregation Council shall annually elect a treasurer or treasurers who shall receive all monies intended for the use of the congregation and disburse the respective funds according to the direction of the Congregation Council, and keep proper accounts of all receipts and disbursements. Each treasurer shall make a monthly report to the Congregation Council as to the financial condition of the treasurer's particular fund or charge, and at the annual meeting of the congregation the treasurer shall render an accurate account, which shall be audited by a committee appointed by Congregation Council, of all monies received and payments made. The checks of each fund shall be signed by any two of the following: the treasurer of the respective fund, the financial secretary, the chair of the Finance Committee or the financial administrator whose duties are delegated by the Finance Committee and financial secretary.

The treasurer shall be responsible to see that an annual review or audit is performed. The treasurer shall furnish to the synod treasurer by March 31<sup>st</sup> of each year, or as soon thereafter as feasible, said review or audit.

- e. The Congregation Council shall annually elect a financial secretary who shall keep a careful record of all contributing members, also an accurate account of their contributions; and the financial secretary shall endeavor to effect payment of the year's subscriptions and apportionments.

5. In case the treasurer or financial secretary are not members of the Congregation Council, this body may grant them a voice but no vote, in its proceedings.
6. At the monthly Congregation Council meeting, the order of business shall include but not be limited to the following:
  - (1) Prayer
  - (2) Roll call and action on excuses for absence
  - (3) Reading of minutes
  - (4) Report of treasurer
  - (5) Report of financial secretary
  - (6) Reports of the pastor and other staff members
  - (7) Reports of standing committees
  - (8) Reports of special committees
  - (9) Other reports
  - (10) Reception of petitions and communications
  - (11) Unfinished business
  - (12) New business
  - (13) Adjournment with prayer
7. The Congregation Council shall consist of the pastors and 12 members of the congregation.
8. Additional program staff shall be members of the Congregation Council subject to the approval of council.
9. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the financial and property matters of this congregation.
  - a. 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.
  - b. The Congregation Council shall prepare and adopt an annual budget for the work of the church in the year to come, including projections of income and expenditures, supervision of the expenditures of funds in accordance therewith, and reporting a detailed budget to the congregation prior to the annual meeting.
  - c. The Congregation Council shall ascertain that the financial affairs of this congregation are being conducted efficiently.
  - d. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for this congregation's investments and its total insurance program.
  - e. The Congregation Council shall not borrow money in an amount to exceed \$50,000 without the approval of the congregation.

## BYLAWS - SECTION 6: COMMITTEES

1. An Executive Committee comprised of members of Congregation Council may be appointed by the president of council. The Executive Committee shall include the council president, vice-president, and secretary, Senior Pastor, and such other members of the council as designated in the continuing resolutions. Said appointment shall be subject to the approval of Congregation Council. During intervals between meetings of the Congregation Council, the Executive Committee shall possess and may exercise all the powers of the Congregation Council and management and direction of the affairs of the church except that it shall not have authority to borrow money.
2. When a pastoral vacancy occurs, a Call Committee of voting members shall be appointed by the Congregation Council.
3. The president shall nominate members of Congregation Council to serve on the Standing Committees and shall submit the nominations to Congregation Council for its approval. The chair of each Standing Committee shall be appointed by the president of the congregation and approved by Congregation Council. The chair of the standing committees may appoint other members of the congregation to serve on said committee.
4. The Standing Committees of the congregation shall be established by and responsible to the Congregation Council and shall include such committees as necessary to provide for general oversight of the life and activities of this congregation as set forth in then Statement of Purpose of the Constitution.

The Standing Committees of the congregation may include:

- a. A committee on Church Property - it shall provide for the proper care, protection and maintenance of the church property.
- b. A Finance committee - it shall oversee all financial affairs of the congregation. The treasurer and financial secretary shall be members ex officio of this committee.
- c. A committee on Worship - it shall be the duty of this committee to assist the council in seeing that the services of God's house are conducted properly and in accordance with the liturgy of the church, that competent ushers are provided and that hymnals and other devotional helps are provided and properly cared for.
- d. A committee on the Arts - it shall develop and maintain a well-balanced program of music, art and drama, and, in consultation with the professional staff, provide such as is proper for the services of worship. It shall coordinate

all activities of the church concerned with the arts and shall be responsible for the purchase and care of musical instruments and choir vestments.

- e. A committee on Educational Ministry - in cooperation with the program staff, this committee shall have the responsibility of organizing, promoting and supervising a program of Educational Ministry consistent with the teachings, principles and practices of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for all ages in the parish.
- f. A committee on Stewardship - it shall be responsible for the promotion of the expression of the Christian faith in the daily life of the members and lead them to higher levels of proportionate giving for the Lord's work.
- g. A committee on Evangelism - it shall stimulate and lead all members of the congregation in continuous and, from time to time, concerted endeavors to reawaken the spiritually indifferent and to reach others with the Gospel and attach them to Christ's Church.
- h. A committee on Missions - it shall stimulate the congregation to a world wide perspective of Christian Mission based upon the directive of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The committee shall be the enabling body of the congregation for the carrying out of mission in North America and throughout the world.
- i. A committee on Social Ministry - it shall stimulate the congregation to a broadening perspective of Christian social responsibility. The committee shall act as the enabling body for the carrying out of responsible Christian social ministry both within and outside the congregation.
- j. A committee on Administration and Personnel - it shall be responsible to make recommendations to Congregation Council regarding matters related to all church employees.
- k. A committee on Publicity and Communication - it shall recommend policy for, and be responsible for supervision of all publications of the congregation, newspaper advertising and news releases, radio broadcasts, and other efforts in the printed and broadcast media.
- l. A committee on Auxiliaries and Fellowship - it shall be the responsibility of this committee to be the liaison between the Congregation Council for all recognized organizations and auxiliaries of the congregation not otherwise related through another standing committee. It shall exercise supervision over all such organizations. Furthermore, this committee shall be responsible for policy-making, coordination and supervision of all congregation-wide social and fellowship activities.

- m. A committee on Parish Ministry - it shall be the responsibility of this committee to assist the pastor(s) in the promotion of the general welfare of the congregation and to assist the congregation in responding to the needs of the sick, the infirm, and the suffering within the congregation. The committee will provide readily available emergency funds for pastoral use via the benevolence budget.
  - n. A committee on Youth Ministry - it shall be the responsibility of this committee to guide each youth member in reaching a more mature faith in Jesus Christ and to integrate Christianity into the total life of each youth.
5. Duties of all Standing Committees not otherwise defined shall be fixed by the Congregation Council from whom they shall receive needed instruction, and by whom their acts shall be subject to review. Standing committee members shall serve for one year and may be reappointed. The pastors shall have a voice and a combined total of one vote in all committees.
  6. The president of the congregation may create as many special committees as the local and general interests of the church may require; the president shall appoint the members of said special committee, subject to the approval of Congregation Council.

#### BYLAWS - SECTION 7: ORGANIZATIONS WITHIN THE CONGREGATION

1. 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.
2. 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 shall be subject to the authority of Congregation Council.