

**CONSTITUTION and BYLAWS**  
**Trinity Lutheran Church of Ishpeming, Michigan**  
**Revised by the Forward Planning Committee**  
**Approved at a Special Congregational Meeting: August 12, 2001**  
**Ratified by the Congregation and Effective: February 3, 2002**

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**PREAMBLE**

We, the 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 Trinity Lutheran Church of Ishpeming, Michigan.

C1.02. For the purposes of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws, Trinity Lutheran Church of Ishpeming, Michigan congregation is hereinafter designated as "this congregation."

C1.03. This congregation shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of Michigan.

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 creations, 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 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 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. 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 of the Congregation Council or the bylaws of the congregation.

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. approve the annual budget;
- e. acquire real and personal property by gift, devise, purchase, or other lawful means;
- f. hold title to and use its property for any and all activities consistent with its purpose;
- g. sell, mortgage, lease, transfer, or otherwise dispose of its property by any lawful means;
- h. elect its Congregation Council, boards, and committees, and require them to carry out their duties in accordance with the constitution and bylaws, and continuing resolutions, and
- i. 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 the Northern Great Lakes Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. This congregation is subject to the discipline of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

C6.02. The 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. This congregation agrees to consider associates in ministry 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 outline 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 10 days after the resolution has been adopted.
- c. The bishop of the synod shall consult with this congregation during a period of at least 90 days.

- d. If this congregation, after consultation, still desires to terminate its relationship,
    - such action may be taken at a legally called and conducted special meeting by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present, at which meeting the bishop of the synod or an authorized representative shall be present. Notice of the meeting shall be mailed to all voting members at least 10 days in advance of the meeting.
  - e. A certified copy of the resolution to terminate its relationship shall be sent to the synodical bishop, at which time the relationship between this congregation and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be terminated.
  - f. Notice of termination shall be forwarded by the synodical bishop to the secretary of this church and be published in the periodical of the church.
- 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 Northern Great Lakes Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- C7.02. If this congregation is removed from membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America according to its procedure for discipline, title to property shall continue to reside in this congregation.
- C7.03. If a two-thirds majority of the voting members of this congregation present at a legally called and conducted special meeting of this congregation vote to transfer to another Lutheran church body, title to property shall continue to reside in this congregation. Before this congregation takes action to transfer to another Lutheran church body, it shall consult with representatives of the Northern Great Lakes Synod.
- C7.04. If a two-thirds majority of the voting members of this congregation present at a legally called and conducted special meeting of this congregation vote to become independent or relate to a non-Lutheran church body, title to property of this congregation shall continue to reside in this congregation only with the consent of the Synod Council. The Synod Council, after consultation with 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 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, 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.

C8.05.01. A confirmed member who does not, for a period of two years, partake of Holy Communion, support the church with offerings, and does not appear to desire to participate in the life and worship of the congregation shall be visited by the Pastor(s) and the congregation's officers and encouraged by them to active membership. If, during the third year, the confirmed member does not actively participate, his/her name shall be removed from the membership roster of the congregation but be retained on a responsibility list as one who is in special need of the congregation's prayer and 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 regularly 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 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. a. Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 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 ELCA churchwide organization and of the Northern Great Lakes Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

C9.04. The specific duties of the pastor, compensation, and other matters pertaining to the service of the pastor shall be included in the 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 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 in grounds of doctrine, morality, or continued neglect of duty, or
6. the dissolution of the congregation.

b. In the case of alleged physical or mental incapacity of the pastor or ineffective conduct of the pastoral office, it shall be the responsibility of the bishop of the synod, when such difficulties are personally known or 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, to 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 the 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. 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 and voting at a legally called meeting after consultation with the bishop.

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

as disciplinary matters.

- f. If in the course of the proceedings, 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.

C9.10. The pastor(s) shall be an advisory member(s) of all committees.

C9.11. 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 call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of C9.05.a.

C9.12. 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;
- 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.

- C9.13. The pastor(s) shall submit a report of his or her ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.
- C9.20. Ecumenical pastoral ministry.
- C9.21. Under special circumstances, subject to the approval of the synodical bishop and the concurrence of this congregation, an ordained minister of a church body with which the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America officially has established a relationship of full communion may serve temporarily under contract as pastor of this congregation.

## Chapter 10. CONGREGATION MEETING

- C10.01 The annual meeting of this congregation shall be held at a time specified in the bylaws.
  - C10.01.01. The Annual Meeting shall be held in the month of January or as late as the first Sunday in February. The date and time of the Annual Meeting shall be determined by the Congregation Council.
- 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 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. Twenty-five voting members shall constitute a quorum.
- C10.05. Voting by proxy or by absentee ballot 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. Real property shall not be purchased, disposed of, or encumbered in any manner except by resolution adopted by not less than a two-thirds majority vote of the members present and voting at a legally called meeting of the congregation.
- C10.08. 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, Treasurer, and Financial Secretary.
- a. Duties of the officers shall be specified in the bylaws.
  - b. The officers shall be voting members of the congregation.
  - c. The President, Vice-President, and Secretary shall be elected from the Congregation Council.
  - d. The Treasurer and Financial Secretary shall be elected by the Congregation Council.
- C11.01.01. The President shall:
- a. preside at meetings of the Congregation Council and of the congregation.
  - b. be an advisory member of all committees.
  - c. be one of the legal officers of the congregation for the signing of documents.
  - d. make an annual report to the congregation.
- C11.01.02. The Vice-President shall assume any of the obligations of the office of President when the President is unable to fulfill any of the obligations of the office.
- C11.01.03. The Secretary shall:
- a. keep the minutes of the Congregation Council and congregation meeting.
  - b. maintain and preserve records, reports, and minutes of the Congregation Council and congregation meetings.
  - c. be one of the legal officers of the congregation for the signing of documents.
  - d. present the current list of voting members for all congregation meetings.
  - e. assume the obligations of the office of President when the President and Vice-President are unable to do so.
  - f. act as Corresponding Secretary for the Congregation Council.
- C11.01.04. The Treasurer shall:
1. Weekly:
    - a. Be available to count the offerings following the second service on Sunday or on Monday evenings with at least one council member, and separate sums into those categories as designated.
    - b. Deposit Sunday offerings immediately after the count has concluded (or as soon as possible).
    - c. Count and tally all monetary offerings made on each Sunday, from whatever source and separate sums into those categories as designated.
    - d. Balance money count to Financial Secretary's envelope count.
    - e. Prepare deposit tickets for each account as designated.

- f. Treasurer may designate a church officer to make necessary deposits in his or her absence.
2. Monthly:
    - a. Attend the monthly Stewardship Committee meeting.
    - b. Review Treasurer's Report from the preceding month with the Stewardship Committee and Financial Secretary.
    - c. Present a Treasurer's Report to the Congregation Council at the monthly council meeting on the second Monday of each month.
    - d. As authorized by Council, the Treasurer may arrange contractually for payroll services.
    - e. Write checks as directed by the Stewardship Committee.
    - f. Coordinate with Certified Public Accountant (if any) regarding the preparation of payroll checks and taxes. Deliver these checks as needed.
  3. Annually:
    - a. Meet with the auditor for year end audit and deliver necessary reports.
    - b. Present the Treasurer's Annual Report at the Annual Meeting.

C11.01.05. The Financial Secretary shall:

1. Weekly:
  - a. Be available to count the offerings following the second service on Sunday or on Monday evenings with at least one council member.
  - b. Prepare adding machine tape total of all envelopes received for each type of offering including General offerings, all Capital Improvement offerings, Radio Fund, Memorial and Bequest offerings, and Youth Development/Sunday School offerings.
  - c. Compare adding machine tape total of all offerings received to the Treasurer's money count.
  - d. Arrange all envelopes in numerical order.
  - e. Deposit Sunday offerings immediately after the count has concluded if possible.
  - f. Prepare deposit tickets for each account as designated.
  - g. Assist in the counting and tallying of all monetary offerings made on each Sunday, from whatever source, and separate sums into those categories as designated.
  - h. Post the offerings to the individual member's giving record on a weekly basis.
  - i. Update the software weekly to reflect deposits, checks written and invoices received.
2. Monthly:
  - a. Prepare monthly Stewardship Reports (Financial Secretary Report, Treasurer's Report, and Monthly Financial Spreadsheet) for Stewardship Committee Meeting.
  - b. Attend the monthly Stewardship Committee meeting and review with the committee financial reports from the preceding month.
  - c. Review and approve the Financial Report with the Stewardship

Committee and Treasurer for presentation to the Congregation Council at the next scheduled council meeting.

- d. Write and send thank you notes to non-members for gifts made to the church.
  - e. Provide a list of memorials made in memory of a loved one to family members following funerals.
  - f. Prepare a list of memorials or gifts made to the congregation for the "Tidings" each month.
  - g. Reconcile Ishpeming Community Federal Credit Union (or other lending institution) monthly statements with the church's accounts.
3. Annually:
- a. Review end of year membership status list with Pastor as prepared by Parish Secretary.
  - b. Prepare all Financial Reports for the Annual Report.
  - c. Present the Financial Secretary's Annual Report at the Annual Meeting.
  - d. Prepare a Budget-To-Date Report for the Stewardship Committee and Church Council for the succeeding church year.
  - e. Assign and distribute envelopes annually to members and as needed to  
new members.
  - f. Assist with special offering envelopes as needed.
  - g. Prepare an annual membership status list.
  - h. Prepare the envelope order for the succeeding church year.
  - i. Distribute annual statements.
  - j. Prepare and distribute the envelopes for the succeeding year.
  - k. Key in new envelope numbers for the succeeding church year on the computer.

C11.02. The Congregation Council shall elect its officers and they shall be the officers of the congregation. The officers shall be elected by written ballot and shall serve for one year or until their successors are elected. Their terms shall begin at the close of the meeting at which they are elected.

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 eleven (11) members of the congregation of which at least one member shall be under the age of nineteen years when elected. 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 four successive regular meetings of the Congregation Council without cause. Consistent with the laws of the state in which the congregation is incorporated, the congregation may adopt procedures for the removal of a member of the Congregation Council in other circumstances.

C12.02. The members of the Congregation Council except the pastor(s) shall be

elected by written ballot to serve for three years or until their successors are elected. Such members shall be eligible to serve no more than two full terms consecutively. Their terms shall begin at the close of the annual meeting at which they are elected.

- C12.03. Should a member's place on the Congregation Council be declared vacant, the Congregation Council shall elect, by majority vote, a successor until the next annual meeting.
- C12.04. The 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 in 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, appointment, or employment.
  - e. To be examples individually and corporately of the style of life and ministry expected of all baptized persons.
  - f. To promote a congregational climate of peace and goodwill and, as differences and conflicts arise, to endeavor to foster mutual understanding.
  - g. To arrange for pastoral service during the sickness or absence of the pastor.
  - h. To emphasize partnership with the synod and churchwide organization 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.
- C12.04.01. The Congregation Council shall appoint the Superintendent of the Sunday

Church School upon nomination by the Parish Education Committee.

- C12.04.02. The Congregation Council shall have the authority to choose delegates to any group or meeting in which the Congregation is entitled to representation.
- C12.04.03. The Congregation Council shall elect council members to the following six committees: Parish Education, Evangelism and Social Concerns, Property and Maintenance, Stewardship, Worship and Music, and Youth. The Congregation Council shall supervise these committees.
- C12.05. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the financial and property matters of this congregation.
- a. 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 State of Michigan, 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 regularly called meeting of the Congregation.
  - c. The Congregation Council may enter into contracts of up to \$1,000 for items not included in the budget.
  - d. The Congregation Council shall prepare an annual budget for adoption by this congregation, shall supervise the expenditure of funds in accordance therewith following its adoption, and may incur obligations more than 5% in excess of the anticipated receipts only after approval by a Congregation Meeting. The budget shall include this congregation's full indicated share in support of the wider ministry being carried on in partnership with the synod and churchwide organization.
  - 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.
- C12.05.01. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the buildings and premises of the congregation so that their use is normally limited to the functions of the congregation. Should groups or individuals not associated with the congregation desire to use such property, application shall be made to the Congregation Council for its approval.
- C12.06. The Congregation Council shall see that the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws and the continuing resolutions 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.
- C12.09. The Congregation Council shall submit a comprehensive report to this congregation at the annual meeting.
- C12.10. The Congregation Council shall normally meet once a month. Special meetings may be called by the pastor(s) or the president, and shall be called at the request of at least one-half of its members. Notice of special meetings shall be given to all who are entitled to be present.
- C12.11. A quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of a majority of the members of the Congregation Council, including the pastor(s) or interim pastor(s).
- C12.12. 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 the pastor or interim pastor requests or consents to be absent and has given prior approval to the agenda for a particular regular or special meeting, which shall be the only business considered at that meeting. Chronic or repeated absence of the pastor or interim pastor who has refused approval of the agenda of a subsequent regular or special meeting shall not preclude action by the Congregation Council, following consultation with the synodical bishop.

### Chapter 13. CONGREGATION COMMITTEES

- C13.01. The officers of this congregation and the pastor(s) shall constitute the Executive Committee.
- C.13.02. A Nominating Committee of three voting members of this congregation shall be elected at the Annual Meeting for a term of one year. Members shall be eligible for re-election.
  - C13.02.01. It shall be the duty of the Nominating Committee, to annually present nominees for the elective positions to be filled within the structure of the congregation. Such nominees will be presented by the committee and voted upon by the congregation at its annual meeting. The Nominating Committee will meet upon the request of the Pastor(s). The Nominating Committee shall nominate one or more candidates for each office to be filled and shall secure the consent of each candidate. In addition to the candidates submitted by the Nominating Committee, additional nominations may be made from the floor.
- C13.03. An Audit Committee of more than one voting member shall be elected by the Congregation Council. Audit Committee members shall not be members of the

Congregation Council. Terms of office will be one year. Members shall be eligible for re-election.

- C13.03.01. The Audit Committee shall review the financial records of the congregation and shall report at the Annual Meeting.
- C13.03.02. Council may employ a Certified Public Accountant to perform an audit of the church records annually.
- C13.04. A Staff Support Committee of three to five voting members shall be appointed by the Congregation Council. Terms of office shall be two years. Members shall be eligible for reappointment.
  - C13.04.01. The Staff Support Committee shall serve as a communications link between employees of the congregation and the congregation. It shall maintain current job descriptions, evaluate individual performances, interview each employee on an annual basis, and make salary recommendations to the Congregation Council.
- C13.05. When a pastoral vacancy occurs, a Call Committee of seven voting members shall be elected at a special Congregation Meeting called for that purpose. Term of office will terminate at installation of the newly called pastor(s).
- C13.06. A Memorial and Bequest Committee of five voting members of this congregation shall be elected at the Annual Meeting for a term of one year. At least one but not more than two members of the Congregation Council shall serve on this committee.
  - C13.06.01. The Memorial and Bequest Committee shall:
    - a. elect from its own membership a chair.
    - b. conduct regular meetings, not less than once each quarter.
    - c. shall report to the Congregation Council each quarter, and to the congregation at the Annual Meeting.
    - d. make recommendations toward more meaningful and vital contributions to the Memorial and Bequest Fund from the congregation.
    - e. work with the church Treasurer and Financial Secretary on recognizing all Memorial and Bequest gifts given to the congregation.
    - f. make recommendation to the Congregation Council for the use of Memorial and Bequest funds for the stimulation and furthering of the mission of the congregation above and beyond the normal General Fund Operational Budget. Examples: Continuing education of pastor and people; special furnishings for the building; mission work at home and worldwide; special speakers; camp scholarships, etc.
    - g. bring to a regularly called congregation meeting any request to use Memorial and Bequest Funds for other congregational purposes.
    - h. make recommendations to the Congregation Council to accept or reject designated memorial gifts or bequests.
    - i. administer a Scholarship Fund for members of the congregation who are full-time students at a Lutheran college, university, or seminary. Each

student will receive a grant of up to \$1,000 per year, renewable for up to four years from Memorial and Bequest money. The total expenditure for scholarship(s) per calendar year will not exceed \$3,000. The Memorial and Bequest Committee will develop suitable guidelines for this scholarship program.

C13.07. Other congregation committees may be formed as the need arises, by decision of the Congregation Council.

C13.08. Duties of congregation committees shall be specified in the bylaws.

C13.08.01. There shall be at least one Congregation Council member on each of the committees listed in C12.04.03. All committees described in C13.08.02. - C13.08.07 shall have the following responsibilities:

- a. conduct regular meetings and annually elect a chair.
- b. report to the congregation Council and to the Annual Meeting.
- c. serve as congregation's link to the conference, synod, and churchwide committees.

C13.08.02. There shall be a Parish Education Committee which shall have the responsibilities to:

- a. develop an effective teaching ministry which includes the training of teachers and leaders, and provide opportunity for study by every member of the congregation through its teaching agencies.
- b. nominate candidates for Sunday School Superintendent to the Congregation Council. The committee shall maintain a current job description for this position.
- c. determine policy for the congregation's teaching ministry, supervise and coordinate all teaching agencies in the congregation.
- d. appoint a librarian to be responsible for maintaining and expanding the library. The committee shall maintain a current job description for this position.

C13.08.03. There shall be an Evangelism and Social Concerns Committee which shall have the responsibilities to:

- a. plan, stimulate, coordinate and supervise the ministry of evangelism and social ministry in this congregation.
- b. seek out the unchurched in the community and the inactive members of this congregation.
- c. stimulate and coordinate volunteer activities in the area of evangelism and social ministry.
- d. minister meaningfully and specifically to all congregational members in the Armed Forces or those away at school.

C13.08.04. There shall be a Property and Maintenance Committee which shall be responsible for the maintenance, repair, improvement and security of all physical properties.

C13.08.05. There shall be a Stewardship Committee which shall:

- a. teach and promote Biblical principals of proportionate giving. This committee shall encourage thankful and regular giving to the Lord's work.
- b. promote a strong stewardship consciousness.
- c. enlist as many people as possible in the work of the church.
- d. allow payment each month of all budgeted expenditures, doing so as each item warrants.
- e. make recommendations for adequate insurance coverage to the Congregation Council.

C13.08.06. There shall be a Worship and Music Committee which shall have the responsibilities to:

- a. seek to interpret and enrich the worship life of the church.
- b. give leadership, counsel, and guidance in all matters pertaining to worship and church music within the congregation.

C13.08.07. There shall be a Youth Committee which shall have responsibility to promote, guide and relate youth to the total parish ministry.

C13.08.08. There shall be a Good Samaritan Committee which shall consist of the pastor(s) and two other members of the congregation elected annually by the congregation council. This committee shall:

- a. conduct meetings at least quarterly and elect a chair and a treasurer.
- b. administer a Good Samaritan Fund for the benevolent needs of members of the congregation and others that this committee shall determine. The committee upon majority vote shall use the money as it determines.
- c. authorize the treasurer of this committee to be responsible for all funds given to the Good Samaritan Fund.
- d. report quarterly to the congregation and to the annual meeting. Such reports will not include names of recipients of the fund.

If the congregation shall require the use of this Good Samaritan Fund for any purpose other than as listed above, a two-thirds vote of the congregation council shall be required to disburse any portion of this fund.

#### Chapter 14. ORGANIZATIONS WITHIN THE CONGREGATION

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

C14.02. Special interest groups, other than those of the official organizations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, may be organized only after

authorization has been given by the Congregation Council.

## Chapter 15. DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS AND ADJUDICATION

- 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. If for any reason, the pastor is unable to administer the admonitions required by a) and b) hereof, the president (if not the pastor) or vice president shall administer such admonitions.
- C15.02. A member charged with the offense shall appear before the Congregation Council after having received a written notice, at least 10 days prior to the meeting, specifying the exact charges that have been made against the member.
- C15.03. Should the allegations be sustained by a two-thirds majority vote 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 majority vote of those voting members present.
- 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 regular or special Congregation Meeting called 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. Amendments to this constitution may be proposed by at least twenty-five 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 its regular or special meeting called for that purpose. The Congregation Council shall notify the members of the proposal with their recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the meeting.

- C17.02. A proposed amendment to this constitution shall:

- a. be approved at a properly called meeting according to this constitution by a majority vote of those present and voting.
- b. be ratified without change at the next annual meeting
- c. have the effective date included in the resolution and noted in the constitution.

- C17.03. 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 Northern Great Lakes Synod.

#### Chapter 18. CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

- C18.01. The Congregation Council may enact continuing resolutions which describe the function of the various committees or organizations of the 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.