

**PROPOSED CHANGES TO CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS  
OUR SAVIOR EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CONGREGATION  
CHURCH CONSTITUTION**

**PREAMBLE**

**June 10, 2019**

**Review Copy**

It is the will of our Lord Jesus Christ that his disciples should preach the gospel to the whole world (Mark 16:16, Matthew 28:18-20, Acts 1:8). That Christ's mission for his Church might be carried out according to his will, he has commanded that Christians unite in worship (Hebrews 10:24-25), practice fellowship with one another (Acts 2:42), witness to all men (Acts 1:8), help each other grow in the Word (Ephesians 4:11-14), serve the needs of all men in Christian love (Ephesians 4:7-16, Mark 10:42-44, John 13:35, Galatians 6:10), administer the Office of the Keys as his Church (John 20:21-23, Matthew 18:15-20), and maintain decency and order (1 Corinthians 14:40) in the Church.

Therefore, we, a congregation of Lutherans of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, do herewith, in the name of the Triune God; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and by subscribing our names hereto, adopt the following CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS.

# **Our Savior Ev. Lutheran Church & School**

## **Constitution**

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### **ARTICLE I Name**

The name of this congregation shall be Our Savior Evangelical Lutheran Church.

### **ARTICLE II Articles of Faith**

This congregation accepts and confesses all the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God, and all the symbolical books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, contained in the Book of Concord of 1580, as a correct presentation and true exposition of Christian doctrine, drawn from, and in full agreement with the Holy Scriptures; hence, no doctrine shall be taught or tolerated in this congregation which is in any way at variance with the following symbols of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, namely:

1. The Three Ecumenical Creeds - the Apostles', the Nicene, the Athanasian;
2. The Unaltered Augsburg Confession;
3. The Apology of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession;
4. The Smalcald Articles;
5. Luther's Catechisms - the Large and the Small;
6. The Formula of Concord.

And we set forth that according to this norm of doctrine and faith all controversies which may arise in this congregation shall be decided and adjusted.

### **ARTICLE III -Membership**

Only such can be and remain members and enjoy the rights and privileges of membership in this congregation who

1. are baptized;
2. declare (if of proper age) their adherence to all the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments, without qualification, as the only rule and norm of faith and life;
3. are familiar (if of proper age) at least with Luther's Small Catechism, and declare their acceptance of the same;
4. do not live in manifest works of the flesh (Gal. 5:19-21), but lead Christian lives;
5. together with the congregation partake of the Lord's Supper frequently, if of mature age;
6. permit themselves to be fraternally admonished and corrected when they have erred;
7. are free from all ungodly associations, such as lodges (cf. 2 Cor. 6:14-18; Eph. 5:11-12; Matt. 5:34-37), on account of their false doctrines concerning God (John 5:23), the Bible (2 Tim. 3:16), the way of salvation (Rom. 3:28; Eph. 2:8,9), and prayer (John 14:6-13);
8. attend divine services faithfully.

### **ARTICLE IV Contributions**

It shall be the joy of every member to contribute according to ability toward all purposes that the congregation has made its concern, and in general share in all its work (1 Cor. 16:2; Mk. 16:15; 1 Cor. 9:14).

#### **ARTICLE V Christian Education**

It shall be the responsibility of all members to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Eph. 6:4). To this end they shall bring them to Holy Baptism at an early age, give them a Christian training in the home, and to the fullest possible extent use and promote the opportunities for Christian Education which are offered by the congregation.

#### **ARTICLE VI Voting**

Only such male communicant members of the congregation as have attained the age of 18 years shall have the right to vote (1 Cor. 14:34; 1 Tim. 2:12). ~~Male called workers shall not have the right to vote.~~

#### **Article VII Excommunication, Removal, and Dismissal**

Members excommunicated according to Matt. 18:15-20, who exclude themselves by evading Matt. 18:15-20, and who by adherence to false doctrine or by removal sever their connection with the congregation, give up all their rights in the congregation and its property.

Such members as for reasons that are justified by the Word of God ask for their dismissal shall be peaceably dismissed by the congregation. Such dismissed members relinquish all their rights in the congregation and its property.

#### **Article VIII Separation**

If at any time a separation shall occur in this congregation on account of doctrine or for any other cause (which God may graciously prevent), the property of this congregation and all of its benefits shall remain with those members who

1. adhere to this constitution;
2. remain faithful to the confessions of this constitution (Article II);
3. and who remain with the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod so long as it also remains faithful to the aforesaid confessions.

#### **Article IX The Ministry**

The congregation has the exclusive right to call and elect pastoral staff (pastor, staff minister, pulpit assistant, etc.), teachers, and other officers. The pastorate of this congregation shall be conferred only upon such ministers or ministerial candidates as unqualifiedly and publicly profess their acceptance and adherence to Article II of this constitution; and such acceptance and adherence shall be required of them in the call or vocation extended by the congregation.

The teachers called to assist the pastor(s) and pastoral staff in the Christian training of our youth shall be in agreement with the confessional standard of the congregation (Article II) and be qualified for this field of work.

*Note: In case of a vacancy in the position of the pastoral staff or teacher, the congregation shall notify the president of the local district of the Synod for the purpose that the latter may assist in temporarily filling the vacancy and in giving his good counsel in regard to the calling of a new pastoral staff member or teacher.*

#### **Article X Removal From Office**

If a person holding an office in the congregation willfully neglects his or her duty, and upon due admonition does not amend, the church in such case has the right, and eventually the duty, to remove him or her from office and elect another to take his or her place.

Sufficient and urgent cause for removing a member of the pastoral staff or teacher are persistent adherence to false doctrine, scandalous life, willful neglect of duty, or established inability to perform the duties of the office. (1 Tim. 3:3-7; Titus 1:6-9).

#### **Article XI Books**

All hymnals and textbooks for instruction in Christian doctrine used in this church must conform to Article II of this constitution.

#### **Article XII Officers and Church Council**

The congregation shall function in accordance with the law of the State of Wisconsin. (Chapter 187)

The officers of the congregation are the:

- President
- Vice-President
- Recording Secretary
- Treasurer
- Financial Secretary

The duties of the officers are delineated in the Bylaws.

The officers of the congregation shall serve as authorized signers of the corporation.

#### **Article XIII Meetings of the Congregation**

The regular meetings of the congregation shall be held as prescribed in the Bylaws. All voting members are encouraged to attend the same. All communicant members are welcome to attend.

Special meetings of the congregation may be called by the Church Council, by the pastor(s) or by written request of three (3) voting members.

The voting members physically present at a properly announced meeting of the congregation shall constitute a quorum, but a meeting in which a majority of the voting members is not present shall not have the right:

1. to change the constitution;
2. to decide anything regarding the relationship of the congregation to its called workers;
3. to buy new land or to sell property belonging to the congregation.

In case the majority of members is not present **to act on any of the three items listed above**, the meeting shall be adjourned to a later date. If again only a minority is present, it shall have full authority to decide.

In all matters not already decided by the Word of God the majority rules.

No one shall bring before the congregation a complaint against any member nor against its called workers unless he has admonished them in a Christian manner according to Matthew 18:15-20.

Only voting members physically present at the meeting may vote.

#### **Article XIV Meetings of the Church Council**

The regular meetings of the Church Council shall be held as prescribed in the Bylaws. Special meetings of the Council may be called by the pastor(s), by the congregational president, or upon the written request of any two (2) Council members.

The Church Council shall never convene to transact business without the knowledge of the pastor(s).

#### **Article XV Organizations**

If groups of church members unite for the purpose of serving the common welfare of the congregation, such organizations shall report to and remain under the supervision of the pastoral staff and the Church Council. All authority is vested in the local congregation. (1 Cor. 1:10-11; 1 Cor. 12:25).

#### **Article XVI Repeals and Alterations**

~~Articles II, III, IV, VII, VIII, IX, XI, XV, and XVI of this constitution shall be and remain unalterable and irrepealable.~~

Proposals to alter or repeal ~~an alterable or repealable~~ article of this constitution shall be offered in writing and announced at a regular Voters' meeting. This first reading may include discussion and suggested revisions to the proposals, but no voting may take place. At the next regular Voters' meeting, or at a specially called meeting to consider the proposal(s), two-thirds of all the Voting members present shall be necessary to pass the alteration or repeal.

Bylaws not in conflict with the letter or spirit of this constitution may be adopted by a majority vote at any properly constituted Voters' meeting. Such Bylaws also may be amended or repealed by the same procedure.

# Our Savior Ev. Lutheran Church & School BYLAWS

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## ARTICLE I Voters' Meetings

### Section 1

A regular meeting of the congregation's Voters will be held twice annually: April/May (Elections and Budget) and September/October (Annual).

### Section 2

The Church Council shall set the exact date, time, the nature of the business to be transacted, and the place of the meetings, unless otherwise specified by the Voters. Announcements of the meetings shall be given on at least two different Sundays prior to the time of the meeting.

### Section 3

Special meetings of the congregation may be called by the Church Council, by the pastor(s), or by written request of three (3) voting members. Such meetings must be announced according to the general rule set forth in Article 1, Section 2, with the purpose clearly stated.

### Section 4

The order of business for meetings may include the following:

- A. Opening devotion or prayer
- B. Approval of minutes
- C. Pastor's Report (including membership changes and other pastoral business)
- D. Old business
- E. Recommendations of the Church Council and new business
- F. Reports
- G. Elections
- H. Adjournment with prayer

### Section 5

The meetings shall be conducted according to good, Christian order and commonly used parliamentary procedure.

### Section 6

~~The Voters shall maintain the authority to make decisions on recommendations brought from the Church Council.~~ All boards and committees are subject to the authority of the Church Council. The Church Council is subject to the authority of the Voters.

### Section 7

No one shall bring to any meeting a charge or complaint against any member or against its called workers unless he has first admonished them in a Christian manner according to Matthew 18:15-20.

## **ARTICLE II The Church Council**

### **Section 1 Membership**

The Voters shall elect by ballot at its election meeting, specified in the Bylaws, Article I, a Church Council composed of the following: Congregational Officers (President, Vice-President, Recording Secretary, Treasurer, and Financial Secretary) and Chairmen of the following Boards and Committees (Board of Christian Education, Board of Elders, Budget and Finance Committee, Building and Grounds Committee, Outreach Committee, Spiritual Growth Committee, and Stewardship Committee).

### **Section 2 Responsibilities**

2.1 The members of the Church Council shall adorn their high office with an honest way of life and be good examples to the congregation (1 Timothy 3:8-12). They shall aid the pastoral staff in the spiritual affairs of the church. They shall be accountable for good order in the services. They shall particularly care in love for their fellow members who have special needs (Galatians 6:9-10). The members of the Church Council shall consult together concerning the total spiritual and physical well-being of the congregation giving due attention also to the work of the Lord in the church-at-large. The Church Council shall implement resolutions of the Voters and carry out such assignments as are directed to them by the Voters. It shall recommend to the Voters the annual Ministry Plan (budget) of the congregation.

2.2 The Church Council shall control the corporate property of the congregation according to the direction given to it by the Voters. The Church Council is hereby empowered to borrow money, pledge the assets of the congregation, sell, lease, or otherwise dispose of the real and personal property of the congregation all at the direction of the Voters. It shall also have the right to acquire property by purchase, trade, gift or device as directed by the Voters.

~~2.3 The Church Council shall maintain the authority to make decisions on recommendations brought from boards and committees represented on the Church Council.~~

### **Section 3 Term of Office**

3.1 The term of office for each elected member of the Church Council shall be three (3) years. ~~All Council members, except for the Congregational Treasurer, shall be elected to no more than two consecutive full terms. The Congregational Treasurer, following two consecutive terms, will be eligible to be elected to an unlimited number of one-year terms as is mutually agreeable to the Treasurer, the Nominating Committee and the Church Council. Each of the other elected members of the Church Council~~ ~~He~~ shall again be eligible for election to the Church Council one year after the expiration of his second consecutive term of office.

3.2 The term of one third of the members, if possible, shall expire each year. Such expired positions are to be filled by election at the election meeting of the Voters.

### **Section 4 Installation**

Soon after the election, the new members of the Church Council and boards and committees shall be installed to their offices at a regular worship service of the congregation.

### **Section 5 Meetings**

The Church Council shall strive to meet regularly once each month. Special meetings may be called by the pastor(s), by the congregational president, or upon the written request of any two (2) Council members. The Church Council shall not convene to transact business without the knowledge of the pastor(s).

### **Section 6 Vacancies**

In the event of a vacancy on the Church Council or a vacancy on the Board of Christian Education or Board of Elders, the vacancy shall be filled by appointment of the president, subject to the approval of the Church Council. (Note: The time spent by an individual who is filling a vacancy by appointment of the president shall not count toward the elected terms of the office as described in Article III, Section 3.1. Example: A person could fill a vacancy for two years and still be elected to two consecutive full terms.)

## **ARTICLE III Officers of the Congregation**

### **Section 1 President**

The President of the congregation is the "Executive Director" of the program of the congregation. As such he is responsible to help coordinate the work of all elected and appointed officers, boards and committees of the congregation and see to it that they are functioning and carrying out their individual responsibilities according to the Bylaws.

- A. The President shall preside at all meetings of the Church Council and Voters and have the deciding vote in the case of a vote that ends in a tie.
- B. He shall see to it that the decisions of the meetings of the Church Council and Voters are executed.
- C. He shall prepare the agenda for Council meetings, and after consideration of items by the Council, shall prepare the agenda for Voters meetings.
- D. He shall serve as a member of the Board of Elders.
- E. He shall be an ex-officio member of all boards and committees and shall attend personally whenever necessary or advisable.
- F. He shall seek to meet monthly with the pastor(s) to analyze past progress and plan future efforts and emphasis needed in the total church program.
- G. He shall encourage officers and chairmen of boards and committees to offer concise reports and well-worded recommendations to the Church Council.
- H. As directed by congregational Bylaws, the President, assisted by the pastoral staff and the chairmen of the affected boards and committees, shall by appointment fill vacancies to the Church Council, the Board of Education and the Board of Elders on the basis of members' talents, interest and willingness, subject to the approval of the Church Council.
- I. He shall, at the end of each fiscal year, appoint an Auditing Committee to audit the financial books of the congregation (church and school treasurers).
- J. He shall seek opportunities to commend "leadership shown" and "job well done" by members of the congregation.
- K. He shall conduct meetings in accordance with good "rules of order" and strive to avoid unnecessarily long meetings.
- L. He shall have the right to delegate duties and jobs.
- M. He shall yearly appoint a nominating committee.
- N. He shall serve as an authorized signer of checks.
- O. He shall serve as an authorized signer of the legal corporation.

### **Section 2 Vice-President**

The Vice-President shall serve as a voting member of the Church Council.



- A. The Vice-President shall work with and assist the President in the orderly running of the congregation.
- B. He shall assume the duties of the President when necessary.
- C. He shall serve as a member of the Board of Elders.
- D. He shall serve as Head Usher.
- E. He shall assume all duties that may be designated to him by the President and/or the Board of Elders.
- F. He shall serve as an authorized signer of checks.
- G. He shall serve as an authorized signer of the legal corporation.

### **Section 3 Recording Secretary**

The Recording Secretary shall serve as a voting member of the Church Council.

- A. The Recording Secretary shall faithfully record in permanent records all minutes of the Board of Elders, Church Council and Voters.
- B. He shall be responsible for presenting the records of all minutes of the Board of Elders, Church Council and Voters, for approval by such groups.
- C. He shall submit recommendations of the Church Council to the Voters.
- D. He shall keep an attendance record for meetings of the Board of Elders, Church Council and Voters.
- E. He shall supply committees with information as recorded in church minutes when so requested.
- F. He shall serve as an authorized signer of checks.
- G. He shall serve as an authorized signer of the legal corporation.

### **Section 4 Treasurer**

The Treasurer shall serve as a voting member of the Church Council.

- A. The Treasurer shall be responsible for accurate recording of congregational disbursements and expenditures.
- B. He shall be responsible for making all financial disbursements.
- C. He shall keep a complete set of books.
- D. He shall present reports and a written financial statement at regular Church Council and regular Voters' meetings.
- E. He shall submit financial records for requested audits.
- F. He shall coordinate the flow of money from the Treasury to ensure that an adequate balance is kept for salaries and other expenses.
- G. He shall receive from the Financial Secretary a report of all moneys received, deposited and recorded.
- H. He shall have available for all boards and committees a current record of their accrued disbursements and budgeted allotment.
- ~~I. He shall serve as a member of the Budget and Finance Committee.~~
- J. He shall be authorized to spend, with Church Council approval, necessary payments for items included in the Ministry Plan (budget) and the designated funds, without having to go to the Voters for approval.
- K. He shall be authorized to spend, with Church Council approval, an amount up to 5% of the annual Ministry Plan (budget) for items that are not included in the adopted Ministry Plan (budget), without having to go to the Voters for approval. **Such spending would be limited to those items that become immediately necessary as a result of an unplanned or emergency situation and it is determined by the Church Council that it would not be advisable to delay such action until a special Voters' meeting could be called and conducted.**
- L. He shall serve as an authorized signer of checks.
- M. He shall serve as an authorized signer of the legal corporation.
- N. He shall be bonded.

## **Section 5 Financial Secretary**

The Financial Secretary shall serve as a voting member of the Church Council.

- A. The Financial Secretary shall be responsible for the organized collection, accurate counting, recording, depositing and reporting of receipts (monies and/or material donations, including by electronic means) received for the congregation.
- B. He shall confidentially record member commitments.
- C. He shall issue statements to members, showing their offerings and commitments to date.
- D. The Treasurer, the Budget and Finance Committee Chairman, the President and the pastor(s) shall receive batch deposit fund reports.
- E. He shall be responsible for requisitioning and distribution of offering envelopes.
- F. He shall give summary reports to the Voters and Church Council.
- G. He shall develop, maintain and oversee teams of two or more counters to assist with counting of regular offerings done on campus.
- H. The President may appoint an Assistant Financial Secretary, approved by the Church Council, to assist the Financial Secretary in any of the following areas:
  - Accurate counting, recording, reporting and depositing of weekly offerings.
  - Assisting members with making electronic offerings.
  - Issuing offering statements.
  - Coordinating weekly counting teams.
- ~~I. He shall serve as a member of the Budget and Finance Committee.~~
- J. He shall serve as an authorized signer of the legal corporation.
- K. He (and the Assistant Financial Secretary) shall be bonded.

## **ARTICLE IV Boards of the Congregation**

### **Section 1 Board of Christian Education**

#### **1.1 Purpose**

The basic objective of the Board of Christian Education is to oversee the congregation's program of Christian education as being carried out by our Christian school. This congregation intends to maintain a Christian Day School to provide for the Christian training of the souls the Lord places in our care. The Board of Christian Education will consist of five (5) members including the Chairman, who will also serve as a voting member on the Church Council. The pastoral staff may and the principal of the Christian Day School shall meet with the Board of Christian Education as advisory members. The pastor by virtue of his office is the superintendent of the Christian Day School. When it is mutually agreeable between our congregation and another congregation in our fellowship, a representative from that congregation will serve as a non-voting advisory member of the Board.

#### **1.2 Responsibilities**

- A. The Board of Christian Education together with the pastoral staff shall have charge of the training in Christian doctrine and life, and shall, subject to the powers of the Church Council, administer, control, and manage the affairs of the Christian Day School.
- B. They shall work in close harmony with the principal and pastoral staff.
- C. They shall assist the teachers in their work and assume shared responsibility, along with the teaching staff, for the teaching program of the school.
- D. They shall support the principal's work of curriculum selection.
- E. They shall encourage ongoing curriculum study on the part of the faculty.

- F. They shall respond to concerns of parents about the school in accordance with the policies set forth in the school handbook.
- G. They shall oversee the school finances.
- H. They shall oversee the congregation's pre-kindergarten program.
- I. They shall establish the school and pre-kindergarten tuition rates and all other fees.
- J. They shall establish and enforce rules and policies for the school (dress, discipline, etc.).
- K. They shall admit and dismiss students in accordance with the policies established by the Board and as stated in the school handbook.
- L. They shall assist in the planning for future growth of the school in order to reach out to others with the saving message of the gospel.
- M. They shall maintain a plan to visit classrooms.
- N. They shall maintain a plan to meet with teachers and paid staff members.
- O. They shall upon vacancy and/or need of a teaching position, work with the principal and members of the pastoral staff to request names from the District President and appropriate synod officials and present recommendations to the Voters, which has the sole authority to call members of the pastoral staff and Christian school teachers in our congregation.
- P. They shall assist the principal in determining classroom divisions and grade placement for teachers.
- Q. They shall review, update and revise as necessary the school handbook.
- R. They shall work with the Building and Grounds Committee regarding necessary school maintenance, repair and improvement.
- S. They shall recommend to the Church Council expenditures for non-budgeted items not normally covered in school fees.
- T. They shall act on recommendation of the principal and teacher that would retain or double promote a child.
- U. They shall foster effective relationships between parents and teachers.
- V. They shall at all times, by word and action, show concern for spiritual, emotional and physical health and well-being of the Christian school staff and their families.
- W. They shall provide for professional growth of the educational staff through conferences, conventions, workshops, continuing education and the like, and request the necessary funds for the same in the yearly school or congregational Ministry Plan (budget).
- X. They shall approve the school calendar.
- Y. They shall support the work of the Budget and Finance Committee in establishing the annual salaries and benefits of teachers and other paid school workers. The chairman of the Board of Education shall serve as an advisory member of the Budget and Finance Committee.
- Z. They shall look for ways to connect members to volunteer service opportunities.
- AA. They shall be responsible for reports to the Church Council and Voters. In addition, the principal shall ~~report~~ give reports to the Church Council.
- BB. They shall submit yearly itemized budget requests.

### 1.3 Elections

- A. Members of the Board of Christian Education shall be elected for a three-year term.
- B. No member shall be elected to more than two consecutive full terms. He shall again be eligible for election one year after the expiration of his second consecutive term of office.
- C. The terms of approximately one third of the members, if possible, shall expire each year. Such expired positions are to be filled at the election meeting of the Voters.
- D. In the event of a vacancy on the Board of Christian Education, the vacancy shall be filled by appointment of the President, **assisted by the pastoral staff and the chairman of the Board, and** subject to the approval of the Church Council. (Note: The time spent by an individual who is filling a vacancy by appointment of the President shall not count toward the elected terms of the office as described in Article III, Section 3.1. Example: A person could fill a vacancy for two years and still be elected to two consecutive full terms.)
- E. The Nominating Committee shall be responsible for gathering names for annual elections through its

annual Nominating Committee work.

## **Section 2 Board of Elders**

### **2.1 Purpose**

The basic objective of the Board of Elders is the spiritual welfare of the called workers and congregational members. The Board of Elders will consist of seven (7) members. Four (4) men shall be elected, with one elected as Chairman. The Chairman will also serve as a voting member of the Church Council. The other three (3) members shall be the President, Vice-President and Recording Secretary of the congregation. The nature of the duties of the Board of Elders requires that only men noted for their Christian knowledge, zeal and experience in the spiritual work of the Kingdom of Christ shall be elected to membership.

### **2.2 Responsibilities**

That the objectives of this Board may be carried out, the Board, either corporately or through specifically designated individuals, shall adhere to the following responsibilities:

#### **2.3 Responsibilities regarding pastor(s) and all called workers**

- A. They shall see that the Word of God is preached in truth and purity, the holy sacraments are administered in accordance with Christ's command, and Lutheran doctrine and Lutheran practices are preserved in the congregation.
- B. They shall, together with the pastoral staff, be concerned with all matters pertaining to the spiritual welfare of the congregation.
- C. They shall, individually and collectively, by word and action, encourage the pastoral staff in their work.
- D. They shall regularly pray for their pastor(s), teachers and other spiritual leaders.
- E. They shall assist the pastor(s) in counseling difficult cases and in finding peaceful and God-pleasing solutions to personal problems within the congregation.
- F. They shall be concerned about the spiritual, emotional and physical health and welfare of all called workers and their families (and all called workers and their families) and regularly assist the Budget and Finance Committee's review of the salaries, housing and benefits, vacation time and continuing educational opportunities.
- G. The Chairman shall serve as an advisory member of the Budget and Finance Committee.

#### **2.4 Responsibilities regarding congregation members**

- A. They shall oversee the doctrine and practice of all organizations within the congregation so that they function in harmony with the Word of God and the Lutheran Confessions, and in brotherly love, with the Southeastern Wisconsin District and the Wisconsin Synod.
- B. They shall concern themselves with attendance and non-attendance at the public worship of God on the part of all members.
- C. They shall keep themselves informed and concerned about the use of the Sacraments by members of the congregation.
- D. They shall, individually and collectively, seek to speak a word of commendation and encouragement to members giving evidence of Christian faithfulness, consecration and growth.
- E. They shall, individually and collectively, use special events and moments in the lives of members as opportunities to be concerned for fellow members of the body of Christ by speaking a word of Christian joy or hope or comfort as we find it in God's Word and the Christian faith.

- F. They shall determine eligibility for membership of all individuals and families applying for membership in this congregation and consider requests for leaving the membership of this congregation.
- G. They shall see to the prompt transfer of all members who move away and of new families moving into the community.
- H. They shall be concerned, together with the pastoral staff, about adequate and thorough instruction of adults and youth for confirmation and church membership.
- I. They shall audit annually all congregational spiritual statistics maintained by the pastor(s).
- J. They shall assist in the friendly personal welcome of visitors at worship and for the orientation and integration of new members.
- K. They shall assist in the care of congregation members with special needs.
- L. They shall look for ways to connect members to volunteer service opportunities.

#### 2.5 Responsibilities regarding Church Discipline

- A. They shall study and fully understand the purpose and importance of church discipline in a Christian congregation.
- B. They shall consider complaints and grievances of members of the congregation only after Matthew 18:15-16 has been observed.
- C. They shall carry out church discipline diligently, carefully and prayerfully in accordance with the Word of God.
- D. They shall keep adequate records on file listing all stages of each discipline case.

#### 2.6 Responsibilities regarding Worship Services

- A. They shall review, under pastoral leadership, the nature, purpose and conduct of God-pleasing worship.
- B. They shall analyze, at least once a year, the regular and specific worship services of the congregation. Are our worship services - the music, hymns, liturgy, offering, Baptism, Holy Communion, sermon, etc. - meaningful to our people as well as to non-Lutherans? Is the time for our regular and special services most conducive to good attendance? Are the number of services adequate? Etc.
- C. They shall be responsible for seeing that all services are conducted decently and in order.
- D. They shall review periodically the administration of Baptism and Holy Communion, the rite of Confirmation in public services, and high festivals (Christmas, Easter, Pentecost) services of the church year and other special services (Advent, Lent, Thanksgiving, New Year's Eve, Ascension, etc.).
- E. They shall assist the Head Usher (Vice-President) with staffing, training and supervising the ushering staff.
- F. They shall supervise the organists of the congregation.
- G. They shall provide for vicars, assistants, substitute pastors and guest speakers as needed.
- H. They shall supervise the Altar Guild in the care, use and maintenance of the sacred vessels, the altar and altar furnishings.
- I. They shall recommend and annually review compensation for organists, office staff and other non-called paid positions.

#### 2.7 Miscellaneous Responsibilities

- A. They shall serve as the "Pulpit Committee" of the congregation when a vacancy occurs in the pastoral staff. (Leadership in securing a vacancy pastor, in obtaining a list of candidates, in observing God-pleasing protocol by the congregation when calling a pastor, etc.).
- B. They shall be responsible for seeing that the congregation maintains a proper relationship with our District and the Synod and supports the work adequately, such as providing delegates to conferences and Synod Conventions.

- C. They shall review congregational growth, recommending pastoral assistance when necessary (i.e. senior vicar, full-time vicar, associate pastor, etc.).
- D. They shall be present for periodic training as determined by the pastoral staff and this Board.
- E. They shall be examples of Christian conduct and life for the congregational members by regularly hearing the Word of God and receiving the Lord's Supper, and by active participation in Bible study courses offered at church.
- F. They shall prepare and submit an annual itemized budget.

## 2.8 Elections

- A. The four members of the Board of Elders shall be elected for a three-year term.
- B. No member shall be elected to more than two consecutive full terms. He shall again be eligible for election one year after the expiration of his second consecutive term of office.
- C. The terms of the members, as possible, shall expire on different years. Such expired positions are to be filled at the election meeting of the Voters.
- D. In the event of a vacancy on the Board of Elders, the vacancy shall be filled by appointment of the President, **assisted by the pastoral staff and the chairman of the Board, and** subject to the approval of the Church Council. (Note: The time spent by an individual who is filling a vacancy by appointment of the President shall not count toward the elected terms of the office as described in Article III, Section 3.1. Example: A person could fill a vacancy for two years and still be elected to two consecutive full terms.)
- E. The Nominating Committee shall be responsible for gathering names for annual elections through its annual Nominating Committee work.

## **ARTICLE V Committees of the Congregation Represented on the Church Council**

### **Elections and Appointments**

The following procedures apply to Article VI, Sections 1-5 (Budget and Finance, Building and Grounds, Outreach, Spiritual Growth and Stewardship Committees)

- A. The Chairman of the Committee shall be elected for a three-year term. The Nominating Committee shall be responsible for gathering names for annual elections through its annual Nominating Committee work.
- B. The Chairman shall not be elected to more than two consecutive full terms. He shall again be eligible for election one year after the expiration of his second consecutive term of office.
- C. In the event of a Chairman vacancy on ~~the a~~ Committee, the vacancy shall be filled by appointment of the President, **assisted by the pastoral staff, and** subject to the approval of the Church Council. (Note: The time spent by an individual who is filling a vacancy by appointment of the President shall not count toward the elected terms of the office as described in Article III, Section 3.1. Example: A person could fill a vacancy for two years and still be elected to two consecutive full terms.)
- ~~D. The president shall appoint, subject to the approval of the Church Council, up to two additional members to two year terms to the Budget and Finance Committee, and up to four additional members to the Building and Grounds, Outreach, Spiritual Growth and Stewardship Committees. There is no limit to the number of terms a person can serve. The Nominating Committee shall assist in gathering names for such appointments through its annual Nominating Committee work.~~  
**The Nominating Committee shall be responsible for providing names for appointment of non-chairman committee members through its annual Nominating Committee process. Subject to the approval of the Church Council, the President shall appoint the appropriate number of members to satisfy the requirements as stated in the Bylaws. Committee members shall serve two-year terms. There is no limit to the number of terms to which a person may be appointed.**
- E. In the event of an appointment vacancy, the vacancy shall be filled by the President, **assisted by the pastoral staff and chairman of the Committee, and** subject to the approval of the Church Council.

## **Section 1 Budget and Finance Committee**

### **1.1 Purpose**

The basic objective of the Budget and Finance Committee is to evaluate and make recommendations on all budget and financial issues as deemed necessary. This committee will consist of a minimum of three (3) members including the elected Chairman, who will also serve as a voting member on the Church Council. ~~The Congregational Treasurer and the Congregational Financial Secretary shall serve as members of the Budget and Finance Committee. Up to two (2) other voting members may be appointed.~~

### **2.2 Responsibilities**

- A. The Budget and Finance Committee shall analyze, prepare, and recommend annual budget submission for presentation to the Church Council and Voters.
- B. They shall evaluate compensation and benefits of called workers and present recommendations for change to the Church Council and then to the Voters for approval.
- C. They shall annually provide a salary and benefits summary to all called workers and paid staff.
- D. They shall review any major capital purchases or financial transactions that are not included in the Ministry Plan (budget). Formal recommendations with comparative financial analysis of possible alternatives shall be provided to the Church Council for presentation to Voters.
- E. They shall evaluate all financial procedures and reports, make recommendations for change, and assist in the implementation of approved changes.
- F. They shall assist the Treasurer by establishing banking relationships and evaluating investment opportunities for surplus funds.
- G. They shall assist in establishing loans when required.
- H. They shall manage and establish building loan programs.
- ~~I. They shall serve as the Auditing Committee to annually audit financial books of the congregation (church and school treasurers).~~
- J. They shall look for ways to connect members to volunteer service opportunities.
- K. The Chairman shall serve as an authorized signer of checks.

## **Section 2 Building and Grounds Committee**

### **2.1 Purpose**

The basic objective of the Building and Grounds Committee is the proper maintenance and repair of congregational properties so that these properties honor and glorify our Lord. The Building and Grounds Committee will consist of a minimum of four (4) members including the elected Chairman who will also serve as a voting member on the Church Council.

### **2.2 Responsibilities**

- A. The Building and Grounds Committee will regularly inspect congregational property and equipment.
- B. They shall carry out all resolutions of the Voters on purchases, repairs, and replacement of congregational property.
- C. They shall determine and engage, with congregational approval, adequate custodial help. The Committee shall also meet periodically with the custodian(s) to discuss the care of the buildings, needs, and problems in custodial service.
- D. They shall work with the custodial help to maintain required daily, weekly, monthly, and annual maintenance of the facilities and equipment of the congregation.
- E. They shall support the work of the Budget and Finance Committee in reviewing and establishing costs associated with custodial services.
- F. They shall enlist work crews for indoor and outdoor repair, maintenance and improvement projects.

- G. They shall arrange for emergency repairs and all normal repairs and alterations for which budget funds have been allocated.
- H. They shall be responsible for appropriate service contracts. (Examples could include snow plowing, fire protection, etc.)
- I. They shall look for ways to connect members to volunteer service opportunities.
- J. They shall be responsible for reports to the Church Council and Voters.
- K. They shall submit annual itemized budget requests.

### **Section 3 Outreach Committee**

#### **3.1 Purpose**

The basic objective of the Outreach Committee is to train and equip members of the congregation to share the good news of our Savior Jesus. The Outreach Committee will consist of a minimum of four (4) members including the elected Chairman who will also serve as a voting member on the Church Council.

#### **3.2 Responsibilities**

- A. The Outreach Committee shall promote the biblical call to “Go” with the good news of our Savior Jesus.
- B. They will seek to provide programs to invite FRAN’s (Friends, Relatives, Acquaintances and Neighbors) to workshops, studies and worship.
- C. They will encourage greater awareness of the opportunities locally, nationally and internationally for outreach and mission work.
- D. They will provide education opportunities to sharpen skills among members to spread the gospel, to tell the next generation about his love.
- E. They will work with the pastoral staff to manage a prospect list for the BIC (Bible Information Classes), to contact and invite prospects to BIC, and to nurture those who are interested in membership.
- F. They will work to heighten member awareness of opportunities to contact visitors. This could include offering training for the members to do outreach visits and conduct follow up visits and calls on visitors and guests.
- G. They will work with the pastoral staff to maintain a prospect data collection process for accurate and up-to-date identification and follow up.
- H. They will regularly organize Mission Festivals (World and Home Missions).
- I. They will encourage and support the ministry of the LWMS (Lutheran Women’s Missionary Society).
- J. They will organize various community events to connect people with the gospel of Christ.
- K. They will work to increase community awareness through:
  - *Come Strategies* – bring people to us at our event or on our campus;
  - *Go Strategies* – reach out into our community to witness where people are.
- L. They will work with the Board of Christian Education to promote our LES.
- M. They shall look for ways to connect members to volunteer service opportunities.
- N. They shall be responsible for reports to the Church Council and Voters.
- O. They shall submit annual itemized budget requests.

### **Section 4 Spiritual Growth Committee**

#### **4.1 Purpose**

The basic objective of the Spiritual Growth Committee is to encourage congregation members in some form of spiritual growth through the various channels available. The Spiritual Growth Committee will



consist of a minimum of four (4) members including the elected Chairman who will also serve as a voting member on the Church Council.

#### 4.2 Responsibilities

- A. The Spiritual Growth Committee shall be responsible for the Christian nurture of children, youth, and adults in the congregation.
- B. They shall continually review existing spiritual growth agencies to determine whether all age groups are being served.
- C. They shall be concerned for the assimilation of new members into appropriate agencies for spiritual growth.
- D. They shall assist in the recruitment of students for our congregation's education opportunities.
- E. They shall work to strengthen families as the basic unit of Christian education by encouraging families to spend time with God and his Word.
- F. They shall encourage personal spiritual growth by creating awareness of special classes, courses,
- G. conferences, retreats and the like.
- H. They shall look for ways to connect members to volunteer service opportunities.
- I. They shall be responsible for reports to the Church Council and Voters.
- J. They shall submit annual itemized budget requests.

### **Section 5 Stewardship Committee**

#### 5.1 Purpose

The basic objective of the Stewardship Committee is to assist in the development of good stewardship attitudes and practices for the members of the congregation in regard to time, talents, and treasures. The Stewardship Committee will consist of a minimum of four (4) members including the elected Chairman who will also serve as a voting member on the Church Council.

#### 5.2 Responsibilities

- A. The Stewardship Committee shall encourage Biblical stewardship practices among congregational membership.
- B. They shall encourage the use of the means of grace which are available to the membership and encourage the membership's joyful use of its time, talents and treasures.
- C. They shall encourage congregational leaders and groups to use the member service surveys in their efforts to recruit and encourage member volunteer service.
- D. They shall assist in the education and training of members in the Scriptural principles and practices of the use of its time, talents and treasures.
- E. They shall look for ways to connect members to volunteer service opportunities.
- F. They shall be responsible for reports to the Church Council and Voters.
- G. They shall submit annual itemized budget requests.

### **ARTICLE VI Committees of the Congregation Not Represented on the Church Council**

#### **Section 1 Long Range Planning Committee**

##### 1.1 Purpose

The basic objective of the Long Range Planning Committee is to assess past, current and future plans and needs of the congregation, both short and long term, so that we may better carry out Christ's mission for our church and school. The Long Range Planning Committee will consist of the President of the

congregation (and/or his appointed officer of the congregation) plus additional members approved by the Church Council.

#### 1.2 Responsibilities

- A. The committee shall assess and work with ministry plans.
- B. The committee shall assess and work with finance plans.
- C. The Committee shall assess and work with campus and facility plans.
- D. The Committee will normally function within the concept of a multi-year plan.
- E. The Committee shall be responsible for reports to the Church Council and Voters.

#### 1.3 Appointments

- A. The President shall appoint, subject to the approval of the Church Council, an appropriate number of members to two (2) year terms to the LRP Committee. There is no limit to the number of terms a person can serve.
- B. In the event of an appointment vacancy, the vacancy shall be filled by the President, subject to the approval of the Church Council.

### **Section 2 Nominating Committee**

#### 2.1 Purpose

The basic objective of the Nominating Committee is to prepare a slate of candidates to elected and appointed positions as described in Articles 4, 5 and 6 of the Bylaws.

#### 2.2 Responsibilities

- A. The Committee shall provide a slate of candidates to the Church Council prior to the annual Voters election meeting.
- B. The Committee shall provide a slate of candidates to the voters for the annual Voters' election meeting. The Committee's work is complete after the Voters' annual election meeting.
- C. The Committee shall select from the voting membership at least one candidate for each expired term on the Board of Christian Education and on the Board of Elders.
- D. The Committee shall select from the voting membership at least one candidate for each expired term of a congregational officer.
- E. The Committee shall select from the voting membership at least one candidate for each expired term of a Committee chairman as described in Article VI of the Bylaws.
- F. The Committee shall select for appointment from the church communicant membership (18 years or older) at least one candidate for each expired term on the Committees listed in Article VI of the Bylaws (Budget and Finance, Building and Grounds, Outreach, Spiritual Growth, Stewardship)

#### 2.3 Appointments

The President shall annually appoint, subject to the approval of the Church Council, an appropriate number of members to serve on the Nominating Committee. There is no limit to the number of times a person can serve.

### **ARTICLE VII Reception into Membership**

#### **Section 1 By Confirmation**

All children and adults properly instructed and confirmed shall be considered communicant members of this congregation. Such action shall be taken by the Church Council and shall be ratified at a regular meeting of the Voters. Notice of such receptions shall be reported to the congregation.

#### **Section 2 By Transfer**

Persons from a sister congregation in fellowship with us who wish to be received into membership in this congregation shall bring their request to the attention of the pastor(s) and the Church Council. The Council shall honor an official request for transfer from a sister congregation and when qualifications for membership, as specified in Article III of this Constitution, have been met. Such action of the Council shall be ratified at a regular meeting of the Voters.

#### **Section 3 By Profession of Faith**

Persons coming from Lutheran congregations not in fellowship with us may be received as communicant members upon recommendation of the pastor(s) and the Board of Elders if they give evidence that they know and believe according to our Lutheran teachings and practices. Otherwise they and all others must take the adult confirmation course. The Council shall honor their request when qualifications for membership as specified in Article III of this Constitution have been met. Such action of the Council shall be ratified at a regular meeting of the Voters.

#### **Section 4 Membership Encouragement regarding Constitution and Bylaws**

Since reception into membership signifies acceptance of and submission to this Constitution and Bylaws, each family is encouraged to become familiar with its provisions.

### **ARTICLE VIII Removal & Dismissal of Communicant Members**

Members of Our Savior who desire to join some other congregation in fellowship or be released from membership shall present their requests to the pastor(s) or Board of Elders. If any of the details from Article III of the Constitution are in question, the pastor(s) will communicate this with these members and make them aware of their deficit in a notice of concern (email, text or phone call).

#### **Section 1 By Transfer**

Recommendation of transfer shall be issued to those who have attended church faithfully, have partaken of the Lord's Supper regularly, and have led Christian lives as specified in Article III of this Constitution.

Members who desire to join some other Christian congregation in fellowship with us but who are delinquent in church and/or communion attendance (as determined by the Board of Elders, this does not include those under church discipline), shall be granted a transfer. The receiving congregation shall be informed of the situation when the transfer is sent and may make their own decision as to how they shall consider the transferred person.

#### **Section 2 By Release**

Members who desire to join some other Christian congregation not in fellowship with us in doctrine and practice, but who have attended church faithfully, have partaken of the Lord's Supper regularly, and have led Christian lives as specified in Article III of this Constitution, shall be granted a release. A notice of warning which states the danger of compromising the truth of God's Word may be sent to the members informing them of this action.

### **Section 3 By Removal**

Members who have moved from this vicinity without asking for a letter of transfer or release, or who cannot be personally contacted after having moved and have shown after at least six (6) months that they take no interest in the congregation and its welfare shall be removed from the membership list.

Members who have not attended church faithfully, have not partaken of the Lord's Supper regularly, and /or have not led Christian lives as specified in Article III of this Constitution, shall be removed from the membership list of the congregation. A notice of warning which states the danger of falling away from the truth of God's Word will be sent to the members whenever possible.

If there is no current contact information for this person(s) a copy of the removal and warning notice will be placed in their file and moved to the non-member files. In all dealings, the gaining and not the losing of the member should at all times be the end and objective in view. Attempts will be made to contact and win them back to Christ.

### **Section 4 By Removal for Self-Exclusion**

- A. Openly impenitent sinners who persistently disregard the principles of Christian life and faith in whole or in part as laid down in the Word of God and this Constitution shall be admonished in brotherly love according to Matthew 18:15-18. If, after repeated attempts, such admonition proves futile, the pastor(s) and elders have the responsibility to place the individual under church discipline (i.e. suspend him/her from the Lord's Supper) until he/she repents. The process for this church discipline has been outlined in the "Final Act of Love" procedure. If such an individual disregards this process and asks the leaders of the church to stop contacting him/her, he/she shall be removed from the church by unanimous vote in accordance with Matthew 18:15-18. Such removal by self-exclusion shall be made public to the congregation. Individuals removed by self-exclusion give up all rights in the congregation including the right to partake of the Lord's Supper, to serve as sponsor at a Lutheran baptism, and in case of death, to receive a Christian burial, and also all claims upon its property.
- B. Should a person removed for self-exclusion later express repentance of his/her sin and be willing to change, as shown by a confession of his/her wrong made in the presence of the pastor(s) and/or elders, he/she shall again be received by unanimous vote into the congregation in the spirit of meekness and shall enjoy all the rights and privileges of membership.
- C. In all dealings with openly impenitent sinners, the gaining and not the losing of the member should at all times be the end and objective in view.

### **Section 5 By Excommunication**

- A. Openly impenitent sinners who persistently disregard the principles of Christian life and faith in whole or in part as laid down in the Word of God and this Constitution shall be admonished in brotherly love according to Matthew 18:15-18. If, after repeated attempts, such admonition proves futile, the pastor(s) and elders have the responsibility to place the individual under church discipline (i.e. suspend him/her from the Lord's Supper) until he/she repents. The process for this church discipline has been outlined in the "Final Act of Love" procedure. If such an individual still continues to resist all admonition, refuses to meet with the congregation to deal with his/her case, or will not repent, he/she shall be excommunicated from the church by unanimous vote in accordance with Matthew 18:15-18. Such excommunication shall be made public to the congregation. Individuals excommunicated give up all rights in the congregation including the right to partake of the Lord's Supper, to serve as sponsor at a Lutheran baptism, and in case of death, to receive a Christian burial, and also all claims upon its property.
- B. Should an excommunicated person later express repentance of his/her sin and be willing to change, as shown by a confession of his/her wrong made in the presence of the pastor(s) and/or elders,

he/she shall again be received by unanimous vote into the congregation in the spirit of meekness and shall enjoy all the rights and privileges of membership as stated in Article III of the Constitution.

- C. In all dealings with openly impenitent sinners, the gaining and not the losing of the member should at all times be the end and objective in view.

#### **Section 6 Relinquishment of Legal Rights**

Members transferred, released, removed or excommunicated relinquish all legal rights in this congregation.

### **ARTICLE IX Special Services**

#### **Section 1 Weddings**

The wedding service is truly a joyous celebration and ceremony reaffirming the regulations, blessings, and importance of the holy estate of matrimony as instituted by our God. Because of this, wedding services will be performed by a pastor(s) for members and others who have made arrangements through our pastor(s). Because the wedding service is truly a worship service in which we focus on our God and ask for his blessings, all aspects of the service will reflect the Christ-centered character of the ceremony so that the proper emphasis might be maintained. It is therefore understood that all who officiate and lead this worship service will subscribe to Article II of this Constitution. All decisions regarding service specifics (music, dress, etc.) will be made in consultation with the pastor(s) and/or the Elders of the congregation and will always underscore the proper decorum and reverence of the Christian wedding ceremony. Every couple married in our church must first receive premarital counseling at the discretion of the pastoral staff.

#### **Section 2 Funerals**

The service of Christian burial is primarily a service of comfort for the survivors. It is a service when members of the pastoral staff share with those bereaving the comfort of everlasting life - that the deceased was truly a believing child of God and now is an heir of the eternal joys of heaven. Because of this, members of the pastoral staff will only be able to perform funerals for those about whom they can speak these personal words of comfort and forgiveness. The members of the pastoral staff will be able to perform funerals for members of our congregations and those in fellowship with us and for those people who have personally come into contact with them and have expressed such saving faith. All specific arrangements and decisions for this service of comfort will always be made in consultation with the pastoral staff and/or the Elders of the congregation.

### **ARTICLE X REPEALS AND AMENDMENTS OF THE BYLAWS**

Any and all Bylaws may be repealed or amended by a majority vote of the voting members present at any regular Voters' meeting, or at a special Voters' meeting called to consider such Bylaw change(s), as stated in Article I, Sections 1-3.

