

CONSTITUTION FOR
BETHESDA EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
CARLTON, MINNESOTA
2016

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*PREAMBLE

We, baptized members of the Church of Christ, responding in faith to the call of the Holy Spirit through the Gospel, desiring to unite together to preach the Word, administer the sacraments, and carry out God's mission, do hereby adopt this constitution and solemnly pledge ourselves to be governed by its provisions. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Chapter 1.

NAME AND INCORPORATION

- C1.01. The name of this congregation shall be Bethesda Evangelical Lutheran Church, Carlton Minnesota.
- C1.02. For the purpose of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws, Bethesda Evangelical Lutheran Church is hereinafter designated as "this congregation."
- C1.11. This congregation shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of Minnesota.

Chapter 2.

CONFESSION OF FAITH

- *C2.01. This congregation confesses the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- *C2.02. This congregation confesses Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and the Gospel as the power of God for the salvation of all who believe.
- a. Jesus Christ is the Word of God incarnate, through whom everything was made and through whose life, death, and resurrection God fashions a new creation.
 - b. The proclamation of God's message to us as both Law and Gospel is the Word of God, revealing judgment and mercy through word and deed, beginning with the Word in creation, continuing in the history of Israel, and centering in all its fullness in the person and work of Jesus Christ.
 - c. The canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the written Word of God. Inspired by God's Spirit speaking through their authors, they record and announce God's revelation centering in Jesus Christ. Through them God's Spirit speaks to us to create and sustain Christian faith and fellowship for service in the world.
- *C2.03. This congregation accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life.
- *C2.04. This congregation accepts the Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds as true declarations of the faith of this congregation.

- *C2.05. This congregation accepts the Unaltered Augsburg Confession as a true witness to the Gospel, acknowledging as one with it in faith and doctrine all churches that likewise accept the teachings of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession.
- *C2.06. This congregation accepts the other confessional writings in the Book of Concord, namely, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles and the Treatise, the Small Catechism, the Large Catechism, and the Formula of Concord, as further valid interpretations of the faith of the Church.
- *C2.07. This congregation confesses the Gospel, recorded in the Holy Scriptures and confessed in the ecumenical creeds and Lutheran confessional writings, as the power of God to create and sustain the Church for God's mission in the world.

Chapter 3.
NATURE OF THE CHURCH

- *C3.01. All power in the Church belongs to our Lord Jesus Christ, its head. All actions of this congregation are to be carried out under his rule and authority.
- *C3.02. The Church exists both as an inclusive fellowship and as local congregations gathered for worship and Christian service. Congregations find their fulfillment in the universal community of the Church, and the universal Church exists in and through congregations. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, therefore, derives its character and powers both from the sanction and representation of its congregations and from its inherent nature as an expression of the broader fellowship of the faithful. In length, it acknowledges itself to be in the historic continuity of the communion of saints; in breadth, it expresses the fellowship of believers and congregations in our day.
- *C3.03. The name Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA or “this church”) as used herein refers in general references to this whole church, including its three expressions: congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization. The name Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is also the name of the corporation of the churchwide organization to which specific references may be made herein.

Chapter 4.
STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

- *C4.01. The Church is a people created by God in Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, called and sent to bear witness to God's creative, redeeming, and sanctifying activity in the world.
- *C4.02. To participate in God's mission, this congregation as a part of the Church shall:
 - a. Worship God in proclamation of the Word and administration of the sacraments and through lives of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, witness, and service.

- b. Proclaim God's saving Gospel of justification by grace for Christ's sake through faith alone, according to the apostolic witness in the Holy Scripture, preserving and transmitting the Gospel faithfully to future generations.
- c. Carry out Christ's Great Commission by reaching out to all people to bring them to faith in Christ and by doing all ministry with a global awareness consistent with the understanding of God as Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier of all.
- d. Serve in response to God's love to meet human needs, caring for the sick and the aged, advocating dignity and justice for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, and standing with the poor and powerless, and committing itself to their needs.
- e. Nurture its members in the Word of God so as to grow in faith and hope and love, to see daily life as the primary setting for the exercise of their Christian calling, and to use the gifts of the Spirit for their life together and for their calling in the world.
- f. Manifest the unity given to the people of God by living together in the love of Christ and by joining with other Christians in prayer and action to express and preserve the unity which the Spirit gives.

*C4.03. To fulfill these purposes, this congregation shall:

- a. Provide services of worship at which the Word of God is preached and the sacraments are administered.
- b. Provide pastoral care and assist all members to participate in this ministry.
- c. Challenge, equip, and support all members in carrying out their calling in their daily lives and in their congregation.
- d. Teach the Word of God.
- e. Witness to the reconciling Word of God in Christ, reaching out to all people.
- f. Respond to human need, work for justice and peace, care for the sick and the suffering, and participate responsibly in society.
- g. Motivate its members to provide financial support for the congregation's ministry and the ministry of other parts of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- h. Foster and participate in interdependent relationships with other congregations, the synod, and the church-wide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- i. Foster and participate in ecumenical relationships consistent with church-wide policy.

*C4.04. This congregation shall develop an organizational structure to be described in the bylaws. The Congregation Council shall prepare descriptions of the responsibilities of each committee, task force, or other organizational group and shall review their actions. (Such descriptions shall be contained in continuing

resolutions in the section on the Congregation Committees.)

(C4.04.01 moved to Bylaws)

*C4.05. This congregation shall, from time to time, adopt a mission statement which will provide specific direction for its programs.

C4.05.01 moved to Bylaws)

*C4.06. References herein to the nature of the relationship between the three expressions of this church – congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization – as being interdependent or as being in a partnership relationship describe the mutual responsibility of these expressions in God’s mission and the fulfillment of the purposes of this church as described in this chapter, and do not imply or describe the creation of partnerships, co-ventures, agencies, or other legal relationships recognized in civil law.

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. call or terminate the call of associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers in conformity with the applicable policy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;
- d. adopt amendments to the constitution, as provided in Chapter 17, amendments to the bylaws, as specified in Chapter 16, and continuing resolutions, as provided in Chapter 18;
- e. approve the annual budget;
- f. acquire real and personal property by gift, devise, purchase, or other lawful means;
- g. hold title to and use its property for any and all activities consistent with its purpose;
- h. sell, mortgage, lease, transfer, or otherwise dispose of its property by any lawful means;
- i. elect its Congregation Council, Nominating, Audit, and Endowment Fund Committees, and require them to carry out their duties in accordance with the constitution, bylaws and continuing resolutions; and

- j. terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as provided in Chapter 6.

*C5.04. This congregation shall choose from among its voting members lay persons to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly as well as persons to represent it at meetings of any conference, cluster, coalition, or other area subdivision of which it is a member. The number of persons to be elected by the congregation and other qualifications shall be as prescribed in guidelines established by **the Northeastern Minnesota Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.**

(C5.04.01 moved to Bylaws)

C5.05 This congregation shall have a mission endowment fund that will operate as specified in this congregation's continuing resolutions. The purpose of the mission endowment fund is to provide for mission work beyond the operational budget of this congregation.

Chapter 6. CHURCH AFFILIATION

- *C6.01. This congregation shall be an interdependent part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or its successor, and of the Northeastern Minnesota Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. This congregation is subject to the discipline of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- *C6.02. This congregation accepts the Confession of Faith and agrees to the Purposes of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and shall act in accordance with them.
- *C6.03. This congregation acknowledges its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in which:
 - a. This congregation agrees to be responsible for its life as a Christian community.
 - b. This congregation pledges its financial support and participation in the life and mission of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - c. This congregation agrees to call pastoral leadership from the clergy roster of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in accordance with its call procedures except in special circumstances and with the approval of the bishop of the synod. **These special circumstances are limited either to calling a candidate approved for the roster of ordained ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or to contracting for pastoral services with an ordained minister of a church body with which the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America officially has established a relationship of full communion.**
 - d. This congregation agrees to consider associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers for call to other staff positions in

the congregation according to the procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

- e. This congregation agrees to file this constitution and any subsequent changes to this constitution with the synod for review to ascertain that all of its provisions are in agreement with the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and with the constitution of the synod.

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

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

*C6.05. This congregation may terminate its relationship with **this church** 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. **Such meeting may be held no sooner than 30 days after written notice of the meeting is received by the bishop of the synod, during which time the congregation shall consult with the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any. The times and manner of the consultation shall be determined by the bishop in consultation with the Congregation Council. Unless he or she is a voting member of the congregation, the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any, shall have voice but not vote at the meeting.**
- b. The secretary of this congregation shall submit a copy of the resolution to the bishop, **attesting that the special meeting was legally called and conducted and certifying the outcome of the vote**, 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 **and the congregation shall continue in consultation as specified in paragraph a. above**, during a period of at least 90 days **after receipt by the synod of the notice as specified in paragraph b. above**.
- d. If this congregation, after **such** consultation, still **seeks** to terminate its relationship, such action may be taken at a legally called and conducted special meeting by a two-thirds **vote** of the voting members present. Notice of the meeting shall be mailed to all voting members **and to the bishop** at least 10 days in advance of the meeting. **Unless he or she is a voting member of the congregation, the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any, shall have voice but not vote at the meeting.**

- e. A copy of the resolution attesting that the special meeting was legally called and conducted and certifying the outcome of the vote, shall be sent to the bishop within 10 days after the resolution has been adopted, at which time the relationship between this congregation and this church shall be terminated subject to paragraphs g., h., and i. below. Unless this notification to the bishop also certifies that the congregation has voted by a two-thirds vote to affiliate with another Lutheran denomination, the congregation will be conclusively presumed to be an independent or non-Lutheran church.
- f. Notice of termination shall be forwarded by the bishop to the secretary of this church, who shall report the termination to the Churchwide Assembly.
- g. Congregations seeking to terminate their relationship with this church which fail or refuse to comply with each of the foregoing provisions in *C6.05. shall be required to receive Synod Council approval before terminating their membership in this church.
- h. Congregations which had been members of the Lutheran Church in America shall be required, in addition to complying with the foregoing provisions in *C6.05., to satisfy all financial obligations to this church and receive Synod Council approval before terminating their membership in this church.
- i. Congregations established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be required, in addition to complying with the foregoing provisions in *C6.05., to satisfy all financial obligations to this church and receive Synod Council approval before terminating their membership in this church.
- j. If a congregation fails to achieve the required two-thirds vote of voting members present at the congregation's first meeting as specified in paragraph a. above, another special meeting to consider termination of relationship with this church may be called no sooner than six months after that first meeting. If a congregation fails to achieve the required two-thirds vote of voting members present at the congregation's second meeting as specified in paragraph d. above, another attempt to consider termination of relationship with this church must follow all requirements of *C6.05. and may begin no sooner than six months after that second meeting.

*C6.06. If this congregation considers relocation, it shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located and the appropriate unit of the churchwide organization before any steps are taken leading to such action. The approval of the Synod Council shall be received before any such action is effected.

- *C6.07. If this congregation considers developing an additional site to be used regularly for worship, it shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located and the appropriate unit of the churchwide organization before any steps are taken leading to such action.

Chapter 7.
PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

- *C7.01. If this congregation ceases to exist, title to undisposed property shall pass to the Northeastern Minnesota 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, **provided the process for termination of relationship in *C6.05. has been followed.** Before this congregation takes action to transfer to another Lutheran church body, it shall consult with representatives of the Northeastern Minnesota 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 **and have followed the process for termination of relationship in *C6.05.**, title to property of this congregation shall continue to reside in this congregation only with the consent of the Synod Council. The Synod Council, after consultation with this congregation by the established synodical process, may give approval to the request to become independent or to relate to a non-Lutheran church body, in which case title shall remain with the majority of this congregation. If the Synod Council fails to give such approval, title shall remain with those members who desire to continue as a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- *C7.05. Notwithstanding the provisions of *C7.02. and *C7.03. above, where this congregation has received property from the synod pursuant to a deed or other instrument containing restrictions under provision 9.71.a. of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, this congregation accepts such restrictions and:
- a. Shall not transfer, encumber, mortgage, or in any way burden or impair any right, title, or interest in the property without prior approval of the Synod Council.
 - b. Shall, upon written demand by the Synod Council, pursuant to S13.23. of the constitution of the Northeastern Minnesota Synod, reconvey and transfer all right, title, and interest in the property to the synod.

Chapter 8.
MEMBERSHIP

- *C8.01. Members of this congregation shall be those baptized persons on the roll of this congregation at the time that this constitution is adopted and those who are admitted thereafter and who have declared and maintain their membership in accordance with the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.
- *C8.02. Members shall be classified as follows:
- a. *Baptized members* are those persons who have been received by the Sacrament of Holy Baptism in this congregation, or, having been previously baptized in the name of the Triune God, have been received by certificate of transfer from other Lutheran congregations or by affirmation of faith.
 - b. *Confirmed members* are baptized persons who have been confirmed in this congregation, those who have been received by adult baptism or by transfer as confirmed members from other Lutheran congregations, or baptized persons received by affirmation of faith.
 - c. *Voting members* are confirmed members. Such confirmed members, during the current or preceding calendar year, shall have communed in this congregation and shall have made a contribution of record to this congregation. Members of this congregation who have satisfied these basic standards shall have the privilege of voice and vote at every regular and special meeting of the congregation.
 - d. *Associate members* are persons holding membership in other Lutheran congregations who wish to retain such membership but desire to participate in the life and mission of this congregation, or persons who wish to retain a relationship with this congregation while being members of other congregations. They have all the privileges and duties of membership except voting rights and eligibility for elected offices or membership on the Congregation Council of this congregation.
- *C8.03. All applications for confirmed membership shall be submitted to and shall require the approval of the Congregation Council.
- *C8.04. It shall be the privilege and duty of members of this congregation to:
- a. make regular use of the means of grace, both Word and sacraments;
 - b. live a Christian life in accordance with the Word of God and the teachings of the Lutheran church; and
 - c. support the work of this congregation, the synod, and the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America through contributions of their time, abilities, and financial support as biblical stewards.
- *C8.05. Membership in this congregation shall be terminated by any of the following:
- a. death;

- b. resignation;
- c. transfer or release;
- d. disciplinary action in accordance with ELCA constitutional provision 20.40. and the accompanying bylaws; 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 moved to Bylaws)

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 legally called for that purpose. Before a call is issued, the officers, or a committee elected by the Congregation Council to recommend the call, shall seek the advice and help of the bishop of the synod.
- *C9.02. Only a member of the clergy roster of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or a candidate for the roster of ordained ministers who has been recommended for the congregation by the synodical bishop may be called as a pastor of this congregation.
- *C9.03. Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,
 - a. Every 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) strive to extend the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation, and abroad;
 - 2) seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel;
 - 3) impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through distribution of its periodicals and other publications; and

- 4) endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the church-wide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and of the Northeastern Minnesota Synod of the ELCA.

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

*C9.05. a. The call of a congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment, which shall be terminated only by death or, following consultation with the synodical bishop, for the following reasons:

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

b. When allegations of physical disability or mental incapacity of the pastor under paragraph a.4) above, or ineffective conduct of the pastoral office under paragraph a.3) above, have come to the attention of the bishop of the synod,

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

c. In case of alleged physical disability or mental incapacity under paragraph a.4) above, the bishop's committee shall obtain and document competent medical opinion concerning the pastor's condition. When a disability or incapacity is evident to the committee, the bishop of this synod declare the pastorate vacant and the pastor shall be listed on the clergy roster as disabled. Upon removal of the disability and the restoration of a disabled pastor to health, the bishop shall take steps to

enable the pastor to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another **appropriate call**.

- d. In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of the congregation **under paragraph a.3) above, the bishop's committee shall endeavor to hear from all concerned persons, after which the bishop together with the committee shall present their recommendations first to the pastor and then to the congregation. The recommendations of the bishop's committee must address whether the pastor's call should come to an end and, if so, may suggest appropriate severance arrangements. The committee may also propose other actions that should be undertaken by the congregation and by the pastor, if appropriate. If the pastor and congregation agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action need be taken by the synod.**
- e. **If either party fails to assent to the recommendations of the bishop's committee concerning the pastor's call, the congregation may dismiss the pastor only at a legally called meeting after consultation with the bishop, either (a) by a two-thirds majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee did not recommend termination of the call, or (b) by a simple majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee recommended termination of the call.**
- f. **If, in the course of proceedings described in paragraph c. or paragraph d. above, the bishop's committee concludes that there may be grounds for disciplinary action, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action in accordance with the provisions of this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions.**

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

*C9.07. During the period of service, an interim pastor shall have the rights and duties in the congregation of a regularly called pastor and may delegate the same in part to a supply pastor with the consent of the bishop of the synod and this congregation or Congregation Council. The interim pastor and any ordained pastor providing assistance shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a pastor. **Unless previously agreed upon by the Synod Council, an interim pastor is not available for a regular call to the congregation served.**

*C9.08. This congregation shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to a former pastor before calling a successor. A pastor shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to this congregation **before beginning service in a call to another congregation or employment in another ministry setting related to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.**

*C9.09. When a pastor is called to serve in company with another pastor or pastors, the privileges and responsibilities of each pastor shall be specified in documents to accompany the call and to be drafted in consultation involving the pastors, the Congregation Council, and the bishop of the synod. As occasion requires, the documents may be revised through a similar consultation.

- *C9.11. 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 a 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; and
 - c. shall become a member of this congregation upon receipt and acceptance of the letter of call. In a parish of multiple congregations, the pastor shall hold membership in one of the congregations.
- *C9.13. 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.
- *C9.14. The parochial records of this congregation shall be maintained by the pastor and shall remain the property of the congregation. The secretary of this congregation shall attest in writing to the bishop of this synod that such records have been placed in his or her hands in good order by a departing pastor before the installation of that pastor in another field of labor or the granting by the synod of retired status to the pastor.
- C9.20. Ecumenical pastoral ministry
It is the expectation of this congregation that the pastor under call will regularly participate in the ecumenical activities of this congregation.
- 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 as pastor of this congregation under a contract between the congregation and the ordained minister in a form proposed by the synodical bishop and approved by the congregation.

Chapter 10.
CONGREGATION MEETING

- C10.01. The annual meeting of this congregation shall be held at a time and date scheduled 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 by the president of the congregation upon the written request of 10% of the voting members. The president of the Congregation Council shall call a special

meeting upon request of the synodical bishop. 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 or electronic means, as permitted by state law, to all voting members at least 10 days in advance of the date of the meeting.
- C10.04. 10 percent of the voting membership shall constitute a quorum.
- C10.05. Voting by proxy or by absentee ballot shall not be permitted.
- C10.06. All actions approved by the congregation shall be by majority vote of those voting members present and voting, except as otherwise provided in this constitution or by state law.
- C10.07. *Robert's Rules of Order*, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of all meetings of this congregation.

Chapter 11. OFFICERS

- C11.01. The officers of this congregation shall be a President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer.
- a. Duties of the officers shall be specified in the bylaws.
 - b. The officers shall be voting members of the congregation.
 - c. Officers of this congregation shall serve same offices of the Congregation Council and shall be voting members of the Congregation Council.
 - d. If the Congregation Council elects its officers, the president, vice president, and secretary shall be selected from the elected membership of the Congregation Council.
 - e. All but the Treasurer are elected from the council members to serve one year terms or until their successor is elected. If the Treasurer is not selected from the elected membership of the Congregation Council, or if the Treasurer receives a stipend, they shall have voice but not vote at the meetings of the Congregation Council.

(C11.01A and C11.01.01 moved to Bylaws)

- C11.02. The Congregation Council shall, at its first meeting of the congregational year, elect its officers and they shall be the officers of the Congregation Council and congregation. The officers shall be elected by written ballot and shall serve for one year or until their successors are elected. They shall begin their terms at the close of the election proceedings.
- C11.03. No officer shall hold more than one office at a time.

Chapter 12.
CONGREGATION COUNCIL

- C12.01. The membership of the Congregation Council shall consist of the pastor(s), the officers of the congregation, and not more than 14 members nor fewer than 6 **voting** members of the congregation. Any **voting** member of the congregation may be elected, subject only to the limitation on the length of continuous service permitted in that office. **Lay persons who are paid income or stipends by the congregation may not be elected to the Congregation Council due to conflict of interest.** 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 (4) successive regular meetings of the Congregation Council without cause. Consistent with the laws of the state in which this congregation is incorporated, the congregation may adopt procedures for the removal of a member of the Congregation Council in other circumstances.
 - c) has a written resignation accepted by the Council.
- C12.02. The members of the Congregation Council except the pastor(s) shall be elected by written ballot to serve for two years or until their successors are elected. Such members shall be eligible to serve no more than three 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 **may** elect, by majority vote, a successor until the next annual meeting.
- C12.04. The Congregation Council shall have general oversight of the life and activities of this congregation, and in particular its worship life, to the end that everything be done in accordance with the Word of God and the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The duties of the Congregation Council shall include the following:
- a. To lead this congregation in stating its mission, to do long-range planning, to set goals and priorities, and to evaluate its activities in light of its mission and goals.
 - b. To seek to involve all members of this congregation in worship, learning, witness, service, and support.
 - c. To oversee and provide for the administration of this congregation to enable it to fulfill its functions and perform its mission.
 - d. To maintain supportive relationships with the pastor(s) and staff and help them annually to evaluate the fulfillment of their calling, or employment.
 - e. To be examples individually and corporately of the style of life and ministry expected of all baptized persons.
 - f. To promote a congregational climate of peace and goodwill, and, as differences and conflicts arise, to endeavor to foster mutual understanding.

- g. To arrange for pastoral service during the sickness or absence of the pastor.
- h. To emphasize partnership with the synod and church-wide **organizations** of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as well as cooperation with other congregations, both Lutheran and non-Lutheran, subject to established policies of the synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- i. To recommend and encourage the use of program resources produced or approved by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- j. To seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel.

C12.05. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the financial and property matters of this congregation.

- 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 Minnesota, except as otherwise provided herein.
- b. The Congregation Council shall not have the authority to buy, sell, or encumber real property unless specifically authorized to do so by a meeting of the congregation.
- c. The Congregation Council may enter into contracts of up to \$1,500 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 of more than \$1,500 in excess of the anticipated receipts only after approval by a Congregation Meeting. The budget shall include this congregation's full indicated share in support of the wider ministry being carried on in partnership with the synod and church-wide organization.
- e. The Congregation Council shall ascertain that the financial affairs of this congregation are being conducted efficiently, giving particular attention to the prompt payment of all obligations and to the regular forwarding of benevolence monies to the synodical treasurer.
- f. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for this congregation's investments and its total insurance program.

C12.06. The Congregation Council shall see that the provisions of this constitution, 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 employment 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.

- C12.11. The Congregation Council shall normally meet once a month. Special meetings may be called by the pastor or the president, and shall be called by the president at the request of at least one-half of its members. Notice of each special meeting shall be given to all who are entitled to be present.
- 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 regular meeting, which shall be the only business considered at that meeting. **If any additions need to be made to the agenda of a regular meeting in the pastor's absence, the Congregation Council president must first attempt to contact the pastor to advise of those changes before they can be added to the agenda.** 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.
- C12.13. **The Congregation Council and its committees may hold meetings by remote communication, including electronically and by telephone conference, and, to the extent permitted by state law, notice of all meetings may be provided electronically.**
- C12.14. The Council shall be responsible for the Standing Committees, providing and updating descriptions of responsibilities to be included in **the Bylaws.**

(C12.13A91-98 are moved to the Bylaws and changed to C12.14.01)

- C12.15. The Pastor should abstain from voting on motions for which s/he has a conflict of interest.**

Chapter 13. CONGREGATION COMMITTEES

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

(C13.01.A98 moved to Bylaws and changed to C13.01.01)

- C13.02. A *Nominating Committee* of four **voting** members of this congregation, two of whom, if possible, shall be outgoing members of the Congregation Council, shall be elected at the annual meeting for a term of two years so that terms are alternating. Members of the Nominating Committee are not eligible for consecutive reelection.

(13.02.A95 moved to Bylaws and changed to C13.02.01)

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

(C13.03.A91 moved to Bylaws and changed to C13.03.01)

(C13.05 *Staff Support Committee* deleted)

C13.05. When a pastoral vacancy occurs, a *Call Committee* of six to eight **voting** members shall be elected by the Congregation Council. Term of office will terminate upon installation of the newly called pastor.

(C13.06.98 moved to Bylaws as C13.05.01)

(C13.07.A99 moved to Bylaws as C13.06.01)

C13.06. The *Memorial and Endowment Committee* shall be custodian of the Endowment Fund, which consists of two accounts: A Perpetual Fund and a Memorial Fund. The Committee shall consist of five members **holding** 3-year terms, 2 consecutive terms (only full 3-year terms apply). A complete copy of the resolution describing the Endowment Fund is included at the back of **the Bylaws** in the Continuing Resolutions.

C13.07. Committees of this congregation may be formed, as the need arises, by decision of the Congregation Council. Duties of the committees of this congregation shall be specified in the continuing resolutions and for “ease of use” included by the section they pertain to in any constitution revisions or updates.

C13.08. The pastor of this congregation shall be an *ex officio* member of all committees and boards of the congregation. The president of this congregation shall be an *ex officio* member of all committees and boards of the congregation, except the Nominating Committee.

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.

(C14.01.A91 moved to Bylaws as C14.01.01)

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. Persistent and public denial of the Christian faith, willful or criminal conduct grossly unbecoming a member of the Church of Christ, continual and intentional interference with the ministry of the congregation, or willful and repeated harassment or defamation of member(s) of the congregation is sufficient cause for discipline of a member. Prior to disciplinary action, reconciliation and repentance will be attempted following Matthew 18:15-17, proceeding through these successive steps, as necessary: a) private counsel and admonition by the pastor, b) censure and admonition by the pastor in the presence of two or three witnesses, c) written referral of the matter by the Congregation Council to the vice president of the synod, who will refer it to a consultation panel drawn from the Consultation Committee of the synod, and d) written referral of the matter by the consultation panel to the Committee on Discipline of the synod. If for any reason, the pastor is unable to administer the admonitions required by paragraphs a. and b. hereof, those steps may be performed by another pastor chosen by the Executive Committee of the Congregation Council.
- *C15.02. The process for discipline of a member of the congregation shall be governed as prescribed by the chapter on discipline in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. If the counseling, censure, and admonitions pursuant to C15.01 do not result in repentance and amendment of life, charges against the accused member(s) that are specific and in writing may be prepared by the Congregation Council, signed, and submitted to the vice president of the synod. The vice president shall select from the synod's Consultation Committee a panel of five members (three lay persons and two clergy). A copy of the written charges shall be provided to the consultation panel and the accused member(s). The consultation panel, after requesting a written reply to the charges from the accused member(s), shall consider the matter and seek a resolution by means of investigation, consultation, mediation, or whatever other means may seem appropriate. The panel's efforts to reach a mutually agreeable resolution shall continue for no more than 45 days after the matter is submitted to it.
- *C15.03. If the consultation panel fails to resolve the matter, that panel shall refer the case in writing, including the written charges and the accused member's reply, to the Committee on Discipline of the synod for a hearing. A copy of the panel's written referral shall be delivered to the vice president of the synod, the Congregation Council, and the accused member(s) at the same time it is sent to the Committee on Discipline of the synod. The Executive Committee of the Synod Council shall then select six members from the Committee on Discipline to decide the case, and shall appoint a member of the Synod Council to preside as nonvoting chair. Those six members plus the nonvoting chair comprise the discipline hearing panel for deciding the case. The Congregation Council and the accused member(s) are the parties to the case.

- *C15.04. The discipline hearing panel shall commence and conduct the disciplinary hearing in accordance with the provisions governing discipline of congregation members prescribed in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.
- *C15.05. By vote of at least two-thirds of the members of the discipline hearing panel who are present and voting, one of the following disciplinary sanctions can be imposed:
 - a. suspension from the privileges of congregation membership for a designated period of time.
 - b. suspension from the privileges of congregation membership until the pastor and Congregation Council receive evidence, satisfactory to them, of repentance and amendment of life;
 - c. termination of membership in the congregation; or
 - d. termination of membership in the congregation and exclusion from the church property and from all congregation activities.
- *C15.06. The written decision of the discipline hearing panel shall be sent to the vice president of the synod, the accused member(s), and the Congregation Council, as required by the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. The decision of the discipline hearing panel shall be implemented the Congregation Council and recorded in the minutes of the next council meeting.
- *C15.07. No member of the congregation shall be subject to discipline a second time for offenses that a discipline hearing panel has heard previously and decided pursuant to this chapter.
- *C15.10. **Adjudication**
- *C15.11. When there is disagreement among factions within this congregation on a substantive issue that cannot be resolved by the parties, members of this congregation shall have access to the synodical bishop for consultation after informing the chair of the Congregation Council of their intent. If the consultation fails to resolve the issue(s), the Consultation Committee of the synod shall consider the matter. If the Consultation Committee of the synod shall fail to resolve the issue(s), the matter shall be referred to the Synod Council, whose decision shall be final.

Chapter 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 and voting.
- *C16.03. Changes to the bylaws may be proposed by any voting member, provided 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. The Congregation Council notify the congregation's members of the proposal with the council's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the Congregation Meeting. Notification may take place by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law.

*C16.04. Approved changes to the bylaws shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod.

Chapter 17. AMENDMENTS

*C17.01. Unless provision C17.04. is applicable, those sections of his constitution that are not required, in accord with the *Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, may be amended in the following manner. Amendments may be proposed by at least 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 a regular or special Congregation Meeting called for that purpose. The Congregation Council shall notify the congregation's members of the proposal together with the council's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the meeting. Notification may take place by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law.

*C17.02. An amendment to this constitution proposed under *C17.01., shall:

- a. be approved at a legally called Congregation Meeting according to this constitution by a majority vote of those present and voting;
- b. be ratified without change at the next annual meeting by a two-thirds majority vote of those present and voting; and
- c. have the effective date included in the resolution¹ and noted in the constitution.

*C17.03. Any amendments to this constitution that result from the processes provided in *C17.01. and *C17.02. shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod. The synod shall notify the congregation of its decision to approve or disapprove the proposed changes; the changes shall go into effect upon notification that the synod has approved them.

*C17.04. This constitution may be amended to bring any section into conformity with a section or sections, either required or not required, of the *Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* as most recently amended by the Churchwide Assembly. Such amendments may be approved by a simple majority vote of those voting members present and voting at any legally called meeting of the congregation without presentation at a prior meeting of the congregation, provided that the Congregation Council has

¹ Such an effective date must be stated in relation to the requirements of *C17.03. to allow time for synodical review of the amendment.

submitted by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law, notice to the congregation of such an amendment or amendments together with the council's recommendations, at least 30 days prior to the meeting. Upon request of 10% of the voting members of the congregation, the Congregation Council shall submit such notice. Following the adoption of an amendment, the secretary of the congregation shall submit a copy thereof to the synod. Such provisions shall become effective immediately following a vote of approval.

Chapter 18.

CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

- *C18.01. The Congregation Council in a legally called meeting of the Congregation Council may enact continuing resolutions. Such continuing resolutions may not conflict with the constitution or bylaws of this congregation.
- *C18.02. Continuing resolutions shall be enacted or amended by a majority vote of a meeting of the congregation or a two-thirds vote of all voting members of the Congregation Council.

Chapter 19.

IDEMNIFICATION

- *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 made a party to any threatened, pending, or completed civil, criminal, administrative, arbitration, or investigative proceeding.

BYLAWS

- C4.04.01 ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF BETHESDA EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH. This congregation is organized to function as follows: The church council, consisting of not more than 14 nor fewer than 6 elected members shall administer the business of this church under the guidance of the pastor. Currently there are 6 Standing Committees with at least one council member serving on each committee. The detailed descriptions of responsibilities are included under **Bylaw C.12.14.01**.
- C4.05.01 MISSION STATEMENT OF BETHESDA EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH: Bethesda Evangelical Lutheran Church ~ Resolving to Make a Difference by Sharing Christ's Love through Mission
- C5.04.01 In accordance with the NE MN Synod Guidelines, this congregation shall elect at its Annual Meeting, one male and one female to serve a two year term as Voting Members to the NE MN Synod Assembly, any conference, cluster, coalition or other area subdivision of which this congregation is a member.
- C8.05.01 **By action of the Congregation Council, members may be removed from the membership roll due to inactivity.** Criteria for removal from membership roll due to inactivity:
 1. Has not received Holy Communion in more than two years.
 2. Has not made any contributions of record to **Bethesda** for more than two years.[Such persons who have been removed from the roll of members shall remain persons for whom the church has a continuing pastoral concern.]
- C11.01.A The positions of Treasurer and Financial Secretary may be combined and filled by one person or separated and filled by one person in each position as determined by the Executive Committee. This position(s) is appointed by the **Executive Committee** to serve indefinite terms.
- C11.01.01 Responsibilities of officers:
 1. *President*
 - a. Be an active church member who faithfully attends worship and supports the activities of this church.
 - b. Attends and chairs all council and congregational meetings, preparing for distribution, the meeting agendas in advance of the meetings.
 - c. Listens to church member concerns and conveys them to the council.
 - d. Is a visionary leader who is willing to set goals for congregational growth.
 - e. Is informed on the church mission statement, constitution, and parliamentary procedure for chairing meetings.
 - f. **Serves as ex-officio member of the Endowment/Memorial Committee or may appoint another Congregation Council member to serve in that capacity.**

2. *Vice-president*

- a. Be an active church member who faithfully attends worship and supports the activities of this church.
- b. Attends all council and congregational meetings
- c. Is informed on the church mission statement, constitution, and parliamentary procedure for chairing meetings.
- d. Serve as Chair for the Memorial Committee
- e. Be prepared to assume all of the president's responsibilities in the event of the president's absence.

3. *Secretary*

- a. Be an active church member who faithfully attends worship and supports the activities of this church.
- b. Attends all council and congregational meetings
- c. Keep accurate minutes of all council and congregational meetings in a volume which shall be permanently preserved, **and submits them to the website for publication.**
- d. Responsible for processing all council correspondence.

4. *Treasurer*

- a. Be an active church member who faithfully attends worship and supports the activities of this church.
- b. Attend all congregational meetings **and is available to Council during its meetings.**
- c. Keep the books of account for this congregation; and shall receive from the Financial Secretary account of all funds received and disburse them on proper orders from the pastor/council or whoever has been designated.
- d. Shall make a written report of all financial transactions on a monthly financial statement to be presented to the council.
- e. Shall be prepared for and cooperate with periodic audits.
- f. Shall realize and be committed to maintaining the confidentiality of financial records.
- g. In the event that the Treasurer and Financial Secretary are combined as Treasurer, the Treasurer's responsibilities would include those listed as Financial Secretary.

5. *Financial Secretary*

- a. Be an active church member who faithfully attends worship and supports the activities of this church.
- b. Is invited to but not required to attend all council and congregational meetings
- c. Keep accurate record of all financial income to the church, recording to specified accounts.
- d. Shall be prepared for and cooperate with periodic audits.
- e. Will record and verify deposit of all monies collected and counted from all sources of income, including worship offerings.
- f. Will provide an accurate accounting of all income to the Treasurer.

- g. Will record all memorial/special giving and notify **Memorial and Endowment Fund Committee** and newsletter editor of information that should go in the newsletter.
- h. Order, receive, prepare for distribution all offering envelopes and statement of giving.
- i. Shall realize and be committed to maintaining strict confidentiality.
- j. In the event that the Financial Secretary and Treasurer are combined all the above listed responsibilities for Financial Secretary would go to the Treasurer.

C.12.14.01

1. Children Youth and Family Ministry

Along with pastor, this committee shall oversee the conduct and promotion of all educational activities of this church. It shall encourage and seek to introduce teaching and worship materials published by the ELCA. This committee shall work with the pastor to promote activities for the youth of our congregation to provide opportunities for growth in faith and in close, caring relationships with other youth and adults as they serve others in the church and community and develop skills in leadership in various areas of ministry.

2. Evangelism (“Welcome Encourage and Support Team” or “WEST”)

This committee shall seek to stimulate and lead all members of this congregation to witness to the gospel, sharing the "good news" with those who are unchurched in our community. The committee will also nurture prospective members, inactive members and members with special needs.

3. Property

This committee shall see to the proper care and maintenance of all properties belonging to this congregation.

4. Social Ministry

This committee shall seek to stimulate and lead all members of this congregation to support programming and projects that deal with helping those who are oppressed. This committee will study social conditions and issues and bring needed information before the congregation.

5. Stewardship

The Treasurer/Financial Secretary **may** be **ex officio** member(s) of this committee. This committee will promote the expression of Christian faith through faithful giving of time and talents, and financial support. Annually this committee will be responsible for developing, implementing, and recording the results of the annual stewardship emphasis.

6. Worship

This committee will assist the pastor with decisions regarding worship services. This committee will supervise ushers, lectors, altar guild and music departments. This committee will work with the council to provide pulpit supply during pastoral vacancies.

C13.01.01

Executive Committee is made up of the pastor and officers

- a. Responsible for setting and revising the monthly council meeting agenda.
- b. May serve in official capacity in some legal matters;
- c. Serve as "personnel" Committee working with all paid staff on salary, compensation, **and** other work related issues.

- C13.02.01** *Nominating Committee*
1. Prepare a list of candidates for elected positions from the qualified members of this congregation seeking candidates that fairly represent all aspects of our congregation.
 2. At least one candidate will be presented for each open elected position on the council, audit committee, nominating and memorial and endowment committees.
 3. If a vacancy occurs during the year, in either Council or above named committees, upon notification by the council president, this committee will reconvene to secure a qualified candidate to present to the council for approval at the earliest possible date following the notification of vacancy.
- C13.03.01** *Audit Committee*
Meet at least once annually to audit all the records of:
- a. Church Treasurer
 - b. Financial Secretary
 - c. LCW Treasurer
 - d. CYFM Treasurer**
- C13.05.01** *Call Committee*
Will meet as often as necessary to carry out the duties as outlined by the Northeastern Minnesota Synod to fill a pastoral vacancy. Members should reflect a good cross-section of the congregation.
- C13.06.01** Memorial Committee is hereby dissolved with its responsibilities being transferred to the Endowment Fund Committee **and the new name of this committee shall be Memorial and Endowment Committee.**
- C14.01.01** Women of Bethesda (LCW)
An organization of Bethesda belonging to the Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (WELCA). This group functions as an arm of our congregation that is responsible for providing education, fellowship and growth for the women of this congregation.

CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

- CR 1.** Adopted by the Congregation at the Annual Meeting, January 18, 1998
RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING ENDOWMENT FUND

BETHESDA LUTHERAN CHURCH, Carlton, Minnesota, has a living endowment of faithful members with rich gifts and varied talents.

"As each has received a gift, employ it for another, as good stewards of God's varied grace whoever renders it by the strength which God supplies, in order that in everything God may be glorified." (1 Peter 1:10-11)

NOW, THEREFORE, in order to establish an Endowment Fund consisting of a Perpetual Fund in which the principal will be retained and only the income used, and a Memorial Fund from which both principal and income can be used, all to enable the further growth of our church, it's ministries and stewardship opportunities:

BE IT RESOLVED:

That the membership of Bethesda Lutheran Church establish an Endowment Fund providing for two separate funds to be known as the "Perpetual Fund" and the "Memorial Fund," to receive and administer gifts, bequests, estates, insurance, memorials, and other assets. And,

BE IT RESOLVED:

That the efforts of Bethesda Lutheran Church in establishing the Endowment Fund be dedicated to the Glory of Almighty God, And,

BE IT RESOLVED:

That the purpose of the Endowment Fund is to enhance the work of the church by establishing new ministries and stewardship opportunities additional to and apart from the general operation of the congregation. And,

BE IT RESOLVED:

That the membership of Bethesda Lutheran Church annually, at the annual meeting, decide for what purposes the Endowment Fund income is to be used. And,

BE IT RESOLVED:

That the Endowment Fund Committee shall be custodian of the Endowment Funds. And,

BE IT RESOLVED:

That while Bethesda Lutheran Church has every intention of using the Endowment Funds as set forth in there resolutions, it does recognize that with the passage of time and changing circumstances, there may be a time when it is not feasible to utilize the Endowment Funds as was intended. Should that situation develop, Bethesda Lutheran Church or its successors in interest shall than be free to make such other use of the income and principal as is consistent with the charitable and religious purposes of Bethesda Lutheran Church, in accordance with provisions of the laws of the State of Minnesota, and preserving the principal of those gifts designated to be perpetual, carrying out the donor's wishes.

NOW, THEREFORE, in order to carry out the purposes of the Endowment Fund and to enable the further extension and stewardship work of our church,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

I. THE COMMITTEE

1. The committee shall consist of five members, all of whom shall be voting members of Bethesda Lutheran Church. Except as herein limited, the term of each member shall be three (3) years. After the adoption of this resolution by the congregation, it shall elect five (5) members to the committee- two (2) for a term of three (3) years; two (2) for a term of two (2) years; and one (1) for a term of one (1) year. Thereafter at each annual meeting the congregation shall elect the necessary number for a term of three (3) years. No member shall serve more than two consecutive

terms. A partial term shall not be counted for this purpose. A former committee member may be re-elected after a lapse of twelve (12) months between his/her election for a third term and the completion of his/her second term.

2. In the event of a vacancy on the committee, the remaining members by the affirmative vote of three (3) shall forthwith elect a member to fill the vacancy until the next annual meeting of the congregation, as which time the congregation shall elect a member to fill the vacancy. In the event the vacancy is not filled within thirty (30) days after it occurs, the congregation shall fill it at a special meeting called for that purpose.

3. The elected Nominating Committee shall seek nominees for this committee and report at the annual meeting in the same manner as it does for other offices or committees. Nominations may also be made from the floor. The person receiving the greater number of affirmative votes at the annual meeting shall be elected.

All Endowment Fund committee members shall endeavor to maintain a high degree of communication with the church council, other organizations within the church, and members of the congregation to nurture the total life and mission of the church and of the Endowment Fund. Each committee member must be a member in good standing of Bethesda Lutheran Church. An Endowment Fund committee member may not serve concurrently on the church council. The senior pastor of the church and the president or the chairperson of the church council, or his or her designee shall be ex-officio non-voting members of the Endowment Fund Committee.

4. The committee shall elect from it's membership a chairperson, treasurer, and a secretary.

5. The committee shall meet at least once a month at the church at a time fixed by resolution of the committee and more frequently as it may be deemed by it for the best interests of the Endowment Fund. The committee, when it deems it is unnecessary to hold a particular monthly meeting may by resolution cancel a meeting. Special meetings may be called on twenty four (24) hours written or oral notice to the members of the committee by the chairperson or any two members. No notice other than recording of the resolution of the board fixing the time of the regular meetings need be given the members. Each member is charged with knowledge of the contents of the minute book. If all members are present, consent in writing to the minutes by a member of the committee shall constitute his/her approval of the action reflected in the minutes and taken at the meeting and shall have the same force and effect as though he/she had been present and voting at the meeting reflected by the minutes.

6. A quorum shall consist of three (3) members. The affirmative vote of a majority present and voting shall carry any motion or resolution.

7. The committee shall establish written rules and regulations as may be necessary for the conduct of its business.

8. The committee shall maintain accounts with such financial institutions as it may be resolution authorize and determine. All checks and other documents transferring or expending any funds of assets in the Endowment Fund shall be executed by the treasurer and either the chairperson or secretary of the committee.

9. All members of the committee shall be provided with corporate fidelity bond in a principal amount to be determined from time to time by the committee, at the expense of the committee.
10. The committee may ask other members of the congregation to serve as advisory members and may employ, at the expense of the Endowment Fund income such professional counseling on investments and legal matters as it deems to be for the best interest of the Endowment Fund.
11. The committee shall maintain complete and accurate books of accounts and may employ such professional help as it deems necessary in this connection.
12. The Secretary shall maintain complete and accurate minutes of all meetings of the committee and supply a copy thereof to each member.
13. The chairperson, or the member designated by the chairperson, shall preside at all committee meetings.
14. No member of the committee shall engage in any self sealing of transactions with the Endowment Fund in which the member of the committee has direct or indirect financial interest and shall at all times refrain from any conduct in which his/her personal interest would conflict with the interest of the Foundation.

II. COMMITTEE DUTIES

1. The Foundation Committee shall investigate ways in which the perpetual Fund can be invested and present this information to the congregation at the annual meeting. Members of the congregation may make written suggestions to the committee as to the types of investments to be made.
2. The congregation at the annual meeting will select by majority vote from the options presented by the committee as to the types of investments to be made.
3. The Endowment Fund Committee shall investigate ways in which the Endowment Fund income can best be used and present this information to the congregation at the annual meeting. Members of the congregation may make written suggestions to the committee, at least one week in advance of the meeting.
4. The congregation at the annual meeting will select by majority vote from the options presented by the committee as to the uses of the income. Thereupon the committee is to carry out the decision of the congregation.
5. The Endowment Fund committee, at each annual meeting of the congregation, shall render a full and complete account of the administration of the Endowment Fund during the preceding year.
6. The Endowment Fund Committee or church may receive funds through gifts, memorials, bequests, wills, estates, etc. from any individual or corporation or organization or from any other source in cash or in other property acceptable to the. All funds and property shall be kept and

maintained separate, distinct and independent from the funds and property otherwise belonging to the church.

7. The Endowment Fund Committee may commingle the Funds and property of the Perpetual Fund, the memorial Fund and any other funds or property held by the Foundation, and administer such funds as a single fund, so long as the committee records at all times accurately reflect the receipts and disbursements properly allocable to each fund and the property in each fund.

8. The Endowment Fund Committee shall in no event be required to make physical segregation of the assets of the Endowment Fund in order to conform to the directions of any individual donors, but may establish separate accounts in its accounting records.

9. The committee is to inform the members of the congregation the purposes of the Foundation, and may periodically arrange for members of the congregation to meet with professional counselors in the areas of charitable giving, wills, bequests, insurance, etc.

10. All new members of the Endowment Fund Committee are to receive a copy of the Endowment Fund format to become acquainted with the function and purposes of the Endowment Fund.

III. COMMITTEE POWERS

The committee is hereby authorized to have and exercise on behalf of Bethesda Lutheran Church the following:

1. To receive the income, profits, rents, and proceeds of the Endowment Fund and to collect and receipt for the same, and pay all administrative and necessary expenses in connection with it. Expenses are to be paid from the Endowment Fund income;

2. To purchase, retain or acquire stocks, bonds, notes or other securities, or any variety of real or personal property for income to the Endowment fund on behalf of the congregation when directed by the congregation;

3. To make, execute and deliver all instruments necessary of proper for the accomplishment of the purposes of the Bethesda Lutheran Church Foundation, including deeds, bills of sale, transfers, leases, mortgages, assignments, conveyances, contracts, purchase agreements, waivers, release and settlement;

4. To determine what is principal and income according to accounting procedures;

5. To hold investments in the name of the Bethesda Lutheran Church Endowment Fund on behalf of the congregation and to sign checks and all other necessary documents on behalf of the congregation in furtherance of the Endowment Fund purposes;

6. To employ and reasonably compensate from the Endowment Fund income, accountants, agents, and attorneys to assist and advise in the execution of the Endowment Fund, without liability for their omissions or neglect, but using reasonable care in their selection, and to rely on the advice of the persons so employed.

7. The Endowment Fund Committee shall not be liable for any losses which may be incurred upon investments of the Endowment Fund except to the extent that such losses shall have been caused by bad faith or gross negligence of the committee members. No member shall be personally liable as long as he or she acts in good faith and with ordinary prudence in discharging the duties of the office. Each committee member shall be liable only for his or her own willful misconduct or omissions in bad faith. No committee member shall be liable for the acts or omissions of any other committee member, or of any accountant, agent, attorney or custodian selected with reasonable care.

8. The Endowment Fund committee members shall not receive any compensation, but may be reimbursed from the income of the Endowment Fund for expenses reasonably incurred.

IV. THE CONGREGATION

1. The congregation at the annual meeting shall select by majority vote from the options presented by the Endowment Fund Committee, the methods of Endowment Fund investments, and to review the investments at each meeting of the congregation called for this purpose.

2. The congregation at the annual meeting shall select by majority vote from the options presented by the Endowment Fund Committee. The use of the Perpetual Fund income, and to review this at each meeting of the congregation called for this purpose.

3. The congregation may upon recommendation by the Endowment Fund Committee decide when and if any Perpetual Fund principal, or corpus, shall be used by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of those present at a legally called meeting of the congregation. This holds true if the principal, or corpus, is ever needed in the event of a catastrophe, or dire emergency.

4. The Endowment Fund Committee shall supply the congregation with sufficient information to make the best use of the Endowment Fund according to its purposes.

5. The Endowment Fund Resolution may not be altered or amended except by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present at an annual meeting of the congregation, or at a special meeting called specifically for the purpose of amending this resolution.

V. MEMORIAL FUND

There is hereby established for administration by the Endowment Fund Committee a separate fund to be known as the "Memorial Fund." The memorial Fund will receive donations, gifts and contributions which are not to be included in the Perpetual Fund or in the general fund of the church. The memorial Fund shall be administered by the Endowment Fund Committee, the Endowment Fund Committee may disburse both principal and income from the Memorial Fund for church purposes as designated by the donor or as determined by the Endowment Fund Committee.

Bethesda Lutheran Church Council
By _____
ITS PRESIDENT

AND _____
ITS SECRETARY

Constitution and Bylaws revised by congregation vote on 10/08/2000.

Constitution and Bylaws revised to follow 2013 Model Constitution by congregation vote on
_____.