

**Constitution
for
Congregations
of the
Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America®**

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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 Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church.
- C1.02.** For the purpose of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws, the congregation of Grace 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 Scripture 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. This church confesses the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church and is resolved to serve Christian unity throughout the world.

- *C3.02.03 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.

- *C3.04. This church, inspired and led by the Holy Spirit, participates in The Lutheran World Federation as a global communion of churches, engaging in faithful witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ and in service for the sake of God's mission in the world.

- *C3.05. 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.

Commented [G&EL1]: Items highlighted in cyan (this color) are changes made to make the Constitution align with the model constitution for congregations.

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:

- Worship God in proclamation of the Word and administration of the sacraments and through lives of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, witness, and service.
- 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.
- 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.
- Serve in response to God's love to meet human needs, caring for the sick and the aged, advocating dignity and justice, and equality for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations, and standing in solidarity with the poor and powerless, oppressed and committing itself to their needs.
- 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.
- 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:

- Provide services of worship at which the Word of God is preached and the sacraments are administered.
- Provide pastoral care and assist all members to participate in this ministry.
- Challenge, equip, and support all members in carrying out their calling in their daily lives and in their congregation.
- Teach the Word of God.

- e. Witness to the reconciling Word of God in Christ, reaching out to all people.
 - f. Respond to human need, work for justice and peace, care for the sick and the suffering, and participate responsibly in society.
 - g. Motivate its members to provide financial support for the congregation's ministry and the ministry of other parts of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - h. Foster and participate in interdependent relationships with other congregations, the synod, and the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - i. Foster and participate in ecumenical relationships consistent with churchwide policy.
- *C4.04. This congregation shall develop an organizational structure to be described in the bylaws. 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 Council.
- *C4.05. This congregation shall, ~~from time to time,~~ adopt **and periodically review** a mission statement which will provide specific direction for its programs.
- *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 a minister of Word and Service;
 - e d. call or terminate the call of ~~associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers~~ a minister of Word and Service in conformity with the applicable policy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;
 - d. adopt amendments to the constitution, as provided in Chapter ~~17, 16~~ and amendments to the bylaws, as specified in Chapter ~~16 17,~~ 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, boards, and committees, and require the members of the council 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 laypersons 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.
- C5.05. 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.

Commented [G&EL2]: Subsequent enumeration should also change.

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:
- This congregation agrees to be responsible for its life as a Christian community.
 - This congregation pledges its financial support and participation in the life and mission of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - This congregation agrees to call pastoral leadership from the ~~clergy roster~~ **roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament** 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 Ministers of Word and Sacrament of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or to contracting for pastoral services with a minister of Word and Sacrament of a church body with which the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America officially has established a relationship of full communion.**
 - This congregation agrees to consider ~~associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers~~ **Ministers of Word and Service** for call to other staff positions in the congregation according to the procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - 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:
- This congregation takes action to dissolve.
 - This congregation ceases to exist.
 - 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 **or in accordance with provision 9.23. of the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.**
 - The Northeastern Minnesota Synod takes charge and control of the property of this congregation to hold, manage, and convey the same on behalf of the synod pursuant to ¶S13.24. of the synod constitution. This congregation shall have the right to appeal the decision to the next Synod Assembly.**
 - ~~e.~~ **This congregation follows the procedures outlined in *C6.05.**
- ~~*C6.05. This congregation may terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America by the following procedure:~~
- ~~A 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.~~
 - ~~The secretary of this congregation shall submit a copy of the resolution to the synodical bishop and shall mail a copy of the resolution to voting members of this congregation. This notice shall be submitted within 10 days after the resolution has been adopted.~~
 - ~~The bishop of the synod shall consult with this congregation during a period of at least 90 days.~~
 - ~~If this congregation, after consultation, still desires to terminate its relationship, such action may be taken at a legally called and conducted special meeting by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present, at which meeting the bishop of the synod or an authorized representative shall be present. Notice of the meeting shall be mailed to all voting members at least 10 days in advance of the meeting.~~
 - ~~A certified copy of the resolution to terminate its relationship shall be sent to the synodical bishop, at which time the relationship between this congregation and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be terminated.~~
 - ~~Notice of termination shall be forwarded by the synodical bishop to the secretary of this church and published in the periodical of this church.~~
 - ~~Since this congregation was a member of the Lutheran Church in America, it shall be required, in addition to the foregoing provisions in *C6.05., to receive synodical approval before terminating its membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.~~

Commented [G&EL3]: This portion changed sufficiently that it's easier to just strike it, and replace with the wording from the Model Constitution rather than trying to find which words changed.

***C6.05.** This congregation may terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America by the following procedure:

- a. A resolution indicating the intent to terminate its relationship must be adopted at two legally called and conducted special meetings of this congregation by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present at each meeting. The first 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 this 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 the bishop and/or the bishop's designees are voting members of this congregation, they shall have voice but not vote at the first meeting.
- b. Within 10 days after the resolution has been voted upon at the first meeting, 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 send copies of the resolution and certification to voting members of this congregation.
- c. If the resolution was adopted by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present at the first meeting, the bishop of the synod and this congregation shall continue in consultation, as specified in paragraph a. above, during a period of at least 90 days after receipt by the bishop of the attestation and certification as specified in paragraph b. above.
- d. If this congregation, after such consultation, is still considering termination of its relationship with this church, 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 second meeting shall be sent to all voting members and to the bishop at least 10 days in advance of the meeting. Unless the bishop and/or the bishop's designees are voting members of this congregation, they shall have voice but not vote at the second meeting.
- e. Within 10 days after the resolution has been voted upon, the secretary of this congregation shall submit a copy of the resolution to the bishop, attesting that the second special meeting was legally called and conducted and certifying the outcome of the vote, and shall send copies of the resolution and certification to the voting members of the congregation. If the resolution was adopted by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present at the second meeting, the relationship between the congregation and this church shall be terminated subject to Synod Council approval as required by paragraphs f. and g. below.
- f. Unless this notification to the bishop also certifies that this congregation has voted to affiliate with another Lutheran denomination, this congregation shall be deemed an independent or non-Lutheran church, in which case *C7.04. shall apply.
- g. This congregation shall abide by these covenants by and among the three expressions of this church:
 - 1) 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.
 - 2) 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 receive synod approval before terminating their membership in this church.
 - 3) 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.
- h. If this congregation fails to achieve the required two-thirds vote of voting members present at this congregation's first meeting as specified in paragraph a. above or fails to achieve the required two-thirds vote of voting members present at this 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 the meeting at which the two-thirds vote was not achieved.

***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 **or pursuant to 9.23. of the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**, 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 process established by the synod 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. **In neither case does title to this congregation's property transfer to the synod.**
- C7.05. Notwithstanding the provisions of *C7.02. and *C.7.03. 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:
- 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.
 - 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:
- 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.
 - 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.
 - 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 as well as the other **rights and privileges ascribed to voting members by the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws. They shall not have voted as a seasonal member of another congregation of this church in the previous two calendar months.**
 - 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** or other rights and privileges ascribed to voting members by the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.
 - Seasonal** members are voting members of other congregations of this church who wish to retain such membership but desire to participate in the life and mission of this congregation, including exercising limited voting rights in this congregation. The Congregation Council may grant seasonal membership to such persons provided that this congregation is a member of a synod where the Synod Council has

approved seasonal member voting on its territory. Such seasonal members shall have all the privileges and duties of voting members except that:

- 1) they shall not be eligible for elected office in, or for membership on the Congregation Council or on a call committee of, this congregation;
- 2) they shall not have the right to vote on any matter concerning or affecting the call or termination of call of any minister of this congregation;
- 3) they shall not have the right to vote on any matter concerning or affecting the affiliation of this congregation with this church;
- 4) they shall not be eligible to serve as voting members from this congregation of the Synod Assembly or the Churchwide Assembly;
- 5) they shall not, even if otherwise permitted by this congregation, vote by proxy or by absentee ballot; and
- 6) they shall not, within any two calendar month period, exercise voting rights in this congregation and in the congregation where they remain voting members.

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

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

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

*C8.05. Membership in this congregation shall be terminated by any of the following:

- a. death;
- b. resignation;
- c. transfer or release;
- d. disciplinary action by the Congregation Council in accordance with Chapter 20 of the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; or
- e. removal from the roll due to inactivity as defined in the bylaws in accordance with the provisions of this constitution and its 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 Termination of membership: A voting member shall be removed from membership due to inactivity through the following process:

- a. A member shall be considered inactive if they have not attended worship or made a contribution of record for a year.
- b. After one year, they shall be contacted by the Pastor and/or Church Council and with proper pastoral care and concern be urged to continue fully in the life of the congregation.
- c. After two years, they shall be contacted by the Congregational Council or appointed committee and urged to continue to participate in the life of the congregation or indicate where they would like their membership transferred.
- d. After three two years, the Congregational Council shall remove the member from the church roles unless other arrangements have been made for the provision of their membership.

C8.05.02 A voting member who has been removed due to inactivity inactive members shall be restored to the rolls of confirmed voting members in good standing when the member receives the Lord's Supper and once more enters upon the other rights and obligations of a member of the congregation.

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

Chapter 9.

THE PASTOR-ROSTERED MINISTER

Commented [G&EL4]: This is the proper way to have a bylaw. Suggested changes to the wording are indicated by highlighting (and striking). Otherwise the language is identical to what was stated in the bylaws as in the previous edition (see end of document).

Items highlighted in green (this color) are changes to the congregation's existing bylaws.

Commented [G&EL5]: I believe this provision violates the definition of a "voting member" in "C8.02c (a required portion of the Constitution). Bylaws may not contradict the Constitution.

Also note that there is no official category of "inactive member."

Commented [G&EL6]: This provision is already the last line of C8.05; repeating it in the bylaw is unnecessary.

*C9.01. Authority to call a pastor shall be in this congregation by at least a two-thirds vote of voting 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 this congregation to recommend the call, shall seek the advice and help of the bishop of the synod.

*C9.02. Only a member of the clergy roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or a candidate for the roster of ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament 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 churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and of the Northeastern Minnesota Synod of the ELCA.~~

*C9.03. Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,

a. Every minister of Word and Sacrament shall:

- 1) preach the Word;
- 2) administer the sacraments;
- 3) conduct public worship;
- 4) provide pastoral care;
- 5) seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel;
- 6) impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through available channels of effective communication;
- 7) witness to the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation, and abroad; and
- 8) speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, advocating dignity, justice, and equity for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, and embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations.

b. Each pastor with a congregational call shall, within the congregation:

- 1) offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead;
- 2) relate to all schools and organizations of this congregation;
- 3) install regularly elected members of the Congregation Council;
- 4) with the council, administer discipline;
- 5) endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the churchwide organization and of the Northeastern Minnesota Synod; and
- 6) encourage adherence to covenantal relationship with this church as expressed in the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.

*C9.04. The specific duties of the pastor, compensation, and other matters pertaining to the service of the pastor shall be included in 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, except in the case of the death of the pastor, shall be terminated only following consultation with the synodical bishop and for the following reasons:~~

Commented [G&EL7]: The content of this doesn't change that much; it's just that its organization does significantly enough that it's easier to strike and replace the whole thing.

Commented [G&EL8]: There are significant changes to *C9.05, leading me to want to strike the whole section and replace it.

- 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, 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, without reflection on the competence or the moral and spiritual character of the pastor;
- 4) the physical or mental incapacity of the pastor;
- 5) disqualification of the pastor through discipline on grounds of doctrine, morality, or continued neglect of duty;
- 6) the dissolution of the congregation; or
- 7) suspension of the congregation as a result of discipline proceedings.

b. When allegations of physical or mental incapacity of the pastor or ineffective conduct of the pastoral office have come to the attention of the bishop of the synod, the bishop in his or her sole discretion may, or when such allegations have been brought to the synod's attention by an official recital of allegations by the Congregation Council or by a petition signed by at least one third of the voting members of the congregation, the bishop shall, investigate such conditions personally in company with a committee of two ordained ministers and one layperson.

c. In case of alleged physical or mental incapacity, competent medical testimony shall be obtained. When such disability is evident, the bishop of the synod with the advice of the committee shall declare the pastorate vacant. Upon the restoration of a disabled pastor to health, the bishop of the synod shall take steps to enable the pastor to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another field of labor.

d. In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of the congregation, all concerned persons shall be heard, after which the bishop of the synod together with the committee described in *C9.05.b. shall decide on the course of action to be recommended to the pastor and the congregation. If they agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action shall be taken by the synod. If either party fails to assent, the congregation may dismiss the pastor 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.

e. If, in the course of proceedings described in *C9.05.d., the committee concludes that there may be grounds for disciplinary action, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action to the synodical bishop, who may bring charges in accordance with the provisions of the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the constitution of this synod.

f. If, following the appointment of the committee described in *C9.05.b. or d., it should become apparent that the pastoral office cannot be conducted effectively in the congregation(s) being served by the ordained minister due to local conditions, the bishop of the synod may temporarily suspend the pastor from service in the congregation(s) without prejudice and with pay provided through a joint synodical and churchwide fund and with housing provided by the congregation(s).

***C9.05.** The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between a minister of Word and Sacrament and this congregation shall be as follows:

a. The call of this congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment, which shall be terminated only by the pastor's death or, following consultation with the synod bishop, for any of 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 this congregation in view of local conditions;
- 4) inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in view of disability or 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 Ministers of Word and Sacrament of this church;
- 7) termination of the relationship between this church and this congregation;
- 8) dissolution of this congregation or the termination of a parish arrangement; or
- 9) suspension of this congregation through discipline for more than six months.

b. When allegations of disability or 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 this synod,

- 1) the bishop, who has sole discretion, may investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two rostered 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 this congregation, the bishop personally shall investigate such conditions together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson.
- c. In case of alleged disability or 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 may declare the pastorate vacant. When the pastorate is declared vacant, the Synod Council shall list the pastor on the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament with disability status. Upon resumption of the ability to conduct the office effectively, 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 this 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 this 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 this 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, this congregation may dismiss the pastor only at a legally called meeting after consultation with the bishop, either (a) by a two-thirds 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 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 discipline, 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~~ rostered minister 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** call or approval of a request for change in roster status.

C9.20. Ecumenical pastoral ministry

C9.21-15. Under special circumstances, subject to the approval of the synod**ical** bishop and the concurrence of this congregation, **an ordained minister** a minister of Word and Sacrament 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 pastor** in a form proposed by the synod**ical** bishop and approved by the congregation.

*C9.21. Authority to call a deacon shall be in this congregation by at least a two-thirds vote of voting members present and voting at a meeting legally called for that purpose. Before a call is issued, the officers, or a committee elected by this congregation to recommend the call, shall seek the advice and help of the bishop of the synod.

*C9.22. Only a member of the roster of Ministers of Word and Service of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or a candidate for the roster of Ministers of Word and Service who has been recommended for this congregation by the synod bishop may be called as a deacon of this congregation.

*C9.23. Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, every minister of Word and Service shall:

- a. Be rooted in the Word of God, for proclamation and service;
- b. Advocate a prophetic diakonia that commits itself to risk-taking and innovative service on the frontiers of the Church's outreach, giving particular attention to the suffering places in God's world;
- c. Speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, advocating dignity, justice, and equity for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, and embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations;
- d. Equip the baptized for ministry in God's world that affirms the gifts of all people;
- e. Encourage mutual relationships that invite participation and accompaniment of others in God's mission;
- f. Practice stewardship that respects God's gift of time, talents, and resources;
- g. Be grounded in a gathered community for ongoing diaconal formation;
- h. Share knowledge of this church and its wider ministry of the gospel and advocate for the work of all expressions of this church; and
- i. Identify and encourage qualified persons to prepare for ministry of the gospel.

*C9.24. The specific duties of the deacon, compensation, and other matters pertaining to the service of the deacon shall be included in a letter of call, which shall be attested by the bishop of the synod.

*C9.25. The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between a minister of Word and Service and this congregation shall be as follows:

- a. The call of this congregation, when accepted by a deacon, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment, which shall be terminated only by the deacon's death or, following consultation with the synod bishop, for any of the following reasons:
 - 1) mutual agreement to terminate the call or the completion of a call for a specific term;
 - 2) resignation of the deacon, 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 ministry of Word and Service effectively in this congregation in view of local conditions;
 - 4) inability to conduct the office effectively in view of disability or incapacity of the deacon;
 - 5) suspension of the deacon through discipline for more than three months;
 - 6) resignation or removal of the deacon from the roster of Ministers of Word and Service of this church;
 - 7) termination of the relationship between this church and this congregation;
 - 8) dissolution of this congregation or the termination of a parish arrangement; or
 - 9) suspension of this congregation through discipline for more than six months.
- b. When allegations of disability or incapacity of the deacon under paragraph a.4) above, or ineffective conduct of the office of minister of Word and Service under paragraph a.3) above, have come to the attention of the bishop of this synod,
 - 1) the bishop, who has sole discretion, may investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson, or

Commented [G&EL9]: This added portion through the rest of chapter 9 refers to the call of a Deacon.

- 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 this congregation, the bishop personally shall investigate such conditions together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson.
- c. In case of alleged disability or incapacity under paragraph a.4) above, the bishop's committee shall obtain and document competent medical opinion concerning the deacon's condition. When a disability or incapacity is evident to the committee, the bishop of this synod may declare the position vacant. When the position is declared vacant, the Synod Council shall list the deacon on the roster of Ministers of Word and Service with disability status. Upon resumption of the ability to conduct the office effectively, the bishop shall take steps to enable the deacon 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 this 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 deacon and then to this congregation. The recommendations of the bishop's committee must address whether the deacon'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 this congregation and by the deacon, if appropriate. If the deacon 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 deacon's call, this congregation may dismiss the deacon only at a legally called meeting after consultation with the bishop, either (a) by a two-thirds 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 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 discipline, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action in accordance with the provisions of this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions.

***C9.26.** This congregation shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to a former deacon before calling a successor. A deacon 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.

***C9.27.** When a deacon is called to serve in company with another rostered minister or other rostered ministers, the privileges and responsibilities of each rostered minister shall be specified in documents to accompany the call and to be drafted in consultation involving the rostered ministers, the Congregation Council, and the bishop of the synod. As occasion requires, the documents may be revised through a similar consultation.

***C9.28.** With the approval of the bishop of the synod, this congregation may depart from *C9.25.a. and call a deacon 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 deacon and representatives of this congregation for a review of the call. Such a call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of *C9.25.a.

***C9.29.** The deacon shall become a member of this congregation upon receipt and acceptance of the letter of call. In a parish of multiple congregations, the deacon shall hold membership in one of the congregations.

***C9.31.** The deacon(s) shall submit a report of ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.

Chapter 10

CONGREGATION MEETING

C10.01. The annual meeting of this congregation shall be held at a time specified in the bylaws. This congregation shall have at least one regular meeting per year. The regular meeting(s) of the congregation shall be held at the time(s) specified in the bylaws. Consistent with the laws of the State of Minnesota, the bylaws shall designate one regular meeting per year as the annual meeting of this congregation.

C10.01.01. This congregation shall hold its annual meeting following worship on the fourth Sunday in January, or on a nearby Sunday as determined by the Church Council should that date present a number of conflicts. If weather forces the cancellation of worship on this day, the annual meeting will be held on the next Sunday at which regular worship occurs.

Commented [G&EL10]: Chapter 10 is the first time we get non-required elements. They can be left unchanged, but if changed, need to match the model constitution. Changes I'm proposing will be to match it to the model constitution.

Commented [G&EL11]: Items highlighted in yellow (this color) are additions to the bylaws of this congregation.

- 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 twenty (20) of the voting members. **The president of the Congregation Council shall call a special meeting upon request of the synod 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. **The posting of such notice in the regular mail, with the regular postage affixed or paid, sent to the last known address of such members shall be sufficient or notices may be hand delivered.**
- C10.04.** **Thirty (30)** Twenty (20) percent of voting members 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.
- C10.08.** This congregation may hold meetings by remote communication, including electronically and by telephone conference, as long as there is an opportunity for simultaneous aural communication or its equivalent. To the extent permitted by state law, notice of all meetings may be provided electronically.
- C10.09.** "Ex officio" as used herein means membership with full rights of voice and vote unless otherwise expressly limited.

Chapter 11. OFFICERS

- C11.01.** The officers of this congregation shall be a president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer.
- Duties of the officers shall be specified in the bylaws.
 - The officers shall be voting members of the congregation.
 - Officers of this congregation shall serve similar offices of the Congregation Council and shall be voting members of the Congregation Council.
 - If the Congregation Council elects its officers, the president, vice president, and secretary shall be selected from the elected membership of the Congregation Council.
- C11.01.01.** The duties of the officers shall be:
- President:**
 - Preside over meetings of the Congregation Council.
 - Prepare (in consultation with the rostered minister) and distribute council meeting agenda prior to the meeting.
 - Preside over meetings of this congregation.
 - Represent the Council before the congregation and community.
 - Preside over meetings of the Joint Council of the Parish if the meeting is held at Grace.
 - Prepare (in consultation with the rostered minister) and distribute agenda for Joint Council meetings of the Parish if the meeting is held at Grace.
 - Provide, in consultation with Emmanuel's President, for pastoral coverage in the event that the pastor is/will be absent.
 - Serve as ex-officio member of committees of this congregation as outlined in this Constitution, bylaws and continuing resolutions.
 - Vice President:**
 - Assumes necessary roles of the President, should the President be absent.
 - Secretary:**
 - Take minutes at all council meetings.
 - Send finalized minutes to council members for additions and corrections prior to the next meeting.
 - Send minutes (corrected, if sufficient time) to the office administrator to be included in the monthly newsletter.
 - Take minutes at all congregation meetings.
 - Send finalized minutes to council members for additions and corrections.

- 6) Send corrected minutes to the office administrator for inclusion monthly newsletter and next year's annual report.
 - 7) Arrange with the Secretary of Emmanuel who will be responsible for taking minutes of joint meetings; usually the Secretary of Grace will take minutes when the Joint Council meeting is held at Grace.
 - 8) Send finalized minutes to Joint Council members for additions and corrections, and once these have been received, send corrected minutes to the office administrator for inclusion in the monthly newsletter.
- d. Treasurer:
- 1) Liaison with this congregation's bookkeeper.
 - 2) Send out the financial report and memorial fund report each month to the Council members prior to the meeting.
 - 3) Identify to the council any issues with the financial reports and unexpected increases or decreases that appear in them.

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

C11.03. No officer shall hold more than one office at a time. No elected officer shall be eligible to serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office.

Chapter 12.

CONGREGATION COUNCIL

C12.01. The voting membership of the Congregation Council shall consist of the pastor, the officers of the congregation, and three members of the this 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. A member's place on the Congregation Council shall be declared vacant if the member a) ceases to be a voting member of this congregation or b) is absent from four successive regular meetings of the Congregation Council without cause. Consistent with the laws of the state in which this congregation is incorporated, the congregation may adopt procedures for the removal of a member of the Congregation Council in other circumstances.

C12.01.A23. The Congregation Council shall assign a Council member as a liaison and member of each standing committee, except those where it is indicated in this constitution that the committee is to be elected by the congregation. That person shall have voice and vote on that committee.

C12.01.B23. The Congregation Council Liaison shall:

- a. Provide a report from the Committee to the Congregation Council each month.
- b. Provide a report from the Congregation Council to the Committee each month.
- c. Represent the Committee to the Congregation Council on issues needing Council attention.

C12.02. The members of the Congregation Council except the pastor(s) shall be elected at a legally called meeting of the congregation during the month of January. Their term of office shall be for 2 (two) years, with the term of office beginning at the Church Council meeting after the annual meeting in which they were elected, on February 15 and ending on February 14). Newly elected Congregation Council members shall be installed at worship the Sunday prior to the date they assume office at a time appointed by the Congregation Council.

C12.03. Should a member's place on the Congregation Council be declared vacant, the Congregation Council shall elect, by majority vote, a successor until the next annual meeting. Individuals who have served less than one-half of a regular term shall be eligible for nomination and possible election to a full term.

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

- a. To lead this congregation in stating its mission, to do long-range planning, to set goals and priorities, and to evaluate its activities in light of its mission and goals.
- b. To seek to involve all members of this congregation in worship, learning, witness, service, and support.
- c. To oversee and provide for the administration of this congregation to enable it to fulfill its functions and perform its mission.
- d. To maintain supportive relationships with the pastor(s) rostered ministers and staff and help them annually to evaluate the fulfillment of their calling or employment.

- e. To be examples individually and corporately of the style of life and ministry expected of all baptized persons.
- f. To promote a congregational climate of peace and goodwill, and, as differences and conflicts arise, to endeavor to foster mutual understanding.
- g. To arrange for pastoral service during the sickness or absence of the pastor.
- h. To emphasize partnership with the synod and churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as well as cooperation with other congregations, both Lutheran and non-Lutheran, subject to established policies of the synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- i. To recommend and encourage the use of program resources produced or approved by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- j. To seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel.

C12.04.A23. Except when this constitution specifies that another specific method for constructing committees (such as through Congregation vote or appointment by the rostered minister), the Congregation Council shall be responsible for appointing members of all Committees.

- C12.05.** The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the financial and property matters of this congregation.
- a. The Congregation Council shall be the board of directors 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~~ this congregation.
 - c. The Congregation Council may enter into contracts of up to \$ 2000.00 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 \$ 2000.00 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~~ collaboration with the synod and churchwide organization.
 - e. The Congregation Council shall ascertain that the financial affairs of this congregation are being conducted efficiently, giving particular attention to the prompt payment of all obligations and to the regular forwarding of ~~benevolence~~ mission support monies to the ~~synodical-treasurer~~ synod.
 - 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~~ staff of this congregation. ~~Nothing in this provision shall be deemed to affect this congregation's responsibility for the call, terms of call, or termination of call of any employees who are on a roster of this church.~~

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 particular regular or special meeting, which shall be the only business considered at that meeting. Chronic or repeated absence of the pastor or interim pastor who has refused approval of the agenda of a subsequent regular or special meeting shall not preclude action by the Congregation Council, following consultation with the ~~lead~~ bishop.

C12.13. The Congregation Council and its committees may hold meetings by remote communication, including electronically and by telephone conference, as long as there is an opportunity for simultaneous aural communication or its equivalent. To the extent permitted by state law, notice of all meetings may be provided electronically.

Chapter 13.

CONGREGATION COMMITTEES

- C13.01.** The officers of this congregation and the pastor shall constitute the *Executive Committee*.
- C13.02.** A *Nominating Committee* of six 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 one year. Members of the Nominating Committee are not eligible for consecutive reelection.
- 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.
- C13.04.** A *Mutual Ministry Committee* (in the absence of a mutual ministry committee, the duties shall be fulfilled by the executive committee) shall be appointed jointly by the president and the **pastor rostered minister**. Term of office shall be two years, with two members from Grace to be appointed each successive year. This shall be a Parish Committee with representatives from each congregation.
- C13.05.** When a **pastoral** vacancy occurs **in a position for which this congregation calls a rostered minister**, a *Call Committee* of six voting members shall be elected by this congregation. This shall be a Parish Call Committee with 3 members from each congregation. Term of office will terminate upon installation of the newly called pastor.
- C13.06.** Other committees of this congregation may be formed, as the need arises, by decision of the Congregation Council.

C13.06.A23. This congregation shall have the following additional standing committees:

- a. Property Committee.
- b. Youth & Education Committee.
- c. Worship and Music Committee
- d. Evangelism/Social Ministry Committee.
- e. Finance Committee

C13.07. Duties of committees of this congregation shall be specified in the continuing resolutions.

C13.07.A23. The duties of the Property Committee shall be:

- a. Church property
 - 1) Supervise cleaning personnel.
 - 2) Schedule preventive maintenance and repairs based upon scheduled annual or periodic inspections.
 - 3) Develop long range needs and plans for improvement.
 - 4) Develop policies and procedures on the use of church property.
 - 5) Landscape:
 - i) Provide for grass to be mowed and trimmed properly.
 - ii) Provide for fertilizer and weed control to be applied, as needed.
 - iii) Provide for trees and shrubs to be maintained.
 - iv) Provide for snow and ice removal and for slippery surfaces to be treated.
 - 6) Utilities:
 - i) Monitor utility costs.
 - ii) Schedule routine maintenance.
 - 7) Church Furnishings are to be repaired or replaced based upon regular inspections.
- b. Parsonage Property
 - 1) Schedule preventive maintenance and repairs based upon scheduled annual and/or periodic inspections.
 - 2) Develop long range needs and plans for improvements.
 - 3) Landscape:
 - i) Provide for grass to be mowed and trimmed properly.
 - ii) Provide for fertilizer and weed control to be applied, as needed.
 - iii) Provide for trees and shrubs to be maintained.
 - iv) Provide for snow and ice removal and for slippery surfaces to be treated.
 - 4) Utilities:
 - i) Utility costs to be monitored.
 - ii) Schedule routine maintenance.
 - 5) Repair or replace furnishings based on regular inspections.

C13.07.B23. The duties of the Youth & Education Committee shall be:

- a. Provide outreach to youth.

Commented [G&EL12]: Because there is no indication when the document from which this comes was created, I'm putting it for this year; thus we can do with it as we want—following the process for creating/amending Continuing Resolutions.

Items highlighted in green (this color) are created continuing resolutions (that were created from pre-existing ones of unknown date).

- b. Plan and supervise local youth events and youth ministries.
- c. Publicize and encourage participation in ELCA youth events and camps, etc.
- d. Encourage participation by youth in the ministry of the congregation.
- e. Interpret the needs and concerns of youth to the congregation.
- f. Encourage the congregation to support youth.
- g. Share with the pastor in the supervision and administration of the educational programs of the congregation.
- h. Staff, train and supervise the teaching staffs.
- i. Approve the curricula used in the schools.
- j. Administer the following programs:
 - 1. Sunday Church School
 - 2. Vacation Church School
 - 3. Preparation for first communion
 - 4. Premarital education programs
 - 5. Parenting education programs
 - 6. Adult education programs
 - 7. Preparation for confirmation
 - 8. Pre-baptism education programs.
 - 9. Special programs based on special needs (such as, handicapped) or interests.

C13.07.C23. The duties of the Worship and Music Committee shall be:

- a. Assist the pastor in planning worship services.
- b. Arrange for special services.
- c. Staff, train and supervise (with the pastor) the various staffs:
 - 2) Ushering staff
 - 3) Acolyte staff (Pastor)
 - 4) Communion preparation staff
 - 5) Assisting ministers (Pastor)
 - 6) Organists
 - 7) Choir directors
 - 8) Flower arrangers and plants (including watering)
 - 9) Altar guild
 - 10) Lectors
- d. Provide items necessary for worship:
 - 1) Adequate Sound System
 - 2) Paraments and altar furnishings
 - 3) Communion sets
 - 4) Vestments
 - 5) Disposable items, such as candles, communion glasses, communion registration cards, pencils, baptismal napkins, etc.
 - 6) Flowers
 - 7) Banners
- e. Provide for continuing worship education and interpretations, with emphasis on participation by all, including children and youth.

C13.07.D23. The duties of the Evangelism/Social Ministry Committee shall be:

- a. Share with the pastor in the outreach program of the congregation.
 - 1) Encourage and train the congregation to reach out to the unchurched.
 - 2) Provide for the instruction, orientation, reception and integration of new members.
 - 3) Provide for the reception of new members.
 - 4) Provide for outreach to the inactive.
 - 5) Provide opportunities for fellowship for the congregation, and for small groups within the congregation.
- b. Develop a public relations program.
- c. Liaison:
 - 1) Lutheran homes and institutions.
 - 2) Lutheran Social Service.
 - 3) Service agencies.
- d. Nursing Home Worship Service.

- C13.07.E23.** The Finance Committee shall engage in financial management by:
- Providing internal control systems for income and expenditures.
 - Assisting the financial secretary and treasurer in developing bookkeeping.
 - Cooperating with the audit committee.
 - Assisting the financial secretary and treasurer in providing annual reports.
 - Administering the development of the preliminary budget.
 - Administering the transactions related to indebtedness and the orderly retirement of indebtedness.
 - Administering the memorial and endowment funds.
 - Administering the securities of the congregation.
- C13.07.F23.** All committees share the following responsibilities, in addition to those determined by the Congregation Council:
- Prepare an annual calendar of events and work plans.
 - Prepare an annual budget.
 - Prepare an annual report.
 - Keep appropriate minutes and permanent records of Committee decisions, policies and activities.
 - Develop appropriate operating policies, job descriptions, and job procedures.
- C13.08.** The senior pastor of this congregation shall be *ex officio* a member of all committees and boards of the congregation. The president of this congregation shall be *ex officio* a member of all committees and boards of this congregation, except the Nominating Committee.
- C13.08.A23.** The Council President and Pastor, as *ex officio* members, shall have voice and vote.
- C13.08.B23.** The Committee shall elect from its members a chairperson who will
- Establish an agenda for each meeting.
 - Chair each meeting or delegate chair responsibilities.
 - Authorize the expenditures of the Committee as provided by the Congregation budget and/or Congregation Council action.
 - Ensure completion of responsibilities accepted by Committee members.

Chapter 14.

ORGANIZATIONS WITHIN THE CONGREGATION

- C14.01.** All organizations within this congregation shall exist to aid it in ministering to the members of this congregation and to all persons who can be reached with the Gospel of Christ. As outgrowths and expressions of this congregation's life, the organizations are subject to its oversight and direction. This congregation at its meeting shall determine their policies, guide their activities, and receive reports concerning their membership, work, and finances.
- C14.02.** Special interest groups, other than those of the official organizations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, may be organized only after authorization has been given by the Congregation Council.

Chapter 15.

DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS AND ADJUDICATION

- *C15.01.** Denial of the Christian faith as described in this constitution, conduct grossly unbecoming a member of the Church of Christ, or persistent trouble making in this congregation are sufficient cause for discipline of a member. 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 this congregation, or willful and repeated harassment or defamation of member(s) of this congregation is sufficient cause for discipline of a member. Prior to disciplinary action, reconciliation will be attempted following Matthew 18:15-17, proceeding through these successive steps: a) private counsel and admonition by the pastor, b) censure and admonition by the pastor in the presence of two or three witnesses, and c) citation to appear before the Congregation Council. If, for any reason, the pastor is unable to administer the admonitions required by a. and b. hereof, the president (if not the pastor) or vice president shall administer such admonitions. 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 discipline against a member proceeds beyond counseling and admonition by the pastor, charges

Commented [G&EL13]: C15.02-7 are all sufficiently changed to warrant cut and replace. The primary way this shows up is with the Synod Consultation and Discipline committees.

against the accused member(s) that are specific and in writing shall be prepared by member(s) of the congregation who shall sign the charges as the accuser(s). The written charges shall be filed with the pastor, who shall advise the Congregation Council of the need to issue a written citation to the accused and the accusers that specifies the time and place of the hearing before the Congregation Council. The written charges shall accompany the written citation to the accused. A member charged with the offense shall appear before the Congregation Council after having received a written citation, at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting. If the member charged with the offense fails to appear at the scheduled hearing, the Congregation Council may proceed with the hearing and may pass judgment in the member's absence.

***C15.03.** Members of the Congregation Council who participate in the preparation of the written charges or who present evidence or testimony in the hearing before the Congregation Council are disqualified from voting upon the question of the guilt of the accused member. Should the allegations be sustained by a two-thirds majority vote of the members of the Congregation Council who are not disqualified but who are present and voting, and renewed admonition prove ineffectual, the council shall impose one of the following disciplinary actions:

- a. censure before the council or congregation;
- b. suspension from membership for a definite period of time; or
- c. exclusion from membership in this congregation;

Disciplinary actions b. and c. shall be delivered to the member in writing.

***C15.04.** The member against whom disciplinary action has been taken by the Congregation Council shall have the right to appeal the decision to the Synod Council. Such right may not be abridged and the decision of the Synod Council shall be final.

***C15.05.** Disciplinary actions may be reconsidered and revoked by the Congregation Council upon receipt of a) evidence that injustice has been done or b) evidence of repentance and amendment.

***C15.06.** For disciplinary actions in this congregation, "due process" shall be observed as specified in 20.41.04, in the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

***C15.07.** No member of a congregation shall be subject to discipline for offenses that the Congregation Council has previously heard and decided, unless so ordered by the Synod Council after an appeal.

***C15.02.** The process for discipline of a member of this 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 laypersons and two rostered ministers). 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 the 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 this congregation; or
- d. termination of membership in this 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 by the Congregation Council and recorded in the minutes of the next council meeting.

***C15.07.** No member of this 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 may petition ~~shall have access to the synodical~~ bishop for consultation after informing the ~~chair of the Congregation Council~~ president of this congregation of their intent to do so. The synod bishop shall seek a timely resolution of the dispute. If the issue relates directly to the pastor, the bishop may begin the process in ¶S14.18.d. In all other matters, if the bishop's ~~If the~~ consultation fails to resolve the issue(s), the bishop shall refer the matter to the Consultation Committee of the synod, which will undertake efforts to find an appropriate solution ~~shall consider the matter~~. If the Consultation ~~Committee's efforts of the synod shall~~ fail to resolve the issue(s) dispute, the entire matter shall be referred to the Synod Council for adjudication by whatever process the Council deems necessary. The ~~Synod Council's whose~~ decision shall be final.

Chapter 16-17.

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~~ two-thirds vote of those voting members present and voting.

***C16.03.** Changes to the bylaws may be proposed by any voting member, provided, ~~however,~~ that such additions or amendments be submitted in writing to the Congregation Council at least 60 days before a regular or special Congregation Meeting called for that purpose, ~~and that~~ the Congregation Council shall notify ~~the~~ this congregation's members ~~by mail~~ 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 17-16.

AMENDMENTS

***C17.01.** Unless provision *C16.04. is applicable, those sections of this 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 fifteen (15) 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 ~~by mail~~ 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 *C16.01., shall:

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

***C17.03.** Any amendments to this constitution that result from the processes provided in *C16.01. and *C16.02. shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod. ~~The amendment shall become effective within 120 days from the date of the receipt of the notice by the synod unless the synod informs this congregation that the amendment is in conflict with the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or the constitution of the Northeastern Minnesota Synod of the ELCA. The synod shall notify this 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 Constitutions for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*

Commented [G&EL14]: The bylaw and amendment chapters swap position and numbering. Amendments become chapter 16; bylaws become chapter 17. I'm going to deal with content, rather than numbering at this point.

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 subsequent legally called meeting of the this congregation without presentation at a prior meeting of the this congregation, provided that the Congregation Council has submitted by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law, notice to the this congregation of such an amendment or amendments, together with the council's recommendations, at least 30 days prior to the meeting. Upon the request of at least two (2) voting members of this 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 the congregation's vote of approval.

Chapter 18.

CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

- *C18.01. The This congregation in a legally called meeting or the Congregation Council may enact continuing resolutions (which describe the functions of the various committees or organizations of Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church). 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 this congregation or a two-thirds vote of all voting members of the Congregation Council.
- *C18.03. Adopted or amended continuing resolutions shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod.

Commented [G&EL15]: This explanatory, parenthetical clause (which is not in the model constitution) cannot exist inside a required element. The suggestion is to cut it.

Chapter 19.

INDEMNIFICATION

- *C19.01. Consistent with the provisions of the laws under which this congregation is incorporated, this congregation may adopt provisions providing indemnification for each person who, by reason of the fact that such person is or was a Congregation Council member, officer, employee, agent, or other member of any committee of this congregation, was or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending, or completed civil, criminal, administrative, arbitration, or investigative proceeding.

Chapter 20.

PARISH AUTHORIZATION

[* Required provisions when congregation is part of a parish]

- *C20.01. This congregation may unite in partnership with one or more other congregations recognized by the synod named in *C6.01. to form a parish. Except as provided in *C20.02. and *C20.03., a written agreement, developed in consultation with the synod and approved by the voting members of each congregation participating in the parish, shall specify the powers and responsibilities that have been delegated to a Parish Council. The Parish Agreement shall identify which congregation of the parish issues calls on behalf of the member congregations or shall establish a process for identifying which congregation issues calls on behalf of the member congregations.
- C20.01.01.** The call for a rostered minister serving this parish shall be issued by Grace Lutheran Church.
- *C20.02. Whenever a letter of call is being recommended for extension to an ordained minister of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or a candidate for the roster of ordained ministers who has been One congregation of a parish shall issue a call on behalf of the member congregations to a minister of Word and Sacrament or a candidate for the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament who has been recommended to the congregation by the synodical bishop to serve the congregations of a the parish-s. Such letter of call shall be first approved prior to issuance by a two-thirds vote at a congregational meetings of each of the congregations forming the parish. If any congregation of the parish should fail to approve extending this the call, the other congregations in of the same parish shall have the right to terminate the parish arrangement.
- *C20.03. One congregation of a parish may issue a call on behalf of the member congregations to a minister of Word and Service or a candidate for the roster of Ministers of Word and Service who has been recommended by the synod bishop to serve the congregations of the parish. Such a call shall be approved prior to issuance by a two-thirds vote at a congregation meeting of each congregation forming the parish. If any congregation of the parish should fail to approve the call, the other congregations of the parish shall have the right to terminate the parish agreement.

***C20.03-04.** Any one of the congregations of a parish may terminate the call of a their relationship with the pastor as provided in †S14.13-18.d. of the synodical constitution of the synod named in *C6.01. In such case, the other congregation(s) in of the same parish shall have the right to terminate the parish arrangement.

***C20.05.** Any one of the congregations of the parish may terminate their relationship with a minister of Word and Service as provided in †S14.43.d. of the synod constitution of the synod named in *C6.01. In such case, the other congregation(s) of the same parish shall have the right to terminate the parish agreement.

***C20.06.** Whenever a parish agreement is terminated, the call of any rostered minister serving that parish is terminated. Should any congregation that was formerly part of the parish agreement desire to issue a new call to that rostered minister, it may do so in accordance with the call process of this church.

By-Laws (2009)

Termination of Membership

A member shall be considered inactive if they have not attended worship or made a contribution of record for a year.

After one year, they shall be contacted by the Pastor and with proper pastoral care and concern be urged to continue fully in the life of the congregation.

After two years, they shall be contacted by the Congregational Council or appointed committee and urged to continue to participate in the life of the congregation or indicate where they would like their membership transferred.

After three years, the Congregational Council shall remove the member from the church roles unless other arrangements have been made for the provision of their membership.

Inactive members shall be restored to the rolls of confirmed members in good standing when the member receives the Lord's Supper and once more enters upon the other rights and obligations of a member of the congregation.

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

Commented [G&EL16]: This is not how bylaws are supposed to be entered into the document. See C8.05.01 and C8.05.02.