

Bylaws

Lutheran Church of the Master

Part I Statement of Faith

1. Lutheran Church of the Master (LCM) shall be a Lutheran congregation, which holds the Word of God as the authoritative norm and guide for faith and life as reflected in the Old and New Testaments. LCM shall embrace and conduct its operations and activities in accordance with the Apostles', Nicene and Athanasian Creeds and the Book of Concord as expressions of the Christian faith.

Part II Membership in Church Bodies

1. LCM will operate as an independent Lutheran church, or as a member of a Lutheran church body (or bodies), as the congregation so decides. A decision to join or leave a Lutheran church body shall require a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote at a congregational meeting. Any action to join or leave a Lutheran church body must be ratified by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote at a congregational meeting no less than sixty (60) days after the initial vote.
2. If LCM is a member of a Lutheran church body, the Church Council shall ensure compliance with the requirements of such membership as appropriate for LCM and shall involve the congregation as is appropriate or required.

Part III Membership in LCM

1. Voting membership shall be all confirmed members.
2. Baptized membership shall be all who have been baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and participate in the life and activity of the congregation.
3. Discontinuance of membership:
 - A. By transfer – any member requesting a transfer to another congregation shall receive a transfer.
 - B. By request – any member requesting their name be removed as a member.
 - C. Due to inactivity – if during a calendar year a member has not: communed; or attended and participated in worship services at LCM; or contributed financially according to LCM's contribution records, the member may be placed on the inactive list for a period of six (6) months. A representative of LCM will contact the member during this time. If there is no response, the member may be deleted from the list of members.

Part IV Holy Communion

1. Participation in communion is open to all who profess belief in the one Savior Jesus Christ, and who profess a belief in the presence of the true body and blood of Christ at the communion table, and who have been instructed in its benefits.
2. An ordained pastor will normally preside over communion for the congregation. From time to time, a lay person designated by a LCM pastor may preside over communion.

Part V Disciplining Members

1. Chapter 18 in the New Testament Book of Matthew shall guide the congregation for any disciplinary matter of any member.
2. The Church Council is charged with administration of any disciplinary hearing involving a member.
3. A member, who is requested to appear before the Church Council for possible discipline, shall be advised in writing no less than ten (10) days prior to the hearing. The written notice shall include the time and place of the hearing and shall specify the exact reason for the possible discipline. If the member fails to appear at the time and place without a valid excuse, the Church Council may proceed with the hearing and may reach its conclusion in the member's absence.
4. By a two-thirds (2/3) vote, the Church Council may impose one of the following:
 - A. Censure before the Church Council or the congregation.

- B. Suspension from membership until proof is provided of sufficient repentance and amendment.
- C. Exclusion from membership and denial of the sacraments.
- D. The member will be notified of the Church Council's conclusion and any further action in writing within seven (7) days of the hearing.

Part VI The Pastoral Call

1. Only pastors who are in agreement with the "Statement of Faith" in Part I of these bylaws can be called and retained as pastors for LCM.
2. Authority to call a pastor shall rest in the congregation. Such authority to call shall be exercised by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the ballot votes at a meeting for that purpose.
3. If LCM is a member of a Lutheran church body, the Church Council shall provide information to, and secure information and assistance from, such Lutheran church body as is appropriate or required, related to a pastoral call.
4. The Church Council shall maintain a written policy and procedure covering the details of a pastoral call.
5. In the event of a vacancy in an authorized pastoral position, the Church Council shall provide for interim pastoral service, as needed.

Part VII Requesting the Resignation of a Pastor

1. If, in the judgment of the congregation, a pastor is no longer able to serve it satisfactorily, for various reasons, including defection in doctrine or conduct unbecoming a pastor, that pastor may be requested to resign. Before the resignation is requested, all parties, including the pastor, shall have the opportunity to be heard at a specially called meeting of the Church Council. After the hearing before the Church Council, a special meeting of the congregation may be called to consider a request for the pastor's resignation. A resolution requesting a pastor's resignation must be adopted by a majority ballot vote. A minimum of ten (10) days' notice of such meeting of the congregation must be given. If a resignation has been requested in the manner here provided, the pastor shall vacate the office at the time the congregation specifies. Should the pastor fail to do so, the Church Council, shall declare the pastoral office vacant.

Part VIII Title to Property

1. Title to all real and personal property acquired by the congregation, its organizations or individuals for the use of the congregation, shall be held in the name of Lutheran Church of the Master, a Nebraska nonprofit corporation. Contracts relating to the purchase, sale or encumbrance of real estate, and any deeds or mortgages, shall be executed by such officers of the corporation as directed by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the votes at an annual or special congregational meeting.

Part IX Meetings of the Congregation

1. The power and authority of the congregation shall be exercised through congregational meetings, which shall be called and conducted in conformity with the Nebraska Nonprofit Corporation Act and provisions of the articles of incorporation and bylaws of the corporation.
2. The quorum for all congregational meetings shall be seventy-five (75) voting members physically present.
3. A meeting of the congregation may, by majority vote, recess to reconvene at a specified time and place. If appropriate and if time permits, the time and place shall be announced at worship services and/or in a written notice to members. A meeting also may recess to reconvene upon call, provided, however, the time and place of such a reconvened meeting upon call must be announced at worship services of the congregation, and not less than three (3) days written notice must be given of the reconvened meeting.
4. Unless contrary to the articles of incorporation or these bylaws, parliamentary procedures shall be in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order.
5. Voting
 - A. Unless specifically stated otherwise in these Bylaws, any action by the congregation must pass by a simple majority of the votes cast.
 - B. In order to vote, a member must be physically present and voting. However, absentee ballots may be used for issues brought before the congregation which are not amendable. For example: calling a

pastor; election of candidates to council; election of delegates to church wide or regional meetings; election of nominating committee; ratifying votes; etc. (This list is not all inclusive.) The actual vote may be viva voce (live voice), hand count, standing count or secret ballot.

- C. Proxies will not be allowed.
 - D. Abstaining votes will not be included in the calculation to determine whether or not the proper affirmative majority has been attained.
6. The Annual Meeting:
- A. The annual meeting shall be held on the date selected by the Church Council.
 - B. It shall include, but is not limited to, election of Church Council members, Nominating Committee members and delegates to churchwide or regional meetings; a report from the Treasurer or Financial Secretary; and to establish a financial budget for the following year.
 - C. Announcement of the time and place of the annual meeting shall be made at all worship services during the two (2) weeks preceding the date of the meeting, or by a written notice to the membership at least ten (10) days before the meeting.
 - D. The names of the candidates provided by the Nominating Committee for Church Council and for the Nominating Committee are to be announced or furnished in writing to the voting membership at least fourteen (14) days before the date of the meeting.
 - E. The Nominating Committee shall nominate at least three (3) more candidates than vacancies to be filled on the Church Council, and shall secure the consent of each candidate. Additional nominations can be made from the floor for Church Council members, Nominating Committee members and delegates to churchwide or regional meetings -- however, the nominee must be present at the meeting and must agree to be a candidate.
7. Special Meetings:
- A. A special meeting of the congregation may be called by: the Church Council; the President of LCM; a Pastor or by petition of fifty (50) of the voting members.
 - B. Written or printed notice stating the day, hour, place and purpose of such special meeting shall be sent to all voting members, and shall be delivered not less than ten (10) nor more than fifty (50) days before the date of the meeting.
 - C. The Pastor(s) shall be notified of the time and place at which a special meeting of the congregation is to be held.
 - D. Only the business for which a special meeting has been called shall be transacted at that meeting.

Part X General Provisions for Church Boards

- 1. Boards shall mean any of Church Council, Board of Deacons or Board of Trustees.
- 2. Only a confirmed member of the congregation shall be eligible for membership on these bodies or offices.
- 3. A compensated staff member of LCM (i.e. pastors, coordinators, and operational support staff) may not serve on the boards
- 4. No member shall be eligible to succeed himself or herself more than once.
- 5. If a vacancy occurs in one of these bodies, the Church Council may fill the vacancy at its next meeting. Should the remaining term be one (1) year or less, it shall not be considered in determining eligibility for succession.
- 6. A member of a board who is absent from two (2) consecutive regular meetings shall be consulted by the President of the congregation. If the member is absent from additional regular meetings without valid excuse, the Church Council may declare the office vacant.
- 7. A quorum for any regular or special meeting of the Church Council, Board of Trustees or Board of Deacons shall be one-half (1/2) of the membership of that body.
- 8. A special meeting of the Board of Deacons, Board of Trustees or the Church Council, may be called by the Pastor(s), the chairperson of the board or one-half (1/2) of the members of the board or Church Council. Notice of such meeting shall be given not less than five (5) days prior to the meeting and

announced at each worship service held during that period. The five (5) day notice may be waived by consent of two-thirds (2/3) of the voting members of the board.

9. The Pastor(s) shall be an advisory member(s) of the Church Council, the Board of Trustees and the Board of Deacons by virtue of that office, but without vote.
10. Board members must excuse themselves from considering matters where a real or perceived conflict of interest exists, as determined by the chair.

Part XI Church Council - Duties and Responsibilities

1. The Church Council shall determine the number of members on the Nominating Committee, not to exceed ten (10). The term of office shall be two (2) years, with approximately one-half (1/2) of the terms expiring each year. The senior pastor shall convene the Nominating Committee and shall serve as an advisory member.
2. The Church Council shall determine the number of members on the Church Council, which shall be at least ten (10) and not more than thirty (30). The term of office shall be three (3) years, with approximately one-third (1/3) of the terms expiring each year.
3. At its first meeting following the annual meeting of the congregation, the Church Council shall:
 - A. Elect from its own membership a President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Financial Secretary of the congregation.
 - B. Elect a chairperson and vice chairperson of the Board of Trustees and a chairperson and vice chairperson of the Board of Deacons.
 - C. Elect such committee chairpersons as are necessary to carry out the work of the church.
 - D. Designate as many as desired of its members, including the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and chairperson of the Board of Deacons, to serve as the Board of Trustees of the congregation.
 - E. Designate as many as desired of its members, including the President, to serve as the Board of Deacons of the congregation.
4. The Church Council shall exercise such authority as is delegated to it by the amended articles of incorporation, the bylaws and the resolutions of the congregation.
5. The Church Council shall designate and grant authority to individuals to sign any legal documents (other than contracts relating to the purchase, sale or encumbrance of real estate, and any deeds or mortgages) on behalf of LCM including, but not limited to, checks, drafts, notes and any other order of monetary payment for LCM.
6. Conduct regular meetings not less than once each quarter, at such time and place as the Church Council may determine.
7. Annually review the salary of the Pastor(s) and make adjustments from time to time within the limits of the budget approved by the congregation.
8. Review and approve the annual budget for submittal to the congregation for approval.
9. Report its major decisions and other significant information, as appropriate, to the members at the annual or special meetings of the congregation, and at such other times as the Church Council or the congregation deems appropriate.
10. Have authority between meetings of the congregation to choose delegates to any group or meeting in which the congregation is entitled to representation.
11. Establish policies necessary for the ongoing operations and programs of the church with input from the congregation as appropriate.
12. The Church Council may assign other duties and responsibilities to the officer positions, and to the Board of Trustees and the Board of Deacons as necessary.
13. The Council shall determine how to allocate overages or shortages of receipts vs expenditures.

Part XII Officers

1. The President shall preside at the meetings of the Church Council and of the congregation.
2. The Vice President shall preside at the meetings of the Church Council and of the congregation in the absence of the President.
3. The chairperson of Board of Trustees shall preside at the meetings of the Board of Trustees.
4. The chairperson of Board of Deacons shall preside at the meetings of the Board of Deacons and work in harmony with the pastor(s) to provide spiritual leadership for the congregation.
5. The Secretary shall write the minutes of meetings of the Church Council, the Board of Trustees and the congregation, and shall ensure the major records of the congregation are being maintained as required by the Records Retention Policy and other applicable policies.
6. The Treasurer shall have custody of all funds of the congregation. He shall oversee the receipt and disbursement of such funds in accordance with the decisions of the congregation or the Board of Trustees and establish financial controls as necessary.
7. The Financial Secretary shall maintain records of all contributions and make regular reports to the Church Council and to the members as required by the Church Council.

Part XIII Board of Trustees - Duties and Responsibilities

1. This board shall be responsible, either by direct involvement, or by monitoring results of authority delegated to others, for all matters relating to legal and corporate affairs, and shall supervise the maintenance of the properties of the congregation.
2. Conduct regular meetings approximately once a month but not less than ten (10) times annually at such time and place as the board may determine.
3. Approve hiring of compensated staff other than the pastor(s). Annually fix and review their salaries.
4. Receive reports regularly from the Treasurer to ascertain the total expenditures for the calendar year will not exceed actual total receipts (income) for the calendar year, unless authorized by the congregation.
5. Direct the preparation of the annual budget for review and approval by the Church Council, prior to submission to the annual meeting of the congregation.
6. Assure itself the Treasurer and others who have access to the funds of the congregation are adequately bonded.
7. Annually appoint an auditing committee of three (3), to audit the fiscal records of the congregation and report its findings in writing to the annual meeting. Such audits shall include examination of existing insurance coverage.
8. Be responsible for the buildings and premises of the congregation so their use is primarily limited to the functions of the congregation.
9. Report its major decisions and other significant information, as appropriate, to the members at the annual or special meetings of the congregation, and at such other times as the Church Council or the congregation deems appropriate.

Part XIV Board of Deacons - Duties and Responsibilities

1. This board shall provide spiritual leadership in the congregation, working with the pastor(s) and others to guide the work, witness, worship and service of the congregation to the world.
2. Elect from its own membership a secretary.
3. Conduct regular meetings approximately once a month but not less than ten (10) times annually at such time and place as the board may determine.

Part XV Amendment of Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws

1. Amendments to, or restatement of, the articles of incorporation or the bylaws can be proposed to the congregation by the Church Council, or by fifteen (15) or more voting members submitting to the Church Council a request for specified amendments or restatements.
2. Any proposed amendment or restatements must be readily available to the voting members at least twenty-one (21) days prior to a legally called congregational meeting. A general description of the

proposed amendment(s) or restatements and the date and time of the congregational meeting must be announced at worship services during the twenty-one (21) days prior to the congregational meeting.

3. Any proposed amendment(s) or restatements must be approved at an annual or special congregational meeting by the affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the votes cast. The voting results shall be stated in the worship bulletin for the next two (2) weeks.
4. Amendments to or restatements of the articles of incorporation shall be filed with the Secretary of the State of Nebraska. The copy of the articles of incorporation maintained in the church office for distribution to LCM members shall be updated for the amendments or restatements as soon as practical after the revision or restatement was approved by the congregation. The official copy of the bylaws, maintained in the corporate records, shall be changed to reflect the amendments or restatement and to show the date of such amendments, or restatements, and the Secretary of the corporation at the time the congregation approved the amendments or restatements shall sign a certification of the revised bylaws. This certification shall be shown at the end of the revised bylaws.

Adopted January 27, 1974
Updated May 10, 1985
Updated January 19, 1986
Updated January 17, 1988
Restated January 20, 2002
Restated January 18, 2004

These bylaws are restated in their entirety by vote of the congregation January 18, 2004.

Signed: _____
Bruce Holmquist, Secretary