

CONSTITUTION

Zion Lutheran Church

A Congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

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Mission Statement

We share God's call to experience purpose, wholeness, and community in Jesus Christ and faithfully steward his creation.

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Reviewed by Congregation Council December 18, 2017;
based on 2016 Model Constitution of the ELCA.

Adopted by the congregation on January _____.

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CONSTITUTION
ZION SCANDINAVIAN LUTHERAN CHURCH
Lewistown, Montana

***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 Zion Scandinavian Lutheran Church.
- C1.02.** For the purpose of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws, the congregation of Zion Scandinavian Lutheran Church is hereinafter designated as "this congregation."
- C1.11.** This congregation shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of Montana.

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.

* Required provision

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.
- *C3.03. 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.

Chapter 4.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

- *C4.01. The Church is a people created by God in Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, called and sent to bear witness to God's creative, redeeming, and sanctifying activity in the world.
- *C4.02. To participate in God's mission, this congregation as a part of the Church shall:
 - a. Worship God in proclamation of the Word and administration of the sacraments and through lives of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, witness, and service.
 - b. Proclaim God's saving Gospel of justification by grace for Christ's sake through faith alone, according to the apostolic witness in the Holy Scripture, preserving and transmitting the Gospel faithfully to future generations.
 - c. Carry out Christ's Great Commission by reaching out to all people to bring them to faith in Christ and by doing all ministry with a global awareness consistent with the understanding of God as Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier of all.
 - d. Serve in response to God's love to meet human needs, caring for the sick and the aged, advocating dignity and justice for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, standing with the poor and powerless, and committing itself to their needs.
 - e. Nurture its members in the Word of God so as to grow in faith and hope and love, to see daily life as the primary setting for the exercise of their Christian calling, and to use the gifts of the Spirit for their life together and for their calling in the world.
 - f. Manifest the unity given to the people of God by living together in the love of Christ and by joining with other Christians in prayer and action to express and preserve the unity which the Spirit gives.
- *C4.03. To fulfill these purposes, this congregation shall:
 - a. Provide services of worship at which the Word of God is preached and the sacraments are administered.
 - b. Provide pastoral care and assist all members to participate in this ministry.
 - c. Challenge, equip, and support all members in carrying out their calling in their daily lives and in their congregation.
 - d. Teach the Word of God.
 - e. Witness to the reconciling Word of God in Christ, reaching out to all people.
 - f. Respond to human need, work for justice and peace, care for the sick and the suffering, and participate responsibly in society.
 - g. Motivate its members to provide financial support for the congregation's ministry and the ministry of other parts of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

- h. Foster and participate in interdependent relationships with other congregations, the synod, and the 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 Committees.]
- *C4.05.** This congregation shall, from time to time, adopt 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;
 - d. terminate the call of a minister of Word and Service in conformity with the constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;
 - e. adopt amendments to the constitution, as provided in Chapter 16, amendments to the bylaws, as specified in Chapter 17, and continuing resolutions, as provided in Chapter 18;
 - f. approve the annual budget;
 - g. acquire real and personal property by gift, devise, purchase, or other lawful means;
 - h. hold title to and use its property for any and all activities consistent with its purpose;
 - i. sell, mortgage, lease, transfer, or otherwise dispose of its property by any lawful means;
 - j. elect its [officers][,] [and] Congregation Council, [boards, and committees,] and require [them] [the members of the council] to carry out their duties in accordance with the constitution[,] [and] bylaws[,] [and continuing resolutions]; and
 - k. 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 Montana 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.

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 Montana Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. This congregation is subject to the discipline of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- *C6.02. This congregation accepts the Confession of Faith and agrees to the purposes of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and shall act in accordance with them.
- *C6.03. This congregation acknowledges its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in which:
 - a. This congregation agrees to be responsible for its life as a Christian community.
 - b. This congregation pledges its financial support and participation in the life and mission of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - c. This congregation agrees to call pastoral leadership from the 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.
 - d. This congregation agrees to consider 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.
 - e. This congregation agrees to file this constitution and any subsequent changes to this constitution with the synod for review to ascertain that all of its provisions are in agreement with the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and with the constitution of the synod.
- *C6.04. Affiliation with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may be terminated as follows:
 - a. This congregation takes action to dissolve.
 - b. This congregation ceases to exist.
 - c. This congregation is removed from membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America according to the procedures for discipline of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - d. This congregation follows the procedures outlined in *C6.05.
- *C6.05. This congregation may terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America by the following procedure:
 - a. A resolution indicating the intent to terminate its relationship must be adopted at a legally called and conducted special meeting of the congregation by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present. Such meeting may be held no sooner than 30 days after written notice of the meeting is received by the bishop of the synod, during which time the congregation shall consult with the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any. The times and manner of the consultation shall be determined by the bishop in consultation with the Congregation Council. Unless he or she is a voting member of the congregation, the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any, shall have voice but not vote at the meeting.
 - b. The secretary of the congregation shall submit a copy of the resolution to the bishop, attesting that the special meeting was legally called and conducted and certifying the outcome of the vote, and shall mail a copy of the resolution to voting members of the congregation. This notice shall be submitted within 10 days after the resolution has been adopted.
 - c. The bishop of the synod and the congregation shall continue in consultation, as specified in paragraph a. above, during a period of at least 90 days after receipt by the synod of the notice as specified in paragraph b. above.
 - d. If the congregation, after such consultation, still seeks to terminate its relationship, such action may be taken at a legally called and conducted special meeting by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present. Notice of the meeting shall be mailed to all voting members and to the bishop at least 10 days in advance of the meeting. Unless he or she is a voting member of the congregation, the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any, shall have voice but not vote at the meeting.
 - e. A copy of the resolution, attesting that the special meeting was legally called and conducted and certifying the outcome of the vote, shall be sent to the bishop within 10 days after the resolution has been adopted, at which time the relationship between the congregation and this church shall be terminated subject to paragraph g. below. Unless this notification to the bishop also certifies that the

- congregation has voted by a two-thirds vote to affiliate with another Lutheran denomination, the congregation will be conclusively presumed to be an independent or non-Lutheran church.
- f. Notice of termination shall be forwarded by the bishop to the secretary of the ELCA, who shall report the termination to the Churchwide Assembly.
 - 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 synodical approval before terminating their membership in this church. (Since Zion formerly was a member of the American Lutheran Church, this paragraph does not apply.)
 - 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. (Since Zion formerly was a member of the American Lutheran Church, this paragraph does not apply.)
 - h. If this congregation fails to achieve the required two-thirds vote of voting members present at the congregation's first meeting as specified in paragraph a. above, another special meeting to consider termination of relationship with this church may be called no sooner than six months after that first meeting. If this congregation fails to achieve the required two-thirds vote of voting members present at the congregation's second meeting as specified in paragraph d. above, another attempt to consider termination of relationship with this church must follow all requirements of *C6.05. and may begin no sooner than six months after that second meeting.
- *C6.06.** If this congregation considers relocation, it shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located and the appropriate unit of the churchwide organization before any steps are taken leading to such action. The approval of the Synod Council shall be received before any such action is effected.
- *C6.07.** If this congregation considers developing an additional site to be used regularly for worship, it shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located and the appropriate unit of the churchwide organization before any steps are taken leading to such action.

Chapter 7.

PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

- *C7.01.** If this congregation ceases to exist, title to undisposed property shall pass to the Montana Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- *C7.02.** If this congregation is removed from membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America according to its procedure for discipline, title to property shall continue to reside in this congregation.
- *C7.03.** If two-thirds 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 Montana Synod.
- *C7.04.** If two-thirds of the voting members of this congregation present at a legally called and conducted special meeting of this congregation vote to become independent or relate to a non-Lutheran church body and have followed the process for termination of relationship in *C6.05., title to property of this congregation shall continue to reside in this congregation only with the consent of the Synod Council. The Synod Council, after consultation with this congregation by the established synodical process, may give approval to the request to become independent or to relate to a non-Lutheran church body, in which case title shall remain with the majority of this congregation. If the Synod Council fails to give such approval, title shall remain with those members who desire to continue as a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- C7.05.** Notwithstanding the provisions of *C7.02. and *C7.03. above, where this congregation has received property from the synod pursuant to a deed or other instrument containing restrictions under provision

9.71.a. of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, this congregation accepts such restrictions and:

- a. Shall not transfer, encumber, mortgage, or in any way burden or impair any right, title, or interest in the property without prior approval of the Synod Council.
- b. Shall—upon written demand by the Synod Council, pursuant to †S13.23. of the constitution of the Montana Synod—reconvey and transfer all right, title, and interest in the property to the synod.

Chapter 8. MEMBERSHIP

***C8.01.** Members of this congregation shall be those baptized persons on the roll of this congregation at the time that this constitution is adopted and those who are admitted thereafter and who have declared and maintain their membership in accordance with the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.

***C8.02.** Members shall be classified as follows:

- a. **Baptized** members are those persons who have been received by the Sacrament of Holy Baptism in this congregation, or, having been previously baptized in the name of the Triune God, have been received by certificate of transfer from other Lutheran congregations or by affirmation of faith.
- b. **Confirmed** members are baptized persons who have been confirmed in this congregation, those who have been received by adult baptism or by transfer as confirmed members from other Lutheran congregations, or baptized persons received by affirmation of faith.
- c. **Voting** members are confirmed members. Such confirmed members, during the current or preceding calendar year, shall have communed in this congregation and shall have made a contribution of record to this congregation. Members of this congregation who have satisfied these basic standards shall have the privilege of voice and vote at every regular and special meeting of the congregation as well as the other rights and privileges ascribed to voting members by the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.
- d. **Associate** members are persons holding membership in other Christian congregations who wish to retain such membership but desire to participate in the life and mission of this congregation. These individuals have all the privileges and duties of membership except voting rights or other rights and privileges ascribed to voting members by the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.
- e. **Seasonal** members are voting members of other ELCA congregations 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 the ELCA;
 - 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 in accordance with ELCA constitutional provision 20.41. and the accompanying bylaws; or
- e. removal from the roll due to inactivity 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.

Chapter 9.

ROSTERED MINISTER

***C9.01.** Authority to call a pastor 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][the Congregation Council] to recommend the call, shall seek the advice and help of the bishop of the synod.

***C9.02.** Only a member of the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or a candidate for the roster of 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 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 distribution of its communications and publications;
- 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, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world.

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; and
- 5) endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the ELCA churchwide organization and of the Montana Synod of the ELCA.

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

***C9.05.** 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 death or, following consultation with the synodical bishop, for the following reasons:

- 1) mutual agreement to terminate the call or the completion of a call for a specific term;
- 2) resignation of the pastor, which shall become effective, unless otherwise agreed, no later than 30 days after the date on which it was submitted;
- 3) inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in the congregation in view of local conditions;
- 4) physical disability or mental incapacity of the pastor;

- 5) suspension of the pastor through discipline for more than three months;
 - 6) resignation or removal of the pastor from the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament of this church;
 - 7) termination of the relationship between this church and the congregation;
 - 8) dissolution of the congregation or the termination of a parish arrangement; or
 - 9) suspension of the congregation through discipline for more than six months.
- b. When allegations of physical disability or mental incapacity of the pastor under paragraph a.4) above, or ineffective conduct of the pastoral office under paragraph a.3) above, have come to the attention of the bishop of this synod,
 - 1) the bishop in his or her 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 the congregation, the bishop personally shall investigate such conditions together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson.
 - c. In case of alleged physical disability or mental incapacity under paragraph a.4) above, the bishop's committee shall obtain and document competent medical opinion concerning the pastor's condition. When a disability or incapacity is evident to the committee, the bishop of this synod 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 as disabled. Upon removal of the disability and the restoration of the pastor to health, the bishop shall take steps to enable the pastor to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another appropriate call.
 - d. In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of the congregation under paragraph a.3) above, the bishop's committee shall endeavor to hear from all concerned persons, after which the bishop together with the committee shall present their recommendations first to the pastor and then to the congregation. The recommendations of the bishop's committee must address whether the pastor's call should come to an end and, if so, may suggest appropriate severance arrangements. The committee may also propose other actions that should be undertaken by the congregation and by the pastor, if appropriate. If the pastor and congregation agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action need be taken by the synod.
 - e. If either party fails to assent to the recommendations of the bishop's committee concerning the pastor's call, the congregation may dismiss the pastor only at a legally called meeting after consultation with the bishop, either (a) by a two-thirds 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 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.
- C9.15.** Under special circumstances, subject to the approval of the synodical bishop and the concurrence of this congregation, 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 pastor in a form proposed by the synodical bishop and approved by the congregation.
- *C9.21.** Authority to call a minister of Word and Service 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][the Congregation Council] 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 synodical 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, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world, witnessing to the realm of God in the community, the nation, and abroad;
 - 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 the ELCA 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 death or, following consultation with the synodical bishop, for the following reasons:
 - 1) mutual agreement to terminate the call or the completion of a call for a specific term;

- 2) resignation of the 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) physical disability or mental 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 physical disability or mental 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 in his or her 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 physical disability or mental 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 as disabled. Upon removal of the disability and the restoration of the deacon to health, 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.** The deacon shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to a former congregation before:
- a. installation in another field of labor, or
 - b. the issuance of a certificate of dismissal or transfer.
- *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 his or her 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.
- C10.02. A special Congregation Meeting may be called by the pastor, the Congregation Council, or the president of this congregation, and shall be called by the president of the congregation upon the written request of 10 of the voting members. The president of the Congregation Council shall call a special meeting upon request of the synodical bishop. The call for each special meeting shall specify the purpose for which it is to be held, and no other business shall be transacted.
- C10.03. Notice of all meetings of this congregation shall be given at the services of worship on the preceding two consecutive Sundays and by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law, to all voting members at least 10 days in advance of the date of the meeting.
- C10.04. Ten percent (10%) of the 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.

Chapter 11. OFFICERS

- C11.01. The officers of this congregation shall be a president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer.
 - a. Duties of the officers shall be specified in the bylaws.
 - b. The officers shall be voting members of the congregation.
 - c. Officers of this congregation shall serve similar offices of the Congregation Council and shall be voting members of the Congregation Council.
 - d. If the Congregation Council elects its officers, the president, vice president, and secretary shall be selected from the elected membership of the Congregation Council. If the treasurer is not selected from the elected membership of the Congregation Council, the treasurer shall have voice but not vote at the meetings of the Congregation Council.
- 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 council meeting following the annual meeting.
- 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(s), the officers of the congregation, and not more than 15 members of the congregation, at least one of whom may be a youth or a young adult (under 30). 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.
- C12.02.** The members of the Congregation Council except the pastor(s) shall be elected by written ballot to serve for 3 years or until their successors are elected. Such members shall be eligible to serve no more than two full terms consecutively. Their terms shall begin at the close of the annual meeting at which they are elected.
- C12.03.** Should a member's place on the Congregation Council be declared vacant, the Congregation Council shall elect, by majority vote, a successor until the next annual meeting.
- C12.04.** The 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 rostered minister(s) and staff and help them annually to evaluate the fulfillment of their calling or employment.
 - e. To be examples individually and corporately of the style of life and ministry expected of all baptized persons.
 - f. To promote a congregational climate of peace and goodwill and, as differences and conflicts arise, to endeavor to foster mutual understanding.
 - g. To arrange for pastoral service during the sickness or absence of the pastor.
 - h. To emphasize partnership with the synod and 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.
- C12.05.** 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 managing 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 Montana, except as otherwise provided herein.
 - b. The Congregation Council shall not have the authority to buy, sell, or encumber real property unless specifically authorized to do so by a meeting of the congregation.
 - c. The Congregation Council may enter into contracts of up to \$5,000 for items not included in the budget.
 - d. The Congregation Council shall prepare an annual budget for adoption by this congregation, shall supervise the expenditure of funds in accordance therewith following its adoption, and may incur obligations of more than \$5,000 in excess of the anticipated receipts only after approval by a Congregation Meeting. The budget shall include this congregation's full indicated share in support of the wider ministry being carried on in partnership with the synod and churchwide organization.
 - e. The Congregation Council shall ascertain that the financial affairs of this congregation are being conducted efficiently, giving particular attention to the prompt payment of all obligations and to the regular forwarding of benevolence monies to the synodical treasurer.
 - f. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for this congregation's investments and its total insurance program.
- C12.06.** 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 staff of this congregation. Nothing in this provision shall be deemed to affect the 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 synodical bishop.
- C12.13.** The Congregation Council and its committees may hold meetings by remote communication, including electronically and by telephone conference and, to the extent permitted by state law, notice of all meetings may be provided electronically.

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 five 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 re-election.
- 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 one year, with members elected each year. Members shall be eligible for re-election.
- C13.04.** *Mutual Ministry Committee(s)* (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 rostered minister. Term of office shall be four years, with one member to be appointed each successive year.
- C13.05.** When a pastoral vacancy occurs, a *Call Committee* of six voting members shall be elected by the Congregation Council. 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.
- C13.07.** Duties of committees of this congregation shall be specified in the continuing resolutions.
- C13.08.** The 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 the congregation, except the Nominating Committee.

Chapter 14.
ORGANIZATIONS WITHIN THE CONGREGATION

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

Chapter 15.

DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS AND ADJUDICATION

- *C15.01.** Persistent and public denial of the Christian faith, willful or criminal conduct grossly unbecoming a member of the Church of Christ, continual and intentional interference with the ministry of the congregation, or willful and repeated harassment or defamation of member(s) of the congregation is sufficient cause for discipline of a member. Prior to disciplinary action, reconciliation and repentance will be attempted following Matthew 18:15–17, proceeding through these successive steps, as necessary: a) private counsel and admonition by the pastor, b) censure and admonition by the pastor in the presence of two or three witnesses, c) written referral of the matter by the Congregation Council to the vice president of the synod, who will refer it to a consultation panel drawn from the Consultation Committee of the synod, and d) written referral of the matter by the consultation panel to the Committee on Discipline of the synod. If, for any reason, the pastor is unable to administer the admonitions required by paragraphs a. and b. hereof, those steps may be performed by another pastor chosen by the Executive Committee of the Congregation Council.
- *C15.02.** The process for discipline of a member of the congregation shall be governed as prescribed by the chapter on discipline in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. If the counseling, censure, and admonitions pursuant to *C15.01. do not result in repentance and amendment of life, charges against the accused member(s) that are specific and in writing may be prepared by the Congregation Council, signed, and submitted to the vice president of the synod. The vice president shall select from the synod's Consultation Committee a panel of five members (three laypersons and two ministers of Word and Sacrament). 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:
- suspension from the privileges of congregation membership for a designated period of time;
 - suspension from the privileges of congregation membership until the pastor and Congregation Council receive evidence, satisfactory to them, of repentance and amendment of life;
 - termination of membership in the congregation; or
 - termination of membership in the congregation and exclusion from the church property and from all congregation activities.
- *C15.06.** The written decision of the discipline hearing panel shall be sent to the vice president of the synod, the accused member(s), and the Congregation Council as required by the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. The decision of the discipline hearing panel shall be implemented by the Congregation Council and recorded in the minutes of the next council meeting.
- *C15.07.** No member of the congregation shall be subject to discipline a second time for offenses that a discipline hearing panel has heard previously and decided pursuant to this chapter.

***C15.10. Adjudication**

***C15.11.** When there is disagreement among factions within this congregation on a substantive issue that cannot be resolved by the parties, members of this congregation shall have access to the synodical bishop for consultation after informing the chair of the Congregation Council of their intent. If the consultation fails to resolve the issue(s), the Consultation Committee of the synod shall consider the matter. If the Consultation Committee of the synod shall fail to resolve the issue(s), the matter shall be referred to the Synod Council, whose decision shall be final.

Chapter 16.

AMENDMENTS

***C16.01.** 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 10 voting members or by the Congregation Council. Proposals must be filed in writing with the Congregation Council 60 days before formal consideration by this congregation at a regular or special Congregation Meeting called for that purpose. The Congregation Council shall notify the congregation's members of the proposal together with the council's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the meeting. Notification may take place by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law.

***C16.02.** An amendment to this constitution, proposed under *C16.01., shall:

- a. be approved at a legally called Congregation Meeting according to this constitution by a majority vote of those voting members present and voting;
- b. be ratified without change at the next annual meeting by a two-thirds vote of those voting members present and voting; and
- c. have the effective date included in the resolution² and noted in the constitution.

***C16.03.** 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 synod shall notify the congregation of its decision to approve or disapprove the proposed changes; the changes shall go into effect upon notification that the synod has approved them.

***C16.04.** This constitution may be amended to bring any section into conformity with a section or sections, either required or not required, of the *Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* as most recently amended by the Churchwide Assembly. Such amendments may be approved by a majority vote of those voting members present and voting at any legally called meeting of the congregation without presentation at a prior meeting of the congregation, provided that the Congregation Council has submitted by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law, notice to the congregation of such an amendment or amendments, together with the council's recommendations, at least 30 days prior to the meeting. Upon the request of at least ten (10) voting members of the congregation, the Congregation Council shall submit such notice. Following the adoption of an amendment, the secretary of the congregation shall submit a copy thereof to the synod. Such provisions shall become effective immediately following a vote of approval.

Chapter 17.

BYLAWS

***C17.01.** This congregation may adopt bylaws. No bylaw may conflict with this constitution.

***C17.02.** Bylaws may be adopted or amended at any legally called meeting of this congregation with a quorum present by a two-thirds vote of those voting members present and voting.

***C17.03.** Changes to the bylaws may be proposed by any voting member, provided that such additions or amendments be submitted in writing to the Congregation Council at least 60 days before a regular or special Congregation Meeting called for that purpose. The Congregation Council shall notify the congregation's members of the proposal with the council's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the Congregation Meeting. Notification may take place by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law.

***C17.04.** Approved changes to the bylaws shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod.

² Such an effective date must be stated in relation to the requirements of *C16.03. to allow time for synodical review of the amendment.

Chapter 18.

CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

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

Chapter 19.

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 the 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.
- *C20.02. 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 by the synodical bishop to serve the congregations of the parish. Such a call shall be approved prior to issuance by a two-thirds vote at a congregational 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. 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 synodical bishop to serve the congregations of the parish. Such a call shall be approved prior to issuance by a two-thirds vote at a congregational 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.
- *C20.04. Any one of the congregations of the parish may terminate their relationship with the pastor as provided in †S14.18.d. of the synodical 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.
- *C20.05. 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 synodical 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.

BYLAWS

PART I - COMMUNION PARTICIPATION.

(Cf. Chapter 4 of Constitution)

1. This congregation invites all of its baptized members, who have been prepared to receive this sacrament, to participate regularly in Holy Communion.
2. Preparation for Holy Communion will normally be provided for baptized persons ten years of age, or younger if requested, according to this provision in the ELCA's 1997 Statement on Sacramental Practices.
3. Participation in Holy Communion shall be open to baptized members of other congregations who accept the following teaching in regard to this Sacrament:
 - a. that Christ is present,
 - b. there is forgiveness, and
 - c. this action is a sign of our unity.
 - d. We hold that a "person is well-prepared and worthy who believes these words, 'given and shed for you for the remission of sins.' But anyone who does not believe these words, or doubts them, is neither prepared nor worthy, for the words 'for you' require simply a believing heart" (Martin Luther).

PART II - CONFLICTING LOYALTIES

(Cf. Chapters 2, 3, and 4 of the Constitution)

1. While the building of this congregation shall be open to all people to share in its worship, instruction, pastoral care, and fellowship, the congregation rejects all fellowship with organizations, secret or open, which are avowedly religious or which practice forms of religion without confessing faith in the Triune God and in Jesus Christ as the Eternal Son of God incarnate to be our only Savior from sin and evil, and which teach salvation by works.
2. Ceremonies of lodges or other such organizations shall not be permitted in the buildings or premises of the congregation; nor shall its pastor(s) or lay assistant(s) take part in any such ceremonies wherever they are conducted.

PART III - MEMBERSHIP

(Cf. Chapter 8 of the Constitution)

1. Baptism

Our entire Christian life is centrally related to what God did with us in our baptism: "In the waters of baptism we are reborn children of God and inheritors of eternal life. By water and the Holy Spirit we are made members of the Church which is the Body of Christ" (LBW Service of Holy Baptism).

The one business of our life is to realize, to give effect to, what was given us in our baptism; in baptism we "died to sin"; how, then can we still live in it (Romans 6:2)7

Baptism affirms that we belong not to ourselves but to God who has acted decisively in the cross to bring us back to Himself. Baptism affirms that we also belong to one another in the fellowship of Christ's Church, the relationship being not only one of unity with God but of unity with and commitment to the rest of God's People.

This sacrament also calls us to discipleship, a life of service, helping to uplift a suffering world. It also calls us to sharing in the work of salvation, the work of proclaiming the gospel; the charge of the Risen Lord, "Go, therefore ... " is given to every baptized person.

Baptism is thus God's grace, God's love and acceptance, freely given; the response of the baptized is the Christian life expressed in faith and obedience.

2. Confirmed Members

- a. A baptized member of the congregation shall become a confirmed member through the rite of Affirmation of Baptism, after having received appropriate instruction.
- b. A baptized adult, not previously a confirmed member of a Lutheran congregation, shall become a confirmed member of this congregation after having received instruction, having given evidence of adequate understanding of the teachings of the Word of God as confessed by the Lutheran Church, and having publicly affirmed her/her faith.
- c. An unbaptized adult who has received instruction and has given evidence of an adequate understanding and acceptance of the teachings of the Word of God as confessed by the Lutheran Church, shall, upon confession of faith and baptism, become a baptized member of the congregation.
- d. An applicant for membership who presents a Letter of Transfer which certifies that he/she is a confirmed member in good standing of a Lutheran congregation shall become a confirmed member of the congregation upon approval by the Congregational Council. The acceptance of the applicant shall be reported to the congregation.
- e. An applicant for membership who presents evidence of confirmation in a Lutheran congregation but does not have a Letter of Transfer shall be admitted to confirmed membership when the Congregational Council has determined that he/she meets the standards of Christian faith and life indicated in the constitution and bylaws and when he/she has reaffirmed his/her faith before the congregation.

3. Voting Members

A voting member shall be a confirmed member. The roster of voting members in good standing may be requested for all regularly called meetings of the congregation (the request should be at least two weeks in advance). The term "in good standing" shall be defined to include:

- a. those who partake of Holy Communion.
- b. those who contribute to the congregational treasury according to the congregation's record.

4. Discontinuance of Membership

- a. A confirmed member in good standing desiring to change his/her membership to another congregation shall, upon request, receive a Letter of Transfer.
- b. The congregation shall, in the event of the removal of a member from the community it serves, encourage the member to request a transfer to a Lutheran congregation which can serve him/her effectively. Should the member fail to request a transfer, a Lutheran congregation in the community of his/her residence should be notified.
- c. If a member moves from the community normally served by the congregation and its ministry and does not transfer his/her membership to a new congregation within a period of one year after his/her move, his/her name shall be removed from the membership roster of the congregation but be retained on an inactive list until such time as a transfer shall be effected.
- d. A confirmed member who does not, for a period of one year, partake of Holy Communion, support the church with his/her offerings, and does not appear to desire to participate in the life and worship of the congregation shall be encouraged to active membership. If, during the second year, the confirmed member does not actively participate, his/her name shall be removed from the membership roster of the congregation but be retained on a responsibility list as one who is in special need of the congregation's prayer and concern.

PART IV - MEETINGS OF THE CONGREGATION

(Cf. Chapter 10 of the Constitution)

1. The annual meeting of the congregation shall normally be held in January. Notice of the annual meeting shall be given pursuant to paragraph CIO.03 of the Constitution.
2. The current roster of voting, confirmed, and baptized members may be requested from the church office at least two weeks in advance of the meeting for which it will be used.
3. Reports from all the organizations of the congregation, including a financial statement, shall be submitted in writing to the Council President through the church office not less than ten days before the annual meeting. A compilation of all such reports shall be available at the annual meeting or at any time thereafter.

PART V – OFFICERS AND BOARDS

(Cf. Chapter 11 of the Constitution)

1. Duties and Responsibilities of the Congregational Council

In addition to the duties and responsibilities provided in the Constitution, the Congregational Council shall:

- a. Secure necessary staff other than the pastor(s), such as administrative assistant, Christian Day school teacher, business administrator, church musician, parish education director, parish secretary, custodian, property manager, nursery attendant, etc./ and fix and review annually their salaries.
- b. Review annually the salary of the pastor(s) and make adjustments as deemed appropriate on the basis of synod guidelines.
- c. Receive reports regularly from the treasurer to ascertain that the expenditures are bequests which are designated by the original donor to be used in a certain way shall be considered apart from and in addition to the regular budgeted items and shall not figure in determining total budgeted expenditures.
- d. Prepare budget to submit to annual congregational meeting.
- e. Assure itself that the treasurer and others who have access to the funds or the congregation are adequately bonded.
- f. Be responsible for the buildings and premises of the congregation so that their use is normally limited to the functions of the congregation. Should groups or individuals not associated with the congregation desire to use such property, application shall be made to the Congregational Council for its approval.
- g. Ratify the superintendent(s) of the Sunday school, upon nomination by the Parish Education Committee.
- h. Oversee the staffing and encourage the operation of all committees and task forces as described in Part V of the Bylaws and in the Continuing Resolutions.
- i. Have authority between meetings of the congregation to choose delegates to any group or meeting in which the congregation is entitled to representation.

2. Duties of Elected Officers, Church Treasurer and Administrative Secretary

- a. The president shall preside at meetings of the Congregational Council and of the congregation; work with and support the pastor(s) and other staff; preside at executive meetings; serve as council spokesperson to the congregation; build agenda for council meetings in collaboration with the pastor(s) and appropriate staff; provide annual report to the congregation.
- b. The vice-president shall preside at the meetings of the Congregational Council and of the congregation in the absence of the president; attend executive committee meetings; assist in carrying out responsibilities of the president.
- c. The secretary shall keep the minutes of the Congregational Council and of the congregation and shall have custody of the archives of the congregation; provide for notice of congregational meetings as specified by the Constitution (CIO.03., CI2.11); try to distribute minutes of council and congregational meetings within one week's time.
- d. The treasurer, and persons authorized by the Council, shall have custody of all funds of the congregation, except those designated by the Trust Fund's constitution to the Trust Committee. They shall receive and disburse such funds in accordance with the

decisions of the congregation or the Congregational Council; receive and promptly deposit all offerings and funds of the congregation; arrange as able two individuals to count and record offerings; maintain and provide adequate records of all receipts, expenses, and other funds of the congregation; provide an annual report to the congregation.

- e. The administrative secretary shall maintain records of all contributions and make regular reports to the Congregational Council and to the members as required by the Council.

PART VI - PARISH RECORDS
(Cf. Chapter 9 of the Constitution)

The records of the congregation shall be and remain the property of the congregation. The pastor and administrative secretary shall be responsible for the maintenance of the records, except as otherwise provided herein. Upon the termination of the pastor's service to the congregation, he/she shall have brought the records up to date prior to his/her departure.

The records shall consist of:

- a. The roster of baptized, confirmed, and voting members.
- b. The ministerial/sacramental acts performed by the pastor.

Should the congregation be dissolved, the official records of the congregation shall be deposited in the archives of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or its successor.

CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

PART I - "COMMITTEES", "TASK FORCES", CLUSTERING" **(Cf. C4.04., C12.04., C13., C18.01.)**

1. "Committees" normally meet each month to conduct regular business and planning. Committees require members who have demonstrated gifts and skills, and who can offer sustained commitment. Committees include Worship and Music, Parish Education, Caring Ministry, Youth and Family, Facilities, Finance, Call, and Perpetual Trust and Memorial Fund. The chairperson who convenes and coordinates the committee will usually (but not always) be a Council member.
2. "Task Forces" normally meet on an "as needed" basis. Like committees, the chairperson who convenes and coordinates the task force will usually (but not always) be a Council member. Task Forces have 1) well-defined objectives, 2) limited time commitment from members, and 3) the entire congregation as a member-base from which to draw time and abilities for short term projects. Task Forces include Evangelism, Social Ministry, Stewardship, Nominating, Audit and ZLCW. ZLCW will in most cases provide receptions for new members, weddings, funerals/memorials, anniversaries, etc.
3. "Clustering" describes how committees and/or task forces can work together to enhance the effectiveness of energy, communication, planning and delivery. For example, Evangelism and Social Ministry may cluster to support a "Mission Partner," or Parish Education and Social Ministry may cluster to provide outreach to the poor during Thanksgiving and Christmas.

PART II - DESCRIPTIONS OF COMMITTEES AND TASK FORCES

1. WORSHIP AND MUSIC COMMITTEE

MISSION

To assist the pastor and Congregation Council in providing for the highest quality in the congregation's worship, and to involve members as participants and leaders, according to their gifts.

MEMBERSHIP

The committee will consist of up to six members of the congregation, including at least one council member, and a chair ratified by the Congregation Council.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Assist in planning all regular and special worship services of the congregation.
- Provide for the recruitment and training of members of the congregation to support worship by carrying out such tasks as ushering and caring for the sacristy.
- Help the congregation grow in its understanding of and appreciation for the seasons of the church year and the lectionary.
- Help the congregation learn to worship in ways that are hospitable to guests and newcomers to the Christian faith.
- Review new worship materials (such as hymn collections and new settings of the liturgy) as they become available, and plan for their introduction and use in the congregation as appropriate.
- Develop ways the arts (including various performing and visual arts) can be used to enhance the congregation's worship, giving special attention to using the artistic gifts of members of the congregation.
- Promote appreciation and use of the Lutheran worship tradition that enhances Lutheran unity and identity.
- Provide for meaningful ecumenical worship with ELCA full communion partners and other Christian churches.

TIME COMMITMENT

The term of service is normally one year, renewable. The committee meets monthly or as needed.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND REPORTING

- The committee will provide regular reporting of its accomplishments and recommendations to the Congregation Council.
- The committee will prepare a written report for the annual congregational meeting.
- The committee will submit an annual budget request..

(See also the ZLC "Structure for Mission")

2. PARISH EDUCATION COMMITTEE

MISSION

To provide a lifelong program of Christian education that will enable members of all ages to learn the Scriptures and Lutheran teaching and apply them in their daily lives.

MEMBERSHIP

The committee will consist of a minimum of five members of the congregation, including at least one council member, and the Sunday School coordinator(s), ratified by the Congregation Council.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Plan ongoing, regular educational experiences that will appeal to all segments of the congregation.
- Plan special events that promote and encourage all members to participate in the education program.
- Plan opportunities for members to learn about the needs of people throughout the church and the world, including such areas of concern as global mission and hunger awareness.
- Coordinate recruitment of volunteer leaders and teachers for the congregation's education program.
- Provide ways for the congregation to recognize and thank the people who volunteer to teach and lead in the education program.
- Review available curricula and other educational materials and select those that will be used in the education program of the congregation, giving special attention to those from the publishing house of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- Give special attention to the educational programs that support faith development and involvement in the life of church, such as confirmation ministry, early childhood, Lutheran heritage, and family support programs.

TIME COMMITMENT

The term of service is normally one year, renewable. The committee meets monthly or as needed.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND REPORTING

- The committee will provide regular reporting of its accomplishments and recommendations to the Congregation Council.
- The committee will prepare a written report for the annual congregational meeting.
- The committee will submit an annual budget request..

(See also the ZLC "Structure for Mission")

3. EVANGELISM TASK FORCE

MISSION

To lead this congregation in witnessing to the gospel of Jesus Christ to people who are not active members of a Christian congregation; to support the faith development of members and increase the active membership of this congregation.

MEMBERSHIP

The task force will consist of up to six members of the congregation, at least one council member, and a chair ratified by the Congregation Council.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Conduct regular audits of the congregation's climate, facilities, and procedures to cultivate hospitality toward guests.
- Provide guidelines in hospitality for greeters, ushers, and others who regularly come into contact with guests.
- Provide for obtaining the names and addresses of nonmembers who attend worship services of the congregation; provide for follow-up contacts to thank them for participation, obtain feedback on their experience at worship, and ascertain ways to serve them further.
- Provide for contact with nonmembers who regularly participate in the life of the congregation (such as parents who enroll children in Sunday School, or people who participate in support groups, after-school programs, and so forth).
- Regularly provide opportunities for guests and new members to be introduced to the Christian faith.
- Encourage devotional life to the congregation.
- Enlist members of the congregation to serve as sponsors for new members.
- Identify populations in the congregation's community that could be targeted for outreach efforts, and develop specific strategies to communicate with and invite these people to participate in our congregation's ministry.
- Develop ways for the work of the congregation to be regularly advertised and promoted in the community.
- Encourage members to invite friends, relatives, and acquaintances to worship with them.
- Interpret to the congregation in temple talks and in print the outreach of the Lutheran Church as a whole.
- Conduct an annual International Day Dinner (e.g. with ZLCW) to highlight the gospel in other lands.

TIME COMMITMENT

The term of service is normally one year, renewable. It meets monthly or as needed. Those serving may also serve as liaisons to other task forces and committees.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND REPORTING

- The committee will provide regular reporting of its accomplishments and recommendations to the Congregation Council.
- The committee will prepare a written report for the annual congregational meeting.
- The committee will submit an annual budget request.

(See also the ZLC "Structure for Mission")

4. CARING & SOCIAL MINISTRY COMMITTEE

MISSION

Our mission is grounded in the tradition of the early Christian Church which promotes health, healing and care for all God's people. To that end, we will lead the congregation's efforts to address the health and wellbeing of people within the congregation, community, and world at-large.

MEMBERSHIP

The committee will consist of a minimum of six members of the congregation, including at least one council member, and a chair ratified by the Congregation Council.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Provide for a quarterly Service of Healing, addressing various issues of healing and wholeness for body, mind, and spirit.
- Provide a visitation ministry to the sick and homebound.
- Encourage healthful disciplines and activities among members of the congregation.
- Recruit as needed a Home Care Team to provide necessary practical assistance in homes.
- Lead the congregation in active participation in ELCA Mission Programs, i.e. World Hunger, Disaster Response and Global Ministries. (Note: LWR is attended to by ZLCW.)
- Partner with community agencies that seek to alleviate social problems and human need. Inform congregational members of their work, and/or provide opportunities for financial support, as appropriate.
- Receive and study social statements of the ELCA, develop means by which they can be discussed in the congregation and develop action plans based on such statements, as appropriate.

TIME COMMITMENT

The term of service is normally one year, renewable. The committee meets monthly or as needed.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND REPORTING

- The committee will provide regular reporting of its accomplishments and recommendations to the Congregation Council.
- The committee will prepare a written report for the annual congregational meeting.
- The committee will submit an annual budget request..

(See also the ZLC "Structure for Mission")

5. YOUTH AND FAMILY COMMITTEE

MISSION

To encourage youth and adults to participate in worship, prayer, service, learning, and fellowship- the essential activities of the Christian community; nurture families in life-shaping Christian values; equip youth for witness; and develop congregational life as a sustaining family of faith.

MEMBERSHIP

The committee will consist of at least one council member, the Youth and Family Ministry Director(s), and the members of the Junior and Senior High Youth Councils. There may also be a chair ratified by the Congregation Council.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Provide the spiritual foundation for children and youth faithfully to live their Christian calling in the church and in the world.
- To equip parents for Christian leadership in the home.
- Provide a variety of opportunities for young people to interact with peers and caring adults within this community of faith.
- Programmatically divide youth into two groups: 7th-8th graders, and 9th- 12th graders.
- On average hold one event for each youth group each month from Sept-May, with one Event held during the summer (a minimum of 10 events per level per year).
- On average, family or congregation-wide events will be held fall, winter-spring, or summer, and may coincide with regular youth events.
- Events will vary opportunities for service, study and recreation.
- Formation and fellowship events for children (and families) below the 7th grade may be coordinated with junior and senior youth and family activities

TIME COMMITMENT

The term of service for the Youth Council members and chair (if chosen) is normally one year, renewable. The committee meets monthly during the school year, and more as needed. (For Youth and Family Director time commitment, see the position job description.)

ACCOUNTABILITY AND REPORTING

- The committee will provide regular reporting of its accomplishments and recommendations to the Congregation Council.
- The committee will prepare a written report for the annual congregational meeting.
- The committee will submit an annual budget request.

(See also ZLC "Structure for Mission", and the Youth and Family Ministry description and Director's job description.)

6. MUTUAL MINISTRY COMMITTEE (Cf. Chapter 13.04 of the Constitution)

MISSION

To strengthen the mutual ministry of the congregation and the pastor through listening and clarifying, sharing and communicating, reviewing and reflecting.

To care for the pastor by conferring, supporting, and providing counsel in order to facilitate effective relationships among the pastor and congregational members.

MEMBERSHIP

The committee will consist of four members. Because of the need for confidentiality in Mutual Ministry Committee discussions members are not currently serving on the executive committee of the council, but may be a regular council member, nor are committee members paid church staff. It is important to have a diversity of voices, ages, longevity in congregation, etc.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- To commit to ongoing prayer support for one another.
- To reflect with the pastor in his/her self-evaluation, continuing education interests, and ramifications of ministry reviews, goals and priorities.
- To celebrate milestones, events, successes, etc., with the pastor.
- To identify and to help address early warning signs of misunderstandings within the congregation and pastor.
- To reflect on the mutual ministry of this unique combination of pastor and people, that the mission and ministry may be strengthened.

TIME COMMITMENT

Members serve staggered four-year terms. The committee will select a chairperson for each year. The committee will meet quarterly for regular check-in time with the pastor. Other meetings may be called by the chairperson or the pastor if a topic or crisis warrants it.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND REPORTING

The chairperson will report to the Congregation Council any recommendations that the committee feels will enhance the ministry of the pastor and congregation. No confidential information will be reported. No annual report need be submitted.

7. STEWARDSHIP TASK FORCE

MISSION

To provide an ongoing, year-round program of stewardship education; to invite all members to participate according to their means in the financial support of the congregation and of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; to encourage planned giving; to challenge all members to offer their time and talents in the support of the work of the church.

MEMBERSHIP

The task force will consist of up to six members of the congregation, including at least one council member, and a chair ratified by the Congregation Council.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Develop education programs through which all members of the congregation can grow in their understanding of themselves as stewards of all God's gifts.
- Annually provide a program through which people make a commitment to financially support the congregation.
- Ensure confidential recording of members' giving, analyze trends, and challenge members to grow in their giving.
- Interpret to the congregation the mission and work of its synod and of the ELCA as a whole; encourage the support of the ELCA through prayer, financial support, and other ways.
- As appropriate, plan and carry out programs that support giving to special needs of the Congregation, the ELCA, or other causes that have been endorsed by the synod.

TIME COMMITMENT

The term of service on the task force is normally one year, renewable. The task force meets as needed. Those serving may also serve as liaisons to other task forces and committees.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND REPORTING

- The task force will provide regular reporting of its accomplishments and recommendations to the Congregation Council.
- The task force will prepare a written report for the annual congregational meeting.
- The task force will submit an annual budget request.

(See also the Zion Lutheran Church "Structure for Mission")

8. FACILITIES COMMITTEE

MISSION

To provide for the maintenance and improvement of the property of the congregation; to provide the equipment and materials necessary and helpful for the congregation to carry out its mission and ministry; to provide for the scheduled maintenance and replacement of property and equipment.

MEMBERSHIP

The committee will consist of up to six members of the congregation, including at least one council member, the property manager, custodial staff, and a chair ratified by the Congregation Council.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Provide for the maintenance, repair and improvement of property of the congregation.
- Consult and coordinate with the Custodians and Property Manager.
Provide for regular cleaning and maintenance to ensure that the interior and exterior of the building is attractive, inviting, and suitable for use by the entire congregation.
Enter into contracts for repairs or other services on behalf of the Congregation Council, up to limits established by budget, congregational policy (for unbudgeted items), or Council action.
Regularly review the need for equipment that will increase the efficiency and productivity of the congregation's office staff and program leaders; assess options and develop recommendations for
- purchases; monitor depreciation of equipment and make recommendations for replacement.
- Regularly audit the congregation's accessibility by people with various disabilities, and provide remedies for deficiencies.
- Regularly audit the congregation's environmental practices, including energy efficiency, and pursue environmentally sound systems and procedures.
- Regularly audit the safety of the building and property giving attention both to the potential for damage or loss and to the security of people who use the property.

TIME COMMITMENT

The term of service is normally one year, renewable. The committee usually meets monthly, as well as for special meetings at times mutually agreeable.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND REPORTING

- The committee will provide regular reporting of its accomplishments and recommendations to the Congregation Council.
- The committee will prepare a written report for the annual congregational meeting.
- The committee will submit an annual budget request.

9. FINANCE COMMITTEE

MISSION

To provide for responsible management of all financial assets of the congregation; to prepare an annual budget reflecting realistic anticipated receipts and expenditures that support the congregation's ministries; to strengthen the financial position of the congregation through all appropriate means.

MEMBERSHIP

The committee will consist of up to six members of the congregation, including at least one Council member, the treasurer, and a chair ratified by the Congregation Council.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Provide for financial management systems in the congregation, including bookkeeping, banking, and investing.
- On behalf of the Congregation Council, ensure that financial affairs of the congregation are being conducted efficiently, giving particular attention to promptly paying all obligations and regularly forwarding the expected proportionate share of congregational income to the synodical treasurer.
- Regularly analyze and report to the Congregation Council trends in income and expenses, giving special attention to unanticipated fluctuations.
- Annually develop a draft or budget for the coming fiscal year and submit it to the congregation Council for its submission to the congregation. The budget development process should include opportunities for staff, committees, and other groups to request support for their programs, and should reflect annual consultation between the synod and the congregation.
- Provide for an annual audit of all financial transactions of the congregation.
- Develop and maintain a system of long-range financial planning for the congregation.

TIME COMMITMENT

The term of service is normally one year, renewable. The committee usually meets monthly, as well as for special meetings at times mutually agreeable.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND REPORTING

- All records will be submitted to the Audit Team annually and more frequently upon request.
- The committee will provide a regular report of its accomplishments and recommendations to the Congregation Council.
- The committee will prepare a written report for the annual congregational meeting.
- The committee will submit an annual budget request.

10. NOMINATING TASK FORCE

The Nominating Task Force consists of up to five (5) voting members of the this congregation, two of whom shall be outgoing members of the Congregational Council, who shall be elected at the annual meeting for a term of one year. The pastor shall serve as convener and as an advisory member. Members of the Nominating Committee shall nominate one or more candidates for each office to be filled and shall secure the consent of each candidate. The list of nominees shall be announced to the congregation in conjunction with the announcements of the meeting of the congregation at which the elections are to take place.

11. AUDIT TASK FORCE

The Audit Task Force consists of three (3) voting members of this congregation who shall be elected annually by the Congregational Council for a term of one year. Members of the Audit Committee shall be eligible for reelection. The Audit Committee shall audit the financial records of the congregation, the Perpetual Trust Fund, and the Memorial Fund. Their findings shall be reported to the annual meeting.

12. CALL COMMITTEE

The Call Committee consists of at least six (6) voting members of this congregation who shall be appointed by the Congregational Council when a pastoral vacancy occurs. Term of office will terminate at installation of the newly called pastor.

13. ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH TRUST FUND COMMITTEE

MISSION

To establish and maintain a trust fund consisting of a perpetual fund in which the principal will be retained and only the income used, and a memorial fund from which both principal and income can be used, to enable the further growth of our church, its ministries, and stewardship opportunities.

MEMBERSHIP

The committee will consist of five voting members of the congregation who shall be elected at the annual meeting for a term of 3 years, at least one of whom shall be a member of the Congregation Council. The pastor/ s) and the Council president or one member of the Congregation Council shall be ex-officio non-voting member. (See Trust Fund Resolution, 1., The Committee, for a full discussion of its membership.) A paid CPA accountant or investment manager may be retained.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Provide for membership in accordance with the Trust Fund Resolution.
- Make use of Trust and Memorial income as is consistent with the charitable and religious purposes of this church.
- Establish written rules and regulations as may be necessary for the conduct of its business (e.g., policies on investing, receiving, and reporting gifts and income) .
- Discharge all its duties according to the stipulations of the Trust Fund Resolution.

TIME COMMITMENT

The term of service for each member is 3 years. No member shall serve more than 2 consecutive terms. At each annual meeting the congregation shall elect the necessary number needed to maintain 5 committee members.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND REPORTING

- The committee will provide regular reporting to the Congregation Council.
- The committee will prepare a written report for the annual congregational meeting.
- The committee will provide for an annual audit of its funds and transactions.

14. ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH WOMEN (ZLCW) TASK FORCE

MISSION

As a community of women created in the image of God, called to discipleship in Jesus Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves to grow in faith, affirm our gifts, support one another in our callings, engage in ministry and action, and promote healing and wholeness in the church, the society and the world.

MEMBERSHIP

Every woman of Zion Lutheran Church is a member of a service group. It is a goal of ZLCW, through service groups, that all may be aware of the activities and events of our congregation and take advantage of the opportunities to be of service. Officers are elected by the women of the church; service group leaders and various committee chairs volunteer their time.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Encourage and affirm worship and study circles for women of the congregation.
- Provide staff and serve the needs of the congregation through the following functions: Sunday refreshments, funerals, receptions, dinners, etc.
- Lead the congregation in active participation in the WELCA Thankoffering program; collect items for health kits, school kits and layettes.
- Conduct annual fund raisers to benefit Zion and the community at large.
- Create opportunities for fellowship with each other through general meetings held throughout the year.
- Provide staffing for the Altar Guild and ensure that all duties connected with the Guild are fulfilled.
- Participate in ELCA and Montana Synod conventions and workshops.
-

TIME COMMITMENT

Women of the church are members of ZLCW as long as they are members of the church. Officers, service group leaders, and committee chairs are elected for a two year term, renewable.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND REPORTING

- The task force will provide regular reporting of its accomplishments and recommendations to the women of the congregation.
- The task force will prepare a written report for the annual congregational meeting.
- The task force will present an annual budget to the women of the church at a general meeting.

15. PERSONNEL TASK FORCE

MISSION

To facilitate communications and concerns between the Council and the staff, encourage harmony between staff and members, and promote quality and satisfaction in the performance of this church's varied tasks.

MEMBERSHIP

The task force will consist of the personnel chairperson, the council president, the pastor(s), the chairperson of the relevant committee or task force, and other members as determined by the persons above.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Conduct annual performance interviews with staff.
- Negotiate and review job descriptions and benefits.
- Convey the support and appreciation of the congregation.
- Decisions regarding hiring and terminating will involve the personnel chairperson, council president, pastor(s), and appropriate committee/task force representatives.

TIME COMMITMENT

The term of service of the chairperson will normally be 3 years, renewable. Other representatives (such as council president and committee/task force members) will serve as needed during their terms of service.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND REPORTING

- The chairperson, and others as needed, will provide reporting of its work and recommendations to the Congregation Council.
- The chairperson will prepare a written report for the annual congregational meeting.
- The task force will work with the Finance Committee to submit an annual budget request on behalf of employees.

16. CHURCH ARTS TASK FORCE

MISSION

The Church Arts Task Force, drawing on the rich artistic heritage of the Christian Church, and the Lutheran Church in particular, assists this congregation to create and sustain a wide variety of artistic projects to inspire Christian faith and witness. Various media can be used, such as stained, flash, and etched glass; carving, painting, fabric art, sculpture, and furnishings displaying symbols of God, the Means of Grace, the Church, etc .. In the Lutheran tradition a central emphasis of church art is to affirm the activity in God incarnate, who is present in space and time to create and redeem, to call and inspire.

MEMBERSHIP

The task force will have up to six members of the congregation, and a chair ratified by the Congregation Council.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Among church members, increase awareness of church art in the Christian tradition.
- Use opportunities such as church anniversaries, memorials upon death of members, building renovations, etc. to enhance the aesthetic space of this church.
- Be aware of ways to beautify and inspire the exterior and landscape space of this church.
- Consult as needed with artists within our congregation as well as those at- large.
- Develop and monitor projects from start to finish, with attention to quality and costs.
Report as needed to the Congregation Council to update projects and request funding.

TIME COMMITMENT

The chair and members serve for 2 years, renewable. The task force meets as needed.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND REPORTING

- The task force chair will prepare a written report for the Annual Congregation Meeting.
- The task force will provide reporting of its plans, accomplishments, and recommendations to the Congregation Council.