

BYLAWS
OF
TRINITY EVANGELICAL
LUTHERAN CHURCH

TULLAHOMA, TENNESSEE

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INTRODUCTION

These Bylaws of Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, Tullahoma, Tennessee, comply with the current (2005) edition of the *Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.

Codification explanation: The numerical and chapter headings in the bylaws correspond to the chapter headings contained in the Constitution of Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church.

- a. Bylaws provisions are codified with two sets of numbers: the chapter number and a two-digit section number preceding the second period in the codification. Thus, one constitutional provision related to “Membership” is codified *C8.xx.
- b. The Congregation Council may adopt “continuing resolutions,” which provide descriptions of operational patterns or of the ongoing responsibilities of committees or other units within the organizational structure of the congregation. Continuing resolutions may be updated regularly by the Congregation Council without the necessity of calling a regular or special Congregation Meeting by a majority vote of the congregation or a two-thirds vote of all voting-members of the Congregation Council.

Continuing resolutions also are codified with three sets of numbers except that the third set is preceded by a capital letter. Thus, a continuing resolution might be numbered R13. to designate the bylaws chapter; R13.xx. to designate the subject matter within the chapter; and the third set might be used to further define the resolution within the administrative file structure.

Voting terminology: a “majority vote” means the same as a “simple majority” and a “majority of those members present and voting.” For example, 10 members are present in a quorate meeting; a motion is made and seconded (if required); 1 (one) member votes “Aye” and none vote “Nay.” The motion carries because the 1 vote is a majority of those present and voting.

A majority vote of those members present means that the affirmative vote must be a majority of those members present, including those who voted nay or abstained. Using the above example with 10 members, it would take an affirmative vote of at least 6 (six) members to adopt a motion.

A majority of all members means the affirmative vote must be a majority of ALL members of the organization, whether they are present or not. For example, a committee has 20 members, but only 13 are present at a meeting. If the motion requires an affirmative vote of ALL members, then it would take at least 11 affirmative votes to pass the motion.

**TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
TULLAHOMA, TENNESSEE
BYLAWS**

CHAPTERS 1 –9 RESERVED (see the Constitution, except for * C8.05e.01 and C9.20 below)

CHAPTER 8 MEMBERSHIP

C8.05e.01 Termination of Membership – Inactivity Defined. Any confirmed members who, despite pastoral care and counseling, have failed for a period of three (3) years to receive Holy Communion and to make any contribution of standing record to the congregation shall be classified by the Congregation Council (Council) as inactive. Whenever possible, these members shall be counseled and given written notification that such action is pending. If they still do not wish to remain as members or if they do not take steps to reactivate their membership, then their names shall
be removed from the roll of confirmed members. The congregation will keep them in its care and concern, and they will be restored in good standing by the Council to the roll of confirmed
members
when they again receive the Lord's Supper and enter once more upon the other rights and
obligations
of the members of this congregation.

CHAPTER 9 THE PASTOR

C9.20 Ecumenical Pastoral Ministry. Under special circumstances, subject to the approval of the synodical bishop and the concurrence of this congregation, an ordained minister of a church body with which the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America officially has established a relationship of full communion may serve temporarily as pastor of this congregation under a contract between the congregation and the ordained minister in a form proposed by the synodical bishop and approved by the congregation.

CHAPTER 10 CONGREGATION MEETINGS

C10.01 Regular Meetings. The congregation shall have at least two regular meetings each calendar year. In June at a time and place determined by the Council at its April meeting; and in December at a time and place determined by the Council at its October meeting.

C10.01.01 June Meeting. At the June congregation meeting, the senior pastor, the president on behalf of the Council, and each organization and school within the congregation shall each submit a written report. Election of new members to the Council will be held, and program reports and plans shall be acted upon.

C10.01.02 December Meeting. At the December congregation meeting, a treasurer's report shall be submitted; regular financial reports/plans and a proposed budget shall be acted upon; and the Nominating Committee's members shall be elected.

C10.01.03 Member's Concerns. Member's concerns shall be addressed at any regular meeting.

C10.02 Special Meetings. A special congregation meeting shall be conducted when called by (a) senior or interim pastor, (b) Council, (c) president of the congregation, or (d) upon written notice to the Council by at least 5% (five percent) of the congregation's voting members.

The person or group initiating the call for the special meeting shall set the purpose, date, time, and place of the meeting, with no business conducted other than that contained in the notice.

C10.03 Notice of Meetings. Notice of all meetings of this congregation shall be (1) given at the services of worship on the preceding two consecutive Sundays, and (2) contained in the mail or email sent to all members at least 10 days in advance of the meeting date.

C10.04 Quorum. Five percent (5%) of the voting members of this congregation present at a special or a regular meeting constitutes a quorum.

C10.05 Proxy / Absentee Voting. Voting by proxy or absentee ballot is not permitted.

C10.06 Fiscal and Program Years. The fiscal year shall be January 1 – December 30. The program year shall be July 1 – June 30.

CHAPTER 11 OFFICERS

C11.01 Officers. The officers of the Council and this congregation shall be a president, a vice president, a secretary, and a treasurer.

C11.02 Duties. The duties of officers shall be specified in position descriptions approved by the Council.

C11.03 Eligibility. The officers shall be elected from Council members, except the treasurer (see C11.04 below). No officer shall hold more than one office at a time.

C11.04 Elections. The Council shall elect its officers, and they shall be officers of the congregation. The officers shall be elected as soon as practicable after the June Council member elections.

Treasurer - the Council may elect the treasurer from either the Council's or the congregation's voting membership, and the Treasurer shall be a member of the Council. If elected from the Council's membership, then his/her vacated Council position may be refilled following the procedure in C12.09.

Ballot - The officers shall be elected by ballot when there is more than one nominee for the same office.

C11.05 Term of Office. The president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer shall serve for one year, or until their successors are elected. The officers shall assume office upon adjournment of the meeting at which the officer elections occur.

C11.06 Term Limits. No officer, with the exception of the treasurer, shall serve more than two (2), full consecutive terms in the same office. A full term is serving more than one-half (1/2) the term of the office.

C11.07 Vacancies. Officers elected to fill unexpired terms shall serve from the time of the meeting at which they are elected to the next general election of officers.

CHAPTER 12 CONGREGATION COUNCIL

C12.01. Membership. The voting membership of the Council shall consist of the pastor(s) and not more than 11 members of the congregation. Of the 11 congregation members, six (6) shall be general members, four (4) are the officers, and one (1) is the youth member specifically described in C12.16.

C12.02. Duties of Members. The duties of Council members shall be specified in position descriptions approved by the Council.

C12.03 Eligibility. Any voting member, except an employee of the congregation, is eligible. If, after election, a Council member becomes an employee, other than a pastor, then s/he must resign from the Council.

C12.04 Nomination, Election, & Installation. The Nominating Committee at the June congregational meeting shall make nominations for Council membership, ensuring that staggered terms are maintained. Additional nominations may be made from the floor. Voting shall be by ballot when there are more nominees than positions available. Election to office shall be by majority vote. Newly elected Council members shall be installed at a Sunday worship service as close as possible to the day they assume office.

C12.05 Term of Office. The elected member's term of office shall be for three (3) years, unless a shorter term is required to maintain staggered terms, or until their successor is elected. Their term begins immediately upon the close of the meeting at which the elections occur.

C12.06 Term Limits. An elected member may serve no more than two, full consecutive terms. A full term is serving more than one-half (1/2) the term of that office.

C12.07 Vacancies. A sitting member's place on the Council shall be declared vacant with no further action than these bylaws if the member: a) ceases to be a voting member of this congregation, b) is absent from three (3) regular meetings of the Council in a calendar year, or c) submits their written resignation to the president of the Council.

C12.08 Resignations. A member may resign from the Council by submitting a letter of resignation to the president. Resignations are effective immediately upon their receipt by the president.

C12.09 Filling Vacancies. The Council may fill vacancies by a majority vote of all members. The person elected may serve until the next Council member elections. Vacancies in this section refer to positions either a) declared vacant (C12.05), or b) left unfilled at the general election.

C12.10 Meetings. The Council's regular meetings shall normally be once a month with the day, time, and place to be determined by the Council. Special meetings shall be conducted when called by the senior or interim pastor, or the president, or at least one-half of the Council members. Notice of each special meeting shall be given to all who are entitled to be present and shall include the purpose, day, time, and place of the meeting with no business conducted other than that contained in the notice.

C12.11 Quorum. A quorum is a majority of the members of the Council, including the senior or the interim pastor, except when the senior 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 senior or interim pastor who has refused approval of the agenda of a subsequent regular or special meeting shall not preclude action by the Council, following consultation with the synodical bishop.

C12.12 Council Duties and Responsibilities. The Council shall have general oversight of the life and activities of this congregation, and, in particular, its worship life. To that end, everything should be done in accordance with the Word of God and the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

C12.12.01 Duties. The duties of the Council shall include the following:

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

C12.12.02 Council Responsibilities. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the financial and property matters of this congregation.

- a. The Congregation Council shall be the board of trustees of this congregation, and as such shall be responsible for maintaining and protecting its property and the management of its business and fiscal affairs. It shall have the powers and be subject to the obligations that pertain to such boards under the laws of the State of Tennessee, except as otherwise provided herein.
- b. The Congregation Council shall not have authority to buy, sell, or encumber real property unless specifically authorized to do so by a meeting of the congregation.
- c. The Congregation Council shall have authority to make disposition of surplus personal property of up to \$1,000.00 in value. Disposition of surplus personal property in excess of \$1,000.00 in value shall require congregational approval.
- d. The Congregation Council may enter into contracts of up to \$10,000.00 for items not included in the budget.
- e. The Congregation Council shall prepare an annual budget for adoption by this congregation, shall supervise the expenditure of funds in accordance therewith following its adoptions, and may incur obligations up to 10 percent of the current year's budget without congregational approval. 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.
- f. 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.
- g. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for this congregation's investments and its total insurance program.
- h. The Congregation Council shall determine the amount of corporate surety necessary for all financial officers, and the premiums shall be paid by the congregation.

C12.13 Staff Supervision. The Council shall be responsible for both the direct and the indirect supervision of the salaried employees of this congregation.

C12.14 Annual Report. The Council shall submit a comprehensive report to the congregation at the June congregational meeting.

C12.15 Organizational Documents. Current copies of the (1) organization chart; and (2) continuing resolutions, memoranda, or other documents containing the descriptions of each committee, task force, or other organizational group shall be attached to and be considered a part of these bylaws. These administrative documents may be created, deleted, or amended individually without amending these bylaws.

C12.16 Youth Council Member. The one (1) youth member shall be elected in the same manner as the other Council members. Except for the following sub-sections in this section, the youth member shall be a full member of the Council and subject to the same provisions of these Bylaws as the other members.

C12.16.01 Age Requirement. The youth member shall be a voting member of the congregation 20 years of age, or younger, at the time of election.

C12.16.02 Term of Office. The youth member's term shall be one (1) year from the date of their election, or until their successor is elected.

C12.16.03 Term Limit. The youth member's term is one (1) year. However, the incumbent may serve one (1) additional year if no other nominee is elected by the congregation.

C12.16.04 Additional Considerations. The Council may impose additional duties, responsibilities, restrictions, and provisions as necessary to ensure the youth member's tenure is safe, productive, and meaningful to both the youth member and the other members of the Council. However, none of the preceding actions mentioned in this sub-section, if implemented, may abridge the youth member's voice, voting, or related fundamental rights of Council membership.

CHAPTER 13 CONGREGATION COMMITTEES

C13.01 General. Standing and special committees, as provided in this Chapter, may be formed as the local and general interest of the congregation may require. The acts of all committees are subject to review of the council. The pastor(s) shall have a voice and vote in all committees.

C13.02 Standing Committees. A standing committee is of a permanent nature and may be established only by the Council. The membership, duties, and responsibilities of all standing committees shall be fixed by resolution, from which the committees shall receive needed instructions.

C13.03 Special Committees. A special committee is of temporary duration and may be established by the Council, or the president, or either the senior or the interim pastor. The membership, duties, and responsibilities of a special committee shall be specified in a memorandum prepared by the initiating authority.

CHAPTER 14 ORGANIZATIONS WITHIN THE CONGREGATION

C14.01 General. 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 June meeting, shall determine their policies, guide their activities, and receive reports concerning their membership, work, and finances.

C14.02. Special Interest Groups. Groups other than those of the official organizations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, may be organized only after the Council gives its written authorization.

CHAPTERS 15 – 20 RESERVED (see Constitution)

CHAPTER 21 PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, latest edition, shall be the parliamentary authority for conducting meetings of this congregation, the Council, and the committees. Provisions of law, the Constitution, bylaws, and adopted rules of order supersede Robert's Rules.

Amendment History: June 1, 2008