

**CONSTITUTION and BY-LAWS
OF FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH
HIGHLAND, MICHIGAN**

2009

CONSTITUTION

MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to welcome and unite God's people, to nurture faith through the Gospel, and provide opportunities and commitment to serve Christ through our Ministry within the congregation and the community.

PREAMBLE

The Word of God requires that a Christian congregation shall conform to the Divine Word in doctrine and practice (Ps. 119:105, Gal. 1:6-8, 2 Tim. 4:1-5) and that all things shall be done decently and in order (I Cor. 14:40). Therefore we, the members of Faith Lutheran Church, accept and subscribe to the following Constitution and By-Laws, in accordance with which all spiritual and material affairs of our congregation shall be governed.

ARTICLE I – NAME

The name of this congregation shall be Faith Lutheran Church and is located in Highland, Michigan.

ARTICLE II – PURPOSE

This congregation, recognizing Jesus Christ as the Lord of the Church, shall serve its members and spread the kingdom of God by the preaching of the Word of God, by the administration of the Sacraments, and by religious instruction of youth and adults, according to the confessional standard of the Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod (Article III), and shall foster Christian fellowship and charity.

ARTICLE III – CONFESSIONS

This congregation acknowledges and accepts all the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments as the revealed Word of God, verbally inspired, and acknowledges and accepts all the Confessional Writings of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, contained in the Book of Concord of the year 1580, to be the true and genuine exposition of the doctrines of the Bible. These Confessional Writings are the three Ecumenical Creeds (Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian), the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles, Luther's Large and Small Catechisms, and the Formula of Concord.

ARTICLE IV – MEMBERSHIP

The membership of this congregation includes the following:

A. *Baptized Members:*

Baptized members are all members who have been baptized, including the children on the membership rolls who have not yet confirmed their baptismal vows.

B. *Communicant Members:*

Those who:

1. Are baptized in the name of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost;
2. Accept all canonical books of the Old and New Testaments as the only divine rule and standards of faith and life;
3. Are familiar with the six chief parts of Christian Doctrine:
 - a. Ten Commandments
 - b. Apostles' Creed
 - c. Lord's Prayer
 - d. Sacrament of the Altar
 - e. Office of Keys and Confession
 - f. Baptism
4. Attend divine services faithfully;
5. Lead Christian lives and do not live in manifest works of the flesh (Gal. 5:19-21);
6. Partake of the Lord's Supper frequently after their confirmation;
7. Contribute regularly and faithfully, as God has prospered them, toward the building of Christ's Kingdom in the congregation and throughout the world;
8. Devote their time and talents to the extension of the kingdom of God;
9. Permit themselves to be fraternally admonished and corrected when they have erred; and
10. Are not supporters of the false teachings of secret societies which conflict the Word of God and denying salvation by grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

C. ***Voting Members:***

Include all confirmed members, not under church discipline and who have reached their 18th birthday, are entitled to vote in the affairs of this congregation, (See By-Laws Article I, Paragraph B and Article II, Paragraph B).

ARTICLE V – THE OFFICES OF PASTOR AND TEACHER

The Pastoral office of this congregation shall be conferred upon such ministers only as profess and adhere to the confessional standard set forth in Article III of this constitution and are well qualified for their work. Any Pastor and/or teacher shall, in the call extended to and accepted by them, be pledged to this confessional standard.

ARTICLE VI – POWERS OF THE CONGREGATION

A. ***General:***

The congregation as a body, through the voting members, shall have supreme power to administer and manage all its external and internal affairs. The establishment and conduct of all institutions and societies within the congregation, such as a parochial school, the Sunday School, youth societies, ladies and men organizations, choir, etc., shall at all times be subject to the approval of the congregation. They shall not be empowered to decide anything contrary to the Word of God and the Confessions of the Lutheran Church (Article III) and any such decision by any group contrary to Article III shall be null and void.

B. ***Right of Calling:***

The right of calling Pastors or teachers shall be vested in the Voters' Assembly which shall consult with the congregation. This right can never be delegated to a smaller body or to an individual.

C. ***Decision Making:***

Matters of doctrine and conscience shall be decided by the Word of God. Other matters shall be decided by the Voters' Assembly by a majority vote unless otherwise specified by the Constitution or By-Laws.

D. ***Power of Officers:***

Congregational Officers or committees, whether elected or appointed by the voters, shall have no authority beyond that which has been conferred upon them by this constitution and whatever power(s) may have been delegated to them may at any time be altered or revoked by the Voters' Assembly.

E. ***Removal from Office:***

Any officer, Pastor, or teacher, may be removed from office by a two-thirds vote of the Voters' Assembly for one of the following causes:

1. Persistent adherence to false doctrine;
2. Scandalous life, and/or
3. Inability to perform his/her official duties or willful neglect of them.

Such action shall be accomplished in a manner of Christian love and lawful order by secret ballot.

F. ***Officers:***

The officers of this congregation shall be such officers, boards, or committees as the By-Laws of this congregation may prescribe.

G. ***Board of Directors:***

The Board of Directors for Faith Lutheran Church shall be recognized as the Church Council and shall consist of the elected officers and a minimum of three additional directors at all times in conformance with Michigan law (MCL acts 327 of 1931; 162 of 1982; and 222 of 2008).

ARTICLE VII – PROPERTY RIGHTS

If, at any time, a separation should take place on account of doctrine, the property of the congregation and all benefits therewith connected shall remain with those voting members who continue to adhere in confession and practice to Article III of this Constitution. In the event the congregation should totally disband, the property and all rights connected therewith shall be transferred to the Mission Board of the Michigan District of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod.

ARTICLE VIII – DOCTRINAL LITERATURE

Only such hymns, prayers, and liturgies shall be used in the public services of the congregation and in all ministerial acts as conform to the confessional standard of Article III. Likewise, in all classes for instruction in Christian doctrine, only such books shall be used as conform to this same standard.

ARTICLE IX – SYNODICAL MEMBERSHIP

A. ***Membership:***

This congregation shall hold membership in the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod. It shall send its Pastor and a lay delegate, to the District convention of Synod.

B. ***Membership Commitment:***

It shall be the duty of the congregation and its individual members to support the work of Synod.

ARTICLE X – BY-LAWS and GOVERNANCE

This congregation may adopt such By-Laws as may be required for the accomplishment of its purpose.

ARTICLE XI – CHANGING THE CONSTITUTION

A. ***Unalterable Articles:***

The following articles of this Constitution or sections thereof shall be unalterable and irrevocable: III, V, and VIII.

B. ***Amendments:***

Amendments to this Constitution and By-Laws may be adopted at a regular Voters' Assembly, provided that:

1. They do not conflict with the provisions laid down in Article III or with any section of any other article that pertains to Scriptural doctrine and practice.
2. The proposed amendment has been submitted in writing at a previous, regularly scheduled Voters' Assembly.
3. The affirmative vote of a two-thirds majority of the voting membership present at the Voters' Assembly shall be required for the adoption of an amendment, and a quorum of one-third of the voting members shall be present at the meeting.

BY-LAWS

ARTICLE I – MEMBERSHIP

A. ***Admission into Membership:***

There are three primary ways to gain communicant membership including:

1. **By Confirmation** – Confirmation itself being a reception into church membership, all who are thus received by this act become communicant members.
2. **By Transfer** – Persons coming with a communicant letter of transfer from a congregation in church fellowship, provided they conform in all respects to the requirements of membership of this congregation, shall be received by the Board of Elders whose action is to be approved in a subsequent meeting of the Voters' Assembly.
3. **By Affirmation of Faith** – Other persons shall submit their application to the Pastor and having given satisfactory evidence of qualifications for communicant membership to the Board of Elders, they shall be received as communicant members, to be approved in a subsequent meeting of the Voters' Assembly based on the Board of Elders recommendation.

B. ***Voting Membership*** involves:

1. **Reception:** An applicant for voting membership shall give notice of his intention to the congregational President or at a meeting of the Voters' Assembly. New voting members shall read a copy of the Constitution and By-Laws of the congregation which shall be furnished him/her. At a subsequent constitutional meeting of the Voters' Assembly and in the presence of the applicant, the congregational President shall present such application. Upon two-thirds majority vote of the voting members present, the applicant shall be declared a voting member.
2. **Duties:** It shall be the duty of every voting member to attend the Voters' Assemblies. By failing to attend such meetings, a member waives the right to cast his/her vote during that meeting. He/she shall accept nomination for office, committee appointment, etc., if possible, and generally participate in the business activities of the Voters' Assembly.

ARTICLE II – TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

A. *Communicant Membership:*

1. **Transfer to Other Congregations** – Communicant members desiring to join a congregation in church fellowship shall present their request for transfer to the Pastor, to whom authorization is granted to issue such transfers. Such transfer of membership shall first be approved by the Elders and subsequently by the Voters' Assembly.
2. **Joining Other Churches** – In cases where communicant members have joined another congregation, outside our fellowship, they shall (upon recommendation of the Pastor) be considered as having terminated their membership and their names shall be removed from the membership list by a resolution of the Voters' Assembly as presented by the Board of Elders.
3. **Whereabouts Unknown** – The names of members whose whereabouts are unknown and cannot be established within a period of twelve months shall be reviewed and a membership determination made by the Board of Elders and subsequently voted upon by the Voters' Assembly. Upon a vote for removal, such membership is immediately terminated.
4. **Excommunication and Self-Exclusion** – Any member who conducts himself/herself in an unchristian manner shall be admonished according to Matt. 18:15-20. If he/she refuses to amend his/her sinful life after proper admonition, he/she shall be excommunicated. If the member refuses to attend the Voters' meeting or to meet with a smaller group (e.g., Board of Elders) officially acting for the Voters to discuss their case, he/she has thereby excluded themselves. A unanimous vote shall be required for every Resolution by the Voters' Assembly for excommunication or self-exclusion as presented by the Board of Elders.
5. **Status** – A person whose communicant membership has been terminated has forfeited all rights of a member of this congregation and all claims upon the property of this congregation as such, or upon any part thereof, so long as he/she is not reinstated into membership.

B. *Voting Membership:*

A voting member who is absent from the meetings of the Voters' Assembly for a three-month period without receiving an excused absence by the Congregational President shall have his/her name removed from the roster of voting members; however, he/she may be reinstated by approval of the Voters' Assembly.

ARTICLE III – MEETINGS

A. *Standard Meetings:*

Regular meetings of the Voters' Assembly shall be held on the third Thursday of each month beginning at 7:30 p.m.

The annual meeting of the Voters' Assembly shall be the Voters' Assembly meeting held in January at which reports for the entire previous year shall be given.

B. *Special Meetings:*

Special meetings of the Voters' Assembly may be called by the Congregational President or Pastor. Additionally, if necessary and appropriate, five members of the Voters' Assembly have the right to call for a Voter's meeting.

C. *Voters' Meetings Provisions:*

1. Every Voter's meeting shall be announced (by word or in the bulletin) at a prior Sunday service. Whenever a meeting has been announced and at least one-third of the voting members of the congregation (a quorum) are in attendance, it shall be considered a properly convened and legal meeting capable of transacting business.
2. For amending the Articles of Incorporation, the Constitution, the By-Laws, the erection of buildings, the purchase or sale of property, or the removal of a Pastor or teacher or some other member from office, a quorum of one-third of the voting members is necessary, and a two-thirds majority vote shall be required for adoption of a resolution, unless otherwise provided by state law.
3. The Pastor shall, if possible, attend all meetings of the Voters' Assembly and provide devotion and Pastor's report.
4. All Voters' meetings shall be conducted in accordance with this constitution and "Roberts Rules of Order."

ARTICLE IV - CALLING OF PASTORS AND TEACHERS

A. *Nominations:*

At a properly convened meeting of the Voters' Assembly, the list of candidates having been received from the District President for the office of Pastor or teacher shall be submitted by the nomination committee. Any communicant member can make additional nominations to the nominating committee. Any voter is entitled to make additional nominations from the floor.

B. *Candidate Review:*

The congregational President and Chairman of the Board of Elders will assemble a task force to review candidates including conducting either personal or telephone interviews. This task force will also facilitate a church visit by finalists wishing to visit the congregation.

C. *Elections:*

The election of a Pastor or teacher from the list chosen by the congregation's Voters' Assembly shall be by ballot. The candidate receiving a majority of all votes cast shall be considered elected. The election shall, if possible, be made unanimous by a rising vote and the call shall be sent to the Pastor or teacher-elect.

If, on the first ballot, none of the candidates receives an absolute majority, the one having the least number of votes shall be eliminated from the list of candidates and another ballot cast until the person elected has an absolute majority.

ARTICLE V – ELECTION OF CONGREGATIONAL OFFICERS

A. *Method:*

1. A nominating committee consisting of voting members, appointed by the Church Council or Congregational President, shall present a slate of candidates at the November meeting of the Voters' Assembly.
2. The slate proposed by the nominating committee should consist of two names for each office. The incumbents, if eligible, shall be listed as one of the nominees. Any amount of additional nominations may be made from the floor.
3. The annual election shall be by ballot and shall be held at the December meeting of the Voters' Assembly.
4. If on the first ballot, none of the candidates receive an absolute majority, the one having the least number of votes shall be eliminated from the list of candidates and another ballot cast until the person elected has an absolute majority.

B. *Eligibility:*

1. Only members in good standing shall be eligible to hold elective offices. Appointive positions may be held by non-voting members.
2. Anyone who holds voting membership in the congregation may serve as officers and as chairs of boards and committees.
3. Women should not be placed in a position of usurping authority over men. Accordingly, they shall not be elected as President or Vice-President or an Elder. Furthermore, women should not be placed into any positions directly involved in the specific functions of the Pastoral office (e.g., preaching, public administrations of the sacraments, and/or church discipline).

C. *Installation:*

1. The officers-elect shall assume their respective duties on January 1st.
2. The officers-elect shall be formally installed on the first Sunday in January, if possible, in a regular church service.

D. *Vacancies:*

1. Officers shall be elected for the terms specified in these By-Laws and shall hold office until their successors shall have been elected and qualified.
2. In the event of a vacancy in any office, the Church Council or the Congregational President shall appoint a successor to serve until the next annual election. This appointment shall be approved at a subsequent Voters' Assembly meeting.

ARTICLE VI - OFFICERS

The elected positions of this congregation shall be:

- A. Congregational President
- B. Congregational Vice-President
- C. Congregational Secretary
- D. Congregational Treasurer
- E. Financial Secretary
- F. Board of Elders
- G. Board of Trustees
- H. Board of Education
- I. Board of Stewardship
- J. Faith Family Community Outreach

ARTICLE VII – CHURCH COUNCIL

A. *Church Council:*

The Church Council shall consist of the:

1. President of the congregation;
2. Vice President;
3. Chairpersons of the Board of Elders, Trustees, Education, Social Outreach and Stewardship;
4. Congregational Secretary;
5. Congregational Treasurer; and
6. Financial Secretary.

As noted in the Constitution, Article VI, section G, the Church Council is the Board of Directors for Faith Lutheran Church.

The Pastor shall be an ex-officio member of the Council.

B. *Responsibilities:*

The Church Council will meet to discuss all matters pertinent to the general welfare of the congregation as presented by the various boards and to present recommendations to the congregation. While the Church Council through its committees will address ecclesiastical issues in particular, the Council will tend to the business and affairs of the congregation and shall manage it in compliance with Michigan laws addressing the responsibilities of Board of Directors. Additionally, the Church Council shall act in matters committed to it by the Voters' Assembly. The Church Council shall have no authority or power other than that granted by the Voters' Assembly.

C. *Meetings:*

It shall be the duty of the Church Council to meet as called upon by the congregational President, especially in times of emergency or between Voters' meetings.

D. *Council Quorums:*

There may be occasions where the Church Council must act without the support and attendance of the Voters' Assembly. In such cases a quorum for the transaction of business is defined, per Michigan law,

as a majority of the members of the board then in office. However, as there are more than seven (7) directors, Michigan Law allows that the articles of incorporation or bylaws provide that less than a majority, but in no event less than 1/3 of the directors, may constitute a quorum of the board.

The vote of the majority of members present at a meeting at which a quorum is present constitutes the action of the board, unless the vote of a larger number is required by the constitution or bylaws.

ARTICLE VIII – TERMS AND DUTIES OF OFFICERS AND STANDING COMMITTEES

A. *Congregational President:*

1. The term of office of the Congregational President shall be for one year and the incumbent shall not hold that office for more than three consecutive terms without a lapse of one year minimum.
2. The Congregational President shall preside over all meetings of the Voters' Assembly.
3. Decisions of the Congregational President shall be made according to parliamentary rules.
4. The Congregational President shall hold their vote and have the choice of casting the deciding vote in case the votes are equally divided.
5. The Congregational President shall decide all questions of order.
6. The Congregational President shall have the responsibility of ensuring that all resolutions are executed by the proper officers of boards according to the wishes of the Voters' Assembly.
7. The Congregational President shall be an ex-officio member of all standing boards and committees, with the exception of the Board of Elders, and shall attend personally or designate the Congregational Vice-President of the congregation to attend meetings of boards and committees whenever necessary and advisable.
8. The Congregational President shall annually appoint an audit committee.
9. The Congregational President shall be a signer of all church accounts and debt instruments.
10. Be an active member of the Planning Task Force.

B. *Congregational Vice-President:*

1. The term of office for the Congregational Vice-President shall be one year and the incumbent shall not hold that office for more than three consecutive terms without a lapse of at least one year.
2. In the absence of the Congregational President, the Congregational Vice-President shall perform the duties of the office.
3. In the event of a vacancy in the office of the Congregational President, the Congregational Vice-President shall succeed to that office for the remainder of the term.
4. The Congregational Vice-President shall preside at all meetings of the Church Council.
5. The Congregational Vice-President shall be an ex-officio member of any standing boards and committees as delegated by the Congregational President and shall attend their meetings.

6. Be an active member of the Planning Task Force.

C. *Congregational Secretary.*

1. The term of office for the Congregational Secretary shall be one year and he/she shall not hold that office for more than three consecutive terms without an elapse of time.
2. The Congregational Secretary shall keep accurate minutes of the Voters' Assembly and Church Council meetings for the permanent records of the congregation.
3. He/she shall retain copies of monthly reports of all church organizations.
4. The Congregational Secretary shall keep a roll of all the voting members of the congregation and all Church Council members, shall call the roll at meetings of the Voters' Assembly and Church Council, and shall keep a record of attendance at such meetings.
5. He/she shall conduct all official correspondence of the Voters' Assembly and of the Church Council.
6. The Congregational Secretary shall keep a master copy of the constitution and record all changes.
7. The Congregational Secretary shall be a signer on all asset accounts of the congregation, as well as any ancillary accounts by other organizations within Faith Lutheran Church.
8. Be an active member of the Planning Task Force.

D. *Congregational Treasurer.*

1. The term of office of the Congregational Treasurer shall be for two years and he/she shall not hold that office for more than two consecutive terms.
2. The Congregational Treasurer shall pay all bills authorized by the Congregation. He/she shall not handle any cash or checks, but rather direct all such exchanges to go directly to the Board of Trustees for counting, processing, and depositing in the bank.
3. He/she shall keep an accurate record of all receipts and disbursements of the congregation in books, which shall remain the property of the congregation.
4. The Congregational Treasurer's books may be audited by an Audit Committee appointed by the Congregation President and issue a report of such to be presented at a Voters' Assembly meeting.
5. He/she shall submit a written report to each Voter's Assembly meeting, regularly scheduled. Such report shall show actual receipts and disbursements compared with the budgeted amounts.
6. The Congregational Treasurer shall close the books of the Church by January 31st of the following year.
7. It shall be the responsibility of the incumbent Congregational Treasurer at the beginning of the new fiscal year to obtain any new signatures necessary from the Congregational President, Congregational Secretary and Congregational Treasurer to be placed on the signature cards of the savings and checking accounts of the congregation.

8. The Congregational Treasurer will be the primary contact with the taxing authorities, as well as financial institutions.
9. Work with other board chairs to prepare the annual budget for submission at the November's Voters' Assembly.
10. Be an active member of the Board of Stewardship and the Planning Task Force.

E. ***Financial Secretary.***

1. The term of office of the Financial Secretary shall be for two years and he/she shall not hold that office for more than two consecutive terms without a lapse of time.
2. It shall be the duty of the Financial Secretary to keep detailed records of all money received. He/she shall be responsible for a quarterly statement of contributions to be sent to each contributing member, which should be issued not later than the 15th of the month following the close of each quarter.
3. The Financial Secretary shall submit a written report at each meeting of the Voters' Assembly following the close of each quarter, indicating especially the total number of communicant members, attendance, communion registration, and analysis of average offerings.
4. The congregation, through its Voters' Assembly, may elect or appoint as many assistants to the Financial Secretary as is deemed necessary.
5. Keep the congregation informed of the church's financial status through semi annual report letters to be mailed to members' homes and in the monthly newsletter.
6. Be an active member of the Board of Stewardship and the Planning Task Force.

F. ***Board of Elders.***

1. ***Membership.***

The Board of Elders shall consist of:

- a) One elected Elder for approximately every thirty-five communicant members,
- b) Unlimited Para Elder appointees; and
- c) The Pastor in an ex officio capacity.

Each elected Elder shall serve a term of three years, but shall not hold a position for more than two consecutive terms without a lapse of time. One third of the elected positions are to be elected annually. At the request of the Board of Elders, through its chairman the Congregation President may appoint additional Elders for a specified time period. The appointment shall be approved by the Voters' Assembly. The appointed Elders will assist in carrying out an Elders' duties at such time when an elected Elder is unavailable due to illness, vacation or other reasons including growth in membership. The board shall meet after elections to select a Chairman who shall represent them on the Church Council and a Board Secretary who shall record the minutes of the meetings and submit a written report, except for personal and private business, to the Voters' Assembly.

The Chairman is a member of the Church Council and should be an active participant of the Planning Task Force.

2. *Responsibilities:*

Duties of the Board of Elders include the following:

- a) Assist the Pastor in all matters pertaining to the spiritual welfare of the congregation.
- b) Consider complaints and grievances of members of the congregation if Matt. 18:15-16 has been fully observed, and they shall report to the congregation those which cannot be otherwise adjusted, in accordance with Matt.18:17-18.
- c) Make every effort to induce members who have been negligent in their attendance of services, in the use of the Sacraments, or in any other spiritual matters to mend their sinful ways and fully enjoy the rights and privileges of their membership.
- d) Meet with the Pastor annually to review their assigned list before each and every Elder sends a letter of greeting and introduction to their assigned members and are encouraged to establish and maintain personal contact on a consistent basis.
- e) Ensure that all services are conducted in such a manner as to avoid needless disturbances and to foster an attitude conducive to worship among those in attendance.
- f) Assist the Pastor in arranging for pulpit assistance, special services, and guest speakers.
- g) Maintain a list of ushers and use them as needed.
- h) Appoint a head acolyte and maintain a schedule of acolytes for each of the weekly services.
- i) Prepare a list of candidates when the congregation is to call a Pastor or teacher (cfr. Article III). Similarly, the board will prepare lists of candidates for all other paid positions (i.e., office secretary, organist, custodian, etc.) and work as necessary with the Board of Trustees if appropriate. It will conduct appropriate due diligence on the candidates and prepare a recommendation to the Voters' Assembly.
- j) Evaluate individual performance on an annual basis and make recommendations to the Voters' Assembly regarding any compensation adjustments.
- k) Responsible for public relations to publicize the Gospel and the church by any and all available and appropriate media.
- l) Be an example of Christian conduct.
- m) Upon the request of the Pastor, assist him in visiting prospective or current members.
- n) Assign a member of the Board of Elders to each committee to serve as a liaison providing insights and communication.
- o) Appoint a Worship Committee to assist the Pastor with special services. This committee shall also advise the congregation on new music and form of worship. The committee shall also include the Pastor and at least one Elder. All appointments shall be approved by the Voters' Assembly. The Worship Committee shall be under the direction of the Board of Elders.

3. *Para Elders (Deacons?)*

Para Elders are appointed members of the Elder Board whose function is to conduct selected Elder functions. Such positions, filled by either men or women, cannot conduct responsibilities a, c, d, f, i, and j.

G. *Board of Trustees:*

1. *Membership:*

This board shall consist of:

- a) Minimum of three elected members;
- b) Unlimited appointed members;
- c) The Pastor in an ex officio capacity; and
- d) An Elder as a liaison to the Board of Elders.

Member terms of office shall be three years. Members shall not hold that office for more than two consecutive terms without a lapse of one year. One-third of the Trustees shall be elected each year. This board shall organize themselves annually and elect a Chair who shall represent them on the Church Council, and a Board Secretary who shall record minutes of their meetings and submit a written report to the Voters' Assembly.

The Chairperson is a member of the Church Council and should be an active participant of the Planning Task Force.

2. *Responsibilities:*

Duties of the Board of Trustees include the following:

- a) Administer all church property belonging to the congregation with the aid and guidance of the church officers and committee chairs (e.g., Congregation President, Congregation Vice President, Congregation Treasurer, Elders, Education, etc.); to make contracts; accept and receive grants and bequests; sign documents, and appear in court.
- b) Establish an account, or accounts, with a limited credit line as set by the Voters' Assembly for repairs and other low end maintenance of the church property. Such accounts will be held in the name of the church with signing authority given only to the Chair of the Trustees.
- c) Develop and maintain a routine maintenance schedule for appropriate equipment, as well as schedule and supervise annual cleanings before Easter and Christmas, and otherwise as deemed necessary.
- d) Have an annual schedule for a Trustee to be on duty for any and all worship services to perform the following activities:
 - (i) Opening and/or securing the church facility for services;
 - (ii) Maintaining that entries and walkways are safe to and from the church; and
 - (iii) Counting and preparing all offerings from the worship service(s) for bank deposit which will be made immediately after the last service and in no event more than 24 hours after the service.

- e) Oversee the rental of facilities and equipment (tables and chairs).
- f) Be the primary contact with the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth preparing and submitting the Annual Report and renewal of licensing as a nonprofit in accordance with the Nonprofit Acts. The chair will serve as the Resident Agent to the State of Michigan.
- g) Ensure that the church maintains a proper level of insurance coverage over all facilities and property and equipment, as well as appropriate Director and Officer Liability.

H. ***Board of Christian Education:***

1. ***Membership:***

The board shall consist of:

- a) Three elected members;
- b) The Pastor in an ex officio capacity;
- c) An Elder, non-voting and as a liaison with the Board of Elders, and
- d) Minimum of two appointed members who may include:
 - i. The superintendent of the Sunday School and two appointed teachers; and
 - ii. The supervisor of the Vacation Bible School program.

Elected and appointed members are for a term of three years with one third being elected/appointed annually. This board shall organize immediately after election for the purpose of electing a Chair and a Board Secretary. The chair shall represent the board on the Church Council. The Board Secretary shall record minutes of the meetings and submit a written report to the Voters' Assembly. One third of the elected positions are to be elected annually.

The Chairperson is a member of the Church Council and should be an active participant of the Planning Task Force.

2. ***Responsibilities:***

Duties of the Board of Education include the following:

- a) Scope and nature of board responsibilities:
 - (i) Foster spiritual growth in the life of the individual Christian.
 - (ii) Strengthen the Christian home and help equip parents, children, and young people for Christian family living, as well as grandparents, aunts, and uncles.
 - (iii) Provide learning opportunities for all age levels: preschool, school age, youth, adult, and older adults.
 - (iv) Provide leadership education for teachers and education workers.
 - (v) Periodically assess the need and prepare a recommendation to the Voters' Assembly regarding establishing a pre-school and/or day school.

- b) Program planning:
 - (i) Set up adequate objectives for every age level.
 - (ii) Select curricula so that objectives for each age level can be achieved which are consistent with Article III.
 - (iii) Give attention to enrollment, attendance of pupils and expansion program.
 - (iv) Recommend to the congregation appropriate teaching and administrative educational personnel.
 - (v) Develop a teacher training and leadership education program.
 - (vi) Bring to the attention of the Voters' Assembly the needs of facilities and equipment for all educational agencies, as well as an annual budget.
 - (vii) Review and appraise all educational programs and plan for improvement on the basis of such regular appraisals.
- c) Organization and administration:
 - (i) Subdivide and assign responsibility to one or more members by age levels, e.g., child, youth, or adult, or by function, e.g., Sunday School; Nursery; Bible Classes for teens, young adults, and adults; Family Life Education; and/or Leadership Training.
 - (ii) Delegate the administration of all educational agencies and work to qualified persons.
 - (iii) Maintain open and continuous dialogue with Michigan District and Concordia University System to identify appropriate education programs for Faith.

I. ***Board of Stewardship:***

1. ***Membership:***

This board shall consist of the following:

- a) Three elected members;
- b) Financial Secretary;
- c) Congregational Treasurer;
- d) An Elder, non-voting and as a liaison to the Board of Elders;
- e) The Pastor in an ex officio capacity
- f) Unlimited appointed positions who may include:
 - i. Welcoming Committee (minimum two members); and
 - ii. Time and Talent Committee (minimum two members).

The three elected members will serve a term of three years with one position being nominated each year. An incumbent cannot exceed two consecutive terms without a lapse of one year. Members from the Welcoming and Member Information Sheet Committees are appointed and may serve longer. One third of the elected members are to be elected annually.

One elected member will serve as Chairperson representing the board on the Church Council. One of the other elected positions will serve as Board Secretary to the Stewardship Board and maintain minutes to be submitted to the Voters' Assembly.

The Chairperson is a member of the Church Council and should be an active participant of the Planning Task Force.

2. ***Responsibilities:***

It shall be the duty of this board to:

- a) Discover the talents of the membership and maintain a current database, which allows other boards and committees to enlist them in congregational programs and activities.
- b) Assist in training lay workers.
- c) Sponsor stewardship and mission talks, discussions, presentations, plays, movies, etc. for the congregation.
- d) Identify, communicate, and reinforce a clear vision of the world's need of Christ and how they can contribute to filling those needs.
 - (i) Work with the circuit and district stewardship committees, where appropriate, and communicate these programs and opportunities to the congregation to extend District and Synod outreach efforts.
 - (ii) Communicate with the congregation on local congregational programs and opportunities to extend our community advocacy and outreach.
- e) Educate and encourage the congregation on its Christian responsibility to contribute time, talents, and possessions.
- f) Review the raising of all funds by any and all groups within the congregation: receive reports from any group conducting a fundraiser on success of the event and disposition of the funds.
- g) Participate or provide materials for New Member Orientation and assist in integration into Faith as appropriate.
- h) Represent the congregation in sending greetings to prospective and new members.
- i) Maintain open and continuous dialogue with Michigan District, Church Extension fund, Thrivent and other agencies to identify appropriate programs and resources for Faith and our Community.

J. ***Faith Family Community Outreach***

1. ***Membership:***

This board shall consist of:

- a) Minimum of three elected members;
- b) Unlimited appointed members, but minimum of two;
- c) The Pastor in an ex officio capacity; and
- d) An Elder, non-voting and as a liaison to the Board of Elders.

The elected members shall be for a term of three years not to exceed two consecutive terms without a lapse of one year. One third of the members are to be elected annually. One of the elected members will be the Chairperson of this board and shall represent them on the Church Council. A second elected member shall serve as Board Secretary and prepare meeting minutes to be presented at the Voters' Assembly.

The Chairperson is a member of the Church Council and should be an active participant of the Planning Task Force.

2. ***Responsibilities:***

It shall be the duty of this board to:

- a) Discover the needs of individuals in the congregation (e.g., aged, sick, poor, homeless, single parent, etc.) and use board discretion to determine and support a course of action. Such needs and response will be brought to the attention of the Voters' Assembly with suggestions for action by the Congregation.
- b) Extend to the emergency needs of a congregational member, monies not to exceed \$250 with the approval of no less than three members of the committee from special gifts or the budget. Requests in excess of \$250 or from other accounts require the prior approval of the Voters' Assembly.
- c) Review and report on the social needs of the community and solicit congregational support with selected agencies endeavoring to help them meet the needs.
- d) Prepare an annual report on the areas Faith provided for social needs including an assessment of the effectiveness of such support and a recommendation for future involvement with any organization that benefited from our support. It shall recommend new organizations to fund, and when funding should cease to be shared with other organizations.
- e) Review requests that come to the attention of the church, either directly or from congregational members and make a determination on whether Faith should be involved, with subsequent review and if appropriate, approval at a Voters' meeting.
- f) Make available church personnel and facilities for community welfare programs and projects (i.e., Blood Drives, etc.).
- g) Ensure any funds provided by the Noisy Offering are used to buy food, either through Community Sharing or food bank, or some other agency that provides either cooked/prepared meals or groceries to those in need in our community.

K. ***Planning and Finance Task Forces:***

1. ***Membership:***

- a) The Planning Task Force consists:
 - i) The chairmen of all boards and committees;
 - ii) The Pastor;
 - iii) The Congregational President and Congregational Vice President; and
 - iv) The Presidents of any and all auxiliary organizations in the congregation.

- b) The Finance Task Force consists:
 - i) The Church Treasurer;
 - ii) The Financial Secretary;
 - iii) The Congregational President and Congregational Vice President; and
 - iv) Any other member of the congregation.

2. Responsibilities:

- a) The Planning Task Force, with any interested member of the congregation, shall meet to review the Mission Statement of the church, create a vision for growth, and develop a plan for the congregation and Faith's role in the community.
- b) The Planning Task force, along with interested members, will meet throughout the year to assess progress of the plan and make adjustments as appropriate.
- c) The Finance Task Force, with any interested member of the congregation, shall meet as needed to review the financial strength and stability of Faith and make recommendations to the Voters' Assembly as appropriate.
- d) The Finance Task Force, with any interested member of the congregation, shall meet as directed by the Voters' Assembly to review specific financial matters such as investments, insurance coverage, the mortgage, etc. Results of such meetings are to be presented at the Voters' Assembly.

L. Miscellaneous Officer and Board Provisions:

1. Holding More than One Office:

Two or more offices may be held by the same person, but an officer shall not execute, acknowledge, or verify an instrument in more than one capacity if the instrument is required by law or the articles or bylaws to be executed, acknowledged, or verified by two or more officers/directors.

2. Lapse between Terms in Office:

It may be necessary at some time to appoint a member who has served in an elected position for two consecutive terms and is not eligible for re-election. The "appointment" of the member for a one-year non-elected period of service does not restrict the re-election of that member to a new three year term at the next regular annual election.

3. Frequency of Board Meetings:

Boards shall meet monthly, although meetings may be suspended in the summer months, specifically June and July. In no event should any board have less than six meetings per year.

4. Board Postings:

Each Board is responsible to review and approve any postings to its assigned bulletin areas. For General Announcements, responsibility is assigned to the Chairman of the Board of Trustees working with the Office Secretary to review and approve any postings.

5. Communication:

Maintain good relations and cooperation with the individual agencies and educational organizations, the Voters' Assembly, the Church Council, the whole congregation, and the community. Additionally, a copy

of the board's meeting minutes that is submitted to the Voters' Assembly should also be given to the assigned Elder liaison.

6. *Task Forces:*

Boards shall convene Task Forces as needed. Such Task Forces have no direct authority to spend or commit funds, are temporary entities, and have no permanent membership. Task Forces must be accountable to an existing board.

7. *Faith Operations Manual:*

Each Board shall endeavor to work in creating and maintaining a current operation manual. Such manual will contain documented procedures including forms, reports, checklists and the like that will assist the congregational members and committee members in understanding how certain procedures are completed, or who is involved in certain decision making.

M. *Auxiliary Organization Provisions:*

1. *Accountability:*

Auxiliary organizations may be asked to report to a board. In any event, all auxiliary organizations are accountable to the Voters' Assembly with respect to existence and objectives, performance, and financial accountability.

2. *Reporting:*

Any auxiliary organizations receiving funds through the budget or through Faith Lutheran Church will submit to the Voters' Assembly a report every six months addressing its activities and efforts for inclusiveness, as appropriate. This provision includes any auxiliary organization seeking matching Thrivent funds.

ARTICLE IX – CHANGES IN REGULATIONS

The congregation shall from time to time, adopt, alter, or amend rules and regulations (or directives) for the guidance of officers and committees in their work. Any changes needed to be included in the Constitution or By-Laws will follow the procedure for amendment as noted above.

ARTICLE X – ORDER OF BUSINESS

The following shall be the order of business for the regular Voters' Assembly:

- A. Devotion
- B. Roll Call
- C. Welcome of Visitors and Prospective Members
- D. Reading of Minutes
- E. Pastor's Report
- F. Reports of Officers and Boards
- G. Reception of Voting Members
- H. Reception of Applicants for Communicant Membership
- I. Release of Members from Communicant Membership
- J. Unfinished Business
- K. New Business
- L. Adjournment

ARTICLE XI – CASH MANAGEMENT POLICIES

A. *Expenditure Approval*

1. Once the budget is approved, any expenditure to be incurred by any officer or committee in excess of \$250 shall be communicated to the Voters' Assembly before any commitment is finalized.
2. Any expense that exceeds the approved budget must be brought before the Voters' Assembly for approval before any commitment is finalized.

B. *Use of budgeted funds*

1. The budget shall include line items for each active board and selected committees identified and approved by the Voters' Assembly. Boards include: Elders, Trustees, Stewardship, Social Outreach, and Christian Education. Current committees and groups include: Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, Women of Faith, and Youth.
2. Line items added to the budget require the recommendation of the Finance Committee and/or Stewardship Board, as well as Voters' Assembly approval.
3. Board and committee line items will only be used to educate and develop committee members or the congregation. Such expenses may include conference costs, videos, computer programs, and other materials necessary to help develop skills or in the line of advocacy/awareness within the congregation.

C. *Benevolence Budget*

1. The budget will include line items for benevolence outside of Faith Lutheran Church.
2. Known or expected expenditures will be covered by one or more line items as appropriate. Appropriate committees can make commitments against the line items once the budget is approved, but should provide notice to the Voters' Assembly and the Congregational Treasurer on items above \$250.
3. Unknown or unassigned expenditures will be covered by one line item. Disbursements or uses of these funds require review and approval by Voters' Assembly. Where necessary and appropriate additional funds can be requested from either "Funds and Gifts" or "Memorials."

D. *Ancillary Financial Accounts and Reporting*

1. Any ancillary accounts related to Faith Lutheran Church and its operations must be reported through the Congregational Treasurer and included in the monthly financial statements for the church.
2. Where other ancillary accounts exist, the responsible overseer will submit a copy of the monthly statements and any necessary and requested supporting material to the Congregational Treasurer.
3. All ancillary accounts will include the Congregational Secretary as one of the authorized signatures.
4. All ancillary accounts are subject to annual financial audit as requested by the Congregational President and completed by his/her designees.

5. Known or expected expenditures from ancillary funds in excess of \$250 require notice to and discussion with the Voters' Assembly (unless the expenditure had previously been approved by the Voters' Assembly as part of a fund raising event).

***This Constitution of Faith Lutheran Church and the amendments herein
were revised March, 2009.***