

PROCEDURES FOR CONGREGATIONS OF THE MINNESOTA NORTH DISTRICT WHEN AMENDING OR REWRITING A CONSTITUTION AND/OR BYLAW

September, 2019

The Handbook of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod indicates that all changes to the constitution and bylaws of member congregations are to be reviewed and approved through the district board of directors as a qualification for continued membership in the Synod. In addition, the Handbook for the Minnesota North District charges the Committee on Congregational Constitutions and District Membership of the Minnesota North District with reviewing all new constitutions/bylaws of a member congregation as well as all amendments to existing constitutions/bylaws. Please note that any revisions to a constitution or bylaws is not effective, nor should the congregation begin to implement such revisions, until the board of directors has approved the changes.

In general, the Committee on Congregational Constitutions and District Membership (Constitution Committee) looks to see if the constitution/bylaws helps a congregation accomplish its mission decently and in order. The Constitution Committee looks to see that the wording is clear, concise, and unambiguous; that articles in the constitution and bylaws do not conflict with each other or with the constitution and bylaws of the Synod and District; and that there is a date on the document. In addition, it is reviewed for punctuation, spelling, and grammar. A congregation's constitution and bylaws should be clear and easily understood by anyone reading it.

The following procedures will help assure that changes to a constitution/bylaws can be processed as quickly as possible:

- 1 - The congregation approves all changes as required by its current constitution and bylaws.
- 2 - After changes are approved by the voters assembly, 2 copies of the new or revised constitution/bylaws with the changes in the appropriate place and 2 copies of the old constitution/bylaws are sent to the district president. A copy may be sent to him electronically as an alternative.
- 3 - The district president forwards 1 copy of each document to the district's Constitution Committee. The document may be sent electronically.
- 4 - The committee reviews the changes as well as the entire constitution/bylaws for any other changes that might be necessary.
- 5 - The committee chairman sends a letter to the congregation detailing any additional changes that might be necessary or that they might be requested to consider.
- 6 - The congregation makes the necessary changes (these may need to have voter approval). Two copies of the final revised constitution/bylaws are sent directly to the committee chairman. A copy may be sent to him electronically as an alternative.
- 7 - The committee chairman will review the final changes and forward to the district president with a recommendation for approval as appropriate.
- 8 - The district president presents the constitution/bylaws to the district board of directors for action.
- 9 - The congregation will be notified by the district secretary of action taken by the board of directors.
- 10 - A copy of the approved constitution and bylaws must be sent to the district president for file.

Questions regarding constitution/bylaw changes can be directed to Rev. John Beck, chairman of the MNN District Constitution Committee. He can be reached at constitution@mnnlcms.org. You may also contact the district office for his home telephone number.

**GUIDELINES FOR CONSTITUTIONS AND BYLAWS
OF LUTHERAN CONGREGATIONS
IN THE MINNESOTA NORTH DISTRICT
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH - MISSOURI SYNOD**

September, 2019

INTRODUCTION

Because a degree of uniformity in the constitutions and bylaws of member congregations of The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (Synod) and the Minnesota North District (MNN District) is desirable, the Committee on Congregational Constitutions and District Membership (Constitution Committee) of the Minnesota North District has from time to time issued guidelines for the preparation and review of such documents. While these guidelines are based on those which appear on the Synod website, some additional articles have been included. In some cases, the Synod guidelines have been slightly altered.

These guidelines are distributed for the assistance of congregations in the MNN District in formulating a new constitution/bylaws or revising an existing document. The guidelines identify subjects that ordinarily should be addressed in the constitution and bylaws of member congregations of the Synod.

Congregations applying for membership in The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod are required to have their constitutions approved by the board of directors of the Minnesota North District. In addition, as a condition of continued membership in The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, congregations who revise an existing constitution/bylaws also are required to submit them for approval by the Board of Directors of the Minnesota North District. These requirements are noted in the Handbook of The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod and in the Handbook of the Minnesota North District.

The goal of these guidelines is to assist congregations of the Minnesota North District in carrying out ever more effectively the great mission which our Lord Jesus Christ has given to His church on earth: to make disciples of all nations, sharing with their communities and the world the good news of salvation, and teaching them to observe all that He has commanded.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Congregations that are preparing a new constitution and bylaws, or are amending a current document, are strongly encouraged to follow the attached guidelines. While guidelines can be changed to fit each individual congregation, the basic guidelines should still be followed very closely. Using these guidelines will make it easier for a congregation to write a new constitution/bylaws or revise an existing document and make the approval process happen quicker. The following should be taken into consideration:

- 1) Brevity - Governing documents (articles of incorporation, constitution, bylaws) should be as brief as possible while including everything necessary to conduct the affairs of the congregation decently and orderly so that no one has to interpret the constitution/bylaws.
- 2) Reference System - For ease of reference, a numerical and decimal numbering system is recommended. This is similar to the numbering system used in the Synod's Handbook.

3) Articles of Incorporation - While some congregations combine the articles of incorporation with the constitution, these should be separate documents. Articles of incorporation are the legal statements required by the State of Minnesota (or the state in which the congregation is located) for incorporation, whereas the constitution serves an expanded purpose for the congregation. State law requires that every amendment to the articles of incorporation be reported to the state. Therefore, it is advised that the constitution be separate from the articles of incorporation.

4) Relation of Constitution to Bylaws - The constitution is the document that sets forth the fundamental purposes of the congregation and includes the basic form of organization and general principles. The bylaws contain the organizational details. The bylaws are generally more easily modifiable than the constitution. If ambiguity between the constitution and bylaws exists, the constitution governs.

5) Examination of Constitution and Bylaws - Upon referral by the district president, the Committee on Congregational Constitutions and District Membership, as required by the bylaws of The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod and the Minnesota North District, reviews the new or revised constitution and bylaws of the congregation. It reviews the constitution and bylaws as a single document, makes recommendations for changes as needed, reviews the final revisions, and submits its recommendation to the district president who makes a recommendation to the district board of directors.

6) Date of constitution - All constitutions must be dated. With word processing programs it should be very easy to put the date on the bottom of each page. Congregations are encouraged to include additional dates and information either on the cover page of the constitution or the back page of the bylaws. The recommended system is to use the original date of the constitution and/or bylaws. The next date shown on the document is the date that it was approved by the board of directors. In the case of revisions to a constitution/bylaws, there may be multiple dates. This could be accomplished similar to this:

1-5-98	Constitution/bylaws approved (but not enacted) by the congregation
6-3-98	Constitution/bylaws approved by MNN District board of directors
6-10-98	Constitution enacted by voters assembly
8-3-02	Bylaws revised to change months that voters assembly meet
10-6-02	Bylaw change approved by MNN District board of directors
9-8-04	Bylaws revised to change term of office for boards
1-8-05	Bylaw change approved by MNN District board of directors

7) The pages of a constitution and bylaws are to be numbered.

8) These guidelines contain some information in italics and enclosed in parentheses (for instance, article 1.0 of the constitution). In these instances congregations will need to make some kind of decision as to the appropriate information to use.

CONSTITUTION

1.0 NAME

The name of this congregation shall be [Name] Lutheran Church of [City,] [County,] [State].

2.0 MISSION

The purpose of this congregation shall be to give honor and glory to the Triune God, to carry out His will, to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all the world, to nurture the faith of its members, to manifest the unity of our faith in Jesus Christ as God and Savior, to foster Christian fellowship and love, to extend a helping hand to human need, and to achieve its objectives by the preaching of the Word of God, by the administration of the sacraments, and by the religious instruction of all its members according to the confessional standard of the Evangelical Lutheran Church.

3.0 CONFESSIONAL STANDARD

This congregation accepts without reservation that:

- 3.1 The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the revealed, inspired, inerrant, infallible, and written Word of God and the only rule and norm of faith and practice.
- 3.2 All the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church are a true and unadulterated statement and exposition of the Word of God, to wit: the three Ecumenical Creeds (the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, the Athanasian Creed), the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles, the Large Catechism of Luther, the Small Catechism of Luther, and the Formula of Concord.
- 3.3 Any doctrine or practice in conflict or inconsistent with this confessional standard shall not be taught or tolerated in this congregation.
- 3.4 Only hymns, prayers, liturgies, and other worship forms shall be used in the public services and activities of this congregation and in all ministerial acts as conform to these confessional standards.

4.0 SYNODICAL MEMBERSHIP

This congregation shall be a member of The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod as long as the Synod conforms to the congregation's confessional standards as set forth in this constitution.

- 4.1 A two-thirds vote of the voters present at a properly called voters assembly shall be required to withdraw from membership in The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod.

5.0 MEMBERSHIP

This congregation distinguishes among three types of congregational membership.

- 5.1 The membership of this congregation includes the following:
 - 5.1.1 Baptized members are all who have been baptized in the name of the Triune God and who are under the spiritual care of the pastor of this congregation, including the children who have not yet been confirmed into communicant membership.
 - 5.1.2 Communicant members are those baptized members who have been instructed and are familiar with the contents of *Luther's Small Catechism*, have been confirmed in the Lutheran faith, and accept the confessional standard of this constitution.
 - 5.1.3 Voting members are communicant members who have reached the age of [insert the age required to be a voting member] years.
- 5.2 The members of this congregation are received in the following manner:
 - 5.2.1 Baptized members are received through the Sacrament of Holy Baptism or through the consent of one or both parents in the case of children who have been baptized in another Christian congregation.

- 5.2.2 Adult members are received through the rite of confirmation and Sacrament of Holy Baptism as appropriate, through transfer from a sister congregation, or through profession of faith or reaffirmation of faith.
- 5.2.3 Eligible communicant members may be received as voting members upon application for such privilege and upon approval of the voters assembly. They shall also have read the constitution and signed a copy thereof. They shall have the right to vote at the voters assembly following the one at which they become a voting member.
- 5.3 Members of this congregation shall conform their entire lives to the authority of God's Word and to that end shall make diligent use of the means of grace, exercise faithful stewardship of God's many gifts and talents, impart and accept fraternal admonition as the need of such admonition becomes apparent, and be readily available for service in the kingdom of Christ within and beyond the congregation. Membership in organizations whose principles and conduct conflict with the Word of God is prohibited.
- 5.4 Membership in this congregation shall be terminated as follows:
 - 5.4.1 Membership shall be terminated by transfer to a sister congregation, by joining a congregation outside the fellowship of this congregation, by excommunication, by self-exclusion, or by death.
 - 5.4.2 Communicant members who conduct themselves in an un-Christian manner shall be admonished according to Matthew 18:15-20, the goal of which shall be to call them to repentance. If they remain impenitent after proper admonition, they shall be excommunicated. Each case of excommunication or self-exclusion shall be presented to the voters assembly for a decision. A two-thirds majority vote of the voters present at a properly called voters assembly shall be required.
- 5.5 Requests for change in membership shall be processed by the pastor in conjunction with the board of elders and reported to the voters assembly. All changes in membership shall be reported in church publications such as the Sunday bulletin, newsletter, annual report.

6.0 CALLED CHURCH WORKERS

The voters assembly of this congregation shall have the exclusive right to call ordained or commissioned ministers. This responsibility shall not be delegated to a smaller body and never to an individual.

- 6.1 The pastoral office shall be conferred only upon ordained ministers who are members of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, candidates for the pastoral ministry who have satisfied the qualifications and requirements for assignment of first calls by Synod, or ordained ministers who are members in good standing of church bodies that have been formally recognized to be in altar and pulpit fellowship with the Synod when agreements for such calls are in place.
- 6.2 Only those commissioned ministers shall receive a call who adhere to the confessional standard set forth in this constitution, who are qualified for the work of the ministry to which they are called, and who have been endorsed by and are members of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, or are candidates of LCMS colleges and universities who have satisfied the qualifications and requirements for assignment of first calls, or are commissioned ministers in good standing from church bodies that are in altar and pulpit fellowship with The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.
- 6.3 The right of calling ordained or commissioned ministers shall be vested in the voters assembly and shall not be delegated otherwise.
- 6.4 Called ordained or commissioned ministers may be removed from office in Christian and lawful order by a two-thirds majority ballot vote of the voters present at a properly called voters assembly for one of the following reasons: persistent adherence to false doctrine, scandalous life, willful neglect of the duties of office, the inability to perform those duties, or

domineering in office. This shall be done only in consultation with the President of the Minnesota North District.

- 6.5 When a vacancy occurs in an office of an ordained or commissioned minister, the congregation shall notify the President of the Minnesota North District to receive assistance in temporarily filling the vacancy and to receive his counsel in calling a new pastor, teacher, or other church worker.

7.0 AUTHORITY OF AND WITHIN THE CONGREGATION

The voters assembly shall be the governing body of this congregation and shall be empowered to administer and manage all its affairs.

- 7.1 The establishment and conduct of all organizations and societies within the congregation or related directly to the congregation shall be subject to the overall authority and general oversight of the voters assembly.
- 7.2 All matters before the voters assembly shall be decided by a majority vote unless otherwise specified by this constitution or bylaws. Matters of doctrine and conscience shall be decided only on the basis of the Word of God.
- 7.3 Officers, board members, and committee members shall have no authority beyond that which has been conferred upon them. Whatever power may have been delegated to them shall at all times be subject to change or revision by the voters assembly.
- 7.4 This congregation may receive, acquire, hold title to, and manage real estate and other property in order to accomplish its purpose. It may also sell or dispose of such real estate and other property or any part thereof, remodel existing facilities, or build new facilities in order to accomplish its purpose. A two-thirds majority vote of the voters present at a properly called voters assembly is required for such action.
- 7.5 The *[insert the correct officer(s) or board]* shall serve as the legal representative of the congregation.

8.0 VOTERS ASSEMBLY MEETINGS

Meetings of the voters assembly shall be held as determined in the bylaws.

- 8.1 Announcements of regular meetings shall be made in the services of the two previous Sundays or printed in the Sunday bulletin for the two previous Sundays.
- 8.2 Announcements of special meetings shall be made in the services of the two previous Sundays or in the services of the previous Sunday when accompanied by notification by mail unless deemed an emergency meeting. Such special meetings may be called at the request of the pastor, chairman, church council, or five (5) *[or insert an appropriate number]* voting members. The business at a special voters assembly shall be limited to the reason for which it was called.
- 8.3 All voting members present at a properly called meeting shall constitute a quorum. *[If a definitive number of voting members is required to transact business and the required number does not attend, then a method for transacting business without that number must be defined.]*
- 8.4 It shall be the obligation of every voting member to attend all meetings of the voters assembly. By being absent a voter waives the right to vote in that meeting. Absentee ballots or voting by proxy shall not be allowed.
- 8.5 The attendance or absence of each voter shall be recorded by the secretary.

9.0 OFFICERS, BOARDS, AND COMMITTEES

This congregation shall have the following officers, boards, and committees in addition to any which the congregation shall establish from time to time.

- 9.1 The officers of this congregation shall be:
 - 9.1.1 A chairman, who shall conduct the meetings of the voters assembly, church council, and congregation.
 - 9.1.2 A vice-chairman, who shall serve in the chairman's absence or inability to act.
 - 9.1.3 A secretary, who shall keep the minutes of the voters assembly and the church council.
 - 9.1.4 A treasurer, who shall be responsible for the financial records of the congregation.
 - 9.1.5 A financial secretary, who shall be responsible for the receipt of all contributions and who shall deposit the same in an account established in the name of the congregation.
- 9.2 The boards of this congregation shall be:
 - 9.2.1 A board of elders, consisting of three members [*or as otherwise defined*], which shall assist the pastor in the spiritual life of the congregation.
 - 9.2.2 A board of trustees, consisting of three members [*or as otherwise defined*], which shall be responsible for the physical properties of the congregation.
 - 9.2.3 A board for Christian education, consisting of three members [*or as otherwise defined*], which shall be responsible for the nurture and Christian growth of the members of the congregation.
 - 9.2.4 A board for evangelism, consisting of three members [*or as otherwise defined*], which shall lead the members of the congregation into community outreach.
 - 9.2.5 A board for stewardship, consisting of three members [*or as otherwise defined*], which shall be charged with teaching and promoting proper stewardship of time, talents, and treasures.
 - 9.2.6 A board for youth, consisting of three members [*or as otherwise defined*], which shall be charged with coordinating the youth program of the congregation.
 - 9.2.7 [*insert other boards of the congregation*]
- 9.3 The committees of this congregation shall be:
 - 9.3.1 An audit committee, consisting of three members [*or as otherwise defined*], which shall audit the books of the treasurer annually.
 - 9.3.2 A nominating committee, consisting of three members [*or as otherwise defined*], which shall be responsible for nominations and elections to office.
 - 9.3.3 [*insert other standing committees of the congregation*]
- 9.4 Any officer, board member, or committee member who fails to carry out his or her duties of office or who fails to perform the responsibilities of confirmed membership may be removed from office by the voters assembly by a two-thirds majority ballot vote, in Christian and lawful order. Reasons for such removal shall normally include persistent adherence to false doctrine, scandalous life, willful neglect of the duties of the office, or inability to perform the duties of the office. Matthew 18 should be followed under such circumstances.
- 9.5 The pastor, by virtue of his office, shall be an advisory member of all boards and committees. [*If "ex-officio" is used rather than advisory, then "voting privileges" or "non-voting privileges" of the pastor must be stated*]

10.0 DIVISION

If at any time a division of the congregation should take place for any reason, the following principles will govern.

- 10.1 The President of the Minnesota North District shall be contacted for his counsel before any final decision is made regarding a division.
- 10.2 The property of the congregation and all benefits connected therewith shall remain with those communicant members who continue to adhere in confession and practice to the confessional standards set forth in this constitution.

- 10.3 If a division takes place for reasons other than doctrinal reasons, the property of the congregation shall remain with the majority of the communicant members.
- 10.4 In the event that the congregation dissolves, all property shall be disposed of by the final voters assembly for the payment of debts and all just claims against the congregation. Any and all surplus and all rights connected therewith shall be conveyed to and become the property of the Minnesota North District of The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod.

11.0 AMENDMENTS

This constitution may be amended in a properly convened meeting of the voters assembly.

- 11.1 Amendments to articles other than article 3 may be adopted at a regular or special voters assembly meeting provided that:
 - 11.1.1 They do not conflict with the provisions of article 3 or with any other article that pertains to scriptural doctrine and practice.
 - 11.1.2 The proposed amendment has been submitted in writing at a previous meeting of the voters assembly and published in the Sunday bulletin at least one Sunday prior to the meeting at which the proposed amendment will be acted upon.
 - 11.1.3 A two-thirds affirmative vote of the voters present at a properly called meeting shall be required for adoption.
- 11.2 Amendments to article 3 [*and any additional articles as necessary*) shall follow the above procedures. Any changes to this article shall not destroy the essential meaning of the same.
- 11.3 The revised constitution shall, as a condition of continued membership in The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, be submitted to the President of the Minnesota North District for review by the Constitution Committee for the Minnesota North District and favorable action by the Board of Directors of the Minnesota North District before being implemented by the congregation.

BYLAWS

1.0 PROCEDURES FOR CALLING MINISTERS OF RELIGION

When this congregation calls a minister of religion, ordained or commissioned, the following procedure shall be followed:

- 1.1 When a pastor or commissioned minister is to be called, every member of the congregation shall be provided opportunity to suggest one or more names for consideration.
- 1.2 A call committee shall be appointed by the church council *[or as otherwise defined]* to serve as a screening committee and shall submit all suggested names to the District President for information and evaluation. The District President may add additional names as necessary. The committee shall then present to the congregation by public announcement its proposed list of candidates and their biographical sketches.
- 1.3 After the final list of candidates is received from the District President, the information shall be made available to the congregation for two Sundays *[or another number of Sundays]* prior to a voters assembly called for the purpose of calling a pastor or commissioned minister. All congregation members shall be allowed to attend this meeting. However, only eligible voters may cast a vote.
- 1.4 Ballot voting shall continue until a majority *[or another appropriate percentage]* vote determines the disposition of the call.
- 1.5 If at all possible, a unanimous voice vote by registered voters shall be the last vote for the candidate who was elected.

2.0 CHURCH COUNCIL

The church council shall provide direction to the congregation on behalf of the voters assembly.

- 2.1 The church council shall consist of the congregation's chairman, vice-chairman, secretary, treasurer, financial secretary, and the chairman of each of its boards. The pastor shall be an advisory member of the church council. *[If "ex-officio" is used rather than advisory, then "voting privileges" or "non-voting privileges" of the pastor must be stated]* The chairman and secretary of the congregation shall also serve as the chairman and secretary of the church council.
- 2.2 The church council shall meet a minimum of four times a year *[or an appropriate number such as "during the months when the voters assembly does not meet"]*. Special meetings of the church council may be called by the chairman, the pastor, or any three members *[or insert an appropriate number]* of the church council by providing notice at least 24 hours prior to the meeting.
- 2.3 The church council members present at a properly called meeting shall constitute a quorum. *[If a definitive number of church council members is required to transact business and the required number does not attend, then a method for transacting business without that number must be defined.]*
- 2.4 The principal duty of the church council shall be to coordinate the program and activities of the various boards of the congregation. It shall also have the power to act on behalf of the congregation between meetings of the voters assembly within limitations established by the voters assembly and the constitution and bylaws. Actions of the church council shall be reported to the next meeting of the voters assembly.

3.0 NOMINATIONS, ELECTIONS, APPOINTMENTS, AND TERMS OF OFFICE

The procedure for the nomination and election of officers and board members, appointment of committees, and appointment to vacant offices shall be as follows.

- 3.1 A nominating committee appointed by the church council [*or congregation chairman*] shall present a slate of candidates for each elected office. The slate shall normally provide two names for each office. Additional nominations may be made from the floor. No person shall be nominated without his or her consent.
- 3.2 A majority of the votes cast at a properly called voters assembly shall be required for all elections. Candidates receiving the lowest number of votes shall be eliminated in each succeeding ballot.
- 3.3 All officers shall be elected for a term of [*insert length of term*]. Each officer may serve for three [*or an appropriate number*] consecutive terms in the office to which he or she is elected. Any further election to that office can be done only after an absence of one [*or another number*] year from that office.
- 3.4 Members of each board shall be elected for a term of [*insert length of term*]. Each board member may serve for three [*or another number*] consecutive terms in the office to which he or she is elected. Any further election to that office can be done only after an absence of one [*or another number*] year from that office.
- 3.5 An individual may only hold one elective office at a time. Elected individuals may serve on appointed committees at the same time as serving in an elected office.
- 3.6 The chairman of the congregation [*or church council or voters assembly*] shall appoint all committee members. Appointed committee members shall serve for a term of one year [*or another number*]. Appointed committee members may serve for an unlimited number of terms [*or an appropriate number*].
- 3.7 Officers, board members, and committee members shall assume office on January 1 [*or another date*]. They shall be inducted into office in a public service of the congregation.
- 3.8 In case of a vacancy in an elective office, the voters assembly shall elect [*or the church council shall appoint or the congregation chairman shall appoint*] a successor to fill the unexpired term from a list of candidates provided by the nominating committee [*or by some other method*]. Service for more than one-half of a term shall constitute a full term.
- 3.9 The following restrictions shall prevail:
 - 3.9.1 All elective offices of the congregation shall be reserved to members of the voters assembly who have been voting members for at least one year [*or another criteria*] and are at least twenty-one (21) years of age [*or another criteria*].
 - 3.9.2 Members of the board of elders shall be reserved to male members of the congregation [*other restrictions regarding this may be added such as age*].
 - 3.9.3 Appointed offices may be filled by any communicant member of the congregation who is at least eighteen (18) years of age [*other criteria for age can be used*].

4.0 OFFICIAL DUTIES

Officers and members of boards and committees shall perform the duties as provided in the constitution.

- 4.1 Each board shall elect its chairman annually.
- 4.2 The congregation shall have the right to detail and expand upon those responsibilities by job descriptions developed by the church council and approved by the voters assembly.

5.0 MEETINGS OF THE VOTERS ASSEMBLY

The voters assembly shall meet in January, April, July, and October [*or other months*]. The October [*or another month*] voters assembly shall be designated as the annual meeting during which elections and approval of the budget shall take place. The voters assembly shall normally meet on the second Monday of the month [*or another month and day or eliminate this sentence and*].

allow the chairman to schedule the meeting dates]. However, the chairman shall have the authority to schedule the meetings for any day of the month.

6.0 RULES OF ORDER

In addition to principles laid down in Scripture and in the constitution and bylaws of this congregation, accepted parliamentary procedures such as *Robert's Rules of Order* shall be followed.

7.0 PRIORITY OF THE CONSTITUTION

Should there be a conflict between the constitution and the bylaws or the addendum or between the bylaws and the addendum, the following procedures shall prevail:

- 7.1 If there is a conflict between the constitution and the bylaws, the pertinent portion of the constitution will take precedence.
- 7.2 If there is a conflict between the constitution and the addendum to the constitution, the pertinent portion of the constitution will take precedence.
- 7.3 If there is a conflict between the bylaws and the addendum, the pertinent portion of the bylaws will take precedence.

8.0 AMENDMENTS

These bylaws may be amended in a properly convened meeting of the voters assembly.

- 8.1 Amendments shall be adopted by a majority of all votes cast, provided the proposed change has been submitted in writing in a previous meeting or has been provided in writing to all voting members at least two weeks prior to the meeting.
- 8.2 The revised bylaws shall, as a condition of continued membership in The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, be submitted to the President of the Minnesota North District for review by the Constitution Committee of the MNN District and favorable action by the Board of Directors of the Minnesota North District before being placed into practice by the congregation.

ADDENDUM TO THE CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS DUTIES OF OFFICERS, BOARD MEMBERS, AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS

In accordance with article 4.2 of the bylaws this addendum details job descriptions for all officers, boards, and committees. These job descriptions may be changed by the voters assembly without submitting them to the President of the Minnesota North District for review and approval.

[The following sample of duties may be attached as an addendum to the bylaws rather than being made a part of the bylaws. By attaching the duties as an addendum they may be altered or changed without changing the bylaws and without having to submit the changes for review and approval by the district's board of directors.

Or

The following sample of duties may be inserted into Article 4.2 of the bylaws and numbered appropriately by replacing the current article with "The officers shall perform the duties prescribed in the constitution in addition to those included in these bylaws" and then adding the detailed job description; boards could be Article 4.3; committees could be Article 4.4 If the duties are made a part of the bylaws, any changes or alterations would need to be submitted for review and approval by the district's board of directors.

Any duties so defined cannot conflict with any of the articles of the constitution or bylaws.

These are only suggestions and are not all encompassing. In some cases, duties included below under an officer or a board may very well be part of another officer's or board's duties and so will need to be placed under the appropriate office or board.]

The chairman shall:

- 1) Chair all meetings of the congregation, the voters assembly, and the church council;
- 2) Call meetings of the congregation, the voters assembly, or the church council as regularly scheduled or whenever necessary;
- 3) Assist the pastor in the administration of the temporal affairs of the congregation;
- 4) Appoint board and committee members as necessary;
- 5) Perform such other duties as assigned by the voters assembly.

The vice-chairman shall:

- 1) Perform the duties of the chairman during his absence or inability to serve;
- 2) Perform such other duties as assigned by the voters assembly.

The secretary shall:

- 1) Keep a written record of actions of the voters assembly and the church council in the form of minutes of these meetings;
- 2) Keep a written record of all standing resolutions;
- 3) Conduct the correspondence of the congregation not otherwise arranged;
- 4) Keep an accurate and current roster of the members of the voters assembly;
- 5) Be present at all elections to test the qualifications of candidates if a question should arise;
- 6) Perform such other duties as assigned by the voters assembly.

The treasurer shall:

- 1) Receive the rightful and lawful bills to the congregation and make disbursement by check from congregational funds on authority of the congregation;
- 2) Make written monthly reports of disbursements to the church council and make written quarterly and annual reports to the voters assembly;
- 3) Submit the financial books of the congregation for audit after the close of the fiscal year;
- 4) Ask for assistance in completing these assigned tasks as necessary;
- 5) Perform such other duties as assigned by the voters assembly.

The financial secretary shall:

- 1) Receive all contributions for the congregation, and see to their prompt deposit in a bank designated by the voters assembly;
- 2) Keep an accurate account of all receipts and deposits;
- 3) Issue offering envelopes, provided by the congregation, to each communicant member;
- 4) Record the contributions of members through the offering envelopes on forms provided by the congregation and distribute them on a periodic basis;
- 5) Make written monthly reports to the church council and written quarterly reports to the voters assembly;
- 6) Ask for assistance in completing these assigned tasks as necessary;
- 7) Perform such other duties as assigned by the voters assembly.

The board of elders shall:

- 1) Assist the pastor in all spiritual matters of the congregation, in particular to cultivate peace, harmony and love among the members, to assist in the pastoral care of the sick, the needy, and such as are negligent in worship participation or the use of the Sacraments;
- 2) Ensure that the worship services are conducted decently and in order, that the Gospel is preached in its purity and in accord with sound Lutheran doctrine, and that all instruction, religious or secular, is in accord with the Word of God;
- 3) Make provision for pastoral care and services in the absence, sickness, or disability of the pastor or in times of pastoral vacancy;
- 4) Assist the pastor in the administration of the Sacraments in whatever ways are considered necessary and mutually agreeable;
- 5) Devise and foster ways by which guests and visitors are sincerely welcomed and made to feel at home in the congregation;
- 6) Promote personal witnessing among the members and organize outreach into the community of the congregation;
- 7) Direct and supervise the incorporation of new members and make every effort to bring them into the life and work of the congregation;
- 8) Approve all special services, entertainments, performances, or any other functions planned for presentation to the congregation or general public or to any society or organization;
- 9) Supervise the music staff;
- 10) Supervise the altar guild in the care, use, and maintenance of all items such as communion ware, chancel furnishings, banners, vestments;
- 11) Consider cases of church discipline and bring them to a satisfactory conclusion or bring them to the attention of the voters assembly in accordance with Matthew 18;
- 12) Exercise leadership in gathering call lists and calling a new pastor when a vacancy occurs;
- 13) Be concerned about the spiritual, emotional, and physical welfare of the pastor(s) and his family (adequate compensation, housing, free time, vacation, assistance in times of illness) and specifically review these items annually;
- 14) Assist the pastor(s) in processing changes of membership among congregation membership;
- 15) Pray for the pastor(s) and other spiritual leaders and encourage them in their work by word and action;
- 16) Train and supervise the ushers;
- 17) Review and recommend salary changes to the voters assembly;
- 18) Perform such other duties as assigned by the voters assembly.

The board of trustees shall:

- 1) Be concerned with and responsible for the maintenance and repair of real and personal property of the congregation;
- 2) Take such action as may be necessary in an emergency to protect the property and interest of the congregation;
- 3) Arrange proper insurance coverage for the congregational properties and make any necessary reports and recommendations to the voters assembly;
- 4) Regulate the use of all congregational facilities by organizations of the congregation, individual members, and non-member individuals or groups;
- 5) Make proper and adequate arrangements for the housing of the pastor and his family;
- 6) Perform such other duties as assigned by the voters assembly.

The board for Christian education shall:

- 1) Supervise all educational programs of the congregation including children, youth, and adults;
- 2) Approve curriculum used in Sunday school, Bible study, VBS, etc.;
- 3) Encourage and assist the teachers of the congregation in their work;
- 4) Report to the church council and the voters assembly on the condition of the educational agencies of the congregation and make recommendations for their improvement;
- 5) Perform such other duties as assigned by the voters assembly.

The board for evangelism shall:

- 1) Promote the efforts of the congregation in sharing the Word of God with the members of this congregation, with the community, and with the world;
- 2) Promote personal witnessing among the members and organize outreach into the community of the congregation in cooperation with the board of elders;
- 3) Assimilate new members into the life and work of the congregation in cooperation with the board of elders;
- 4) Welcome visitors to church services and other activities;
- 5) Promote mission opportunities in the community, the district, the Synod, and the world;
- 6) Perform such other duties as assigned by the voters assembly.

The board for stewardship shall:

- 1) Develop, organize, and carry out a program of Christian stewardship, including the use of time, talent, and treasure, for all members of the congregation;
- 2) Conduct an annual stewardship program to remind members of basic Biblical stewardship principles and practices;
- 3) Encourage financial support for mission opportunities in cooperation with the evangelism committee;
- 4) Provide the congregation with periodic financial reports;
- 5) Perform such other duties as assigned by the voters assembly.

The board for youth shall:

- 1) Promote attendance and involvement of the congregation's youth at all youth activities;
- 2) Provide for the continuing spiritual growth of the youth through Bible study, prayer, and Christian service;
- 3) Plan a special event to welcome the newly confirmed and to invite them to join the youth group;
- 4) Publicize the need for full-time professional workers in the church;
- 5) Perform such other duties as assigned by the voters assembly.

The audit committee shall:

- 1) Audit the financial records of the congregation annually;
- 2) Report the findings of its audit to the voters assembly at the April meeting.

The nominating committee shall:

- 1) Provide a slate of candidates for election by the voters assembly;
- 2) Certify the election results;
- 3) Provide names for appointment to a vacant office if required.