

**ST. MARK LUTHERAN CHURCH OF JANESVILLE WISCONSIN**  
~~**THE LUTHERAN CHURCH OF ST. MARK THE EVANGELIST**~~  
**CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS**

~~**June 25, 2015**~~ **(Strike outs to be changed upon adoption). \*\*\*\*\***

**CONSTITUTION:**

*PREAMBLE:*

We, a Christian congregation, united by our humble acceptance of the all-embracing love of God, and realizing that all things must be done decently and in order, do establish this Constitution and Bylaws by which all affairs of the Congregation are to be administered.

*NAME:*

The name of this congregation shall be ~~The Lutheran Church of St. Mark the Evangelist of Janesville, Wisconsin, hereafter referred to as~~ **St. Mark Lutheran Church of Janesville, Wisconsin.** This congregation shall be a non-profit religious corporation organized under the statutes of the State of Wisconsin

*PURPOSE:*

The purpose of this congregation, individually and collectively, is twofold:

1. To teach and acknowledge publicly that God has blessed us with His love; and
2. To affirm publicly by our actions that ALL OF LIFE is the arena of a Christian's ministry to God and Man.

*CONFESSIONS:*

This congregation, individually and collectively, believes, teaches, and confesses that the prophetic and apostolic writings of the Old and New Testaments are the only rule and norm by which public doctrines and teachings are to be judged. We acknowledge the three Ecumenical Creeds and the other documents contained in the Book of Concord of 1580 as witnesses to the fashion in which the doctrine of the prophets and apostles was preserved since apostolic times.

*SYNODICAL*

*AFFILIATION:*

This congregation affiliates itself with the English District of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod inasmuch and insofar as the confessions and purposes of that body are in accord with the confessions and purposes of this congregation.

*MEMBERSHIP:*

Membership is granted by the congregation on the following basis:

1. Baptized Member – Any person baptized in the name of the Triune God and coming under the spiritual ministry of this congregation.
2. Confirmed Member – Any person who has been accepted by the congregation by affirmation, by rite of confirmation, or by transfer from another Lutheran congregation.
3. Voting Member – Any confirmed member who has attained the age of eighteen and is not under congregational discipline.

*TERMINATION*

*OF MEMBERSHIP:*

Membership in this congregation may be terminated by:

1. Death of the member; or
2. The request of the member; or
3. Congregational action in accordance with the Bylaws.

Termination of membership under any procedure terminates all rights of any nature in the property of this congregation.

*POWERS OF THE  
CONGREGATION:*

The Congregation shall have supreme authority in the administration of its program. The delegation of this authority shall be accomplished in accordance with the Bylaws.

*PASTORAL CALL:*

Pastors shall be called by action of the congregation. The pastors must subscribe to the confessions of this constitution and be qualified, endorsed by Synod and a member of Synod.

They shall be the spiritual head of the congregation and shall be responsible for the public proclamation of the Word and the administration of the Sacraments as well as the other rites of the church.

Pastors shall be ex officio members of the Church Council and its subsidiary committees. If, in the judgment of the congregation, a pastor is unable to serve it satisfactorily, he may be requested to resign. The matter must be discussed by the Church Council with the District President before such resignation is requested.

*MEETINGS:*

Regular meetings of the voting membership shall be held as determined by the Bylaws. All meetings shall be conducted with proper parliamentary procedures and Christian charity.

*LEGAL*

*OWNERSHIP:*

The congregation may acquire, use, and sell real estate and other property to accomplish its stated purpose. Should this congregation dissolve without disposing of its assets, then all assets shall become the property of the English District of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. Title to real property shall be taken or disposed of in the name of the congregation. No transfer or encumbrance of real property shall be made except by action of the voting membership, in meeting assembled.

If a division of the congregation should take place on account of doctrine or non-doctrinal reasons, the property of the congregation and all benefits connected therewith shall remain with the majority of those voting members who continue to adhere in confession and practice to the article entitled "CONFESSIONS" in this Constitution, as determined by the adjudication procedures of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

*BYLAWS:*

This congregation shall adopt such Bylaws as deemed necessary and desirable for the proper conduct of the business of the congregation.

*AMENDMENTS:*

The constitution may be amended in either of the following ways:

1. Written notice together with a copy of the proposed change to be sent to each voting member. (Notice to head of household is sufficient notice to all members of the family residing at that address.) Said notice to be sent at least thirty days prior to the meeting of the congregation which the amendment is to be acted upon. A favorable vote of two-thirds of the members present at the meeting adopts an amendment.
2. Passage of the amendment by a two-thirds vote at two consecutive meetings of the congregation provided the voting members have notice of the proposed amendment a reasonable time before the second meeting

## **BYLAWS:**

### *TERMINATION*

#### *OF MEMBERSHIP:*

1. Upon the request of a member, a letter of transfer or release shall be issued by the Church Council to any specified Christian congregation.
2. Membership may be terminated by action of the congregation only where a member has, by his/her conduct, expressed disinterest in continuing his/her membership. In no case shall membership be terminated by action of the congregation as long as the member participates in Christian worship with the congregation and accepts Christian admonition or pastoral counsel.

#### *MEETINGS:*

Regular meetings of the congregation shall be held at least twice each year as set by the Church Council. One will be known as the Annual Meeting, at which time the Church Council shall be elected, and one as the Budget Meeting at which time the budget will be presented **for approval**. The exact date, time, purpose, and place of the meetings shall be announced a reasonable time in advance of any meetings.

Special meetings may be called upon reasonable notice by the congregation itself, by the Church Council upon **written** petition of ten percent of the voting members of the congregation.

A quorum at any meeting consists of the members present at the meeting.

#### *CHURCH COUNCIL:*

The affairs of this congregation shall be administered by a Church Council in accordance to the Constitution, Bylaws and resolutions of this congregation in meeting assembled.

The Church Council shall be elected at ~~the~~ **an** annual meeting. Church Council, **Board and Committee** members shall be voting members of the congregation.

The permanent committees are: PROPERTIES, WORSHIP, STEWARDSHIP, EDUCATION, EVANGELISM, AND YOUTH MINISTRY. The Permanent Board is the BOARD OF DEACONS.

The Church Council shall consist of a Congregational Chair, a recording secretary, a treasurer, and the chair of each of the permanent committees or board. **The Congregational Chair, the Secretary or the Treasurer shall be authorized to sign documents for the congregation**

**The church council will hear congregational grievances and work to reconcile them.**

No person may serve the Church Council in more than one position, although he/she may serve as a member of more than one committee or board. ~~No employee of the church may serve on the Church Council.~~

## CHURCH COUNCIL

### MEETINGS:

Meetings shall be held monthly on a regular schedule basis, ~~with the exception of the month of July~~, to be determined by ~~each new~~ **the** Church Council. Special meetings may be called by the Congregational Chair or by any two Church Council members. **A meeting of the council may be cancelled because of inclement weather or if considered necessary by the majority of the council.** A quorum to conduct business shall be a majority of the members of the Church Council. No action may be taken by the Church Council without a favorable vote by a majority of the members present.

### ELECTIONS:

The Church Council members shall be elected individually at ~~the~~ **an** Annual Meeting. Method of balloting shall be at the option of the congregation. Nominations may be made from the floor in addition to those presented by the Nominating Committee, if the consent of the nominee has been obtained and he/she is acquainted with the duties of the office. **Any voting member in good standing is eligible for election to the Church Council.**

The term of office begins **upon** the Installation of Officers and extends for two years. **A Church Council member's term ends when their successor is installed.** ~~Any voting member is eligible for election to the Church Council.~~ **Council members may serve no more than two consecutive terms. Any member receiving financial compensation for service to the church is not eligible to serve on the council.**

**Any council member should recuse themselves from council discussions, votes or council responsibilities as necessary to avoid a potential conflict of interest.**

### VACANCIES:

If a vacancy is created on the Church Council, for any reason, it shall be filled for the unexpired term by the action of the Church Council.

### DUTIES OF CHURCH COUNCIL MEMBERS:

The Church Council shall establish areas of responsibility for its members and the committees. In general, the duties of the Church Council members shall be:

CONGREGATIONAL CHAIR: The Congregational Chair shall be the presiding officer and Chair of the Church Council and the congregation. **The Congregational Chair shall carry out duties normally associated with this position and such other duties as may be specifically delegated to the chair by the Church Council.** The Congregational Chair shall be an **ex-officio (non-voting)** member of all permanent and standing committees/boards of **the** Church Council.

RECORDING SECRETARY: The Recording Secretary shall be the secretary of the Church Council and the congregation and shall keep minutes of all meetings. He/she shall be responsible for the official papers and congregational and Church Council correspondence.

TREASURER: The Treasurer shall be responsible for the authorized disbursements of the monies of the congregation. He/she shall make regular reports to the Church Council and the congregation on the financial status of the congregation

PHYSICAL PROPERTY CHAIR: The Physical Property Chair shall:

1. Be directly responsible to the Church Council and the congregation for the maintenance and improvement of the buildings and grounds owned by the congregation.
2. **Responsible for the selection of a own committee for this the purpose of maintaining the property and grounds. May solicit volunteers from the congregation to assist in maintaining the property and grounds or for specific related projects.**
3. **Responsible for directing directing and implement overseeing** the duties of the maintenance and housekeeping staff.
4. **Will be notified regarding any individual or group requests to use the church facilities; indoor and/or outdoor for other than regularly scheduled church related activities prior to any approval for use.**
5. **Responsible for and will be notified and may approve or disapprove requests from any member of the congregation to borrow or use any church property.**
6. **Will be responsible for writing specifications for competitive bids for church projects requiring bids be received. Will make recommendations to the church council and the congregation regarding the awarding of bids.**

WORSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIR: The Worship Committee Chair shall appoint a committee to assist him/her and report directly to the Church Council on the following:

1. Consult with the pastor regarding schedules and orders of worship.
2. **Oversee ushers. and decorum.**
3. Oversee the ministry of music.
4. Oversee a system of chancel and altar care.
5. **Oversee the greeter program**

STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIR: The Stewardship Committee Chair shall:

1. Appoint a committee to assist him/her.
2. ~~Appoint by Council a Financial Secretary that will be responsible for recording all contributions. The Stewardship Committee Chair will appoint and supervise a counting team which will count offerings, prepare a report for the head teller and make bank deposits. Financial Secretary the Treasurer, and deposit monies in the bank. Treasurer will assume these duties which will be unpaid. This will save \$1,200 annually.~~
3. **Stewardship Committee Chair will appoint a Head Teller that will be responsible for recording all contributions.**
4. Stewardship Chair will appoint an Audit Committee to audit the church financial records annually or if there is a change in Treasurer.
5. Educate the congregation regarding missions.
6. Establish a continuing program of personal and group education of the congregational members about their obligations and privileges to exercise wise and conscientious stewardship of their time, talent, and money.
7. Establish and operate a continuing program of assimilation of all church members as full participants in the life of the congregation.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE CHAIR: The Education Committee Chair shall appoint a committee to assist him/her in the following duties:

1. Organize and supervise a children's education program.
2. Coordinate an adult education program, which will include home Bible study groups.
3. Coordinate a youth education program, working in conjunction with the Youth Ministry Committee.
4. **Schedule and maintain childcare for the children's nursery for use during worship times and as may be needed.**

EVANGELISM COMMITTEE CHAIR: The Evangelism Committee Chair shall appoint a committee to assist him/her in the following duties:

1. Provide outreach to the community.
2. Promote fellowship within the congregation.

YOUTH MINISTRY CHAIR: The Youth Ministry Chair shall appoint a committee of at least three (3) members, two (2) of which must be 18 or older. They will assist him/her in the following duties:

1. Strive to involve the young people of the congregation in **the** work of Christ **in the church.**
2. **Work with the Youth Ministry team to plan and execute mission trips, service projects, fund raisers and other events.**
3. Work along with the Education **Team** to provide for ~~their~~**youth** spiritual growth and nurturing in Christ Jesus.
4. Seek to promote genuine Christian fellowship ~~for~~ **between the youth; middle school to young adult; and also the congregation as a whole.**

THE BOARD OF DEACONS CHAIR: The Board of Deacons Chair shall be nominated and elected in the same manner as other Church Council members as set forth in these Bylaws. The term of office for the Board of Deacons Chair shall also be consistent with the provisions of these Bylaws regarding Church Council members. The Board of Deacons Chair shall be a voting member of Church Council. The Board of Deacons Chair shall:

1. Work directly with the pastor(s).
2. Work directly with the pastors and Worship Committee Chair in suggesting policies regarding worship.
3. Be responsible for providing an agenda for each meeting of the Board of Deacons and for communication Board activity with the Church Council.

*BOARD OF  
DEACONS:*

The Board of Deacons shall consist of a Chair and a minimum of six deacons. Voting members demonstrating spiritual maturity are eligible to serve on the Board of Deacons. Deacons shall be nominated **by the Board of Deacons Chair** ~~Nominating Committee~~ and approved by the Church Council. The term of office for deacons is two years, with no term limits.

DUTIES OF THE BOARD OF DEACONS: The Board of Deacons shall:

1. Regularly contact the members of the congregation for the purpose of spiritual encouragement and to demonstrate Christian caring and concern.
2. Work with the pastor in a process of reconciliation when conflict arises in the congregation.
3. Recommend changes in congregational membership to the Church Council and maintain a process of exit interviews.
4. Suggest policy to the Church Council in the areas of membership, spiritual care, and worship.
5. Support the pastors and staff by prayer and encouragement.
6. Meet at least six times per year for the purpose of fulfilling the duties of the Board of Deacons, plan its work, and pray for the congregation and its members.
7. Other tasks that deacons may become involved in as time and interest allow; visit members in the hospital and in their homes (shut-ins and others).

*STANDING  
COMMITTEES:*

The Church Council shall appoint ~~three~~ **four** standing committees: **the Nominating Committee, the Audit Committee, and the Scholarship Committee.**

NOMINATING COMMITTEE: This committee shall consist of five members appointed by the Church Council. At least three members of this committee shall not be members of the Church Council. The Committee shall nominate at least one person for each Church Council position in advance of the annual meeting and notify the congregation of its selections. The Committee must obtain verbal consent of the nominee after acquainting him/her with the duties of the office before announcing his/her nomination.

AUDIT COMMITTEE: This committee shall consist of three members appointed by the Church Council. Its function is to examine the financial books and records of the congregation annually or as often as requested by the Church Council. The committee shall report to the Church Council which in turn shall report to the congregation.

BUDGET COMMITTEE: This committee shall consist of the Congregational Chair, the Stewardship Chair, the Treasurer, the pastor, and other appointed by the Church Council. Its function is to prepare the annual budget and present it to the Church Council for review and ~~presentation to~~ **acceptance . The budget is then presented to the congregation for approval at the annual congregation Budget Meeting.**

**SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE** The committee shall consist of five members to include the Youth Chair and/or Education Chair and three or four members chosen and appointed by the council. The committee is responsible for the awarding of the Beltz Scholarship Fund. The Eugene Beltz Memorial Scholarship is given to graduating high school seniors. The Tuition Scholarships are open to any member of St. Mark Lutheran church with children attending a religious institution from elementary through high school.

*SOCIETIES,  
ORGANIZATIONS,  
AND COMMITTEES:*

Any of these may be formed under the approval and continuing supervision of the Church Council. They must exist to carry out the stated purpose of this congregation.

*MINISTERIAL ACTS:*

The pastor(s) shall be responsible for keeping accurate records of membership and of ministerial acts. These records are and shall remain the property of the congregation. The pastors shall give a report of official acts at each Church Council meeting.

*AMENDMENTS:*

These Bylaws may be changed by action of the congregation in meeting assembled. The Bylaws may be changed by vote of the majority when reasonable advance notice of the proposed change has been given to the voting members. Otherwise it shall require a three-fourth vote of the members present and voting to change the Bylaws.

Adopted by Congregation on April 6, 1967.

Revisions adopted at Congregational Meeting on June 2, 1996; June 3, 2001; January 6, 2002; June 5, 2005; January 17, 2010; June 14, 2015, **January 17, 2021.**