

C O N S T I T U T I O N A N D B Y - L A W S

T R I N I T Y L U T H E R A N C H U R C H

G I R A R D , K A N S A S

PREAMBLE

Whereas Christians should practice fellowship with those who profess the true faith (Act 2, 42; Heb. 10, 24-25; and

Whereas they should endeavor to keep the unity of faith (Eph. 4 5-6; I Cor. 1, 10); and

Whereas as a body they should administer the Office of the Keys (John 20, 21-23; Matt. 18, 17-20); and

Whereas a body everything should be done decently and in order (I Cor. 14, 40);

Therefore, we the undersigned, herewith adopt the following Constitution and its By-Laws according to which all affairs of this congregation both spiritual and material, shall be conducted.

CONSTITUTION and BY-LAWS

Of TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH Girard, Kansas

Article I - Name.

The name of this congregation shall be Trinity Lutheran Church, Girard, Kansas.

Article II - Declaration of Creed.

This Congregation accepts and acknowledges all the canonical books of the Old and New Testament as the inspired Word of God, and all the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church contained in the Book of Concord of the year 1580 as a true and sound exhibition of Christian doctrine taken from and in agreement with the Holy Scriptures, to wit: ... The Ecumenical Creeds (The Apostolic, the Nicene, and The Athanasian), the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, the Apology of the same, the Smalcald Articles, Dr. Martin Luther's Large and Small Catechism, and the Formula of Concord. According to this norm all doctrines shall be judged and all doctrinal controversy which may arise shall be decided and adjudicated.

Article III - Admission to Membership.

A. Condition of Membership:

Only such persons can be or remain members of this congregation as:

1. Are baptized in the name of the Holy Trinity;
2. Declare their adherence to the Confessions of this congregation;
3. Lead Christian lives and make diligent use of the Word and Sacraments and in all things submit themselves to the Word of God;
4. Are not members of any ungodly society or secret organization, including lodges which conflict with the Word of God.

B. Reception of Members:

Applicants for communicant membership presenting a letter of dismissal from a recognized orthodox congregation shall be accepted as communicant members.

Applicants for communicant membership not affiliated with a recognized orthodox Church shall give satisfactory evidence of their qualification for membership in an interview with the pastor and, if

necessary, receive an adequate course of instruction in the chief parts of Christian doctrine. Having declared in the presence of witnesses their acceptance of the doctrines of the Lutheran Church, they shall be received as communicant members.

The reception of communicant members shall be announced by the pastor in the Voters' Assembly.

C. Duties of Members:

It shall be the duty of every communicant member:

1. To attend public worship diligently and to partake of Holy Communion frequently and to announce himself or have himself announced for the Lord's Supper;
2. To contribute according to ability toward the maintenance, of Church and school, if any, toward all missionary purposes, toward, the payment of any indebtedness of the congregation, and toward all other necessary expenditures.
3. To submit and conform; to the rules and regulations established by the congregation.

It shall also be the duty of such members of this congregation as have the parental care of unconfirmed children incumbent upon, them to send such children to the Christian day school, if there be any, Sunday School, Saturday School and to catechetical instruction, or to provide otherwise for their Christian education and training.

Article IV - Release and Withdrawal

1. Members desiring a release for the purpose of joining a sister congregation shall obtain a written dismissal or recommendation from the pastor who, in turn, shall report to the congregation. If, however, such petitioner is a voting member, the pastor shall consult the Board of Elders. The Board, of Elders shall report such action to: the voting body at the next meeting.
2. Members moving away and thereby severing their connection with the congregation without obtaining a release shall, after a period of one year and after due investigation and consideration by the Board of Elders, be stricken from the list of membership and forfeit all property rights and membership privileges.

Article V - Suffrage and Eligibility to Office

Only such communicant members as have attained to the age of eighteen and have declared their acceptance of this Constitution and its By-Laws and have signed it in a regular meeting of the Voters' Assembly shall be entitled to vote.

Applicants for suffrage confirmed in this Church or having a letter of dismissal from a recognized orthodox congregation shall be received into membership upon presentation of application by the pastor or one of the Elders.

Article VI - Authority of the Congregation

The Voters' Assembly as a body shall have supreme authority and power to manage and adjust all spiritual and material affairs of the congregation. Any enactment or decision, whether it proceed from an individual or from a body within the congregation, shall be invalid unless it is enacted or performed in the name of the Voters' Assembly and according to the authority conferred by it. Any enactment or decision of the Voters' Assembly contrary to the Word of God and Symbols of the Church shall be null and void.

Article VII - Church Discipline

1. It shall be the duty of an erring member to submit to brotherly admonition and correction.
2. Manifest and impenitent, sinners shall be excommunicated after fruitless admonition in the various grades prescribed in Matt. 18, 15-17. "Persons unwilling to submit to this divine rule shall be as judged as such as have severed their connection with the congregation. Such persons forfeit all rights and privileges of membership and lose all claims upon the property of the congregation.
3. Excommunicated persons who repent and ask for forgiveness shall be reinstated into membership.

Article VIII - Office of the Ministry

The office of the pastor shall be conferred upon such pastors and candidates only as:

1. Unreservedly pledge their acceptance of and adherence to the Declaration of Creed contained in Article II of this Constitution;

2. Are members of, or have applied for membership in the same orthodox Synod to which the congregation belongs; and

3. Have been properly and rightfully called by the congregation.

A pastor can be removed from office in a rightful and Christian manner only. Sufficient and urgent causes for removal are persistent adherence to false doctrines, scandalous life, and willful neglect of official duties.

Article IX - Synodical Membership.

This congregation shall remain affiliated with the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod only as long as this body remains loyal to its Confessions.

Article X - Societies.

1. Organized societies within the congregation shall exist only by consent of the Voters' Assembly.

2. Only communicant members of this congregation shall be eligible to voting membership in such societies or hold an office.

3. The pastor, by virtue of his office, shall exercise supervision over all societies within the congregation.

Article XI - Division and Closure

1. Should separation within the congregation take place on account of doctrine, may Almighty God prevent this from ever happening, the advice of the District President shall be sought. If the division continues, the property of the congregation shall remain in the possession of those members who steadfastly and unreservedly adhere to the Declaration of Creed contained in Article II of this Constitution.

2. In the event that the congregation considers closing, the congregation shall notify the District President and the Circuit Visitor for proper guidelines, since closure involves the disposal of property, payment of debts, care for a congregation's cemetery, and notification of the State of Kansas.

3. In the event the congregation chooses to dissolve, it shall pass a resolution including final dates, a plan for payment of all debts and just claims against the congregation, dispersal of all properties, and a local designee to carry out the congregation's will. Remaining funds shall be disbursed by the congregation, with special consideration being given to the mission and ministry of the LCMS Kansas District.

Article XII - Books and Forms.

1. Only purely Lutheran hymnbooks shall be used in public worship, and none but approved books of forms shall be employed in all official acts of the pastor.

2. For religious instruction in the Christian day school, if any, Saturday and Sunday School in addition to the Bible and Dr. Martin Luther's Small Catechism only such books and literature as approved by the Board of Education shall be used.

Article XIII - Unalterable Paragraphs.

Of this Constitution the following articles shall be unalterable and irrepealable: Articles II, III, VII, VIII, IX, XII, XIII.

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BY LAWS.

Article I - Officers and Boards.

The officers and boards of this congregation shall be: a Chairman, a Vice-Chairman, a Recording Secretary, a Treasurer, a Board of Elders, a Board of Trustees, a Board of Finance, and a Board of Education.

To the Board of Elders only such members shall be eligible as have attained to the age of twenty-five and have been voting members of the congregation for one year. For the other elective or appointive offices, every voting member shall be eligible who has been a voting member for one-year.

Only male voting members shall serve on the Board of Elders or as Chairman or as Vice-Chairman.

Article II - Tenure of Office.

1. The Chairman shall hold office for a term of one year.
2. The Vice-Chairman shall hold office for a term of one year.
3. The Recording Secretary shall hold office for a term of one year.
4. The Treasurer shall hold office for a term of three years.
5. The Board of Elders shall consist of four members, who shall hold office for a term of three years, one member to be elected annually except for every third year in which two members' term expires.
6. The Board of Trustees shall consist of four members, who shall hold office for a term of three years, one member to be elected annually except for every third year in which two members' term expires.
7. The Board of Finance shall consist of seven members, who shall hold office for a term of three years, two member to be elected annually, The Treasurer shall be an ex-officio member of the Board.
8. The Board of Education shall consist of four members, who shall hold the office for a term of three years, one member to be elected annually except for every third in which two members' term expires.

All elective officers may succeed themselves for a second term only.

Article III - Duties of Officers and Boards

1.The Chairman shall preside at the meeting of the Voters' Assembly and of the Church Council and shall exercise care that the meeting be conducted in an orderly, Christian manner.

2.The Vice-Chairman shall perform the duties of the Chairman in the event of his absence.

3. The Recording Secretary shall keep an exact record of all transactions and resolutions of the Voter's Assembly in both regular and special meetings, as well as church council meetings. They shall submit their minutes for approval at the next regular meeting, and enter such approved minutes in a book provided by the congregation for this purpose.

4. The Treasurer shall have charge of all moneys and the records pertaining to finances. The Treasurer shall pay all bills promptly and make monthly remittances to the District. The Treasurer shall submit a quarterly report of the transactions to the Voters' Assembly. His/Her annual report, including the records that He/She has kept for the year, shall be reviewed by the Financial Review Committee.

The congregation may create a special treasury for definitely prescribed purposes and elect or appoint a special treasurer to have charge thereof. All rules prescribed in this article for the treasurer's records shall apply to any such special treasurer.

5. The Elders shall assist the pastor in all matters pertaining to the spiritual welfare of the congregation (1 Tim. 3:8-10). They shall see that the services in God's house are held regularly and that all things connected with public worship are done decently and in order. They shall assist the pastor in the care of the sick and the needy, in the cultivation of love and harmony among the members, and in the furtherance of God's Kingdom at home and abroad.

6. The Trustees shall have charge of the property of the congregation and keep it in good condition and repair. For repairs or other necessary expenditures they shall have the power to draw on the treasury to the amount specified each year by the Voters without special resolution of the Voters' Assembly, but only after consultation with the Treasurer of the congregation. They shall also supervise the work of the custodian.

7. The Board of Finance shall appoint one of its members to serve as Financial Secretary, who shall serve for a term of one year. At least two members of the Board shall be present when envelopes are opened and money is counted. It shall also supply all communicant members with envelopes in December and encourage members to contribute regularly and proportionately.

The Financial Secretary shall keep an exact list of all contributing members and credit every contributor with the amount of their contribution. They shall as soon as possible deliver to the Treasurer all moneys received by them. They shall also submit a quarterly report to the Voter' Assembly.

8. The Board of Education shall have supervision of all educational agencies of the congregation. It shall make reports to the congregation and offer suggestions for the furtherance and improvement of Christian education. The members of the Board shall visit the classrooms during instruction periods, observe the existence of good discipline and order, urge the purchase of the necessary supplies and equipment, and encourage parents to avail themselves of the opportunities for thorough religious instruction of their children in the educational agencies provided by the congregation. This board shall also appoint the Sunday School Superintendent.

9. The Chairman and the Secretary shall be legal representatives of this congregation and shall have authorization to sign all legal documents with approval by the Voter's Assembly.

10. Any officer of the congregation, board member, or committee member may be removed from office in Christian and lawful order by a two-thirds (2/3) majority ballot vote of the Voters' Assembly for one of the following reasons: persistent adherence to false doctrine, scandalous life, willful neglect of the duties of office, or the prolonged inability to perform those duties.

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The pastor shall be ex-officio member of all the boards and committees in the congregation.

Article IV - Ushers.

There shall be at least two ushers appointed by and under the supervision of the Vice-Chairman. (The Vice-Chairman shall be in charge of obtaining ushers) They shall hold office for a term of one-year. They need not be voting members, but it is desirable that they be above eighteen years of age. They shall welcome visitors, escort worshipers to their seats and provide them with hymnals as appropriate. They shall see that comfort and order prevails at the public service. They shall also take up the offering.

Article V - Financial Review Committee.

The Financial Review Committee shall consist of at least two members. It shall make an annual review of the books of the Treasurer and Financial Secretary and report their findings to the Voters' Assembly.

Article VI - Nominating Committee.

The Elders shall be the Nominating Committee. They shall submit a slate consisting of one nominee for each open elective office. The Chairman can take nominations in addition to the slate from the floor. If more than one nominee exists for an open position, a ballot will be utilized to determine that elected position.

Article VII - Church Council.

The Church Council shall consist of the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman, the Recording Secretary, the Elders, the Trustees, the Treasurer, the members of the Finance Board and members of the Board of Education.

The Church Council shall meet annually and before regular quarterly Voters' Assembly meeting if discussion is necessary. It shall deliberate on matters pertaining to the welfare of the congregation and make recommendations to the Voters' Assembly. It shall draw up the agenda for the Voters' Assembly. It shall also prepare the annual budget of the congregation and appoint the Financial Review Committee.

Article VIII- Voters' Assembly.

The regular Voters¹ Assembly of the congregation shall be quarterly and shall be held when possible on the second Sunday of the following months: January, April, July, and October. In addition, an annual finance meeting shall be held in November. These meetings shall be announced in public service on a previous Sunday. Special meetings may be called by the Church Council or, in special urgent cases, by the pastor. They shall be announced, if possible, on the Sunday previous to such meetings.

Article IX - Election of Officers.

The election of officers shall take place in the November

meeting. The slate of officers shall be elected by acclamation; unless the number of nominees exceeds open positions, in which case a ballot will be utilized for that specific office.

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Article X - Quorum.

At any duly announced Voters' Assembly meeting one-third of the total voting membership shall constitute a quorum and shall be able to transact business and to adopt resolutions.

It shall be the duty of every voting member, if at all possible to attend the Voters' Assembly. Any voting member who fails to be present not only forfeits his or her right to vote, but he or she must also concede to the resolution passed by the Voters' Assembly,

Article XI-Official Acts

The utilization of Trinity Lutheran Church, Girard, KS facilities (including but not limited to the church, fellowship hall, grounds and parsonage) for the purpose of ceremonies/services of marriage and funeral and all other official acts will come under the direction of the current congregation's policy of such as available in the church office.

Article XII - Ordained Minister Call Process

At the time of a Pastoral vacancy, the Chairman of the congregation shall contact the Circuit Visitor who serves as a representative of the District President's office. His role is to advise and help the congregation in all call matters. The District President, or another District official, along with the Circuit Visitor will meet with the congregation to discuss the procedure for beginning the call process, which includes the nomination of candidates, filling the vacancy, and issuing a call.

The Call Committee shall include the Church Council President, Vice-President, Elders and representatives from the congregation._____.

The Call Committee will review all profiles of potential candidates sent to it by the District President. After asking the Lord for guidance in prayer the Call Committee shall then select those candidates they feel will best fit the needs of the congregation. Interviews may be conducted using this list of candidates. Any interview shall follow the pre-call interview guidelines established by the Synod.

At a regular or special meeting of the Voters' Assembly the Call Committee shall recommend their list of candidates to the Voters. Any Voter is entitled to amend the list of candidates, provided the nominee appears on the list of candidates provided by the District President. A two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of those present shall be required to amend the call list. The final call list shall then be approved by the Voters' Assembly. The Voters shall then cast ballots until one candidate is elected by a simple majority vote. That candidate shall receive

the Divine Call. It shall be the duty of the President of the Congregation to notify the candidate promptly in whatever manner the Voters' Assembly has decided.

When the Voters' Assembly decides to call a graduate from one of our Synod's seminaries, the placement of such candidate will be handled by the LCMS Council of Presidents acting as the Board of Assignments.

When calling an ordained minister as a multi-congregation parish, the procedures outlined in the parish agreement shall be followed.

Article XIII - Amendments.

Alterations or repeal of any article or section of these By-Laws shall require a two-thirds majority of those present in a regular Voters' Assembly meeting duly announced on a previous Sunday. It shall be presented in writing and the vote shall be by ballot.

The revised Bylaws shall, as a condition of continued membership in The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, be submitted to the President of the Kansas District for review by the District's Constitution and Bylaw Committee, and favorable action by the District's Board of Directors, before being implemented by the congregation.

Adopted April 14, 1957

Includes April, 1984 amendment changing #7 and adding #9

Includes July, 2025 amendments changing:

- Constitution Article XI
- By-Laws:
 - o Article II-Board members numbers, adding Board of Education,
 - o Article III, item 10 removal of officers
 - o Article VI-Nominating process,
 - o Article VII-Church Council meeting requirements
 - o Article IX-officer election process
 - o Article XI-added Marriage and Funeral to be directed by Policy