**TRINITY EVANGELICAL**

**LUTHERAN CHURCH**

 **OF NORFOLK, VIRGINIA**

CONSTITUTION AND

by-laws of the congregation

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Trinity evangelical lutheran church – organizational charT

**CONSTITUTION**

**OF TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF NORFOLK, VIRGINIA**

# **PREAMBLE**

Whereas the Word of God demands that a Christian Congregation not only conform to the Word of God in doctrine and practice (Psalm 119:105; Gal. 1:6-8; 2 Tim. 4:1-5), but that all things be done decently and in order (1 Cor. 14:40); therefore, we the members of Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church of Norfolk, Virginia set forth by this present document, signed by ourselves, this Constitution in accordance with which this Congregation’s affairs, spiritual and material, shall be conducted.

## **Article I NAME**

The name of this congregation is Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, 6001 Granby Street, Norfolk, Virginia 23505.

**Article II PURPOSE**

This religious, non-profit, unincorporated congregation is the body of Christ and is organized for the purpose of:

l. Worshipping and adoring the true God.

2. Strengthening its members in the life of Christ as they gather around the Word and Sacraments.

3. Serving as priests to one another in God’s kingdom.

4. Training its members to go forth into the world to love, serve, and to win others for the Kingdom of God.

5. Carrying out a ministry of concern to its own community and to all the world.

**Article III CONFESSIONAL STANDARD**

This congregation accepts all the Canonical Books of the Old and New Testaments to be the inspired Word of God, and acknowledges all the symbolical books of the Lutheran Church contained in the Book of Concord of the year 1580, viz., the Ecumenical Creeds (the Apostolic, the Nicene, and the Athanasian); the unaltered Augsburg Confession of 1530; the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Catechisms of Martin Luther; the Smalcald Articles, the Formula of Concord, to be the true and genuine exposition of the doctrines of the Bible. From this Word of God, all doctrines are to be deduced and proven, and according to these confessional books, all religious disputes are to be decided.

**Article IV SYNODICAL AFFILIATION**

This congregation shall be affiliated with the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, as long as the confessions and constitution of said Synod are in accord with the confession and constitution of this congregation as set forth in Article III above, and said Synod abides by the same.

This congregation shall, to the best of its abilities, cooperate with the said Synod and participate with it in the up building of the Kingdom of God.

## **Article V MEMBERSHIP**

**A. Baptized Membership**

 1. All souls who are baptized "In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost", who are committed to the congregation's care and for whom the congregation has assumed pastoral and spiritual responsibilities, are Baptized Members of this congregation.

**B. Communicant Membership**

 1. All persons are Communicant Members of this congregation:

1. Who have been baptized “In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.”
2. Who, after receiving Christian instructions, signify their agreement with the Confessional Standard as set forth in Article III of this constitution, and
3. Who have been accepted into Communicant Membership in accordance with the Constitution of this congregation.

 2. Those persons who become Communicant Members should:

1. Continue to be faithful to the Word and Sacraments,
2. Serve the Lord through the congregation and in their own personal lives in the up building of the Kingdom of God.
3. Contribute regularly of their time, talents, and treasures to the support of the congregation.
4. Submit willingly to live within the discipline of love as exercised by the congregation in its ministry of reconciliation.
5. Avoid membership in, or association with organizations, which deny the Lordship of Christ, or conflict with the Confessional Standard of the congregation.

 3. Communicant members may be received by transfer, profession of faith, adult baptism, or confirmation. They are received by the Board of Deacons according to the current practices of the congregation.

 4. The Board of Deacons shall terminate the membership of those transferring to other Lutheran congregations, joining without transfer churches of other denominations, or whose whereabouts cannot be ascertained. In the case of self-exclusion or excommunication, the Board of Deacons shall make recommendations to the Voters’ Assembly for action.

**C. Voting Membership**

* 1. The Voting Membership shall constitute the Voters' Assembly. All Communicant Members who have reached their 18th birthday have been accepted by the Voters’ Assembly after having read and signed the Constitution of the congregation shall be entitled to a vote.
	2. A voting member is expected to attend meetings of the Voters' Assembly, accept office and participate in the other activities of the congregation as the Lord gives strength and ability.

## **Article VI OFFICERS/DIRECTORS OF BOARDS**

A. Communicant Members of this congregation who are at least 21 years of age and qualified to vote shall be eligible to hold a position as an Officer of the congregation. Communicant Members of this congregation who are at least 18 years of age and qualified to vote shall be eligible to hold a position as Director of a Board.

B. Reasons for dismissing an Office/Director of a Board shall be persistent adherence to false teaching contrary to the Confessional Standard of the congregation, a scandalous life, or willful neglect of duties. This congregation shall take no action to dismiss an Officer/Director of a Board until he/she has been advised of the charges preferred against him/her and given the opportunity to answer such charges.

## **Article VII PASTORS AND TEACHERS**

A. This congregation shall call only such pastors, teachers, or other workers whose beliefs are in accord with the Confessional Standard of this congregation (Article III), and who have been approved by the Synod as being qualified for their positions. Reasons for dismissing such workers shall be persistent adherence to false teaching contrary to the Confessional Standard of this congregation, a scandalous life, or willful neglect of duties. This congregation shall take no action to dismiss a called worker until he/she has been advised of the charges preferred against him/her and given the opportunity to answer such charges.

B. This congregation shall generally follow the calling practices recommended by The Lutheran Church-Missouri synod. Upon vacancy in a position of one of the congregation's called workers, the calling procedure the congregation intends to follow shall be presented to the Voters’ Assembly for approval. The final vote to issue a call shall never be delegated to an individual or other body.

**Article VIII GOVERNING AUTHORITY IN THE CONGREGATION**

The Voters' Assembly (Article V, C) shall be the governing authority in the congregation, and any members may appeal to it regarding any matter relating to the affairs and government of the congregation. A decision of the Voters’ Assembly shall be final and binding, but such decisions must always be in accord with the Word of God and the Lutheran Symbolical Books (Article III).

**Article IX PROPERTY RIGHTS OF THE CONGREGATION**

This religious, non-profit, unincorporated body may receive, acquire, hold title to, and manage such real estate and other property, as it may deem necessary to accomplish its purpose as a congregation. The congregation may sell or dispose of such real estate and other property, or any part thereof, in accordance with the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia, and this body shall have all other rights and powers that are granted a religious congregation under the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Should a separation in the congregation occur, (May God graciously avert it) the entire property of the congregation and all rights connected therewith shall remain with those members who hold fast to this constitution. In the event that the congregation shall disband, the property and all rights connected therein sha1l be transferred to that District of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod of which the congregation is a member.

## **Article X AMENDMENTS**

Amendments to this constitution must be submitted to the Voters' Assembly in writing at one regular meeting and acted on at the next regular meeting of the Voters' Assembly (Article V, C, l).

The foregoing constitution adopted on July 16, 2017, effective January 1, 2018, as and for the constitution of Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church of Norfolk, Virginia supersedes all similar documents previous to July 16, 2017.

**THE BY-LAWS OF THE CONGREGATION**

**ARTICLE I – MEMBERSHIP**

**A. BAPTIZED MEMBERSHIP.**

1. **Reception**. Refer to Article V.A of the Constitution.

2. **Duties and Privileges.** Baptized members are called to grow in faith by:

1. Regularly attending church services of worship and programs of Christian education.
2. Conforming their lives to their baptismal vows.
3. Attending Confirmation classes that lead to the rite of Confirmation and receiving Holy Communion.
4. Receiving nurture and assistance from members, access to the Pastor in his professional role, and reception of Christian burial.

**B. COMMUNICANT MEMBERSHIP.**

1. **Reception.** The Pastor shall inform applicants for communicant membership of the requirements needed for such membership in accordance with Article V.B of the Constitution.
	1. Applicants from other Lutheran Church Missouri Synod (hereafter called LCMS) congregations shall submit a letter of transfer from their former congregation. In the case of applicants whose membership in the LCMS has lapsed, they shall receive a period of re-instruction at the discretion of the Pastor with the consent of the Board of Deacons.
	2. Applicants not familiar with the teachings and confessions of the LCMS shall be required to attend a course of instruction, and to make affirmation of their baptismal covenant.
	3. Junior confirmands shall be received as communicant members according to the procedures outlined in Section A.2.c. of this article.
	4. When these requirements have been met, the applicant's admission as a communicant member shall be either before the congregation in worship, or, at the Board of Deacons discretion, before witnesses who are members of the Board of Deacons, before being received as a communicant member. The roster of members shall be reported to the congregation via church publications.

2. **Duties and Privileges.** Membership in Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church is a concrete expression of commitment to Christ and to "the church which is His body" (Ephesians 1:22-23). The privileges of communicant members include partaking in Holy Communion, access to the Pastor in his professional role, concern and assistance from fellow members, eligibility for Voting Membership and reception of Christian burial. Members of the congregation shall therefore recognize their call from God to:

1. Regularly attend church services of worship and receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion.
2. Grow in knowledge and understanding of the Word of God by making use of opportunities for Christian Education.
3. Love and forgive, care for and be cared for by one another as brothers and sisters in one body, which “makes bodily growth and up builds itself in love” (Ephesians 4: 16).
4. Use their gifts to serve God in the world.
5. Rejoice in the sure promise of forgiveness and life in order that the life freely given in the cross and baptism may be renewed and strengthened every day.

**C. VOTING MEMBERSHIP –** Refer to Article V.C of the Constitution.

**D. TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP.**

1. **Fulfillment.** Membership in the church is not terminated butfulfilled when the Lord of the church receives one of His saints into the promised inheritance, where he/she will serve and praise God forever in the ranks of “angels and archangels and all the company of heaven”.

2. **Transfers.** A member desiring to transfer to another LCMS congregation shall speak to the Pastor (or Board of Deacons, in case of a Pastoral vacancy). Upon approval a letter of transfer shall be issued and reported to the congregation via church publications.

3. **Joining Other Churches.** Members of this congregation who request transfer to a non-LCMS congregation shall be informed their membership cannot be transferred. Pastor (or the Board of Deacons, in case of a Pastoral vacancy) may issue a Release from Membership when requested and the names reported to the congregation via church publications.

In cases where members have joined another non-LCMS congregation, they shall, upon the decision of the Pastor (or the Board of Deacons, in case of a Pastoral vacancy) be deemed to have excluded themselves from membership at Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church. Their names shall be removed from the membership list of the congregation and reported to the congregation via church publications.

4. **Whereabouts Unknown.** The names of members whose whereabouts are unknown and cannot be established within a period of one year shall be removed from the membership list by the decision of the Pastor (or the Board of Deacons, in case of a Pastoral vacancy). Such membership is terminated and reported to the congregation via church publications.

5. **Self-Exclusion.** Members of the congregation who self-exclude themselves shall be removed from membership by the decision of the Pastor (or the Board of Deacons, in case of a Pastoral vacancy) and reported to the congregation via church publications.

Such self-exclusion releases the individual from all responsibilities to this congregation, but in addition, also excludes the person from the privileges of church membership.

6. **Forced Removal (Excommunication).** Any member who persists in living in an unchristian manner (e.g.: openly adheres to teachings contrary to the exposition of the Holy Scriptures in the Lutheran Confessions, gives public evidence of an immoral and offensive life, or willfully despises the preaching of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments) shall be admonished, and if unrepentant after repeated admonition, shall be removed from membership by Pastor (or the Board of Deacons, in case of a Pastoral vacancy) and reported to the congregation via church publications.

7. **Restoration to Membership**. An individual who has been removed from membership for whatever reason shall be restored upon request with all rights and privileges after speaking to the Pastor (or the Board of Deacons, in case of a Pastoral vacancy) and reported to the congregation via church publications.

8. **Intent.** In terminating membership, the congregation shall be guided by love, by the earnest desire that none be lost, and by the word of Christ in Matthew 18:15-17.

**ARTICLE II – OFFICE OF THE PASTOR OR OTHER CALLED WORKER**

**A.**  **PROCEDURES FOR SECURING A PASTOR OR OTHER CALLED WORKER.** As soon as a Pastoral or other called worker vacancy occurs the President of the congregation will contact the District President and the Circuit Visitor and appoint a Call Committee. Call procedures will be in accordance with the Southeastern District Operations Manual and specific guidance from the district.

The Board of Worship in conjunction with the Circuit Visitor shall secure the services of a Vacancy Pastor or other called worker, if needed. The Vacancy Pastor or other called worker shall perform all necessary duties and/or arrange to have them performed properly. The Church Council will determine the duties of the Vacancy Pastor or other called worker. The Salary, Wage and Benefit Review Committee shall determine the salary of the Vacancy Pastor or other called worker.

**B. THE PASTORAL OFFICE.**

1. **Purpose**. The Pastoral office is the servant ministry conferred upon Pastors by God, through the call of the congregation to exercise in public the preaching of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments on the behalf of all.

2. **Duties**. Upon being installed the pastor is authorized and obligated to:

1. Proclaim and teach the Word of God in its full truth and purity as contained in the Sacred Scriptures and professed in the Book of Concord of A.D. 1580.
2. Administer the Sacraments in accordance with their divine institution.
3. Shepherd the congregation for its comfort and growth in faith and unity.
4. Guard and promote faithfully the spiritual welfare of the members.
5. Instruct children and adults in the Scriptures and thus prepare them for communicant membership in the church.
6. Minister to individuals in times of disability, distress, division or sin (e.g., aid, counsel, and guide all members; visit the sick and dying; and admonish the delinquent and the erring).
7. Lead and encourage the members in their fervent love to one another and their witness to the world.
8. Guide the congregation in applying the divinely ordained doctrine of the church.
9. Provide spiritual leadership and oversight to the various adult, youth, and family organizations within the congregation.
10. Promote and guide the mission/evangelical activities of the congregation.
11. Serve the congregation as an example of Christian conduct.
12. Live in brotherly unity with the members of the congregation and with fellow workers of sister congregations in the Synod.
13. Oversee all Adult Bible Studies and other Christian educational programs.
14. Serve on the Church Council as a non-voting member.
15. Serve on each Administrative Board as a non-voting member.
16. Oversee and annually review the performance of the **Church Secretary**.
17. Oversee the Boards of Christian Growth, Deacons, Worship, and the LWML.

3. **Congregational Responsibility**. Members of the congregation obligate themselves to:

1. Recognize the Pastor as a divinely called servant of JesusChrist.
2. Give the Pastor the honor, love, and obedience which the Scriptures prescribe.
3. Support the Pastor with encouraging words, cooperative actions, and ardent prayers.
4. Provide for the Pastor's maintenance according to the ability of the congregation.
5. Support the Pastor's continuing education as a professional person in the service of the Gospel.
6. Exercise their spiritual priesthood, which is a privilege and a responsibility, in calling and installing a Pastor.

**C. REMOVAL FROM OFFICE.** Any Pastor or other called worker may be removed from office by the congregation in Christian and lawful order, for one of the following reasons:

* 1. Persistent adherence to false teaching contrary to the Confessional standard of this congregation.
	2. Conduct unbecoming of a Pastor or other called worker.
	3. Willful neglect of official duty.
	4. Evident and prolonged inability to perform the functions of the office.

 Charges of any of these counts shall be carefully investigated by the Board of Deacons.

Should such charges be substantiated by clear evidence, the individual shall first be given an opportunity to resign his/her position in the congregation. Such opportunity having been given and declined, the Church Council shall notify the Voting Membership by written notification of the situation, and shall submit the matter for action at a special meeting of that body. A two-thirds majority vote of the Voting Members present at said special meeting shall be required to dismiss a Pastor or other called worker.

The Circuit Visitor and District President shall have full knowledge of removal procedures when they are preferred against a Pastor or other called worker, and all such actions shall be taken in full consultations with said officials. The congregation shall act in love and concern for the personhood and family of the one who had the call, as to a brother or sister given by the Lord himself.

**ARTICLE III - VOTERS' ASSEMBLY AND CHURCH COUNCIL**

**A. MEETINGS**

1. Voters' Assemblies are required to be held at least two times per year, one in the fall and one in the spring.

1. The fall meeting of the Voters’ Assembly shall include the consideration and acceptance of the Church budget for the following fiscal year, as well as the election of Officers and Directors of the various boards of the congregation. The date of this meeting shall be set by the Church Council and publicized at least one month in advance.
2. The spring meeting of the Voters’ Assembly shall be held for discussion regarding the State of the Church. The date of this meeting shall be set by the Church Council and publicized at least one month in advance.
3. Special Voters’ Assemblies may be called by the President, Pastor or a quorum of the Church Council. The date, place and time of special Voters' Assemblies shall be set by the Church Council and properly publicized throughout the membership at least one week in advance via church publications.

2. The Church Council shall meet a minimum of every other month. Additional meetings may be called by the President and/or the Pastor. The first meeting of the newly elected Church Council shall be a joint meeting with the preceding Church Council.

**B. RULES OF ORDER.**

1. All meetings of the Voters' Assembly and Church Council shall be conducted in accordance with the Constitution and By-Laws of this congregation. In questions of parliamentary procedure not covered by the Constitution and By-Laws, Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall be used as a guide in reaching a God-pleasing decision.
2. All members of the congregation may attend the meetings of the Voters’ Assembly. Only Voting Members may cast votes except in the case of calling a Pastor, where all communicant members may vote.
3. A quorum for the Voters’ Assembly shall be a 10% average of the attendance at weekly Sunday worship services over the past 12 month period to be calculated every December 31st. There will be no voting by proxy.
4. A quorum of the Church Council shall consist of 50% or more of Council Voting Members. There will be no voting by proxy.
5. In the absence of a quorum at a Voters' Assembly or Church Council meeting, those present will set the date for a new meeting as soon as possible. The re-scheduled Voters’ Assembly shall be publicly announced at least one week prior to the date of such meeting. The number of members who are present at such adjourned meeting shall constitute a quorum at the re-scheduled Voters’ Assembly.

**C. AUTHORITY OF VOTERS' ASSEMBLY.** The following matters shall be vested in the Voters' Assembly and shall never be delegated to another group or person:

1. Any non-budgeted expenditure in excess of $2,500. The exception is emergency expenditures requiring immediate attention which shall be at the discretion of the Church Council and reported to the congregation via church publications.
2. Any sale or disposal of church property valued in excess of $2,000.
3. Adoption of yearly budgets and revisions.
4. Adoption of resolutions to the District and Synod.
5. Approval of capital improvements.
6. Nominations for office in the District and Synod.
7. Decisions assigned to the Voters' Assembly in accordance with specific sections of the By-Laws.

**D. THE CHURCH COUNCIL.** The Church Council shall consist of 12 members as follows: President, Vice President, Recording Secretary, Treasurer, and the Director of: Christian Growth, Deacons, LWML, Special Ministries, Stewardship, Trustees, Worship, and the Pastor. The Pastor shall serve as a non-voting member.

1. **Purpose.** The Church Council shall serve as a forum where the activities of the church may be discussed, evaluated, coordinated and decided upon.

1. **Responsibilities.** Church Council members shall:
	1. Faithfully attend worship and Bible study.
	2. Serve as the Governing Board of the congregation.
	3. Project plans for the midterm (one to five years) for all activities of the church considering the long-range plans of the District and Synod in their deliberations.
	4. Publicize to the congregation a yearly plan of activities for the development and expansion of Christ’s work in our midst.
	5. Prepare the agenda for all Voters’ Assembly meetings.
	6. Appoint the Nominating Committee at the time required.
	7. Approve and archive minutes from each meeting.
	8. Have authority to approve payments for unbudgeted expenditures up to a value of $2,500 which shall be reported to the Voters’ Assembly. The exception is emergency expenditures requiring immediate attention which shall be at the discretion of the Church Council and reported to the congregation via church publications.

**ARTICLE IV - ORGANIZATION**

**A. OFFICERS.** The Officers of Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church are:

President

Vice President

Recording Secretary

Treasurer

First Trustee

 Any two or more of the above may function as Trustees under Virginia Law.

**B. ADMINISTRATIVE BOARDS.** The Administrative Boards of Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church are:

 Board of Christian Growth Board of Stewardship

 Board of Deacons Board of Trustees

 Board of LWML Board of Worship

 Board of Special Ministries

**C. ELECTION PROCEDURES.**

1. **Eligibility.** All Communicant Members, who have attained the age of 18, shall be eligible to serve on the Church Council as a Director of an Administrative Board. All Communicant Members, who have attained the age of 21, shall be eligible to serve as an Officer of the Congregation.

2. **Nomination.** At the spring meeting of the Voters’ Assembly the Church Council shall announce its selection of the **Nominating Committee** which shall consist of the Vice President (who shall serve as chair) and two voting members, serving for one year. At this meeting the list of open positions shall be publicized.

The Nominating Committee shall present a list of candidates to the Church Council six weeks prior to the fall Voters’ Assembly for validation. This list shall be made available to the congregation along with procedures for additional nominations via church publications.

Following the publication of the Nominating Committee's list, any Voting Member of the congregation may submit to the committee additional names (who have agreed to be nominated) for inclusion on the list and such names shall be placed in nomination by the committee along with the candidates already chosen, provided:

1. That such names shall be submitted at least four weeks before the date of the fall Voters’ Assembly.
2. That the Nominating Committee shall have investigated the status of all proposed candidates and found them eligible for office and willing to serve.

The Nominating Committee, at least two weeks before the date of the fall Voters’ Assembly shall publicize the list of candidates via church publications.

1. **Election Procedure.** At the fall Voters’ Assembly the voting membership shall elect by simple majority positions up for election (by paper ballot if requested). If there is more than one candidate for a particular position a paper ballot will be used.
2. **Terms.** The terms for the Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church Council members are:

**Vice President** - A Vice President shall be elected every year. When elected, the Vice President shall serve for one year and then serve one year as President

**Second Truste**e - A Second Trustee shall be elected every year. When elected, the Second Trustee shall serve for one year and then serve one year as First Trustee.

**LWML President** – The LWML President shall be elected every year as presented by the LWML per their by-laws.

With the exception of those listed above, the terms for all elected positions shall be for two years.

During even-numbered years the following shall be elected:

Vice President

Second Trustee

Treasurer

Director of Christian Growth

Director of Deacons

LWML President (presented for election by vote of the LWML)

During odd-numbered years, the following shall be elected:

Vice President

Second Trustee

Recording Secretary

Director of Special Ministries

Director of Stewardship

Director of Worship

LWML President (presented for election by vote of the LWML)

1. **Installation of Officers**. Newly elected Church Council members shall assume their duties on January 1st. Those appointed to fill vacancies shall assume their duties as soon as appointed. Church Council members shall be installed at a Sunday service in December.

**D. TERMINATION.** The tenure of any Church Council member may be terminated upon Church Council’s acceptance of a written resignation. The voters’ may remove a Church Council member at their discretion (following similar procedures as set forth for Pastors or Other Called Workers – Article II, Section C of these By-Laws).

**E. FILLING OF VACANCIES.** Vacancies shall be filled by immediate presidential appointment, with approval of the Church Council. In unique circumstances when this is not possible, a called meeting of the Voters’ Assembly will be required to approve such appointment. Upon filling of a vacancy the congregation shall be notified via church publications.

**ARTICLE V - DUTIES OF OFFICERS AND ADMINISTRATIVE BOARDS**

**A. DUTIES OF CHURCH OFFICERS.**

**1. *President.***

1. **Purpose.** To preside over the affairs of the congregation, ensuring adherence to the Constitution, By-Laws, and Policy Manual so that the expressed will of the congregation, as embodied in the resolutions of the Voting Membership, is fulfilled.
2. **Responsibilities**. The President shall:
	1. Faithfully attend worship and Bible study.
	2. Ensure that the place, date, time and agenda of the meetings of the Church Council are set.
	3. Preside at all meetings of the Voters’ Assembly and Church Council.
	4. Ensure that the functions, plans, and activities of the congregation are coordinated by the Church Council.
	5. Communicate with the Pastor, Officers and Board Directors regarding congregational matters.
	6. Ensure that each Board carries out its functions according to the Constitution and By-Laws.
	7. Be an ex-officio member of all Boards, Committees, Auxiliaries and Groups, except the Nominating Committee.
	8. Appoint any special committees formed by action of the Church Council. The purposes and names of members of these committees and individuals shall be reported to the congregation.
	9. Appoint an **Auditing Committee** consisting of any two unrelated qualified communicant members of the congregation (other than the Treasurer, Church Secretary, and Bookkeeper and their immediate family members) to audit annually all financial records of the congregation. This audit shall occur within one month of closing of the fiscal year. The Audit Committee's report shall be submitted to the Voters' Assembly.
	10. Activate annually a **Salary, Wage and Benefit Review Committee** whose members shall be the President, Vice President, Recording Secretary and Treasurer. The committee shall:
		1. Be responsible for the hiring of all non-called church employees.
		2. Review the salaries and benefits of all church employees.
		3. Consult with the appropriate Board Directors regarding the hiring and annual evaluations of employees for whom they are responsible.
		4. Verify that all job descriptions are kept up to date.
		5. Forward to the Director of Stewardship the committee's financial recommendations for inclusion in the church budget at the appropriate time.
	11. Sign the Bank Signature Card so that in the absence of the Treasurer he/she shall have the authority to sign checks or withdraw bank funds.
	12. Contact the District President, Circuit Visitor, and appoint a Call Committee, in the event of a Pastoral vacancy.
	13. Oversee the following: Recording Secretary, Treasurer, Board of Stewardship, Auditing Committee, and the Salary, Wage and Benefit Review Committee.

**2. *Vice President.***

a. **Purpose.** In the absence of the President, the Vice President serves in his/her stead.

b. **Responsibilities.** The Vice President shall:

1. Faithfully attend worship and Bible study.
2. Act for and on the behalf of the President in his/her absence, at his/her request, or in the event of his/her inability to perform his/her duties.
3. Sign the Bank Signature Card so that in the absence of the Treasurer and the President he/she shall have the authority to sign checks or withdraw bank funds.
4. Oversee the following: Recording Secretary, the Boards of Trustees and Special Ministries and the Nominating Committee. Review reports from these Boards/Committees and keep the President informed if deemed necessary.
5. Serve on the Salary, Wage and Benefit Review Committee.
6. Serve as the chair on the **Nominating Committee**.
7. Be available for whatever duties the President shall assign to him/her.

***3. Recording Secretary.***

1. **Purpose**. To record and be the custodian of the congregation, Voters’ Assembly, Church Council and Salary, Wage and Benefit Review Committee records and any other committees as requested by the President.

b. **Responsibilities**. The Recording Secretary shall:

1. Faithfully attend worship and Bible study.
2. Transcribe and permanently record the minutes of the Voters' Assembly, Church Council, and Salary, Wage and Benefit Review Committee and submit minutes for adoption at their following regular meetings. Supply copies of all minutes to all council members within one week after each meeting.
3. Keep the roll of attendance at meetings and maintain a roster of the Voting Membership on the church membership software.
4. Maintain a file on all Administrative Board reports.
5. Prepare and dispatch official correspondence and notices as requested.
6. Maintain an adequate supply of up-to-date copies of the Constitution and By-Laws for distribution to the congregation.
7. Perform other duties as may be delegated by the Voters' Assembly or Church Council, President and/or Vice President.
8. Serve on the Salary, Wage and Benefit Review Committee.

**4. *Treasurer.***

1. **Purpose.** The Treasurer shall be the custodian of all congregational funds and financial assets. The Treasurer shall be the primary signatory to all bank accounts.

b. **Responsibilities.** The Treasurer shall:

1. Faithfully attend worship and Bible study.
2. Sign checks prepared by the bookkeeper after reviewing attached invoices for accuracy and appropriate account.
3. Serve as a member of the Board of Stewardship.
4. Assist the Board of Stewardship in the preparation of an annual congregational budget for recommendation to the Church Council.
5. Execute the budget.
6. Present monthly financial statements to the Church Council.
7. Report overall financial status of the congregation monthly.
8. Present financial statements at each Voters’ Assembly.
9. Have the authority to transfer funds within all bank accounts as approved by the Church Council or Voters' Assembly.
10. Have authority to approve payments for unbudgeted expenditures up to a value of $500 which shall be reported to the Church Council.
11. Have authority to approve payments for items over budget not exceeding $500 which shall be reported to the Church Council.
12. Provide all documentation for an audit.
13. Serve on the Salary, Wage and Benefit Review Committee.
14. Oversee and annually review the performance of the **Bookkeeper,** who shall:
15. Support creation and execution of annual budgets.
16. Produce Journal Entries and Adjusting Journal Entries (at the direction of the Treasurer) for all accounting transactions.
17. Perform all account reconciliations, reporting any discrepancies to the Treasurer.
18. Produce monthly reports for the Treasurer.
19. Ensure that all employees and W-9 contractors are entered into payroll program and process payroll semi-monthly.

**5. *First Trustee****.*

1. **Purpose.** The First Trustee shall serve as the primary legal Trustee of the congregation.

b. **Responsibilities.** The First Trustee shall:

1. Faithfully attend worship and Bible study.
2. Serve as Director of the Board of Trustees.
3. Be the primary signature on contracts relating to church properties.

**B. ADMINISTRATIVE BOARDS.**

1. **General Duties of Administrative Boards**.
	1. **Overall Responsibilities**. Each Administrative Board shall initiate and effectively perform the functions and duties as stated in the By-laws and assigned by the Church Council or Voters’ Assembly.
	2. **Reports**. Each Administrative Board shall submit a written report of its activities at each regular meeting of the Church Council and the Voters' Assembly, and on such other occasions as the Assembly may require. Such reports shall include specific recommendations (if any) for the Voters' Assembly action and/or approval. The Recording Secretary will retain a copy of all such reports.
	3. **Administration of Funds**. Each Administrative Board shall prepare an annual budget to be submitted to The Board of Stewardship. Each Administrative Board shall be empowered to administer all funds set aside for its work by the budget. This shall include adjustments in line items within the Board’s budget.
	4. **Organization.** Each Administrative Board shall be under the supervision of the Director of that Board. The Director of each Board shall seek individuals to fill the Board's membership. The names of these individuals shall be submitted to the Recording Secretary and publicized via church publications. Each Administrative Board may appoint committees or individuals for special projects to help it accomplish its assigned tasks.
	5. **Meetings.** The time and frequency of Board meetings shall be at the discretion of the Director of the Board and the Board Members, except that, either the President, Vice President or the Pastor may call a meeting of the Board at any time. Meetings thus called shall be classified as special meetings and each Board member shall be notified of the date, time and purpose of such a meeting. Each Administrative Board shall prepare a permanent set of minutes for each meeting and such minutes shall be submitted to the Recording Secretary.
2. **Board of Christian Growth***.* The Board of Christian Growth shall consist of at least five members, including the Director of the Board, Sunday School Director, Youth Leader, Summer Camp Director and one member at large.
	1. **Purpose.** The Board shall plan, administer and oversee the Sunday School, Bible Classes, Youth Activities, Summer Camp and any other opportunities for Christian Growth in conjunction with the Pastor.
	2. **Responsibilities.** The members of the Board shall:
		1. Faithfully attend worship and Bible study.
		2. Be responsible for the Christian Education of the congregation and encourage participation.
		3. Be responsible for the oversight of the Youth Program and encourage participation.
		4. Approve curriculum and monitor the reception of each educational program in conjunction with the Pastor.
		5. Enlist and provide ongoing training to lay teachers/leaders for each educational program in conjunction with the Pastor.
		6. Encourage the growth of the educational staff through conferences, conventions, etc., and request the necessary funds for the same in the yearly budget.
		7. Encourage member subscriptions to church periodicals, such as the "Lutheran Witness”.
		8. Review suggestions made by the education departments of Synod and the District for possible use.
		9. Continually examine the education facilities and equipment and report any needs to the Church Council.
		10. Appoint and oversee the **Sunday School Director**, whose responsibilities shall include:
			1. Oversight of Sunday morning children/youth Christian Education activities.
			2. Continually evaluating the participation, responsiveness and acceptance of all Christian Education activities.
			3. Encouraging the children/youth to attend Sunday morning Christian Education activities.
			4. Nurturing the spiritual, emotional and physical health of the Sunday School staff.
			5. Appointing Sunday School Teachers for the children/youth.
		11. Appoint and oversee the **Youth Leader**, whose responsibilities shall include:
			1. Encouraging all youth to participate in Worship, Word and Sacrament.
			2. Planning and carrying out year-round activities (such as service, social and spiritual events) for the youth.
			3. Continually evaluating the participation, responsiveness and acceptance of all youth activities.

12. Appoint and oversee the **Summer Camp Director,** whose responsibilities shall include:

 a. Planning and administration of Summer Camp.

 b. Hiring and supervising of Summer Camp Personnel.

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1. **Board of Deacons***.* The Board of Deacons shall consist of the Director of the Board and a Deacon assigned to cover each zone.
	1. **Purpose.** The Board shall assist the Pastor on all matters pertaining to the spiritual welfare of the congregation.
	2. **Responsibilities.** The members of the Board shall:
		1. Faithfully attend worship and Bible study.
		2. Receive all applications for membership and all requests for letters of transfer in conjunction with the Pastor.
		3. Review and encourage regular attendance at worship services and reception of the means of grace.
		4. Encourage those members who have attained 18 years of age to become Voting Members.
		5. Follow-up on “inactive” members (as defined by the Board of Deacons).
		6. Encourage thorough instruction and spiritual development of youth and adults for confirmation and church membership in cooperation with the Pastor.
		7. Encourage an atmosphere of friendliness in the congregation.
		8. Report on individual contacts to the Pastor and the Director of the Board at its regular meetings.
		9. Seek training of its members as determined by the Pastor.
		10. Oversee the reception and integration of new members into the congregation.
		11. Mentor the group “Active Guests”. Upon joining the church as a member, see that they are assigned a Deacon based on their locality.
		12. Show concern for the spiritual, emotional, and physical welfare of the Pastor, his family and all church employees.
		13. Oversee the **Prayer Chain** with notification of requested prayers by members of the congregation.
		14. Report the names of those who are received into communicant membership (Article I – B) and the names of those whose membership is terminated (Article I –D) via church publications.
2. **Board of Lutheran Women’s Missionary League (LWML).** The LWML is governed by their own set of by-laws. The Board shall consist of at least seven members including the President of LWML (who shall serve as the Director of the Board), Vice President of LWML, Recording Secretary of LWML, Corresponding Secretary of LWML, Treasurer of LWML, Networker of LWML and Christian Growth Chairperson of LWML.

 a. **Purpose.**

1. The mission of the LWML is to assist each woman of the LCMS in affirming her relationship with the Triune God so that she is enabled to use her gifts in ministry to the people of the Word.

 2. To support the congregation and ministry of Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church.

 b. **Responsibilities.** The members of the LWML shall:

1. Faithfully attend worship and Bible Study.
2. Be in charge of the**:**
	1. **Altar Guild** - In conjunction with the Board of Worship shall maintain the sanctuary for use for worship services as listed under Board of Worship responsibilities.
	2. **Welcome Center** – Coordinate hostesses/hosts for the purpose of supplying food and drinks for the Welcome Center on Sunday mornings. Coffee, sweeteners, stirrers, cream, plates, napkins and cups are furnished by LWML.
	3. **Receptions -** The women are responsible for providing receptions that are held in Belvedere Hall, including funeral receptions and the reception following the Music Festival each fall.
	4. **The Laura Johnson Memorial Fund** - The LWML is the custodian of this account. This fund provides for funeral receptions (at church or in the home), flowers or other appropriate acknowledgements of care and concern. Members help to fund this account through memorials and direct contributions.
	5. **Prayer Shawl Ministry -** Completed shawls are offered for prayer that God would bless the shawl and its recipient. Shawls are delivered to those needing extra prayers.
	6. **Love Boxes** – Each year around Valentine’s Day boxes of goodies and supplies are packed and delivered to our college students and our deployed military members. A list of suggested items is posted on the bulletin board so that all members of the congregation can participate.
	7. **Pantry Fund -** The LWML is the custodian of this account. The money for this fund comes through offering envelopes and through direct contributions. Money has been given to outside organizations, to help Special Ministries with their outreach programs and to members of the congregation in need of assistance. This fund may also be used by the Pastor if he knows of someone who is in need of food.
	8. **Fund Raisers** –The congregation is asked to support several fund raisers each year in order to support some of the items listed above and the outreach missions of the LWML.
	9. **Missions –** Through the MITE program the LWML supports designated recipients in District, Zone and National LWML Programs. Financial support is also offered to many organizations/individuals including an adopted Seminary Student, LAMP, and disaster relief programs.

1. **Board of Special Ministries**. The Board shall consist of at least five members, including the Director of the Board, a representative from the LWML, a representative from Operation Barnabas and two members at large.
	1. **Purpose**. Spreading the Gospel through various opportunities of service to people in need throughout the community.
	2. **Responsibilities**. The members of the Board shall:
		1. Faithfully attend worship and Bible Study.
		2. Encourage congregational support and participation in the Board’s activities.
		3. Encourage other organization’s support and participation in the Board’s activities.
		4. Share information about benevolent and charitable agencies in the community, state, and on the national level with the congregation and other Boards for opportunities of service.
		5. Continually evaluate the social and human needs of the community and of the effectiveness of the congregation in serving these needs.
		6. Appoint and oversee the leader of **Operation Barnabas** whose responsibilities shall include:

a. Training and assisting the congregation and the community in the care, support and outreach to all military connected people.

1. **Board of Stewardship**. The Board shall consist of at least four members, including the Director of the Board, the Church Secretary, Treasurer and the Bookkeeper.
	1. **Purpose.**

1. To help members of the congregation grow as faithful stewards of Jesus Christ; carry out His mission and ministry in their personal lives and corporately through the congregation, Circuit, District and Synod.

1. To promote Christian stewardship as the free and joyous activity of the child of God and God’s family, the church, in managing all of life and life’s resources for God’s purposes

b. **Responsibilities**. The members of the Board shall:

1. Faithfully attend worship and Bible Study.

2. Develop and update annually and as needed a congregational Service and Opportunities file and provide results to the Church Council.

3. Give each member an opportunity to make a commitment of his/her treasure for the support of Christ’s ministry through the congregation annually.

4. Encourage the proportionate, first-fruits giving of time, talent and treasure through education, communication and other means.

5. Encourage various programs for endowments, for remembrance of the congregation in wills, bequests, trusts, etc.

6. Collate an annual budget with requests from all Administrative Boards and prepare a consolidated congregational budget for presentation to the Church Council for review and recommendation to the voters.

* + 1. Annually recommend a budgeted level of support for the District and Synod.
		2. Provide personal quarterly and yearly statements to all givers.
1. B**oard of Trustees**. The Board shall consist of at least three members including the First and Second Trustees and the Sexton. The First Trustee is the Director of the Board.

a. **Purpose.**

1. Plan for maintenance and repair of church property.

2. Generally protect the church property against loss or damage.

b. **Responsibilities.** The members of the Board shall:

1. Faithfully attend worship and Bible Study.
2. Ensure ongoing systematic and thorough inspection of all church property and equipment per Maintenance Log.
3. Ensure all regulatory inspections are accomplished.
4. Make recommendations to the Church Council for major repairs, improvements or replacements.
5. Arrange for immediate repairs of an urgent nature and all normal repairs and alterations for which budgeted funds have been allocated.
6. Supervise, control and recommend adequate storage facilities for all church property, equipment, and supplies and their orderly maintenance.
7. Approve service contracts for office machines, pest control, heating and air conditioning, etc., and retain a copy of all contracts in the church safe.
8. Review all property related insurance policies for adequate coverage annually.
9. Enlist work crews for special repairs, improvements, cleaning, painting, decorating, landscaping and other like requirements.
10. Prepare/maintain a contract of the required custodial duties for the facilities and equipment and oversee the execution of the duties in accordance with their contract.
11. Oversee and annually review the performance of the **Sexton** and **Custodian**.
12. Maintain a current inventory of all church property, equipment and supplies, including acquisition date, approximate value, and model and serial number of each item, annually. A copy of this inventory shall be kept in the church safe.
13. Report annually to Church Council the status of the inventory and contracts.
14. Recommend all policies and fees for rental, use and lending of church property to Church Council and oversee the enforcement of the policies. Copies of these policies should be kept in the church office.
15. Distribute keys and maintain a current list of keys issued for the church property.
16. Stay current on the laws governing nonprofit organizations.
17. Oversee the acceptance and use of donated property and equipment with the approval of the Voters’ Assembly. Property and equipment accepted in donation becomes the unreserved property of the congregation.
18. **Board of Worship***.* The Board of Worship shall consist of at least five members, including the Director of the Board, the Director of Music, the Head of the Altar Guild and the Head Usher.
	* + 1. **Purpose.** To plan and supervise all activities pertaining to congregational worship in conjunction with the Pastor.
			2. **Responsibilities.** The members of the Board shall:

1. Faithfully attend worship and Bible study.

2. Set the time and schedule of all worship and special services.

3. Continually evaluate the congregation's participation, responsiveness, and acceptance of various forms of worship. The Board shall approve new forms of worship, Liturgies and Hymns for use in all worship services and special services.

4. Assist the Pastor in the selection, training and supervision of lay people to serve as communion assistants, lectors, ushers and acolytes during all worship and special services.

5. See that communion assistants, lectors, acolytes, ushers and children sermon leaders are scheduled and present schedule to the church office.

6. Be responsible for adequate nursery facilities.

7. Annually review the performance of the Director of Music and Nursery Attendant.

8. In conjunction with the LWML supervise the work of the **Altar Guild**. The Head of the Altar Guild shall:

a. Select, train and supervise the Altar Guild members in the care, use and maintenance of the sacred vessels, the altar, the altar furnishings and vestments in conjunction with the Pastor.

b. Coordinate all church and chancel decorations, including the procurement of altar flowers and their ultimate distribution.

* + - 1. Maintain an adequate supply of consumable items for worship, such as grape juice, communion cups, wine and wafers (regular and gluten free), baptismal napkins, and candles. See that attendance books, scribble cards, offering envelopes, pencils and prayer request forms are replenished in the pews, as needed.

9. Oversee and annually review the performance of the **Director of Music,** who shall:

a. Serve as the organist and choir director for all worship and special services and procure a substitute in his/her absence.

b. Coordinate with the Pastor the selection of hymns for all worship and special services.

c. Provide for vocal and/or instrumental music and performers and their supervision.

* + - 1. Notify the Church Office when the congregation-owned musical instruments require service.

10. Oversee and annually review the performance of the **Nursery Attendant,** who shall:

 a. Care for the children brought to the nursery each Sunday for services and during the Bible Class hour.

**ARTICLE VI - THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE SACRAMENTS**

**A. SACRAMENT OF HOLY BAPTISM**. The sacrament of Holy Baptism will normally be administered by the called Pastor of Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church of Norfolk, Virginia consistent with the biblical institution and God’s command. On a case by case basis, the called Pastor may, at his discretion, allow another to perform the rite. Holy Baptism will normally be performed within the regularly scheduled worship services. In cases of emergency or sickness or special circumstance the rite may be done privately as deemed advisable. In urgent cases, in the absence of the Pastor, Holy Baptism may be administered by any Christian.

**B. SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION**. The sacrament of Holy Communion (the Lord’s Supper) will normally be administered by the called Pastor of Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church of Norfolk, Virginia consistent with the biblical institution and God’s command. The Pastor may be assisted by other ordained LCMS pastors or pastors in altar and pulpit fellowship with the LCMS or by male members of the congregation who are in good standing. All LCMS members or persons who are members of a church in altar and pulpit fellowship with the LCMS are eligible and invited to receive the sacrament. The sacrament may also be received by those under pastoral care who are in agreement with ARTICLE III CONFESSIONAL STANDARD of the constitution of Trinity Lutheran. In all cases, the called Pastor of Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church of Norfolk, VA will ultimately decide whether to administer the sacrament or not.

### ARTICLE VII – AMENDMENTS TO THE BY-LAWS

These By-Laws may be amended by any properly convened Voters’ Assembly by a two-thirds majority of Voting Members present, provided the proposed amendment has been introduced at a previous Voters’ Assembly.

The foregoing By-Laws adopted on July 16, 2017, effective January 1, 2018 as and for the By-Laws of Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church of Norfolk, Virginia supersedes all similar documents previous to July 16, 2017.