

August 23, 2016



**TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
BERRIEN SPRINGS, MICHIGAN**

PREAMBLE

Whereas, Christians should practice fellowship with those who profess the true faith (Acts 2:42; Hebrews 10:24, 24); and

Whereas, they should endeavor to keep the unity of faith (Ephesians 4:3-6; I Corinthians 1:10); and

Whereas, as a body they should administer the Office of the Keys (John 20:21-23; Matthew 18:15-20); and

Whereas, in such a body all things should be done decently and in order (I Corinthians 14:40); and

Whereas, our original Constitution was framed in the German language:

Therefore, we the congregation have considered it advisable to update, and where feasible, to alter and improve our Constitution in such a manner that nothing of importance be omitted, and we therefore adopt the following Constitution and its By-Laws according to which all affairs of this congregation, both spiritual and material, shall be conducted.

CONSTITUTION

Constitution, Article I

NAME

The name of this church shall be "Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church", of Berrien Springs, Berrien County, Michigan.

Constitution, Article II

MISSION

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

Constitution, Article III

CONFESSONAL STANDARD

The congregation acknowledges and accepts all the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments as the revealed Word of God, verbally inspired, and acknowledges and accepts all the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, contained in the Book of Concord of 1580, to be true and genuine expositions of the doctrines of the Bible.

These Symbolical Books are: the three Ecumenical Creeds {Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian}, the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, the Apology of the same, the Smalcald Articles, Luther's Large and Small Catechisms, and the Formula of Concord.

Constitution, Article IV

SYNODICAL MEMBERSHIP

The congregation shall hold membership in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod as long as the Synod conforms to the Congregation's Confessional Standards {Constitution, Article III} as set forth in this constitution.

Constitution, Article V
MEMBERSHIP

The membership of this congregation includes the following:

- Baptized members are all who have been baptized in the name of the Triune God and who are under the spiritual care of the pastor of this congregation, including the children who have not yet been confirmed into communicant membership.
- Communicant members are those baptized members who have been instructed and are familiar with the contents of Luther's Small Catechism, having been confirmed in the Lutheran faith, and adhere in confession and practice to the Confessional Standards {Constitution, Article III} set forth in this constitution.
- Voting members are communicant members who are at least eighteen (18) years of age and who received Confirmation/Adult Confirmation and are recorded by current means as members of this congregation shall have the right to vote.

Members of this congregation are received in the following manner:

- Baptized members are received through the Sacrament of Holy Baptism or through the consent of one or both parents in the case of children who have been baptized in another Christian congregation.
- Adult members are received through the rite of confirmation and Sacrament of Holy Baptism as appropriate, through transfer from a sister congregation; By-Laws, Article One {Admission of New Members}, or through profession of faith or reaffirmation of faith; By-Laws, Article One {Admission of New Members}.
- Only members who are at least eighteen (18) years of age and who received Confirmation/Adult Confirmation and are recorded by current means as members of this congregation shall have the right to vote.

Members of this congregation shall conform their entire lives to the authority of God's Word and to that end shall make diligent use of the means of grace, exercise faithful stewardship of God's many gifts and talents, impart and accept fraternal admonition as the need of such admonition becomes apparent, and be readily available for service in the kingdom of Christ within and beyond the congregation.

- Membership in organizations whose principles and conduct conflict with the Word of God is prohibited.

Termination of membership of this congregation:

- Membership shall be terminated by transfer to a sister congregation, by joining a congregation outside the fellowship of this congregation, by excommunication or self-exclusion, or by death.
- Communicant members who conduct themselves in an un-Christian manner shall be admonished according to Matthew 18:15.20 and so stated in detail in the By-Laws, Article Three {Membership Revocation}.

Constitution, Article VI
RIGHTS OF SUFFRAGE AND ELIGIBILITY TO HOLD OFFICE

Only such members who are at least twenty-one (21) years of age shall be eligible to hold office. In keeping with the order of Creation, only such male members who have reached the age of twenty-one (21) shall serve as an Elder, President and Vice-President of the congregation.

And be it further resolved that all male pronouns, except in reference to the Board of Elders members, President and Vice-President of the congregation, be understood as applying to both genders.

Constitution, Article VII
OFFICERS

The officers of this congregation shall be President, Vice-President, Recording Secretary, Treasurer, and such other officers of the boards and committees as the Constitution and By-Laws of this congregation may prescribe or as this congregation may elect in accordance with its needs.

- It shall be the duty of each Officer to maintain in a Christian manner their elected office.
- The congregation possesses the power to remove, in a Christian manner, from office any officer of the congregation who willfully neglects the duties of their office; By-Laws, Article Nine {Duties of Office}.
- A two-thirds majority vote of the voters' assembly shall be required.

Constitution, Article VIII
SUPPORT OF THE CHURCH

It shall be the duty of every member of this congregation to contribute financially according to his or her ability toward the maintenance and growth of the church and school, and in general, to assist in bearing the financial obligations of the congregation.

Constitution, Article IX
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AND TRAINING

It shall be the duty of such members of this congregation who have parental care of unconfirmed children to provide for their Christian education and training.

Constitution, Article X
PASTORS AND TEACHERS

The pastoral office shall be conferred only upon ordained ministers who are members of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, candidates for the pastoral ministry who have satisfied the qualifications and requirements for assignment of first calls by Synod, or ordained ministers who are members in good standing of church bodies that have been formally recognized to be in altar and pulpit fellowship with the Synod when agreements for such calls are in place.

Only those commissioned ministers shall receive a call who are qualified for the work of the ministry to which they are called, and have been endorsed by and are members of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, who are candidates of LCMS colleges and universities who have satisfied the qualifications and requirements for assignment of first calls, and who are commissioned ministers in good standing from church bodies that are in altar and pulpit fellowship with the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

Only such ordained ministers, commissioned ministers or teachers shall be called by this congregation as are in accord with the Confessional Standard of this congregation {Constitution, Article III}.

- The right of calling ordained ministers, commissioned ministers or teachers shall never be delegated to a smaller body or to an individual.
- Reasons for dismissing a pastor or teacher shall be persistent adherence to false teaching, and scandalous life, willful neglect of the duties of office, the inability to perform those duties, or domineering in office.
- For the election of pastors and teachers, a majority vote of the voters' assembly is required.
- For dismissal of a pastor or teacher a two-thirds vote of the voters' assembly is required.

When a vacancy occurs in an office of an ordained minister, commissioned minister or teacher the appropriate call committee listed in the By-Laws {Call Committee} shall notify the president of the district to receive assistance in temporarily filling the vacancy and to receive his counsel in calling a new pastor, teacher or other church worker.

**Be it understood that by virtue of his call, Pastor is an ex-officio member of all Boards and Committees of this congregation (Acts 20:28).

Constitution, Article XI
INDEMNIFICATION

To the fullest extent permitted by law, the congregation shall indemnify any individual who was or is a party, or is threatened to be made a party, to any proceeding other than a proceeding by or in the right of the congregation, because he or she was or is a called employee, officer, or board member of the congregation, or because of any action or inaction in such capacity, against liability and expenses incurred in the proceeding, if:

- He or she conducted himself or herself in good faith.
- He or she reasonably believed (i) in the case of conduct in his or her official capacity, that his or her conduct was in the best interests of the congregation, and (ii) in all other cases, that his or her conduct was at least not opposed to the best interests of the congregation.
- In the case of any criminal proceeding, that he or she had no reasonable cause to believe that his or her conduct was unlawful.

Constitution, Article XII
AUTHORITY OF AND WITHIN THE CONGREGATION

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

- The establishment and conduct of all boards, committees and societies within the congregation or organizations related directly to the congregation shall be subject to the overall authority and general oversight of the voters' assembly.
- All matters before the voters' assembly shall be decided by a majority vote unless otherwise specified by this Constitution or By-Laws.
- Matters of doctrine and conscience shall be decided only on the basis of the Word of God.

Constitution, Article XIII
PROPERTY RIGHTS OF THE CONGREGATION

The congregation may receive, acquire, hold title to, and manage such real estate and other property as it may need to accomplish its purpose {Constitution, Article II} and may sell or dispose of such real estate and other property or any part thereof; the congregation shall have all rights and powers that are granted by the laws of the State of Michigan to religious organizations.

Constitution, Article XIV
DIVISION

If at any time division of the congregation should take place for any reason (which God may graciously prevent) the following principles will govern.

- The property (or any part thereof) of the congregation and all benefits connected therewith shall remain with those communicant members who continue to adhere in confession and practice to the Confessional Standards {Constitution, Article III} set forth in this constitution.
- In the event that the congregation dissolves, all property (or any part thereof) shall be disposed of by the final voters assemble for payment of debts and all just claims against the congregation, and any and all surplus and all rights connected therewith shall be conveyed to and become the property of the Michigan District of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

Constitution, Article XV
BOOKS AND FORMS

In all public services of the congregation, in all ministerial acts, and in all religious instruction of the church and school, only such books, music and materials shall be used which are in accord with the Confessional Standards {Constitution, Article III} of the congregation.

Constitution, Article XVI
MARRIAGE POLICY

The marriage policy of Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, a member congregation of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, is and always has been consistent with the Synod's beliefs on marriage. We believe that marriage is a sacred union of one man and one woman (Gen. 2:24-25), and that God gave marriage as a picture of the relationship between Christ and His bride the Church (Eph. 5:32). The official position of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, as set forth in 1998 Res. 3-21 ("To Affirm the Sanctity of Marriage and to Reject Same-Sex Unions"), is that homosexual unions come under categorical prohibition in the Old and New Testaments (Lev. 18:22,24; 20:13; 1 Cor. 6:9-10; 1 Tim. 1:9-10) as contrary to the Creator's design (Rom. 1:26-27). These positions and beliefs can be found on the LCMS website, along with other statements, papers and reports on the subject of homosexuality and same-sex civil unions and "marriage". Our pastors will not officiate over any marriages inconsistent with these beliefs, and our church property may not be used for any marriage ceremony, reception or other activity that would be inconsistent with our beliefs and this policy.

(Concerning marriage or the institution of the Marriage Policy the Elders of the congregation shall have authority.)

Constitution, Article XVII
AMENDMENTS

Amendments to this Constitution or By-Laws may be proposed in the following manner; amendments to any article of this Constitution may be submitted in writing to the Church Council, the Church Council shall post an agenda, containing the proposed amendment, offering a two-week notice before a regular meeting of the voters' assembly. The proposed amendment placed before the congregation may be considered, amended, or rejected by a majority vote. If the majority vote is affirmative towards the proposed or amended amendment no final action thereon can be taken until the following regular meeting. At the following regular meeting this proposed amendment may be amended or voted upon. In order to be adopted the final draft of the amendment must be accepted by at least two-thirds of those present in order to become effective.

- Amendments to Articles II, III, V, IX, X, XII, XV, XVI and XVII shall not destroy their essential meaning.
- The date of approval shall be referenced next to any amendment that is added to the Constitution or the By-Laws.
- The revision of the Constitution or By-Laws containing the amendment(s) must be submitted to the Michigan District Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod constitution committee for review and recommendations.

Constitution, Article XVII
ADOPTION OF BY-LAWS

This congregation may adopt such By-Laws as the accomplishment of the purpose of its organization may demand.

BY-LAWS

By-Laws, Article One **ADMISSION OF NEW MEMBERS**

Applicants for communicant membership presenting a letter of transfer from a recognized Lutheran congregation shall be accepted as communicant members. Applicants for communicant membership not affiliated with a recognized orthodox Lutheran Church shall give satisfactory evidence of their qualification for membership in an interview with the Pastor and the Elders. If necessary they may be required to receive an adequate course of instruction in the Chief Parts of Christian Doctrine. Having declared in the presence of the congregation their acceptance of the doctrines of the Lutheran Church, they shall be received as communicant members.

The Pastor shall announce the reception of communicant members to the congregation.

By-Laws, Article Two **RELEASE AND WITHDRAWAL**

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 the same to the congregation. Members who have severed their connection with the congregation without obtaining a release shall, after a period of two years, be stricken from the membership list following due-investigation by Elders and consideration by the voters' assembly.

By-Laws, Article Three **MEMBERSHIP REVOCATION**

Loving and sincere admonitions/counsel shall be given through fellow members, the Boards of Elders and/or Pastor (guided by Matthew 18:15-20) when any or all of the following occur:

- a) A member of this congregation has not attended divine worship services
- b) Has not partaken of the Sacrament of the Altar for a period of two (2) consecutive years
- c) Manifestly refuses or fails to heed repeated loving, sincere admonitions/counsel

The Board of Elders shall recommend, to the voting members at the next congregational meeting, that the errant member be *revoked membership* resulting in excommunication.

August 23, 2016

No recommendation to revoke membership shall be made prior to personal contacts with the delinquent member by a member of the Board of Elders accompanied by Pastor, giving notice of the pending membership revocation. If personal contact cannot be made after diligent effort, a certified letter or notification shall be sent to the last known address, not less than thirty days prior to the pending date of membership revocation.

Any person whose membership has been revoked pursuant to {By-Laws, Article Three} shall be declared to have forfeited all rights and claims whatsoever against the congregation which were formally held and enjoyed by virtue of membership.

The same forfeiture of membership rights applies to those members who abandon an active association with the Church, refuse to adhere to this congregation's Constitution and By-laws, and by doing so exclude themselves.

By-Laws, Article Four MEETINGS

The regular meetings of the voters' assembly shall be four (4) in number each fiscal year, the fiscal year being September 1 through August 31. The meetings are to be held on the fourth Tuesday in November, February, May (includes Elections) and August. Church Council shall post an agenda offering a two-week notice before regular voters' meetings. The Board of Elders, Church Council, the President, and the Pastor may call special meetings following a posted agenda offering a two-week notice to the congregation.

The voting members present at a regular or at any duly called special meeting shall constitute a quorum.

It shall be the right of every voting member, if possible, to attend all the meetings of the voters' assembly. Failing to attend a meeting, a member waives the right of casting a vote, but acquiesces in the voters' assembly proceedings, findings, and decisions.

In all meetings of the congregation the majority of votes cast shall decide all questions. Amendments to the Articles of Incorporation, the Constitution, and the By-Laws shall require a two-thirds majority of the votes cast. In matters of doctrine and conscience, congregational concord shall be required for a valid decision.

By-Laws, Article Five BOARDS

All Boards to be represented on Church Council shall, at the beginning of the fiscal year after elections, nominate and elect a chairman who will officiate and represent that Board as Chairman. *(see {By-Laws, Article Eight} "Church Council" for the list of representatives)**

August 23, 2016

The Board of Elders, Board of Trustees, Board of Stewardship, Board of Christian Discipleship, Board of Finance, and the Christian School Board are required to create and/or maintain a policy and procedure handbook related to the workings of their Board, any proposed changes to the Board's corresponding handbook must be submitted to the Council for review.

All Boards shall maintain and present an annual budget to the Budget Committee.

All Boards will record minutes of their meetings and present them by current means or hard copy, at a minimum of one week prior to the corresponding Board's next monthly meeting.

All boards and elected officials who need to prepare a monthly council report shall submit the report by current means or hard copy at least three days before the council meeting.

All boards and elected officials who need to prepare a quarterly congregational report shall submit the report by current means or hard copy to the recording secretary, in a timely order, allowing the secretary time to post an agenda and a two-week notice.

By-Laws, Article Six OFFICERS

In addition to the officers specified in the Constitution {Constitution, Article VII}, the congregation shall elect an Assistant Treasurer, Financial Secretary, Assistant Financial Secretary, a Board of Elders consisting of eight, with no more than twelve (8 – 12) members {*see Board of Elders, By-Laws Article Nine}, a Board of Christian Discipleship consisting of four (4) members, a Board of Finance consisting of four (4) members, a Christian School Board consisting of seven (7) members, a Board of Trustees consisting of twelve (12) members, and a Board of Stewardship consisting of six (6) members.

The term of office of the President, Vice-President, Recording Secretary, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Financial Secretary, and Assistant Financial Secretary, shall be two (2) years.

The President, Recording Secretary, Treasurer, and Assistant Financial Secretary shall be elected in odd numbered years. The Vice-President, Assistant Treasurer, and Financial Secretary shall be elected in even numbered years.

The term of office of the Board of Elders, the Board of Trustees, the Board of Stewardship, the Board of Finance, the Board of Christian Discipleship, and the Christian School Board shall be three (3) years each.

The congregation shall elect such committees or boards {Constitution, Article VII} as the congregation's needs demand.

By-Laws, Article Seven
ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The election of all Officers indicated in {By-Laws, Article Six} shall be performed in the following manner:

1. The Nominating Committee, having compiled all candidates and received a formal written acceptance, shall close the nomination process and present the ballot of candidates to Church Council.
2. Church Council shall post the ballot of candidates to the congregation, as stated in {By-Law, Article Four}, (at least two (2) weeks prior to the May voters' meeting).
 - a. No nominations shall be accepted after the ballot has been closed.

All Officers elected shall be formally installed during a Sunday worship service following the election of officers and will assume their respective offices at the beginning of the fiscal year.

Vacancy of office may be filled for the remainder of an unexpired term during any voters' assembly by nomination and election by ballot. Nominations from the floor, excluding those pertaining to Elders, President and Vice President, will be accepted as long as the nominee is present and has acknowledged acceptance of the nomination. {Constitution, Article VI}

By-Laws, Article Eight
CHURCH COUNCIL

Purpose: *To serve as Board of Directors of the corporation, except to the extent powers and authorities that are retained by the Voters.*

Church Council shall consist of the President, Vice President, Recording Secretary, Financial Secretary, Treasurer and the following Board Chairmen: Elders, Stewardship, Trustees, Christian Discipleship, and Christian School Board. The Pastor and TLS Principal shall be advisory members of Church Council. The congregation President and Vice President shall serve as respective chairman roles for Church Council; Recording Secretary shall serve as Secretary of Church Council.

Church Council shall act as an administrative body except in the following areas:

- Election of officers
- Changes to the Constitution and By-Laws
- Annual budget
- Calling of pastors/teachers/staff
- Dismissal of called pastors/teachers/staff
- Borrowing money
- Entering into non-operational contracts

- Building projects

All boards, committees and societies of the congregation shall be represented at and responsible to Church Council. All financial and other congregational affairs are to be thoroughly discussed. Recommendations are to be made and recorded by the secretary regarding all important matters that need to be, or are likely to be, discussed at the next voters' assembly or whenever necessary. The Pastor, President, or two members of the council may assemble Church Council at any time. All members of Council shall be notified prior to the meetings. Council shall consider all matters of a private nature to be confidential.

Primary Duties and Responsibilities

Church Council shall meet at least eight times per year. Congregation President may call special Church Council meetings by notifying each member of Council regarding the time and place of such meeting at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting. A majority of members of Council shall constitute a quorum.

Disputes concerning functions and authorities of officers, boards, and committees shall be decided by Church Council.

Church Council Delegations of Authority

Except to the extent the voters' assembly retains authority, all corporate powers shall be exercised by or under the direction of Church Council including the business and legal affairs of the congregation. These delegations are intended to formalize the delegations of authority of Church Council. These delegations shall be filed with the boards and committees as maintained by the recording secretary.

Each board is hereby authorized to approve expenses within its area of responsibility (as maintained in the boards and committees), Pastor for the church office and TLS Principal for the school office, are authorized to approve expenses all within the following guidelines:

1. A purchase order must be obtained from the Treasurer.
2. The expense must be within the annual budget. However, Church Council retains the authority to suspend this delegation if actual revenues are significantly below the annual budget.
3. The expense must be incurred in the normal course of business; this includes, without limitation:
 - a. Normal operating supplies and expenses.

The Board of Elders shall have the authority to arrange for vacancy or temporary pastoral services within the annual budget limits.

The Board of Trustees, with the approval of the President, Treasurer and Pastor, may approve capital expenses within the annual budget in excess of \$5,000 but less than \$25,000.

The Board of Trustees, with the approval of the President, Treasurer and Pastor, may also approve expenses outside of the annual budget in cases of emergency.

By-Laws, Article Nine
DUTIES OF OFFICE

It shall be the duty of each Officer to maintain in a Christian manner their elected office. If by their own will they choose to perform their duties contrary to the teachings and beliefs of Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church the following procedures are to be followed:

- A formal letter describing the charges against an officer must be submitted to the Pastor or Elders.
- The Pastor or Elders must follow Matthew 18 in their review of this charge.
- If the officer has been proven to be performing their duties contrary to this church's teachings and beliefs and has been uncooperative in a resolution to this charge the Pastor or Board of Elders shall refer to Article VII of the Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church Constitution.

(1) CONGREGATION PRESIDENT

Purpose: *To serve as President of the congregation and exercise general administrative responsibility for the entire organization of the congregation and be responsible for ensuring that all Elected or Appointed Officers, Boards and Committees function and carry out their duties and responsibilities.*

It shall be the duties of congregation President to:

Preside at and conduct all regular and special meetings of the voters' assembly and Church Council in a Christian-like manner preserving order and harmony.

- The congregationally accepted edition of Robert's Rules of parliamentary procedure shall guide the President.
- The President's agenda shall be prepared with the advice of Church Council and shall adhere to the Order of Business as prescribed in the By-Laws.

Be an advisory member of all boards and committees of the congregation.

Represent the congregation in matters of business and sign or countersign all legal documents.

August 23, 2016

Meet periodically with the Pastor(s) and congregation Vice President to review past progress, plan future efforts and priorities that are needed in the total program of the congregation and report to the Church Council any plans or priorities that may need the Church Council's review.

(2) CONGREGATION VICE PRESIDENT

Purpose: *To serve as the Vice President of the congregation and work with all elected and Appointed Officers, Boards and Committees to assist them in carrying out their assigned duties and responsibilities.*

It shall be the duties of the Vice President to:

Preside at all meetings of Church Council and the voters' assembly at the request of, or in the absence of, the congregation President.

Meet periodically with the Pastor(s) and congregation President to review past progress and plan future efforts and priorities.

Coordinate calendar activities for the coming year.

Perform the duties of Recording Secretary in the individual's absence.

Coordinate with the Board of Elders in regards to the Church employee job descriptions, personnel records and annual reviews. Recommendations should be submitted to the Compensation Committee.

(3) RECORDING SECRETARY

Purpose: *To be the secretary of record for the congregation.*

It shall be the duties of Recording Secretary to:

Keep an exact record of all transactions of the voters' assembly in both regular and special meetings.

Submit the minutes for approval at the next regular meeting.

Enter the approved minutes into a record book provided for future reference of this congregation.

Post an agenda with a two-week notice for all quarterly and special voters' meetings.

Receive and keep a record of all board and committee reports and perform such other duties as generally involved as secretary.

(4) FINANCIAL SECRETARY

Purpose: *To serve the Church by providing accurate records of contributions for the Church.*

It shall be the duties of Financial Secretary to:

Take receipt of the deposit slip, checks and cash contributions collected at all Church services and special-use fund drives and record them in a system provided for this purpose by the congregation.

- The Financial Secretary shall deposit the deposit slip, checks and cash in the Churches bank deposit box as soon as possible.

Act as Chairman of the Budget Committee and conduct all meetings of the Budget Committee. Financial Secretary shall consult with this committee in preparing the annual budget. Financial Secretary shall caution the Budget Committee that all discussions of the financial affairs of the congregation or the contributions of individual members should be kept in strict confidence.

Submit all books, together with all receipts and other papers pertaining to this office, for auditing at the close of the year.

- The Financial Secretary and Assistant Financial Secretary shall assist the Auditors in making a complete audit of said books and papers when called upon.

The Financial Secretary along with the Assistant Financial Secretary shall be responsible for distributing offering envelopes or instructing members as to other means of giving that may be available.

Assist and supervise the Assistant Financial Secretary as needed.

The Financial Secretary shall chair the Board of Finance.

The Financial Secretary shall be bonded.

(5) ASSISTANT FINANCIAL SECRETARY

Purpose: *To serve the Church by providing accurate records of contributions for the Church and its members.*

It shall be the duty of the Assistant Financial Secretary to:

Assist the Financial Secretary in fulfilling the responsibilities of that office if needed.

The Assistant Financial Secretary shall record individual contributions in a system provided for this purpose by the congregation.

August 23, 2016

The Assistant Financial Secretary shall issue annual statements to members concerning individual contributions.

The Assistant Financial Secretary along with the Financial Secretary shall be responsible for distributing offering envelopes or instructing members as to other means of giving that may be available.

Participate as an active member of the Board of Finance.

(6) BOARD OF FINANCE

Purpose: *To serve the Church by assisting the Financial Secretary in providing accurate records of contributions for the Church and its members.*

It shall be the duties of the Board of Finance to:

Count and balance the collections of the Church, then recording the amounts received in a system provided by the congregation for that purpose.

The Board of Finance after balancing will prepare the collections deposit slip, and including the checks and cash contributions collected and recorded at all Church services and special-use fund drives, shall then turn this deposit over to the Financial Secretary.

All collections received by the Church and Christian Day School receipts must be submitted and recorded through the Board of Finance into a system provided for this purpose by the congregation.

(7) TREASURER

Purpose: *To serve the Church by providing appropriate and accurate accounting and business records for the Church.*

It shall be the duties of the Treasurer to:

Receive and record all monies collected by the Financial Secretary.

- An accurate account of such monies will be recorded in a set of books provided by the congregation for that purpose.
- Invoices must be available for all expenses.

Report to the voters' assembly at each quarterly meeting all receipts and disbursements incurred during the past quarter.

Submit all books, together with all receipts and other papers pertaining to this office, for auditing at the close of the year. The Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer shall assist the Auditors in making a complete audit of said books and papers.

The Treasurer shall be bonded.

Accountant a non-elected position that is subordinate to the Treasurer (*may be the Treasurer—it is however, a prerequisite for this combined office to have first a high level of accounting skills*)

Primary Duties and Responsibilities

- Maintain appropriate and accurate accounting records, such as:
- Accounts payable and receivable
- Payroll
- General ledger
- Monthly income statement and balance sheet
- Bank accounts
- Investment and other special accounts
- Tax reporting
- Help develop and prepare the Church budget.
- Cooperate with auditors in the annual audit process.
- Report to the Treasurer, if applicable.

(8) **ASSISTANT TREASURER**

Purpose: To serve the Church by assisting the Treasurer in providing appropriate and accurate accounting and business records for the Church.

It shall be the duty of the Assistant Treasurer to:

Assist the Treasurer in fulfilling the responsibilities of that office.

(9) **BOARD OF ELDERS**

Purpose: To oversee the spiritual life of the congregation and its individual Members.

The Board of Elders shall consist of not less than eight (8*) no more than twelve (12*) Elders.
[*not including the Chairman]

While the entire Board of Elders hold responsibility for the spiritual welfare and activities of the congregation, both individually and cooperatively, as a matter of convenience each Elder is assigned members and then becomes the Elder for these parishioners. The Chairman may act as an Elder to new members for a period of time (less than six months) until the member has been assigned or transferred to another Elder.

The Board of Elders shall meet once a month totaling twelve (12) meetings per year.

- With consent of Pastor(s), no more than two (2) per year may be cancelled.

It shall be the duties of the Board of Elders to:

Have authority and responsibility for the spiritual welfare and activities of the congregational Members, individually and cooperatively.

August 23, 2016

Set the time, schedule, and number of worship services in conjunction with the Pastor allowing time for family, personal, and study needs.

Approve or disapprove new forms of worship, liturgies, and hymns for use in public service.

The Board of Elders shall select a chairman according to {By-Laws, Article Five}.

- The Chairman of the Board of Elders shall preside at all meetings of the Board of Elders.
- The Chairman shall appoint a Secretary to record the minutes.
- The Chairman shall appoint one (1) Elder to serve as an advisor on, at a minimum, each of the following boards: the Board of Christian Discipleship, the Christian School Board, and the Board of Trustees.
- The Chairman shall report the recommendations of the Board of Elders to Church Council and the voters' assembly.
- The Chairman may call special meetings of the Board of Elders.

Serve as special assistants to the Pastor(s), supporting him (them) with prayer, helping him (them) with special problems in his (their) ministry; and concerning itself with the spiritual, emotional and physical health and welfare of the Pastor(s) and his (their) family.

- The Elders shall work with the Compensation Committee to provide adequate compensation, housing and assistance.

Help the Pastor(s) cultivate a spirit of harmony among the congregation members.

Be responsible for providing the Pastor(s) with adequate pulpit and altar assistance.

Arrange for pastoral services when a vacancy occurs in the office, including the exercising of proper leadership in calling a Pastor.

Be responsible for the proper conduct of the public congregational worship services.

Make appropriate recommendations to Church Council regarding the reception of new members, peaceful release and the transfer of members.

The Board of Elders shall, on rare occasion, need to become involved in the spiritual welfare and activities of the preschool and day school. Involvement may be required under certain circumstances in which a potential harm exists in regards to the spiritual welfare of the congregation.

Appoint a Head Usher and two assistants, plus at least two advisors from past (experienced) serving ushers.

August 23, 2016

Appoint a Social Ministry Committee to consist of a chairman and others as “helping hands” in Jesus name to extend to fellow souls in need.

Facilitate the Altar Guild in the care, use, and maintenance of the sacred vessels, the altar, the altar furnishings, and vestments.

Maintain and supervise adequate nursery facilities and personnel as needed.

Annually review goals and accomplishments of the past year and prepare goals and objectives for the coming year.

Annually review the Elder’s Policy and Procedures handbook for appropriateness and any needed changes.

(10) BOARD OF STEWARDSHIP

Purpose: *To provide oversight and direction for the congregation’s Stewardship life and to encourage all members to be fruitful stewards of the Lord’s gifts.*

It will be the duties of the Board of Stewardship to:

Have authority and responsibility for the development of ongoing programs that enlist the time, talents and treasures of the Members of the congregation.

Work with the Pastor(s) to develop and implement the necessary programs recommended and approved by Church Council and voters’ as it relates to the time, talents and treasures of all members of the congregation.

Initiate and conduct programs of education and training of Church members in the Scriptural principles and practices for sharing of time, talents and treasures.

Analyze quarterly Christian giving in order to determine trends and assure that adequate monitoring and tracking of contributions is reported and available for all members.

Prepare and initiate an annual program to obtain stewardship commitments from every member of the congregation.

(11) BOARD OF CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP

Purpose: *To guide the congregation’s ongoing religious education efforts for all Members, child and adult, as well as for prospective Members.*

August 23, 2016

It will be the duties of the Board of Christian Discipleship to:

Have the authority and responsibility for the growth of the congregation's ongoing religious educational activities and make recommendations for improvement.

Work with Pastor(s), various committees, and other Boards, especially the Stewardship Board, on assimilation.

Provide oversight for the following programs and their ministries:

- Youth
- Sunday School
- Vacation Bible School
- Adult education and Family ministry
- Potential professional Church worker recruitment

Make recommendations for improvement of the congregation's religious educational activities.

(12) CHRISTIAN SCHOOL BOARD

Purpose: *To facilitate the workings of the Christian Day School and Early Childhood programs and to see to the Christian welfare of the Students, their Families and the Staff.*

It shall be the duties of the Christian School Board to:

Recommend and carry out the policies of the Christian Day School and Early Childhood programs as established by the Christian School Board.

The Christian School Board shall act as an administrative body over the Christian Day School and Early Childhood programs having the privilege and duty to make recommendations with reference to teacher assignments, appointments or dismissals except to the extent of the responsibilities that are of the Church voters' as described in {By-Laws, Article Eight}.

This Board shall at all times be ready to counsel and assist the teachers in all phases pertaining to the workings of the School and especially be of service in maintaining Christian discipline.

Submit to the May voters' assembly, through Church Council, an Annual Report in detail.

The Board shall provide for the ongoing evaluation of staff and programs.

August 23, 2016

The Board shall make recommendations to the Compensation Committee.

The Board plus one Elder shall constitute the Christian School Call Committee.

The Christian School Board shall approve all bills for school expenditures, and the Christian School Board is authorized to make purchases within the budget as described in {By-Laws, Article Eight} (Church Council Delegations of Authority number 2).

The Pastor (as Superintendent), and the TLS Principal, are considered ex officio members of the Christian School Board with voice, but without vote, and may introduce discussions and offer solutions regarding School matters.

The Christian School Board, at their discretion, may appoint up to two (2) additional Non-Church members who have children in the Christian Day School (Community Members). These additional Christian School Board members will have voice, without vote, and may introduce discussions and offer solutions regarding School matters.

Any member of the Christian School Board shall not have a spouse on the school staff.

(13) BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Purpose: To be responsible for all real and personal property of the congregation.

It shall be the duty of the Board of Trustees to:

The Board of Trustees has authority and responsibility for all personal and real property of the congregation.

Church and School Property and Equipment

Carry out resolutions as instructed by the voters' assembly and/or Church Council regarding purchases, repairs, replacements or modifications of the Church and School property and equipment. Coordinate purchases, repairs, replacements or modifications of Church and School property and equipment.

Keep and review a list of keys issued for access to all Church and School facilities and provide for the issuing of such keys. Retrieve keys from individuals who are no longer authorized to hold them.

Maintain a list of repairs and improvements needed or brought to the Trustees. Establish a "priorities for work" report and present this report to Church Council as recommendations.

August 23, 2016

Service Contracts

Coordinate service contracts provided for in the budget or approved by the voters' assembly or Church Council.

Review annually the adequacy and terms of property insurance policies of the congregation and make appropriate purchase recommendations to Church Council and congregation.

Purchasing

All Trustees are authorized to make purchases within the budget as described in {By-Laws, Article Eight} (Church Council Delegations of Authority number 2). Review property expenditures with Church Council and receive recommendations for future purchases by Trustee chairman.

Coordinate and recommend for approval by Church Council and the voters' assembly, all official documents and contracts relative to the properties of the congregation.

Miscellaneous

Provide for the care and safekeeping of all official documents of the congregation, particularly the Articles of Incorporation, the Constitution and By-Laws, the policies and procedures master handbook, all insurance policies, all deeds and titles, all legal opinions and legal correspondence, all contracts and all blueprints. Provide a secure, dry storage area for retention of permanent congregation records, financial records and reports, meeting minutes and similar documents of historical and legal value eligible for archiving.

(14) COMMITTEES

AUDIT COMMITTEE

The purpose of this Committee is to make a thorough examination to verify a balance of all transactions of expenditures and receipts of Trinity Lutheran Church and School of Berrien Springs.

The Committee shall be appointed by the Church Council and shall consist of members or outside professionals with the abilities to do such audits.

The Committee shall recommend to the congregation that an outside private audit of the transactions of expenditures and receipts of Trinity Lutheran Church and School of Berrien Springs, be done every 3 years.

The Committee shall make a full report to the congregation at the annual budget meeting prior to the conclusion of the fiscal year.

August 23, 2016

COMPENSATION COMMITTEE

The membership of this Committee will include the President of the congregation, Vice President, Treasurer, Financial Secretary and the Chairman of the following: the Board of Elders, Board of Trustees, Christian School Board, and Board of Stewardship.

The purpose of this Committee will be to study and reevaluate all staff salaries. The Committee shall use the recommended Missouri Synod approved compensation guidelines for Teachers and Pastors as well as the current economic situation as a reference.

The Committee shall be convened by the President prior to the annual budget meeting, or whenever deemed necessary.

The President shall serve as Chairman of the Compensation Committee.

ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE

The membership of this Committee will include the Financial Secretary, the Chairman of the Board of Stewardship and representation from the laity.

The purpose of this Committee will be to study, evaluate, and make recommendations to Church Council as to the best use of the Endowment Fund.

The Committee shall create By-Laws as to the use of the Endowment Fund.

The Committee shall convene whenever deemed necessary.

The Committee is required to create and/or maintain a policy and procedure handbook related to the workings of their Committee, any proposed changes to the Committee's corresponding handbook must be submitted to Church Council for review.

BUDGET COMMITTEE

The Committee shall be comprised of the President, Vice President, Treasurer, Financial Secretary, Assistant Financial Secretary, along with the Chairman of the following boards: Board of Christian Discipleship, Board of Trustees, Christian School Board, and Board of Stewardship.

The Committee shall prepare the annual budget and present the same to the congregation for approval at a regular or a special voters' meeting prior to the conclusion of the fiscal year.

NOMINATION COMMITTEE

The second year members of the Board of Elders, Board of Trustees, Christian School Board, Board of Stewardship, Board of Finance, Board of Christian Discipleship, and the Vice-President shall constitute the annual Nomination Committee.

- The Vice-President shall chair the Nomination Committee.

The Committee shall compile nominations, names and written acceptance forms for open positions within the congregation.

The Committee is required to create and/or maintain a policy and procedure handbook related to the workings of their Committee, any proposed changes to the Committee's corresponding handbook must be submitted to Church Council for review.

The Committee shall implement and follow {By-Laws, Article Seven}.

CALL COMMITTEE

Call committees shall be comprised of the members of the Board of Elders for the purposes of calling a Pastor or shall be comprised of the members of the Christian School Board for the purpose of calling a Teacher.

- Representation in regards to the Board of Elders is required on any Christian School Call Committee.
- Other members of the congregation, who are not voted members of these boards, may be requested to assist the Call Committee.

The Committee for either shall receive a list of eligible candidates and in following the Pastors and Teachers guidelines of {Constitution, Article IX} evaluate said candidates and prepare recommendations to the church voters.

SOCIAL MINISTRY COMMITTEE

The Board of Elders shall appoint a Social Ministry Committee to consist of a chairman and others as "helping hands" in Jesus name to extend to fellow souls in need.

The Social Ministry Committee includes up to two (2) Elders whose responsibility is to help the Pastor oversee and provide for the physical welfare of the congregation's members especially during times of hardship or illness.

The Social Ministry Committee will also be responsible to oversee the development and implementation of programs designed to help the physical welfare of those outside the Trinity church family.

August 23, 2016

By-Laws, Article Ten
SOCIETIES

Organized societies within the congregation shall exist only by the consent and approval of the Church Council. Reports to Church Council may be requested periodically.

All organized societies are required to create and/or maintain a policy and procedure handbook related to the workings of their society including membership requirements, any proposed changes to the society's corresponding handbook must be submitted to the Council for review.

Non-members may participate in societies, but not hold office.

The Pastor, by virtue of his office, shall exercise supervision over any and all societies within the congregation.

By-Laws, Article Eleven
ORDER OF BUSINESS

The following is the suggested order or business in a regular voters' meeting:

- Call to Order
- Opening Devotion
- Reading of Previous Minutes
- Pastor
- Financial Secretary
- Treasurer
- The Board of Elders
- Board of Stewardship
- Board of Christian Discipleship
- Principal
- Christian School Board
- Board of Trustees
- Old Business
- New Business
- Adjournment

August 23, 2016

By-Laws, Article Twelve
ALTERATION AND REPEAL OF BY-LAW ARTICLES

Proposals to alter or repeal any Article in the By-Laws may be placed before the congregation following {Constitution, Article XVII} Amendments.