

# Christ the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

## Constitution, Bylaws, & Continuing Resolutions

Updated January 2019

**Commented [AT1]:** It is common practice for these three pieces to be combined into one document – though that hasn't been recent CGS practice. By combining these three documents into one, we can more easily see how our governing documents are explained or amended by our bylaws and continuing resolutions.

### \*PREAMBLE

We, baptized members of the Church of Christ, responding in faith to the call of the Holy Spirit through the Gospel, desiring to unite together to preach the Word, administer the sacraments, and carry out God's mission, do hereby adopt this constitution and solemnly pledge ourselves to be governed by its provisions. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

### Chapter 1.

#### NAME AND INCORPORATION

- C1.01.** The name of this congregation shall be Christ the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church.
- C1.02.** For the purpose of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws, the congregation of Christ the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church is hereinafter designated as "this congregation."
- C1.11.** This congregation shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of California.

### Chapter 2.

#### CONFESSION OF FAITH

- \*C2.01.** This congregation confesses the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- \*C2.02.** This congregation confesses Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and the Gospel as the power of God for the salvation of all who believe.
  - a. Jesus Christ is the Word of God incarnate, through whom everything was made and through whose life, death, and resurrection God fashions a new creation.
  - b. The proclamation of God's message to us as both Law and Gospel is the Word of God, revealing judgment and mercy through word and deed, beginning with the Word in creation, continuing in the history of Israel, and centering in all its fullness in the person and work of Jesus Christ.
  - c. The canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the written Word of God. Inspired by God's Spirit speaking through their authors, they record and announce God's revelation centering in Jesus Christ. Through them God's Spirit speaks to us to create and sustain Christian faith and fellowship for service in the world.
- \*C2.03.** This congregation accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life.
- \*C2.04.** This congregation accepts the Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds as true declarations of the faith of this congregation.

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\* Required provision  
\*C#.#. Constitution  
C#.#.#. Bylaw  
C#.#.#.#.X## Continuing Resolution

- \*C2.05. This congregation accepts the Unaltered Augsburg Confession as a true witness to the Gospel, acknowledging as one with it in faith and doctrine all churches that likewise accept the teachings of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession.
- \*C2.06. This congregation accepts the other confessional writings in the Book of Concord, namely, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles and the Treatise, the Small Catechism, the Large Catechism, and the Formula of Concord, as further valid interpretations of the faith of the Church.
- \*C2.07. This congregation confesses the Gospel, recorded in the Holy Scripture and confessed in the ecumenical creeds and Lutheran confessional writings, as the power of God to create and sustain the Church for God’s mission in the world.

**C2.07.01** This congregation is a Reconciling in Christ Congregation. Reconciling in Christ is a designation of Reconciling Works, which seeks to identify Lutheran Congregations inclusive of Lesbian, Gay Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer people.

**Commented [AT2]:** This bylaw used to contain some out of dates names and information. It called CGS a “Reconciled” in Christ congregation which is no longer the term used. It also referred to Lutherans Concerned North America but Reconciling Works now manages this designation. Previously, this bylaw also omitted “Bisexual, Transgender, & Queer” in the definition of who was included. These changes modernize our language but do not change our practice.

### Chapter 3. NATURE OF THE CHURCH

- \*C3.01. All power in the Church belongs to our Lord Jesus Christ, its head. All actions of this congregation are to be carried out under his rule and authority.
- \*C3.02. This church confesses the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church and is resolved to serve Christian unity throughout the world.
- \*C3.03. The Church exists both as an inclusive fellowship and as local congregations gathered for worship and Christian service. Congregations find their fulfillment in the universal community of the Church, and the universal Church exists in and through congregations. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, therefore, derives its character and powers both from the sanction and representation of its congregations and from its inherent nature as an expression of the broader fellowship of the faithful. In length, it acknowledges itself to be in the historic continuity of the communion of saints; in breadth, it expresses the fellowship of believers and congregations in our day.
- \*C3.04. This church, inspired and led by the Holy Spirit, participates in The Lutheran World Federation as a global communion of churches, engaging in faithful witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ and in service for the sake of God’s mission in the world.
- \*C3.05. The name Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA or “this church”) as used herein refers in general references to this whole church, including its three expressions: congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization. The name Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is also the name of the corporation of the churchwide organization to which specific references may be made herein.

**Commented [AT3]:** This is an addition to our current constitution which reflects the confession of the whole ELCA.

**Commented [AT4]:** This is an addition to our current constitution which names our partnership with the Lutheran World Federation by virtue of our inclusion in the ELCA.

**Commented [AT5]:** This is an addition to our current constitution which clarifies terms of this document: “church” refers to our national expression, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; “congregation” refers to our local expression, Christ the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

### Chapter 4. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

- \*C4.01. The Church is a people created by God in Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, called and sent to bear witness to God’s creative, redeeming, and sanctifying activity in the world.
- C4.01.01** This congregation as part of the Church shall proclaim and practice the love, peace, justice, healing, diversity and celebration of life inspired by Christ through his Gospel which we

acknowledge as universal, relevant and alive. We are committed to living Christ's message by being a continually reforming, involved and supportive Lutheran community.

**Commented [AT6]:** The grammar of this bylaw was confusing to us so we are proposing some grammatical changes which hopefully convey that we are actively living & practicing love, peace, justice, healing, diversity, and celebration of life.

- \*C4.02.** To participate in God's mission, this congregation as a part of the Church shall:
- Worship God in proclamation of the Word and administration of the sacraments and through lives of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, witness, and service.
  - Proclaim God's saving Gospel of justification by grace for Christ's sake through faith alone, according to the apostolic witness in the Holy Scripture, preserving and transmitting the Gospel faithfully to future generations.
  - Carry out Christ's Great Commission by reaching out to all people to bring them to faith in Christ and by doing all ministry with a global awareness consistent with the understanding of God as Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier of all.
  - Serve in response to God's love to meet human needs, caring for the sick and the aged, advocating dignity and justice for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, standing with the poor and powerless, and committing itself to their needs.
  - Nurture its members in the Word of God so as to grow in faith and hope and love, to see daily life as the primary setting for the exercise of their Christian calling, and to use the gifts of the Spirit for their life together and for their calling in the world.
  - Manifest the unity given to the people of God by living together in the love of Christ and by joining with other Christians in prayer and action to express and preserve the unity which the Spirit gives.
- \*C4.03.** To fulfill these purposes, this congregation shall:
- Provide services of worship at which the Word of God is preached and the sacraments are administered.
  - Provide pastoral care and assist all members to participate in this ministry.
  - Challenge, equip, and support all members in carrying out their calling in their daily lives and in their congregation.
  - Teach the Word of God.
  - Witness to the reconciling Word of God in Christ, reaching out to all people.
  - Respond to human need, work for justice and peace, care for the sick and the suffering, and participate responsibly in society.
  - Motivate its members to provide financial support for the congregation's ministry and the ministry of other parts of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
  - Foster and participate in interdependent relationships with other congregations, the synod, and the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
  - Foster and participate in ecumenical relationships consistent with churchwide policy.
- \*C4.04.** This congregation shall develop an organizational structure to be described in the bylaws. The Congregation Council shall prepare descriptions of the responsibilities of each committee, task force, or other organizational group and shall review their actions. Such descriptions shall be contained in continuing resolutions in the section on the Congregation Committees.
- \*C4.05.** This congregation shall, from time to time, adopt a mission statement which will provide specific direction for its programs.
- \*C4.06.** References herein to the nature of the relationship between the three expressions of this church—congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization—as being interdependent or as being in a partnership relationship describe the mutual responsibility of these expressions in God's mission and the fulfillment of the purposes of this church as described in this chapter, and do not

imply or describe the creation of partnerships, co-ventures, agencies, or other legal relationships recognized in civil law.

**Commented [AT7]:** This is an addition to the current CGS document which clarifies the relationship between CGS and the rest of the ELCA through its various forms.

## Chapter 5.

### POWERS OF THE CONGREGATION

- \*C5.01. The powers of this congregation are those necessary to fulfill its purpose.
- \*C5.02. The powers of this congregation are vested in the Congregation Meeting called and conducted as provided in this constitution and bylaws.
- \*C5.03. Only such authority as is delegated to the Congregation Council or other organizational units in this congregation's governing documents is recognized. All remaining authority is retained by the congregation. The congregation is authorized to:
  - a. call a pastor as provided in Chapter 9;
  - b. terminate the call of a pastor as provided in Chapter 9;
  - c. call a minister of Word and Service;
  - d. terminate the call of a minister of Word and Service in conformity with the constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;
  - e. adopt amendments to the constitution, as provided in Chapter 16, amendments to the bylaws, as specified in Chapter 17, and continuing resolutions, as provided in Chapter 18;
  - f. approve the annual budget;
  - g. acquire real and personal property by gift, devise, purchase, or other lawful means;
  - h. hold title to and use its property for any and all activities consistent with its purpose;
  - i. sell, mortgage, lease, transfer, or otherwise dispose of its property by any lawful means;
  - j. elect its Congregation Council, and require the members of the council to carry out their duties in accordance with the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions; and
  - k. terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as provided in Chapter 6.
- \*C5.04. This congregation shall choose from among its voting members laypersons to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly as well as persons to represent it at meetings of any conference, cluster, coalition, or other area subdivision of which it is a member. The number of persons to be elected by the congregation and other qualifications shall be as prescribed in guidelines established by the Sierra Pacific Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

**Commented [AT8]:** These are new points from what CGS has now – to reflect the congregation's options with the new roster of Word and Service ministers. Word and Service ministers have been colloquially referred to as "Deacons" at CGS in the past couple years.

**Commented [AT9]:** This language is different from the current CGS constitution only to reflect the new chapter numbers

**C5.04.A08** The congregation shall, at its Annual Meeting, elect laypersons to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly and at meetings of any conference, cluster, coalition, or other area subdivision of which it is a member. The term of duty shall be one year, with no limit on serving successive terms. If a duly elected layperson is unable to perform these duties, the Congregation Council may, by simple majority vote, appoint another voting member of the congregation to serve for the remainder of that term.

**Commented [AT10]:** This continuing resolution was mis-numbered at C5.04.08. The council voted in December of 2018 to renumber the resolution to bring it into alignment with the constitution.

## Chapter 6.

### CHURCH AFFILIATION

- \*C6.01. This congregation shall be an interdependent part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or its successor, and of the Sierra Pacific Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in

America. This congregation is subject to the discipline of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

**\*C6.02.** This congregation accepts the Confession of Faith and agrees to the purposes of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and shall act in accordance with them.

**\*C6.03.** This congregation acknowledges its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in which:

- a. This congregation agrees to be responsible for its life as a Christian community.
- b. This congregation pledges its financial support and participation in the life and mission of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- c. This congregation agrees to call pastoral leadership from the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in accordance with its call procedures except in special circumstances and with the approval of the bishop of the synod. These special circumstances are limited either to calling a candidate approved for the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or to contracting for pastoral services with a minister of Word and Sacrament of a church body with which the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America officially has established a relationship of full communion.
- d. This congregation agrees to consider ministers of Word and Service for call to other staff positions in the congregation according to the procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- e. This congregation agrees to file this constitution and any subsequent changes to this constitution with the synod for review to ascertain that all of its provisions are in agreement with the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and with the constitution of the synod.

**\*C6.04.** Affiliation with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may be terminated as follows:

- a. This congregation takes action to dissolve.
- b. This congregation ceases to exist.
- c. This congregation is removed from membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America according to the procedures for discipline of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- d. This congregation follows the procedures outlined in \*C6.05.

**\*C6.05.** This congregation may terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America by the following procedure:

- a. A resolution indicating the intent to terminate its relationship must be adopted at a legally called and conducted special meeting of the congregation by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present. Such meeting may be held no sooner than 30 days after written notice of the meeting is received by the bishop of the synod, during which time the congregation shall consult with the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any. The times and manner of the consultation shall be determined by the bishop in consultation with the Congregation Council. Unless he or she is a voting member of the congregation, the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any, shall have voice but not vote at the meeting.
- b. The secretary of the congregation shall submit a copy of the resolution to the bishop, attesting that the special meeting was legally called and conducted and certifying the outcome of the vote, and shall mail a copy of the resolution to voting members of the congregation. This notice shall be submitted within 10 days after the resolution has been adopted.

**Commented [AT11]:** This is a change in language to reflect the new title of clergy in our denomination – it also reflects more detail and agreement about calling a non-Lutheran Pastor.

**Commented [AT12]:** This is a change in language to reflect the new roster of Word and Service in the ELCA – formerly called associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers.

- c. The bishop of the synod and the congregation shall continue in consultation, as specified in paragraph a. above, during a period of at least 90 days after receipt by the synod of the notice as specified in paragraph b. above.
- d. If the congregation, after such consultation, still seeks to terminate its relationship, such action may be taken at a legally called and conducted special meeting by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present. Notice of the meeting shall be mailed to all voting members and to the bishop at least 10 days in advance of the meeting. Unless he or she is a voting member of the congregation, the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any, shall have voice but not vote at the meeting.
- e. A copy of the resolution, attesting that the special meeting was legally called and conducted and certifying the outcome of the vote, shall be sent to the bishop within 10 days after the resolution has been adopted, at which time the relationship between the congregation and this church shall be terminated subject to paragraph g. below. Unless this notification to the bishop also certifies that the congregation has voted by a two-thirds vote to affiliate with another Lutheran denomination, the congregation will be conclusively presumed to be an independent or non-Lutheran church.
- f. Notice of termination shall be forwarded by the bishop to the secretary of the ELCA, who shall report the termination to the Churchwide Assembly.
- g. This congregation shall abide by these covenants by and among the three expressions of this church:
  - 1) Congregations seeking to terminate their relationship with this church which fail or refuse to comply with each of the foregoing provisions in \*C6.05. shall be required to receive Synod Council approval before terminating their membership in this church.
  - 2) Congregations which had been members of the Lutheran Church in America shall be required, in addition to complying with the foregoing provisions in \*C6.05., to receive synodical approval before terminating their membership in this church.
  - 3) Congregations established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be required, in addition to complying with the foregoing provisions in \*C6.05., to satisfy all financial obligations to this church and receive Synod Council approval before terminating their membership in this church.
- h. If this congregation fails to achieve the required two-thirds vote of voting members present at the congregation's first meeting as specified in paragraph a. above, another special meeting to consider termination of relationship with this church may be called no sooner than six months after that first meeting. If this congregation fails to achieve the required two-thirds vote of voting members present at the congregation's second meeting as specified in paragraph d. above, another attempt to consider termination of relationship with this church must follow all requirements of \*C6.05. and may begin no sooner than six months after that second meeting.

**\*C6.06.** If this congregation considers relocation, it shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located and the appropriate unit of the churchwide organization before any steps are taken leading to such action. The approval of the Synod Council shall be received before any such action is effected.

**\*C6.07.** If this congregation considers developing an additional site to be used regularly for worship, it shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located and the appropriate unit of the churchwide organization before any steps are taken leading to such action.

## Chapter 7.

**Commented [AT13]:** The underlined portions of this article are additions or alterations to the current language of our governing documents. The underlining is for ease of review and will not be included in the final draft. Overall, the changes are more specific than our previous constitution about the rights and roles of the parties involved, and account for the advances in technology.

## PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

- \*C7.01.** If this congregation ceases to exist, title to undisposed property shall pass to the Sierra Pacific Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- \*C7.02.** If this congregation is removed from membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America according to its procedure for discipline, title to property shall continue to reside in this congregation.
- \*C7.03.** If two-thirds of the voting members of this congregation present at a legally called and conducted special meeting of this congregation vote to transfer to another Lutheran church body, title to property shall continue to reside in this congregation, provided the process for termination of relationship in \*C6.05. has been followed. Before this congregation takes action to transfer to another Lutheran church body, it shall consult with representatives of the Sierra Pacific Synod.
- \*C7.04.** If two-thirds of the voting members of this congregation present at a legally called and conducted special meeting of this congregation vote to become independent or relate to a non-Lutheran church body and have followed the process for termination of relationship in \*C6.05., title to property of this congregation shall continue to reside in this congregation only with the consent of the Synod Council. The Synod Council, after consultation with this congregation by the established synodical process, may give approval to the request to become independent or to relate to a non-Lutheran church body, in which case title shall remain with the majority of this congregation. If the Synod Council fails to give such approval, title shall remain with those members who desire to continue as a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- C7.05.** Notwithstanding the provisions of \*C7.02. and \*C7.03. above, where this congregation has received property from the synod pursuant to a deed or other instrument containing restrictions under provision 9.71.a. of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, this congregation accepts such restrictions and:
- Shall not transfer, encumber, mortgage, or in any way burden or impair any right, title, or interest in the property without prior approval of the Synod Council.
  - Shall—upon written demand by the Synod Council, pursuant to †S13.23. of the constitution of the Sierra Pacific Synod, reconvey and transfer all right, title, and interest in the property to the synod.

**Commented [AT14]:** This is an addition to our current constitution which accounts for the greater clarity of process added to section \*C6.05

## Chapter 8. MEMBERSHIP

- \*C8.01.** Members of this congregation shall be those baptized persons on the roll of this congregation at the time that this constitution is adopted and those who are admitted thereafter and who have declared and maintain their membership in accordance with the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.
- \*C8.02.** Members shall be classified as follows:
- Baptized** members are those persons who have been received by the Sacrament of Holy Baptism in this congregation, or, having been previously baptized in the name of the Triune God, have been received by certificate of transfer from other Lutheran congregations or by affirmation of faith.
  - Confirmed** members are baptized persons who have been confirmed in this congregation, those who have been received by adult baptism or by transfer as confirmed members from other Lutheran congregations, or baptized persons received by affirmation of faith.

- c. **Voting** members are confirmed members. Such confirmed members, during the current or preceding calendar year, shall have communed in this congregation and shall have made a contribution of record to this congregation. Members of this congregation who have satisfied these basic standards shall have the privilege of voice and vote at every regular and special meeting of the congregation as well as the other rights and privileges ascribed to voting members by the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.
- d. **Associate** members are persons holding membership in other Christian congregations who wish to retain such membership but desire to participate in the life and mission of this congregation. These individuals have all the privileges and duties of membership except voting rights or other rights and privileges ascribed to voting members by the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.
- e. **Seasonal** members are voting members of other ELCA congregations who wish to retain such membership but desire to participate in the life and mission of this congregation, including exercising limited voting rights in this congregation. The Congregation Council may grant seasonal membership to such persons provided that this congregation is a member of a synod where the Synod Council has approved seasonal member voting on its territory. Such seasonal members shall have all the privileges and duties of voting members except that:
- 1) they shall not be eligible for elected office in, or for membership on the Congregation Council or on a call committee of, this congregation;
  - 2) they shall not have the right to vote on any matter concerning or affecting the call or termination of call of any minister of this congregation;
  - 3) they shall not have the right to vote on any matter concerning or affecting the affiliation of this congregation with the ELCA;
  - 4) they shall not be eligible to serve as voting members from this congregation of the Synod Assembly or the Churchwide Assembly;
  - 5) they shall not, even if otherwise permitted by this congregation, vote by proxy or by absentee ballot; and
  - 6) they shall not, within any two calendar month period, exercise voting rights in this congregation and in the congregation where they remain voting members.

**Commented [AT15]:** This language is an addition to our current constitution. It names a practice that we have already been living.

**C8.02.E17** For the purposes of the annual review of the membership roster, the council may interpret the phrase “contribution of record” broadly to include identifiable in-kind gifts, committed personal service, and other forms of committed visible stewardship supporting the congregation’s mission, in lieu of identifiable financial contributions.

**Commented [AT16]:** In our current constitution there is a provision for “... persons who wish to retain a relationship with this congregation while being members of other congregations” in sub-section “d”. The model which we are adopting accounts for this allowance in greater detail with the addition of sub-section “e”. Therefore this language is an alteration and addition of what is in our current constitution.

**\*C8.03.** All applications for confirmed membership shall be submitted to and shall require the approval of the Congregation Council.

**\*C8.04.** It shall be the privilege and duty of members of this congregation to:

- a. make regular use of the means of grace, both Word and sacraments;
- b. live a Christian life in accordance with the Word of God and the teachings of the Lutheran church; and
- c. support the work of this congregation, the synod, and the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America through contributions of their time, abilities, and financial support as biblical stewards.

**\*C8.05.** Membership in this congregation shall be terminated by any of the following:

- a. death;
- b. resignation;



- c. transfer or release;
- d. disciplinary action in accordance with ELCA constitutional provision 20.41. and the accompanying bylaws; or
- e. removal from the roll due to inactivity in accordance with the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.

Such persons who have been removed from the roll of members shall remain persons for whom the Church has a continuing pastoral concern.

**C8.05.01** For purposes of membership roll maintenance, any member who during the current calendar year and the two previous calendar years has made no contribution of record, nor has been recorded as communing or attending a worship service, shall be considered inactive.

**Chapter 9.**  
**ROSTERED MINISTER**

**\*C9.01.** Authority to call a pastor shall be in this congregation by at least a two-thirds vote of voting members present and voting at a meeting legally called for that purpose. Before a call is issued, the officers, or a committee elected by this congregation to recommend the call, shall seek the advice and help of the bishop of the synod.

**\*C9.02.** Only a member of the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or a candidate for the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament who has been recommended for the congregation by the synodical bishop may be called as a pastor of this congregation.

**\*C9.03.** Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,

- a. Every minister of Word and Sacrament shall:
  - 1) preach the Word;
  - 2) administer the sacraments;
  - 3) conduct public worship;
  - 4) provide pastoral care;
  - 5) seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel;
  - 6) impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through distribution of its communications and publications;
  - 7) witness to the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation, and abroad; and
  - 8) speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God’s love for the world.
- b. Each pastor with a congregational call shall, within the congregation:
  - 1) offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead;
  - 2) relate to all schools and organizations of this congregation;
  - 3) install regularly elected members of the Congregation Council;
  - 4) with the council, administer discipline; and
  - 5) endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the ELCA churchwide organization and of the Sierra Pacific Synod of the ELCA.

**\*C9.04.** The specific duties of the pastor, compensation, and other matters pertaining to the service of the pastor shall be included in a letter of call, which shall be attested by the bishop of the synod.

**\*C9.05.** The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between a minister of Word and Sacrament and this congregation shall be as follows:

**Commented [AT17]:** This is a change of language from our current constitution and refers to an update in the disciplinary process as outlined in chapter 20

**Commented [AT18]:** This title replaces “The Pastor” in our current CGS constitution. This whole section replaces “pastor” with the new nomenclature of “rostered minister of word and sacrament” in the ELCA.

**Commented [AT19]:** This is a more specific term than we currently use in our constitution. This aligns with our current and historical practice.

**Commented [AT20]:** This is a change from “supervise” in our current constitution and gives our congregation more freedom to determine roles and responsibilities.

**Commented [AT21]:** The four highlighted points(a5, a6, a7, b5) are not additions to our current constitution but they are rearranged so that the entire section has 2 sub sections instead of our current 3 sub sections.

**Commented [AT22]:** All copies of the CGS constitution that I could find omit this sentence. However, I believe it is a clerical error – therefore this would not necessarily be a deviation from / addition to our current CGS constitution

a. The call of this congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment, which shall be terminated only by death or, following consultation with the synodical bishop, for the following reasons:

- 1) mutual agreement to terminate the call or the completion of a call for a specific term;
- 2) resignation of the pastor, which shall become effective, unless otherwise agreed, no later than 30 days after the date on which it was submitted;

3) inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in the congregation in view of local conditions;

4) physical disability or mental incapacity of the pastor;

5) suspension of the pastor through discipline for more than three months;

6) resignation or removal of the pastor from the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament of this church;

7) termination of the relationship between this church and the congregation;

8) dissolution of the congregation or the termination of a parish arrangement; or

9) suspension of the congregation through discipline for more than six months.

b. When allegations of physical disability or mental incapacity of the pastor under paragraph a.4) above, or ineffective conduct of the pastoral office under paragraph a.3) above, have come to the attention of the bishop of this synod,

1) the bishop in his or her sole discretion may investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson, or

2) when such allegations have been brought to the synod's attention by an official recital of allegations by the Congregation Council or by a petition signed by at least one-third of the voting members of the congregation, the bishop personally shall investigate such conditions together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson.

c. In case of alleged physical disability or mental incapacity under paragraph a.4) above, the bishop's committee shall obtain and document competent medical opinion concerning the pastor's condition. When a disability or incapacity is evident to the committee, the bishop of this synod may declare the pastorate vacant. When the pastorate is declared vacant, the Synod Council shall list the pastor on the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament as disabled. Upon removal of the disability and the restoration of the pastor to health, the bishop shall take steps to enable the pastor to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another appropriate call.

d. In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of the congregation under paragraph a.3) above, the bishop's committee shall endeavor to hear from all concerned persons, after which the bishop together with the committee shall present their recommendations first to the pastor and then to the congregation. The recommendations of the bishop's committee must address whether the pastor's call should come to an end and, if so, may suggest appropriate severance arrangements. The committee may also propose other actions that should be undertaken by the congregation and by the pastor, if appropriate. If the pastor and congregation agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action need be taken by the synod.

e. If either party fails to assent to the recommendations of the bishop's committee concerning the pastor's call, the congregation may dismiss the pastor only at a legally called meeting after consultation with the bishop, either (a) by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee did not recommend termination of the call, or (b) by a majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee recommended termination of the call.

**Commented [AT23]:** This is a change from our current constitution and omits: "without reflection on the competence or the moral and spiritual character of the pastor;"

**Commented [AT24]:** This is a change from our current constitution and omits another sub-point which says "disqualification of the pastor through discipline on the grounds of doctrine, morality, or continued neglect of duty;"

**Commented [AT25]:** These two points are an addition to our current constitution

**Commented [AT26]:** These two points are a change in language from our current constitution without changing our rights or practice.

**Commented [AT27]:** This section is re-ordered from our current constitution to include sub-group numbers. There are also negligible language changes for more specificity.

**Commented [AT28]:** The definition of a bishop's committee, the reference numbering, and other negligible language changes are an addition to our current constitution.

**Commented [AT29]:** This is a numbering change from our current constitution

**Commented [AT30]:** This language is an addition to our current constitution

**Commented [AT31]:** This language describing this step is an addition to our current constitution

- f. If, in the course of proceedings described in paragraph c. or paragraph d. above, the bishop's committee concludes that there may be grounds for discipline, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action in accordance with the provisions of this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions.
- \*C9.06.** At a time of pastoral vacancy, an interim pastor shall be appointed by the bishop of the synod with the consent of this congregation or the Congregation Council.
- \*C9.07.** During the period of service, an interim pastor shall have the rights and duties in the congregation of a regularly called pastor and may delegate the same in part to a supply pastor with the consent of the bishop of the synod and this congregation or Congregation Council. The interim pastor and any rostered minister providing assistance shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a pastor. Unless previously agreed upon by the Synod Council, an interim pastor is not available for a regular call to the congregation served.
- \*C9.08.** This congregation shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to a former pastor before calling a successor. A pastor shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to this congregation before beginning service in a call to another congregation or employment in another ministry setting related to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- \*C9.09.** When a pastor is called to serve in company with another pastor or pastors, the privileges and responsibilities of each pastor shall be specified in documents to accompany the call and to be drafted in consultation involving the pastors, the Congregation Council, and the bishop of the synod. As occasion requires, the documents may be revised through a similar consultation.
- \*C9.11.** With the approval of the bishop of the synod, the congregation may depart from \*C9.05.a. and call a pastor for a specific term. Details of such calls shall be in writing setting forth the purpose and conditions involved. Prior to the completion of a term, the bishop or a designated representative of the bishop shall meet with the pastor and representatives of the congregation for a review of the call. Such a call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of \*C9.05.a.
- \*C9.12.** The pastor of this congregation:
- shall keep accurate parochial records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from the congregation;
  - shall submit a summary of such statistics annually to the synod; and
  - shall become a member of this congregation upon receipt and acceptance of the letter of call. In a parish of multiple congregations, the pastor shall hold membership in one of the congregations.
- \*C9.13.** The pastor(s) shall submit a report of his or her ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.
- \*C9.14.** The parochial records of this congregation shall be maintained by the pastor and shall remain the property of the congregation. The secretary of this congregation shall attest in writing to the bishop of this synod that such records have been placed in his or her hands in good order by a departing pastor before the installation of that pastor in another field of labor or the granting by the synod of retired status to the pastor.
- C9.15.** Under special circumstances, subject to the approval of the synodical bishop and the concurrence of this congregation, a minister of Word and Sacrament of a church body with which the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America officially has established a relationship of full communion may serve temporarily as pastor of this congregation under a contract between the congregation and the pastor in a form proposed by the synodical bishop and approved by the congregation.

**Commented [AT32]:** The remainder of this section is a rearranged version of the language in our current constitution

**Commented [AT33]:** This is a change in language from our current constitution to reflect the addition of the new word and service roster.

**Commented [AT34]:** This is an addition to our current constitution and reflects our current practice.

**Commented [AT35]:** In our current constitution there is a section C9.20 that states "Ecumenical pastoral ministry" This appears to be a typo or clerical error. Since this provision does not appear in the model constitution either optionally or required, we can omit this provision from our updated document.

**Commented [AT36]:** In our current constitution this section is numbered C9.21. Here it is re-numbered to be in accordance with the model.

**\*C9.21.** Authority to call a minister of Word and Service shall be in this congregation by at least a two-thirds vote of voting members present and voting at a meeting legally called for that purpose. Before a call is issued, the officers, or a committee elected by the Congregation Council to recommend the call, shall seek the advice and help of the bishop of the synod.

**\*C9.22.** Only a member of the roster of Ministers of Word and Service of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or a candidate for the roster of Ministers of Word and Service who has been recommended for this congregation by the synodical bishop may be called as a deacon of this congregation.

**\*C9.23.** Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, every minister of Word and Service shall:

- a. Be rooted in the Word of God, for proclamation and service;
- b. Advocate a prophetic diakonia that commits itself to risk-taking and innovative service on the frontiers of the Church's outreach, giving particular attention to the suffering places in God's world;
- c. Speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world, witnessing to the realm of God in the community, the nation, and abroad;
- d. Equip the baptized for ministry in God's world that affirms the gifts of all people;
- e. Encourage mutual relationships that invite participation and accompaniment of others in God's mission;
- f. Practice stewardship that respects God's gift of time, talents, and resources;
- g. Be grounded in a gathered community for ongoing diaconal formation;
- h. Share knowledge of the ELCA and its wider ministry of the gospel and advocate for the work of all expressions of this church; and
- i. Identify and encourage qualified persons to prepare for ministry of the gospel.

**\*C9.24.** The specific duties of the deacon, compensation, and other matters pertaining to the service of the deacon shall be included in a letter of call, which shall be attested by the bishop of the synod.

**\*C9.25.** The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between a minister of Word and Service and a congregation shall be as follows:

- a. The call of this congregation, when accepted by a deacon, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment, which shall be terminated only by death or, following consultation with the synodical bishop, for the following reasons:
  - 1) mutual agreement to terminate the call or the completion of a call for a specific term;
  - 2) resignation of the deacon, which shall become effective, unless otherwise agreed, no later than 30 days after the date on which it was submitted;
  - 3) inability to conduct the ministry of Word and Service effectively in this congregation in view of local conditions;
  - 4) physical disability or mental incapacity of the deacon;
  - 5) suspension of the deacon through discipline for more than three months;
  - 6) resignation or removal of the deacon from the roster of Ministers of Word and Service of this church;
  - 7) termination of the relationship between this church and this congregation;
  - 8) dissolution of this congregation or the termination of a parish arrangement; or
  - 9) suspension of this congregation through discipline for more than six months.
- b. When allegations of physical disability or mental incapacity of the deacon under paragraph a.4) above, or ineffective conduct of the office of minister of Word and Service under paragraph a.3) above, have come to the attention of the bishop of this synod,

- 1) the bishop in his or her sole discretion may investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson, or
  - 2) when such allegations have been brought to the synod's attention by an official recital of allegations by the Congregation Council or by a petition signed by at least one-third of the voting members of this congregation, the bishop personally shall investigate such conditions together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson.
- c. In case of alleged physical disability or mental incapacity under paragraph a.4) above, the bishop's committee shall obtain and document competent medical opinion concerning the deacon's condition. When a disability or incapacity is evident to the committee, the bishop of this synod may declare the position vacant. When the position is declared vacant, the Synod Council shall list the deacon on the roster of Ministers of Word and Service as disabled. Upon removal of the disability and the restoration of the deacon to health, the bishop shall take steps to enable the deacon to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another appropriate call.
  - d. In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of this congregation under paragraph a.3) above, the bishop's committee shall endeavor to hear from all concerned persons, after which the bishop together with the committee shall present their recommendations first to the deacon and then to this congregation. The recommendations of the bishop's committee must address whether the deacon's call should come to an end and, if so, may suggest appropriate severance arrangements. The committee may also propose other actions that should be undertaken by this congregation and by the deacon, if appropriate. If the deacon and congregation agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action need be taken by the synod.
  - e. If either party fails to assent to the recommendations of the bishop's committee concerning the deacon's call, this congregation may dismiss the deacon only at a legally called meeting after consultation with the bishop, either (a) by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee did not recommend termination of the call, or (b) by a majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee recommended termination of the call.
  - f. If, in the course of proceedings described in paragraph c. or paragraph d. above, the bishop's committee concludes that there may be grounds for discipline, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action in accordance with the provisions of this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions.
- \*C9.26.** The deacon shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to a former congregation before:
- a. installation in another field of labor, or
  - b. the issuance of a certificate of dismissal or transfer.
- \*C9.27.** When a deacon is called to serve in company with another rostered minister or other rostered ministers, the privileges and responsibilities of each rostered minister shall be specified in documents to accompany the call and to be drafted in consultation involving the rostered ministers, the Congregation Council, and the bishop of the synod. As occasion requires, the documents may be revised through a similar consultation.
- \*C9.28.** With the approval of the bishop of the synod, this congregation may depart from \*C9.25.a. and call a deacon for a specific term. Details of such calls shall be in writing setting forth the purpose and conditions involved. Prior to the completion of a term, the bishop or a designated representative of the bishop shall meet with the deacon and representatives of this congregation

for a review of the call. Such a call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of \*C9.25.a.

**\*C9.29.** The deacon shall become a member of this congregation upon receipt and acceptance of the letter of call. In a parish of multiple congregations, the deacon shall hold membership in one of the congregations.

**\*C9.31.** The deacon(s) shall submit a report of his or her ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.

**Commented [AT37]:** This whole section C9.21 – C9.31 is an addition to our current constitution. These additions provide our congregation a process by which to call a rostered minister of Word and Service (should we choose to).

## **Chapter 10. CONGREGATION MEETING**

**C10.01.** The annual meeting of this congregation shall be held at a time specified in the bylaws.

**C10.01.01** The annual meeting of this congregation shall be held on either the third or fourth Sunday of January.

**C10.02.** A special Congregation Meeting may be called by the pastor, the Congregation Council, or the president of this congregation, and shall be called by the president of the congregation upon the written request of one third (1/3) of the voting members. The president of the Congregation Council shall call a special meeting upon request of the synodical bishop. The call for each special meeting shall specify the purpose for which it is to be held, and no other business shall be transacted.

**Commented [AT38]:** This is an addition to our current constitution and gives the bishop of our synod the ability to request a congregational meeting.

**C10.03.** Notice of all meetings of this congregation shall be given at the services of worship on the preceding two consecutive Sundays and by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law, to all voting members as least 10 days in advance of the date of the meeting

**Commented [AT39]:** This is an addition to our current constitution to account for advances in technology

**C10.04.** Ten percent (10%) of the voting members shall constitute a quorum.

**C10.05.** Voting by proxy or by absentee ballot shall not be permitted.

**C10.06.** All actions approved by the congregation shall be by majority vote of those voting members present and voting, except as otherwise provided in this constitution or by state law.

**C10.07.** *Robert's Rules of Order*, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of all meetings of this congregation.

## **Chapter 11. OFFICERS**

**C11.01.** The officers of this congregation shall be a president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer.

- a. Duties of the officers shall be specified in the bylaws.
- b. The officers shall be voting members of the congregation.
- c. Officers of this congregation shall serve similar offices of the Congregation Council and shall be voting members of the Congregation Council.
- d. If the Congregation Council elects its officers, the president, vice president, and secretary shall be selected from the elected membership of the Congregation Council. If the treasurer is not selected from the elected membership of the Congregation Council, the treasurer shall have voice but not vote at the meetings of the Congregation Council.

**Commented [AT40]:** This updated provision omits language in our current constitution that states “ (Note: The Treasurer shall be elected by a majority vote of the congregation at the annual congregational meeting. The other officers shall be elected by the members of the Congregation Council.)” These omissions are covered in C11.02 and C11.02.01

**C11.01.01** Duties of the officers of this congregation shall be as follows:

- a. The President shall preside at all council and congregation meetings, facilitate the Council agenda, call and preside at one Executive Committee each month, meet with

the Pastor(s) and staff for conversation at least once a month, provide quarterly reports to the Congregation and maintain oversight of Congregation Committees.

- b. The Vice president shall assume the President's position when s/he is absent, and shall attend the monthly Executive Committee meetings. In all other respects, s/he shall act the same as a council member.
- c. The Secretary shall keep and publish Council, Congregational and Executive Committee meeting minutes and accumulate and publish committee reports which are presented at Church Council meetings. The Secretary shall also have oversight for all members for specially called meetings, notices and other Church Council and Executive Committee correspondence. This includes notification of the meetings to the attendees involved.
- d. The Treasurer shall have oversight of all reports pertaining to the fiscal policy, the budget and the financial strategy of the Church Council, shall be a regular member of the Finance Committee and shall pay all bills, salaries, benefits, taxes and, as directed by the Church Council, other expenses associated with efficient operation of the church.

**C11.02.** The officers shall be elected by the Congregational Council by written ballot and shall serve for one year. The term shall begin on January 1 and end on December 31.

**C11.02.01** The Treasurer shall be elected by a majority vote of the congregation at the annual congregational meeting.

**C11.03.** No officer shall hold more than one office at a time. No elected officer shall be eligible to serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office.

## Chapter 12. CONGREGATION COUNCIL

**C12.01.** The voting membership of the Congregation Council shall consist of the pastor(s), the officers of the congregation, and not more than twenty (20) nor fewer than nine (9) members of the congregation, at least one of whom shall be a youth and at least one of whom shall be a young adult. The actual size shall be determined by the Council as stated in the Continuing Resolutions. Any voting member of the congregation may be elected, subject only to the limitation on the length of continuous service permitted in that office. A member's place on the Congregation Council shall be declared vacant if the member a) ceases to be a voting member of this congregation or b) is absent from four successive regular meetings of the Congregation Council without cause. Consistent with the laws of the state in which this congregation is incorporated, the congregation may adopt procedures for the removal of a member of the Congregation Council in other circumstances.

**C12.01.A07** The Congregational Council shall consist of nine to twelve members.

**C12.02.** The members of the Congregation Council except the pastor(s) shall be elected at a legally called meeting of the congregation during the month of November. Their term of office shall be for three (3) years, with the term of office beginning on the first day of January and ending on the last day of December. Such members shall be eligible to serve no more than two (2) full terms consecutively. Newly elected Congregation Council members shall be installed at worship on a Sunday in the month of January.

**Commented [AT41]:** Updating this article omits language in our current constitution that stated "(other than the treasurer)" and "at the December meeting of the Council"

The stipulation about the treasurer is covered in bylaw C11.02.01

The language about the meeting time does not restrict the council from voting in December but it also liberates the congregation to choose other options.

**Commented [AT42]:** In the previous CGS constitution this was in article C11.01 in parenthesis. If we wish to keep it, this text reflects a recommendation that we create a new bylaw. The way we elect Treasurers will be the same as it has been.

We will vote on this bylaw at the January 2018 congregational meeting. If it does not pass this provision will be omitted from our new governing documents.

**C12.03.** Should a member's place on the Congregation Council be declared vacant, the Congregation Council shall elect, by majority vote, a successor until the next annual meeting.

**C12.04.** The Congregation Council shall have general oversight of the life and activities of this congregation, and in particular its worship life, to the end that everything be done in accordance with the Word of God and the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The duties of the Congregation Council shall include the following:

- a. To lead this congregation in stating its mission, to do long-range planning, to set goals and priorities, and to evaluate its activities in light of its mission and goals.
- b. To seek to involve all members of this congregation in worship, learning, witness, service, and support.
- c. To oversee and provide for the administration of this congregation to enable it to fulfill its functions and perform its mission.
- d. To maintain supportive relationships with the rostered minister(s) and staff and help them annually to evaluate the fulfillment of their calling or employment.
- e. To be examples individually and corporately of the style of life and ministry expected of all baptized persons.
- f. To promote a congregational climate of peace and goodwill and, as differences and conflicts arise, to endeavor to foster mutual understanding.
- g. To arrange for pastoral service during the sickness or absence of the pastor.
- h. To emphasize partnership with the synod and churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as well as cooperation with other congregations, both Lutheran and non-Lutheran, subject to established policies of the synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- i. To recommend and encourage the use of program resources produced or approved by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- j. To seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel.

**C12.04.B14** Disbursements from the scholarship fund are at the discretion of the council and shall be limited to participation in faith forming opportunities that are aligned with the mission and values of CGS. Preference will be given to opportunities which directly benefit the faith community at CGS.

**C12.04.C15** We recognize that evangelism is a value that should pervade all our actions as a congregation. Therefore, the council of this congregation shall consider evangelism in all its decisions and actions.

**C12.05.** The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the financial and property matters of this congregation.

- a. The Congregation Council shall be the board of directors of this congregation and, as such, shall be responsible for maintaining and protecting its property and managing its business and fiscal affairs. It shall have the powers and be subject to the obligations that pertain to such boards under the laws of the State of California, except as otherwise provided herein.
- b. The Congregation Council shall not have the authority to buy, sell, or encumber real property unless specifically authorized to do so by a meeting of the congregation.
- c. The Congregation Council may enter into contracts of up to \$5,000.00 for items not included in the budget.
- d. The Congregation Council shall prepare an annual budget for adoption by this congregation, shall supervise the expenditure of funds in accordance therewith following its adoption, and may incur obligations of more than \$5,000.00 in excess of the anticipated receipts only after

**Commented [AT43]:** This continuing resolution is numbered C13.07.F15 in the current CGS documents the text reflects a suggested renumbering to align it with the appropriate section of the constitution. This renumbering would happen with a vote of the council in December.

**Commented [AT44]:** Previously, there was a continuing resolution that recognized Stewardship as the responsibility of the council in all areas of ministry. Recently, the council removed this continuing resolution in lieu of entrusting stewardship strategy and leadership to the Finance Ministry.



approval by a Congregation Meeting. The budget shall include this congregation's full indicated share in support of the wider ministry being carried on in partnership with the synod and churchwide organization.

- e. The Congregation Council shall ascertain that the financial affairs of this congregation are being conducted efficiently, giving particular attention to the prompt payment of all obligations and to the regular forwarding of benevolence monies to the synodical treasurer.
- f. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for this congregation's investments and its total insurance program.

**C12.06.** The Congregation Council shall see that the provisions of this constitution, its bylaws, and the continuing resolutions are carried out.

**C12.07.** The Congregation Council shall provide for an annual review of the membership roster.

**C12.08.** The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the employment and supervision of the staff of this congregation. Nothing in this provision shall be deemed to affect the congregation's responsibility for the call, terms of call, or termination of call of any employees who are on a roster of this church.

**C12.09.** The Congregation Council shall submit a comprehensive report to this congregation at the annual meeting.

**C12.11.** The Congregation Council shall normally meet once a month. Special meetings may be called by the pastor or the president, and shall be called by the president at the request of at least one-half of its members. Notice of each special meeting shall be given to all who are entitled to be present.

**C12.12.** A quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of a majority of the members of the Congregation Council, including the pastor or interim pastor, except when the pastor or interim pastor requests or consents to be absent and has given prior approval to the agenda for a particular regular or special meeting, which shall be the only business considered at that meeting. Chronic or repeated absence of the pastor or interim pastor who has refused approval of the agenda of a subsequent regular or special meeting shall not preclude action by the Congregation Council, following consultation with the synodical bishop.

**C12.13.A14** For matters where time is of the essence, the Congregational Council may take a vote by electronic mail using the council's emailing list, subject to the following provisions:

- a. Any member of the council may request such a vote; this request must clearly state the question to be decided, and the time frame in which responses are needed. The member to make the motion should solicit amendments and clarifications before requesting a vote.
- b. An absolute majority of the Council's members must vote in the affirmative, and at least two thirds of the council's members must register a vote or abstention within the requested time frame for the motion to succeed.
- c. The Executive Committee shall certify, and the Secretary shall minute (record) the voting results.

**C12.13** The Congregational Council and its committees may hold meetings by remote communication, including electronically and by telephone conference and, to the extent permitted by state law, notice of all meetings may be provided electronically.

**Commented [AT45]:** This is an addition to our current constitution. It reflects our current distinction between the employment of rostered leaders and the employment of lay persons.

**Commented [AT46]:** This is an addition to our current constitution that acknowledges advances in technology.

## Chapter 13.

## CONGREGATION COMMITTEES

- C13.01.** The officers of this congregation and the pastor shall constitute the *Executive Committee*. The Executive Committee shall meet a minimum of once a month. The Executive Committee will establish the agenda for the upcoming Council Meeting and will also make recommendations on behalf of the church staff to the Congregational Council.
- C13.02.** A *Nominating Committee* of six voting members of this congregation, two of whom, if possible, shall be outgoing members of the Congregation Council, shall be elected at the annual meeting for a term of one year. Members of the Nominating Committee are not eligible for consecutive re-election.
- C13.03.** An *Audit Committee* of three voting members shall be elected by the Congregation Council. Audit Committee members shall not be members of the Congregation Council. Term of office shall be three years, with one member elected each year. Members shall be eligible for re-election.
- C13.04.** *Mutual Ministry Committee* (in the absence of a mutual ministry committee, the duties shall be fulfilled by the executive committee) shall be appointed jointly by the president and the rostered minister. Term of office shall be two years, with three members to be appointed each successive year.
- C13.04.01** The primary purpose of the Mutual Ministry Committee is to affirm and strengthen the mission of this congregation through listening and clarifying; sharing and communication; and reviewing and reflecting. The Mutual Ministry Committee reports regularly to the council but is not empowered to consider grievances, set policy, salary, etc. Instead, recommendations are developed and forwarded to the council (or other committees) for final approval.
- C13.05.** When a pastoral vacancy occurs, a *Call Committee* of six voting members shall be elected by this congregation. Term of office will terminate upon installation of the newly called pastor.
- C13.06.** Other committees of this congregation may be formed, as the need arises, by decision of the Congregation Council.
- C13.07.** Duties of committees of this congregation shall be specified in the bylaws and continuing resolutions.
- C13.07.01** The Conflict Resolution Committee shall be the lead organization in the event of concerns within the membership of the congregation. The committee shall be composed of three members appointed for a three-year term. The Committee members shall be instructed in the Synodical requirements of a pastor and the expectations of the council and congregation in calling a pastor. The Committee shall meet only when a Conflict Resolution Form has been submitted to the Committee. The mission of the Committee is to consider, evaluate and disposition such concerns. The Committee does not resolve conflicts but rather determines if the concern can or should be adjudicated at the local level (such as through council action), elevated to Synod awareness or referred to civil law enforcement (in cases such as harassment, physical abuse or sexual misconduct.)
- C13.07.02** In order to carry out the Mission of this congregation, Ministries shall be staffed as specified in the Continuing Resolutions. Unless otherwise specified, the membership of a Ministry shall consist of all members volunteering to participate in that Ministry. Unless otherwise
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specified, any administrative roles in these Ministries, such as committee chairs, secretaries, and so on, shall be chosen by the members of that committee, for a term of one year.

**C13.07.03** Duties and mission of these Ministries shall be specified in the continuing resolutions.  
**C13.07.04** Other Ministries may be formed by the Congregation Council as the need arises. Such Ministries and their duties and mission shall be listed in the continuing resolutions.

**C13.07.A99** The Property Ministry shall oversee the maintenance and upkeep of all the church's real property. The committee shall also identify and/or assemble perceived capital facilities improvements to promote the safety, comfort and adaptability of the property and structures to the church's Mission. Such improvements will be scoped and prioritized for presentation to and consideration of the Church Council. The Property Chair convenes the Property Committee meetings and reports Committee recommendations and property status to the Council.

**C13.07.B99** The Finance Ministry shall be responsible for the stewardship ministry of this congregation. The Treasurer, Financial Secretary, and Memorial Secretary shall be members of the committee. The Treasurer shall provide liaison with the Congregational Council. The Finance Ministry shall be responsible for the formation and execution of the stewardship strategy. They shall advise the Congregational Council in oversight of the fiscal affairs of the congregation as needed.

**C13.07.D06** The Financial Secretary shall have oversight of all gifts to the church's ministry including any special gifts, grants, etc. Bi-annual reports shall be issued to donors to detail contributions. The Financial Secretary will be a member of the Finance Ministry and participate in the Stewardship ministry of the congregation. The Financial Secretary shall be selected from the congregation's membership by the Council for a three-year term, and may serve multiple terms.

**C13.07.E08** The Memorial Secretary shall be responsible for handling the communications necessary to identify appropriate potential uses for restricted funds designated for memorials. This function is distinct from that of the Financial Secretary, who is responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of individual contributions, and that of the Treasurer, who is responsible for maintaining an accurate accounting of all funds, and that of the Congregational Council, which retains final authority over expenditures. The Memorial Secretary shall:

- a. follow the purchase or project from inception to completion, and maintain communications with the relevant ministries, such as the Finance Ministry and the Property Ministry, as well as with the family or estate associated with the memorial;
- b. authorize memorial-related expenses (in addition to the authorizations which would otherwise be needed for the expenditure);
- c. maintain the "memorial book" and other appropriate records of how memorial funds have been used;
- d. when appropriate, assist in arranging dedication services and notifying family members;
- e. when appropriate, oversee the purchase and installation of plaques.

The Memorial Secretary shall be selected from the congregation's membership by the Council for a three-year term, and may serve multiple terms.

**C13.07.F09** The Family & Education Ministry shall seek to involve children and youth in all aspects of the life of the congregation; promote the Christian development of young leaders; assist the church council and the congregation in the identification of the needs of children, youth, and families; and present to the church council proposals for strengthening the connections between church and home as a means of faith formation.

**Commented [AT47]:** This bylaw previously stated that the council had to appoint a liaison of every ministry to relate to the council. This has not been practiced for some time and with the size of our congregation is not feasible. Omitting this requirement gives council the discretion of how they collaborate with ministry groups of the congregation.

**Commented [AT48]:** This continuing resolution was recently updated by the council. It now reflects the responsibility of oversight that the property committee has been serving for years.

**Commented [AT49]:** This continuing resolution was recently updated by the council. It now reflects the focus of the Finance Team to be on the stewardship strategy specifically. It retains their previous role as advisors on the general fiscal affairs of the congregation.

**Commented [AT50]:** The council recently removed Continuing Resolution C13.07.C99 which spelled out the function of the Social Action Committee. They removed this CR because the social action committee has not existed for 4 years.

**Commented [AT51]:** This continuing resolution was recently updated by the council. It now specifies reporting of contributions to donors ("periodic" was replaced by "bi-annual") and the Finance Secretary's participation in the Finance Ministry

**Commented [AT52]:** This continuing resolution was recently amended to reflect a combining of the Children & Youth Ministry with the Christian Education Ministry. This amendment reflect the CGS practice for many years.

**C13.07.H14** The Congregational Council may from time to time establish a Committee on Vision and Mission. The Committee on Vision and Mission’s purpose is to discern this congregation’s mission and vision, to distill these into concise statement, and to recommend these to the Congregation Council for consideration. The committee shall produce these statements within six (6) months of its activation, and shall then be dissolved. The committee shall have eight (8) to ten (10) members (representing the key diversities of this congregation, and not limited to members of the congregation) appointed by the Council. The membership of the committee shall include at least one member of the Council in addition to the pastor. The committee’s work and process are expected to be rooted in scripture. The work is primarily a matter of discernment, rather than change. The committee must engage the congregation and community in dialogue. It is recognized that this process may be transformational for both the committee and the congregation.

**C13.07.I16** The Congregational Council may from time to time convene a Strategic Planning Committee that consists of at least two members of the Congregational Council and the pastor, appointed by the Council to one year terms. In consultation with the Committee on Vision and Mission (if it is active) this committee is responsible for developing the congregation’s Strategic Plan document, gathering input from all members.

**C13.07.J16** The Worship & Music Ministry shall seek to curate worship in a manner informed by Lutheran liturgy, theology, and cultural seasons so that all members of the congregation are spiritually uplifted, encouraged to participate fully, and invited to share their unique gifts in the worship life of the congregation.

**C13.08.** The pastor of this congregation shall be *ex officio* a member of all committees and boards of the congregation, except the Nominating Committee.

**C13.09** A personnel Policies and Procedures Committee consisting of a Chairperson and two or more committee members shall be appointed by the Council for a term not to exceed two years. Consecutive appointment to the committee shall be at the discretion of the Council.

**C13.09.01** The Personnel Policies and Procedures Committee is responsible for recommending personnel policy and facilitating the annual review of the Church employees. The Committee may advise the pastor(s) and help facilitate the process of reviewing staff positions and disciplinary matters. The Committee shall conduct a salary and benefit survey annually, assess and make recommendations on staffing requirements and monitor the recruitment and interviewing of candidates.

**Commented [AT53]:** This continuing resolution was recently updated by the council to give greater permissions to the council to be more involved in goal setting and strategic planning as has been recent practice.

**Commented [AT54]:** This continuing resolution was recently updated by the council to reflect the congregation’s priority that worship is collaboratively prepared but to give permission in the form that such a ministry will take.

**Commented [AT55]:** This bylaw is numbered C13.05.01 in the current CGS documents – the text reflects a suggestion that we renumber it for appropriate reference to the constitution. The text also reflects suggested language changes to bring the name of the committee into alignment with the provision

**Commented [AT56]:** C13.09 does not exist in the model constitution. This provision is carried forward from our current constitution

## Chapter 14.

### ORGANIZATIONS WITHIN THE CONGREGATION

**C14.01.** All organizations within this congregation shall exist to aid it in ministering to the members of this congregation and to all persons who can be reached with the Gospel of Christ. As outgrowths and expressions of this congregation’s life, the organizations are subject to its oversight and direction. This congregation at its meeting shall determine their policies, guide their activities, and receive reports concerning their membership, work, and finances.

**C14.02.** Special interest groups, other than those of the official organizations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, may be organized only after authorization has been given by the Congregation Council and specified in a continuing resolution.

## Chapter 15.

## DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS AND ADJUDICATION

- \*C15.01.** Persistent and public denial of the Christian faith, willful or criminal conduct grossly unbecoming a member of the Church of Christ, continual and intentional interference with the ministry of the congregation, or willful and repeated harassment or defamation of member(s) of the congregation is sufficient cause for discipline of a member. Prior to disciplinary action, reconciliation and repentance will be attempted following Matthew 18:15–17, proceeding through these successive steps, as necessary: a) private counsel and admonition by the pastor, b) censure and admonition by the pastor in the presence of two or three witnesses, c) written referral of the matter by the Congregation Council to the vice president of the synod, who will refer it to a consultation panel drawn from the Consultation Committee of the synod, and d) written referral of the matter by the consultation panel to the Committee on Discipline of the synod. If, for any reason, the pastor is unable to administer the admonitions required by paragraphs a. and b. hereof, those steps may be performed by another pastor chosen by the Executive Committee of the Congregation Council.
- \*C15.02.** The process for discipline of a member of the congregation shall be governed as prescribed by the chapter on discipline in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. If the counseling, censure, and admonitions pursuant to \*C15.01. do not result in repentance and amendment of life, charges against the accused member(s) that are specific and in writing may be prepared by the Congregation Council, signed, and submitted to the vice president of the synod. The vice president shall select from the synod's Consultation Committee a panel of five members (three laypersons and two ministers of Word and Sacrament). A copy of the written charges shall be provided to the consultation panel and the accused member(s). The consultation panel, after requesting a written reply to the charges from the accused member(s), shall consider the matter and seek a resolution by means of investigation, consultation, mediation, or whatever other means may seem appropriate. The panel's efforts to reach a mutually agreeable resolution shall continue for no more than 45 days after the matter is submitted to it.
- \*C15.03.** If the consultation panel fails to resolve the matter, that panel shall refer the case in writing, including the written charges and the accused member's reply, to the Committee on Discipline of the synod for a hearing. A copy of the panel's written referral shall be delivered to the vice president of the synod, the Congregation Council, and the accused member(s) at the same time it is sent to the Committee on Discipline of the synod. The Executive Committee of the Synod Council shall then select six members from the Committee on Discipline to decide the case and shall appoint a member of the Synod Council to preside as nonvoting chair. Those six members, plus the nonvoting chair, comprise the discipline hearing panel for deciding the case. The Congregation Council and the accused member(s) are the parties to the case.
- \*C15.04.** The discipline hearing panel shall commence and conduct the disciplinary hearing in accordance with the provisions governing discipline of congregation members prescribed in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.
- \*C15.05.** By the vote of at least two-thirds of the members of the discipline hearing panel who are present and voting, one of the following disciplinary sanctions can be imposed:
- suspension from the privileges of congregation membership for a designated period of time;
  - suspension from the privileges of congregation membership until the pastor and Congregation Council receive evidence, satisfactory to them, of repentance and amendment of life;
  - termination of membership in the congregation; or

d. termination of membership in the congregation and exclusion from the church property and from all congregation activities.

**\*C15.06.** The written decision of the discipline hearing panel shall be sent to the vice president of the synod, the accused member(s), and the Congregation Council as required by the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. The decision of the discipline hearing panel shall be implemented by the Congregation Council and recorded in the minutes of the next council meeting.

**\*C15.07.** No member of the congregation shall be subject to discipline a second time for offenses that a discipline hearing panel has heard previously and decided pursuant to this chapter.

**\*C15.10. Adjudication**

**\*C15.11.** When there is disagreement among factions within this congregation on a substantive issue that cannot be resolved by the parties, members of this congregation shall have access to the synodical bishop for consultation after informing the chair of the Congregation Council of their intent. If the consultation fails to resolve the issue(s), the Consultation Committee of the synod shall consider the matter. If the Consultation Committee of the synod shall fail to resolve the issue(s), the matter shall be referred to the Synod Council, whose decision shall be final.

**Commented [AT57]:** The section on discipline of members is different from our current constitution. There is a change in roles and responsibilities between the council, synod, and pastor. There is the inclusion of synod committees which is not present in the current CGS constitution. There are also changes in process.

**Chapter 16.**

**AMENDMENTS**

**\*C16.01.** Unless provision \*C16.04. is applicable, those sections of this constitution that are not required, in accord with the *Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, may be amended in the following manner. Amendments may be proposed by at least ten (10) voting members or by the Congregation Council. Proposals must be filed in writing with the Congregation Council 60 days before formal consideration by this congregation at a regular or special Congregation Meeting called for that purpose. The Congregation Council shall notify the congregation's members of the proposal together with the council's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the meeting. Notification may take place by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law.

**Commented [AT58]:** The model constitution swaps the chapter numbering of "Amendments" and "Bylaws" from what is in our current constitution.

**\*C16.02.** An amendment to this constitution, proposed under \*C16.01., shall:  
a. be approved at a legally called Congregation Meeting according to this constitution by a majority vote of those voting members present and voting;  
b. be ratified without change at the next annual meeting by a two-thirds vote of those voting members present and voting; and  
c. have the effective date included in the resolution and noted in the constitution.

**Commented [AT59]:** This is an addition to our current constitution to account for advances in technology.

**\*C16.03.** Any amendments to this constitution that result from the processes provided in \*C16.01. and \*C16.02. shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod. The synod shall notify the congregation of its decision to approve or disapprove the proposed changes; the changes shall go into effect upon notification that the synod has approved them.

**\*C16.04.** This constitution may be amended to bring any section into conformity with a section or sections, either required or not required, of the *Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* as most recently amended by the Churchwide Assembly. Such amendments may be approved by a majority vote of those voting members present and voting at any legally called meeting of the congregation without presentation at a prior meeting of the congregation, provided that the Congregation Council has submitted by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law, notice to the congregation of such an amendment or amendments, together with the council's recommendations, at least 30 days prior to the

**Commented [AT60]:** This is a change from the current CGS constitution which states that constitutional changes go into effect within 120 days from the date of receipt of notice from the synod. This time limit only applies to the process described in \*C16.01

**Commented [AT61]:** This language is a change from our current constitution and is negligible.

meeting. Upon the request of at least two (2) voting members of the congregation, the Congregation Council shall submit such notice. Following the adoption of an amendment, the secretary of the congregation shall submit a copy thereof to the synod. Such provisions shall become effective immediately following a vote of approval.

**Commented [AT62]:** This is an addition to our current constitution and requires that at least two voting members propose the request for notice.

## **Chapter 17. BYLAWS**

- \*C17.01. This congregation may adopt bylaws. No bylaw may conflict with this constitution.
- \*C17.02. Bylaws may be adopted or amended at any legally called meeting of this congregation with a quorum present by a two-thirds vote of those voting members present and voting.
- \*C17.03. Changes to the bylaws may be proposed by any voting member, provided that such additions or amendments be submitted in writing to the Congregation Council at least 60 days before a regular or special Congregation Meeting called for that purpose. The Congregation Council shall notify the congregation's members of the proposal with the council's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the Congregation Meeting. Notification may take place by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law.
- \*C17.04. Approved changes to the bylaws shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod.

**Commented [AT63]:** This was previously numbered chapter 16 in our current constitution

**Commented [AT64]:** This is an addition to our current constitution to account for advances in technology.

## **Chapter 18. CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS**

- \*C18.01. The congregation in a legally called meeting or the Congregation Council may enact continuing resolutions. Such continuing resolutions may not conflict with the constitution or bylaws of this congregation.
- \*C18.02. Continuing resolutions shall be enacted or amended by a majority vote of a meeting of the congregation or a two-thirds vote of all voting members of the Congregation Council.

## **Chapter 19. INDEMNIFICATION**

- \*C19.01. Consistent with the provisions of the laws under which this congregation is incorporated, this congregation may adopt provisions providing indemnification for each person who, by reason of the fact that such person is or was a Congregation Council member, officer, employee, agent, or other member of any committee of this congregation, was or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending, or completed civil, criminal, administrative, arbitration, or investigative proceeding.

## **Chapter 20. PARISH AUTHORIZATION**

- C20.01. This congregation may unite in partnership with one or more other congregations recognized by the synod named in \*C6.01. to form a parish. Except as provided in C20.02. and C20.03., a written agreement, developed in consultation with the synod and approved by the voting members of each congregation participating in the parish, shall specify the powers and responsibilities that have been delegated to the Parish Council. The Parish Agreement shall identify which congregation of the parish issues calls on behalf of the member congregations or

**Commented [AT65]:** In the current CGS constitution the sections of this chapter have an \* because at the time, CGS was a part of the Silicon Valley Lutheran Parish. That parish disbanded in 2016 when the synod conferences were re-drawn. As CGS is no longer in a parish, the sections of this chapter are no longer required and are optional. The text reflect their inclusion so that if CGS enters into a parish in the future, we will not require additional voting measures.

shall establish a process for identifying which congregation issues calls on behalf of the member congregations.

- C20.02.** One congregation of a parish shall issue a call on behalf of the member congregations to a minister of Word and Sacrament or a candidate for the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament who has been recommended by the synodical bishop to serve the congregations of the parish. Such a call shall be approved prior to issuance by a two-thirds vote at a congregational meeting of each congregation forming the parish. If any congregation of the parish should fail to approve the call, the other congregations of the parish shall have the right to terminate the parish agreement.
- C20.03.** One congregation of a parish may issue a call on behalf of the member congregations to a minister of Word and Service or a candidate for the roster of Ministers of Word and Service who has been recommended by the synodical bishop to serve the congregations of the parish. Such a call shall be approved prior to issuance by a two-thirds vote at a congregational meeting of each congregation forming the parish. If any congregation of the parish should fail to approve the call, the other congregations of the parish shall have the right to terminate the parish agreement.
- C20.04.** Any one of the congregations of the parish may terminate their relationship with the pastor as provided in †S14.18.d. of the synodical constitution of the synod named in \*C6.01. In such case, the other congregation(s) of the same parish shall have the right to terminate the parish agreement.
- C20.05.** Any one of the congregations of the parish may terminate their relationship with a minister of Word and Service as provided in †S14.43.d. of the synodical constitution of the synod named in \*C6.01. In such case, the other congregation(s) of the same parish shall have the right to terminate the parish agreement.
- C20.06.** Whenever a parish agreement is terminated, the call of any rostered minister serving that parish is terminated. Should any congregation that was formerly part of the parish agreement desire to issue a new call to that rostered minister, it may do so in accordance with the call process of this church.

**Commented [AT66]:** This is an addition to our current constitution which would allow for us to call a rostered minister to a shared ministry between two or more congregations.

**Commented [AT67]:** This section is renumbered to account for the additional sections about ministers of word and service.

**Commented [AT68]:** This is an addition to our current constitution that allows for the termination of a shared call of a rostered minister.