

CONSTITUTION
OF
PILGRIM LUTHERAN CHURCH
ESSEXVILLE, MICHIGAN
2010

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CONSTITUTION
OF
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PREAMBLE

It is the will of our Lord Jesus Christ that His disciples should preach the Gospel to the whole world (Mark 16:15, Matthew 28:18-20, Acts 1:8). That Christ's mission for His church might be carried out according to His will. He has commanded that Christians unite in worship (Hebrews 10:24-25), practice fellowship with one another (Acts 1:8, Matthew 28:18-20), and serve the needs of all people in Christian love (Ephesians 4:7-16, Mark 10:24-44, John 13:35, Galatians 6:10). Since Christians are also to administer the Office of the Keys as His church (John 20:21-23, Matthew 18:15-20), and to maintain decency and order (I Corinthians 14:40) in the church.

Therefore we, a number of Lutheran Christians living in and near Essexville, accept and subscribe to the following Constitution and By-Laws, in accordance with which all spiritual and material affairs of our congregation shall be governed.

ARTICLE 1: NAME

The name of this congregation shall be: "Pilgrim Evangelical Lutheran Church, of Essexville, Michigan."

ARTICLE 2: CONFESSION

This congregation accepts all the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired and revealed Word of God, and all the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, contained in the Book of Concord of the year 1580, as the correct presentation and true exposition of Christian Doctrine drawn from the Holy Scriptures, viz:

1. The Three Ecumenical Creeds, viz., the Apostolic, the Nicene and the Athanasian;
2. The Unaltered Augsburg Confession;
3. The Apology of the Augsburg Confession;
4. The Smalcald Articles;
5. Luther's Large Catechism;
6. Luther's Small Catechism;
7. The Formula of Concord.

No doctrine or practice in conflict, or inconsistent, with the above norms of our faith and life shall be taught or tolerated in this congregation.

ARTICLE 3: SYNODICAL AFFILIATION

This congregation shall be affiliated with the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod as long as the confessions and constitution of said Synod are in accord with the confession and constitution of this congregation as laid down in Article 2.

This congregation shall, to the best of its ability, collaborate with said Synod and assist it in effecting all sound measures intended for the building up of the Kingdom of God.

ARTICLE 4: MEMBERSHIP

The membership of this congregation includes the following:

A. BAPTIZED MEMBERSHIP

Baptized members are all members who have been baptized in the name of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, including the children.

B. COMMUNICANT MEMBERSHIP

Communicant membership in this congregation may be held only by those who:

1. Are baptized in the Name of the Triune God.
2. Have declared their acceptance of the confessions of this congregation as contained in Article 2 of the Constitution.
3. Have been accepted into communicant membership in accordance with the By-Laws of this congregation and shall remain faithful to the responsibilities of membership as contained in these By-Laws.
4. Do not live in manifest works of the flesh (Galatians 5:19-21), but lead a Christian life.
5. Are not members of a secret society or of any other organization conflicting with the Word of God and the conduct of a Christian (II Corinthians. 6:14-18).

C. The membership, and membership privileges, of each communicant member shall remain in force so long as each member shall maintain his eligibility according to the five points in Section B or this article and shall meet the requirements stated or implied in the disciplinary or other provisions, of the By-Laws. A member who voluntarily severs his connection with this congregation, or who has been released or transferred, or who has been excommunicate or excludes himself according to the provisions of the By-Laws shall be deemed to have terminated his membership in this congregation along with all rights and privileges of such membership.

ARTICLE 5: ORGANIZATION

A. VOTING MEMBERSHIP

This congregation shall be represented by, and administer all its affairs through, it's voting membership. Only communicant members who have qualified according to the membership provisions contained in Article 2 of the By-Laws to this Constitution shall be received as voting members of this congregation.

B. ADMINISTRATIVE BOARDS

Responsibility and authority for the daily administration of congregation affairs shall be delegated to the following boards:

1. A BOARD OF ELDERS
2. A BOARD OF TRUSTEES
3. A BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

One member of each Administrative Board shall serve as the Chairman of that Board.

C. OFFICERS OF THE CONGREGATION

The officers of the congregation shall consist of a President, a Vice-President(s), a Treasurer, and a Secretary elected from among the voting membership in accordance with the By-Laws of the congregation. The President of the congregation (or the Vice-President(s) when acting in the President's capacity) shall have a voice on all Administrative Boards, but his right to vote shall be limited to such Board or Boards on which he may hold membership. The Pastor(s) of the congregation shall be, ex-officio, a member of all Boards and their associated committees, and may, at his discretion, attend any or all meetings related to congregational activity of any kind.

D. RIGHTS AND POWERS

This congregation, subject to the limiting provisions and regulations of this Constitution and its associated By-Laws, shall have supreme power in the administration of its affairs. No duly elected officers of this congregation shall have any power or authority beyond that conferred upon them by the congregation acting through its voting membership. Each administrative Board shall be responsible for the performances of such duties as the voting membership may delegate to them by special resolution. Such specially delegated rights and powers, both of officers and Administrative Boards, shall be subject to revision and complete withdrawal by the voting membership at its discretion.

ARTICLE 6: PASTORS

Only such candidates shall be called or elected to serve as Pastors who are certified and approved by the Synod and who profess acceptance of and pledge faithful adherence to the confessions of this congregation as set forth in Article 2 of this Constitution. In the absence of adequate cause for dismissal, as defined in By-Laws of the congregation, the tenure of office of a called or elected Pastor shall be the remainder of his active life or until the Lord calls him into another field of service.

ARTICLE 7: SOCIETIES

Societies may be organized within the congregation only with the expressed approval of the voting membership, and all such societies shall be under the supervision of the Pastor(s) and the appropriate Administrative Board under whose jurisdiction they function. Only communicant members of this congregation shall be officers of such societies or groups. Any decisions, enactment or performance of or by societies or groups shall be invalid if they conflict with this Constitution and its associated By-Laws. The Pastor(s), by virtue of his office, shall be the advisor for such societies or groups within the congregation.

ARTICLE 8: PROPERTY RIGHTS

If, at any time, a separation should take place with this congregation, the advice of the officers of District and Synod shall be sought. If, despite all efforts to compose differences in peace and love, a division into factions of the congregation shall occur, the property of the congregation and all benefits therewith connected shall revert to the Michigan District of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod or its successor.

ARTICLE 9: VALIDITY OF RESOLUTIONS

All congregation matters shall be decided by a simple majority vote of the qualified voting members present at a properly convened meeting of the voting membership, except as otherwise provided in this Constitution and its associated By-Laws for dealing with certain situations or matters therein specifically mentioned and defined.

ARTICLE 10: AMENDMENTS

Amendments to this constitution must be made in writing and may be presented at any regular meeting, provided that the amendments have already been submitted in a previous meeting. Two-thirds of the voting members present must cast their vote in favor of such amendments. This constitution shall be reviewed and if needed, revised every five (5) years by a committee appointed by the Board of Elders.

BY-LAWS OF THE CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE 1: COMMUNICANT MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 - APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP - PROCEDURE

Applicants for communicant membership in this congregation shall consult the Pastor who shall determine whether such applicants are eligible for membership in accordance with Article 4 of this Constitution. Applicants not familiar with the doctrines and confessions of the Lutheran Church shall be required to attend a course of instruction, and to make profession of their faith before being received as members.

Applicants from other Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod congregations shall submit a letter of transfer from their former congregation to establish their eligibility for membership. In the case of applicants whose previous membership in a Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod congregation has lapsed, or who are members of other Lutheran Church bodies, the Pastor shall arrange for a period of re-instruction prior to reaffirmation of faith for such applicant.

After applicants have given satisfactory evidence of their eligibility in accordance with the two preceding paragraphs, their admission as communicant members shall be recommended by the Pastor to the Board of Elders which shall have the authority to act on such application in behalf of the voting membership. The roster of new members shall be publicized in the various news media of the congregation.

Section 2 - PRIVILEGES AND DUTIES OF COMMUNICANT MEMBERS

It shall be the privilege and duty of members of this congregation to:

Grow in the Christian faith and life through faithful use of the means of grace, searching the Scriptures at home and in fellowship with other members of the congregation and its agencies, and partaking of the Lord's Supper frequently.

Live a morally and decent life before God and men, abstaining from open works of the flesh (Galatians 5:18-21), and so conducting themselves at all times as to bring credit rather than blame upon the Church of Jesus Christ.

Provide for the proper Christian training of their children by instruction at home and through the agencies of the Church.

Contribute toward the maintenance of the congregation and the extension of the Kingdom of God at home and abroad to the limit of their financial ability.

Place their God-given talents and abilities at the disposal of the Pastor(s), the officers, and other agencies of the congregation as set forth in its Constitution and By-Laws, so that the purposes and functions of the congregation may be effectively implemented.

Search for their spiritual gifts through a study of pertinent Scripture passages, i.e., (I Corinthians 12, Romans 12, and Ephesians 4) and explore the possible areas of service in the congregation for using the gift(s) for church growth.

ARTICLE 2: VOTING MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 – ELIGIBILITY

The Voters Assembly is the governing body of the congregation. Any communicant member of this congregation, who is eighteen (18) years of age or over, both male and female, shall be eligible to apply for voting membership. Such application shall be made at any Voter's Assembly meeting of the congregation. Upon affirmation by the applicant of his/her intention to fulfill such duties as are required of a voting member with all the rights and privileges pertaining thereto, he/she shall be required to sign the register with the official copy of the Constitution and By-Laws of the congregation at the time of his/her acceptance into voting membership.

Section 2 – PRIVILEGES AND DUTIES OF VOTING MEMBERS

It shall be the Privilege and duty of a voting member of this congregation to:

Conscientiously and prayerfully exercise his/her right of suffrage in all measures that will advance the work of Christ's Kingdom both locally and in the church-at-large.

Willingly serve in any office or capacity for which his/her gifts, talents, and abilities equip him/her.

Faithfully attend all meetings of the voting membership.

Assist with wholehearted diligence in administering the temporal and spiritual affairs of the congregation.

Encourage, by personal example, friendly interest, and judicious counsel, such eligible communicant members who are not yet voting members to consider seriously accepting the responsibilities and privileges of voting membership.

ARTICLE 3: DISCIPLINE IN THE CONGREGATION

All discipline in this congregation shall be administered in accordance with the order of discipline laid down in Matthew 18:15-20, I Corinthians 5:1-5, and other related New Testament passages. The following procedures shall be followed under the direction of the Pastor(s) and the Board of Elders.

Section 1 – COMMUNICANT MEMBERSHIP – TERMINATION

A. Transfers or Releases – A member desiring transfer or release to another Lutheran congregation shall submit a written request to the Pastor. Upon approval by the Pastor and the Board of Elders, a letter of transfer shall be issued by the Pastor. The Board of Elders shall report all transfers to the congregation via church publications and to the Voters Assembly at the next regular meeting of that body.

B. Joining Other Churches – In cases where communicant members of this congregation have joined a non-Lutheran congregation, they shall, upon the decision of the Pastor(s) and the Board of Elders, be deemed to have terminated their membership in this congregation, forfeiting all rights and privileges of such membership. Their name(s) shall be reported to the Voters Assembly and removed from the membership list of the congregation.

C. Whereabouts Unknown – The names of members whose whereabouts are unknown and cannot be established within a period of one (1) year shall be removed from the membership list. Such membership is terminated and shall be reported as such to the next regular meeting of the Voter's Assembly.

D. Excommunication and Self-Exclusion – For reasons laid down in Holy Scriptures and briefly enumerated in Article 4 of the Constitution of this congregation, the Voters Assembly has the right of excommunication, after the fruitless admonition of the offending member in the manner prescribed in Matthew 18:15-20. Excommunication shall be by unanimous vote of the Voter's Assembly. The excommunicated person shall be notified of the congregation's action. Excommunicated persons who repent and ask forgiveness shall be reinstated into membership (II Corinthians 2:6-10). Such action releases the individual from all responsibilities to this congregation, but it also excludes the member from the privileges of church membership, such as Christian burial, Holy Communion, transfer to a sister congregation, and of any claim against the properties of the congregation. Such a person, however, will at all times be cordially welcome to attend all divine services in our church.

Section 2 – PROVISIONS PERTAINING TO CHURCH OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS

Any officer or board member of the congregation who willfully neglects the duties of his/her office may be deposed by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the voting members present in a regular meeting of the Voters Assembly. The Board of Elders shall initiate such disciplinary action. When an office is made vacant by deposition, incapacitation, resignation, death, or excommunication of the incumbent, an interim successor to such officer or board member shall be presented by the Nominating Committee for appointment at the next regular Voters Assembly meeting.

Section 3 – PROVISIONS PERTAINING TO PASTORS

Sufficient grounds for deposing a pastor shall be persistent adherence to false doctrine, scandalous life, and willful neglect of official duties or evident and protracted incapacity to perform the function of the sacred office. Charges on any of these counts shall be carefully investigated by the Board of Elders. Should such charges be substantiated by clear and convincing evidence, the individual involved shall first be given an opportunity to resign his position in the congregation. Such opportunity having been given and declined, the above mentioned Board, after consultation with the appropriate officers of the Michigan District, shall notify the voting membership of the situation, and shall submit the matter for action at a special meeting of that body. A three-fourths (3/4) majority vote of the voting members present shall be required to depose a pastor.

Should the occasion to depose a pastor ever arise, the intended deposition shall be announced by the Chairman of the Board of Elders at regular divine services on the two (2) Saturdays/Sundays preceding a special meeting of the voting members called for that purpose. All voting members shall be notified by mail at least two (2) weeks in advance of the special meeting.

ARTICLE 4: MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION

Section 1 – REGULAR MEETINGS

The regular voters meetings of this congregation shall be monthly during the calendar year with the exception of the months of June, July and August. Extra meetings may be called by the President of the congregation. Every regular voters meeting shall be announced at a Saturday/Sunday Worship Service previous to its date. It shall be a valid and legal meeting, capable of transacting business, provided that at least ten (10) of the voting members of the congregation are in attendance. It shall be the duty of every voting member to attend voters meetings; by failing to attend, the member waives his/her right to cast his/her vote during such meetings. In all meetings of the congregation, the majority of votes cast shall decide all questions; however amendments to the Articles of Incorporation, the Constitution, and the By-Laws shall require a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the votes

cast. In matters of doctrine, unanimity shall be required for a valid decision. Regular Meetings are to be held on the second Monday of the designated months.

Section 2 – SPECIAL MEETINGS

Special meetings of the Voters Assembly may be called by the President, or at the request of any of the following to the President: Board of Elders, Board of Trustees, Board of Christian Education or any voting member of the congregation. Special voters meetings shall be announced at a Saturday/Sunday worship service at least one (1) week prior to the scheduled date of the meeting. Said Special meetings shall be held at a reasonable time and place as determined by the President.

All other provisions governing Regular meetings shall govern Special meetings.

Section 3 – PRESENCE OF OFFICIAL

No meetings of this congregation shall be conducted without the knowledge or presence of the Pastor or his designated representative.

Section 4 – ORDER OF BUSINESS AT REGULAR MEETINGS

Regular meetings of the voting membership shall proceed as follows:

1. Scripture Reading, Opening Devotion and/or Prayer
2. Reception of New Voting Members
3. Minutes of the Previous Voters Meeting(s)
4. Unfinished Business
5. Reports of Treasurer and Finance Secretary
6. Reports of Administrative Boards and Committees
7. State of the Parish report by Pastor
8. New Business
9. Adjournment with Prayer

The President may, at his discretion, vary the above order in the interests of efficiency. In general, for purposes of order, Robert's rules of Order shall prevail.

Section 5 – RESTRICTIONS PERTAINING TO VOTERS ASSEMBLY MEETINGS

Voting members in attendance at a properly called Voters Assembly meeting shall constitute a quorum, except as otherwise provided in this Constitution and By-Laws for dealing with certain specific situations herein defined.

In the event of a tie vote, the President shall cast the deciding ballot.

It shall be the duty of every voting member to attend meetings; by failing to attend, the member waives his/her right to cast his/her vote during such meeting. There shall be no voting by proxy.

ARTICLE 5: THE OFFICE OF THE PASTOR

Section 1 – PROCEDURE FOR SECURING A PASTOR

In case of a vacancy in the position of pastor, the congregation is urged to immediately notify the President of the Michigan District, so that he may assist in filling the vacancy by giving counsel in regard to the calling of a

new pastor and by assisting in providing names of candidates for consideration. Any member of the congregation is entitled to make nominations, which will be submitted to the District President for approval.

At a meeting of the Voters Assembly properly convened, the voters shall elect one of the proposed candidates by ballot and simple majority. It shall be the duty of the President to see that notice of the election is delivered promptly to the candidate in whatever manner the voting membership shall deem advisable.

Section 2 – THE PASTORAL OFFICE

The Pastoral Office is the authority conferred upon pastors by God, through a call of the congregation (the holder of the priesthood and of all congregational authority) to exercise in public office the common rights of spiritual priesthood in behalf of all. The Pastoral Office is the primary office in the congregation from which all other offices of the congregation issue. However, the congregation may establish as many auxiliary offices as its needs require and determine what work is to be assigned to such offices.

Upon being installed the pastor is authorized and obligated to proclaim to the Congregation, jointly and severally, the Word of God in its full truth and purity as contained in the canonical writings of the Old and New Testaments and professed in the Book of Concord of the year 1580. He is further:

To administer the sacraments in accordance with their divine institution;

To discharge toward all members of the congregation the functions of a minister and curate of their souls in an evangelical manner, in particular to visit the sick and the dying and admonish indifferent and erring members;

To Spiritually guard the welfare of the younger members of the congregation and adults during their preparation for acceptance of Holy Communion;

To guide adult members of the congregation as they seek Spiritual knowledge through study of the Holy Bible;

To guide the congregation in applying the divinely ordained discipline of the church;

To provide spiritual leadership and oversight in the educational agencies and the various adult and youth organizations within the congregation;

To serve as an example by Christian conduct and to do all that is possible for the up-building of the congregation and for the advancement of the Kingdom of Christ. By reason of his position the pastor is not only a servant and steward of God, but also of the congregation. The pastor(s) shall have the authority and responsibility for supervising the musical portion of all worship services in conjunction with the Board of Elders so that it is at all times in harmony with the doctrine and practice of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. Members of the congregation are obligated to accord the Pastor(s) honor, love, and obedience in his ministry of God's Word, and to support his ministrations with diligence and faithful prayers; to help him in the discharge of his duties by cordial one-mindedness, by willing readiness, by peaceable conduct, and in every other way possible; and to provide for his maintenance according to the ability of the congregation.

In calling a pastor to preach the Word of God and to administer the sacraments on their behalf, the members of the congregation exercise their royal priesthood and by no means relinquish it. This is the privilege and responsibility of all members of the Church.

ARTICLE 6: ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS

Section 1 – NOMINATION PROCEDURE

At the September meeting of the Voters Assembly, the President shall appoint two (2) qualified voting members who, together with the Pastor, shall serve as the Nominating Committee. One (1) shall be a member of an Administrative Board and one (1) member of the Voters Assembly not on an Administrative Board. The names of the Nominating Committee shall be published in the church bulletin. The appointments shall be effective for one (1) year.

The Nominating Committee shall prepare a slate of candidates from those eligible to be voting members. It is to be noted that women members cannot hold the following offices of the congregation: President, Vice-President or Elder. Each person nominated must have been contacted and accepted the nomination before his/her name can be placed on the slate. The Committee is responsible for obtaining candidates for each office.

The Nominating Committee, at least two (2) weeks before the date of the election meeting, shall post conspicuously on the church bulletin board the slate of candidates. The slate of candidates shall also be published in the church bulletin at least two (2) weeks prior to the date of the election meeting. Any Communicant member may submit additional names to the committee, provided they are submitted at least one (1) week before the election meeting, and the Nominating Committee determines them eligible and willing to serve.

Section 2 – ELECTION PROCEDURE

The election of officers and board members will take place at the December meeting of the Voters Assembly. Official ballots will be prepared for the election by the Nominating Committee. Election shall be by simple majority. The President shall appoint tellers for the purpose of collecting and counting ballots.

ARTICLE 7: TERMS AND DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Section 1 – THE PRESIDENT

The term of office for the President shall be one (1) year, with no term limit.

The President:

1. Shall preside at all meetings of the Voters Assembly.
2. Shall work in harmony with the pastor(s) and church officers and give leadership in implement the program of the congregation. All boards, committees, auxiliaries, groups, etc., of the congregation shall be responsible to the President, and he shall be welcome at any and all meetings of such groups, either in person or as represented by such person as he may appoint.
3. Shall appoint an Auditing Committee in January consisting of any two (2) qualified members of the congregation other than the Treasurer and Financial Secretary to audit the financial records of the congregation.

Section 2 – THE VICE-PRESIDENT

The term of office for the Vice-President shall be one (1) year, with no term limit.

The Vice-President:

1. Shall perform the duties of the President in his absence, disability, or at his request.
2. In the event of a vacancy in the office of the President, the Vice-President shall succeed to the office of the President for the remainder of the term.

Section 3 - THE TREASURER

The term of office for the Treasurer shall be one (1) year, with no term limit.

The Treasurer:

1. Shall be responsible for the accurate recording of congregational receipts and disbursements and budgeted and actual expenditures according to proper accounting procedures and, as deemed advisable, shall suggest for congregational consideration improved methods systems for keeping financial records.
2. Shall present a written, duplicated financial report at Voters meetings.
3. Shall keep accurate financial records which shall remain property of the congregation. These shall be audited annually and the report of such audit submitted to the March Voters meeting.
4. Shall receive a report of all monies received through worship services, special offerings, or any other source and duly record same.
5. Shall be responsible for monthly disbursements of offerings for missions and church agencies and sign all checks for prompt payment of salaries, bills or other financial commitments authorized by the congregation in the annual budget or special Voters meeting.
6. Shall have available for all Boards a current record of their accrued disbursements and budget allotment.

Section 4 – THE SECRETARY

The term of office for the Secretary shall be one (1) year, with no term limit.

The Secretary:

1. Shall enter the minutes of all meetings of the congregation in a permanent record book over his/her signature.
2. Shall conduct all official correspondence of the congregation under the direction of the President.
3. Shall in general perform all the duties normally pertaining to this office and such additional duties as the voting membership may delegate.

Section 5 – THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY

The Financial Secretary's duties fall under the job description of the Church Office Secretary.

The Financial Secretary:

1. Shall be responsible for the accurate counting, recording, and depositing of all receipts for the congregation in a local financial institution or institutions; and shall notify the Pastor(s) concerning contributions by non-members.
2. Shall be responsible for issuance of regular statements to members, showing their offerings to date.
3. Shall furnish the Treasurer with a duplicate deposit slip for all deposits.

4. Shall be responsible for requisitioning and distribution of offering envelopes.
5. Shall give a monthly report to the Voters Assembly.

Section 6 – THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Finance Committee shall be composed of at least twelve (12) members, to be selected by the Financial Secretary upon approval of the Board of Elders.

The Finance Committee:

1. Shall be responsible, under the direction of the Financial Secretary, for the prompt counting and depositing of Saturday/ Sunday and other receipts.
2. Shall meet with the Financial Secretary and Treasurer to discuss procedure and set up a counting schedule.

ARTICLE 8: TERMS AND DUTIES OF BOARDS

Section 1 – THE BOARD OF ELDERS

This Board is the logical extension of the pastoral office. The men on this Board, therefore, are extremely important in the ministry of the Gospel.

The Board of Elders shall consist of nine (9) members whose term of office shall be three (3) years with no term limits, three (3) members to be elected each year.

They shall organize annually and elect a chairman, vice chairman, and secretary. The secretary shall keep minutes of all board meetings, to be kept in a notebook which becomes the property of the congregation.

This basic objectives of this Board are the spiritual welfare of the Pastor(s) and congregation members, individually and corporately, and the supervision of everything pertaining to congregational worship.

That the objectives of this Board may be carried out, the following specific responsibilities are assigned to the Board of Elders.

The Board shall:

1. Pray for the Pastor(s) and other spiritual leaders.
2. Encourage the Pastor(s) in their work by word and action.
3. Be concerned about the spiritual, emotional and physical health and welfare of the Pastor(s) and their families, and to that end specifically review these items once a year.
4. Assist the Pastor(s) in counseling with difficult cases and in finding peaceful and God-pleasing solutions to personal problems within the congregation.
5. Review yearly the salary and performance of the Church Secretary (ies) and make appropriate recommendations to the voting membership or, in case of vacancy, interview and hire a replacement in conjunction with the Pastor(s).
6. Exercise leadership in gathering call lists and calling a new Pastor when a vacancy occurs.
7. Maintain discipline within the congregation according to Scripture, the Lutheran Confessions and Article 4 of the Constitution and Article 3 of the By-Laws of this congregation and exercise discipline when required.
8. Take spiritual charge and oversight of the list of family groupings assigned to them in liaison with the Pastor(s).

9. Insure that the congregation functions in accordance with the established doctrine of the Church as listed in Article 2 of the Constitution.
10. Determine eligibility for membership of all individuals and families applying for membership in this congregation according to Article 4 of the Constitution and Article 1 of the By-Laws.
11. See to the prompt transfer of all members who move away and of new Lutheran families moving into the community.
12. Engage in member conservation and discipleship training.
13. Engage in continual review of communion and church attendance of all members, make calls on delinquents, and follow up on all newborn children in the congregation until they are baptized.
14. Be concerned about and supervise thorough instruction of youth and adults for confirmation and church membership.
15. Be responsible for a friendly personal welcome of visitors at worship.
16. Be present for periodic training as determined by the Pastor(s) and this Board.
17. For administrative purposes and program development, supervise the work of all auxiliary organizations of the congregation.
18. Encourage spiritual programs in the societies of the congregation generally.
19. Submit an annual budget.

For the Worship of the Congregation:

1. Supervise the organists of the congregation.
2. Provide for vicars, assistants, substitute pastors and guest speakers as needed.
3. Staff, train and supervise the ushering staff.
4. Assist the Pastor(s) with communion distribution, reading of Scripture, leading devotions, etc., as required.
5. Plan and publicize the worship services, any special services, also set the time, schedule and number of communion services, all in conjunction with the Pastor(s).
6. Study and approve new forms of worship, liturgies, and hymns for use in public worship.
7. Supervise the Altar Guild in the care, use and maintenance of the sacred vessels, the altar, the altar furnishings, and vestments.
8. Maintain an adequate supply of expendable items for worship such as communion cards, pencils, communion wine and wafers, baptismal napkins, candles, etc., in conjunction with the Altar Guild.
9. Coordinate with the Altar Guild all church and chancel decorations, and the distribution of altar flowers to the sick and shut-ins.
10. Supervise the budgeted allotment for the selections and procurements of appropriate music, supervision of choirs, and other related matters.
11. Recommend and annually review compensation and personnel for the music staff as required for public worship.
12. Maintain and supervise adequate nursery facilities and personnel.

Section 2 – THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Board of Trustees shall consist of at least six (6) members, but not more than nine (9), whose term of office shall be three (3) years with no term limits, three (3) members to be elected each year.

They shall organize annually and elect a chairman, vice chairman, and secretary. The secretary shall keep minutes of all board meetings, to be kept in a notebook which becomes the property of the congregation. The basic objectives of this Board are the proper maintenance and repair of church property, the representation of the congregation in all legal matters, and the general protection of the congregation against loss or damage of whatever nature.

That the basic objectives of this Board may be carried out, the following responsibilities are assigned to the Board of Trustees.

The Board shall:

1. Make an annual inspection of church properties and equipment and recommend to the Voters Assembly needed repairs, improvements, or replacements.
2. Conduct an annual inventory of all church properties, equipment, and supplies, including acquisition date and approximate value of each item.
3. Carry out all resolutions of the Voters Assembly on purchases, repairs, replacement of church property and equipment.
4. Determine and engage, with the congregational approval, adequate custodial help. Annually review and recommend salaries; meet periodically with custodians to discuss the care of the buildings, needs and problems in custodial service, and the like; prepare a detailed list of the required daily and weekly, monthly or annual maintenance of the facilities and equipment of the congregation.
5. Develop policies and rules for the use of the church's facilities and receive and approve requests for such use for wedding receptions, recreational activities by various groups and all other activities of whatever nature and from whatever source.
6. Maintain and publish a master calendar of activities within the congregation's facilities and coordinate the use of the facilities with the various Boards, organizations, and individuals.
7. Be responsible for and supervise the use of all property and equipment used for the various activities sponsored by this and other Boards, groups, or committees who have requested and received approval of an activity in our facilities, this includes the kitchen, Fellowship Hall, etc.
8. Make and issue keys for church property, and keep and review annually a list of the keys issued.
9. Supervise, control, and recommend adequate storage facilities for all church property, equipment, and supplies and the orderly maintenance of the same.
10. Annually check the adequacy of all types of insurance for church property and equipment, and negotiate insurance contracts which provide surety bonds for all who are involved in financial matters, e.g., the Treasurer, Finance Committee, etc.
11. Check all property twice a year for fire hazards.
12. Enlist work crews for special repair, improvements, cleaning, painting, decorating, landscaping and other projects.
13. Arrange for immediate repairs of an urgent nature and all normal repairs and alterations for which budget funds have been allocated.
14. Obtain legal information necessary for the wise consideration of contracts, deeds, and the like by the congregation.
15. Negotiate service contracts for the organ, office machines, and the like.
16. Make an annual inventory of official documents in safekeeping, and enter its completion in the official minutes of the congregation.
17. Sign official documents and contracts that have been negotiated and approved by the congregation.
18. Obtain legal information on the laws governing non-profit organizations, and submit the Michigan Non-Profit Corporation Annual Report to Michigan Corporation & Securities Commission.
19. Submit and annual budget.
20. For minor maintenance projects have power to draw on the treasury to the amount of five hundred dollars (\$500.00) for each project without a special resolution of the Voters Assembly.

Section 3 – THE BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

The Board of Christian Education shall consist of at least six (6) members, but not more than nine (9) members whose term of office shall be three (3) years with no term limits, three (3) members to be elected each year.

They shall organize annually and elect a chairman, vice chairman, and secretary. The secretary shall keep minutes of all board meetings, to be kept in a notebook which becomes the property of the congregation. They shall also appoint a coordinator of the Sunday school, Vacation Bible School, Preschool, and Library.

The basic objectives of this Board are to plan, administer and supervise the total educational program of the congregation, to determine policies, to select personnel for the various agencies, to provide the necessary means and facilities for the agencies.

So that the objectives of this Board may be carried out, the Board, either corporately or through specifically designated individuals, shall:

1. Be responsible for the Christian nurture of children, youth, and adults in the congregation, and through them in the community and beyond, so that the Church may grow.
2. Establish objectives, set policies for, and supervise the total education program for each education agency in the congregation, including the personnel for said agencies. Such agencies shall include: the Preschool, Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, and all other educational groups.
3. Encourage an active expression of Christian love and concern as an integral part of the total education program.
4. For each educational agency: approve curriculum; analyze performance; seek constant improvement; review to see all age groups are served; make annual analysis for total participation of congregation; maintain "people accounting system" to record members' participation, and follow up on uninvolved.
5. Work with organizations and other Boards and committees to coordinate education activities within the congregation.
6. Encourage increasing participation of every congregation members, especially the elected officers and board members, in Bible Study, privately and in formal and informal groups.
7. Delegate administration of education agencies to qualified person; assist in enlisting, training, and placing of lay teachers and leaders for agencies.
8. Exercise leadership in gathering lists of candidates for vacancies in the teaching staff and for properly calling or contracting professional teachers; i.e., a Director of Christian Education, etc.; supervise conduct; be concerned about the spiritual, emotional and physical health and welfare of staff; annually review and make recommendations concerning adequate compensation; provide for continuing growth through conferences, conventions, continuing education and the like and request necessary funds for the same in a yearly budget.
9. Establish a system of commendation for recognition of faithful service by all persons involved in the educational task of the congregation.
10. Encourage Christian education programs in societies of the congregation; and consider special classes, courses, conferences, retreats and the like for special education opportunities.
11. Maintain, improve and cultivate the use of church library; provide audiovisual aids in a film library; provide and/or promote subscriptions to church periodicals.
12. Study and adopt or adapt helps suggested by the education departments of Synod, District, and Circuit.
13. Establish and maintain, in conjunction with other Boards, a continuing program for the recruitment of full-time workers in the church at large such as Pastors, teachers, deaconesses, and the like.

14. Establish and maintain a permanent file of all children and youth of the congregation by age, grade level, and the like and see to it that such a file is kept continually up to date.
15. Annually examine the education facilities and equipment, and make recommendations to the Board of Trustees as to upkeep, repairs and replacements needed as well as new equipment needed. Check the safety of education facilities – steps, handrails, lights, exits, housekeeping practices, fire drills, and the like on a regular basis.
16. Submit an annual budget.

ARTICLE 9: INDEMNIFICATION

To the fullest extent permitted by law, the congregation shall indemnify any individual who was or is a party, or is threatened to be made a party, to any proceeding other than a proceeding by or in the right of the congregation, because he or she was or is a called employee, officer or board member of the congregation, or because of any action or inaction in such capacity, against liability and expenses incurred in the proceeding, if (a) he or she conducted himself or herself in good faith; (b) he or she reasonably believed (i) in the case of conduct in his or her official capacity, that his or her conduct was in the best interests of the congregation, and (ii) in all other cases, that his or her conduct was at least not opposed to the best interests of the congregation and (c) in the case of any criminal proceeding, that he or she had no reasonable cause to believe that his or her conduct was unlawful.

ARTICLE 10: AMENDMENT OF BY-LAWS

These By-Laws may be changed or amended, by a two thirds majority of the votes cast in a properly convened meeting of the voting membership, provided that the wording of the amendments or changes proposed shall be presented to the congregation assembled for worship on two (2) consecutive Saturdays/Sundays prior to the date upon which the amendment of change is presented for action.

These By-Laws shall be reviewed and if needed, revised every 5 years by a committee appointed by the Board of Elders.