

**PROPOSED  
CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS  
FOR  
ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH  
East Moline --- Illinois  
November 2015**

**PREAMBLE**

The Word of God requires that a Christian congregation shall conform to this Divine Word in doctrine and practice (Ps. 119:105; Matt. 28:18-20; Gal. 1:6-8; 2 Tim. 4:1-5) and all things be done decently and orderly (1 Cor. 14:40). Therefore, we, the members of St. John's Lutheran Church, 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 I - NAME**

The name of this congregation shall be **ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH, EAST MOLINE, ILLINOIS**

**ARTICLE II - PURPOSE**

The purpose of this congregation shall be to serve its members and to spread the Kingdom of God by the preaching of the Word of God, by administration of the Sacraments, and by the religious instruction of youth and adults according to the confessional standard of the Lutheran Church (Article III), and to foster Christian Fellowship and Charity.

**ARTICLE III - CONFESSIONS**

This congregation acknowledges and accepts all the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments as the revealed Word of God, verbally inspired, and acknowledges and accepts all the Confessional Writings of the Evangelical Lutheran Church contained in the Book of Concord of 1580, to be the true and genuine exposition of Christian Doctrine taken from and in full agreement with the Holy Scriptures. In this congregation, no doctrine shall be taught or tolerated which is at variance with these confessional writings which are the three Ecumenical Creeds (Apostles', Nicene and Athanasian), the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, The Smalcald Articles, Luther's Large and Small Catechisms and the Formula of Concord. According to this norm of doctrine, all doctrinal controversies which may arise in this congregation shall be decided and settled.

**ARTICLE IV - MEMBERSHIP**

The membership of this congregation shall consist of Baptized Members, Communicant Members and Voting Members.

**ARTICLE V - OFFICE OF THE MINISTRY**

The pastoral office of this congregation as well as the office of any other called teacher or worker shall be conferred upon such ministers, teachers and candidates only as profess and adhere to the confessional position set forth in Articles II and III of this constitution and are well qualified for their work. Pastors and teachers and other professional staff members shall, in the call extended to and accepted by them, be pledged to this confessional standard.

**ARTICLE VI - OFFICERS AND ADMINISTRATION**

A. General. The Voter's Assembly, as a body, through the voting members, shall have the power, under God, to administer and manage all its external and internal affairs. The establishment and conduct of all institutions, societies and committees within the congregation, such as the Sunday School, youth societies, ladies organizations, choirs, etc., shall at all times be subject to the approval and supervision of the congregation. The Voter's Assembly, however, shall not be empowered to decide anything contrary to the Word of God and the Confessions of the Lutheran Church (Article III) and any such decision shall be null and void.

B. Corporate Officers. The duly elected Executive Board shall act as corporate officers of the congregation and shall represent that body in all legal matters after specific authority has been granted by the Voter's Assembly.

C. The Right of Calling. The right of calling Pastors or other professional church staff members shall be vested in the Voter's Assembly and shall never be delegated to a smaller body or to an individual.

D. Decisions. Matters of doctrine and conscience shall be decided by the Word of God. Decisions on separation, purchase of property, erection of buildings or removal from office of a pastor or called professional church staff members shall be decided by the Voter's Assembly by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting. Other matters shall be decided by the Voter's Assembly by a majority vote of those present unless otherwise specified by the Constitution or By-laws.

E. Election of Officers. The Voter's Assembly shall elect by ballot such officers as the By-laws may prescribe.

F. Power and Duties of Officers. Congregational officers or committees whether elected or appointed, shall have no authority beyond that which has been conferred upon them by the Voter's Assembly and the By-laws of the constitution. Such authority may at any time be altered or revoked by appropriate action of the Voter's Assembly.

G. Removal from Office. Any officer, pastor or professional church staff member may be removed from office by the Voter's Assembly, by ballot, in Christian and lawful order for one of the following causes: persistent adherence to false doctrine; scandalous life; inability to perform in his official duties or willful neglect of them.

#### **ARTICLE VII - PROPERTY RIGHTS**

This congregation may receive, acquire, hold title to and manage such real estate and other property as it may need to accomplish its purpose and may sell or dispose of such property; this body shall have all rights and powers that are granted by the laws of the State of Illinois to religious corporations. If at any time a separation should take place on account of doctrine, the property of the congregation and all benefits and obligations connected therewith shall remain with those voting members who continue to adhere in confession and practice to Article III of this constitution. In the event of dissolution of the congregation, property remaining after discharge of obligations connected therewith shall revert to the Central Illinois District of the Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod.

#### **ARTICLE VIII - SYNODICAL MEMBERSHIP**

This congregation shall hold membership in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. It shall send its pastor and a lay delegate to the District Convention of the Synod. It shall be the duty of the congregation and its individual members to support the work of Synod, since they thereby support their own Christ appointed work.

#### **ARTICLE IX - DOCTRINAL LITERATURE**

Only such hymns, prayers, and liturgies shall be used in the public services of the congregation and in all ministerial acts as conform to the confessional standards of Article III. Likewise, in all classes for instruction in Christian doctrine, only such books shall be used as conform to this standard.

#### **ARTICLE X - BY-LAWS AND GUIDELINES**

This congregation may adopt such By-laws and Guidelines as may be required for the accomplishment of its purpose.

#### **ARTICLE XI - CHANGING THE CONSTITUTION**

The following articles of the Constitution or sections thereof shall be unalterable and irrevocable: II, III, V, IX, and

XI. Amendments to the other articles of this Constitution and the By-laws may be adopted at a regular Voter's Assembly meeting provided: 1) they do not conflict with the provisions laid down in Article III or with any section of any other article that pertains to Scriptural doctrine and practice; and 2) that the proposed amendment has been submitted in writing at a previous Voter's Assembly and 3) that notice of the final edition is given prior to the final vote. The affirmative vote of a two-thirds majority of the voting membership present at the Voter's Assembly shall be required for the adoption of an amendment.

## **By-Laws**

### **SECTION I - NAME**

The name of this congregation represents the legal identification of the corporate body and may be changed only by proper action of the Voter's Assembly.

### **SECTION II - PURPOSE**

The purpose of this congregation as stated in the constitution (Article II) must be foremost in the consideration of all actions taken by this body. The intent of this Article may not be altered.

### **SECTION III - CONFESSIONS AND DOCTRINAL POSITION**

This article, as stated in the constitution (Article III), must be the basis for all service and discipline of the congregation. The intent of this article may not be altered.

### **SECTION IV - MEMBERSHIP**

#### **A. Admission into membership.**

1. Baptized Member. Any person who has been properly baptized may be admitted as a baptized member.

*a. Reception. Baptized members are received through the Sacrament of Holy Baptism or through transfer from a sister congregation. Baptized children from other Christian denominations, wishing to become members of this congregation, can do so with the consent of one or both of their non-member parents or guardians.*

*b. Responsibilities. Baptized members should conform their lives to their baptismal vow. Recognizing that Baptism is the beginning of spiritual life, the Baptized members should avail themselves of the opportunity to grow in the faith by close relationship with God's Word through the educational agencies of the church. This includes the responsibility of becoming a Communicant member through catechetical study.*

2. Communicant member.

a. By Confirmation. Confirmation itself being a reception into church membership, all who are thus received by this sacred act become communicant members.

b. By Transfer. Persons coming with a communicant letter of transfer from a congregation in church fellowship, provided they conform in all respects to the requirements of membership of this congregation, shall be received by the Board of Elders in the name of the congregation and reported to a meeting of the Voter's Assembly

c. By Profession of Faith. Other persons shall submit their application to the Board of Elders and, having given satisfactory evidence of qualifications for communicant membership, shall be received as communicant members and reported to a meeting of the Voter's Assembly.

d. Responsibilities of Communicant Members.

i. To accept all canonical books of the Old and New Testaments as the only divine rule and

standard of faith and life and to diligently study the Scriptures.

- ii. To be familiar, at least, with the six chief parts of the Christian Doctrine and declare acceptance of them.
- iii. To attend divine services faithfully.
- iv. To lead a Christian life and not live in manifest works of the flesh (Gal. 5:19-21).
- v. To partake of the Lord's Supper frequently after confirmation.
- vi. To contribute regularly and faithfully, as God has prospered them, toward the building of Christ's Kingdom in the congregation and throughout the world.
- vii. To devote time and talents to the extension of the Kingdom of God.
- viii. To permit themselves to be fraternally admonished and corrected when they have erred.
- ix. Not to be an affiliate or supporter of anti-Christian societies or other organizations conflicting with the Word of God.

### 3. Voting Member.

- a. All confirmed members who have reached their eighteenth birthday, have read and accepted the Constitution and By-Laws of the congregation, and have been accepted by the Voter's Assembly, shall be entitled to vote and to hold elective office. Women members may participate in all rights and privileges of voting membership except those matters pertaining to the public administration of the Office of the Keys and accordingly they shall not serve as Pastor, as a member of the Board of Elders, as Chairman, or vice-chairman of the congregation.
- b. It shall be the duty of every voting member to attend the Voter's Assembly meetings. By failing to attend such a meeting, a member waives the right to cast a vote during that meeting. Voters shall accept nomination for office, committee appointments, etc., if possible and generally participate in the business activities of the Voter's Assembly.
- c. A voting member who is absent from the meetings of the Voter's Assembly for two years without offering valid reason, shall be removed from the roster of the voting members.
- d. A member who has been removed from the roster of voting members may be reinstated upon request and attendance at Voter's Assembly.

## B. Termination of Membership

### 1. Baptized Membership

- a. *Failure to seek communicant membership. Baptized members who refuse further instruction toward communicant membership, including but not limited to the rite of confirmation, following due admonition may be reported by the Board of Elders to the Voter's Assembly to be removed from membership.*

### 2. Communicant Membership

- a. Transfer to other congregations. Communicant members desiring to join a congregation in church fellowship shall present their request for transfer to the Pastor or to the Board of Elders. Such transfer of membership shall be reported to the Voter's Assembly.
- b. Release to other churches. In cases where communicant members have joined another congregation outside our own fellowship, they shall, upon the recommendation of the Board of Elders, be considered to have terminated their membership, and their names shall be reported at the Voter's Assembly. Notification of the action will be sent to such individuals in writing.
- c. Whereabouts unknown. The names of members whose whereabouts are unknown and cannot be established shall be removed by action of the Voter's Assembly thereby terminating membership.
- d. Admonitions, Excommunication and Self-Exclusion. Any member who conducts himself in an unchristian manner shall be admonished and, if persistently unrepentant, excommunicated,

according to the Holy Scriptures (Matt. 18:15-20). *Any member who does not attend worship or receive the sacrament for an extended period of time may, after being admonished, be removed from membership by self-exclusion.* Any such actions shall be directed by the Pastor and the Board of Elders with the approval of the Voter's Assembly. Excommunication or self-exclusion terminates membership. Notification of the action *may* will be sent to the individual in writing by registered mail.

- e. Status. A person whose communicant membership has been terminated has forfeited all rights of a member of this congregation and all claims upon the property of the congregation as such, or upon any part thereof, so long as he is not reinstated into membership.

**C. Reinstatement of membership.**

- 1. Any *baptized or* communicant member whose membership has been terminated as a result of church discipline may apply to the Pastor or an elder for reinstatement by the Voter's Assembly.

**SECTION V - THE OFFICE OF THE MINISTRY**

- A. The offices of Pastor and any other called professional church staff member shall be conferred upon and held only by such ministers, ministerial candidates, teachers and workers who declare their acceptance of and adherence to the provisions of Articles II and III of this constitution; possess in sufficient measure the qualifications of a minister of the Gospel as prescribed in Holy Scripture; have been declared qualified by Synod; and have been properly called by the congregation. Whenever the need for calling a Pastor or other professional church staff member arises, the procedure for calling will be established by the Voter's Assembly. (At no time, however, shall the right for selection or calling be delegated to an individual or group of members.) The Voter's Assembly is the only body empowered to extend a call.
- B. Upon acceptance of a call, the Pastor is empowered and obligated to minister to all members of the congregation, administer the sacraments, and concern himself with the spiritual welfare of the congregation.
- C. The Pastor shall have the right to vote in the Parish Planning Council and Voter's Assembly. He shall be ex-officio member of all other boards and committees.

**SECTION VI - OFFICERS AND ADMINISTRATION**

- A. Voter's Assembly Meetings.
  - 1. Regular meetings of the Voter's Assembly shall be held on the Sunday following the second Thursday of March, June, September, and December. The December meeting shall be designated as the Annual Meeting especially for the purposes of election of officers and adoption of a budget for the following year.
  - 2. Special meetings of the Voter's Assembly may be called by the Parish Planning Council, Pastor, or President. Notice of the meeting and its purpose should be given no less than two weeks in advance.
- B. Election Procedures.
  - 1. The Executive Board shall appoint a nominating committee no later than the September meeting of the Voter's Assembly. The nominating committee shall present a slate of candidates for elected offices of the congregation at the December meeting. ~~The slate for positions on the Executive Board shall, when possible, consist of at least two (2) candidates for each position.~~ Additional

nominations may be made from the floor at any time prior to the official closing of nominations. Each nominee must consent to serve before his name is put on the ballot.

2. The annual election shall be by ballot and shall take place at the regular December meeting.

C. Elected Officers.

1. From its own membership, the Voter's Assembly shall elect 1. a President, a Vice-President, a Recording Secretary, a Treasurer, an Assistant Treasurer, a Financial Secretary, and an Assistant Financial Secretary, who shall serve as the Executive Board and (2) members of the Board of Elders, ~~Parish Ministry, Evangelism, Stewardship, Education, Youth~~ *Youth and Family Ministry, Outreach Ministry, Human Care Ministry*, and Trustees.

D. Terms of Office.

1. All officers and members of administrative Boards shall be elected annually.

2. All members of the executive board shall be permitted to hold the same office for only two consecutive terms. Waivers of this policy shall require the specific approval of the Voter's Assembly. The officers elect shall assume their respective duties on the 1st of January.

3. In the event of a vacancy in any elected office, the Executive Board shall appoint a successor to complete the unexpired term.

E. Appointments and committees.

1. Appointments for special committees or other appointments not described by the By-Laws, shall be made by ~~the Executive Board.~~ *the elected boards.*

*a. Committees shall serve under the authority of the elected boards. Two types of committees are permitted.*

*i. Short term – Short term committees may be formed at such time as deemed necessary for the business of the congregation. Such committees are expected to have a limited responsibility and term of operation, and serve at the discretion of the elected boards.*

*ii. Continuing – Continuing committees may be formed to address longer term needs of the congregation. Continuing committees may be established by the elected boards at any time, but require approval by a majority vote of the Parish Planning Council to maintain the status of a continuing committee. Dissolution of continuing committees shall also be by a majority vote of the Parish Planning Council.*

F. Duties of Elected Officers and Boards

1. Basic objectives and responsibilities of elected officers and administrative boards are described below. Each officer and board is charged with meeting these responsibilities and shall report directly to the Voter's Assembly for program approval and direction. Unless otherwise specified, each board shall elect a chairperson from its membership.

2. Parish Planning Council.

a. The Parish Planning Council shall consist of the president, vice-president, recording

secretary, treasurer, ~~assistant treasurer, financial secretary~~, and chairpersons of the elected boards.

- b. The Parish Planning Council ~~is not primarily a decision-making body, but~~ shall serve as a forum where the activities of the elected boards may be discussed, evaluated, and coordinated, and where such activities may be integrated into an overall congregational program. The council shall be available at all times, however, for any additional functions which the Voter's Assembly may wish to confer upon it. The council shall normally meet prior to each meeting of the Voter's Assembly. Additional meetings may be called by the president and/or the Pastor as required.
- c. The basic objectives of the Parish Planning Council are to:
  - Coordinate activities of boards
  - Act as the point of liaison between Pastor, officers, and boards in the planning of the total work of the congregation.
- d. The following specific responsibilities are assigned to the Parish Planning Council:
  - i. In January, initiate a goal setting session to develop a yearly plan of activity for the entire congregation as well as long-range plans for the development and expansion of Christ's work in our midst. A report of this planning session shall be made to the next Voter's Assembly.
  - ii. Review the programs of all boards to ensure coordination of the total program of the congregation and the attainment of its objectives.
  - iii. *Approve the establishment and dissolution of continuing committees.*
  - iv. ~~iii.~~ Determine anticipated receipts and recommend a budget for adoption by the Voter's Assembly at the December meeting.
  - v. ~~iv.~~ Annually review the compensation for all paid workers of the congregation and make appropriate recommendations to the Voter's Assembly.

### 3. The Executive Board

- a. The vice-president shall serve as chairman of this board.
- b. The basic objectives of this board are to:
  - i. Act on policy matters not otherwise delegated to other boards
  - ii. Coordinate long range planning activities.
  - iii. Represent the congregation in all legal matters.
- c. The following specific responsibilities are assigned to the Executive Board:
  - i. Review and determine disposition of policy items not otherwise clearly delegated to other boards.
  - ii. Appoint a nominating committee in September to prepare a slate of candidates for the December Meeting of the Voter's Assembly.
  - iii. Appoint a financial review committee in January to serve for one year. The financial review committee shall present its written report of an annual financial review at the May Voter's Assembly meeting. The committee shall:
    - complete an annual financial review of the treasurer's books after the books are closed for one year.
    - complete additional financial reviews prior to the change of financial officers in the course of a term.
    - receive a report of a complete financial review from all church societies. Each society shall make an financial review to coincide with the election of its treasurer and shall provide the congregation's financial review committee a report of that financial review.
  - iv. Appoint an archivist who is to be responsible for gathering and preserving items of historic interest for the congregation.

- v. Appoint appropriate committees to develop congregational programs to support the Lutheran Layman's League, the Church Extension Fund, and Lutheran Welfare Services, and other agencies of this type as indicated.
  - vi. Fill unexpired terms of elected officers by appointment.
  - vii. Approve and supervise congregational societies and organizations.
  - viii. Obtain legal information necessary for the wise consideration of contracts, deeds, etc, by the congregation and obtain legal information on laws governing our congregation.
  - ix. Sign official documents and contracts that have been approved by the congregation.
  - x. Establish a scholarship fund and a policy for administering this fund. Monies for the fund can be received from the budget and special gifts. Its purpose would be to lend encouragement and financial assistance to members of St. John's congregation to enter the full-time work of the Kingdom.
  - xi. Prepare and submit to the Parish Planning Council, an annual budget in the form and at the time requested.
  - xii. (The Executive Board) with the Administrative Pastor's help, interview and hire all secretarial and clerical staff.
- d. Duties of members of the Executive Board:
- i. The President shall:
    - a. To the best of his ability, enforce the constitution and By-laws of the congregation.
    - b. Supervise the implementation of the expressed will of the congregation as embodied in the resolutions of the Voter's Assembly.
    - c. Call and preside over the meetings of the Voter's Assembly and Parish Planning Council.
    - d. Be ex-officio member of all boards and committees within the congregation.
  - ii. The Vice-president shall:
    - a. Act for and in the stead of the president during his absence.
    - b. Call and preside over meetings of the Executive Board.
    - c. Actively enlist membership for the Voter's Assembly.
    - d. Be available for whatever duties the president shall assign as his representative.
  - iii. The Recording Secretary shall:
    - a. Be present at all meetings of the Voter's Assembly, the Parish Planning Council, and the Executive Board, and enter the minutes of all meetings of these groups in permanent record books.
    - b. Conduct all official correspondence of the congregation.
    - c. Perform all other duties normally pertaining to this office and such additional duties as the Voter's Assembly may delegate.
  - iv. The Treasurer of the congregation shall:
    - a. Receive from the Financial Secretary a report of all monies received through worship services, special offerings, and all other sources.
    - b. Be responsible for accurate recording of congregational receipts and disbursements and budgeted and actual expenditures according to proper



- accounting procedures and, as deemed advisable, suggest improved methods for consideration of the Voter's Assembly.
- c. Present a written, duplicated financial report at Voter's Assembly and a preliminary report at meetings of the Parish Planning Council.
  - d. Submit permanent financial records for annual audit by the congregation's auditing committee.
  - e. Sign all checks for and be responsible for prompt payments of bills, salaries, or other financial commitments of the congregation.
  - f. Furnish the congregation a surety bond in sum designated by the Voter's Assembly, the premiums of such bond to be paid by the congregation.
  - g. Be responsible for monthly remission of offerings for missions and church agencies authorized by the congregation or various boards.
  - h. Coordinate the flow of monies from the treasury to the various boards in such a way that an adequate balance is retained for the payment of salaries and other regularly recurring expenses.
  - i. Have available for all boards a current record of their accrued disbursements and budget allotment.
- v. The Assistant Treasurer shall:
- a. Learn duties and procedures of the office of the Treasurer.
  - b. Serve as acting Treasurer during the absence or illness of the Treasurer.
  - c. Furnish the congregation a surety bond in the sum designated by the Voter's Assembly, the premiums of such bond to be paid by the congregation.
- vi. The Financial Secretary shall:
- a. Appoint, instruct, and supervise tellers who are to assist in the counting of offerings after each worship service; be otherwise responsible for the accurate counting, recording, and depositing of all receipts for the congregation in a financial institution designated by the Voter's Assembly. All worship service offerings shall be deposited on the date received.
  - b. Appoint, if necessary individuals who shall assist in recording the weekly contributions of the members on forms provided by the congregation, issue regular [quarterly] statements to the members showing their offerings for that period of time as well as an annual statement, and compile an annual report which includes an analysis of member's contributions by categories for use by the Board of Stewardship.
  - c. Furnish the treasurer with a duplicate deposit slip for all deposits.
  - d. Be responsible for purchase and annual distribution of offering envelopes, and also issue offering envelopes as soon as is feasible to new members upon their acceptance into membership with the congregation during the course of the year.
  - e. Furnish to the congregation a surety bond in the amount set by the Voter's Assembly, such bond premium to be paid by the congregation.
- vii. The Assistant Financial Secretary shall:
- a. Learn duties and procedures of the office of the Financial Secretary.
  - b. Serve as Acting Financial Secretary during the absence or illness of the Financial Secretary.
  - c. Furnish the congregation a surety bond in the sum designated by the

Voters' Assembly, the premiums of such bond to be paid by the congregation.

#### 4. THE BOARD OF ELDERS

- a. The Board of Elders shall consist of at least one elder for approximately ~~twenty~~ *thirty* families. Since the Office of the Keys will directly affect the office of the Elders in St. John's congregation, only male members who have reached the age of twenty-five shall be eligible for election as an elder. Elders are to be selected from those men who are regular in worship and communion attendance, who will set an example for the congregation by attendance at the Adult Bible class and who live a life of harmony with Christian principles. See also Acts 6:3.
- b. The basic objectives of this board are:
  - the spiritual welfare of the pastor and congregation members, individually and corporately.
  - the supervision of everything pertaining to congregational worship.
  - *the integration of members, old and new, into the various areas of service to God and others and into the specific ministries of the congregation.*
- c. The following specific responsibilities are assigned to the Board of Elders:
  - i. Pray for and encourage the pastor and other spiritual leaders in their work by word and action.
  - ii. Take spiritual charge and oversight of all baptized members of the congregation.
  - iii. Insure that the congregation functions in accordance with the established confessional standards of the Church as listed in Article III of the constitution.
  - iv. Maintain discipline within the congregation according to Scripture, the Lutheran Confessions and Article III of the constitution and Section IV of the By-laws of the congregation.
  - v. Assist the pastor in counseling with difficult cases and in finding peaceful and God pleasing solutions to personal problems within the congregation
  - vi. Be responsible for initiating steps whereby the congregation gathers call lists and calls a full-time worker when a vacancy occurs.
  - vii. Be responsible to initiate the proper action should sufficient reason arise for disposing a Pastor or full-time Called Worker as described in Article VI Officers and Administration, G. Removal from Office.
  - viii. Initiate action for temporary arrangements for the usual functions of the Pastoral office or any other full-time office established by the congregation in the event of a vacancy.
  - ix. Continually review the communion and church attendance of all members, make calls on membership, and follow up on all newborn children in the congregation until they are confirmed.
  - x. Be responsible for a program of service to the shut-ins of the congregation under the supervision of the Pastor. Calls should be made, bringing the taped worship services to the shut-ins on a regular basis.
  - xi. Together with the pastor, offer a program of visitation to the sick.
  - xii. Plan all worship services for the year, and arrange special services as required.
  - xiii. Set the time, schedule and number of communion services in cooperation with the pastor and the Voter's Assembly.

- xiv. Assist with communion distribution, reading of the Scripture, etc. as required.
- xv. Approve and disapprove new forms of worship, liturgies, and hymns for use in public worship *according to the guidelines set forth in Article IX of the Constitution.*
- xvi. Interview and hire organists and choir directors when vacancies occur.
- xvii. Be responsible for ushers, appoint Head Ushers, and assist them in the staffing, training and supervising the Usher's Staff.
- xviii. Coordinate the work of the Altar Guild which shall be responsible for the care, use and maintenance of the Sacred vessels, the altar, the altar furnishing, and vestments.
- xix. Be responsible for the enlistment and training of the acolytes.
- xx. Appoint a wedding co-ordinator of the congregation who shall assist the Pastor.
- xxi. Provide classes for the education and spiritual growth of members and prospective members, and encourage every member to be in God's Word privately and in formal and informal groups.*
- xxii. Provide for the discipleship formation of all members, by educating and encouraging them to use their God given time, talents and treasures in service to Christ's Church and in their vocations.*
- xxiii. Be responsible for the maintenance of a congregational talent file, and provide for the recording of the talents and abilities of incoming members.*
- xxiv. Provide opportunities for the development of talents such as training courses and workshops.*
- xxv. Conduct annual programs of instruction in basic Biblical Stewardship in order to give every member an opportunity to make a commitment of time, talents and treasures for the work of the congregation.*
- xxvi. Engage at least once yearly in a review and evaluation of the board's work.*
- ~~xxi.~~ *xxvii.* Prepare and submit, to the Parish Planning Council, an annual budget in the form and at the time requested.

5. THE BOARD OF PARISH MINISTRY

- ~~a. The Board of Parish Ministry shall consist of at least six members. Its basic objectives are:
 
  - ~~To foster a spirit of Christian caring among our members as a natural demonstration of our love for Jesus Christ.~~
  - ~~To develop and administer policies for the congregation's efforts to meet the physical and emotional needs of people as an expression of a living faith and in support of the proclamation of the Gospel.~~
  - ~~To educate the congregation regarding the resources available through the church, synod and the community for those with special needs.~~
  - ~~To integrate members, old and new, into the various areas of service to God and others and into the specific ministries of the congregation.~~~~
- ~~b. The following specific responsibilities are assigned to the Board of Parish Ministry.
 
  - ~~i. Determine and administer the congregation's programs of social welfare: food pantry, care ministry, food basket distribution, etc.~~~~

- ~~ii. Analyze the congregation's ability and efforts to meet the needs of disabled individuals including those visually and hearing impaired.~~
- ~~iii. Urge the members to support and utilize the special agencies of the synod and district such as Bethesda Lutheran Home, Mill Neck Manor, Camp Cilea, etc.~~
- ~~iv. Promote the ministry for homebound individuals which includes such as "The Lutheran Hour", "This is the Life", The Concordia Tract Ministry, etc.~~
- ~~v. Develop and promote visitation to hospitals and nursing homes.~~
- ~~vi. Assess the needs of those who experience personal calamities and facilitate the efforts of the congregation to provide assistance.~~
- ~~vii. Monitor the needs of the elderly of our congregation and guide the congregation in appropriate assistance.~~
- ~~viii. Encourage fellowship opportunities which recognize the special needs of those who may be experiencing loneliness: widows, widowers, single parents, etc.~~
- ~~ix. Work with social ministry representatives of other congregations to promote the foreign and domestic ministries of the synod, district and circuit.~~
- ~~x. Assist members in discovering how they can use their pledges of Time and Talent to support and promote the work of various agencies in the congregation.~~
- ~~xi. Prepare and submit, to the Parish Planning Council, an annual budget in the form and at the time requested.~~

## 5. THE BOARD OF YOUTH AND FAMILY MINISTRY

- a. *The Board of Youth and Family Ministry shall consist of at least four members. Its basic objectives are*
  - *to determine policies, plan, direct and supervise the total educational program of the congregation.*
  - *to select personnel and provide the necessary means and facilities for the agencies.*
  - *to provide for spiritual growth, involvement and genuine Christian fellowship among the children, youth, adults and families of the congregation.*
- b. *The following specific responsibilities are assigned to the Board of Youth and Family Ministry:*
  - i. *Be responsible for the Christian education and nurture of children and youth in the congregation.*
  - ii. *Establish objectives, set policies for, and supervise the total education program in the congregation, including the personnel, for the Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, Preschool, Confirmation, Youth and Adult Bible classes.*
  - iii. *Approve curriculum and analyze performance of parish education and seek constant improvement.*
  - iv. *Continually review educational programs to determine whether all age groups are being served, the degree of participation of the total membership and recommend revisions and additions to the program as deemed advisable.*
  - v. *Establish and maintain, in conjunction with other boards, a continuing program*

- for the recruitment of full-time workers in the church at large.*
- vi. *Provide for the professional growth of the Youth and Family Ministry staff through training programs, conferences, conventions, continuing education and other means.*
  - vii. *Promote attendance and involvement of the congregation's parents, children and youth in worship and in all activities and congregational functions.*
  - viii. *In conjunction with the Board of Outreach Ministry provide for an active Evangelism program through the Sunday School. This includes contacts with children who become inactive in their attendance, and especially an out-reach for the unchurched children in the community.*
  - ix. *Be responsible for supervision of the Cradle Roll.*
  - x. *Together with the Sunday School staff, prepare and present the Sunday School Christmas Program.*
  - xi. *Be responsible for special classes, courses, conferences, retreats and the like for special purposes and for special groups, such as the handicapped, married couples and families.*
  - xii. *Maintain, improve and cultivate the use of a church library, and media center.*
  - xiii. *Annually examine the educational facilities and equipment, and make recommendations to the Board of Trustees as to upkeep, repairs, and replacements needed as well as new equipment needed.*
  - xiv. *Plan and carry out a year-round spiritual, social, and recreational program for the members of the congregation, ie. children, youth, adults, families, etc..*
  - xv. *Actively participate in the selection and training of adult leaders for all children and youth programs.*
  - xvi. *Plan and observe, together with the pastor, periodic youth Sundays.*
  - xvii. *Promote and provide opportunities for activities and events to build relationships among the members of the congregation, ie. small or specialized groups, congregational dinners, supper clubs, etc.*
  - xviii. *Engage at least once yearly in a review and evaluation of the board's work.*
  - xix. *Prepare and submit, to the Parish Planning Council, an annual budget in the form and at the time requested.*

6. THE BOARD OF EVANGELISM THE BOARD OF OUTREACH MINISTRY

- a. The Board of ~~Evangelism~~ *Outreach* shall consist of at least ~~six~~ *four* members. Its basic objectives are:
  - the enlistment of all God's people in the work of spreading the Gospel.
  - the bringing of the Gospel to the unchurched.
  - *the education regarding and promotion of mission work beyond the congregation.*
- b. The following specific responsibilities are assigned to the Board of Evangelism:
  - i. Share with the pastor in the entire program of proclaiming the Gospel to all people.
  - ii. Encourage prayer in church and homes for sincere evangelistic concern toward all people ~~inside and outside the Church.~~
  - iii. Foster a climate ~~of evangelism~~ that encourages congregation members informally and spontaneously to share Christ with one another, and the unsaved.
  - iv. Emphasize evangelism *and mission outreach* through an intensive every-member education program.

- v. Promote and direct congregation-wide evangelism *and mission* undertakings.
- vi. Utilize the evangelism potential of the Lutheran Hour, ~~This Is The Life~~, and other Synodical or Christian programs.
- vii. Emphasize evangelism and encourage ~~evangelism~~ *outreach* programs in and through the societies and auxiliary organizations of the congregation and suggest projects for such organizations.
- viii. Emphasize, in conjunction with the Board of *Family and Youth Ministry* ~~Christian Education and the Board of Youth~~, child and youth evangelism *and missions support*, both in participation and outreach.
- ix. Canvass the congregation's area of responsibility and effectively record, study, and utilize the results in churching the lost and straying.
- x. Be responsible for the follow-up of a prospect file at all times.
- xi. Be responsible for the follow-up of visitors at the worship services.
- xii. Before organization of pastor's instruction classes, conduct special visitations to witness for Christ and to invite prospective members to attend.
- xiii. Be genuinely concerned for those moving into the community and for those (both members and prospects) moving into other areas. Use any and all means available for maintaining such contacts.
- xiv. Study and adopt or adapt suggestions by the *outreach entities* ~~evangelism~~ ~~departments~~ of Synod, District, and Circuit.
  - xv. Engage at least once yearly in a review and evaluation of the board's work.
  - xvi. Be responsible for the tract ministry of the congregation.
  - xvii. Be concerned with the congregation's role in the community and develop a program of community relations that identifies the congregation with the Gospel of Christ.
- xviii. Establish and maintain a continuing program of publicity for the congregation and its activities which will reflect favorably on the congregation and its commitment to the Gospel of Christ.
- xix. Be responsible for Greeters, and assist them in the staffing, training and supervising the Greeter's staff.
- xx. Prepare and submit, to the Parish Planning Council, an annual budget in the form, and at the time requested.

## 7. THE BOARD OF STEWARDSHIP

- a. ~~The Board of Stewardship shall consist of at least six members. Its basic objectives are:
 
  - ~~initiate programs for the development of good stewardship attitudes in the members of the congregation in regard to time, talents, and treasures.~~
  - ~~ensure the financial stability of the congregation and its work through a developed program of dedicated, proportionate giving.~~~~
- b. ~~The following specific responsibilities are assigned to the Board of Stewardship:
 
  - i. ~~Study the Scriptural principles regarding the total stewardship calling of the Christian and share these insights with congregation members.~~
  - ii. ~~Be responsible for maintenance of a congregational talent file, and provide for the recording of the talents and abilities of incoming members.~~
  - iii. ~~Provide opportunities for the development of talents such as training courses and~~~~

- workshops.
- iv. ~~Conduct an annual program of instruction in basic Biblical Stewardship in order to give every member an opportunity to make a commitment of his treasure for Kingdom work through the congregation. Provide to the Planning Council a projection of stewardship giving and a report of the final results of the annual stewardship program.~~
  - v. ~~Develop a year round Stewardship follow up program.~~
  - vi. ~~Evaluate the offering of the congregation regularly and share these evaluations with the members of the congregation.~~
  - vii. ~~Prepare and submit, to the Parish Planning Council, an annual budget in the form and at the time requested.~~

## 7. THE BOARD OF HUMAN CARE MINISTRY

- a. *The Board of Human Care Ministry shall consist of at least four members. Its basic objectives are:*
  - *To foster a spirit of Christian caring among our members as a natural demonstration of our love for Jesus Christ.*
  - *To develop and administer policies for the congregation's efforts to meet the physical and emotional needs of people, both within and outside the congregation, as an expression of a living faith and in support of the proclamation of the Gospel.*
  - *To educate the congregation regarding the resources available through the congregation, synod, and community, for those with special needs.*
  - *To educate members about opportunities for serving and supporting the needs of others in the congregation, community, and throughout the world.*
  - *To encourage members to take an active part in ministries of human care and disaster relief.*
- b. *The following specific responsibilities are assigned to the Board of Human Care Ministry.*
  - i. *Determine and administer the congregation's programs of social welfare: food pantry, care ministry, food basket distribution, grief support, parish nurse, etc.*
  - ii. *Analyze the congregation's ability and efforts to meet the needs of disabled individuals including those who are visually or hearing impaired.*
  - iii. *Urge the members to support and utilize the special human care agencies of the synod and district such as Bethesda Lutheran Home, Lutheran World's Relief and Human Care, Camp Cilca, etc.*
  - iv. *Promote human care opportunities outside the congregation, ie. Habitat for Humanity, Crisis Pregnancy Centers, Lutherans For Life, Homeless Missions, Lutheran Disaster Response Teams, etc..*
  - v. *Promote and assist in organizing regular local service projects and mission trips for members..*
  - vi. *Develop and promote visitation to hospitals and nursing homes.*
  - vii. *Assess the needs of those who experience personal calamities and facilitate the efforts of the congregation to provide assistance.*
  - viii. *Monitor the needs of the elderly of our congregation and guide the congregation in appropriate assistance.*
  - ix. *Encourage fellowship opportunities which recognize the special needs of those who may be experiencing loneliness: widows, widowers, single parents, etc.*
  - x. *Work with social ministry representatives of other congregations to promote the foreign and domestic care ministries of the synod, district and circuit.*
  - xi. *Engage at least once yearly in a review and evaluation of the board's work.*

*xii. Prepare and submit, to the Parish Planning Council, an annual budget in the form and at the time requested.*

~~8. THE BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION~~

- ~~a. The Board of Christian Education shall consist of at least six members. Its basic objectives are~~
- ~~— to determine policies, plan, direct and supervise the total educational program of the congregation.~~
  - ~~— to select personnel and provide the necessary means and facilities for the agencies.~~
- ~~b. The following specific responsibilities are assigned to the Board of Christian Education:~~
- ~~i. Be responsible for the Christian nurture of children, youth, and adults in the congregation.~~
  - ~~ii. Establish objectives, set policies for, and supervise the total education program for educational agencies in the congregation, including the personnel, for the Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, Preschool and Bible classes.~~
  - ~~iii. Approve curriculum and analyze performance of each education agency and seek constant improvement.~~
  - ~~iv. Continually review educational agencies to determine whether all age groups are being served, the degree of participation of the total membership and recommend revisions and additions to the program as deemed advisable.~~
  - ~~v. Establish and maintain, in conjunction with other boards, a continuing program for the recruitment of full time workers in the church at large.~~
  - ~~vi. Recruit teachers for the Educational Programs.~~
  - ~~vii. Provide for the professional growth of the Educational staff through training programs, conferences, conventions, continuing education and other means.~~
  - ~~viii. Together with the Board of Elders encourage the participation of the Sunday School children in the worship services.~~
  - ~~ix. Appoint and develop the duties of the Sunday School Staff.~~
  - ~~x. Be responsible for an active Evangelism program through the Sunday School. This includes contacts with children who become inactive in their attendance, and especially an out reach for the unchurched children in the community.~~
  - ~~xi. Be responsible for supervision of the Cradle Roll.~~
  - ~~xii. Together with the Sunday School staff, prepare and present the Sunday School Christmas Program.~~
  - ~~xvii. Be responsible for special classes, courses, conferences, retreats and the like for special purposes and for special groups, such as the handicapped, married couples and families.~~
  - ~~xiv. Encourage increasing participation of every congregation member in Bible study, privately and in formal and informal groups.~~
  - ~~xv. Maintain, improve and cultivate the use of a church library, and media center.~~
  - ~~xvi. Annually examine the educational facilities and equipment, and make recommendations to the Board of Trustees as to upkeep, repairs, and replacements needed as well as new equipment needed.~~
  - ~~xvii. Prepare and submit, to the Parish Planning Council, an annual budget in the form and at the time requested.~~

~~9. THE BOARD OF YOUTH~~

- ~~a. The Board of Youth shall consist of at least six members. Its basic objectives are:~~
- ~~— to involve the youth of the congregation in the work of Christ.~~



- ~~—to provide for their spiritual growth and to promote genuine Christian fellowship among the youth of the congregation.~~
- ~~b. The following specific responsibilities are assigned to the Board of Youth:
 
  - ~~i. Promote attendance and involvement of the congregation's youth at all youth activities and congregational functions.~~
  - ~~ii. Plan and carry out, with youth leaders, a year round spiritual, social, and recreational program for the youth of the congregation.~~
  - ~~iii. Be responsible for the assimilation of all youth into appropriate programs for study and activity.~~
  - ~~iv. Actively participate in the selection and training of adult leaders for all youth programs.~~
  - ~~v. Plan and observe, together with the pastor, periodic youth Sundays.~~
  - ~~vi. Provide and support appropriate community youth organizations such as Scouting programs, etc.~~
  - ~~vii. Provide for public recognition of various youth achievements and accomplishments
 
    - ~~a. Inform the public on specific Lutheran Youth Fellowship accomplishments and services.~~
    - ~~b. Inform the congregation of accomplishments by individual youth.~~~~
  - ~~viii. Plan and coordinate activities with other Christian Youth groups.~~
  - ~~ix. Encourage and involve the youth of the congregation in bringing others to faith in Christ.~~
  - ~~x. Provide counseling for the spiritual, moral, social, and vocational development of youth.~~
  - ~~xi. Develop programs to meet the needs of post High School age youth.~~
  - ~~xii. Prepare and submit to the Parish Planning Council, an annual budget in the form and at the time requested.~~~~

**10. 8. THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

- a. The Board of Trustees shall consist of at least ~~six~~ *four* members. Its basic objectives are:
  - the proper maintenance and repair of church property.
  - development and administration of policies regarding use of church facilities and equipment.
  - the general protection of the congregation against loss or damage to its property.
- b. The following specific responsibilities are assigned to the Board of Trustees:
  - i. Make an annual inspection of church properties and equipment and recommend to the Voter's Assembly needed repairs, improvements, or replacements.
  - ii. Arrange for immediate repairs of an urgent nature and all normal repairs and alterations for which budget funds have been allocated.
  - iii. Enlist work crews for special repair, improvements, cleaning, painting, decorating, landscaping, and other projects.
  - iv. Carry out all decisions of the Voter's Assembly on purchases, repairs, and replacement of church property and equipment.
  - v. Conduct an inventory each July of official documents in safekeeping and of all church properties and equipment including acquisition date and approximate value of each item, and enter the results in the official records of the congregation. A report shall be made at the September meeting of the Voter's Assembly.
  - vi. Interview and hire the custodial personnel when a vacancy occurs.
  - vii. Meet periodically with custodians to discuss the care of the buildings, needs and

- problems in custodial service, etc.
- viii. Determine and establish, with approval of the Voter's Assembly, regulations and fees governing the rental, use and lending of church property and equipment such as the organ, office equipment, chairs and tables, kitchen equipment, gymnasium, meeting rooms, etc.
- ix. Coordinate and approve the scheduling of all activities within the congregation's facilities.
- x. Approve or disapprove all requests for use of the congregation's facilities and equipment.
- xi. Make and issue keys for the church property and keep and review annually a list of the keys issued.
- xii. Annually check the adequacy of all types of insurance for church property and equipment and negotiate insurance contracts.
- xiii. Negotiate service contracts as required for church instruments and equipment such as the organ, office machines, heating, and air conditioning.
- xiv. Check all property twice a year for fire hazards and provide for emergency evacuation.
- xv. Engage at least once yearly in a review and evaluation of the board's work.*
- ~~xv.~~ *xvi.* Prepare and submit, to the Parish Planning Council, an annual budget in the form and at the time requested.

#### SECTION VII-PROPERTY RIGHTS

The Board of Trustees shall be responsible for the maintenance, protection, and care of all property as described in SECTION VI of the by-laws. This board shall make recommendations for the disposal or acquisition of property for authorization by the Voter's Assembly.

#### SECTION VIII-SYNODICAL MEMBERSHIP

Synodical membership includes participation in the program of the Central Illinois District and the local circuit. As members of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, this congregation assumes a responsibility in carrying out the programs of the Central Illinois District and the Synod to the best of its ability.

#### SECTION IX-CHANGING THE BY-LAWS

Any changes in the By-laws will be made in accordance with the provisions of article XI of the Constitution. Procedure for implementation and changes to this constitution and By-laws shall be determined by the Voter's Assembly.