

TRINITY SAN ANTONIO CONSTITUTION

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

This Constitution and Bylaws constitute the rules adopted by Trinity San Antonio of San Antonio, Texas, (hereinafter sometimes referred to as, "Trinity" "Trinity San Antonio" "the Church" or "the Congregation") for the regulation and management of its affairs.

ARTICLE 1 - NAME OF THE CONGREGATION

1.01. Name. The name of the Congregation shall be TRINITY SAN ANTONIO of San Antonio, Bexar County, State of Texas.

ARTICLE 2 - PURPOSE OF THE CONGREGATION

2.01. Purpose. The purpose of this Congregation shall be to give honor and glory to the triune God, to carry out His will, to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all the world, to manifest the unity of our faith in Jesus Christ as God and Savior, to foster Christian fellowship and love, to extend a helping hand in human need, and to achieve our objectives by the preaching of the Word of God, by the administration of the Sacraments, and by the religious instruction of all its Members according to the confessional standard of the Lutheran Church.

ARTICLE 3 - DOCTRINE OF THE CONGREGATION

3.01. Scripture. This Congregation believes and confesses that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, are the inspired and inerrant Word of God, revealed for our salvation, and to be the final authority and unchangeable standard for Christian faith and life.

3.02. Sacraments. This Congregation believes that the Holy Sacraments, Baptism, the Lord's Supper, and Absolution, in union with the Word of God, are means of grace.

3.03. Symbols. This Congregation unreservedly subscribes to the Apostles', the Nicene, and the Athanasian Creeds, together with the Unaltered Augsburg Confession and Luther's Small Catechism as true expressions of Christian faith and life, to which all teaching and preaching in the Congregation shall conform.

3.04. Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality. In accordance with God's design, this Congregation believes that:

- A.** God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two (2) distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God (Gen 1:26-27). Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person.
- B.** The term "marriage" has only one (1) meaning: the uniting of one (1) man and one (1) woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture (Gen. 2:18-25).
- C.** God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other (1 Cor 6:18, 7:2-5; Heb 13:4). We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.
- D.** Any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, and use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God (Matt 15:18-20; 1 Cor 6:9-10).
- E.** In order to preserve the function and integrity of Trinity San Antonio as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the Congregation's Members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by the Congregation in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, or Members of this Congregation, agree to and abide by this Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality (Matt 5:16; Phil 2:14-16; 1 Thess 5:22).
- F.** God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ (Acts 3:19-21; Rom 10:9-10; 1 Cor 6:9-11).
- G.** Every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31). Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of this Congregation.

ARTICLE 4 - AFFILIATION OF THE CONGREGATION

4.01. Affiliation. This Congregation affiliates with the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations, and endorses its Fundamental Principles and Rules for Work which affirm that the local Congregation governs its own affairs, subject to the Word and the Spirit of God alone.

ARTICLE 5 - MEMBERSHIP OF THE CONGREGATION

5.01. Definition. Members of this Congregation are those who are designated as such when this Constitution is adopted, and those who have been received afterwards in accordance with its provisions and Bylaws, whose membership has not been withdrawn or transferred, or who have not been removed.

5.02. Non-Voting Members. All children of parents who are Members of the Congregation become non-voting Members through Holy Baptism. Upon turning 18 years of age, these non-voting Members become voting Members by meeting the requirements detailed below.

5.03. Requirements. Those who apply for membership in the Congregation shall be:

- A.** Believers in Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins.
- B.** Baptized in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit;
- C.** Confirmed or having completed a course of instruction in Christian doctrine as an equivalent;
- D.** By confession and life showing that they seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness;
- E.** Agreeing to submit to this Constitution and Bylaws and share in the life and work of the Congregation according to ability; and
- F.** Promise to keep the commitments of the Church Covenant.

5.04. New Members. Membership of those recommended by the Pastor, shall be approved by the Board of Elders and subsequent agreement by vote of the Congregation at the next appropriate Meeting. New Members shall be recognized during a regular worship service of the Congregation. During possible periods of pastoral vacancy, new members are recommended by the president of the congregation.

5.05. Pastoral Membership. A Pastor and his family shall automatically become Members of the Congregation where they reside upon his acceptance of the Letter of Call and installation.

5.06. Exclusive Membership. No Member of this Church shall retain membership in any other Church.

5.07. Delinquent Members. Individuals/families are removed from membership after twelve (12) months without any record of contribution or attendance.

5.08. Life of Members. Members of this Congregation shall conform their entire lives to the authority of God's Word and to that end shall:

- A. Make diligent use of the means of grace;
- B. Exercise faithful stewardship of God's many gifts and talents;
- C. Impart and accept fraternal admonition as the need of such admonition becomes apparent; and
- D. Be readily available for service in the kingdom of Christ within and beyond the Congregation.

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

5.10. Termination. Membership in this Congregation shall be terminated as follows:

- A. By transfer to another Congregation;
- B. By joining a Congregation outside the fellowship of this Congregation; or
- C. By excommunication, self-exclusion, or death.

5.11. Discipline and Excommunication. Members who conduct themselves in an un-Christian manner shall be admonished according to Matthew 18:15-20 and the Congregation's stated and adopted guidelines. If they remain impenitent after proper admonition, they shall be excommunicated. Each case of excommunication or self-exclusion shall be presented at a Congregational Meeting for a vote. See Bylaws for additional details.

ARTICLE 6 - MEETINGS OF THE CONGREGATION

6.01. Weekly Gatherings. The Congregation shall meet weekly on Sunday to celebrate the Divine Service and receive God's gifts of Word and Sacrament. The Congregation may also gather at other times throughout the week.

6.02. Congregational Authority. The governing body of the Congregation is the Congregational Meeting, through which all power and authority are exercised by the voting Members, whose decisions are valid when the Meeting has been duly called according to this Constitution.

6.03. Required Meeting. The Congregation shall hold one (1) annual Congregational Meeting with the exact date to be chosen by the Board of Elders.

6.04. Annual Meeting. The annual Congregational Meeting shall receive reports from all the organizations of the Congregation, to be submitted at least seven (7) days prior to the Meeting. The following business will be conducted:

- A. Election of officers: Secretary and Treasurer;
- B. Election of Elders and Deacons/Deaconesses;
- C. To vote on new Members or to recognize termination of membership;
- D. To approve, once in every year, a Church budget, as presented by the Board of Elders and Treasurer;
- E. To hear reports from the Elders and, from time to time, the various Deacons/Deaconesses; and
- F. To take any other action they deem necessary or desirable.

6.05. Announcement. All Congregational Meetings shall be announced at least two (2) weeks in advance during the Divine Service and through email.

6.06. Special Meetings. Special Meetings of the Congregation may be called by means of a petition submitted to the President of the Congregation by at least twenty percent (20%) of the voting Members, or by a majority vote of the Elder Board. The only items of business that may be considered at such a Meeting are those for which the Meeting has been called.

6.07. Voting Rights. All voting Members not under Church Discipline have the right to vote.

6.08. Quorum and Vote Threshold. In order for business to be transacted at any Meeting of the Congregation, a quorum of at least thirty percent (30%) of the voting Members, in good standing as defined by the Bylaws, must be present. Motions shall be adopted upon the agreement of two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) of the Members present and voting on the question, except on matters otherwise provided for in this Constitution.

6.09. Roster. A roster of the voting Members of the Congregation shall be available at every Meeting, and may be read by request of any Member. This roster shall be maintained by the Secretary of the Congregation.

6.10. Voting Method. There shall be no proxy or absentee voting.

ARTICLE 7 - OFFICERS AND BOARD

7.01. Definition. The biblical offices in the Congregation shall be Elders and Deacons/Deaconesses, but final earthly authority is vested in the Congregational Meeting.

7.02. Board of Elders. Oversight of the ministry, resources, and facilities of the Congregation shall be vested in a Board of Elders, which shall be comprised of an odd number not fewer than three (3) men.

7.03. Qualifications for Elders. The minimum qualifications for Elders shall not be less than those listed in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. In addition to the minimum qualifications given in Scripture, Elders must be Members who:

- A. Fully subscribe to the Congregation's Constitution and Bylaws;
- B. Profess, without reservation and in good conscience, Lutheran theology as outlined above in the Doctrine of the Congregation;
- C. Align with the ethos and values of this Congregation;
- D. Have been a Member for at least twelve (12) months; and
- E. Are actively involved in the ministry of the Congregation.

7.04. Male Eldership. In accordance with 1 Timothy 2:12 and 3:2, women shall not serve as Elders.

7.05. Elder Details. The selection and duties of the Elders are outlined in the Bylaws.

7.06. Pastor. A Pastor is automatically a Member of the Board of Elders. His position on the Board is not subject to a reaffirmation vote, nor to any term limit.

7.07. Single Office. No Elder shall hold the office of Deacon during his tenure.

7.08. Various Officers. The Board of Elders shall choose their Chairman and other Officers. In compliance with the nonprofit corporation laws of the State of Texas, the Board of Elders, along with the Secretary and Treasurer of the Congregation, shall serve as the Board of Directors of the Corporation. The Chairman of the Board of Elders shall serve as both the President of the Corporation and of the Congregation.

7.09. Elder Removal. An Elder shall be removed from office upon the vote of those present at the Congregational Meeting. The Board of Elders may also vote to remove an Elder, other than a Pastor, by majority vote, at any time, without good cause, with the Congregation confirming the removal from office upon a vote. Any such action shall be done in accordance with the instructions of the Lord Jesus in Matthew 18:15-20 and those of the Apostle Paul in 1 Timothy 5:17-21.

7.10. Deacons/Deaconesses. Particular service to the Congregation shall be provided by Deacons/Deaconesses, the number of which shall vary as the Congregation has need. They shall be Members who meet the qualifications set forth in 1 Timothy 3:8-13 and be chosen and fulfill such duties as detailed in the Bylaws.

7.11. President. The Chairman of the Board of Elders shall also serve as the President of the Congregation.

- A. The duties of the President of the Congregation shall include preparing, in consultation with the Pastor, the agenda for and presiding over all Congregational Meetings.
- B. He shall have no vote in Meetings unless the voting Members be equally divided on a question.
- C. A Pastor shall not be eligible to serve as Chairman.
- D. He shall serve a renewable one (1) year term.
- E. Should the President be removed from the office of Elder he is also stripped of the office of President. A new President must be appointed by the Board of Elders in thirty (30) days' time and announced at the next Divine Service and Congregational Meeting.

7.12. Secretary. The Secretary of the Congregation shall:

- A. Record and preserve the minutes of all Congregational Meetings; be responsible to maintain the membership roster and to make it available at all Congregational Meetings; and give reports as requested by the Elders, Deacons/Deaconesses, or the Congregation.
- B. Be chosen and fulfill such duties as detailed in the Bylaws.

7.13. Treasurer. The Treasurer of the Congregation shall:

- A. Keep an account of all financial records, receipts and disbursements, and pay all bills authorized by the Congregation and/or Board of Elders.
- B. Be chosen and fulfill such duties as detailed in the Bylaws.

ARTICLE 8 - PROPERTY OF THE CONGREGATION

8.01. Property. The Congregation cannot purchase, dispose of, or encumber property except by decision of the eligible Members present and voting on the question at a duly called Meeting of the Congregation. The question shall be referred to the Congregation by the Board of Elders. In case of a division of the Congregation, the property shall remain the possession of the part of the Congregation that remains faithful to this Constitution. An individual Member has no personal rights to the property of the Congregation, and in the event the Congregation is dissolved, all remaining funds and the proceeds from the sale of any property shall be disbursed to another Congregation holding to Article 3 of this Constitution, the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations, or a non-profit religious organization holding to Article 3 of this Constitution.

ARTICLE 9 - AMENDMENTS

9.01. Immutable Article(s). Articles 3 and 9 shall not be amended or removed.

9.02. Amendments. This Constitution (except those sections listed in 9.01.) may be amended through the following procedure: A motion for amendment must be made in writing at the annual Congregational Meeting, and cannot be adopted until the proposed amendment is considered at the next annual Meeting, at which time it must be adopted by ninety percent of voting Members present.

BYLAWS

ARTICLE 1 - ELDERS

1.01. Duties. Subject to the will of the Congregation, the Elders shall oversee the ministry and resources of the Church. The Elders shall, in keeping with the principles set forth in the Scriptures, especially Acts 6:1-6; 1 Timothy 3:1-7, 5:17; Titus 1:5-9; James 5:14; and 1 Peter 5:1-4, undertake the responsibility of assisting the Pastor(s) in shepherding God's flock by devoting themselves to prayer and the ministry of the Word. They shall have particular authority to:

- A.** Assist the Pastor(s) in all spiritual duties pertaining to the spiritual wellbeing of the Congregation and Church staff;
- B.** Direct all the affairs of the Church to ensure that the mission is accomplished in a spirit of unity;
- C.** Oversee the provision of the physical facilities needed by Trinity San Antonio, including the buying and selling of real estate and securing real estate leases;
- D.** Be responsible for any construction project (The actual coordination of a construction project may be delegated to a Building Team);
- E.** Serve as a Pastoral Search Team in locating a new Pastor;
- F.** Prayerfully interview and appoint replacements for the Board of Elders;
- G.** Examine and instruct prospective Members;
- H.** Oversee the process of Church Discipline;
- I.** Examine and recommend candidates for all offices and positions;
- J.** Oversee the work of the Deacons/Deaconesses and the Church;
- K.** Hire, oversee, evaluate the performance of, and when necessary terminate paid Church staff;
- L.** Construct a proposed budget for approval by the Congregation; and
- M.** Take any other action which shall be necessary and proper for faithfully overseeing and shepherding the Church.

1.02. Terms. Elders shall be elected for three (3) year terms. Elders shall be reaffirmed by vote of the Church triennially, and having served two (2) consecutive three (3) year terms, shall not be eligible for re-election for one (1) year, unless in the case of a supermajority vote of the Congregation (90%). During the selection of the inaugural Elders (besides the Pastor) half shall be elected to a two (2) year term. This two (2) year term shall count as one (1) of two (2) consecutive terms for term limits. In the case that the election is to fill a vacated seat the man elected shall serve the remaining term. This partial term shall not count as a full term for the purposes of term limits.

1.03. Selection Process. Elders shall be selected as follows: The Board of Elders is to receive nominations from the Congregation and within the Board no less than three (3) months prior to the Congregational vote. The Board of Elders shall prayerfully interview each candidate. Upon the unanimous approval of the Board of Elders, they shall present to the Church one (1) nominee per vacancy to the office of Elder. The nominee's name shall be presented both in the announcements at the Divine Service and through email. For a period of at least thirty (30) days, the Church shall consider whether the nominee is qualified for the office. If any Member believes the nominee to be unqualified, that Member shall express such concern to the Elders, who may on the basis of that advice remove the nominee. When a period of thirty (30) days has elapsed, the Elders shall at the next Congregational Meeting present the nominee to the Church, who shall vote on the nominee(s). Any nominee elected, shall be an Elder, which men the Church shall in due haste publicly recognize and set apart as such.

1.04. Vacancies. Appointment to fill a vacancy to complete the remaining term of exiting Elder (for whatever reason) requires a one-hundred percent (100%) affirmation of standing Board of Elders and approval by vote of the Congregation.

1.05. Board of Elders Meetings. The Board of Elders will meet monthly and may meet more at the discretion of the Pastor. All decisions require a simple majority of quorum. Any motions passed and recorded in a Meeting without the Pastor may not take effect without the consent of the Pastor, or until the following Meeting, if the Pastor is present and the minutes of the previous Meeting are approved. A Pastor's consent is not needed in the case of his removal. Notification must be made at least five (5) days in advance of the Meeting.

1.06. Quorum. A majority of the number of Elders then in office shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any Meeting of the Board of Elders.

1.07. Proxies. Voting by proxy is prohibited.

1.08. Action Without Meeting. Any action required or permitted to be taken by the Board of Elders may be taken without a Meeting and with the same force and effect as a unanimous vote of Elders, if all Members of the Board consent in writing to the action. Such consent may be given individually or collectively.

1.09. Ministry Coordinator Meetings. The Elders shall call regular Ministry Coordinator Meetings to hear reports, receive feedback, and solicit proposals from the Deacons/Deaconesses and other ministry coordinators. Items that would require a decision by the Elders shall be referred to the subsequent Elder Meeting.

1.10. Compensation. Elders, other than a Pastor, shall not receive salaries or compensation for their services as Board Members.

1.11. Majority Lay Board. A majority of the Elders shall be laymen, that is, Church Members not in the regular pay of the Church.

ARTICLE 2 - DEACONS AND DEACONESSSES

2.01. Election Term. Deacons/Deaconesses will serve a term of one (1) year for up to three (3) terms. After which they must take off one (1) year before being eligible for re-election.

2.02. Responsibility. The Deacons/Deaconesses shall be responsible for assisting the Elders in the care of the Congregation, serving the physical needs of the Congregation, as well as the material affairs of the Congregation. In keeping with the principles set forth in Acts 6:1-6, Deacons/Deaconesses shall not exercise a ministry of spiritual authority, but shall support the Elders' ministry of the Word, work to maintain the unity of the Church, and care for the physical needs of the Church. The Church may recognize Deacons/Deaconesses to take responsibility for seeing that the sick, the sorrowing, the aged, and the infirm receive spiritual and physical comfort.

2.03. Vacancies. If a Deacon is removed from service, either voluntarily or involuntarily, the replacement is appointed by the Board of Elders and approved by the Congregation by simple majority vote.

2.04. Selection Process. The Board of Elders is to receive nominations from the Congregation and within the Board no less than one (1) month prior to the Congregational vote. The Board of Elders shall prayerfully interview each candidate. They shall present to the Church one (1) nominee per vacancy to the office of Deacon/Deaconess. The nominee's name shall be presented both in the Divine Service and through email. For a period of at least twenty-one (21) days, the Church shall consider whether the nominee(s) are qualified for the office. If any Member believes one or more of the nominees to be unqualified, that Member shall express such concern to the Elders, who may on the basis of that advice remove the nominee(s). When a period of twenty-one (21) days has elapsed, the Elders shall at the next Congregational Meeting present a final list of nominee(s) to the Church, who shall vote on each of the nominee(s) in turn. Any nominee elected by simple majority shall be a Deacon/Deaconess, which men or women the Church shall in due haste publicly recognize and set apart as such.

2.05. Removal of Deacons. A Deacon/Deaconess may be removed from office by a decision of the Elders, or upon the recommendation of the Elders and the subsequent agreement of the Members present and voting on the question at any Meeting.

ARTICLE 3 - PASTOR(S)

3.01. Role. A Pastor is the servant leader of the Congregation, and is an ex-officio (and may be voting) Member of all boards and committees.

3.02. Duties. Pastor(s) shall be Elder(s). Pastor(s) shall perform the duties of an Elder described, above, and shall be recognized by the Church as particularly gifted and called to the full-time ministry of Word and Sacrament ministry.

3.03. Confession. Pastor(s) must affirm the Doctrine of the Congregation in the Constitution.

3.04. Roster Status. Pastor(s) shall be in good standing as an ordained pastor and approved on the clergy roster of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations. If he shall cease to be a pastor in good standing on the clergy roster of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations, he shall immediately submit his resignation as Pastor of the Congregation.

3.05. Calling. The following procedure shall be followed when calling a Pastor:

- A.** The Board of Elders shall elect a Call Committee of seven (7) Members to prayerfully select candidates for consideration by the Congregation. Up to five (5) Elders should serve as part of the Call Committee, with the additional Committee persons being Members in good standing and appointed by the Board of Elders. If there are more than five (5) Elders they shall choose amongst themselves which five (5) will serve on the Call Committee.
- B.** The Call Committee shall seek the recommendations from the AFLC President's Office, but is not bound to those recommendations.
- C.** Candidates may be visited and interviewed by the Call Committee, with any expenses to be approved by the Board of Elders.
- D.** The Call Committee's recommended candidate shall be approved by the full Board of Elders before being presented to the Congregation.
- E.** The Congregation shall call the Pastor by vote at a special Meeting of the Congregation called by the Board of Elders. Upon approval by vote a Letter of Call shall be extended.
- F.** A Letter of Call shall be prepared by the Board of Elders, who will determine the salary and benefits package. It shall be signed by the Chairman of the

Elders, and sent to the candidate together with a copy of this Constitution and Bylaws.

- G.** If the Letter of Call is accepted, the Pastor shall be installed by the Board of Elders. The Pastor and Board of Elders may also invite an official of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations for the installation.

3.06. Resignation. Any resignation of a Pastor shall be submitted in writing to the Board of Elders and read to the Congregation during the following Divine Service(s). It shall not be effective until sixty (60) days after the date of such resignation unless otherwise mutually agreed upon by the Pastor and Board of Elders.

3.07. Removal of Pastor. A Pastor may only be removed for good cause upon unanimous consent of the Board of Elders and affirming vote by the Congregation. Written notice of the decision shall be given to him. His service to the Congregation shall cease immediately after official notification, and he shall receive at least three (3) months of salary and benefits as a severance package, except in cases of gross misconduct.

ARTICLE 4 - THE TREASURER

4.01. Duties. The Treasurer shall ensure that all funds and securities of the Church are properly secured in such banks, financial institutions, or depositories as designated by the Congregation. The Treasurer shall also ensure that full and accurate accounts of receipts and disbursements are kept in books belonging to the Congregation, and that adequate controls are implemented to guarantee that all funds belonging to the Congregation are appropriately handled by any officer, employee, or agent of the Congregation. The Treasurer shall render to the Elders at least once in every year, or whenever they may require it, an account of all financial transactions and of the financial condition of the Church. The Treasurer shall also be responsible for presenting regular reports of the account balances, revenues, and expenses of the Church at Congregational Meetings.

4.02. Selection and Term. The Treasurer shall be selected to a renewable term of two (2) years upon the recommendation of the Elders and the subsequent agreement of a majority of the Members present and voting on the question at any Congregational Meeting.

4.03. Non-Elder and Lay. No Elder or paid staff Member of the Church shall be eligible for the office of Treasurer.

4.04. Removal. The Treasurer shall be removed from office upon the recommendation of the Elders and the subsequent vote of the Members present and voting on the question at any Congregational Meeting.

4.05. Audit. The Congregation shall at the appropriate Meeting appoint an independent committee perform an internal audit of the church finances at least every other year to ensure accurate accounting.

ARTICLE 5 - THE SECRETARY

5.01. Duties. The Secretary shall record the minutes of all Congregational Meetings of the Church, keep an accurate roll of the Membership, and give reports as requested by the Elders, particular Deacons/Deaconesses, or the Church.

5.02. Selection. The Secretary shall be selected to a renewable term of two (2) years upon the recommendation of the Elders and the subsequent agreement of a majority of the Members present and voting on the question at any Congregational Meeting.

5.03. Removal. The Secretary shall be removed from office upon the recommendation of the Elders and the subsequent vote of the Members present and voting on the question at any Congregational Meeting.

ARTICLE 6 - ADMISSION OF NEW MEMBERS

6.01. Application. When someone desires to become a Member of the Congregation, he/she shall apply to the Pastor, who shall become acquainted with the faith and life of the applicant, and recommend the same to the Board of Elders. If the Pastor and the Board of Elders approve of his/her admission, his/her application for membership shall be recommended to the Congregation at the next Meeting.

6.02. Catechesis and Confession. All applicants are to receive instruction in the Lutheran faith. In addition to fulfilling the requirements for membership in the Constitution, he/she should receive instruction based on Luther's Small Catechism, with special attention given to the three articles of the Creed and the two Sacraments. All applicants must confess the Nicene Creed, accept that this Congregation confesses the Lutheran doctrines as outlined in Article 3 of the Constitution, and promise to affirm and keep the commitments expressed in the Church Covenant.

6.03. Recognition. When new Member(s) have been accepted per the Constitution's requirements, they shall be formally received and welcomed at a public worship service.

ARTICLE 7 - CHURCH DISCIPLINE

7.01. Purpose. The Congregation seeks to zealously watch over the doctrine and life of its Members. When anyone is overtaken in any trespass, the Congregation strives to restore him in a spirit of meekness and love (Gal 6:1). The procedure established by our Lord in Matthew 18:15-20 shall be followed.

7.02. Private Admonition. No Member shall be accused publicly without first having been admonished in love privately.

7.03. Admonition by Elders. If this admonition fails, the case may be brought to the Board of Elders, who shall, after prayerful consideration, seek through admonition and conviction by the Word of God to bring the erring one to repentance.

7.04. Congregational Discipline. If these efforts fail, the Board of Elders shall present the matter to the Congregation, who may employ the following means:

- A. Admonition and intercessory prayer by the Congregation;
- B. Exclusion from the Lord's Supper; and / or
- C. Termination of membership in the Congregation.

7.05. Elder Care. Consistent non-attendance at worship and indifference to the Word of God shall be investigated by the Elders, who shall by loving and prayerful admonition seek to bring the erring Member(s) back into the fellowship.

7.06. Means. The basic means of purifying the Congregation is through the preaching and teaching of the Word of God.

ARTICLE 8 - AMENDMENTS OF BYLAWS

8.01. Amendments and Additions. A proposal to amend these Bylaws or the Church Covenant, or to add new Bylaws, may be submitted in writing during a Congregational Meeting. A majority vote of Members present and voting is required for adoption. Once passed, changes go into effect immediately.

CHURCH COVENANT

Doctrinal Confessions

1. I confess a personal faith in Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior, have been baptized into His death and resurrection in the waters of baptism, and desire to seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness.
2. I confess that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, are the inspired and inerrant Word of God, revealed for our salvation, and to be the final authority and unchangeable standard for Christian faith and life.
3. I confess the historic faith of the Christian Church as declared in the Apostles' Creed.
4. I confess Holy Communion to be a Sacrament instituted by Christ Himself in which we receive the true Body and Blood of Christ for the forgiveness of sins.

Life Together Commitments

1. **Gather** - I commit to weekly attendance at the Divine Service as the foundational aspect of our life together. (Lev 23:3; Heb 10:24-25; 1 Tim 4:13)
2. **Grow** - I commit to the continual pursuit of spiritual formation practices and opportunities. (Col 3:1-17; 2 Pet 1:5-8; Rom 12:1-2; Heb 5:12-14; Ps 1:1-3)
3. **Belong** - I commit to pursuing life together with the people of God, maintaining charity and goodwill toward my fellow parishioners, and humbly submitting to pastoral care and correction. (Matt 5:23-24, 18:15-20; Eph 4:1-3; 1 Thess 5:12; Heb 13:17)
4. **Give** - I commit to financially supporting the ministry of this congregation through the tithing of my income, or at least to taking steps toward tithing my income to this church. (Gen 14:19-20; Neh 10:35-37; Mal 3:8-9; Matt 23:23)
5. **Serve** - I commit to actively participate in the life and ministry of the church according to spiritual gifting, opportunity, and ability. (Rom 12:3-8; 1 Pet 4:10-11; 1 Cor 12:7; Acts 1:8)

This Covenant, the Constitution and Bylaws of the Congregation, and all other duties and commitments contained within the vows of my Baptism, I commit myself to within the context, ministry, and authority of this Congregation.

Name: _____

Date: _____