

ADVENT LUTHERAN CHURCH

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CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

**Constitution and Bylaws for Advent Lutheran Church
Approved by Florida Bahama Synod on Sept. 10, 2016
Adopted by the Congregation: _____**

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Constitution and Bylaws for Advent Lutheran Church

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***PREAMBLE**

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

EXPLANATION OF CODIFICATION OF CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

The provisions of the Constitution and Bylaws that pertain to the same matter are placed together for clarity in use. Continuing Resolutions are published separately in a replaceable appendix. A numerical codification indicates general subject, constitutional provisions, bylaw provisions and continuing resolutions.

All constitutional provisions are prefaced with "C" to distinguish these provisions from comparable ones in the synodical and churchwide constitutions.

Major sectors are designated as chapters. The chapter designation becomes the first number in the codification sequence and is followed by a period. Thus, provisions in "Chapter 8. Membership" are preceded by "8."

Constitutional provisions are codified with two sets of numbers: the chapter number and a two digit number preceding the second period in the codification. Thus, one constitutional provision relating to the membership is codified C8.01.

Bylaw provisions are codified with three sets of numbers: the chapter number, the related constitutional provision number and a two digit number. Thus, one bylaw provision would be codified C8.01.01. Bylaws are printed in italics.

Continuing Resolutions are prefaced with "CR" and are codified with three sets of numbers except the third set is preceded by a capital letter. Thus a continuing resolution might be numbered CR13. to designate the chapter; CR13.07 to designate the subject matter within the chapter; and the third set might be numbered A04; in the codification CR13.07.A04. to indicate by the "A" that is the first continuing resolution regarding that subject and by "04" that it was adopted in 2004.

When many related provisions are parts of a unit that are considered inseparable, they are normally lettered "a," "b," "c," etc. When related provisions are part of a unit but considered separable, such as a list of duties, they are normally numbered in sequence. If the related provisions can not be clearly judged to be separable or inseparable, preference will be given to a numbered sequence.

* All Constitution provisions preceded by an * are mandatory synodical provisions.

If chapter numbers are considered the major sequence number, constitution numbers as a fraction of the chapter number, and bylaw numbers as a fraction of the constitution number, then the codification can be said to provide a progressive sequence. Thus, C5.01. will precede C5.03.01., and C9.11.16. will precede C9.13.

In these governing documents, "Church" with a capital letter is used in reference to the one holy, catholic and apostolic Church. In reference to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the words "church" and "this church" in lower case letters are employed.

Chapter 1

NAME AND INCORPORATION

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

Chapter 2

CONFESSION OF FAITH

- *C2.01.** This congregation confesses the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- *C2.02.** This congregation confesses Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and the Gospel as the power of God for the salvation of all who believe.
 - a. Jesus Christ is the Word of God incarnate, through whom everything was made and through whose life, death, and resurrection God fashions a new creation.
 - b. The proclamation of God's message to us as both Law and Gospel is the Word of God, revealing judgment and mercy through word and deed, beginning with the Word in creation, continuing in the history of Israel, and centering in all its fullness in the person and work of Jesus Christ.
 - c. The canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the written Word of God. Inspired by God's Spirit speaking through their authors, they record and announce God's revelation centering in Jesus Christ. Through them God's Spirit speaks to us to create and sustain Christian faith and fellowship for service in the world.
- *C2.03.** This congregation accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life.
- *C2.04.** This congregation accepts the Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds as true declarations of the faith of this congregation.
- *C2.05.** This congregation accepts the Unaltered Augsburg Confession as a true witness to the Gospel, acknowledging as one with it in faith and doctrine all churches that likewise accept the teachings of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession.
- *C2.06.** This congregation accepts the other confessional writings in the Book of Concord, namely, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles and the Treatise, the Small Catechism, the Large Catechism, and the Formula of Concord, as further valid interpretations of the faith of the Church.
- *C2.07.** This congregation confesses the Gospel, recorded in the Holy Scriptures and confessed in the ecumenical creeds and Lutheran confessional writings, as the power of God to create and sustain the Church for God's mission in the world.

Chapter 3

NATURE OF THE CHURCH

- ***C3.01.** All power in the Church belongs to our Lord Jesus Christ, its head. All actions of this congregation are to be carried out under his rule and authority.
- ***C3.02.** The Church exists both as an inclusive fellowship and as local congregations gathered for worship and Christian service. Congregations find their fulfillment in the universal community of the Church, and the universal Church exists in and through congregations. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, therefore, derives its character and powers both from the sanction and representation of its congregations and from its inherent nature as an expression of the broader fellowship of the faithful. In length, it acknowledges itself to be in the historic continuity of the communion of saints; in breadth, it expresses the fellowship of believers and congregations in our day.
- ***C3.03.** The name Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA or “this church”) as used herein refers in general references to this whole church, including its three expressions—congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization. The name Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is also the name of the corporation of the churchwide organization to which specific references may be made herein.

Chapter 4

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

- ***C4.01.** The Church is a people created by God in Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, called and sent to bear witness to God's creative, redeeming, and sanctifying activity in the world.
- ***C4.02.** To participate in God's mission, this congregation as a part of the Church shall:
 - a. Worship God in proclamation of the Word and administration of the sacraments and through lives of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, witness, and service.
 - b. Proclaim God's saving Gospel of justification by grace for Christ's sake through faith alone, according to the apostolic witness in the Holy Scripture, preserving and transmitting the Gospel faithfully to future generations.
 - c. Carry out Christ's Great Commission by reaching out to all people to bring them to faith in Christ and by doing all ministries with a global awareness consistent with the understanding of God as Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier of all.
 - d. Serve in response to God's love to meet human needs, caring for the sick and the aged, advocating dignity and justice for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, and standing with the poor and powerless, and committing itself to their needs.
 - e. Nurture its members in the Word of God so as to grow in faith and hope and love, to see daily life as the primary setting for the exercise of their Christian calling, and to use the gifts of the Spirit for their life together and for their calling in the world.
 - f. Manifest the unity given to the people of God by living together in the love of Christ and by joining with other Christians in prayer and action to express and preserve the unity which the Spirit gives.

- *C4.03. To fulfill these purposes, this congregation shall:
 - a. Provide services of worship at which the Word of God is preached and the sacraments are administered.
 - b. Provide pastoral care and assist all members to participate in this ministry.
 - c. Challenge, equip, and support all members in carrying out their calling in their daily lives and in their congregation.
 - d. Teach the Word of God.
 - e. Witness to the reconciling Word of God in Christ, reaching out to all people.
 - f. Respond to human need, work for justice and peace, care for the sick and the suffering, and participate responsibly in society.
 - g. Motivate its members to provide financial support for the congregation's ministry and the ministry of other parts of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - h. Foster and participate in interdependent relationships with other congregations, the synod, and the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - i. Foster and participate in ecumenical relationships consistent with churchwide policy.
- *C4.04. This congregation shall develop an organizational structure to be described in the bylaws. The Congregation Council shall prepare descriptions of the responsibilities of each committee, task force, or other organizational group and shall review their actions. Such descriptions shall be contained in continuing resolutions in the section on the Congregation Committees.
- *C4.05. This congregation shall, from time to time, adopt a mission statement which will provide specific direction for its programs.
- *C4.06. References herein to the nature of the relationship between the three expressions of this church—congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization—as being interdependent or as being in a partnership relationship describe the mutual responsibility of these expressions in God’s mission and the fulfillment of the purposes of this church as described in this chapter, and do not imply or describe the creation of partnerships, co-ventures, agencies, or other legal relationships recognized in civil law.

Chapter 5

POWERS OF THE CONGREGATION

- *C5.01. The powers of this congregation are those necessary to fulfill its purpose.
- *C5.02. The powers of this congregation are vested in the Congregation Meeting called and conducted as provided in this constitution and bylaws.
- *C5.03. Only such authority as is delegated to the Congregation Council or other organizational units in this congregation's governing documents is recognized. All remaining authority is retained by the congregation. The congregation is authorized to:
 - a. call a pastor as provided in Chapter 9;
 - b. terminate the call of a pastor as provided in Chapter 9;
 - c. call or terminate the call of associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers in conformity with the applicable policy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;
 - d. adopt amendments to the constitution, as provided in Chapter 17, and amendments to the bylaws, as specified in Chapter 16; and continuing

resolutions, as provided in Chapter 18.

- e. approve the annual budget;
- f. acquire real and personal property by gift, devise, purchase, or other lawful means;
- g. hold title to and use its property for any and all activities consistent with its purpose;
- h. sell, mortgage, lease, transfer, or otherwise dispose of its property by any lawful means;
- i. elect its officers and Congregation Council, and require them to carry out their duties in accordance with the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions; and
- j. terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as provided in Chapter 6.

C5.03.01 Real property shall not be purchased or otherwise acquired except by a resolution adopted by not less than a two-thirds majority ballot of the voting members present and voting at a legally called meeting of this congregation. Further, a meeting called to consider a real property transaction must be called and held in conformity with such provisions of civil law as may be applicable.

C5.03.02 Real property shall not be disposed of or encumbered in any manner except by a resolution adopted by not less than a two-thirds majority ballot of the voting members present and voting at a legally called meeting of this congregation.

***C5.04.** This congregation shall choose from among its voting members laypersons to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly as well as persons to represent it at meetings of any conference, cluster, coalition, or other area subdivision of which it is a member. The number of persons to be elected by the congregation and other qualifications shall be as prescribed in guidelines established by the Florida-Bahamas Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

C5.05. This congregation may have a mission endowment fund that will operate as specified in this congregation's continuing resolutions. The purpose of the mission endowment fund is to provide for mission work beyond the operational budget of this congregation.

Chapter 6

CHURCH AFFILIATION

***C6.01.** This congregation shall be an interdependent part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or its successor, and of the Florida-Bahamas Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. This congregation is subject to the discipline of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

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

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

- a. This congregation agrees to be responsible for its life as a Christian community.
- b. This congregation pledges its financial support and participation in the life

and mission of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

- c. This congregation agrees to call pastoral leadership from the clergy roster of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in accordance with its call procedures except in special circumstances and with the approval of the bishop of the synod. These special circumstances are limited either to calling a candidate approved for the roster of ordained ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or to contracting for pastoral services with an ordained minister of a church body with which the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America officially has established a relationship of full communion.
- d. This congregation agrees to consider associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers for call to other staff positions in the congregation according to the procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- e. This congregation agrees to file this constitution and any subsequent changes to this constitution with the synod for review to ascertain that all of its provisions are in agreement with the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and with the constitution of the synod.

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

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

***C6.05.** A congregation may terminate its relationship with this church by the following procedure:

- a. A resolution indicating the intent to terminate its relationship must be adopted at a legally called and conducted special meeting of the congregation by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present. Such meeting may be held no sooner than 30 days after written notice of the meeting is received by the bishop of the synod, during which time the congregation shall consult with the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any. The times and manner of the consultation shall be determined by the bishop in consultation with the congregation council. Unless he or she is a voting member of the congregation, the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any, shall have voice but not vote at the meeting.
- b. The secretary of the congregation shall submit a copy of the resolution to the bishop, attesting that the special meeting was legally called and conducted and certifying the outcome of the vote, and shall mail a copy of the resolution to voting members of the congregation. This notice shall be submitted within 10 days after the resolution has been adopted.
- c. The bishop of the synod and the congregation shall continue in consultation, as specified in paragraph a. above, during a period of at least 90 days after receipt by the synod of the notice as specified in paragraph b. above.
- d. If the congregation, after such consultation, still seeks to terminate its relationship, such action may be taken at a legally called and conducted special meeting by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present. Notice of the meeting shall be mailed to all voting members and to the bishop at least 10 days in advance of the meeting. Unless he or she is a voting member of the

congregation, the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any, shall have voice but not vote at the meeting.

e. A copy of the resolution, attesting that the special meeting was legally called and conducted and certifying the outcome of the vote, shall be sent to the bishop within 10 days after the resolution has been adopted, at which time the relationship between the congregation and this church shall be terminated subject to paragraphs g., h., and i. below. Unless this notification to the bishop also certifies that the congregation has voted by a two-thirds vote to affiliate with another Lutheran denomination, the congregation will be conclusively presumed to be an independent or non-Lutheran church.

f. Notice of termination shall be forwarded by the bishop to the secretary of this church, who shall report the termination to the Churchwide Assembly.

g. Congregations seeking to terminate their relationship with this church which fail or refuse to comply with each of the foregoing provisions in *C6.05., shall be required to receive Synod Council approval before terminating their membership in this church.

h. Congregations which had been members of the Lutheran Church in America shall be required, in addition to complying with the foregoing provisions in *C6.05., to receive synodical approval before terminating their membership in this church.

i. Congregations established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be required, in addition to complying with the foregoing provisions in *C6.05, to satisfy all financial obligations to this church and receive Synod Council approval before terminating their membership in this church.

j. If a congregation fails to achieve the required two-thirds vote of voting members present at the congregation's first meeting as specified in paragraph a. above, another special meeting to consider termination of relationship with this church may be called no sooner than six months after that first meeting. If a congregation fails to achieve the required two-thirds vote of voting members present at the congregation's second meeting as specified in paragraph d. above, another attempt to consider termination of relationship with this church must follow all requirements of *C6.05. and may begin no sooner than six months after that second meeting.

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

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

Chapter 7

PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

***C7.01.** If this congregation ceases to exist, title to undisposed property shall pass to the Florida-Bahamas Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

***C7.02.** If this congregation is removed from membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America according to its procedure for discipline, title to property shall continue to reside in this congregation.

- *C7.03. If a two-thirds majority of the voting members of this congregation present at a legally called and conducted special meeting of this congregation vote to transfer to another Lutheran church body, title to property shall continue to reside in this congregation, provided the process for termination of relationship in *C6.05. has been followed. Before this congregation takes action to transfer to another Lutheran church body, it shall consult with representatives of the Florida-Bahamas Synod.
- *C7.04. If a two-thirds majority of the voting members of this congregation present at a legally called and conducted special meeting of this congregation vote to become independent or relate to a non-Lutheran church body and have followed the process for termination of relationship in *C6.05., title to property of this congregation shall continue to reside in this congregation only with the consent of the Synod Council. The Synod Council, after consultation with this congregation by the established synodical process, may give approval to the request to become independent or to relate to a non-Lutheran church body, in which case title shall remain with the majority of this congregation. If the Synod Council fails to give such approval, title shall remain with those members who desire to continue as a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Chapter 8 MEMBERSHIP

- *C8.01. Members of this congregation shall be those baptized persons on the roll of this congregation at the time that this constitution is adopted and those who are admitted thereafter and who have declared and maintain their membership in accordance with the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.
- *C8.02. Members shall be classified as follows:
 - a. **Baptized** members are those persons who have been received by the Sacrament of Holy Baptism in this congregation, or, having been previously baptized in the name of the Triune God, have been received by certificate of transfer from other Lutheran congregations or by affirmation of faith.
 - b. **Confirmed** members are baptized persons who have been confirmed in this congregation, those who have been received by adult baptism or by transfer as confirmed members from other Lutheran congregations, or baptized persons received by affirmation of faith.
 - c. **Voting** members are confirmed members. Such confirmed members, during the current or preceding calendar year, shall have communed in this congregation and shall have made a contribution of record to this congregation. Members of this congregation who have satisfied these basic standards shall have the privilege of voice and vote at every regular and special meeting of the congregation.
 - d. **Associate** members are persons holding membership in other Christian congregations who wish to retain such membership but desire to participate in the life and mission of this congregation, or persons who wish to retain a relationship with this congregation while being members of other congregations. They have all the privileges and duties of membership except voting rights and eligibility for elected offices or membership on the Congregation Council of this congregation.

- C8.02.01.** If on any decision before the congregation the laws of the state impose a minimum age upon voters, then the legal requirements of age shall supersede the definition of voting members for that particular ballot.
- *C8.03.** All applications for confirmed membership shall be submitted to and shall require the approval of the Congregation Council.
- *C8.04.** It shall be the privilege and duty of members of this congregation to:
- a. make regular use of the means of grace, both Word and sacraments;
 - b. live a Christian life in accordance with the Word of God and the teachings of the Lutheran church; and
 - c. support the work of this congregation, the synod, and the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America through contributions of their time, abilities, and financial support as biblical stewards.
- C8.04.01.** Active members are those persons who within the past two years have exercised their privileges and fulfilled their duties (as outlined in C8.04 above).
- *C8.05.** Membership in this congregation shall be terminated by any of the following:
- a. death;
 - b. resignation;
 - c. transfer or release;
 - d. disciplinary action by the Congregation Council; or
 - e. removal from the roll due to inactivity as defined in the bylaws.
- Such persons who have been removed from the roll of members shall remain persons for whom the Church has a continuing pastoral concern.
- C8.05.01.** Inactive members are those persons who, resident or nonresident, have not fulfilled the requirements for active membership (see C8.04.01) unless hindered by circumstances beyond their control. They shall be visited by the pastor and/or one or more congregational officers and encouraged to return to active membership. Listing as an inactive member shall be automatically terminated when the person fulfills the requirements for active membership.
- C8.05.02.** If, after a member's second year as inactive, that member does not actively participate in a manner to reinstate active membership, that member's name shall be dropped from the membership roster of this congregation.

Chapter 9

THE PASTOR

- *C9.01.** Authority to call a pastor shall be in this congregation by at least a two-thirds majority ballot vote of members present and voting at a meeting legally called for that purpose. Before a call is issued, the officers, or a committee elected by this congregation to recommend the call, shall seek the advice and help of the bishop of the synod.
- *C9.02.** Only a member of the clergy roster of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or a candidate for the roster of ordained ministers who has been recommended for the congregation by the synodical bishop may be called as a pastor of this congregation.
- *C9.03.** Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,
- a. Every ordained minister shall:

- 1) preach the Word;
 - 2) administer the sacraments;
 - 3) conduct public worship;
 - 4) provide pastoral care; and
 - 5) speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world.
- b. Each ordained minister with a congregational call shall, within the congregation:
- 1) offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead;
 - 2) supervise all schools and organizations of this congregation;
 - 3) install regularly elected members of the Congregation Council; and
 - 4) with the council, administer discipline.
- c. Every pastor shall:
- 1) strive to extend the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation, and abroad;
 - 2) seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel;
 - 3) impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through distribution of its periodicals and other publications; and
 - 4) endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and of the Florida-Bahamas Synod of the ELCA.
- *C9.04.** The specific duties of the pastor, compensation, and other matters pertaining to the service of the pastor shall be included in a letter of call, which shall be attested by the bishop of the synod.
- *C9.05.**
- a. The call of a congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment, which shall be terminated only by death or, following consultation with the synodical bishop, for the following reasons:
- 1) mutual agreement to terminate the call or the completion of a call for a specific term;
 - 2) resignation of the pastor, which shall become effective, unless otherwise agreed, no later than 30 days after the date on which it was submitted;
 - 3) inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in the congregation in view of local conditions;
 - 4) physical disability or mental incapacity of the pastor;
 - 5) suspension of the pastor through discipline for more than three months;
 - 6) resignation or removal of the pastor from the roster of ordained ministers of this church;
 - 7) termination of the relationship between this church and the congregation;
 - 8) dissolution of the congregation or the termination of a parish arrangement; or
 - 9) suspension of the congregation through discipline for more than six months.
- b. When allegations of physical disability or mental incapacity of the pastor under paragraph a.4) above, or ineffective conduct of the pastoral office under paragraph a.3) above, have come to the attention of the bishop of this synod,
- 1) the bishop in his or her sole discretion may investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two ordained ministers and one layperson, or
 - 2) when such allegations have been brought to the synod's attention by an official recital of allegations by the Congregation Council or by a petition signed by at least one-third of the voting members of the congregation, the bishop personally shall investigate such conditions together with a committee of two ordained ministers and one layperson.
- c. In case of alleged physical disability or mental incapacity under paragraph a.4) above, the bishop's committee shall obtain and document competent medical opinion concerning the

pastor's condition. When a disability or incapacity is evident to the committee, the bishop of this synod may declare the pastorate vacant and the pastor shall be listed on the clergy roster as disabled. Upon removal of the disability and the restoration of the pastor to health, the bishop shall take steps to enable the pastor to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another appropriate call.

- d. In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of the congregation under paragraph a.3) above, the bishop's committee shall endeavor to hear from all concerned persons, after which the bishop together with the committee shall present their recommendations first to the pastor and then to the congregation. The recommendations of the bishop's committee must address whether the pastor's call should come to an end and, if so, may suggest appropriate severance arrangements. The committee may also propose other actions that should be undertaken by the congregation and by the pastor, if appropriate. If the pastor and congregation agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action need be taken by the synod.
- e. If either party fails to assent to the recommendations of the bishop's committee concerning the pastor's call, the congregation may dismiss the pastor only at a legally called meeting after consultation with the bishop, either (a) by a two-thirds majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee did not recommend termination of the call, or (b) by a simple majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee recommended termination of the call.
- f. If, in the course of proceedings described in paragraph c. or paragraph d. above, the bishop's committee concludes that there may be grounds for disciplinary action, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action in accordance with the provisions of this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions.

- *C9.06.** At a time of pastoral vacancy, an interim pastor shall be appointed by the bishop of the synod with the consent of this congregation or the Congregation Council.
- *C9.07.** During the period of service, an interim pastor shall have the rights and duties in the congregation of a regularly called pastor and may delegate the same in part to a supply pastor with the consent of the bishop of the synod and this congregation or Congregation Council. The interim pastor and any ordained pastor providing assistance shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a pastor. Unless previously agreed upon by the Synod Council, an interim pastor is not available for a regular call to the congregation served.
- *C9.08.** This congregation shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to a former pastor before calling a successor. A pastor shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to this congregation before beginning service in a call to another congregation or employment in another ministry setting related to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- *C9.09.** When a pastor is called to serve in company with another pastor or pastors, the privileges and responsibilities of each pastor shall be specified in documents to accompany the call and to be drafted in consultation involving the pastors, the Congregation Council, and the bishop of the synod. As occasion requires, the documents may be revised through a similar consultation.
- *C9.11.** With the approval of the bishop of the synod, the congregation may depart from *C9.05.a. and call a pastor for a specific term. Details of such calls shall be in writing setting forth the purpose and conditions involved. Prior to the completion of a term, the bishop or a designated representative of the bishop shall meet with the pastor and representatives of the congregation for a review of the call. Such a call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of *C9.05.a.
- *C9.12.** The pastor of this congregation:
- a. shall keep accurate parochial records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or

- members excluded from the congregation;
 - b. shall submit a summary of such statistics annually to the synod; and
 - c. shall become a member of this congregation upon receipt and acceptance of the letter of call. In a parish of multiple congregations, the pastor shall hold membership in one of the congregations.
- *C9.13.** The pastor(s) shall submit a report of his or her ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.
- *C9.14.** The parochial records of this congregation shall be maintained by the pastor and shall remain the property of the congregation. The secretary of this congregation shall attest in writing to the bishop of this synod that such records have been placed in his or her hands in good order by a departing pastor before the installation of that pastor in another field of labor or the granting by the synod of retired status to the pastor.
- C9.20. Ecumenical pastoral ministry**
- C9.21.** Under special circumstances, subject to the approval of the synodical bishop and the concurrence of this congregation, an ordained minister of a church body with which the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America officially has established a relationship of full communion may serve temporarily as pastor of this congregation under a contract between the congregation and the ordained minister in a form proposed by the synodical bishop and approved by the congregation.

Chapter 10

CONGREGATION MEETING

- C10.01.** The semi-annual meeting of this congregation shall be held at times specified in the bylaws.
- C10.01.01** The order of business at a regular meeting shall be:
- a. opening devotion;
 - b. reports of pastor, officers, council members, committees, and others (at the May meeting);
 - c. adoption of budget (at the January meeting);
 - d. regular election of officers and council members (at the May meeting);
 - e. unfinished business;
 - f. new business;
 - g. approval of minutes of this meeting; and
 - h. closing prayer.
- C10.01.02** A regular meeting of this congregation shall be held in -January for the purpose of adopting the annual budget. A regular meeting of this congregation shall be held in May for the purpose of electing congregation officers and members to the Congregation Council and receiving annual reports. Other duly announced agenda of business may be addressed at these meetings.
- C10.01.03** The Nominating Committee shall present the official ballot for election of officers and council members. At that time, opportunity shall be given to receive additional nominations from the floor. Each nomination shall be made only with the consent of the nominee.
- C10.01.04** On the day of an election, the president shall appoint two or more tellers who shall collect and count the ballots. No one shall be declared elected unless the person receives a majority of the votes cast. In the event no candidate receives

a majority of the votes cast on the first ballot, a second ballot shall be held with only the two candidates who received the highest number of votes on the first ballot. The candidate receiving the majority of votes cast on the second ballot shall be declared elected. The results of the election shall be made public immediately. The successful candidates shall be notified of their election and shall be requested to be present on the day of their public installation.

- C10.02.** A special Congregation Meeting may be called by the pastor, the Congregation Council, or the president of this congregation, and shall be called by the president of the congregation upon the written request of ten (10) of the voting members. The call for each special meeting shall specify the purpose for which it is to be held and no other business shall be transacted.
- C10.03.** Notice of all meetings of this congregation shall be given at the services of worship on the preceding two consecutive Sundays and by mail to all voting members at least 10 days in advance of the date of the meeting. The posting of such notice in the regular mail, with the regular postage affixed or paid, sent to the last known address of such members shall be sufficient. Electronic notice of meetings may be provided in addition to notice by regular mail.
- C10.03.01** A meeting of this congregation may, by majority vote, recess to reconvene upon call; provided, however, that the time and place of such a reconvened meeting is announced at a public service of the congregation and written notice is mailed to all voting members not less than five days in advance of the reconvened meeting.
- C10.04.** Fifteen percent (15%) of the voting membership shall constitute a quorum.
- C10.04.01** The current rosters of eligible voting, confirmed, and baptized members shall be available at each meeting of this congregation.
- C10.05.** Voting by proxy or by absentee ballot shall not be permitted.
- C10.06.** All actions approved by the congregation shall be by majority vote of those members present and voting, except as otherwise provided in this constitution or by state law.
- C10.06.01** In the following cases, voting shall be by written ballot:
- a. to elect members of the Congregation Council;
 - b. to adopt or amend the Articles of Incorporation, Constitution, or Bylaws of this congregation;
 - c. to call a pastor or to dismiss a pastor;
 - d. to remove a member from office in this congregation;
 - e. to sever membership in the ELCA;
 - f. to dispose of, encumber, or purchase real property; or
 - g. when requested by ten percent of the voting members present.
- C10.07.** Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of all meetings of this congregation.

Chapter 11

OFFICERS

- C11.01.** The officers of this congregation shall be a president, vice president, and secretary, treasurer.
- a. Duties of the officers shall be specified in the bylaws.
 - b. Officers of this congregation shall serve similar offices of the Congregation Council and shall be voting members of the Congregation Council.
- C11.01.01** The president of this congregation shall be deemed president of the

Congregation Council. The president shall preside over meetings of this congregation, the Congregation Council, and the Executive Committee. The president shall perform such other duties as he/she may be directed to do by this congregation and/or the Congregation Council. (CR11.01.01.A05)

C11.01.02 The vice-president shall preside in the absence of the president or upon request of the president and shall complete any unexpired term of the president in the event the office of president is declared vacant. Upon request, assistance shall be given to the pastor and the president in the performance of their duties. (CR11.01.02.A05)

C11.01.03 The secretary shall keep an accurate and secure record of all proceedings of the Congregation Council and of this congregation. The secretary shall take care of any correspondence incident to the business of this congregation and the Congregation Council and shall preside in the absence of the president and vice-president. The secretary shall post a copy of minutes of meetings of this congregation and the Congregation Council on the church bulletin board. (CR11.01.03.A05)

C11.01.04 The treasurer shall hold in safekeeping all money belonging to this congregation. The treasurer shall disburse money by check only and in accordance with the decision of this congregation or of the Congregation Council. The treasurer shall report monthly to the Congregation Council, annually upon audit to this congregation, and submit such other reports as may be requested by the Congregation Council. The treasurer's monthly report shall be posted on the church bulletin board.

b. The treasurer shall be a member of the Finance Committee.

c. If an assistant treasurer(s) is(are) elected, the treasurer may authorize that person to disburse funds and may delegate such other duties as deemed appropriate.

e. Neither the treasurer nor the assistant treasurer(s) may serve concurrently as financial secretary or assistant financial secretary.

(CR11.01.04.A05)

C11.02. The officers shall be elected by the congregation by written ballot and shall serve for two years. The term shall begin on July 1 and end on June 30.

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

Chapter 12

CONGREGATION COUNCIL

C12.01. The voting membership of the Congregation Council shall consist of all called pastors, the officers of the congregation, and neither more than **nine** nor fewer than **four** members of the congregation. Any voting member of the congregation may be elected, subject only to the limitation on the length of continuous service permitted in that office. A member's place on the Congregation Council shall be declared vacant if the member a) ceases to be a voting member of this congregation or b) is absent from three successive regular meetings of the Congregation Council without cause. (CR12.01.A05)

C12.02 The members of the Congregation Council except the pastor(s) shall be elected at a legally called meeting of the congregation during the month of May. Their term of office shall be for two years, with the term of office beginning on July 1

and ending on June 30. Newly elected Congregation Council members shall be installed at worship the Sunday prior to the date they assume office.

- C12.02.01** No person **elected to the Congregation Council** shall be eligible to serve on this Congregation Council for more than two consecutive terms in the same office, and no elected person shall serve on the Congregation Council more than six consecutive years. It is the goal of the congregation to elect half (or one less than half, if there are an odd number of members) of the members of the Congregation Council in even numbered years, with the remaining members elected in odd numbered years.
- C12.02.02** Detailed responsibilities and duties of members shall be defined in continuing resolutions, to be updated annually by the Congregation Council.
- C12.02.03** The term of the Congregation Council shall commence on July 1 and end on June 30.
- C12.03.** Should a member's place on the Congregation Council be declared vacant, the Congregation Council shall elect, by majority vote, a successor until the next Congregation meeting. Individuals who have served less than one-half of a regular term shall be eligible for nomination and possible election to a full term.
- C12.03.01** The Congregation Council shall elect by majority vote a successor to serve any officer vacancy or vacant elected member chair until a replacement is elected at the next Congregation Meeting.
- C12.04.** The Congregation Council shall have general oversight of the life and activities of this congregation, and in particular its worship life, to the end that everything be done in accordance with the Word of God and the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The duties of the Congregation Council shall include the following:
- a. To lead this congregation in stating its mission, do long-range planning, set goals and priorities, and evaluate activities in light of its mission and goals.
 - b. To seek to involve all members of this congregation in worship, learning, witness, service, fellowship, and support.
 - c. To oversee and provide for the administration of this congregation to enable it to fulfill its functions and perform its mission.
 - d. To maintain supportive relationships with the pastor(s) and staff and help them to annually evaluate the fulfillment of their calling, appointment, or employment. (CR12.04.d.A05)
 - e. To be examples individually and corporately of the style of life and ministry expected of all baptized persons.
 - f. To promote a congregational climate of peace and goodwill, and, as differences and conflicts arise, to endeavor to foster mutual understanding.
 - g. To arrange for pastoral service during the sickness or absence of the pastor.
 - h. To emphasize partnership with the synod and churchwide units of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as well as cooperation with other congregations, both Lutheran and non-Lutheran, subject to established policies of the synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - i. To recommend and encourage the use of program resources produced or approved by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - j. To seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel.
- C12.05.** The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the financial and property matters of this congregation.

- a. The Congregation Council shall be the board of directors of this congregation, and as such shall be responsible for maintaining and protecting its property and the management of its business and fiscal affairs. It shall have the powers and be subject to the obligations that pertain to such boards under the laws of the State of Florida, except as otherwise provided herein.
- b. The Congregation Council shall not have the authority to buy, sell, or encumber real property unless specifically authorized to do so by a meeting of the congregation.
- c. The Congregation Council may approve expenditures for items not included in the budget up to an amount specified in the bylaws.
- d. The Congregation Council shall prepare an annual budget for adoption by this congregation, shall supervise the expenditure of funds in accordance therewith following its adoption. The Congregation Council shall not expend in excess of 105% of anticipated receipts without prior approval of this congregation at a Congregation Meeting. The budget shall include this congregation's share in support of the wider ministry being carried on in partnership with the synod and churchwide organization.
- e. The Congregation Council shall ascertain that the financial affairs of this congregation are being conducted efficiently, giving particular attention to the prompt payment of all obligations and to the regular forwarding of benevolence monies to the synodical treasurer.
- f. The Congregation Council may elect an assistant treasurer(s) and/or an assistant financial secretary.
- g. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for this congregation's investments and its total insurance program.

C12.05.01 The Congregation Council each year may enter into contracts of up to two percent of the annual budget for items not included in the budget.

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

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

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

C12.09. The Congregation Council shall regularly report to this congregation regarding the business and ministries of this congregation.

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

C12.11.01 A minimum of 24 hours notice of any special meeting of the Congregation Council shall be given to all Congregation Council members who can be reached by local telephone.

C12.12. A quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of a majority of the members of the Congregation Council, including the pastor or interim pastor, except when the pastor or interim pastor requests or consents to be absent and has been given prior notice of an agenda of routine matters which shall be the

only business of the meeting. Chronic or repeated absence of the pastor or interim pastor who has refused approval of the agenda of a subsequent regular or special meeting shall not preclude action by the Congregation Council, following consultation with the synodical bishop.

C12.13 Financial Secretary

- a. The Congregation Council shall appoint a financial secretary who shall have charge of recording all gifts received by this congregation, keep an accurate record of all contributing unit gifts, and submit a quarterly report of giving to each contributing unit.
- b. The financial secretary shall be a member of the finance committee.
- c. The financial secretary shall perform duties as specified in the continuing resolutions.

Chapter 13

CONGREGATION COMMITTEES

C13.01. The officers of this congregation and the senior pastor shall constitute the **Executive Committee.** (CR13.01.01.A05)

C13.01.01. The Executive Committee shall be responsible for:

- a. Handling any emergency needs between meetings of the Congregational Council.
- b. Providing to the Congregation Council the recommendations of the Memorial/Honoraria Committee. (CR13.01.01.b.A05)
- c. Reviewing salary recommendations from any committees charged with supervising various employees and presenting its recommendations to the Congregation Council.
- d. Signing legal documents by the president and secretary.
- e. Resolving problems that may arise with regard to the performance of duties assigned to any Congregation Council member.

C13.02. A **Nominating Committee** of three to six voting members of this congregation shall be elected at the May meeting for a term of one year. Members of the Nominating Committee are not eligible for consecutive reelection. It is the goal of the congregation to have two former members of the council on the nominating committee.

C13.02.01

- a. The Nominating Committee shall propose the name of at least one candidate for each position to be filled on the Congregation Council, Nominating Committee and delegates to the Synod Assembly.
- b. Three months prior to the election, the Nominating Committee shall publish a listing of the pending vacancies with a summary of their job descriptions and invite members to submit their names for positions which interest them.

C13.03. An **Audit Committee** of three voting members shall be elected by the Congregation Council. Audit Committee members shall not be members of the Congregation Council. Term of office shall coincide with the fiscal year and the term of office shall be three years, with one member elected each year. Members shall be eligible for re-election. (CR13.03.A05)

C13.04. A Pastor's Support Committee shall be appointed by the Congregation Council. (CR13.04.A05)

C13.05. A Personnel Committee shall be appointed by the Congregation Council. (CR13.05.A05)

- C13.06.** The Staff Support Committee shall be appointed by the Congregation Council. (CR13.06.A05)
- C13.07.** When a pastoral vacancy occurs, a **Call Committee** of not less than six nor more than eight voting members shall be elected by this congregation. Term of office will terminate upon installation of the newly called pastor.
- C13.08.** Other committees of this congregation may be formed, as the need arises, by decision of the Congregation Council.
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- C13.08.02.** There shall be a Finance Committee consisting of the treasurer, the financial secretary and three voting members of this congregation elected by the Congregation Council annually. The term of office shall begin January 1 and end December 31. (CR13.08.02.A05)
- C13.09.** Duties of other committees of this congregation shall be specified in the continuing resolutions. (CR13.09.A05 through CR13.09.H05)

Chapter 14

ORGANIZATIONS WITHIN THE CONGREGATION

- C14.01.** All organizations within this congregation shall exist to aid it in ministering to the members of this congregation and to all persons who can be reached with the Gospel of Christ. As outgrowths and expressions of this congregation's life, the organizations are subject to its oversight and direction. This congregation shall guide their activities, approve or disapprove their policies and receive reports concerning their membership, work, and finances.
- C14.02.** Special interest groups, other than those of the official organizations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, may be organized only after authorization has been given by the Congregation Council and specified in a continuing resolution.

Chapter 15

DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS AND ADJUDICATION

- *C15.01.** Persistent and public denial of the Christian faith, willful or criminal conduct grossly unbecoming a member of the Church of Christ, continual and intentional interference with the ministry of the congregation, or willful and repeated harassment or defamation of member(s) of the congregation is sufficient cause for discipline of a member. Prior to disciplinary action, reconciliation and repentance will be attempted following Matthew 18:15–17, proceeding through these successive steps, as necessary: a) private counsel and admonition by the pastor, b) censure and admonition by the pastor in the presence of two or three witnesses, c) written referral of the matter by the Congregation Council to the vice president of the synod, who will refer it to a consultation panel drawn from the Consultation Committee of the synod, and d) written referral of the matter by the consultation panel to the Committee on Discipline of the synod. If, for any reason, the pastor is unable to administer the admonitions required by paragraphs a. and b. hereof, those steps may be performed by another pastor chosen by the Executive Committee of the Congregation Council.

- *C15.02.** The process for discipline of a member of the congregation shall be governed as prescribed by the chapter on discipline in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. If the counseling, censure, and admonitions pursuant to C15.01 do not result in repentance and amendment of life, charges against the accused member(s) that are specific and in writing may be prepared by the Congregation Council, signed, and submitted to the vice president of the synod. The vice president shall select from the synod's Consultation Committee a panel of five members (three lay persons and two clergy). A copy of the written charges shall be provided to the consultation panel and the accused member(s). The consultation panel, after requesting a written reply to the charges from the accused member(s), shall consider the matter and seek a resolution by means of investigation, consultation, mediation, or whatever other means may seem appropriate. The panel's efforts to reach a mutually agreeable resolution shall continue for no more than 45 days after the matter is submitted to it.
- *C15.03.** If the consultation panel fails to resolve the matter, that panel shall refer the case in writing, including the written charges and the accused member's reply, to the Committee on Discipline of the synod for a hearing. A copy of the panel's written referral shall be delivered to the vice president of the synod, the Congregation Council, and the accused member(s) at the same time it is sent to the Committee on Discipline of the synod. The Executive Committee of the Synod Council shall then select six members from the Committee on Discipline to decide the case, and shall appoint a member of the Synod Council to preside as nonvoting chair. Those six members plus the nonvoting chair comprise the discipline hearing panel for deciding the case. The Congregation Council and the accused member(s) are the parties to the case.
- *C15.04.** The discipline hearing panel shall commence and conduct the disciplinary hearing in accordance with the provisions governing discipline of congregation members prescribed in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.
- *C15.05.** By the vote of at least two-thirds of the members of the discipline hearing panel who are present and voting, one of the following disciplinary sanctions can be imposed:
- a. suspension from the privileges of congregation membership for a designated period of time;
 - b. suspension from the privileges of congregation membership until the pastor and Congregation Council receive evidence, satisfactory to them, of repentance and amendment of life;
 - c. termination of membership in the congregation; or
 - d. termination of membership in the congregation and exclusion from the church property and from all congregation activities.
- *C15.06.** The written decision of the discipline hearing panel shall be sent to the vice president of the synod, the accused member(s), and the Congregation Council as required by the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. The decision of the discipline hearing panel shall be implemented by the Congregation Council and recorded in the minutes of the next council meeting.

***C15.10. Adjudication**

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

Chapter 16

BYLAWS

- *C16.01.** This congregation may adopt bylaws. No bylaw may conflict with this constitution.
- *C16.02.** Bylaws may be adopted or amended at any legally called meeting of this congregation with a quorum present by a majority vote of those voting members present and voting.
- *C16.03.** Changes to the bylaws may be proposed by any voting member provided that such additions or amendments be submitted in writing to the Congregation Council at least 60 days before a regular or special Congregation Meeting called for that purpose. The Congregation Council shall notify the congregation's members by mail of the proposal with the council's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the Congregation Meeting. Notification may take place by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law.
- *C16.04.** Approved changes to the bylaws shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod.

Chapter 17

AMENDMENTS

- *C17.01.** Those sections of this constitution that are not required, in accord with the Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, may be amended in the following manner. Amendments may be proposed by at least twenty (20) voting members or by the Congregation Council. Proposals must be filed in writing with the Congregation Council 60 days before formal consideration by this congregation at a regular or special Congregation Meeting called for that purpose. The Congregation Council shall notify the congregation's members by mail of the proposal together with the council's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the meeting. Notification may take place by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law.
- *C17.02.** An amendment to this constitution, proposed under *C17.01., shall:
- a. be approved at a legally called Congregation Meeting according to this constitution by a majority vote of those present and voting;
 - b. be ratified without change at the next annual meeting by a two-thirds majority vote of those present and voting; and
 - c. have the effective date included in the resolution¹ and noted in the constitution.

¹ Such an effective date must be stated in relation to the requirements of *C17.03. to allow time for synodical review of the amendment.

***C17.03.** Any amendments to this constitution that result from the processes provided in *C17.01. and *C17.02. shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod. The amendment shall become effective within 120 days from the date of the receipt of the notice by the synod unless the synod informs this congregation that the amendment is in conflict with the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or the constitution of the Florida-Bahamas Synod of the ELCA. The synod shall notify the congregation of its decision to approve or disapprove the proposed changes; the changes shall go into effect upon notification that the synod has approved them.

NEW *C17.04 This constitution may be amended to bring any section into conformity with a section or sections, either required or not required, of the *Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* as most recently amended by the Churchwide Assembly. Such amendments may be approved by a simple majority vote of those voting members present and voting at any legally called meeting of the congregation without presentation at a prior meeting of the congregation, provided that the Congregation Council has submitted by mail notice to the congregation of such an amendment or amendments, together with the council's recommendations, at least 30 days prior to the meeting. Upon the request of 10 voting members of the congregation, the Congregation Council shall submit such notice and call such a meeting. Following the adoption of an amendment, the secretary of the congregation shall submit a copy thereof to the synod. Such provisions shall become effective immediately following a vote of approval.

Chapter 18

CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

***C18.01.** The Congregation in a legally called meeting or the Congregation Council may enact continuing resolutions. Such continuing resolutions may not conflict with the constitution or bylaws of this congregation. (CR18.01.A05 and CR18.01.B05)

***C18.02.** Continuing resolutions shall be enacted or amended by a majority vote of a meeting of the congregation or a two-thirds vote of all voting members of the Congregation Council.

Chapter 19

INDEMNIFICATION

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

Chapter 20.

PARISH AUTHORIZATION

[Required provisions when congregation is part of a parish]*

- *C20.01.** This congregation may unite in partnership with one or more other congregations recognized by the synod named in *C6.01. to form a parish. Except as provided in *C20.02. and *C20.03., a written agreement, developed in consultation with the synod and approved by the voting members of each congregation participating in the parish, shall specify the powers and responsibilities that have been delegated to a Parish Council.
- *C20.02.** Whenever a letter of call is being recommended for extension to an ordained minister of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or a candidate for the roster of ordained ministers who has been recommended to the congregation by the synodical bishop to serve the congregations of a parish, such letter of call shall be first approved by a two-thirds vote at congregational meetings of each of the congregations forming the parish. If any congregation of the parish should fail to approve extending this call, the other congregation(s) in the same parish shall have the right to terminate the parish arrangement.
- *C20.03.** Any one of the congregations of a parish may terminate the call of a pastor as provided in †S14.13.d. of the synodical constitution of the synod named in *C6.01. In such case, the other congregation(s) in the same parish shall have the right to terminate the parish arrangement.
- *C20.04.** Whenever a parish arrangement is terminated, the call of any rostered person serving that parish is terminated. Should any congregation that formerly was part of the parish arrangement desire to issue a new call to that rostered person, it may do so in accordance with the call process of this church.