

Constitution

Approved January 29, 2012

Good Shepherd Evangelical Lutheran Church
of Manistee, Michigan

521 Cypress Street
Manistee, Michigan

A Congregation of the NORTH AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH

PREAMBLE

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

Chapter 1. NAME AND INCORPORATION

- C1.01. The name of this congregation shall be Good Shepherd Evangelical Lutheran Church of Manistee, Michigan.
- C1.02. For the purpose of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws, the Good Shepherd Evangelical Lutheran Church congregation is hereinafter designated as "this congregation."
- C1.03. This congregation shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of Michigan.

Chapter 2. CONFESSION OF FAITH

This congregation incorporates Article 2 of the constitution of the North American Lutheran Church (the "NALC"), confessing:

- C2.01. The Triune God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.**
- C2.02. 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 the Holy Spirit speaking through their authors, they record and announce God's revelation centering in Jesus Christ. Through them the Holy Spirit speaks to us to create and sustain Christian faith and fellowship for service in the world.**
- C2.03. 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, " according to which all doctrines should and must be judged." (Formula of Concord, Epitome, Part I)**
- C2.04. The Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds as true declarations of the faith of the Church.**
- C2.05. 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. 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. 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.**
- C2.08. This congregation honors and accepts The Common Confession (2005)
- a. The Lord Jesus Christ: We are people who believe and confess our faith in the Triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We trust and believe in Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord.
 - b. The Gospel of Salvation: We believe and confess that all human beings are sinners, and that sinners are redeemed by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. God alone justifies human beings by faith in Christ—a faith that God creates through the message of the Gospel. As ambassadors for Christ, God uses us to speak His Word and build His kingdom.
 - c. The Authority of Scripture: We believe and confess that the Bible is God’s revealed Word to us, spoken in Law and Gospel. The Bible is the final authority for us in all matters of our faith and life.
 - d. A Common Confession of Faith: We accept and uphold that the Lutheran Confessions reliably guide us as faithful interpretations of Scripture, and that we share a unity and fellowship in faith with others among whom the Gospel of Jesus Christ is preached and the sacraments are administered in accordance with the Gospel.
 - e. The Priesthood of All Believers: We believe and confess that the Holy Spirit makes all who believe in Jesus Christ to be priests for service to others in Jesus’ name, and that God desires to make use of the spiritual gifts he has given through the priesthood of all believers.
 - f. Marriage and Family: We believe and confess that the marriage of male and female is an institution created and blessed by God. From marriage, God forms families to serve as the building blocks of all human civilization and community. We teach and practice that sexual activity belongs exclusively within the Biblical boundaries of a faithful marriage between one man and one woman.
 - g. The Mission and Ministry of the Congregation: We believe and confess that the church is the assembly of believers called and gathered by God around Word and Sacrament, and that the mission and ministry of the church is carried out within the context of individual congregations, which are able to work together locally and globally.

Chapter 3. NATURE OF THE CHURCH

- C3.01. The Church is the universal assembly of all believers among whom the Gospel is preached in its purity and the holy sacraments are administered according to the Gospel. (Augsburg Confession VII)

- C3.02. 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.
- C3.03. The Church exists both as an inclusive fellowship and as local congregations gathered for worship and Christian service. Congregations find their fulfillment in the universal community of the Church, and the universal Church exists in and through congregations.
- C3.04. This church, therefore, derives its character and powers from both 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.
- C3.05. This congregation exercises ministry within the mission of the NALC. This congregation embodies the Church in its community and, for the sake of mission, lives in cooperative partnership with other congregations and within the other structures of the NALC. This congregation shall share responsibility for the decision making process of the NALC.

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. Give honor and glory to the Triune God, worshiping in proclamation of the Word and administration of the sacraments and through lives of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, witness, obedience, 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 Scriptures, preserving and transmitting the Gospel faithfully and in accordance with the Lutheran Confessions 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 aged, advocating dignity and justice for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations standing with the poor and powerless, and committing 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 lives 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 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 rightly 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 suffering, and participate responsibly in society.
 - g. Encourage its members to provide support for the congregation's ministry and the ministry of other parts of the NALC.
 - h. Foster and participate in relationships with other congregations and structures of the NALC.
 - i. Foster and participate in ecumenical relationships consistent with NALC 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 groups and shall review their actions. (Such descriptions shall be contained in continuing resolutions of the Congregation Council.)
- C4.05. This congregation shall from time to time, adopt a mission statement which will provide specific directions for its programs.

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 the congregation's governing documents is recognized. All remaining authority is retained by the congregation. This 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. appoint or terminate the appointment of associates in ministry;
 - d. approve the annual budget;
 - e. acquire real and personal property by gift, devise, purchase, or other lawful means;
 - f. hold title to and use its property for any and all activities consistent with its purpose;

- g. sell, mortgage, lease, transfer, or otherwise dispose of its property by any lawful means;
- h. elect its Congregation Council, boards, and committees and require the members of the council, boards and committees to carry out their duties in accordance with the constitution and bylaws, and continuing resolutions; and
- i. establish or terminate a relationship with a church body.
- j. adopt amendments to this constitution as provided in chapter 17, and amendments to the bylaws as specified in chapter 16.

C5.04 This congregation may elect voting members of this congregation to serve as lay delegates and alternates to represent it at any meetings of any conferences, convocations, and other meetings where this congregation is entitled to such representation.

Chapter 6. CHURCH AFFILIATION

C6.01. This congregation is an interdependent part of the NALC or any successor, and is subject to the disciplinary rules of the NALC.

C6.02. **This congregation subscribes to the constitution of the NALC and will act in accordance with it.**

C6.03. This congregation will conduct its ministry in a manner consistent with its membership in the NALC:

- a. This congregation is responsible for its life as a Christian community.
- b. This congregation pledges its participation in the life and mission of the NALC, including the prayerful consideration of financial support.
- c. This congregation shall call only pastors who are members of the NALC or otherwise approved by the NALC to serve.**
- d. This congregation shall appoint only commissioned lay leaders who are members of the NALC or otherwise are authorized by the NALC to serve.**

C6.04. Affiliation with the NALC may be terminated as follows:

- a. This congregation dissolves.
- b. This congregation ceases to exist.
- c. This congregation is removed from membership in the NALC according to the procedures for discipline of the NALC.
- d. This congregation at two properly called and conducted special meetings at least sixty days apart, approves in each meeting by at least two-thirds majority of those voting members present and voting, a resolution directing this congregation to withdraw from the NALC. All provisions of this constitution binding this congregation to the NALC shall be terminated. The congregation shall promptly deliver a copy of the withdrawal resolution to the NALC general secretary.

Chapter 7. PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

C7.01. This congregation is an independent legal entity with rights to purchase, hold and convey real and personal property in accordance with applicable law. The NALC shall have no right or interest in the property of this congregation unless this congregation expressly conveys such a right or interest to the NALC. If this congregation dissolves, its property shall be distributed in accordance with applicable law and with the congregation's governing documents.

Chapter 8. MEMBERSHIP

C8.01. Members of this congregation shall be those baptized persons on the roll of the congregation at the time 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 or 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 in this congregation. Such confirmed members shall have communed and made a contribution of record during the current or previous year. 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 Lutheran congregations who wish to retain such membership but desire to participate in the life and mission of this congregation. They have all the privileges and duties of membership except voting rights at meetings and eligibility for elected offices or membership on the Congregation Council of this congregation.

C8.03. All applicants 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 NALC and their ministries and structures through contributions of their time, abilities and financial support as biblical stewards.

C8.05. Membership in this congregation shall be terminated by the following:

- a. death;
- b. resignation;
- c. transfer or release;
- d. disciplinary action by the Congregation Council; or
- e. removed from the roll of members due to inactivity. Such persons who have been removed from the roll of members shall remain persons for whom the church has a continuing pastoral concern.

C8.06. When a member has failed to receive Holy Communion and to make a contribution of record for a period of two consecutive calendar years, he/she shall be classified as inactive by the Congregation Council. This procedure will take place after such a member has been made aware of the process by the council. A person who has been placed on an inactive status shall remain listed as a baptized member and shall continue to be a person for whom the congregation has a continuing pastoral concern until membership is terminated as outlined in C8.05.

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 special meeting called for that purpose.

C9.02 Consistent with the faith and practice of the NALC,

- a. Every ordained pastor shall:
 - 1) preach the Word of God;
 - 2) administer the sacraments;
 - 3) conduct public worship;
 - 4) provide pastoral care;
 - 5) serve as the chief evangelist in his or her ministry, and
 - 6) proclaim God's love to the world.
- b. Pastors serving this congregation, shall, within the congregation:
 - 1) baptize, 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 Congregation Council administer discipline.

- c. Pastors serving this congregation 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; and
 - 3) impart knowledge of the NALC and its wider ministry through public provision of information, distribution of publications, and other appropriate means.
- C9.03. The specific duties of the pastor, compensation, and other matters pertaining to the service of the pastor shall be included in the letter of call.
- C9.04. a. The call of a congregation, when accepted by a pastor shall constitute a continuing annual relationship and commitment which, except in the case of death of the pastor, shall be terminated only 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 upon, 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, without reflection on the competence of the moral and spiritual character of the pastor;
 - 4) the physical or mental incapacity of the pastor;
 - 5) disqualification of the pastor through discipline on grounds of doctrine, morality, or continued neglect of duty; or
 - 6) the dissolution of the congregation.
- b. If the Congregation Council determines that it may be appropriate to end a call for one of the reasons set out in sub-section (a), the council shall consult with the pastor regarding the matter in accord with Biblical principles (Matthew 18:15ff.). If the Congregation Council and pastor do not reach agreement, the congregation shall inform the Bishop of the NALC, who shall consult with the Congregation Council and the pastor and shall attempt to reach an agreed resolution. If either party fails to assent, the congregation may dismiss the pastor by a two-thirds majority vote of the voting members present and voting at a properly called meeting. In all events, the Congregation Council can suspend a pastor with pay by majority vote if the Congregation Council determines that such suspension is necessary to protect the congregation and all whom it serves.
- C9.05. At time of pastoral vacancy, an interim pastor may be appointed by the Congregation Council.
- C9.06. During periods 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 Congregation Council. The interim pastor and any ordained pastor providing assistance shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a pastor.

- C9.07. 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.
- C9.08. 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." The Congregation Council will draft these documents in consultation with the pastor(s). The documents may be revised through a similar consultation.
- C9.09. The congregation may depart from C9.04.a. and call a pastor for a specific term of years. Details of such calls shall be in writing, setting forth the purpose and conditions involved. Such call may be also terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of C9.04.
- C9.10. The pastor of this congregation shall:
- a. oversee the keeping of accurate parochial records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from the congregation.
 - b. submit a summary of such statistics annually to the Congregation Council; and
 - c. 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.
- C9.11. The parochial records shall remain the property of the congregation.

Chapter 10. CONGREGATION MEETING

- C10.01. The annual meeting of this congregation shall be held at a time specified in the bylaws.
- C10.02. A special Congregation Meeting may be called by the pastor, the Congregation Council, or the president of this congregation. Special meetings shall be called at the written request of 40 voting members. The call for each special meeting shall specify the purpose(s) 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 weekends and to all voting members at least 10 days in advance of the date of the meeting. The posting of such notice in the mail, sent to the last known address, or sent to the last known e-mail address of such members shall be sufficient.
- C10.04. 40 voting members shall constitute a quorum.
- C10.05. Voting by proxy or by absentee ballot shall not be permitted.
- C10.06. All actions by the congregation shall be by majority vote of those voting members present and voting, except as otherwise noted in this constitution.
- 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 Congregation Council shall elect its officers and they shall be the officers of the congregation. The officers shall serve for one year or until their successors are elected. Their terms shall begin at the close of the meeting at which they were elected.
- C11.02. The officers of this congregation shall be president, vice president, and secretary.
- a. Duties of the officers shall be specified in the bylaws.
 - b. The officers shall be voting members of the congregation.
- C11.03. No officer shall hold more than one office at a time. The president, vice president and secretary shall be eligible to serve no more than two consecutive terms in the same office.

Chapter 12. CONGREGATION COUNCIL

- C12.01. The voting membership of the Congregation Council shall consist of the pastor(s) and not more than 18 members of the congregation and the officers of the congregation. Any voting member of the congregation may be elected, subject 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 ceases to be a voting member of this congregation, or is absent from three successive regular meetings of the Congregation Council without cause.
- C12.02. The members of the Congregation Council except the pastor(s) shall be elected by majority vote at the congregation meeting called for this purpose to serve for 3 years or until their successors are elected. Such members shall be eligible to serve no more than two full terms consecutively. Their terms shall begin at the close of the meeting at which they were elected.
- C12.03. Should a member's place on the Congregation Council be declared vacant, the Congregation Council shall elect, by a majority vote, a successor until the next Congregation Elections.
- 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, the Lutheran Confessions, and the faith and practice of the NALC. The duties of the Congregation Council shall include the following:
- a. To lead this congregation in stating its mission, to do long-range planning, to set goals and priorities, and to evaluate its activities in light of its mission and goals.
 - b. To seek to involve all members of this congregation in worship, learning, witness, service, and support.
 - c. To oversee and provide for the administration of this congregation to enable it to fulfill its functions and perform its mission.
 - d. To maintain supportive relationships with the pastor(s) and staff and to help them annually evaluate the fulfillment of their calling, appointment, or employment.
 - e. To be an example individually and collectively 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 supply during sickness or absence of the pastor.
 - h. To emphasize partnership with the NALC as well as cooperation with other congregations, both Lutheran and non-Lutheran.
 - i. 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 of and be subject to the obligations that pertain to such boards under the laws of the State of Michigan, except as otherwise provided herein.
 - b. The Congregation Council shall not have the authority to buy, sell or encumber real property unless specifically authorized to do so by a meeting of the congregation.
 - c. The Congregation Council may enter into contracts of up to \$2,500 for items not included in the budget.
 - d. The Congregation Council shall prepare an annual budget for adoption by this congregation, shall supervise the expenditure of funds in accordance therewith following its adoption, and may incur obligations more than \$2,500 in excess of the anticipated receipts only after the approval by a Congregation Meeting.
 - 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 designated recipients.
 - f. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for this congregation's investments and its total insurance program, "endowment funds excepted".
- C12.06. The Congregation Council shall see that the provisions of this constitution, its bylaws, and the continuing resolutions are carried out.
- C12.07. The Congregation Council shall provide for an annual review of the membership roster.
- C12.08. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the appointment and supervision of the salaried and hourly workers of this congregation.
- C12.09. The Congregation Council shall normally meet once a month. Special meetings may be called by the pastor or the president. Special meetings shall be called at the request of at least one-third of its members. Notice of each special meeting shall be given to all who are entitled to be present.
- C12.10. The Congregation Council shall submit a comprehensive report to the congregation at the annual meeting.
- C12.11. 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 such person

requests or consents to be absent and has given prior approval to an agenda of routine matters which shall be the only business of the meeting. In such a circumstance, the Congregation Council may not conduct any business beyond that which was included on the agenda. 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.

Chapter 13. CONGREGATION COMMITTEES

- C13.01. The officers of this congregation, the treasurer, the pastor(s) shall constitute the Executive Committee.
- C13.02. The Congregation Council shall provide for an annual financial review of congregational accounts.
- C13.03. When a pastoral vacancy occurs, a Call Committee of nine voting members shall be appointed by the Congregation Council. Term of office will terminate at the installation of the newly-called pastor.
- C13.04. Other congregation committees may be formed as the need arises, by the decision of the Congregation Council.
- C13.05. Duties of congregation committees shall be specified in the continuing resolutions.
- C13.06. The [senior] pastor of this congregation shall be ex officio a member of all committees and boards of the congregation. The president of this congregation shall be ex officio a member of all committees and boards of this congregation.

Chapter 14. ORGANIZATIONS WITHIN THE CONGREGATION

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

Chapter 15. DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS

- C15.01. Denial of the Christian faith as described in this constitution or the constitution of the NALC, conduct grossly unbecoming a member of the Church of Christ, or persistent trouble-making in this congregation are sufficient cause for discipline of a member. Prior to disciplinary action, reconciliation will be attempted following Matthew 18:15-17, proceeding through these successive steps:
 - a. private admonition by the pastor,
 - b. admonition by the pastor in the presence of two or three witnesses,

- c. citation to appear before the Congregation Council. If for any reason the pastor is unable to administer the admonitions required by a. and b. hereof, the president or vice president shall administer such admonitions.
- C15.02. A member charged with the offense shall appear before the Congregation Council having received a written notice, specifying the exact charges that have been made against the member, at least 10 days prior to the meeting.
- C15.03. Should the allegations be sustained by a two-thirds majority vote of the Congregation Council, the council shall impose one of the following disciplinary actions:
 - a. censure before the council or congregation;
 - b. suspension from membership for a definite period of time;
 - c. exclusion from membership in this congregation. Disciplinary actions b. and c. shall be delivered to the member in writing.
- C15.04. The member against whom disciplinary action has been taken by the Congregation Council shall have the right to appeal the decision to the Congregation Meeting, which may revise or overturn the Congregation Council's decision by a majority vote. Any such vote will be by secret ballot.
- C15.05. Disciplinary actions may be reconsidered and revoked by the Congregation Council upon receipt of either evidence that injustice has been done or evidence of repentance and amendment.

Chapter 16. BYLAWS

- C16.01. This Congregation may adopt bylaws. No bylaws may conflict with this constitution.
- C16.02. Bylaws may be adopted or amended at any properly 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 and that the Congregation Council notify the members of the proposal with its recommendations regarding the disposition of the proposal at least 30 days in advance of the Congregation Meeting.

Chapter 17. AMENDMENTS

- C17.01. Amendments to this constitution may be proposed by at least 12 voting members of the Congregation or by the Congregation Council. Proposals must be filed in writing with the Congregation Council 60 days before formal consideration by this Congregation at its regular or special meeting called for that purpose. The Congregation Council shall notify the members of the proposal with their recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the meeting.

- C17.02. A proposed amendment to this constitution shall:
- a. be approved at a properly called congregation meeting according to this constitution by a simple 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 resolution and noted in this constitution.

Chapter 18. CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

- C18.01. The Congregation Council may enact continuing resolutions which describe the functions of the various committees or organizations of this congregation. Such continuing resolutions may not conflict with this constitution or bylaws of this congregation.
- C18.02. Continuing resolutions shall be enacted or amended by a two-thirds majority 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 shall adopt provisions providing indemnification for each person who by reason of the fact that such a 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.