

Constitution for East Zion Lutheran Church

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.

Chapter 1

NAME AND INCORPORATION

- C1.01 The name of this congregation shall be East Zion Lutheran Church.
- C1.02 For the purpose of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws, the East Zion Lutheran congregation is here in after designated as "this congregation."
- C1.03 This congregation shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of Minnesota.

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 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 word.
- 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 Apostle's 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. This church, 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.

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 ministry 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 interdependent relationships with other congregations, the synod, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- i. Foster ecumenical relationships consistent with church wide 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.

C4.0b This congregation shall, from time to time, adopt a mission statement which will provide specific direction 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. The congregation is authorized to:
- a. call a pastor.
 - b. terminate the call of a pastor;
 - c. appoint or terminate the appointment of associates in ministry in conformity with the applicable policy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;
 - 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 officers, boards, and committees, and require them to carry out their duties in accordance with the constitution and bylaws; and
 - i. terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as provided in Chapter 6.

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 Southwestern Minnesota 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 other synod.
 - d. This congregation agrees to consider associates in ministry for appointment 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 or 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 This congregation may terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America by the following procedure:
- a. A resolution indicating the desire of this congregation to terminate its relationship must be adopted at a legally called and conducted special meeting of this congregation by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present.
 - b. The secretary of this congregation shall submit a copy of the resolution to the synodical bishop 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 shall consult with this congregation during a period of at least 90 days.

- d. If this congregation, after consultation, still desires to terminate its relationship, such action may be taken at a legally called and conducted special meeting by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present, at which meeting the bishop of the synod or an authorized representative shall be present. Notice of the meeting shall be mailed to all voting members at least 10 days in advance of the meeting.
 - e. A certified copy of the resolution to terminate its relationship shall be sent to the synodical bishop, at which time the relationship between this congregation and ELCA shall be terminated.
 - f. Notice of termination shall be forwarded by the synodical bishop to the secretary of this church and published in the periodical of this church.
- C6.06 If this congregation is considering relocation, it shall confer with the bishop Of the synod before any steps are taken leading to such action. The approval Of the synod council shall be received before any such action is effected.

Chapter 7

PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

- C7.01 If this congregation ceases to exist, title to undisposed property shall pass to the southwestern Minnesota 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 regularly 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. Before this congregation takes action to transfer to another Lutheran church body, it shall consult with representatives of the Southwestern Minnesota Synod.
- C7.04 If a two-thirds majority of the voting members of this congregation present at a regularly called and conducted special meeting of this congregation vote to become independent or relate to a non-Lutheran church body, 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 the 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 the 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 the 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 shall have communed and made a contribution of record during the current year.
 - 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. 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.
- C8.03 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 and of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America through contributions of their time, abilities, and financial support as biblical stewards.
- C8.05 Membership in this congregation shall be terminated by any of the following:
- a. death;
 - b. resignation;
 - c. transfer or release;
 - d. removal from the roll due to inactivity as defined in the bylaws

C8.06 Discipline of the congregation shall be exercised in accordance with Matthew 18:15-18. "If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member listens to you, you have regained that one. But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church, and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

Chapter 9

THE PASTOR

C9.01 The Call

a. 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 regularly 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.

b. Only a member of the clergy roster of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or who has been recommended for it by the synodical bishop may be called as a pastor of this congregation.

c. 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.

d. 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 continuing mutual relationship and commitment which, except in the case of the death of the pastor, shall be terminated. only following consultation with the synodical bishop and for the following reasons:

- 1) mutual agreement to terminate the call or the completion of a call for a specific term of years;
- 2) resignation of the pastor;
- 3) inability of conduct the pastoral office effectively in the congregation in view of local conditions, without reflection on the competence or the moral and spiritual character of the pastor;
- 4) the physical or mental incapacity of the pastor;
- 5) disqualifications of the pastor through discipline on grounds of doctrine, morality, or continued neglect of duty; or
- 6) the dissolution of the congregation.

f. With the approval of the bishop of the synod expressed in writing which sets forth a clear statement of the purpose to be served by such a departure from the normal rule of permanency of the call as expressed in C9.01-e, a congregation may call a pastor for a specific term of years. 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 call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of C9.01-e.

C9.02 Duties

a. Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, every ordained minister shall preach the Word, administer the sacraments, conduct public worship; provide pastoral care, and shall speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world. Each ordained minister with a congregational call shall, with the congregation, offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead; supervise all schools and organizations of the congregation; shall install regularly elected members of the Congregation Council, and with the council administer discipline. Every pastor shall seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel and strive to extend the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation, and abroad; shall impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through distribution of its periodicals and other publications; and shall endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and of the synod of the ELCA.

b. The pastor shall keep accurate parochial records of all baptisms, members transferred, or members dismissed from the congregation, and shall submit a summary of such statistics annually to the synod'

c. 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.

d. The pastor, as spiritual leader of the congregation, shall be ex officio a member of the Church Council, and an advisory member of all other boards, committees, and organizations of the congregation.

e. 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.

C9.03 Resignation

a. If the pastor resigns, the resignation shall not go into effect until three months after its presentation, unless the congregation consents to release the pastor at an earlier date.

b. Interim Pastor

1) At a time of pastoral vacancy, an interim pastor may be appointed by the bishop of the synod with the consent of this congregation or the Congregation Council.

2) During the period of service, an interim pastor shall have the rights and duties 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.

C9.04 Dismissal

a. In the case of alleged physical or mental incapacity of the pastor or ineffective conduct of the pastoral office, it shall be the responsibility of the bishop of the synod, when such difficulties are personally known or 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, to investigate such conditions personally in company with a committee of two ordained ministers and one layperson.

b. In case of alleged physical or mental incapacity competent medical testimony shall be obtained. When such disability is evident, the bishop of the synod with the advice of the committee shall declare the pastorate vacant. Upon the restoration of a disabled pastor to health, the bishop of the synod shall take steps to enable the pastor to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another field of labor.

c. In the case of alleged local difficulties which imperil the effective functioning of the congregation, all concerned persons shall be heard, after which the bishop of the synod together with the committee described in C9.04-a shall decide on the course of action to be recommended to the pastor and the congregation. If they agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action shall be taken by the synod. If either party fails to assent, the congregation may dismiss the pastor by a majority vote of members present at a regularly called meeting and with the approval of the bishop or by a two-thirds vote and consultation with the bishop.

d. The foregoing procedure shall never be invoked when questions of doctrine, morality, or continued neglect of duty are involved, all such cases being treated as disciplinary matters.

e. If in the course of the proceedings, it should be come apparent that the pastoral office cannot be conducted effectively in the congregation being served by the ordained minister due to local conditions, the bishop of the synod may temporarily suspend the pastor from service in the congregation without prejudice and with pay provided through a joint church wide/synod fund and with housing provided by 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, and shall be called at the written request of 10 percent 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 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.
- C10.04 Ten percent of 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 except as otherwise provided 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 AND CONGREGATION COUNCIL

- C11.01 The officers of this congregation shall be a president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer. (1'23-05)
- a. Duties of the officers shall be specified in the bylaws.
 - b. The officers shall be voting members of the congregation.
 - c. Officers of this congregation shall serve similar offices of the Congregation council and shall be voting members of the congregation council.

- C11.02 The congregation shall elect its officers and they shall be the officers of the Congregation. The officers shall be elected by written ballot and shall serve a term of three years or until their successors are elected. Their terms shall begin at the close of the annual meeting at which they are elected.
- 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.
- C11.04 There shall be a Board of Trustees of three members, elected by the annual meeting in such a way that the terms of approximately one-third of the members expire each year. The term of office shall be three years, and no member shall be eligible to election for more than two consecutive terms. The pastor and the president of the congregation shall be advisory members of the board of Trustees. The board of Trustees shall have charge of the general management and control of the business affairs of the congregation.
- C11.05 There shall be a Board of Deacons of three members, elected by the annual meeting in such a way that the terms of approximately one-third of the members each year. The term of office shall be three years, and no member shall be eligible to election for more than two consecutive terms. The pastor shall be ex officio a member of the Board of Deacons; the president of the congregation shall be an advisory member. The Board of Deacons shall be responsible, under leadership of the pastor, for the spiritual life and concern of the congregation.
- C11.06 The voting membership of the congregation council shall consist of the officers of the congregation, the three trustees, the three deacons, the superintendent of Sunday School, and the president of the Women's organization. The pastor shall serve as an ex officio member of the Congregation Council. 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 four successive regular meetings of the Congregation Council without cause.
- C11.07 The members of the Congregation Council' except the pastor and the President of the Women's organization, shall be elected by written ballot to serve for three 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 annual meeting at which they are elected. Newly elected Congregation Council members shall be installed at a Sunday worship service following the annual meeting. The President of the Women's organization shall be elected by its own membership. A vacancy of the President of the Women's organization shall be replaced by its own members.
- C11.08 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 annual meeting. At such time the congregation would select by majority vote a successor to fulfill the term.

- C11.09 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, 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 and staff and help them annually to evaluate the fulfillment of their calling, appointment, or employment.
 - e. To be examples 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 service during sickness or absence of the pastor.
 - h. To emphasize partnership with the synod and church wide 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.
- C11.10 The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the financial and property matters of this congregation.
- a. The Congregation Council 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 Minnesota.
 - 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 shall prepare an annual budget for adoption by this congregation, shall supervise the expenditure of funds in accordance therewith following its adoption. The budget shall include this congregation's support of the wider ministry being carried on in partnership with the synod and church wide organization.

d. The congregation council shall insure 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.

C11.11 The Congregation Council shall see that the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws are carried out.

C11.12 The Congregation Council shall provide for an annual review of the membership roster in accordance with the provisions set forth in the bylaws.

C11.13 The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the appointment and supervision of the salaried lay workers of this congregation and shall be responsible for the congregation's insurance program'

C11.14 The Congregation Council shall submit a financial report to this congregation at the annual meeting.

C11.15 The Congregation Council shall normally meet once a month' Special meetings may be called by the pastor or the president, or may be called at the request of at least one-half of its members. Notice of each meeting shall be given to all members of the Congregation Council.

C11.16 A quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of a majority of the members of the Congregational Council.

Chapter 12

CONGREGATIONAL COMMITTEES AND ORGANIZATIONS WITHIN THE CONGREGATION

C12.01 All committees and 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 at its meeting shall receive reports concerning its organizations membership, work, and finances.

C12.02 **A Nominating Committee** of five voting members of this congregation, two of whom shall be chosen from the Congregation Council. membership, and three shall be elected at the annual meeting for a term of one year. Members of the Nominating Committee are not eligible for consecutive re-election.

C12.03 **An Audit committee** of two voting members shall be appointed annually by the Congregational Council. Such committee members shall not be members of the congregation council. The term of office shall be for one year. Members shall be eligible for re-appointment. (Revision approved 1-31-1999)

C12.04 **An Education Committee** shall consist of four members. Two members are elected by the congregation to serve a two year term, and the Sunday School Superintendent is elected by the Congregation to serve a two year term. The Pastor serves as ex officio member. (revision approved 1-31-1999)

- C12.05 The Mission Committee shall consist of two members. Both shall be elected each year for a two year term. Members shall be eligible for re-election. Missionary Sponsorship funds shall be collected and distributed through the General fund. (Revision approved 1-31-1999)
- C12.05 The Music and Worship Committee shall consist of choir director(s) and organist(s) plus two members elected by the congregation. One shall be elected each year for a two year term. (Revision approved 1-31-1999)
- C12.06 The Parsonage Committee shall consist of two members of the Congregation Council with their term of service being determined by the Council. (revision approved 1-27-2001)
- C12.07 The Cemetery Committee shall consist of three members, with one member elected each year for a term of three years.
- C12.08 The Parish Council will be comprised of voting members from both congregations and will consist of president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, three trustees, three deacons, WELCA president, and Sunday school superintendent from each congregation. A simple majority shall be established as the appropriate number of votes needed to pass.
- C12.09 Other congregational committees may be formed as the need arises, by decision of the Congregational Council. 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.
- C12.10 When a pastoral vacancy occurs, a Call Committee of four voting members shall be appointed by the Congregation Council. Two of these shall be female and two male. These four members shall along with four members from West Zion Lutheran church consist of the Parish Call Committee. The term of office will terminate at the installation of the newly called pastor.
- C12.11 Duties of congregational committees shall be specified in the bylaws.

Chapter 13

BYLAWS

- C13.01 This congregation may adopt bylaws. No bylaw may conflict with this Constitution.
- C13.01 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.
- C13.01 Changes to the bylaws may be proposed by any voting members provided, however, 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 at least 30 days in advance of the Congregation Meeting.

C13.04 Approved changes to the bylaws shall be sent to the synod.

Chapter 14

AMENDMENTS

C14.01 Amendments to this constitution may be proposed by at least five 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 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.

C14.02 A proposed amendment to this constitution shall:

- a. be approved at a properly called 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 resolution and noted in the constitution.

C14.03 Any amendments to this constitution 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 Southwestern Minnesota Synod

Chapter 15

CEMETERY

C15.01 East Zion Lutheran Church, in order to assure future income for the upkeep of East Zion Lutheran Cemetery, shall receive and administer gifts for cemetery maintenance and beautification, and to encourage gifts and memorials for these stated purposes. There shall be a Perpetual Care Cemetery Fund consisting of a Perpetual Fund in which the principal will be retained and only the income used, and an Operating Fund from which both principal and income may be used, to enable the above stated purposes to be carried forth.

C15.02 The Perpetual Care Fund shall be invested only in endeavors of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in furtherance of the kingdom of God. The Cemetery Board shall investigate ways in which the Perpetual Care Fund may be invested and present this information at the annual meeting. Members of the congregation may also suggest possible investments to the Cemetery Board at least one week prior to the annual meeting.

**BY-LAWS FOR THE CONGREGATION OF
EAST ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH
STARBUCK, MINNESOTA**

- Chapter 1 NAME AND INCORPORATION**
- Chapter 2 CONFESSION OF FAITH**
- Chapter 3 NATURE OF THE CHURCH**
- Chapter 4 STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**
- Chapter 5 POWERS OF THE CONGREGATION**
- Chapter 6 CHURCH AFFILIATION**
- Chapter 7 PROPERTY OWNERSHIP**
- Chapter 8 MEMBERSHIP**

B8.04 Holy Communion Participation

- a. Participation in Holy Communion shall be limited to baptized members of this and other Christian congregations. Worthy participation requires sincere repentance, faith in Jesus Christ as Savior, and an earnest desire to amend one's sinful life, as well as acceptance of the Scriptural teaching regarding the Real Presence of Christ with His Body and Blood in the Sacrament. Registration forms or oral announcements shall be so devised as to make prospective participants aware of these requirements.
- b. Record of participation in Holy Communion shall be entered into the records of the congregation. If a member of another congregation communes, notice shall be sent to their pastor.
- c. Children who have attained at least the fifth grade and who have been properly instructed, as determined by the Pastor, with the participation of the parent or legal guardian or who have been accepted to take communion at another church, shall be welcome to receive communion whenever it is offered. (2-1-04)

B8.05 Concern for Membership

- a. Members who move away shall be encouraged to transfer their membership. A confirmed member in good standing desiring to change their membership to another Christian congregation shall, upon request, receive a letter of Transfer.
- b. A confirmed member who in the judgment of the Church Council shows no interest in attending church services and/or does not partake of Holy Communion; and who does not contribute to the congregation treasury according to the congregation's records, for a period of two years, shall be presumed no longer to desire membership, shall lose the right to vote, and shall not be counted

in the membership statistics of the congregation. However, the name and record shall be kept in the files for a period of five years thereafter. such a person shall be encouraged to take part in the congregational life, or to transfer elsewhere, as the situation may indicate to be advisable. If activity is resumed within the five-year period, the person shall be restored to the active membership list; if not, this individual shall be dismissed from the congregation and, if possible, shall be notified of this action.

c. Children, neither of whose parents or guardians are active members of the congregation, shall be dropped from the baptized membership roll if they fail to participate in the Christian education program of the congregation.

d. Members who have been dismissed, or who have resigned; and members who have transferred to other Christian congregations; or who are definitely known to have become members of other congregations without transfer, have thereby terminated their membership in the congregation and have surrendered all membership rights.

Chapter 9 THE PASTOR

Chapter 10 CONGREGATION MEETING

B10.01 Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting shall be held following the last late Sunday service in the month of January.

Chapter 11 OFFICERS AND CONGREGATION COUNCIL

811.01 Duties of Officers

a. The PRESIDENT shall conduct meetings of the congregation and council meetings.

b. VICE PRESIDENT

1. shall preside over meetings of the congregation and council in the absence of the president.

c. TREASURER

1. shall keep the accounts pertaining to the maintenance of the local congregation.

2. shall disburse all funds in accordance with the decisions of the congregation or its church council.

3. shall present an audited report to the congregation annually and to the church council at such time as it may decide.

4. Shall receive, record, and deposit the offerings coming into the congregation.

d. **SECRETARY**

1. Shall keep the minutes of the congregation and church council and preserve it's archives'

811.04 Duties of the Trustees

- a. Be responsible for the care and upkeep of the material properties of the congregation.
- b. Oversee that the property of the congregation be used by the congregation in its normal function as al Lutheran church and not be used in any way no in harmony with the purpose of the congregation
- c. The Congregation Council may enter into contracts of up to \$1,000.00 for items (repair, etc.) not included in the budget.
- d. Report its activities to the annual meeting of the congregation and at such other times as the congregation may decide.
- e. Conduct meeting at such time and place as the board itself may determine.
- f. Be responsible for securing someone for snow removal.
- g. Be responsible for securing an organist by January 1st of each year upon approval of the Congregation Council.

B11.05 Duties of the Deacons

- a. Oversee the preparation prior to Communion and care of Communion ware following Communion.
- b. Assist with the distribution of the Communion elements.
- c. Be involved in the visitation of shut-ins, people who are sick or others who may need encouragement.
- d. Attempt to provide ministry to those people unable to attend worship services.
- e. Oversee the changing of the altar paraments.
- f. Meet with the Pastor prior to the service for consultation and distribution of materials.
- g. Be responsible in securing choir directors to start the beginning of school year. Send out call letters to the choir directors during the summer months.
- h. Oversee that the appropriate props (cross, baptismal fount) are ready for worship services.
- i. Set up and take down the large cross for the season of Lent.
- j. Assist in the distribution of the "Christ In Our Home" devotional booklets.
- k. Co-ordinate the decoration of the sanctuary for all seasons and festivals. (Banners, etc.). Help my be solicited from members of the congregation.
- l. Care for the acolyte gowns.

Chapter 12 CONGREGATIONAL COMMITTEES AND ORGANIZATIONS WITHIN THE CONGREGATION

812.02 Duties of the Nominating Committee

- a. It is recommended that the two members chosen by the council be the outgoing deacon and trustee of the congregational council.
- b. The pastor shall serve as convener and as an advisory member.
- c. The members of the Nominating Committee shall serve for the year following their election. They shall nominate one or more candidates for each office to be filled and shall secure the consent of each candidate to serve if elected.
- d. In addition to the candidates submitted at the Annual Meeting by the Nominating Committee, additional nominations may be made from the floor
- e. A vacancy in the congregational elected membership of the Nominating Committee shall be filled by the remaining members of the committee
- f. The Nomination Committee shall elect a chairperson for the committee who will present the ballot at the annual meeting.

812.04 EDUCATION COMMITTEE (Revisions approved 1-30-2000)

- a. The Education committee is organized to promote the teaching of the Word of God as found in the sacred Scriptures and in harmony with the interpretation and teachings of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America.
- b. The Education committee will consist of 4 members; two elected by the congregation each year. The Sunday School Superintendent shall serve on the committee. The Pastor shall serve as an ex-officio member. Members may serve two consecutive 2 year terms, and may be re-elected following a term off the
- c. Officers
 1. the CHAIRPERSON of the Education Committee is elected by the congregation for a two year term. If the office of chairperson is vacated before the term has expired, the Church Council will appoint a chairperson to fill the unexpired term.
 2. The SECRETARY of the Education Committee is elected by the congregation for a two year term. If the office of secretary is vacated before the term has expired, the Church Council will appoint a secretary to fill the unexpired term.

3. The TREASURER of the Education Committee is elected by the congregation for a two year term. If the office of treasurer is vacated before the term has expired, the Church Council will appoint a treasurer to fill the unexpired term.

4. The SUNDAY SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT is elected by the congregation for a two year term. If the office of superintendent is vacated before the term has expired, the Church Council will appoint a superintendent to fill the unexpired term.

812.05 Duties of the Mission Committee

a. Promote congregational, community, and Global Mission outreach and appropriate activities.

1. Encourage regular prayers for those in Mission fields.

2. Plan annual Mission Festival

3. Encourage special projects for individual groups within the congregation.

b. Plan to attend Global Mission events yearly.

c. Encourage financial participation in chosen mission projects.

812.06 Duties of the Worship and Music Committee

a. One from each congregation to be treasurer of the Choir Funds.

b. Be custodians of the Alfred and Ruby Tollefson Keyboard Scholarship Fund;

1. Fund used to promote furtherance of keyboard education for students of our Parish in grades 6-12.

2. One from the committee will be Treasurer of this fund.

3. Amount of yearly scholarships to be determined by this committee.

4. Gifts/memorials may be added to this fund so this scholarship program may continue.

c. Prayerfully consider ways to prepare/plan inspiring worship services:

1. Seasonal and special worship services.

2. Select hymns to correspond with seasons and scriptures for the day.

3. Special music during the summer months. Committee may want to appoint someone to be in charge of finding music during these months or if needed, during the church year.

4. Arrange for lay readers for various worship services.

d. Contact piano tuner for churches.

B12.07 Duties of the Parsonage Committee

a. The duties of the Parsonage Committee shall consist of the general overseeing of the (maintenance of the) Parsonage buildings and grounds. (Revised 1-23-2000)

- c. Submit the ideas or plans for the improvements of parsonage property) to the councils and./or congregations. (1-29-2000)

812.08 Duties of the Cemetery Committee

- a. Measure and stake interment lots for burial as required.
- b. Maintain Cemetery and Perpetual Care Fund.
- c. Committee to choose treasurer for such funds from its own membership.
- d. The cost of single grave lots will be determined by the Cemetery Committee. Members of East Zion congregation at the time of their death will not be charged for a grave lot. (1-24-10)
- e. There shall be a minimum of two cemetery meetings per year. f. Annually inspect cemetery and markers and schedule maintenance as required.
- g. Maintain and update cemetery maps.
- h. When the Cemetery Fund reaches \$2,000.00, funds over and above that amount may be transferred into the Perpetual Care Fund.
- i. Oversee the mowing and maintenance of Cemetery and church grounds. Co-ordinate efforts with the Trustees.

Chapter 13 BYLAWS

Chapter 14 AMENDMENTS

Chapter 15 CEMETERY