

GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH

190 South Main Street
Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania
18701-1501

1845 - 1895 - 1973

CONSTITUTION

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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.

Chapter 1

NAME AND INCORPORATION

- C1.01. The name of this congregation shall be Good Shepherd Lutheran Church.
- C1.02. For the purpose of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws, the Good Shepherd Lutheran congregation is hereinafter designated as "this congregation."
- C1.11. This congregation shall be incorporated under the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

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 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 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 groups and shall review their actions. [Such description shall be contained in continuing resolutions in the section on the CongregationCommittees.]

*C4.05. This congregation shall, from time to time, adopt a mission statement which will provide specific direction for its programs.

Chapter 5

- *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.

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, 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 Congregation Council, and require them to carry out their duties in accordance with the constitution and bylaws, and continuing resolutions; and
 - j. terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as provided in Chapter 6.
- *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 Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

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 Northeastern Pennsylvania 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.

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. This congregation may terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America by the following procedure:

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 congregational 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 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 un-disposed property shall pass to the Northeastern Pennsylvania 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 Northeastern Pennsylvania 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, 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 and have followed the process for termination of relationship in *C6.05., 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.

*C8.03. 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.

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

- a. death;
- b. resignation;
- c. transfer or release;
- d. disciplinary action in accordance with ELCA constitutional provision 20.40. and the accompanying bylaws; 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.

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 the Congregation Council 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 and of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

*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 the synod, the bishop in his or her sole discretion may, or 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 shall investigate such conditions personally in company with a committee of two ordained ministers and one layperson.

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 the synod may declare the pastorate vacant and the pastor shall be listed on the clergy roster as disabled. Upon removal of the disability and 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 the 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 and 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.

Chapter 10

CONGREGATION MEETING

- C10.01. The semi-annual meetings 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 ten percent of the voting members. The president of the Congregation Council shall call a special meeting upon request of the synodical bishop. 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 or electronic means, as permitted by state law, to all [voting] members at least ten (10) days in advance of the date of the meeting.
- C10.04. Ten percent of the 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

- C11.01. The officers of this congregation shall be a president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and financial secretary.
- a. The Congregation Council shall appoint the treasurer and financial secretary at its June meeting.
 - b. Duties of the officers shall be specified in the continuing resolutions.
 - c. The officers shall be voting members of the congregation.
 - d. [The] elected officers of this congregation [, namely, the president, vice-president and secretary,] shall serve similar offices of the Congregation Council and shall be voting members of the Congregation Council.
 - e. If the treasurer and financial secretary are not selected from the elected membership of the Congregation Council, the treasurer and financial secretary shall have voice but not vote at the meetings of the Congregation Council.
- C11.02. The [elected] officers [as noted in C11.01.d] shall be elected by the Congregation Council by written ballot and shall serve for one year. The term shall begin on June 1 and end on May 31.
- 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. In the event of a vacancy of an elected congregation officer or an appointed congregation officer, the vacated position will be filled by the process of like manner of the original election or appointment at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Congregation Council.

Chapter 12

CONGREGATION COUNCIL

- C12.01. The voting membership of the Congregation Council shall consist of the pastor(s), the officers of the congregation, and not more than twelve 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) dies;
 - b) resigns;
 - c) ceases to be a voting member of this congregation; or
 - d) is absent from three successive regular meetings of the Congregation Council.
- 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 three years with the term of office beginning on June 1

and ending on May 31. No elected Congregation Council member may serve more than 8 consecutive years without being off Congregation Council for one year. Newly elected Congregation Council members shall be installed at worship the Sunday prior to the date they assume office.

- C12.03. Should a member's place on the Congregation Council be declared vacant, the Congregation Council shall appoint, by majority vote, a successor until the next semi-annual meeting. At that annual meeting, an election will be held to fill the vacated position for the remainder of the original term.
- C12.04. There shall be no more than one member of an immediate family, as defined in the continuing resolutions, actively serving on the congregation council at any time.
- C12.05. 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(s) and staff and help them annually to evaluate the fulfillment of their calling, appointment, or employment.
 - 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.
- C12.06. 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 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 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 only enter into contracts of up to \$10,000 for items not included in the budget, unless mandated by governmental regulations.
- 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 \$5,000 in excess of the anticipated receipts only after approval by a Congregation Meeting. The budget shall include this congregation's full indicated 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 shall be responsible for this congregation's investments and its total insurance program.

C12.07. The Congregation Council shall see that the provisions of this constitution, its bylaws and the continuing resolutions are carried out.

C12.08. The Congregation Council shall provide for an annual review of the membership roster.

C12.09. 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.

C12.10. The Congregation Council shall submit a comprehensive report to this congregation at an annual meeting.

C12.11. The Congregation Council shall normally meet once a month.

Special meetings may be called by the pastor(s) or the president, and shall be called 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.

C12.12. A quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of a majority of the members of the Congregation Council, including the pastor(s), except when

such pastor(s) request(s) 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.

- C 12.13 The Congregation Council and its committees may hold meetings by remote communication, including electronically and by telephone conference, and, to the extent permitted by state law, notice of all meetings may be provided electronically.

Chapter 13

CONGREGATION STANDING COMMITTEES AND MINSITRY TEAMS

- C13.01. The officers of this congregation and the pastor(s) shall constitute the Executive Committee.
- C13.02. A Nominating Committee of three (3) voting members of this congregation, two of whom, if possible, shall be outgoing members of the Congregation Council, shall be elected at the May semi-annual meeting for a term of one year. Members of the Nominating Committee are not eligible for consecutive reelection.
- C13.03. An Audit Committee of three voting members shall be elected by the Congregation Council as specified in the Continuing Resolutions relating to the Nominating Committee. Audit Committee members shall not be members of the Congregation Council. Term of office will be three years, with one member elected each year. Members shall be eligible for reelection.
- C13.04. A Mutual Ministry Committee (in the absence of a mutual ministry committee, the duties shall be fulfilled by the executive committee) shall be appointed jointly by the president and the pastor(s). Term of office shall be two years, three members to be appointed each successive year. Committee members will hold no other office in the congregation during their term.
- C13.05. When a pastoral vacancy occurs, a Call Committee of six voting members shall be elected by the Congregation Council. Term of office will terminate upon installation of the newly-called pastor(s).
- C13.06. Other congregation Standing Committees and/or Ministry Teams may be formed as the need arises, by decision of the Congregation Council. Each Standing Committee and/or Ministry Team will have a Congregation Council member appointed to it. The pastor(s) shall have voice and vote in all Standing Committees and/or Ministry Teams with the exception of the Mutual Ministry Committee for which the pastor(s) will have voice only.
- C13.07. Duties of congregation Standing Committees and/or Ministry Teams shall be specified in the continuing resolutions.
- C13.08. No Standing Committee and/or Ministry Team shall have a plurality of its membership from a single immediate family, as defined in the continuing resolutions.
- C13.09 The pastor(s) of this congregation shall be an ex officio member of all Standing Committees and/or Ministry Teams of the congregation with the exception of the Mutual Ministry Committee. The president of this congregation shall be an ex officio member of all Standing Committees and/or Ministry Teams of the congregation, except the Nominating Committee.

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 at its May meeting shall determine their policies, guide their activities, 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 members (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 council 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 elect 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 Congregational 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.

*C15.07.

No member of the congregation shall be subject to discipline a second time for offenses that a discipline hearing panel has heard previously and decided pursuant to this chapter.

*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 the 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 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. Unless provision *C17.04. is applicable, 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 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 a regular or special Congregation Meeting called for that purpose. The Congregation Council shall notify the congregation's members 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 resolution⁴ and noted in the constitution.
- *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 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.

⁴ Such an effective date must be stated in relation to the requirement of *C17.03. to allow time for synodical review of the amendment.

- *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 or electronic means, as permitted by state law, 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 five voting members of the congregation, the Congregation Council shall submit such notice. 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.
- *C18.02. Continuing resolutions shall be enacted or amended by a majority of the congregation or a two-thirds vote of all voting members of the Congregation Council.
- C18.03. The congregation shall be notified by the Secretary of the congregation regarding any approved changes to the Continuing Resolutions.

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.

BYLAWS

CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

1. Congregational meetings shall be held semi-annually on a Sunday in May, other than the last Sunday, and a Sunday in November as designated by Congregation Council.

2. The meeting in May will be held to elect congregational council members and to conduct any other necessary business, such as the written or oral reports of the pastor(s), secretary, treasurer, and the various committees, organizations, schools and associations within the congregation..
3. The meeting in November will be to approve the proposed budget for the coming year and conduct any other necessary business.

MEMBERSHIP

- [1.] A confirmed member[, as so classified according to C8.02.b,] will be[declared] as inactive if [he/she] [has] not communed in this congregation or made a contribution of record to the congregation during the current or preceding five calendar years. [he/she] will be removed from the roll due to inactivity.
- [2.] A baptized, but non-confirmed, member of the congregation may be removed from the roll of baptized members at the discretion of the pastor(s) with approval of the congregation council.]

DUTIES OF THE OFFICERS OF THE CONGREGATION

1. The president shall preside at meetings of the congregation and the Congregation Council. In the event of the president's inability to serve, the vice-president shall preside.
2. The secretary shall keep accurate minutes of all meetings of the congregation and of the council in a volume provided by the congregation, which shall be preserved permanently in its archives.
3. The financial secretary shall receive and keep record of all contribution income.
4. The treasurer shall keep the books of account of the congregation; and shall disburse all funds in proper orders, making regular remittance of benevolence receipts to the treasurer of the synod.
5. The treasurer shall make written report of all financial transactions to the Congregation Council monthly and to the congregation, together with a satisfactory audit, at its annual meetings. All financial officers shall give corporate surety, in amounts determined by the Congregation Council, for which the congregation shall pay the premium.

STANDING COMMITTEES AND MINISTRY TEAMS

1. Following the congregational meeting in May, the Congregation Council shall appoint as many Standing Committees and/or Ministry Teams as the local and wider concerns of the congregation shall require. Each such Standing Committee and/or Ministry Team shall be composed of one or more members of the council and, in addition, other voting members of the congregation. Although appointed by and responsible to the Congregation Council, these Standing Committees and/or Ministry Teams shall be recognized as representative of the interests of, and performing essential services for the congregation as a whole.
2. Except as stipulated in the continuing resolutions, the duties of all Standing Committee and/or Ministry Teams shall be assigned by the Congregation Council, along with such instructions as in its judgment are in the best interests of the congregation. All actions of Standing Committees and/or Ministry Teams shall be subject to review by the council.

PERSONAL LIABILITY OF DIRECTORS

No director of this corporation shall be personally liable for any action or omission unless the director has breached or failed to perform the duties of his office as described in 42 Pa C.S. 8363, and said breach of failure to perform constitutes self-dealing, willful misconduct, or recklessness. Nothing in this bylaw shall be construed to impose a greater standard of liability on said director than is set forth in Pennsylvania Act 1986-57 (42 Pa.C.S. 8332.2). This section shall apply retroactively to any action or omission occurring on or after February 27, 1987.

CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

MISSION STATEMENT

This congregation learns, celebrates, and proclaims the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and engages in a vigorous ministry to its members and to all people.

DEFINITION OF IMMEDIATE FAMILY

[For purposes of this document, the definition for “immediate family” includes the spouse, parents, brothers, sisters, children, and those related by ways of legal guardianship.]

DUTIES OF CONGREGATION STANDING COMMITTEES AND MINISTRY TEAMS

A: Congregation Standing Committees:

1. Audit Committee:

- a. Examines and reviews all accounts and records,
- b. Exercises supervision and oversees the work of the audit if it is conducted by an outside auditor,
- c. Examines all insurance policies and prepares a schedule of the insurance coverage,
- d. Inspects and examines securities and investments,
- e. Reports its findings in writing to the Congregation Council with supporting schedules and recommendations for change and improvement.

2. Mutual Ministry Committee:

Our Lutheran understanding of the church sees ministry as being shared by all the baptized people of God. At no time can we assume that only the pastor and staff are responsible for ministry. The whole people of God have a ministry with and to one another. It is a mutual ministry. Out of this theological awareness emerges the rationale behind a congregational Mutual Ministry Committee.

The ministry of any pastor, staff, and congregation is strengthened when there exists a small group of persons who act out of mutual concern for the pastor(s), staff, and congregation. This mutual ministry becomes specific in such ways as:

- a. Open communication concerning the attitudes and conditions within the congregation;
- b. Early warnings of misunderstanding within the congregation;
- c. A "listening post" for the pastor, staff, and the congregation;
- d. Conflict resolution;
- e. Appraisal of the ministry of the pastor, staff, and the congregation;
- f. Sounding board for the pastor and staff in time of personal or professional stress;
- g. Identifying continuing education that would assist the ministry of the pastor and staff and the goals of the congregation;
- h. Concerns for the spiritual, emotional, and physical needs of the pastor and staff.

Through listening, interpreting, advising, conferring, evaluating, recommending, affirming, and forgiving, the ministry of the pastor(s) and staff is strengthened as well as that of the congregation.

3. **Nominating Committee:**

- a. It shall be the duty of the Nominating Committee to present sufficient candidates for open council positions to the voting membership at the Congregation Meeting in May in order to require an election.
- b. It shall be the duty of the Nominating Committee to present candidates to the Congregational Council for appointment of interim council positions that have been vacated.
- c. It shall be the duty of the Nominating Committee to present candidates to the Congregation Council to serve on the Auditing Committee. The election of such members shall occur at a Congregation Council meeting just prior to the beginning of the liturgical year. Number of members on the Audit Committee and term of office for Auditing Committee members is specified in the Constitution: Chapter 13.03
- d. It shall be the goal of the Nominating Committee to always present a slate of candidates according to the following formula: If one (1) position is to be filled, the slate should contain at least two (2) names; if two (2) positions are to be filled, the slate should contain at least three (3) names; if three (3) positions are to be filled, the slate should contain at least five (5) names. In the event that there be more than 3 positions to be filled, the slate should contain at least two (2) names more than the actual number of positions to be filled.
- e. All persons to be considered for an elected or appointed office with a specific membership requirement shall have their membership standing in the congregation reviewed by the Financial Secretary and Parish Secretary prior to presentation as a candidate to insure the person is in compliance with the requirements of the office.

4. **Call Committee:**

It shall be the duty of the Call Committee to search out pastoral candidates, during a time of a pastoral vacancy, and present same with its recommendations to the Congregation Council for presentation to the congregation. Term of office is specified in the constitution Chapter 13.05.

B: Ministry Teams:

Many and varied Ministry Teams will implement our Mission Statement. Ministry Teams will serve to insure regular attention to our Faith Ministry for local and expanded ministry, education, and spirituality needs and our Operations Ministry for day to day operation, financial, and facility needs. Ministry Teams will meet as needed to do their ministry. This structure is designed to promote Spirit-led endeavors. Ministry Teams will support our Mission Statement to help people grow and send people out to serve.

1. Faith Ministry Teams are created around the areas of ministry to fulfill needs and create innovative opportunities to fulfill our mission statement. They are created to promote membership involvement, stewardship, and utilization of members' "gifts". The following are the Faith Ministry Teams and the duties of each Faith Ministry Team:
 - a. Worship Ministry Team: Provide for meaningful worship through music and ministry. Supervise the volunteers involved with the worship and music programming. The Director of Music shall be a member of the Worship Ministry Team with voice and vote.
 - b. Faith Formation Ministry Team: Provide opportunities for ongoing learning to all people about God's grace, Christian values, fellowship, service, and healthy recreation through engaging activities centered on God's word and conducted in a safe environment where everyone is free to be themselves and learn how to live their faith. Ensure opportunities for programming and ministry with, for, and by the children/youth/young adults/adults/families of the congregation. At least one youth member of the congregation shall be a member of this Ministry Team with voice and vote.
 - c. Outreach Ministry Team: Provide opportunities for community and global outreach to members and non-members in need in the Wilkes-Barre and surrounding areas. Encourage, plan, and promote ministry activities which give aid to the needy and marginalized people of our community, society, and world. Bring the cleansing and healing light of Christian truth to bear upon critical problems through thoughtful Christian discussion of facts and issues. Provide opportunities to reach out to those in need throughout the world.
 - d. Witness and Service Ministry Team: Provide opportunities for members to proactively respond to God's gifts in their lives and enhance their ability to share their faith in God with others in the congregation, with the community at large, and wherever God calls us to witness and serve. Evoke and promote the expression of Christian faith in daily living through a sense of Christian stewardship.
 - e. Connection Building Ministry Team: Organize, schedule and facilitate opportunities for fellowship for the members and non-members of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in order to provide greater unity, increased understanding, and closer relationships among the members and non-members of the congregation and the community.

2. Operations Ministry Teams are created to focus resources, expertise, and supervision to the day- to-day operations and maintenance of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church and the church facilities. The following are the Operations Ministry Teams and the duties of each Operations Ministry Team:
 - a. Administration Ministry Team: Provides for the staffing and the evaluation matters of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church. This Ministry Team will handle matters relating to paid staff and other personnel matters. The Vice-President shall be an ex-officio member of this Ministry Team with voice and vote.
 - b. Finance Ministry Team: Provides for the regular oversight and review of the congregational finances, investments, and insurance program. Prepare an initial annual budget for discussion with the congregational council and presentation at the annual congregational meeting in which the budget is discussed and approved. The Treasurer and Financial Secretary shall be ex-officio members of this Ministry Team with voice and vote.
 - c. Property Ministry Team: Provides for the facility needs of the congregation. Protects and maintains all property of the congregation.
 - d. Long-Range Planning Ministry Team: Devote itself primarily to envisioning the future growth of the congregation and to planning and

implementing plans which encourage long-term growth. Works cooperatively with all other Ministry Teams.

3. Ad Hoc Ministry Teams: Ad Hoc Ministry Teams will be created for a specific or temporary project. An Ad Hoc Ministry Team is a small number of people with complementary skills who are committed to a common purpose, set of goals, and approach for which they hold themselves mutually accountable. The Congregational Council may appoint an Ad Hoc Ministry Team and place it under a specific Standing Committee or Ministry Team to work cooperatively. Ad Hoc Ministry Teams are not meant to meet to discuss but to function with a mixture of task and fellowship. After meeting with the Pastor(s), a new Ad Hoc Ministry Team can also form without seeking formal permission if the proposed ministry: 1. Introduces people to Jesus in positive ways or 2. helps people grow spiritually or 3. relieves suffering.

Any Ad Hoc Ministry Team must be consistent with the congregation's mission statement and beliefs and must not require funding that exceeds the available monies in an appropriate fund. An Ad Hoc Ministry Team will cease to function when its collective members: 1. agree they have completed the task that provided the impetus to form, or 2. agree the ministry team no longer provides the outlet for fellowship and outreach for which it was originally formed, or 3. agree that it would be more appropriate or effective for the team to expend their collective energies in a related focus or possibly a new direction.

STATEMENT OF COMMERCIALISM

That Good Shepherd Lutheran Church does not involve itself in the practice of commercialism as a means of raising finances for the annual budget.

That the Congregation Council, through an intensive yearly program, strives to develop a stewardship response among the people which will provide the resources needed to conduct the ministry and mission of the congregation.

That fellowship events be encouraged as a part of the life of Good Shepherd Church and moneys raised through the sale of tickets or free-will offerings over and above the cost involved with an event, and which could be deemed to be commercialism in nature, be put into a fund of the Program and Ministry Fund to be used to cover the cost of other fellowship events.

That individuals and organizations seeing a need in the physical resources of the church be in contact either through an appropriate committee or the Congregation Council in order to facilitate the meeting of that need through purchase, etc.

That groups or organizations seeking to raise funds must seek council approval.

That as a guide for its position on commercialism, the Congregation Council adopt and refer to the statements from the 1964 LCA Convention and the 1977 action of the LCA's executive council.

STATEMENT OF DIVERSITY

Whereas, the life and ministry of Jesus the Christ was one of welcome and acceptance of diverse populations and individuals; and

Whereas, Good Shepherd Lutheran Church is a welcoming and accepting congregation; and

Whereas, Good Shepherd Lutheran Church maintains a vital ministry and continuing role in a diverse community; and

Whereas, the ministry of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church is available to all persons in a non-prejudicial and/or unbiased manner and without preference to race, color, creed, age, gender, national origin, and/or sexual orientation; and

Whereas, the membership of and in Good Shepherd Lutheran Church is open to all persons in the same non-prejudicial and/or unbiased manner and without the same preferences; and

Whereas, Good Shepherd Lutheran Church cooperates in its ministry with sister congregations of the ELCA and other denominations; and

Whereas, one of the other denominations, The Church of Christ, developed a video message of what it means to be a welcoming and accepting congregation; and

Whereas, several of the major television networks refused to air that same video message, stating that it was too controversial:

Be it resolved: That Good Shepherd Lutheran Church reaffirms its ministry of Jesus the Christ and his ideals of welcome and acceptance; and
that Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, as welcoming and accepting congregation, reaffirms its vital ministry and continuing role in the community; and
that it reaffirms the nature and strength of diversity in the population and individuals; and
that it reaffirms that all individuals are children of God without regard to race, color, creed, age, gender, national origin, and/or sexual orientation; and
that it reaffirms the availability of its ministry to all persons in the same non-prejudicial and/or unbiased manner; and
that it reaffirms that membership is open to all the same persons in the same non-prejudicial and/or unbiased manner; and
that it supports those sister congregations of the ELCA and other denominations who provide witness that they are also welcoming and accepting congregations; and
that it supports The Church of Christ in its video message and its right to share that message of welcome and acceptance with others, including through the use of printed and/or broadcast media.