

# **Constitution, Bylaws And Policies**

**for**

# **Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church**

**- Missouri Synod -**



**631 W. Commercial Ave.  
Lowell, IN**

*The mission and purpose of Trinity Lutheran Church is to...*

**PROCLAIM** the good news of forgiveness and eternal life found only in Jesus Christ

**NURTURE** the faith by the Word of God through worship and study

**SHINE** with the light of Christ's love through our church and to our community by being of service to our fellow man when and where we can.

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# CONSTITUTION

## Preamble

WHEREAS Christians should practice fellowship with those who profess true faith (Acts 2, 42; Hebrews 10, 24-25); and

WHEREAS they should endeavor to keep the unity of faith (Ephesians 4, 3-6; 1 Cor. 1, 10); and

WHEREAS a body they should administer the Office of the Keys (John 20, 21-23; Matthew 18, 17-20); and

WHEREAS in such a body all things should be done decently and in order (1 Cor. 14, 40);

THEREFORE we, the undersigned, herewith adopt the following constitution and its by-laws according to which all affairs of this Congregation, both spiritual and material shall be conducted.

## Article I. Name

The name of this Congregation shall be the TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH of Lowell, Indiana.

## Article II. Purpose and Authority

The purpose of this body shall be that of a religious organization, established and maintained not for profit, but for disseminating the Gospel of Jesus Christ, according to the confessional standard of the Lutheran Church as set forth in the Declaration of Creed.

This corporate body shall have AUTHORITY to exercise the general rights, privileges and powers it may need to accomplish the purpose for which it is formed, as granted by the Holy Scriptures and the laws of the State of Indiana.

## Article III. Declaration of Creed

This Congregation declares unreserved acceptance of and adheres to:

1. The Scriptures of the Old and New Testament as the written Word of God and the only rule and norm of faith and practice;
2. All the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as a true and unadulterated statement and exposition of the Word of God, to wit: the three Ecumenical Creeds (the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, the Athanasian Creed),
  - The Unaltered Augsburg Confession
  - The Apology of the Augsburg Confession
  - The Smalcald Articles

- The Large Catechism of Luther
- The Small Catechism of Luther
- The Formula of Concord

## **Article IV. Membership**

Membership in this Church shall include the following three classes:

- Communicant
- Baptized
- Voting Members

### **1. Communicant Members**

#### **A. CONDITIONS OF COMMUNICANT MEMBERSHIP**

Those only can become, be or remain communicant members of this Church who:

1. Are validly baptized in the name of the Triune God;
2. Declare their acceptance of and adherence to the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the written Word of God and the only rule and norm of faith and of practice;
3. Are familiar with and declare their acceptance of the doctrine of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as it is set forth in Luther's Small Catechism;
4. Do not live in manifest works of the flesh (Gal. 5, 19-21), but lead a Christian life;
5. Are not members of an unchristian or anti-Christian lodge or of any other organization conflicting with the Word of God and conduct of a Christian (2 Cor. 6, 14-18)

#### **B. RECEPTION OF COMMUNICANT MEMBERS**

Persons desiring to become communicant members of this Congregation shall be received:

1. **BY THE RITE OF CONFIRMATION.** Adolescents and adults shall receive adequate previous instruction.
2. **BY LETTER OF TRANSFER.** Persons presenting a letter of transfer from a Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod Church may be received by resolution of the Voters Assembly.
3. **BY PROFESSION OF FAITH.** Persons not affiliated with a Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod church shall give satisfactory evidence of their qualifications for membership in an interview with the Pastor and, if necessary, receive adequate instruction in the chief parts of Christian doctrine. In the presence of witnesses they shall declare their acceptance of the doctrines of the Evangelical Lutheran Church and shall then be received into communicant membership.
4. **HANDLING OF TRANSFERS.** The Pastor in consultation with at least two of the Elders accept members into full communicant membership upon receipt of such transfer from a Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod congregation, or upon confession of faith, and be handled in the same manner and finally be it resolved that such action by the Pastor and the Elders be approved in a subsequent meeting of the voters. (Amended Dec.13, 1973.)

The reception of communicant members shall be announced by the Pastor in a divine service and in the Voters Assembly.

### C. DUTIES OF COMMUNICANT MEMBERS

It shall be the duty of communicant members:

- A. To lead a Godly and Christian life at all times;
- B. To faithfully use the Word of God and Christian prayer at home, to attend public worship regularly, and to partake of the Lord's Supper frequently;
- C. To respect the Pastor as the minister of Christ, 1 Cor. , 1; Heb. 13, 17; to make use of the privilege of consulting the Pastor when in spiritual need;
- D. To contribute of their time, talents, and money, as God has prospered them, to the maintenance and extension of Christ's Kingdom in this Church and throughout the world;
- E. To present their children for Holy Baptism without undue delay;
- F. To provide their children with proper instruction and training in the pure Christian doctrine and life at home and by means of the available agencies of the church, such as Sunday School, Confirmation Classes, etc.;
- G. To submit to Christian admonition as set forth in Matthew 18, 15-17 when erring, giving offense, or delinquent;
- H. To admonish erring, offending, or delinquent fellow-Christians in meekness and love, (Gal. 6, 1; Matt. 18, 15);
- I. To abide faithfully by this Constitution and its By-laws and the regulations of the Voters Assembly.

### D. TERMINATION OF COMMUNICANT MEMBERSHIP

Communicant membership may be terminated by:

1. A LETTER OF TRANSFER to a Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod congregation. Letters of transfer shall be granted by the Voters Assembly and issued by the Pastor to members in good standing applying for transfer to a Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod congregation.
2. A DECLARATION OF THE VOTERS ASSEMBLY:
  - a. A declaration of self-exclusion. Article VI.
  - b. A declaration of excommunication. Article VI.
3. DEATH

## **2. Baptized Members**

The baptized membership shall be comprised of:

- A. All communicant members.
- B. The children of communicant members who have received the Sacrament of Holy Baptism under the authority of this Church;
- C. Such as have been received into baptized membership by resolution of the Voters Assembly;
- D. Such as have presented a letter of transfer from a Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod congregation;
- E. The baptized children of communicant members who were received by profession of faith.

## **3. Voting Members**

### A. CONDITIONS OF VOTING MEMBERSHIP

Those only can become, be, or remain voting members of this Church who:

1. Are male communicant members (1 Cor. 14, 34-35; 1 Tim. 2, 11-12)
2. Have reached the age of 18 years.

#### B. RECEPTION OF VOTING MEMBERS

Voting membership shall be extended to such male communicant members over 18 years of age who:

1. Have made application for such membership at a meeting of the Voters Assembly.
2. Have read this Constitution and its By-laws and declare their acceptance thereof;
3. Have been received at a subsequent regular meeting of the Voters Assembly.
4. Have signed this Constitution and its By-laws.

Regularly called Pastors serving this Congregation shall be regarded as voting members.

#### C. PRIVILEGES AND DUTIES OF VOTING MEMBERS

1. Voting members, possessing the privilege of the floor and the right to vote, shall show active interest in the affairs of the Congregation and, if possible, attend all regular and special meetings of the Voters Assembly.
2. Men who have been voting members of this Congregation for one year and have reached the age of 21 years shall be eligible for an elective office.

#### D. TERMINATION OF VOTING MEMBERSHIP

Voting membership shall be terminated by:

1. Transfer to a Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod congregation.
2. Self-exclusion.
3. Excommunication.
4. Death.
5. A voting member who FAILS TO ATTEND THE MEETINGS of the Voters Assembly for one year without having offered an excuse shall forfeit his voting membership. Such forfeiture shall be duly noted in the minutes.

## Article V. Church Government

1. THE VOTERS ASSEMBLY shall be the governing body of the congregation. It shall be composed of the voting members (Article IV, 3). As a body it shall have supreme authority to manage and direct all spiritual and material affairs of the Congregation (Article II).
2. Matters of doctrine and conscience shall be decided by the Word of God. Other matters shall be decided by the Voters Assembly by a majority vote unless otherwise specified by the Constitution or By-laws.
3. The Voters Assembly shall have no authority to enact or decide anything contrary to the Word of God and the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church (article III), and any such enactment or decision shall be null and void.
4. Any enactment or commitment pertaining to the Congregation, whether it proceed from an

- individual or from a body within the Congregation, shall be invalid and may be restrained or annulled unless it has been authorized by the Voters Assembly.
5. The Voters Assembly may adopt such BY-LAWS as the accomplishment of the purpose of the Congregation may require, provided such by-laws are consistent with this Constitution and the laws of the State of Indiana.
  6. The Voters Assembly is vested with the authority to extend official CALLS TO PASTORS. This authority shall never be delegated to any other group or to any individual within the Congregation and be within District Guidelines.
  7. The Voters Assembly is vested with the authority to ELECT THE OFFICERS of the Congregation, as well as members of boards and committees.
  8. The Voters Assembly is vested with the authority to establish, conduct, and supervise organizations within the Congregation.
  9. The Voters Assembly may hold GENERAL MEETINGS OF THE ENTIRE MEMBERSHIP of the Congregation for the purpose of discussing the general affairs of the Congregation and of the Church-at-large. No matters are to be decided in such meetings; but the Voters Assembly shall carefully consider the opinions of the entire membership as expressed in such meetings.
  10. The Voters Assembly shall exercise the corporate powers of the Congregation granted by the State of Indiana. The President or the Recording Secretary shall represent the Voters Assembly in all matters required by the Articles of Incorporation of the Congregation.

## **Article VI. Church Discipline**

1. It shall be the duty of the individual members and of the Voters Assembly to discipline an erring member (Article IV, 2 A) or one who has not fulfilled his duties (Article IV, 2 C) in accordance with the various steps prescribed in Matthew 18:15-17, when this is possible.
  - A. When members MOVE AWAY from the parish and do not request a letter of transfer, the Pastor shall try to get them to unite with a Lutheran Church- Missouri Synod congregation. If this is unsuccessful within one year, the Voters Assembly, upon recommendation of the Church Council, may by a resolution declare them to be SELF-EXCLUDED.
  - B. Members who have JOINED AN ERRING CHRISTIAN CHURCH or any organization conflicting with the Word of God and the conduct of a Christian shall, after fruitless admonition, be declared by a resolution of the Voters Assembly to be SELF-EXCLUDED. (1 John 2, 19.)
  - C. Communicant members able to ATTEND PUBLIC WORSHIP AND THE LORD'S SUPPER who do not do so for six months shall be admonished by the Pastor and/or an Elder. If they refuse to amend their ways after repeated admonition within the next six months, they shall be invited to appear before the Voters Assembly to discuss his or her case.
  - D. Communicant members under Church discipline who, upon invitation, refuse to attend the meeting of the Voters Assembly to discuss his or her case shall be declared by resolution of the Voters Assembly to be SELF-EXCLUDED.
  - E. Members who PERSISTENTLY CONTINUE IN FALSE DOCTRINE OR AN UNGODLY LIFE after fruitless admonition shall be declared by a resolution of the Voters Assembly to be EXCOMMUNICATED (declared to be as heathen, Matt. 18, 17, and put out of the Congregation 1 Cor. 5, 13).

2. A UNANIMOUS VOTE shall be required for every resolution by the Voters Assembly for EXCOMMUNICATION with the provision that a member in Church discipline be deprived of his right to vote until the question at issue is decided.
  - A. TWO-THIRDS MAJORITY VOTE shall be required for every resolution by the Voters Assembly for SELF-EXCLUSION.
3. Excommunicated and self-excluded persons shall FORFEIT ALL RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES of membership, such as Absolution, the Lord's Supper, membership in the Congregation's organizations, church property rights, and a Christian burial.
4. Excommunicated and self-excluded persons who sincerely REPENT, ASK FORGIVENESS, AND MAKE AMENDS shall receive absolution and be reinstated into membership by resolution of the Voters Assembly.
5. RIGHT OF APPEAL. Any member of this Church who is dissatisfied with the action of the Voters Assembly regarding him or her in a case of church discipline may appeal, in the following order, to:
  1. The Circuit Counselor,
  2. The District President,
  3. The District Board of Appeals,
  4. The General Synodical Board of Appeals

## **Article VII. Office of Pastor**

### **1. Bestowal of Office**

The Congregation shall bestow the office of Pastor upon those Pastors, or candidates who:

- A. Unreservedly declare their acceptance of, and pledge faithful adherence to, the Declaration of Creed as contained in Article III of this Constitution; and
- B. Are members of, or have qualified and applied for membership in, The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, or one that is in confessional agreement therewith; and
- C. Have been properly and rightfully called by the Congregation through its Voters Assembly.

### **2. Duties of the Pastor**

It shall be the duty of the Pastor:

- A. To exercise the Office of the Keys by preaching the Word of God in its truth and purity according to the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, administering the Holy Sacraments according to the institution of our Lord Jesus Christ, and exercising the power to forgive and retain sins;
- B. To apply the Word of God in teaching, admonishing, and consoling individual members of the congregation, especially the sick, as their needs may require, Acts 20, 28; 1 Pet. 5, 14;
- C. To instruct the catechumens in the chief parts of the Christian Doctrine according to the

- Small Catechism of Luther;
- D. To perform special acts, such as Baptism, Marriage Ceremonies, and Burials;
- E. To spiritually supervise the agencies of Christian education and the other organizations of the Congregation;
- F. To keep an accurate church record of Baptisms, Confirmations, Communion, Marriages, and Burials;
- G. to set a good example for the Congregation by a Christian life;
- H. To perform faithfully all other duties of the Holy Ministry.

### **3. Release or Removal from Office**

#### **A. RELEASE INTO ANOTHER FIELD.**

If the Pastor receives a call into another field, he should consult with the Voters Assembly, so that they may jointly, conscientiously, and in fear of God, consider whether he shall be asked to remain or be granted a peaceful release. The final decision rests with the Pastor.

#### **B. REMOVAL FROM OFFICE.**

1. The Congregation has the right, if necessary, to call its Pastors to account, and, if circumstances require it, to remove them from office by the observance of Christian principles, lawful order, and Synodically accepted procedure.
2. Valid REASONS for removal from office are:
  - a. Persistent adherence to false doctrine;
  - b. Offensive and scandalous life;
  - c. Willful neglect of official duty;
  - d. Evident and continued inability to perform the functions of office.

## **Article VIII. Synodical Membership**

Recognizing the obligation to join with fellow-Christians in other Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod congregations in promoting the unity of faith, providing for the proper training of pastors and teachers, and conducting worldwide evangelistic work,

1. The Congregation shall hold membership in the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod.
2. It shall send proper delegates to the conferences and conventions of the Synod when possible.
3. It shall be the duty of the Congregation and its individual members to support the work and program of their Synod according to their ability.

## **Article IX. Organizations**

1. All organizations within the Congregation shall be under the control and supervision of the Voters Assembly (Article V, 1, 8).
2. Any decision, enactment, or performance of such organizations shall be invalid if it shall meet with the disapproval of the Voters Assembly.
3. All such organizations shall be under the spiritual supervision of the Pastor (Article VII, 2, 5).
4. Only members of the Congregation shall be eligible for voting membership or to hold office in

such organizations.

5. Each organization shall submit an annual report, including an audited financial report, to the Voters Assembly.

## **Article X. Hymns, Forms, Books, and Teaching Aids**

Only such hymns, forms, books, literature and teaching aids shall be used in public worship, in all official acts, and for instruction as conform to the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments and the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church (Article III).

## **Article XI. Division or Dissolution**

1. Should DIVISION on account of doctrine or dissension take place (which may God graciously avert!) which cannot be peacefully resolved within the Congregation, the advice and assistance of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod should be sought.
2. If even then a division cannot be averted, the property of the Congregation and all interests connected therewith shall belong to that group of members who unreservedly adhere to the Declaration of Creed in Article III of this Constitution and who retain membership in the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod.
3. In the event of the DISSOLUTION of this corporation, the property of the Congregation and all interests connected therewith shall revert to the Indiana District of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod.

## **Article XII. Amendments to the Constitution**

1. This Constitution may be amended by the affirmative vote of a two-thirds majority of the members present at any regular meeting of the Voters Assembly, a quorum being present, provided that the proposed amendment has been submitted in writing at a previous regular meeting.
2. Article III of the Constitution and any part of any article or section that pertains to Scriptural doctrine and practice shall be unalterable and irrevocable.

## **BY-LAWS**

### **Article I. Voters Assembly Meetings**

1. REGULAR MEETINGS of the Voters Assembly shall be held bi-monthly in January, March, May, July, September, November, and December, and, if possible, on the second Wednesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. Members shall be notified of these meetings in advance. Meetings shall normally adjourn by 8:30 p.m.

2. SPECIAL MEETINGS may be called by resolution of the Voters Assembly, by resolution of the Church Council, or in exceptional cases, by the Pastor or the President, or upon the written request of at least six voting members submitted to the President. Members shall be notified of these meetings in advance.
3. ONE-THIRD of the voting membership shall constitute a QUORUM, qualified to transact business and adopt valid resolutions.
4. In the absence of the President at any properly convened meeting, the Voters Assembly shall elect, by acclamation, a President pro tem.
5. The annual BUDGET shall be presented in the November meeting, and adopted in the December meeting.
6. The annual ELECTION OF OFFICERS shall be held in the November meeting.
7. The FISCAL YEAR shall run from January 1 to December 31 of each calendar year.
8. All matters to be presented to the Voters Assembly shall, if possible, first be brought before the Church Council for consideration.
9. All communicant members are welcome to attend the meetings of the Voters Assembly.

## **Article II. Lay Offices, Boards and Committees**

### ***1. The Lay Offices, Boards and Committees***

#### A. ELECTED:

1. A President for the term of two years.
2. A Recording Secretary for the term of two years.
3. A Financial Secretary for the term of two years.
4. A Treasurer for the term of two years.
5. A Board of Elders of eight members for the term of two years.
6. A Board of Trustees of three members for the term of three years.
7. A Sunday School Superintendent for a term of two years, who is to serve as a member of the Board of Education.
8. A Board of Finance of four members for the term of two years, two of whom shall be the Financial Secretary and the Treasurer.
9. Four Board of Education members, one of which is the Sunday School Superintendent, for a term of two years, with terms expiring on alternate years. The Board shall elect a chairman from its elected members and he shall be a Voting member.

#### B. APPOINTED for the term of one year:

1. An Auditing Committee of three members.
2. A Staff of Ushers.
3. A Staff of Visitors.
4. Assistant Financial Secretaries.
5. Sunday School and Vacation Bible School Officers and Teachers.
6. Youth Leaders
7. Three members of the Board of Education

C. APPOINTED for a term of six years:

1. A Planning Committee of six members.

The Pastor and the President shall be ex-officio members of all boards and committees of the Voters Assembly. They shall have the same right as other members and are permitted, but not required, to attend all their meetings.

D. The members of the Board of Education, by majority vote, shall appoint from the Communicant membership, three members to serve on the Board of Education for a term of one year, subject to the approval of the Voters Assembly.

## ***2. Election or Appointment to Office***

- A. The President and Treasurer shall be elected in one year and the Recording Secretary and Financial Secretary the following year. Four members of the Board of Elders, one member of the Board of Trustees, two members of the Board of Education, and one member of the Board of Finance shall be elected annually.
- B. All appointed officers and committee members shall be approved by the Voters Assembly.
- C. The Auditing Committee shall be appointed from the voting membership by the Church Council.
- D. The Staff of Ushers and the Staff of Visitors shall be appointed from the communicant membership by the Board of Elders. Ushers shall be male communicant members.
- E. Assistant Financial Secretaries shall be appointed from the communicant membership by the Board of Finance.
- F. Sunday School and Vacation Bible School Officers and Teachers and Youth Leaders shall be appointed from the communicant membership by the Board of Education.
- G. The Planning Committee shall consist of at least six communicant members of the Congregation. They shall be appointed by the Chairman of the Congregation and shall hold office for six years except for the first term of the committee. The first term two members shall be appointed for two years, two members for four years, and two members for six years. After the first committee is appointed, two members shall be appointed every two years.
- H. Elected officers may not serve more than two consecutive terms. Exceptions to this rule may be made only by resolution of the Voters Assembly.
- I. Other officers, such as delegates to the conventions of Synod, representatives to conferences, etc., shall be chosen by acclamation.

## ***3. Nomination, Election, and Installation of Officers***

- A. A NOMINATING COMMITTEE of three members consisting of two of the second year Elders and the second year Trustee shall present two or more candidates for each office to be filled at the November meeting of the Voters Assembly. All candidates to be proposed shall previously have been interviewed and their willingness to serve secured.

The list may be augmented before the election of each officer.

- B. The ELECTION of officers shall be by ballot in the November meeting. A MAJORITY of all votes cast shall be required for election.
- C. No member may hold more than one of the first six offices. Elected officers may serve also in appointive offices.
- D. A VACANCY in an elective office shall be filled for the remainder of the unexpired term by the Voters Assembly.
- E. Officers and Board Members elected in the November meeting shall be INSTALLED on the Sunday after Christmas, assuming the responsibility of their offices on New Years Day.
- F. The ORDER OF ELECTION shall be:
  - 1. Elders
  - 2. Trustee
  - 3. President
  - 4. Financial Secretary
  - 5. Treasurer
  - 6. Recording Secretary
  - 7. Sunday School Superintendent
  - 8. Board of Finance
  - 9. Two members of the four elected members, including the Sunday School Superintendent, of the Board of Education.

### **Article III. The Church Council**

- 1. The following officers shall constitute the Church Council: The Pastor, the President, the Recording Secretary, the Financial Secretary, the Treasurer, the Chairman and Secretary of the Board of Elders, the Chairman of the Board of Trustees, and the Chairman of the Board of Education.
- 2. If the Chairman or Secretary of the Board of Elders, the Chairman of the Board of Trustees, or the Chairman of the Board of Education is not able to attend a of the Church Council, he shall appoint another member of his respective Board to represent him.
- 3. The President shall serve as Chairman of the Church Council and the Recording Secretary as its Secretary.
- 4. Four members present at any lawful meeting shall constitute a QUORUM qualified to transact business.
- 5. The Church Council shall have no legislative, but only advisory, directive and executive authority.
- 6. The Church Council shall MEET during the week before the meetings of the Voters Assembly. They shall prepare the schedule of business for the Voters Assembly. They shall deliberate upon matters designed to promote the best interests of the Congregation and of the church-at-large, and, whenever possible, make specific recommendations to the Voters Assembly.
- 7. SPECIAL MEETINGS may be called by the Pastor, the President, or three members of the Church Council.
- 8. Any member of the Congregation shall have the right to appear before the Church Council to present matters intended to promote the welfare of the Congregation and the church-at-large.

## **Article IV. Board and Committee Meetings**

1. After the election of officers, all boards and committees shall organize and choose a Chairman and Secretary.
2. REGULAR MEETINGS of the Board of Elders, the Board of Trustees, the Board of Education, and the Board of Finance shall be held before the regular meetings of the Church Council.
3. Meetings of COMMITTEES shall be held as specified in their duties and as the need arises.
4. SPECIAL MEETINGS of boards and committees may be called by the Pastor, the President, or the respective chairman.
5. Minutes shall be kept of each board and committee meeting. Reports and recommendations shall be presented to the Church Council and to the Voters Assembly.

## **Article V. Duties of Officers, Boards, and Committees**

### ***1. Elected:***

#### **A. The President**

1. The President shall preside at the meetings of the Voters Assembly and shall exercise care that the meetings be conducted in an orderly manner according to Christian principles and parliamentary procedure.
2. He shall serve as the Chairman of the Church Council and as an ex-officio member of all boards and committees of the Voters Assembly (Article II, 1) and shall supervise their proper functioning.
3. In harmony and cooperation with the Pastor and the other officers he shall supervise the execution of the Constitution and By-Laws and of all resolutions of the Voters Assembly and of the Church Council.
4. He shall act as Treasurer upon authorization of the Church Council in case of the Treasurer's disability or absence.

#### **B. The Recording Secretary**

1. The Recording Secretary shall keep an accurate record of all transactions and resolutions of the Voters Assembly and of the Church Council in both regular and special meetings, submit his minutes for approval at the next regular meeting of the respective body, and promptly enter such approved minutes in books provided for the purpose, affixing his signature to them.
2. He shall file all important papers.
3. He shall prepare a list of the old business of the Voters Assembly and the recommendations of the Church Council for new business and present it at each regular meeting of the Voters Assembly.
4. He shall keep an up-to-date list of the names, addresses and telephone numbers of all voting members.

5. He shall see to it that all members are notified of all regular and special meetings in advance.
6. He shall report the names of those voting members who have not attended the meetings of the Voters Assembly for one year without excuse and, thus, have forfeited their voting membership, and note them in the minutes (Constitution, Article IV, 3-C-5).
7. He shall carry on the correspondence of the Congregation designated by the Voters Assembly and the Church Council and keep copies of such correspondence on file.
8. He shall prepare the annual CORPORATION REPORT and file it with the Secretary of State of Indiana at Indianapolis before December 31, of each year.

### **C. The Financial Secretary**

1. The Financial Secretary, and/or the Assistant Financial Secretaries, shall receive all collections taken in the church services, as well as other contributions, keep record of the amount, from who received, and for what purpose intended, and deposit them in the Corporate name of the Congregation in a bank authorized by the Voters Assembly, and shall give the Treasurer a record thereof. These transactions shall be completed weekly by Wednesday, by a minimum of two Assistant Financial Secretaries.
2. They shall keep a separate financial account for each contribution made, by the church supplied numbered envelope, and shall credit each contributor with and maintain a record of the amount of his contribution. All financial records shall be and remain the property of the congregation.
3. He shall serve as a member of the Board of Finance. He shall supply the Board of Finance with accurate information on all contributions and shall submit a report to the Church Council and to the Voters Assembly at their regular meetings, giving an annual report in the January meeting. He shall prepare the annual report for publication.
4. He shall be responsible for the preparation and mailing of INDIVIDUAL STATEMENTS of contributions to the members of the Congregation yearly.
5. He shall see to it that the amount of each contribution is recorded on the envelopes until one month after members have received their individual statements of contributions.
6. He shall submit his record to the Auditing Committee upon request.

### **D. The Treasurer**

1. The Treasurer shall manage all the funds of the Congregation according to the Budget set by the Voters Assembly. He shall make payment of all salaries, bills, and other obligations of the Congregation as authorized by the Voters Assembly. He shall remit each month the monies received for synodical purpose to the Indiana District LCMS.
2. He shall keep an accurate account of all disbursements. All financial records shall be and remain the property of the Congregation.
3. He shall serve as a member of the Board of Finance. He shall supply the Board of Finance with accurate information on all disbursements and shall submit a report to the Church Council and to the Voters Assembly at their regular meetings, giving an annual report in the January meeting. He shall prepare the annual report for publication.
4. He shall submit his records to the Auditing Committee upon request.
5. He shall be the custodian of all valuable financial papers, deeds, bonds, notes, insurance

policies, etc., and shall preserve all important financial records in a safe place.

## **E. The Board of Elders**

1. The Board of Elders shall **PROMOTE THE SPIRITUAL WELFARE** of the Congregation. They shall assist the Pastor in preserving **PURE DOCTRINE AND SOUND PRACTICE** within the Congregation and in cultivating a constant spirit of harmony among the members.
2. They shall see that all **PUBLIC SERVICES** are punctually held and that good order is maintained before, during, and after such services. They shall be in charge of **USHERING** and shall appoint a staff of ushers as needed.
3. They shall render assistance as may be necessary for the various official acts, as Baptism, Holy Communion, Confirmation, Funerals, and Weddings.
4. They shall provide for substitute ministers when the Pastor cannot officiate.
5. They shall provide for and supervise organists and choir directors. One of the Elders shall serve as coordinator.
6. They shall assist the Pastor in **SPIRITUAL CARE OF THE MEMBERS** of the Congregation. They shall divide the territory served by the Congregation into districts and assign a district to each Elder.
7. They shall assist the Pastor in visiting the sick, needy, spiritually distressed, delinquent, or new members in their districts.
8. They shall assist the Pastor in administering the degrees of admonition prescribed in Matthew 18:15-17 with members who are lax in church attendance and communion attendance without good cause, who do not contribute to the Lord in proportion to their means, or who are guilty of conduct unbecoming a Christian.
9. At the Pastor's request they shall accompany him in making calls and shall make specific calls requested by him.
10. They may appoint and supervise a **STAFF OF VISITORS** from the communicant membership, one to each 5-7 families of the Congregation. These may be male or female individuals or married couples.
11. These Visitors shall **VISIT THE FAMILIES** assigned to them to keep them informed on the affairs, progress and needs of the Congregation. New members assigned to them shall be visited immediately and more often at first to integrate them with the Congregation. Reports of the visits shall be made to the Elder of the respective district.
12. They shall plan and promote an **EVANGELISM PROGRAM** in the Congregation and in the community.
13. They may enlist the communicant members in making religious surveys, visiting the unchurched and prospective members, keeping records, etc.
14. They shall promote **STEWARDSHIP EDUCATION** among the entire membership of the Congregation.
15. They shall endeavor to discover the **TALENTS** of the members and enlist them in the Congregation's program.
16. **REGULAR MEETINGS** shall be held before the regular meetings of the Church Council. **SPECIAL MEETINGS** may be called by the Pastor, the President, or the Chairman. Minutes shall be kept of each meeting. Reports and recommendations shall be presented to the Church Council and the Voters Assembly.
17. They shall be responsible for the spiritual and temporal welfare of the Pastor.

## **F. The Board of Trustees**

1. The Board of Trustees shall have charge of the maintenance and repair of the real and personal property of the Congregation under the direction of the Voters Assembly.
2. They shall protect the property and make reasonable repairs and expenditures. The expenditure limit may from time to time be changed by the Voters Assembly and a record of this limit be kept in the Voters Assembly minutes. Major repairs and expenditures shall be reported to the Church Council and approved by the Voters Assembly.
3. They shall periodically INSPECT the buildings and personal property of the Congregation and shall make recommendations to the Church Council and the Voters Assembly for their maintenance and repair, as well as for new facilities and equipment.
4. They shall prepare and submit to the Board of Finance a detailed ESTIMATE OF THE COST of operation, maintenance of property, replacement of equipment, and allowance for contingencies as a basis for the annual budget.
5. They shall keep the Congregation and its property insured with approval of the Voters Assembly.
6. They shall be responsible for keeping our property tax exemption current..
7. REGULAR MEETINGS shall be held before the regular meetings of the Church Council.
8. They shall elect a Chairman who shall appoint three (3) individuals from the communicant membership as assistants to serve on the Board for a one (1) year term. Individuals are subject to the approval of the Voters Assembly. This appointment shall be done annually.

## **G. The Board of Education**

1. The Board of Education shall endeavor to obtain the best possible agencies of Christian education for all age levels of the Congregation. They shall PROMOTE, ORGANIZE, MANAGE, AND SUPERVISE all agencies of Christian education of the Congregation.
2. They shall APPOINT the necessary Pre-School Administrators and teachers, Sunday School and Vacation Bible School officers and teachers, as well as youth leaders , from the communicant membership, subject to the approval of the Voters Assembly at the next regular meeting.
3. All members of the Board of Education shall use Christian discretion and excuse him or herself from the meeting before an evaluation or performance review of a (sibling, spouse, or parental), family member.
4. They shall VISIT the Congregation's agencies of Christian education periodically, study their effectiveness, and make recommendations to the Voters Assembly regarding their needs.
5. They shall foster a wholesome relationship between parents and teachers and the personnel of the various educational agencies.
6. REGULAR MEETINGS shall be held before the regular meetings of the Church Council. SPECIAL MEETINGS may be called by the Pastor, the President, or the Chairman. Four members shall constitute a quorum. Minutes shall be kept of each

meeting. Reports and recommendations shall be presented to the Church Council and Voters Assembly.

7. THE SUNDAY SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT shall administer the affairs of the Sunday School under the direction of the Board of Education.
8. The Pre-School Administrator and the Youth Group Leader(s) shall report to and work under the direction of the Board of Education.

## **H. The Board of Finance**

1. The Board of Finance shall exercise a general supervision over the financial affairs of the Congregation as follows:
2. They shall inform the Church Council and the Voters Assembly of the current financial condition of the Congregation in their regular meetings and shall make necessary recommendations to them.
3. They shall inform all communicant members of the financial needs of the Congregation and of the Church-at-large and shall endeavor to win the sustained interest and adequate financial support of all members in supplying these needs. They shall encourage regular and proportionate giving.
4. They shall report non-contributing and delinquent members to the Board of Elder.
5. In October they shall prepare a PROPOSED BUDGET for the ensuing year and shall submit this to the Church Council at its November meeting.
6. They shall plan, conduct, and supervise the annual distribution of envelopes. They shall see to it that OFFERING ENVELOPES are ordered early in the year, that the names of the communicant members are placed on the envelope cartons, and that the envelope cartons are distributed.
7. They shall explain the financial arrangement of the Congregation to new communicant members coming during the course of the year and shall supply each one with a carton of envelopes.
8. They shall appoint a minimum of six assistant Financial Secretaries, from the Communicate membership at large, to assist the Financial Secretary in counting, recording and depositing the contributions of the congregation. These appointments are subject to the approval of the Voters Assembly. (Article II sub paragraph 1 paragraph B sentence 4.)
9. They shall be responsible for all offerings received.
10. REGULAR MEETINGS shall be held before the regular meetings of the Church Council. SPECIAL MEETINGS may be called by the Pastor, the President, or the Chairman. Minutes shall be kept of each meeting. Reports and recommendations shall be presented to the Church Council and to the Voters Assembly.

## **2. Appointed:**

### **A. The Auditing Committee**

The Auditing Committee shall perform a financial review of the books and records of the Financial Secretary and the Treasurer at least annually. They shall report their audits

to the Church Council. Serious discrepancies shall be reported to the Church Council.

## **B. The Planning Committee**

1. The function of the Planning Committee is to plan for the future growth of the Congregation as related to property and buildings for worship, education, social and pastoral needs.
2. The Committee should base these plans on the projected growth of our Congregation as related to the growth of the community.
3. The Committee shall present a plot plan to the Voters Assembly showing the present and suggested future use of the Congregation's property. This plot plan shall be periodically updated.

## **Article VI. Order of Business**

1. Opening devotion.
2. Roll call.
3. Reading and adoption of the minutes.
4. Reception of new members:
  - A. Communicant and baptized members
  - B. Voting members; signing of the Constitution and By-Laws.
  - C. Application for voting membership.
5. Granting letters of transfer.
6. The Pastor's report.
7. Reports of officers:
  - A. Financial Secretary.
  - B. Treasurer.
8. Reports of Boards:
  - A. Board of Elders.
  - B. Board of Trustees.
  - C. Board of Education.
  - D. Board of Finance.
9. Reports of Committees:
  - A. Auditing Committee.
  - B. Other Committees.
10. Unfinished Business.
11. New Business; Recommendations of the Church Council.
12. Election of Officers and Boards.
13. Adjournment with prayer.
14. Social Period.

## **Article VII. Amendments to the Bylaws**

These By-Laws may be amended by the affirmative vote of a two-thirds majority of the members present at any regular meeting of the Voters Assembly, a quorum being present,

provided that the proposed amendment has been submitted in writing at a previous regular meeting.

## **Policies**

### **Confirmation Class**

1. Responsibility for establishing dates for Confirmation Class shall be that of the Pastor. Cancellation of those classes or postponement to a later date will be left to the discretion of the Pastor, subject to approval by the Board of Elders. The following will be considered valid reasons for cancellation or postponement:
  - A. Emergencies or sudden illness of the Pastor that would prevent his attendance.
  - B. Emergencies or sudden illness of members of the Congregation that would require the Pastor's immediate attention.
  - C. Severe weather conditions where travel to and from would cause undue risk to life or health.
  - D. Church related functions that require or would benefit from the Pastor's or students' attendance.
  - E. Special community related affairs that would have popular support of that sector of the population which would otherwise be in attendance.

### **Memorials**

1. No donations of specific items can be accepted without prior approval of the Voters Assembly.
2. All monetary donations given as memorials may be designated by the family to:
  - A. Our General Fund
  - B. Our Building Fund
  - C. Any other fund already established by the Voters Assembly prior to the donation
  - D. Any charitable agency recognized by the LC-MS as a charity or service agency affiliated with the LC-MS
3. Donations designated for the General Fund or Building Fund will be spent as the Voters Assembly approves. If none of the above is specified by the family then their donation will be held in our memorial fund in their loved ones name for a period of twelve months after their death. During this Twelve-month period the family may ask the Voters Assembly or the Voters assembly may ask the family to consider other uses for their donations. At the end of this twelve-month period any unused or undesignated monies will be transferred into our General Fund.
4. Past donated items may be removed or changed by Voters' approval.
5. Donations specified for the Building Fund will be spent as the Voters Assembly approves.
6. Permanent engravings shall not be placed on specifically donated items nor on items purchased with memorial funds, but a permanent Memorial Record Book shall be maintained for acknowledging such gifts.

## **Funerals**

1. It shall be the policy of the Congregation that the Church shall be reserved for funerals of its membership and shall not be open to public burials. However, the Pastor may, when it seems advisable to him, make exceptions to this rule with the approval of the available Elders.
2. It shall be the responsibility of the Board of Elders to have someone present at funeral services.
3. If the use of the Parish Hall is desired for the wake of a member, it may be made available to them, providing the facility is not previously scheduled. Arrangements must be cleared with the available Elders.
4. The Pastor may conduct funeral services in a funeral parlor or another facility when it seems appropriate to him. He may consult with the Elders when it seems necessary to him.

## **Weddings**

1. The prospective bride and groom must meet with the Pastor for consultation pertaining to marriage. This consultation should take place as soon as possible after matrimony is contemplated.
2. The wedding ceremony shall be a worship service; therefore, the vows, prayers, music, and all other parts of the ceremony shall meet with the approval of the Pastor and Elders. No other person or persons are to do readings of Scriptures of any type in the ceremony unless specifically approved by the Pastor and Board of Elders.
3. The conduct of the participants and observers shall be appropriate to a person entering the House of God, both during rehearsals and the ceremony.
4. Taking of pictures will not be allowed in the church proper.
5. Rice will not be allowed in the church proper.
6. A cleaning fee of \$50.00 is to be paid in advance to the custodian.
7. The Pastor may conduct wedding ceremonies away from the church proper when it seems appropriate to him. He may consult with the Elders at his option.

## **Non-Member Marriage Policy Statement**

We will allow the loaning of our facility under the following criteria:

1. Bride or groom has communicant membership in another Missouri Synod Lutheran Church.
2. Our church is being used with the knowledge of the bride's or groom's pastor.
3. The service is to be conducted by a Missouri Synod pastor.
4. A cleaning fee of \$100.00 is to be paid in advance to the custodian.
5. Our church is being used because the members' home church cannot facilitate them.
6. Any conflict in the date with scheduling in our church will result in our member being given first selection.
7. A denial for usage may be given by the Elders, to any non-member, whenever they desire to do so, without explanation.

## **Board of Finance**

1. It has been and continues to be the policy of the Board of Finance to accept donations made to this Congregation if they are designated for any of the following:
  - A. General Fund
  - B. Building Fund
  - C. Any other fund already established by the Voters Assembly prior to the receiving of the donation.
  - D. Any church agency which is recognized by the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod as a bona fide charitable or service agency affiliated with the Lutheran Church- Missouri Synod.
2. Any donations received which are undesignated will be considered as intended for the General Fund unless otherwise directed by the Voters Assembly.
3. Any donations designated for any other purpose will be held (but not accepted) until the Voters Assembly has had a chance to direct the Board of Finance as to whether the donation should be accepted or returned.
4. This policy has been formulated to conform to the wishes of our Voters Assembly and to avoid problems which have occurred in the past concerning special donations.

## **Usher's Duties**

1. Show up for service 15 minutes prior to start of service.
2. Show a friendly greeting to those entering the church as you hand out bulletins.
3. Open the door and help the elderly and ladies carrying babies, etc.
4. Usher people to an empty seat when the church starts to fill up.
5. Assist the Elder in charge with ushering the congregation for the Lord's Supper.
6. Assist the Elder in taking up the collection.
7. Stay approximately 15 minutes after the service to help with miscellaneous duties.

## **Communion Policy**

1. It shall be the policy that only members of a Missouri Synod Lutheran Church be allowed to come during Communion services.
2. Any exceptions to this policy shall first be discussed with the Pastor and, if deemed necessary, with the Elders, also.

## **Regulations for the Use of the Church Property and Equipment**

1. Organizations of our Congregation authorized by the Voters Assembly shall have the free use of the church property and equipment for their legitimate meetings.
2. Meetings of the Church-at-large, such as Circuit meetings, L.W.M.L. rallies, young people's rallies, Sunday School institutes, pastoral conferences, etc., shall have the use of the church property and equipment, upon invitation of the Voters Assembly.
3. Individual members of our congregation who wish to use the church property and equipment

for gathering in conjunction with weddings, funerals, anniversaries, baptisms, and confirmations, may do so at no charge, upon authorization of the Trustees. A donation may be made through the Financial Secretary of the congregation.

4. If an organization of our congregation wishes to use the church property and equipment to serve a meal to an inside or outside group, it may do so at no charge, upon authorization of the Trustees.
5. Outside organizations and non-member individuals shall not have the use of our church property and equipment except by special authorization of one of the following.
  - A. Voters Assembly if timely requested
  - B. The pastor, who must have the approval of at least two of the three trustees and who must then report such authorization at the next Voters Assembly meeting
  - C. A trustee, who must have the approval of the other two trustees and who must then report such authorization at the next Voters Assembly meeting, and an appropriate fee may be charged.
6. No intoxicating beverages shall be served or used on the property or grounds.
7. All who use the church property and equipment, whether members or non-members, shall leave them in a clean and orderly condition.

## **Sports Rules and Regulations**

1. All players and coaches that are members of a sports activity sponsored by Trinity Lutheran Church of Lowell shall attend church services regularly. A person's work schedule will be taken into consideration when church services are missed. A player not attending church regularly will be dismissed from the team.
2. All members of a sports activity shall have a Christian and sportsmanlike attitude.
3. Persons in charge of the sports activity shall have the authority to dismiss a team member for infraction of the rules. Any dispute that cannot be resolved by the players or coaches shall be brought before the Pastor and the Board of Elders.

