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## **PREAMBLE**

The Word of God requires that a Christian congregation shall conform to this Divine Word in doctrine and practice (Ps. 119:105; Matt. 28:18-20; Gal. 1:6-8; 2 Tim. 4:1-5) and that all things be done decently and in order (1 Cor. 14:40). Therefore, we the members of St. Luke Lutheran Church accept and subscribe to the following Constitution and By-Laws, in accordance with which all spiritual and material affairs of our congregation shall be governed.



## **CONSTITUTION**

### **ARTICLE I NAME**

The name of the Society (hereinafter called "The Congregation") shall be: **ST. LUKE LUTHERAN CHURCH.**

### **ARTICLE II PURPOSE**

The purposes of this Congregation are:

- (a) to unite its members as a congregation in a common confession, defense and propagation of their belief in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior;
- (b) to promote among the members of the Congregation, programs for the spiritual enrichment and edification of its members;
- (c) to provide facilities to enable the members of the Congregation to contribute to the education, training, and spiritual enrichment of the members and their children.

### **ARTICLE III CONFESSION OF FAITH**

This Congregation acknowledges and accepts all the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments as the revealed and inspired Word of God, and acknowledges and accepts all the Confessional Writings of the Evangelical Lutheran church, contained in the Book of Concord, of the year 1580, to be the true and genuine exposition of the doctrines of the Bible. These Confessional Writings are: The Three Ecumenical Creeds (Apostles, Nicene and Athanasian), the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, The Smalcald Articles, Luther's Small and Large Catechisms and the Formula of Concord.

### **ARTICLE IV SYNODICAL MEMBERSHIP**

This Congregation shall hold membership in the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod, or its successors. It shall send its Pastor and lay delegate to the District Convention of Synod. It shall be the duty of the Congregation and its individual members to support the word of Synod, since they thereby support their own Christ-appointed work.

### **ARTICLE V PROPERTY RIGHTS**

If at any time a separation should take place on account of doctrine, the property of the Congregation and all benefits therewith connected shall remain with those members who continue to adhere to the confession and practice of this Congregation as put forth in the Confession of Faith in this Constitution. In the event that the Congregation should disband, the property and all rights connected therewith shall be transferred to the Alberta-British Columbia District of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod, or its successors.

## ARTICLE VI MEMBERSHIP

### A. Baptized Membership

Baptized members are all persons on the membership rolls who have been baptized and are under our Pastoral care.

### B. Communicant Membership

Communicant members are those:

- (1) who are baptized in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; and
- (2) who accept all canonical books of the Old and New Testaments as the only divine rule and norm of faith and life; and
- (3) who are familiar with Luther's Small Catechism and declare their acceptance of it; and
- (4) who faithfully attend divine worship services; and
- (5) who lead Christian lives and do not live in manifest works of the flesh (Galatians 5:19-21); and
- (6) who partake of the Lord's Supper frequently after their confirmation; and
- (7) who contribute regularly and faithfully, as God has prospered them, toward the building of Christ's Kingdom in the congregation and throughout the world; and
- (8) who devote their time and talents to the extension of the Kingdom of God; and
- (9) who permit themselves to be fraternally admonished and corrected when they have erred; and
- (10) who are not members of another congregation, and are not members, affiliates, or supporters of secret societies or other organizations conflicting with the Word of God.

## ARTICLE VII THE OFFICES OF PASTOR AND TEACHER

The pastoral office of this Congregation, as well as that of a called teacher in the parochial school, shall be conferred upon such ministers, teachers, and candidates only as profess and adhere to the confessional standard set forth in Article III of this Constitution and are well qualified for their work. Pastors and teachers shall, in the call extended to and accepted by them, be pledged to this confessional standard.

## ARTICLE VIII POWERS OF THE CONGREGATION

### A. General

The Congregation as a body, through the voting members, shall have the supreme power to administer and manage all its external and internal affairs. The establishment and conduct of all institutions and societies within the Congregation, such as a parochial school, Sunday school, youth societies, ladies organizations, choir, etc., shall at all time be subject to the approval and supervision of the Congregation. The Congregation,

however, shall not be empowered to decide anything contrary to the Word of God and the Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church and any such decision shall be null and void.

**B. Right of Calling**

The right of calling Pastors, teachers or other engaged personnel shall be vested in the Congregation and shall never be delegated to any other body or to an individual.

**C. Decisions**

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.

**D. Powers of Officers**

Congregational officers or committees, whether elected or appointed by the voters, shall have no authority beyond that which has been conferred upon them, and whatever power may have been delegated to them may at any time be altered or revoked by the voters.

**E. Removal from Office**

Any officer, Pastor, or teacher may be removed from office by the Congregation, by ballot, in Christian and lawful order, for one of the following reasons: persistent adherence to false doctrine, scandalous life, inability to perform his/her official duties or wilful neglect of them.

**ARTICLE IX DOCTRINAL LITERATURE**

In the public service of the Congregation, and in all ministerial acts, only such hymns, prayers and liturgies shall be used as conform to the confessional standard of Article III. Likewise in all classes for instruction in Christian doctrine, only such books shall be used as conform to this standard.

**ARTICLE X CHANGING THE CONSTITUTION**

**A. Unalterable Articles**

Articles III, IV, V, VII and IX of this Constitution are unalterable in accordance with Section 22 of the *Societies Act* of British Columbia.

**B. Alterable Articles**

All other Articles of this Constitution are to be changed only in accordance with the provision of the *Societies Act* of B.C.



## **BY-LAWS**

### **ARTICLE I MEMBERSHIP**

#### **A. Baptized Membership**

Baptized members are all persons on the membership rolls who have been baptized and are under our Pastoral care.

#### **B. Communicant Membership**

Communicant members are those:

- (1) who are baptized in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; and
- (2) who accept all canonical books of the Old and New Testaments as the only divine rule and norm of faith and life; and
- (3) who are familiar with Luther's Small Catechism and declare their acceptance of it; and
- (4) who faithfully attend divine worship services; and
- (5) who lead Christian lives and do not live in manifest works of the flesh (Galatians 5:19-21); and
- (6) who partake of the Lord's Supper frequently after their confirmation; and
- (7) who contribute regularly and faithfully, as God has prospered them, toward the building of Christ's Kingdom in the congregation and throughout the world; and
- (8) who devote their time and talents to the extension of the Kingdom of God; and
- (9) who permit themselves to be fraternally admonished and corrected when they have erred; and
- (10) who are not members of another congregation, and are not members, affiliates, or supporters of secret societies or other organizations conflicting with the Word of God.

### **ARTICLE II ADMISSION INTO MEMBERSHIP**

#### **A. Communicant Membership**

- (1) By Confirmation: All children and adults who have been given thorough instruction in the chief parts of Christian doctrine and have been examined as to their Christian faith and knowledge by the Pastor and Elders, shall be received as communicant members.
- (2) By Transfer: Persons coming with a communicant letter of transfer from a congregation in Church fellowship, provided they conform in all respects to the requirements of membership of this Congregation, shall be received by the Pastor, whose action is to be approved in a subsequent meeting of the Elders and Council.
- (3) By Profession of Faith: Persons affiliated with a Lutheran Congregation not in fellowship with this Congregation shall submit their application to the Pastor, and

having given satisfactory evidence of qualifications for communicant membership to the Pastor or one Elder, shall be received as communicant members, to be approved in a subsequent meeting of the Elders and Council.

**B. Voting Membership**

- (1) Any member may vote at a general or special membership meeting (whereby a membership meeting is hereinafter being called "Voters' Assembly") provided as follows:
  - (a) he or she shall be a communicant member of the Congregation, and
  - (b) he or she shall have reached his or her eighteenth birthday, and
  - (c) be a member of the Congregation "in good standing" (i.e., not under congregational discipline), and
  - (d) have read and signed the Constitution and By-Laws of this Congregation.
- (2) Reinstatement to the Voters' Assembly shall follow guide "1" above.

**ARTICLE III TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP**

1.

**A. Communicant Membership**

- (1) Transfer to other congregations: Communicant members desiring to join another congregation in Church fellowship shall present their request for transfer to the Pastor, to whom authorization is granted to issue such transfers. Such transfer of membership shall be approved by the Elders and Council in a subsequent meeting.
- (2) Joining other congregations: In cases where communicant and baptized members have joined another congregation outside our own fellowship, they shall, upon recommendation of the Pastor and Elders, be considered as having terminated their membership. Their names shall be removed from the membership list by a resolution of the Voters' Assembly.
- (3) Whereabouts Unknown: The names of members whose whereabouts are unknown and cannot be established shall be removed by the Voters' Assembly, and forthwith such membership is terminated.
- (4) Excommunication: Any member who conducts himself or herself in an unchristian manner shall be admonished according to Matthew 18:15-20. If he or she refuses to amend his or her sinful life after proper admonition, he or she shall be excommunicated. If the person refuses to attend the Voters' Assembly to discuss his or her case, he or she has therefore excluded himself or herself. A unanimous decision shall be required for every resolution of the Voters' Assembly for excommunication. Excommunication terminates membership. When a member has been excommunicated, a copy of such resolution, signed by the Pastor and Recording Secretary, shall be sent to him or her by registered mail. If anyone who

has been excommunicated shall again apply for admission into the congregation, he or she shall be admitted under "Profession of Faith" above.

- (5) Self-Exclusion: Persons who have terminated their membership for any reason have forfeited all rights of a member of this Congregation and all claims upon the property of the Congregation as such, or upon any part thereof, as long as he or she is not reinstated to membership by the Congregation.

**B. Voting Membership**

1. A voting member who is absent from the meetings of the Voters' Assembly for a full year, without offering valid excuse to the Chairman, shall have his or her name removed from the roster of voting members. He or she may be reinstated by re-applying for voting membership.
2. A member is a member in good standing unless his/her membership is terminated as stated above.

**ARTICLE IV THE OFFICES OF THE PASTOR AND TEACHER**

The pastoral office of this Congregation, as well as that of a called teacher in the parochial school, shall be conferred upon such ministers, teachers, and candidates only as profess and adhere to the confessional standard set forth in Article III of the Constitution and are well qualified for their work. Pastors and teachers shall, in the call extended to and accepted by them, be pledged to his confessional standard.

**ARTICLE V CALLING OF PASTORS AND TEACHERS**

**A. Nominations**

At a properly convened meeting of the Voters' Assembly, a list of candidates from the District President, for the office of Pastor or teacher shall be submitted by the Nominating Committee. Any voter is entitled to make additional nominations from the floor.

**B. Elections**

The election of a Pastor or teacher chosen by the Congregation, shall be by ballot. The candidate receiving the majority of all votes cast shall be considered elected. The election shall, if possible, be made unanimous, and the call shall be sent to the Pastor or teacher elect.

All officers, i.e., members of the Church Council, shall be elected at a General Meeting of the Congregation in November of each year.

**C. Vacancy Pastor**

In the event of a vacancy in the office of the Pastor due to death or other causes, a Vacancy Pastor shall be appointed by the Congregation from a list of pastors secured from the Circuit Counsellor.

**ARTICLE VI POWERS OF THE CONGREGATION****A. General**

The Congregation as a body, through the voting members, shall have the supreme power to administer and manage all its external and internal affairs. The establishment and conduct of all institutions and societies within the Congregation, such as a parochial school, Sunday school, youth societies, ladies organizations, choir, etc., shall at all times be subject to the approval and supervision of the Congregation. The Congregation, however, shall not be empowered to decide anything contrary to the Word of God and the Confessionals of the Evangelical Lutheran Church and any such decision shall be null and void.

**B. Right of Calling**

The right of calling Pastors, teachers or other engaged personnel shall be vested in the Congregation and shall never be delegated to any other body or to an individual.

**C. Decisions**

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.

**D. Powers of Officers**

Congregational officers or committees, whether elected or appointed by the voters, shall have no authority beyond that which has been conferred upon them, and whatever power may have been delegated to them may at any time be altered or revoked by the voters.

**E. Removal from Office**

Any officer, Pastor, or teacher may be removed from office by the Congregation, by ballot, in Christian and lawful order, for one of the following reasons: persistent adherence to false doctrine, scandalous life, inability to perform his/her official duties or willful neglect of them.

**ARTICLE VII VOTERS' ASSEMBLY**

- (1) All regular meetings shall be announced, verbally and in writing, in the public worship service for three weeks prior to the meeting.
- (2) Reports shall be given at any regular Voters' Assembly be it the annual Voters' Assembly or the quarter yearly assembly, by the Treasurer, Recording Secretary, Board of Elders, Board of Trustees, Board of Education, Board of S.E.M., and the Pastor.

- (3) The voters shall meet at least four times yearly of which the Annual Meeting will be held in January. Election of offices and the Proposed Work Program will take place at the November Voters' Assembly. The officers-elect shall assume their respective duties on January first of the following year.
- (4) During the regularly scheduled Voters' Assembly, a quorum shall consist of those voting members present. Special meetings may be called by order of the Church Council, the Pastor, the Chairman, or at the request of not less than ten (10%) percent of the voting members. During a special Voters' Assembly, a quorum shall consist of at least one-half of the voting members of the Congregation, but the number shall be not less than three persons.
- (5) Eligibility for Congregational Officers – any member qualifying under Article I of these By-laws – Voting Membership, shall qualify for office. Eligibility for the office of Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Elder shall be restricted to male members.
- (6) All meetings of the Voters' Assembly shall be open to Baptized Members and invited guests, but they will not have the privilege of voting by reason of such alone.

## **ARTICLE VIII CHURCH COUNCIL**

### **A. General Procedures and Requirements**

The Church Council shall meet regularly to conduct the affairs of the Congregation, as directed by the Voters' Assembly. Any member of the Congregation shall have the right to be in attendance at the Council meeting, but without a voting privilege. He or she may take part in any or all discussions, unless this privilege is withdrawn by a majority vote of the Council. The time and date of the Council meeting shall be decided upon by the Council itself. Any member of the Council has the privilege of calling a special meeting of the Council to consider pressing matters related to his/her duties. The time and date of that meeting shall be determined by the Chairman.

### **B. Members of the Church Council**

The Church Council shall consists of: Chairman of the congregation, Vice-Chairman, Treasurer, Financial Secretary, Recording Secretary, Chairperson of the Board of Christian Education, the Board of Elders, Chairperson of the Board of Trustees, Chairperson of the Board of Stewardship, Evangelism and Mission and the Pastor.

### **C. Powers of the Church Council**

The Church Council may, by simple majority vote, manage the business of the society, pay all expenses and do all things necessary for an orderly conduct of the society's business, subject to the Constitution and By-laws herein, and the provincial and federal legislation and common law.

The Church Council shall have the power to purchase or otherwise acquire and to sell for the Society any property rights or privileges which the Society is authorized to acquire at such price and generally upon such conditions as it thinks fit.

The Church Council shall have the power to lend monies to any person, company or society, to borrow monies and to give any security for such loans as it deems fit.

## **ARTICLE IX OFFICERS OF THE CONGREGATION**

### **A. Election of Congregational Officers**

The Nominating Committee, comprised of the Elders and Vice-Chairman shall present a slate of candidates at the November Voters' Assembly. Additional nominations may be made from the floor. The annual election shall be by ballot. In the event of a vacancy in any office, the Council shall appoint a successor to hold the same office until the next annual election. At that election, the person elected to the vacated position will hold it for the remainder of the original term. Officers shall be elected for the terms specified in these By-laws and shall hold office until their successors have been elected.

### **B. Terms and Duties of Officers**

#### **(1) Chairman of the Congregation**

- (a) The term of office shall be a two year term.
- (b) Will serve no more than two consecutive terms.
- (c) Will preside at and co-ordinate all meetings of the Church Council and Voters' Assembly, and shall vote only in order to break a tie.
- (d) Will see that all Boards and Committees are functioning properly and in keeping with their specific duties.
- (e) Will meeting regularly with the Pastor to review efforts of the past and co-ordinate plans for the future.
- (f) Will be responsible for notifying any member regarding loss of voting privileges.

#### **(2) Vice-Chairman**

- (a) The term of office shall be a two year term.
- (b) Will serve no more than two consecutive terms.
- (c) Will perform the duties of the Chairman when the Chairman is not in attendance.
- (d) Will assist the Chairman in seeing that all Boards and Committees are functioning properly and keeping with their specific duties.
- (e) Will be part of the Nominating Committee, along with the Elders.

#### **(3) Recording Secretary**

- (a) The term of office shall be a two year period.
- (b) Will serve no more than two consecutive terms.
- (c) Will keep an accurate and permanent record of the minutes of the proceedings of all Church Council and Voters' Assembly meetings.
- (d) Will maintain an accurate list of all voting members, church officers (elected and appointed) and their terms of office.

- (e) Will notify the Chairman when a voting member is absent from the Voters' Assembly for a full year.
- (f) Will conduct all formal correspondence as necessary.

**(4) Treasurer**

- (a) The term of office shall be three years.
- (b) Will serve no more than two consecutive terms.
- (c) Will faithfully keep all books of account which shall be and remain the property of the congregation.
- (d) Will make all congregational disbursements of money.
- (e) Will offer a thorough financial report to all Council and Voters' Assembly meetings.
- (f) Will receive all bequests, etc., and keep accurate records as to their origin and intended use.

**(5) Financial Secretary**

- (a) The term of office shall be three years.
- (b) Will serve no more than two consecutive terms.
- (c) Will arrange deposits and record in the proper way, all congregational monies (offerings, contributions, special collections, loans, bequests, etc.)
- (d) Will maintain an accurate and comprehensive set of records listing individual contributors and contributions.
- (e) Will make regular reports to the Church Council and Voters' Assembly meetings.
- (f) Will order and distribute contribution envelopes to all members and new members of the congregation.
- (g) Will send quarterly statements of contributions received to all members of the congregation.
- (h) All offerings shall be counted in the presence of two congregational members.

**(6) Board of Elders**

The Board of Elders shall consist of at least three members. The number of Elders shall be determined by one Elder for each forty communicant members, or major fraction thereof. The Elders shall be elected by ballot at the November Voters' Assembly and their term of office shall run for three years, with one-third or the nearest one-third of the members being elected every year. The Board of Elders shall elect a Chairman who will call and preside at all Elders' meetings.

The Board of Elders shall:

- (a) Assist the Pastor in all matters pertaining to the spiritual welfare of the Congregation.
- (b) Consider complaints and grievances of members of the Congregation as put forth in Matthew 18:15-16, and shall report to the Congregation those matters which cannot be settled in accordance with Matthews 18:17-18.
- (c) Make every effort to induce members who have been negligent in their attendance at Worship Services, in the use of the Sacraments, and in

financial support of the Congregation, to amend their sinful ways and fully enjoy the rights and privileges of their membership.

- (d) See that all Worship Services are conducted in such a manner as to avoid needless disturbance and to foster an attitude conducive to worship among those in attendance.
- (e) Assist the Pastor in arranging for pulpit assistance, special services and guest speakers.
- (f) Appoint and supervise a Worship Committee, who will be responsible for supervising the choir and Altar Guild.
- (g) Appoint and supervise the head usher who will be responsible to select, train and organize the ushers.
- (h) Serve with the Vice-Chairman on the Nominating Committee for election of congregational officers.

**(7) Board of Trustees**

The Board elected at the November Voters' Assembly shall consist of at least four members, being of the legal age in British Columbia, whose term of office shall be three years; and the elected offices so arranged that at least one office expires each year. The Trustees shall elect a chairperson who will call and preside at all Trustee meetings. The chairperson of this Board shall cast a vote only when his or her vote is required to break a tie vote of the Board.

The duties of the Board of Trustees shall be:

- (a) To see to the care of all property belonging to the congregation.
- (b) To make legal contracts pertaining to the property of the congregation.
- (c) To sign all legal documents.
- (d) To appoint one of themselves to appear in and represent the Congregation in court as directed by the Church Council.
- (e) To, in the event of building, extensions or improvements, appoint a Planning Committee.
- (f) To arrange for an annual audit of all congregational accounts and books.
- (g) To be responsible for expenditures under the sum of \$500.00 or the budgeted allotment, unless otherwise directed by the Voters' Assembly.

**(8) Board of Christian Education**

Jesus commanded in Matthew 28:19 – “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations ...” and again in Matthew 28:20 – “Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you...”.

I. The purpose of the Board of Christian Education shall be to supervise Christian Education in this Congregation, as denoted above in the words of Jesus. To do this, the Board will choose a curriculum that is harmonious to our Confession of Faith, select and enlist teachers and leaders who will model this faith and teach according to its doctrine. The Board of Education will also encourage sound Christian Education in the home.

The Board shall submit to the Stewardship Committee an annual projected itemized budget for the educational needs of the Congregation. It shall also undertake recruitment and training of all those involved in Christian Education.

The Board of Christian Education shall meet when appropriate, but at least once every two months.

II. The Board of Christian Education shall consist of:

An annually elected Chairperson who will appoint at least three committee members (one being from the Sunday School and one from another educational endeavour within the Congregation). This Board shall be responsible for all educational endeavours within the Congregation (i.e., Vacation Bible School, the Library, Youth and Adult study groups, etc.). The Chairperson shall be a voting representative of this Board on the Church Council.

**(9) Board of Stewardship, Evangelism and Mission**

This Board shall consist of an annually elected Chairperson who will annually appoint at least three members to this Board. It is desirable that any group within the Congregation that is an organization concerned with mission or evangelistic reasons, shall be represented on this Board. The Chairperson shall be a voting representative of this Board on the Church Council.

I. Stewardship

It shall be the duty of this division of the Board:

- (a) To fully inform the members of the Congregation of its program and opportunities to lengthen their outreach into all the world through District and Synod.
- (b) To instruct God's people in the grace of giving their time, talents and treasures to God's work in their own Congregation and in the world.
- (c) Together with the Treasurer and Financial Secretary, to organize the annual budget of the Congregation for presentation to the Church Council and eventually to the Voters' Assembly.
- (d) To appoint a person to serve as a representative for the District Church Extension Fund.

II. Evangelism

It shall be the duty of this division of the Board:

- (a) To plan, promote and carry out an evangelism program in the Congregation and in the community.
- (b) To assist the Pastor in the training of the laity for the proclamation of the Gospel.
- (c) To be sensitive to the physical and material needs of all members and to the needs of the community.

- (d) To practice concern for all those who come into contract with the Congregation, by a regular visiting and follow-up program.
- (e) To enlist the aid of the Congregation as needed.

### III. Mission

It shall be the duty of this division of the Board to:

- (a) In obedience to Christ's command, to make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, and teaching them to observe all that He has taught; the Board shall lead the Congregation in carrying out this mission.
- (b) Bring to the attention of the Congregation, the needs and opportunities of sharing the Gospel in words and deeds, both locally and world-wide.
- (c) Inform the Congregation of the work and conditions in various mission fields, suggest ways for our own involvement, and nurture a sense of belonging in the universal body of Christ.
- (d) Assist all other organizations within the Congregation with their mission work, at home and abroad.

- IV. Any other organization within the Congregation concerned with stewardship, evangelism or mission, will work in conjunction with this Board.

## **ARTICLE X CHANGES IN REGULATIONS**

The Congregation shall from time to time adopt, alter, or amend rules and regulations (or directives) for the guidance of officers and committees in their work.

## **ARTICLE XI ORDER OF BUSINESS**

The order of business for Voters' Assembly meetings will be as follows:

- (1) Devotion
- (2) Roll call
- (3) Reading of minutes of previous meetings
- (4) Admission of new members (Voters only)
- (5) Reports of Officers, Board and Pastor
- (6) Old Business
- (7) New Business
- (8) Adjournment and closing prayer.