

CONSTITUTION FOR
EMANUEL EVANGELICAL
LUTHERAN CHURCH OF
MARION, OHIO



Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions as amended and ratified January 26, 2025

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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 Emanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church of Marion, Ohio.
- C1.02.** For the purpose of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws, the congregation of Emanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church is hereinafter designated as "this congregation."
- C1.11.** This congregation shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of Ohio.

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 Scripture 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.** This church confesses the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church and is resolved to serve Christian unity throughout the world.
- *C3.03.** The Church exists both as an inclusive fellowship and as local congregations gathered for worship and Christian service. Congregations find their fulfillment in the universal community of the Church, and the universal Church exists in and through congregations. 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.
- *C3.04.** This church, inspired and led by the Holy Spirit, participates in The Lutheran World Federation as a global communion of churches, engaging in faithful witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ and in service for the sake of God’s mission in the world.
- *C3.05.** 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, justice, and equity for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations, and standing in solidarity with the poor and oppressed 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 this congregation's ministry and the ministry of the other expressions 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 Parish Planning Council shall prepare descriptions of the responsibilities of each committee, task force, or other organizational group and shall review their actions. [Such descriptions shall be contained in the by-laws and continuing resolutions.]
- *C4.05.** This congregation shall adopt and periodically review a mission statement which will provide specific direction for its programs.
- *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.

Chapter 5.

POWERS OF THE CONGREGATION

- *C5.01.** The powers of this congregation are those necessary to fulfill its purpose.
- *C5.02.** The powers of this congregation are vested in the Congregation Meeting called and conducted as provided in this constitution and bylaws.
- *C5.03.** Only such authority as is delegated to the Parish Planning Council or other organizational units in this congregation's governing documents is recognized. All remaining authority is retained by this congregation. This congregation is authorized to:
- a. call a pastor as provided in Chapter 9;
 - b. terminate the call of a pastor as provided in Chapter 9;

- c. call a minister of Word and Service;
 - d. terminate the call of a minister of Word and Service in conformity with the constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;
 - e. adopt amendments to the constitution, as provided in Chapter 16, amendments to the bylaws, as specified in Chapter 17, and continuing resolutions, as provided in Chapter 18;
 - f. approve the annual budget;
 - g. acquire real and personal property by gift, devise, purchase, or other lawful means;
 - h. hold title to and use its property for any and all activities consistent with its purpose;
 - i. sell, mortgage, lease, transfer, or otherwise dispose of its property by any lawful means;
 - j. elect its officers, and Parish Planning Council; and require them to carry out their duties in accordance with the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions; and
 - k. terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as provided in Chapter 6.
- *C5.04.** This congregation shall elect 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 this congregation and other qualifications shall be as prescribed in guidelines established by the Northwestern Ohio Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- C5.05.** This congregation shall have endowment funds that will operate as specified in this congregation's bylaws and continuing resolutions. The purpose of the endowment funds are to provide for mission work beyond the operational budget of this congregation.
- C5.06.** The church sanctuary and attached buildings, the land on which the same are situated, and/or any other property shall not be purchased, disposed of, or encumbered in any manner except by resolution adopted by not less than two-thirds majority ballot vote of the members present and voting at a legally called meeting of the congregation.

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 Northwestern Ohio 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 roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament 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 Ministers of Word and Sacrament of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or to contracting for pastoral services with a minister of Word and Sacrament 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 ministers of Word and Service for call to other staff positions in this congregation according to the procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- e. This congregation agrees to file this constitution and any subsequent changes to this constitution with the synod for review to ascertain that all of its provisions are in agreement with the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and with the constitution of the synod.

***C6.04.** Affiliation with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is 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 or in accordance with provision 9.23. of the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- d. The Northwestern Ohio Synod takes charge and control of the property of this congregation to hold, manage, and convey the same on behalf of the synod pursuant to †S13.24. of the synod constitution. This congregation shall have the right to appeal the decision to the next Synod Assembly.
- e. This congregation follows the procedures outlined in *C6.05.

***C6.05.** This congregation may terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America by the following procedure:

- a. A resolution indicating the intent to terminate its relationship must be adopted at two legally called and conducted special meetings of this congregation by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present at each meeting. The first 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 this 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 Congregation Council. Unless the bishop and/or the bishop's designees are voting members of this congregation, they shall have voice but not vote at the first meeting.
- b. Within 10 days after the resolution has been voted upon at the first meeting, the secretary of this 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 send copies of the resolution and certification to voting members of this congregation.
- c. If the resolution was adopted by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present at the first meeting, the bishop of the synod and this congregation shall continue in consultation, as specified in paragraph a. above, during a period of at least 90 days after receipt by the bishop of the attestation and certification as specified in paragraph b. above.

- d. If this congregation, after such consultation, is still considering termination of its relationship with this church, 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 second meeting shall be sent to all voting members and to the bishop at least 10 days in advance of the meeting. Unless the bishop and/or the bishop's designees are voting members of this congregation, they shall have voice but not vote at the second meeting.
- e. Within 10 days after the resolution has been voted upon, the secretary of this congregation shall submit a copy of the resolution to the bishop, attesting that the second special meeting was legally called and conducted and certifying the outcome of the vote, and shall send copies of the resolution and certification to the voting members of the congregation. If the resolution was adopted by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present at the second meeting, the relationship between the congregation and this church shall be terminated subject to Synod Council approval as required by paragraphs f. and g. below.
- f. Unless this notification to the bishop also certifies that this congregation has voted to affiliate with another Lutheran denomination, this congregation shall be deemed an independent or non-Lutheran church, in which case *C7.04. shall apply.
- g. This congregation shall abide by these covenants by and among the three expressions of this church:
 - 1) 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.
 - 2) 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 synod approval before terminating their membership in this church.
 - 3) 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.
- h. If this congregation fails to achieve the required two-thirds vote of voting members present at this congregation's first meeting as specified in paragraph a. above or fails to achieve the required two-thirds vote of voting members present at this 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 the meeting at which the two-thirds vote was not achieved.

***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 taken.

***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 undisposed property shall pass to the Northwestern Ohio 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 or pursuant to 9.23. of the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, title to property shall continue to reside in this congregation.
- *C7.03.** If 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 Northwestern Ohio Synod.
- *C7.04.** If 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 and have followed the process for termination of relationship in *C6.05., 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 process established by the synod, may give approval to the request to become independent or to relate to a non-Lutheran church body, in which case title shall remain with the majority of 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. In neither case does title to this congregation's property transfer to the synod.
- *C7.05.** Notwithstanding the provisions of *C7.02. and *C7.03. above, where this congregation has received property from the synod pursuant to a deed or other instrument containing restrictions under provision 9.71.a. of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, this congregation accepts such restrictions and:
- a. Shall not transfer, encumber, mortgage, or in any way burden or impair any right, title, or interest in the property without prior approval of the Synod Council.
 - b. Shall upon written demand by the Synod Council, pursuant to †S13.23. of the constitution of the Northwestern Ohio Synod — reconvey and transfer all right, title, and interest in the property to the synod.

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 this congregation as well as the other rights and privileges ascribed to voting members by the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws. They shall not have voted as a seasonal member of another congregation of this church in the previous two calendar months.
- 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. These individuals have all the privileges and duties of membership except voting rights or other rights and privileges ascribed to voting members by the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.
- e. **Seasonal** members are voting members of other congregations of this church who wish to retain such membership but desire to participate in the life and mission of this congregation, including exercising limited voting rights in this congregation. The Congregation Council may grant seasonal membership to such persons provided that this congregation is a member of a synod where the Synod Council has approved seasonal member voting on its territory. Such seasonal members shall have all the privileges and duties of voting members except that:
 - 1) they shall not be eligible for elected office in, or for membership on the Congregation Council or on a call committee of, this congregation;
 - 2) they shall not have the right to vote on any matter concerning or affecting the call or termination of call of any minister of this congregation;
 - 3) they shall not have the right to vote on any matter concerning or affecting the affiliation of this congregation with this church;
 - 4) they shall not be eligible to serve as voting members from this congregation of the Synod Assembly or the Churchwide Assembly;
 - 5) they shall not, even if otherwise permitted by this congregation, vote by proxy or by absentee ballot; and
 - 6) they shall not, within any two calendar month period, exercise voting rights in this congregation and in the congregation where they remain voting members.

***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 Chapter 20 of the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; or
- e. removal from the roll due to inactivity in accordance with the provisions of this constitution and its 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.

ROSTERED MINISTER

***C9.01.** Authority to call a pastor shall be in this congregation by at least a two-thirds vote of voting members present and voting at a meeting legally called for that purpose. Before a call is issued, the officers, or a committee elected by this congregation to recommend the call, shall seek the advice and help of the bishop of the synod.

***C9.02.** Only a member of the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or a candidate for the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament who has been recommended for this congregation by the synod 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 minister of Word and Sacrament shall:

- 1) preach the Word;
- 2) administer the sacraments;
- 3) conduct public worship;
- 4) provide pastoral care;
- 5) seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel;
- 6) impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through available channels of effective communication;
- 7) witness to the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation, and abroad; and
- 8) speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, advocating dignity, justice, and equity for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, and embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations.

b. Each pastor with a congregational call shall, within the congregation:

- 1) offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead;
- 2) relate to all schools and organizations of this congregation;

- 3) install regularly elected members of the Congregation Council;
- 4) with the council, administer discipline;
- 5) endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the churchwide organization and of the Northwestern Ohio Synod; and
- 6) encourage adherence to covenantal relationship with this church as expressed in the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions 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.** The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between a minister of Word and Sacrament and this congregation shall be as follows:

- a. The call of this congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment, which shall be terminated only by the pastor's death or, following consultation with the synod bishop, for any of 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 this congregation in view of local conditions;
 - 4) inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in view of disability or 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 Ministers of Word and Sacrament of this church;
 - 7) termination of the relationship between this church and this congregation;
 - 8) dissolution of this congregation or the termination of a parish arrangement; or
 - 9) suspension of this congregation through discipline for more than six months.
- b. When allegations of disability or 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 this synod,
 - 1) the bishop, who has sole discretion, may investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two rostered 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 this congregation, the bishop personally shall investigate such conditions together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson.
- c. In case of alleged disability or 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 this synod may declare the pastorate vacant. When the pastorate is declared vacant, the Synod Council shall list the pastor on the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament with disability status. Upon resumption of the ability to conduct the office effectively,

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 this 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 this 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 this congregation and by the pastor, if appropriate. If the pastor and 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, this congregation may dismiss the pastor only at a legally called meeting after consultation with the bishop, either (a) by a two-thirds 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 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 discipline, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action in accordance with the provisions of this church's constitution, 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 this 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 rostered minister 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.

***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, this 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 this 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 records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from this 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 ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.
- *C9.14.** The records of this congregation shall be maintained by the pastor and shall remain the property of this congregation. The secretary of this congregation shall attest in writing to the bishop of this synod that such records have been placed in the secretary's hands in good order by a departing pastor before the installation of that pastor in another call or approval of a request for change in roster status.
- C9.15.** Under special circumstances, subject to the approval of the synod bishop and the concurrence of this congregation, a minister of Word and Sacrament of a church body with which the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America officially has established a relationship of full communion may serve as pastor of this congregation under a letter or call or contract between this congregation and the pastor in a form proposed by the synod bishop and approved by this congregation.
- *C9.21.** Authority to call a deacon shall be in this congregation by at least a two-thirds vote of voting members present and voting at a meeting legally called for that purpose. Before a call is issued, the officers, or a committee elected by [this congregation][the Congregation Council] to recommend the call, shall seek the advice and help of the bishop of the synod.
- *C9.22.** Only a member of the roster of Ministers of Word and Service of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or a candidate for the roster of Ministers of Word and Service who has been recommended for this congregation by the synod bishop may be called as a deacon of this congregation.
- *C9.23.** Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, every minister of Word and Service shall:
- a. Be rooted in the Word of God, for proclamation and service;
 - b. Advocate a prophetic diakonia that commits itself to risk-taking and innovative service on the frontiers of the Church's outreach, giving particular attention to the suffering places in God's world;
 - c. Speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, advocating dignity, justice, and equity for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, and embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations;
 - d. Equip the baptized for ministry in God's world that affirms the gifts of all people;
 - e. Encourage mutual relationships that invite participation and accompaniment of others in God's mission;
 - f. Practice stewardship that respects God's gift of time, talents, and resources;
 - g. Be grounded in a gathered community for ongoing diaconal formation;
 - h. Share knowledge of this church and its wider ministry of the gospel and advocate for the work of all expressions of this church; and

- i. Identify and encourage qualified persons to prepare for ministry of the gospel.
- *C9.24.** The specific duties of the deacon, compensation, and other matters pertaining to the service of the deacon shall be included in a letter of call, which shall be attested by the bishop of the synod.
- *C9.25.** The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between a minister of Word and Service and this congregation shall be as follows:
 - a. The call of this congregation, when accepted by a deacon, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment, which shall be terminated only by the deacon's death or, following consultation with the synod bishop, for any of the following reasons:
 - 1) mutual agreement to terminate the call or the completion of a call for a specific term;
 - 2) resignation of the deacon, 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 ministry of Word and Service effectively in this congregation in view of local conditions;
 - 4) inability to conduct the office effectively in view of disability or incapacity of the deacon;
 - 5) suspension of the deacon through discipline for more than three months;
 - 6) resignation or removal of the deacon from the roster of Ministers of Word and Service of this church;
 - 7) termination of the relationship between this church and this congregation;
 - 8) dissolution of this congregation or the termination of a parish arrangement; or
 - 9) suspension of this congregation through discipline for more than six months.
 - b. When allegations of disability or incapacity of the deacon under paragraph a.4) above, or ineffective conduct of the office of minister of Word and Service under paragraph a.3) above, have come to the attention of the bishop of this synod,
 - 1) the bishop, who has sole discretion, may investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two rostered 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 this congregation, the bishop personally shall investigate such conditions together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson.
 - c. In case of alleged disability or incapacity under paragraph a.4) above, the bishop's committee shall obtain and document competent medical opinion concerning the deacon's condition. When a disability or incapacity is evident to the committee, the bishop of this synod may declare the position vacant. When the position is declared vacant, the Synod Council shall list the deacon on the roster of Ministers of Word and Service with disability status. Upon resumption of the ability to conduct the office effectively, the bishop shall take steps to enable the deacon 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 this 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 deacon and then to this congregation.

The recommendations of the bishop's committee must address whether the deacon'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 this congregation and by the deacon, if appropriate. If the deacon and 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 deacon's call, this congregation may dismiss the deacon only at a legally called meeting after consultation with the bishop, either (a) by a two-thirds 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 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 discipline, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action in accordance with the provisions of this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions.

***C9.26.** This congregation shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to a former deacon before calling a successor. A deacon 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.

***C9.27.** When a deacon is called to serve in company with another rostered minister or other rostered ministers, the privileges and responsibilities of each rostered minister shall be specified in documents to accompany the call and to be drafted in consultation involving the rostered ministers, the Congregation Council, and the bishop of the synod. As occasion requires, the documents may be revised through a similar consultation.

***C9.28.** With the approval of the bishop of the synod, this congregation may depart from *C9.25.a. and call a deacon 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 deacon and representatives of this congregation for a review of the call. Such a call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of *C9.25.a.

***C9.29.** The deacon shall become a member of this congregation upon receipt and acceptance of the letter of call. In a parish of multiple congregations, the deacon shall hold membership in one of the congregations.

***C9.31.** The deacon(s) shall submit a report of ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.

Chapter 10.

CONGREGATION MEETING

C10.01. This congregation shall have at least one regular meeting per year. The regular meeting of the congregation shall be held at the time specified in the bylaws. Consistent with the laws of the State of Ohio, the bylaws shall designate one regular meeting per year as the annual meeting of this congregation.

C10.02. A special Congregation Meeting may be called by the senior pastor, the Parish Planning Council, or the president of this congregation, and shall be called by the president

of this congregation upon the written request of 25% of the voting members. The president of the Congregation Council shall call a special meeting upon request of the synod 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 10 days in advance of the date of the meeting.

C10.04. 10% of the voting members shall constitute a quorum.

C10.05. Voting by absentee ballot shall be permitted at special congregational meetings, as well as at the Annual Congregational Meetings only under the following conditions:

- a. The ballot is personally requested from the office with reason for being absent, and
- b. The ballot is returned to the office prior to the meeting.
- c. The person specifically states why they are not capable of attending meeting and the request is approved by the Executive Committee.

C10.06. (OMITTED)

C10.07. *Robert's Rules of Order*, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of all meetings of this congregation.

C10.08. This congregation may hold meetings by remote communication, including electronically and by telephone conference, as long as there is an opportunity for simultaneous aural communication or its equivalent. To the extent permitted by state law, notice of all meetings may be provided electronically.

C10.09. "*Ex officio*" as used herein means membership with full rights of voice and vote unless otherwise expressly limited.

C10.10. All actions approved by this congregation shall be by majority vote of those voting members present and voting, along with any absentee ballots legally cast, except as otherwise provided in this constitution, bylaws and continuing resolutions, or by state law.

Chapter 11. OFFICERS

C11.01. The officers of this congregation shall be a president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer.

- a. Duties of the officers shall be specified in the bylaws.
- b. The officers shall be voting members of this congregation.
- c. Officers of this congregation shall serve similar offices of the Parish Planning Council and shall be voting members of the Parish Planning Council.
- d. The president, vice president, secretary and treasurer, along with the rostered leader(s) shall constitute the Executive Committee.
- e. It is preferred that immediate family of members of Parish Planning Council, and/or employees, not serve as an officer. Immediate family members are: spouse, parents, children, in-laws.
- f. If an officer is unable to complete a term, the position will be declared vacant, and the Parish Planning Council shall appoint a replacement for the remainder of the one-year term. At which time, the replacement may be re-elected.

g. It is preferred that one has served at least one year on Parish Planning Council prior to taking an office.

C11.02. The congregation shall elect its officers annually and they shall be the officers of this congregation. The officers shall be elected by written ballot and shall serve for one year terms or until their successors are elected. Their terms shall begin at the close of the annual meeting at which they are elected.

C11.03. No officer shall hold more than one office at a time. No elected officer shall be eligible to serve more than three consecutive years in the same office.

Chapter 12.

CONGREGATION COUNCIL

C12.01. The voting membership of the Parish Planning Council shall consist of the rostered leader(s), the officers of this congregation, and the directors of the ministry boards of this congregation, at least one of whom should be a youth (confirmed and under the age of 18) and at least one of whom should be a young adult (between the ages of 18-30). Any voting member of this congregation may be elected, subject to the limitation on the length of continuous service permitted in that office. It is preferred that immediate family of members of Parish Planning Council, and/or employees, not serve as a director of an administrative board / member of Parish Planning Council. Immediate family members are: spouse, parents, children, in-laws. A member's place on the Parish Planning Council shall be declared vacant if the member a) ceases to be a voting member of this congregation or b) is absent from four successive regular meetings of the Congregation Council without cause. Consistent with the laws of the State of Ohio, in which this congregation is incorporated, this congregation may adopt procedures for the removal of a member of the Congregation Council in other circumstances.

C12.02. The members of the Parish Planning Council, except the rostered leader(s), shall be elected by written ballot to serve for one (1) year terms or until their successors are elected. Such members shall be eligible to serve no more than six full terms consecutively. After a member has served six (6) consecutive years, they are not eligible for re-election for one year. Their terms shall begin at the close of the annual meeting at which they are elected. No member shall serve more than six (6) consecutive years (either as an officer or director combined). No member shall serve more than twelve (12) years total (either as an officer or director combined), and are not eligible for re-election.

C12.03. Should a member's place on the Parish Planning Council be declared vacant, the Parish Planning Council shall elect, by majority vote, a successor until the next annual meeting.

C12.04. The Parish Planning 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 Parish Planning 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 rostered minister(s) and staff and help them annually to evaluate the fulfillment of their calling 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 support of the synod and churchwide organization 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.

C12.05. The Parish Planning Council shall be responsible for the financial and property matters of this congregation.

- a. The Parish Planning Council shall be the board of directors of this congregation and, as such, shall be responsible for maintaining and protecting its property and managing its business and fiscal affairs. It shall have the powers and be subject to the obligations that pertain to such boards under the laws of the State of Ohio, except as otherwise provided herein.
- b. The Parish Planning Council shall not have the authority to buy, sell, or encumber real property unless specifically authorized to do so by a meeting of this congregation.
- c. The Parish Planning Council may enter into contracts of up to \$50,000 for items not included in the budget, and \$25,000 for property repairs and upgrades.
- d. The Parish Planning 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 of more than \$25,000 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 collaboration with the synod and churchwide organization.
- e. The Parish Planning 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 mission support monies to the synod.
- f. The Parish Planning Council shall be responsible for this congregation's investments and its total insurance program.

C12.06. The Parish Planning Council shall see that the provisions of this constitution, its bylaws, and the continuing resolutions are carried out.

- C12.07.** The Parish Planning Council shall provide for an annual review of the membership roster.
- C12.08.** The Parish Planning Council shall be responsible for the employment and supervision of the staff of this congregation. Nothing in this provision shall be deemed to affect this congregation's responsibility for the call, terms of call, or termination of call of any employees who are on a roster of this church.
- C12.09.** The Parish Planning Council shall submit a comprehensive report to this congregation at the annual meeting.
- C12.11.** The Parish Planning Council shall meet at least nine (9) times a year. Special meetings may be called by the pastor or the president, and shall be called by the president 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 Parish Planning Council, including the rostered leader(s), except when the rostered leader(s) requests or consents to be absent and has given prior approval to the agenda for a particular regular or special meeting, which shall be the only business considered at that meeting. Chronic or repeated absence of the rostered leader(s) who has refused approval of the agenda of a subsequent regular or special meeting shall not preclude action by the Parish Planning Council, following consultation with the synod bishop.
- C12.13.** The Parish Planning Council and its committees may hold meetings by remote communication, including electronically, virtually, and by telephone conference, as long as there is an opportunity for simultaneous aural communication or its equivalent. To the extent permitted by state law, notice of all meetings may be provided electronically.

Chapter 13.

CONGREGATION COMMITTEES

- C13.01.** The officers of this congregation and the rostered leader(s) shall constitute the *Executive Committee*.
- C13.02.** A *Nominating Committee* of the pastor and up to three (3) voting members of this congregation, one of whom, if possible, shall be outgoing member of the Parish Planning Council, shall be appointed by the Executive Committee.
- C13.03.** A *Financial Review Committee* of three voting members of the congregation shall be appointed by the Parish Planning Council yearly. Financial Review Committee members shall not be members of the Parish Planning Council, nor members of the Board of Finance.
- C13.04.** *Mutual Ministry Committee* shall be appointed jointly by the president and the rostered minister(s). Mutual Ministry Committee shall consist of six members of the congregation, one of which should be a member of Parish Planning Council. Mutual Ministry Committee will be reviewed each year by the president and rostered leaders(s) to determine any changes in membership. In the absence of a mutual ministry committee, the duties shall be fulfilled by the Board of Spiritual Life.
- C13.05.** When a vacancy occurs in a position for which this congregation calls a rostered minister, a *Call Committee* of six voting members shall be recommended by the Executive Committee to the Parish Planning Council for approval and recommendation to the congregation for election. Term of office will terminate upon installation of the newly called rostered minister.

C13.06. Other committees of this congregation may be formed, as the need arises, by decision of the Parish Planning Council.

C13.07. Duties of committees of this congregation shall be specified in the bylaws.

C13.08. The pastor(s) of this congregation shall be *ex officio* a member(s) of all committees and boards of this congregation. The president of this congregation shall be *ex officio* a member of all committees and boards of this congregation, except the Nominating Committee.

Chapter 14.

ORGANIZATIONS WITHIN THIS 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 meeting shall determine their policies, guide their activities, and receive reports concerning their membership, work, and finances; and specifics may be outlined in the bylaws and/or continuing resolutions. All officers of such organizations shall be members of this congregation.

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 Parish Planning Council and specified in the bylaws and/or continuing resolution. All officers of such special interest groups shall be members of this congregation.

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 this congregation, or willful and repeated harassment or defamation of member(s) of this 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 counsel 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 Parish Planning 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 this 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 Parish Planning Council, signed, and submitted to the vice president of the synod. The vice president shall select from the synod's Consultation Committee a panel of five members

(three laypersons and two rostered ministers). 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 Parish Planning 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 Parish Planning 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 Parish Planning Council receive evidence, satisfactory to them, of repentance and amendment of life;
 - c. termination of membership in this congregation; or
 - d. termination of membership in this 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 Parish 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 this 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 between or among factions within this congregation on a substantive issue which cannot be resolved by the parties, members of this congregation may petition the synod bishop for consultation after informing the president [vice president] of this congregation of their intent to do so. The synod bishop shall seek a timely resolution of the dispute. If the issue relates directly to the pastor, the bishop may begin the process in †S14.18.d. In all other matters, if the bishop's consultation

fails to resolve the issue, the bishop shall refer the matter to the Consultation Committee of the synod, which shall undertake efforts to find an appropriate solution. If the Consultation Committee's efforts fail to resolve the dispute, the entire matter shall be referred to the Synod Council for adjudication by whatever process the Council deems necessary. The Synod Council's decision shall be final.

Chapter 16. **AMENDMENTS**

- *C16.01.** Unless provision *C16.04. 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 25 voting members or by the Parish Planning 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 this 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.
- *C16.02.** An amendment to this constitution, proposed under *C16.01., shall:
- a. be approved at any legally called meeting of this congregation by a majority vote of those voting members present and voting; and
 - b. be ratified without change at the next regular meeting of this congregation by a two-thirds vote of those voting members present and voting.
 - c. have the effective date included in the resolution and noted in the constitution.
- *C16.03.** Any amendments to this constitution that result from the processes provided in *C16.01. and *C16.02. shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod. The synod shall notify this 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.
- *C16.04.** 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 majority vote of those voting members present and voting at any legally called meeting of this congregation without presentation at a prior meeting of this congregation, provided that the Parish Planning Council has submitted by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law, notice to this 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 at least two (2) voting members of this congregation, the Congregation Council shall submit such notice. Following the adoption of an amendment, the secretary of this congregation shall submit a copy thereof to the synod. Such provisions shall become effective immediately following the congregation's vote of approval.

Chapter 17.

BYLAWS

- *C17.01. This congregation may adopt bylaws. No bylaw may conflict with this constitution.
- *C17.02. Bylaws may be adopted or amended at any legally called meeting of this congregation with a quorum present by a two-thirds vote of those voting members present and voting.
- *C17.03. Changes to the bylaws may be proposed by any voting member, provided that such additions or amendments be submitted in writing to the Parish Planning Council at least 60 days before a regular or special Congregation Meeting called for that purpose. The Parish Planning Council shall notify this 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.
- *C17.04. Adopted or amended bylaws shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod.

Chapter 18.

CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

- *C18.01. This congregation in a legally called meeting or the Parish Planning 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 vote of a meeting of this congregation or a two-thirds vote of all voting members of the Parish Planning Council.
- *C18.03. Adopted or amended continuing resolutions shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod.

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 Parish Planning 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.

Chapter 20.

PARISH AUTHORIZATION

(Chapter is not necessary due to Emanuel not being part of a Parish setting.)

Chapter 21.

AUTHORIZATION OF CONSTITUTION AND EFFECTIVE DATE

*C21.01. This constitution, upon its adoption on January 26, 2025, supersedes all other constitutions of this congregation and the actions of the Parish Planning Council not in keeping with this constitution, and shall be effective beginning, upon the approval of the North West Ohio Synod, with the transition of the boards to be completed by the 2026 annual meeting.

Bylaws*

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*These bylaws, upon adoption January 26, 2025, supersede all other bylaws of this congregation, and shall be effective upon approval of the North West Ohio Synod, with the transition of the boards to be completed by the 2026 annual meeting.

ARTICLE I: MISSION STATEMENT

Emanuel: God With Us ~ Loving Christ, Loving Others

ARTICLE II: MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Baptized Membership Applicants (or parents, guardians, etc.) for baptized membership in this Congregation shall consult the Pastor for the instruction, preparation, and scheduling necessary for receiving of the sacrament. Transfer applicants, previously baptized, will be accepted on presentation of evidence of baptism in the name of the Triune God.

Section 2. Confirmed Membership Applicants for confirmed membership in this Congregation shall consult the Pastor who shall determine whether such applicants are eligible for membership in accordance with C8 of the Constitution. Applicants not familiar with the doctrines and confessions of the Lutheran Church may receive instruction and make a profession of their faith before the Congregation upon being received as members. Applicants from other Congregations shall submit a letter of transfer from their former Congregation. Eligible applicants will then be recommended by the Pastor to the Parish Planning Council. New members shall normally be received publicly by affirmation of faith.

Section 3. All Confirmed Members of this Congregation are eligible Voting Members providing they have communed and made a contribution of record during the current or preceding year in compliance with reference to C8.02.c of the Constitution.

Section 4. Associate Membership Applicants may become Associate Members who retain permanent membership elsewhere. They have all the privileges and duties of membership except voting rights and eligibility for elected offices or membership on the Parish Planning Council of this Congregation.

Section 5. Termination of Membership

A. Resignation: The resignation of any member of the Congregation shall be regrettably acknowledged in writing by the Pastor. A peaceful release will be granted, if possible, after consultation with the Parish Planning Council.

B. Transfer: A member desiring to transfer to another Christian Congregation shall apply to the Pastor and upon approval of the Pastor. A letter of transfer shall be issued by the Pastor and sent to the receiving church. The Pastor shall report all transfers/releasing of membership to the Parish Planning Council. Names will be published to the Congregation through the Annual Report.

C. Joining other Non-Christian Churches or Associations: In cases where members of the Congregation have joined a non-Christian Congregation or Association, they shall be deemed to have terminated their membership in this Congregation, forfeiting all rights and privileges of such membership. Their name(s) shall be removed from the membership list.

D. Self-Exclusion by Inactivity: Inactive members shall be contacted and encouraged by the Pastor and others assigned to this task. If, however, after exhausting such procedures, a member has not worshiped, communed, or made a contribution of record for two (2) years, such a person has indicated by his/her behavior an indifference to Church membership, privileges and responsibilities, and their membership shall be removed from membership. If the person desires to re-establish a relationship, a consultation with the Pastor will need to be accomplished.

E. Whereabouts Unknown: If after inactivity for 2 years, attempts will be made to contact to the last known address and/or phone number. After a reasonable time, if no response is received, they will be removed from membership by means of self-exclusion by inactivity.

F. Discipline: After exhausting the steps of reconciliation and procedures of disciplinary action as outlined in C15 of the Constitution, removal from membership shall be regrettably applied as a method of last resort in the hopes of working repentance and renewal in the life of such a person.

ARTICLE III: MEETINGS

Section 1. Annual Congregation Meetings

Annual Congregation Meetings shall be held on the fourth Sunday in January, and shall include the consideration and acceptance of the budget for the current year. All members in the Congregation may attend the regular Congregation Meeting and participate in a discussion of any given item of business before the Congregation.

Voting for each office will be by printed ballot, unless another method is approved by a majority of those present. A simple majority of the voting members present will determine the elected officers.

Order of Business at Annual Congregation Meetings: Annual Congregation Meetings may proceed as follows:

1. Scripture Reading and/or Prayer
2. Determination of Quorum
3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting(s) including Special Meetings
4. Unfinished Business
5. Reports of Administrative Boards
6. Reports from Committees
7. Special Report
8. New Business
9. Treasurer's Report
10. State of the Parish Report by Pastor(s)/Ministerial Team
11. Adjournment

The President may vary the above order in the interest of efficiency.

Section 2. Parish Planning Council

The President of the Congregation may call additional / special Parish Planning Council meetings as necessary. Reference C12.11 of the Constitution.

Section 3. Administrative Boards

The time, frequency and location of Board Meetings shall be at the discretion of the Director of the Board and the Board Members, except that, for good and sufficient reason, either the President of the Congregation or the Pastor(s)/Ministerial Team may call a meeting of the Board at any time. Meetings thus called shall be classified as Special Meetings, and each person involved shall be notified of the date, time, and purpose of such a meeting. The Director will notify the Administrative Assistant of all meetings as to date, time and location, so that the meeting may be properly announced.

ARTICLE IV: ROSTERED MINISTERS

Section 1. Procedure for calling a Rostered Minister

Upon the vacancy of the Pastoral Office, it shall be the duty of the President of the Congregation to see that the call process is carried out according to the Constitution and Bylaws. The Call Committee (reference C13.05) shall seek the advice and help of the Synod Bishop to recommend an appropriate candidate or candidates. Additional candidates may be proposed by

any voting member. The Call Committee shall select a candidate to recommend to the Parish Planning Council, in concurrence with the current Pastoral Staff, who shall recommend the candidate to the Congregation. Election of a Pastor by written ballot shall require a two-thirds total of the votes cast. Compensation arrangements, however, may be agreed to by a simple majority.

1. The Call shall normally be for an indefinite time, but may also be a term call for a specific amount of time.

2. After the Congregation has voted to call a Pastor, it shall send a letter of call to the Pastor elect in the form approved by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The letter of call shall be signed by the President and Secretary of the Congregation and shall be attested by the Synod Bishop.

Section 2. Procedure for calling a Rostered Deacon

A call to a Rostered Deacon shall be issued with the concurrence of the Senior Pastor, and the Parish Planning Council, and presented to the Congregation in the same manner as described above for Rostered Ministers.

Section 3. The Pastoral Office

The Office of the Pastor at Emanuel Lutheran Church is best understood in the light of mutual ministry. From the Constitution of the ELCA: "This church affirms the universal priesthood of all its baptized members. In its function and in its structure this church commits itself to the equipping and supporting of all its members for their ministries in the world and in this church. It is within this context of ministry that this church calls or appoints some of its baptized members for specific ministries in this church. Within the people of God and for the sake of the Gospel ministry entrusted to all believers, God has instituted the office of ministry of Word and Sacrament. To carry out this ministry, this church calls and ordains qualified persons." The Pastoral Office, therefore, is the authority conferred upon Pastors by God through the call of the people of God, and is exercised in a relationship of mutual ministry with the members of this Congregation. In calling a Pastor to preach the Word of God and to administer the sacraments on their behalf, the members of this Congregation exercise their priesthood and by no means relinquish it. The Constitution and Bylaws of this Congregation are meant to activate and empower laypersons in the doing of the ministry, which is the privilege, and responsibility of all members of Emanuel Lutheran Church. The Pastor(s)/Ministerial Team however, by virtue of their position shall be members of all Boards, organizations, and ministries in the Congregation. Marked by mutual ministry, the relationship between Pastor(s)/Ministerial Team and Congregation shall be one of mutual honor, service, love, and prayerful support.

The Senior Pastor is responsible for the day to day operations of the church and the staff. If situations arise, the Senior Pastor will handle the situation in appropriate fashion. If a review of an employee is scheduled, the Senior Pastor and one member from the particular Board, as outlined in the job description, will compile the review with the Board Member assisting the Senior Pastor as needed. It is anticipated that reviews will take place at least every two years. If a review of the Senior Pastor is scheduled, the President of the congregation will work with the Executive Committee to compile the review. It is anticipated that reviews will take place at least every two years.

If a Pastor receives a letter of call to another ministry, the Pastor will notify the Parish Planning Council, in person and in writing. The Pastor will announce the decision to the Congregation in person and in writing, and also notify the Synod Bishop. Following acceptance of the call, the Pastor's ministry in this Congregation shall usually terminate within thirty (30) days.

ARTICLE V: ELECTION OF OFFICERS, PARISH PLANNING COUNCIL, AND ADMINISTRATIVE BOARDS

Section 1 - Nomination Procedures

The Executive Committee and the Senior Pastor shall create and announce to Parish Planning Council the appointment of a Nominating Committee. Voting Members may suggest to the Committee the names of possible candidates for offices. The Nominating Committee shall prepare a list of the candidates drawn from among the voting members who are not paid staff members of the Congregation. The list will include candidates for the following offices: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Directors of the Administrative Boards. The list will include at least one name for each office. The list of candidates shall be submitted for publication and be mailed to all members of the Congregation along with the notification of the Annual Meeting.

Section 2 – Voting Procedures

Voting will occur at the Annual Meeting. Voting will be by printed ballot. A simple majority will determine the elected officer/director for one (1) year terms, for the coming year.

Section 3 - Installation of Officers

The newly elected officers, and Directors of the Congregation shall be installed on the first Sunday in February.

ARTICE VI: DUTIES OF OFFICERS, AND PARISH PLANNING COUNCIL

Section 1. Officers

A. The President of the Congregation shall preside at all meetings of the voting membership and, to the best of one's ability, enforce the Constitution and Bylaws of the Congregation and carry out the expressed will of the Congregation as embodied in the resolutions of the voting membership. All Boards, Committees, Auxiliaries, Groups, etc., in the Congregation shall be responsible to the President. The President shall be welcomed at any and all meetings of such groups, either in person or as represented by such appointed person or persons. The President shall also call and preside over the meetings of the Parish Planning Council and shall endeavor to coordinate the work of the Church. If a review of the Senior Pastor is scheduled, the President of the Congregation and the Executive Committee as needed. The review will be presented to the Senior Pastor by the Executive Committee. It is anticipated that reviews will take place every two years.

B. The Vice President shall be available for whatever duties the President shall assign him/her as his/her representative.

C. The Secretary shall be present at all meetings of the Congregation and at all meetings of the Parish Planning Council, and shall enter the minutes of all meetings of said groups in a permanent record. The Secretary shall conduct all official correspondence of the Congregational Boards and Committees under the supervision of the President. In general, the Secretary shall perform all of the duties normally pertaining to the office and such additional duties, as the voting membership shall delegate.

D. The Treasurer shall be responsible for the following:

1. Congregational receipts, disbursements, budgeted and actual expenditures according to proper accounting procedures, and as deemed advisable, shall suggest for Congregational consideration to the Parish Planning Council and the Executive Committee improved methods and systems for keeping financial records.

2. Present a written financial report at the Annual Congregational meeting and monthly reports at the Parish Planning Council meetings.

3. The submission of financial records for audits and/or reviews whenever prescribed by Parish Planning Council.

4. Monthly remission of offerings for missions and church agencies, and the prompt payment of salaries and bills authorized by the Congregation, or the Boards and Directors as duly constituted sources.

5. Receive from the Financial Secretary regular reports of all monies received through worship services, special offerings, or any other source.

6. The personal approval and signing of all checks for payment of bills, salaries, or other financial commitments of the Congregation of any sort. Where salaries are paid via direct deposit, reviews of these payments should be done by the Treasurer at least semi-annually. In the absence of the Treasurer, the President or the Director of the Board of Finance may approve and sign checks. The Financial Secretary may also sign checks where approval to do so is documented either in writing or electronically by one of the above authorized signers.

7. Taking all necessary steps, in coordination with the Financial Secretary, to transfer funds between accounts as required.

8. Making available to all Boards a current record of their monthly and year to date spending compared to the budget.

9. Advise the Parish Planning Council if short-term anticipated income might result in a short-term cash flow problem.

Section 2. The Parish Planning Council

The Parish Planning Council shall consist of the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and the Directors of the Administrative Boards, at least one of whom may be a youth and at least one of whom may be a young adult, and the Pastor(s)/Ministerial Team of the Congregation, all of whom will hold membership on the Parish Planning Council until their term of office expires. It shall be the specific function of the Parish Planning Council to do the following:

1. Serve as the point of liaison between the officers of the Congregation and the various Administrative Boards in planning the total work of the Congregation.

2. Prepare an agenda for the meetings of the Congregation.

3. Set the dates and times for the Congregational meetings.

4. Approve the Nominating Committee submitted by the Executive Committee.

5. Fill unexpired terms or shortages of personnel by appointment if necessary.

6. Receive an annual report of the membership roster, noting the number of membership changes.

7. Serve as the hiring authority for all paid staff.

8. Keep a permanent set of records for each meeting, and such records shall be the property of the Congregation.

9. Serve as the approving authority for all spending, outside of the budget approved by the Congregation at the Annual Meeting, as designated in the Constitution.

10. The Parish Planning Council is the primary decision making body. It serves as a forum where all activities of the Administrative Boards may be discussed, evaluated, and coordinated, and where all such activities may be integrated into an overall Congregational program. The President of the Congregation may also call additional Parish Planning Council meetings as necessary. If a vote must take place outside of a regularly scheduled meeting, the President of the Congregation may contact the Parish Planning Council members by e-mail and after receiving the responses, the President will notify all members of the result and the results will be added to the minutes of the next Parish Planning Council meeting. The Parish Planning Council shall be

available at all times, for any additional functions which the Congregation may wish to confer upon it.

ARTICLE VII: THE MINISTRY BOARDS

Section 1: General Duties:

The Ministry Boards are to operate as an extension of the Parish Planning Council and, as such, shall organize, direct, and control the ministries of the Congregation assigned to them by the Constitution, these Bylaws and the Parish Planning Council. The Boards shall have sufficient authority to carry out assigned responsibilities subject to the provisions of the Constitution, these Bylaws and the authority granted by the Parish Planning Council. It is recommended that all Boards meet a minimum of 6 times per year. If a vote must take place outside of a regularly scheduled meeting, the Director or Director Designate may contact the Board members by e-mail and after receiving the responses, the Director or Director Designate will notify all members of the result and the results will be added to the minutes of the next Board meeting. The Boards are to acknowledge at all times the headship of Jesus Christ, to seek His will for the Congregation, to do what is best for the Kingdom of God, to be leaders, and at the same time to be servants of the Congregation. The responsibilities of all Ministry Boards shall include the following:

1. Praying for the guidance of the Holy Spirit in all aspects of the life of the Congregation and particularly in carrying out assigned functions.

2. Be open-minded, willing to listen, able to keep confidentiality, willing to engage in group dynamics, capable of vision, sensitivity to group dynamics, actively engaged in congregational life, well-differentiated, healthy knowledge of an appreciation of the larger church.

3. Reviewing the mission and objectives of the Boards consistent with the Constitution and the broader mission and objectives established by the Parish Planning Council.

4. Proposing policies, programs, job descriptions, plans and actions for the Boards subject to evaluation and adoption by the Parish Planning Council.

5. Preparing and submitting to the Board of Finance an annual operating budget for the Board. The proposed budgets shall be submitted for approval in October of each year.

6. Requesting approval of the Parish Planning Council for expenditures that exceed approved budget related to Board activities.

7. Recommending to the Parish Planning Council the need for staff necessary to carry out Board functions.

8. Preparing an annual report of Board activities and plans for submission to the Parish Planning Council and the Congregation.

9. Requesting advice and assistance from the Parish Planning Council in performing functions assigned to the Board.

10. Fulfilling the specific duties assigned to the Board by these Bylaws and those additional duties that may be directed by the Parish Planning Council.

11. Providing for a life of ministry and fellowship for its members, consistent with the Board's objective during their personal period of commitment.

12. Approving all invoices falling within its sphere of activities. Expenditures exceeding \$10,000.00, not detailed in the annual budget, shall require Parish Planning Council approval.

13. Initiating and carrying out such activities and programs within the Congregation as will enable it to effectively perform the function and duties assigned to it by the Constitution and these Bylaws, or by specific resolution of the voting membership.

14. Be empowered to administer all funds set aside for its work by budget appropriation or by special resolution of the Congregation, providing that the voting membership may, at its discretion,

restrict such expenditures to conform with the actual financial condition of the Congregation at any given time.

15. Keep a permanent set of minutes of each meeting, and such minutes shall be the property of the Congregation.

16. Shall be under the direct supervision of the Director of the Board. Following the election of the Director of each Board, the Director of the Board shall appoint members to their respective boards. The Director of the respective Boards shall designate and appoint from among the Board Members, at the Director's discretion, those individuals who will be responsible for various phases of the work of that Board.

Section 2. Specific Duties of the Ministry Boards:

1. Board of Worship

A. This Board is responsible for the Worship life of the Congregation.

B. The Board of Worship will plan and coordinate, in conjunction with the Pastor(s), the worship life of the congregation.

C. The Board of Worship with request and input from the Chairperson of the Altar Guild, will assure that the annual budget will include funds to support the purchase of required supplies that include: supplies for Holy Communion, Baptism, Vestments for the ministerial team, church decorations.

D. With advice from the Senior Pastor and the request of the Chairperson of the Altar Guild, this board will assist in the care, use and maintenance of the sacred vessels, the altar, and altar furnishings and vestments of the Ministerial Team.

E. This Board will staff, train, supervise and schedule Lay Assistants, Ushers, Greeters, Lectors, Acolytes, and other worship assistants.

F. If there is a proposal to permanently change the worship service times and formats, the proposal must originate with this Board and then be approved by Parish Planning Council before being submitted to the Congregation for a vote.

G. The Board of Worship will be a partner with the Worship Staff in assuring that an adequate budget that covers expenses for music staff salary, money to purchase required music, costs of special musical events, annual professional tuning of the organ and piano will be considered in the annual budget of the church.

H. This Board will be responsible for the equipment, staffing, training and coordinating of the multi-media in the sanctuary.

I. The Board of Worship will coordinate, assist, partner with, and integrate with all other Boards and ministry areas. The Board of Worship will ensure worship is part of all ministry in the life of this congregation.

J. This Board will be responsible for the radio broadcast.

2. Board of Spiritual Life

A. This Board is responsible for the spiritual life of the congregation, its members, as well as the local community and the world at large.

B. If a Mutual Ministry Committee is not empowered, this Board will assume the duties of the Mutual Ministry Committee, as outlined in C13.04 of the Constitution.

C. The Board of Spiritual Life will perform the Human Resources functions for the congregation. If the need arises for a formal Human Resources Committee, the Director of the Board of Spiritual Life will, in conjunction with the Senior Pastor and Executive Committee, empower an ad hoc Human Resources Committee, until the conclusion of the process.

- D. The Board of Spiritual Life will maintain the Employee Handbook. This Board will be responsible for ensuring the Employee Handbook is up-to-date. This Board will handle all violations / non-compliance of the Employee Handbook.
 - E. Members of this Board are accountable to each other for maintaining strict confidentiality of all personal and personnel information shared during their work together.
 - F. This Board will maintain discipline within the Congregation according to Scriptures, the Lutheran Confessions, and as directed in C15 of the Constitution. When required, exercise discipline as indicated in C15 of the Constitution.
 - G. This Board will address and seek to resolve conflicts among members that may affect the Congregation's ministry, as well as between members of the Congregation and the Pastor or other rostered leaders.
 - H. This Board will support the Pastor's and other rostered leaders' need for spiritual self-care, compensation, appropriate leaves of absence, sabbaticals, and continuing education.
 - I. Develop and implement a plan for the reception, orientation, and integration of new members into the Congregation.
 - J. Encourage prayer in the Church and home for sincere concern for all people inside and outside the Church.
 - K. Foster a climate of that stimulates Congregation members to share Christ with all people.
 - L. Bring the Gospel to the unchurched, those who currently do not have a church home, and the enlistment of the Church members in the work of spreading the Gospel in order to deepen the faith and activity of the members of the Congregation.
 - M. This Board will ensure that dignity is maintained of all people the ministries of this congregation connect.
 - N. This Board will ensure welcome, inclusion, and equity of all in every area of this congregation.
 - O. This board will ensure evangelism is a component of all ministry of the congregation, and the Gospel is proclaim in everything the congregation says and does.
 - P. This Board will seek to motivate the members of the congregation to witness to their faith at every opportunity in daily life. This Board will endeavor to nurture the membership.
 - Q. The Board of Spiritual Life will coordinate, assist, partner with and integrate with all other Boards and ministry areas.
3. Board of Communications and Administration
 - A. This Board will be responsible for the administrative, day-to-day ministries of this congregation.
 - B. This Board will be responsible for communication, both within the congregation, as well as to the community and church at-large. This will include the newsletter, bulletin and announcements, bulletin boards, flyers, media contact, coordination with others, and communication with the Synod.
 - C. Improve internal and external communications.
 4. Board of Fellowship

- A. The basic objective of this Board is to provide social opportunities that will foster mutual cooperation, trust, and enjoyment among members of the Congregation, and to the community at large.
 - B. The Board will plan, supervise, and implement social gatherings of the Congregation. This Board will welcome suggestions for fellowship activities from other administrative boards and the Congregation.
 - C. This Board will continue to find ways to include friends, visitors and members of the community into fellowship with members of the congregation.
 - D. This Board will ensure there is a fellowship component to all ministries in the congregation.
5. Board of Stewardship
- A. The Board will develop good Stewardship practices within the Congregation.
 - B. The Board will study the scriptural principles regarding Stewardship and engage the Congregation in these areas.
 - C. The Board will develop a program of determining the spiritual gifts of the members of the congregation. The Board will assist in connecting individuals with the appropriate ministries, according to their spiritual gifts.
 - D. The Board will assist the congregation in understanding the stewardship of talents within the congregation, and the world at large. The Board will assist in connecting individuals with ministries according to their talents.
 - E. The Board will assist the congregation in living into God's desire for the Stewardship of all creation. The Board will develop an atmosphere of renewal, reuse, and recycling of materials, within the congregation and in the lives of the members.
 - F. The Board will work together with the Treasurer and the Financial Secretary, for the safe deposit and recording of all funds, monthly remissions of offerings, and prompt payment of salaries and bills authorized by the Congregation and the appropriate Boards.
 - G. Review all investments and endowments held by the Church at least yearly.
 - H. Coordinate a yearly Stewardship drive to allow the Congregation to estimate their giving, time and talents for the upcoming year.
 - I. Produce a proposed annual budget, to be approved by the Parish Planning Council, to be forwarded to the congregation for approval at the annual meeting.
 - J. Approve requests for monies outside the budget that do not require Parish Planning Council and/or congregational approval.
 - K. Provide the income/expense statement on a monthly basis.
 - L. In response to the gifts of God, the Board will ensure the financial stability of the congregation.
 - M. The Board will produce a full accounting in writing, of all the congregation's assets, investments, income, expenditures, and financial position, in the annual report.
 - N. This Board will endeavor to keep the congregation informed about local, regional and national ministries of the Church and urge individuals and congregational support of these ministries.
 - O. This Board will ensure there is a stewardship component to all ministries of the congregation.
6. Board of Outreach and Social Ministry

- A. The objectives of this Board are to inform the Congregation of social needs of the Community from a Gospel perspective. Additionally, to seek responses to those needs from the Congregation's time, talents, and treasures.
 - B. This Board will motivate, equip and support the membership to minister to the poor, the sick, the vulnerable, the distressed, and all who are in need. This Board will further encourage individual and congregational responses to foster justice, alleviate suffering and care for the earth and all its inhabitants. In these efforts this Board will urge cooperation with local, regional, national and international agencies of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Lutheran Services in America, other Christian ministries and organizations, and other groups in society.
 - C. Plan and coordinate year-round programming of outreach projects for the Church.
 - D. Screen outside appeals and make the necessary reports to Parish Planning Council and initiate action if appropriate.
 - E. Coordinate the services of the Congregation with other service agencies within the community, as well as provide communication and education to the Congregation around these projects.
 - F. Provides support and structure to various ministries and develop a core group of volunteers for each of the social ministries of the congregation.
 - G. Communicates specific needs to the Congregation regarding this ministry.
 - H. Consider projects to address unmet physical, emotional, social, and spiritual needs of the Congregation, community and the world.
 - I. Provide educational opportunities for the congregation and the community surround social concerns and issues.
 - J. Ensure the dignity of all those involved is maintained.
 - K. This Board shall seek to motivate the members of this congregation to minister beyond ourselves and beyond the congregation. This Board will empower our membership to ministry beyond the walls of the building.
 - L. This Board will ensure there is a social component to all ministries of the congregation.
7. Board of Education and Youth
- A. The Board will assist in the implementation of family/youth/education/intergenerational programs and events (not including Child Care).
 - B. Be responsible for the Christian nurture of children, youth and adults through education and family strengthening activities both in the Church and community.
 - C. Coordinate volunteer personnel to establish objectives, set policies, and supervise programs for each educational department. Gather lists of candidates for vacancies in teaching staff and lay leaders. Delegate administration to qualified persons, approve curriculum, and insure all age groups are being served. Review and recommend revisions if needed. Areas include: a. Confirmation classes b. Sunday school c. Vacation Bible school d. Adult education e. Others
 - D. Keep records of participation to ensure all age groups are being served.
 - E. Recognize and commend those who serve Emanuel Lutheran Church in educational service and leadership roles.
 - F. Maintain, improve and cultivate use of the Church library.
 - G. Provide Youth Group activities for the various age groups.
 - H. Assist in planning of mission trips, youth gatherings, and other youth/family trips.

- I. Encourage the attendance at camps. Promote camping ministry within the congregation.
 - J. This Board will equip and empower the youth to be leaders, not only in the future, by in the present moment. This Board will endeavor to motivate young people to be involved in youth functions and to provide opportunities for leadership development.
 - K. Ensure youth are involved in all areas of ministry in the congregation.
 - L. Ensure there is an educational component to all areas of ministry in the congregation.
8. Board of Church Properties
- A. The Board shall be responsible for all the maintenance and renovation of the building structure and related property.
 - B. The Board may negotiate service contracts, insurance and handle any legal matters that may apply to the property of Emanuel Lutheran Church.
 - C. Make an annual inspection of Church properties and equipment and recommend to the Parish Planning Council needed repairs, improvements, or replacements.
 - D. Receive and approve requests for the use of the Congregation's facilities. Coordinate the schedule of activities within the facilities with the Church office.
 - E. Make and issue keys for Church property, and keep and review annually a list of keys issued.
 - F. Supervise, control and recommend adequate storage facilities for all Church property, equipment, and supplies, and the orderly maintenance of the same.
 - G. Check all property yearly for fire hazards, injury hazards, and/or health hazards.
 - H. Enlist volunteer work crews for special repair, improvement, cleaning, painting, and decorating, landscaping, and other projects.
 - I. Arrange for immediate repairs of an urgent nature and all normal repairs and alterations for which funds have been allocated.
 - J. Obtain legal information necessary for contracts, deeds, etc., to be considered by the Congregation.
 - K. Ensure compliance with all local, state and federal regulations, as it applies to the property.
 - L. Set all policies and fees for rental, use, and lending of Church properties.
 - M. Ensure property use and availability of property for all ministries of the congregation.
9. Board of Emanuel Early Learning Center
- A. Establish objectives, set policies for and supervise the Early Learning Center program.
 - B. Provide for active expression of Christian love and concern as an integral part of the total Early Learning Center program.
 - C. Approve curriculum and provide for written personnel policies and procedures, including, but not limited to, annual evaluations of the staff and hiring and discharge procedures for the staff.
 - D. Implement plans for continuous improvement for the program, facilities, curriculum and performance of Early Learning Center employees.
 - E. Monitor compliance with State regulations.
 - F. Work with organizations and other boards and committees to coordinate the activities of the Early Learning Center within the Congregation.
 - G. Annually examine the Child Care facilities and equipment.
 - H. Annually review and determine the adequate compensation of all Child Care workers, in cooperation of the Board of Stewardship.

- I. Provide for the professional growth of the educational staff through conferences, conventions, continuing education, etc.
- J. The Early Learning Center Director, subject to the direction of the Early Learning Center Board, shall appoint and exercise management, direction and supervision over the employees of Emanuel Early Learning Center and the program, and make regular reports to the Early Learning Center Board.
- K. The Board will encourage the inclusion of the families of the Early Learning Center in congregational activities. The Board will encourage the participation of the congregation and its members in the activities of the Early Learning Center.

ARTICLE VIII: CONGREGATION COMMITTEES

Section 1. Standing Committees:

Standing committees may include Executive, Nominating, Financial Review, Altar Guild, Scholarship, Worship, etc. These are committees that are needed every year.

Section 2. Ad Hoc Committees:

Ad hoc committees may include Reformation, Anniversary, Human Resources, Fund Raising, etc. These are committees created by the Executive Committee or Senior Pastor for a specific function and dissolved upon completion.

CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS*

Resolution #1 - Years of service on Parish Planning Council

Upon the approval of these continuing resolutions on ????, any person who has served three or more year on Parish Planning council, will be given credit for three years toward their total, lifetime service on Parish Planning Council. Any additional years will be credited starting with four. Any person who has served less than three years on Parish Planning Council will be given credit for the actual number of years toward the their total, lifetime service on Parish Planning Council.

Resolution #2 – When an expenditure is more than \$10,000, we will make attempts to receive no less than two (2) bids for the expenditure. The final decision will be based on what it the best course of action for the congregation and the Kingdom, and not just what is the least expensive.

Resolution #3 – This congregation will strive to be within compliance of all local, state, and federal laws, regulations and rules. We will also endeavor to avoid any actual or perceived ethical issues and/or conflicts of interest.

*These continuing resolutions, upon adoption January 26, 2025, supersede all other continuing resolutions of this congregation, and shall be effective upon approval of the North West Ohio Synod.