

## Notice of Special Congregation Meeting To Approve Constitution Changes

A special meeting of the congregation will be held on Sunday, March 17, 2024, immediately following the 10 am worship service, to consider and vote on changes that Council is proposing to the Constitution, By-laws, and Continuing Resolutions of this congregation. Council is proposing these changes so that our governing documents more accurately reflect the structure by which the business of our congregation is conducted.

For the majority of our existence, the congregation has been governed by the Church Council which delegated oversight and management to a senior pastor. Additional work of the congregation was performed by paid staff and a rather large network of Council committees which consisted of Council liaisons and lay volunteers. When Pastor Hersch arrived, he suggested amending the governance structure to be one that vested broad managerial discretion in the senior pastor, acting as a sort of chief executive officer, while Council governed by setting performance objectives for the senior pastor and by focusing on policy and strategic planning. Our governing documents were amended in 2020 to reflect these changes. At that time, the committees of Council were largely disbanded.

The pandemic and the sudden loss of a full-time senior pastor led us to understand that the best governance model for our congregation is one where Council and the senior pastor share responsibility for governance, policy making and strategy, while the senior pastor remains primarily responsible for staff management. We have also come to understand the vital importance that lay volunteers play in the work of our community. Therefore, we have re-established a Property Team, an Evangelism Team and Young Families Team. We may also wish to form additional teams in the future but we intend to do so in a way that helps our community to do God's work without standing in the way of the inspired work of our amazing paid staff.

The changes proposed by Council consist of:

1. Amendments that have been required/ proposed by the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA) in 2022.

We are required to make most of these changes when we next amend our governing documents. The majority of these changes are either related to adding equity language or are not particularly substantive. Council is proposing making all changes required by the ELCA and those changes suggested by the ELCA that are applicable to our congregation.

And,

2. Additional changes proposed by Council which modify our governing documents to more accurately reflect our current form of governance as described above.

All of these proposed changes have been sent to the synod for approval.

Additionally, since Council has the authority to amend the continuing resolutions contained in Appendix C12.04A19 without congregational approval, it is anticipated that Council will be removing most of the existing language in this appendix (as that applied to the former governance structure), while (a) retaining the section establishing a code of conduct for Council members, (b) giving Council the discretion to appoint a non-voting Youth Representative, and (c) incorporating a lay volunteer policy previously adopted by Council. A version of what we expect the revised appendix to look like is at the end of the document called "Constitution Incorporating Proposed Changes".

We feel confident that this is a faithful, responsible way to enable us to lean into the future as a community of faith poised to do great things! Thank you for considering staying and expressing your vote at what should be a short meeting on March 17.

With gratitude,  
Kate Harenza, President  
Congregation Council