

November 14, 2020

To all Straw Church members,

Your church council in 2019 recognized the long overdue need to review and upgrade our church constitution. This began in late spring with a Constitution Review Committee consisting of Charlotte and Dave Morris along with Pastor Yambor comparing the difference between our current constitution and the model provided by the ELCA. (<https://www.elca.org/constitution> download 2019 model constitution for congregations with instructions)

Beginning the end of August, the committee's comparison was presented weekly over a period of two months to council members for their questions, concerns, and comments and was completed the end of October with very little discussion. Bob Babcock was called in for his input and became part of the committee at that time.

The committee then provided a complete draft of a revised new constitution for council to review and pass on to the congregation for their review before a final vote at the January congregational meeting.

So now you the members and owner of St James Lutheran Church become the final participants in the one-year effort to create our new constitution.

Attached you will find the draft constitution (revised 11/14/2020) presented for your review. Discussion meetings via ZOOM will be announced as frequently as required before the congregation meeting. It is our hope that all discussion can be completed in the coming two months before the congregation meeting so a short congregation vote will allow more meeting time for future planning.

If you have any questions please contact any committee member.

Peace be with you,

Your Constitution Review Committee:

Pastor Yambor	stephenyambor@hotmail.com	908-389-2778
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Instructions, guidelines and helps

The goal of the ELCA is to unite and align the over 9000 congregations in America who come under their guidance. To ensure this, certain sections are marked by an asterisk (*) and are required without alteration. Sections without an asterisk can be customize by our congregation guidelines as long as we don't go so far off base that we are "called out".

If you are interested in the details of the changes you will need to compare line by line our current constitution with the 2019 ELCA model found on the ELCA web site. The constitution committee has already done all the comparison.

Or.. you can use the cheat sheet below which shows the only 15 places decisions or changes are needed or required.

The committee recommended the underlined choices below.

C9. 01. Recommend congregation

C9. 21. Recommend congregation

C10. 02. Recommend 10 percent as in our current constitution

C10. 04. Recommend 10 percent as in our current constitution

C11.02. Recommend the 3rd of 4 paragraph choices with internal choice congregation

C12. 01. Recommend the 2nd of 2 options with no more than 8 or fewer than 4

C12. 02. Recommend the 1st of 2 paragraphs serving for 2 years and serve another 2 year term

C12. 05. a. Recommend trustees / directors

C12. 05. c. 10 percent as in our current constitution

C12. 05. d. 10 percent as in our current constitution

C12. 12. Recommend add "or vice pastor" three places

C13.02. Recommend six go to five voting members

C13.05. Recommend congregation

C16. 1. Recommend 10 percent of the voting members

C17. 02. Must be two-thirds as in model (majority in our current constitution must go)