

# **Constitution and Bylaws for Six Mile Grove Lutheran Church of Lyle, Minnesota**

**Date Last Reviewed: January 23, 2022**

**To be reviewed every 5 years**

**Constitution and By-Laws for Six Mile Grove Lutheran Church**  
**Township of Nevada, Mower County, Lyle, Minnesota**  
Date Last Reviewed: January 23, 2022

**Mission Statement**

Following our founder's deep faith in the future, We, the Six Mile Grove Congregation, called by God, commit ourselves:

- to proclaim the gospel
- to prepare our members for outreach and service

**Vision**

Six Mile Grove Lutheran Church will remain a Lutheran Family and Christian leader in this community by being:

- People who gather around the word and sacrament and empowered by the gospel
- A caring institution called to help all kinds of people by offering God's life changing love, forgiveness, and grace in Jesus Christ
- A ministry whereby we all use the gifts of the spirit for our life together and our mission in the world

**Goals**

We will seek to strengthen the personal and spiritual growth and discipleship of every member of the congregation through prayer, Bible study, service, witness and in congregational life.

We will foster the development of a community where care and support are provided within this congregation and community through meaningful relationships.

Intentionally reaching out to the unchurched seeking to understand those who are searching for meaning in life, providing an inviting and hospitable community, and inviting their participation in God's family at this congregation.

**Preamble**

We, baptize 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 the Son and the Holy Spirit.

## **Chapter 1: Name and Incorporation**

### C1.01

The name of this congregation shall be Six Mile Grove Lutheran Church.

### C1.02

For the purpose of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws, the congregation of Six Mile Grove Lutheran Church is hereinafter designated as “this congregation.”

### C1.03

This congregation shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of Minnesota.

## **Chapter 2: Confession of Faith**

### C2.01

This congregation confesses the Triune God, 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 judgement 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 that other confessional writings in the Book of Concord, namely, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles and the Treatise, the Small 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 confession 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 the Lord Jesus Christ, its head. All actions of this congregation are to be carried out under his rule and authority.

#### C3.02

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.

### **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 and justice of all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, and standing with the poor and powerless, 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.
- g. Accept the ministry of reconciliation that has been entrusted to us.

#### 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 responsibility in society.
- g. Foster and participate in interdependent relationships with other congregations.
- h. 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 Congregation 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 continuing resolutions in the section of the Congregational Council.

#### C4.05

This congregation shall, from time to time, adopt a mission statement which will provide specific direction for its programs.

## **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 bested in the Congregation Meeting called an conducted as provided in this constitution and bylaws.

### **C5.03**

Only such authority as is delegated to the Congregation Council or other organizational units in this congregation's governing documents is recognized. All remaining authority is retained by the congregation. The congregation is authorized to:

- a. Call a pastor as pastor as provided in Chapter 9;
- b. Terminate the call of a pastor as provided in Chapter 9;
- c. Call or terminate the call of associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers;
- d. Adopt amendments to the constitution as provided in Chapter 17 and amendments to the bylaws, as specified in Chapter 16;
- e. Approve the annual budget;
- f. Acquire real and personal property by gift, devise, purchase, or other lawful means;
- g. Hold title to and use its property for any and all activities consistent with its purpose;
- h. Sell, mortgage, lease, transfer, or otherwise dispose of its property by any lawful means; and
- i. Elect its officers and congregational council and committees and require them to carry out their duties in accordance with the constitution and by-laws and continuing resolutions

## **Chapter 6: Church Affiliation**

### **C6.01**

This congregation shall be independent.

## **Chapter 7: Property Ownership**

### **C7.01**

If a two-thirds majority of the voting members of this congregation, present at a legally called and conducted special meeting of this congregation, vote to transfer to or exit from another Lutheran church body, title to property shall continue to reside in this congregation.

## **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 by-laws.

#### 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.
- 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, or persons who wish to retain a relationship with this congregation while being members of other congregations. They have all the privileges and duties of membership except voting rights and eligibility for elected offices or membership on the Congregation Council of this congregation.

#### 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, through contributions of their time, abilities, and financial support as biblical stewards

#### C8.05

Membership of this congregation shall be terminated by any of the following:

- a. Death;
- b. Resignation;
- c. Transfer or release;
- d. Disciplinary action by the Congregation Council; or
- e. Removal from the roll due to inactivity as defined in the bylaws. Such persons who have been removed from the roll of members shall remain persons for whom the Church has a continuing pastoral concern.

#### B8.05.01

When a member of the congregation moves from the community served, the congregation shall encourage the member to request a transfer to a Lutheran congregation that can serve the person effectively.

#### B8.05.02

A confirmed member in good standing desiring to change membership to another Lutheran congregation shall, upon request, receive a Letter of Transfer.

#### B8.05.03

A confirmed member residing in the community served, who does not, for one year partake of Holy Communion, support the church through this congregation with offering, or does not appear to desire to participate in the life and worship of the congregation should be visited and encouraged to active membership. If this member does not actively participate, this individual should be kept on a responsibility list as one who is in special need of the congregation's prayer and concern.

### **Chapter 9: The Pastor**

#### C9.01

Authority to call a pastor shall be in this congregation by at least two-thirds majority ballot vote of members present and voting at a meeting legally called for that purpose.

#### C9.02

Consistent with the faith and practice of Six Mile Grove Lutheran Church.

Every ordained minister shall:

1. preach the word;
2. administer the sacraments;
3. conduct public worship;
4. provide pastoral care; and



5. speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world.

Each ordained minister with a congregational call shall, within the Congregation:

1. offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead;
2. supervise all schools and organization of this congregation;
3. install regularly elected members of the Congregation Council; and
4. with the council, administer discipline

Every pastor shall:

1. strive to extend the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation and abroad;
2. seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel;
3. impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through distribution of its periodicals and other publications; and
4. endeavor to increase the support of the congregation's mission

#### C9.03

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.

#### C9.04

- a. The call of a congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment, which, except in the case of the death of the pastor, shall be terminated and for the following reasons:
  - i. Mutual agreement to terminate the call or the completion of a call for a specific term;
  - ii. Resignation of the pastor, which shall become effective, unless otherwise agreed, 30 days after the date on which it was submitted;
  - iii. Inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in the congregation in view of local conditions, without reflection on the competence or the moral and spiritual character of the pastor;
  - iv. The physical or mental incapacity of the pastor;

- v. Disqualification of the pastor through discipline on grounds of doctrine, morality, or continued neglect of duty;
- vi. The dissolution of the congregation; or
- vii. Suspension of the congregation as a result of discipline proceedings

When allegations of physical or mental incapacity of the pastor or ineffective conduct of the pastoral office have come to the attention of the Council, or by a petition signed by at least one-third of the voting members of the congregation, the Council shall, investigate such conditions with a committee of two council members and one layperson.

In case of alleged physical or mental incapacity, competent medical testimony shall be obtained. When such disability is evident, the Council with the advice of the committee, shall declare the pastorate vacant. Upon the restoration of a disabled pastor to health, the Council shall take steps to enable the pastor to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another field of labor.

In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of the congregation, all concerned persons shall be heard, after which the Council together with the committee shall decide on the course of action to be recommended to the pastor and the congregation. If they agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action shall be taken by the Council. If either party fails to assent, the congregation may dismiss the pastor at a legally called meeting, by a two-thirds majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the Council and the committee recommended termination of the call.

If, in the course of proceedings, the committee concludes that there may be grounds for disciplinary action, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action to the council, who may bring charges in accordance with the provision of the constitution and bylaws.

If, following the appointment of the committee, it should become apparent that the pastoral office cannot be conducted effectively in the congregation(s) being served by the ordained minister due to local conditions, the council may temporarily suspend the pastor from service in the congregation(s) without prejudice and with pay provided through a churchwide fund and with housing provided by the congregation(s).

#### C9.05

At a time of pastoral vacancy, an interim pastor shall be appointed by the council with the consent of this congregation.

#### C9.06

During the period of service, an interim pastor shall have the rights and duties in the congregation of a regularly called pastor and may delegate the same in part to a supply

pastor with the consent of the council and this congregation. The interim pastor and any ordained pastor providing assistance shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a pastor.

#### C9.07

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.

#### C9.08

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 and the congregation council. As occasion requires, the documents may be revised through a similar consultation.

#### C9.09

The pastor of this congregation:

- a. Shall keep accurate parochial records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from the congregation;
- b. 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.

### **Chapter 10: Congregation Meeting**

#### C10.01

The annual meeting of this congregation shall be held at a time specified in the bylaws.

#### CR 10.01.A2006

This fiscal year of the church shall be from January 1 to January 1

#### CR 10.01.B2006

All committees and organizations handling funds within the congregation shall submit financial reports to the church office by January 10

#### CR 10.01.CXX04

Copies of annual reports should be handed out at least one week before the annual meeting.

#### B10.01.01

An annual meeting of this congregation shall be held each year in the month of January, unless other circumstances arise, with appropriate notice to the congregation.

#### C10.02

A special Congregation Meeting may be called by the pastor, the Congregation Council, or the president of this congregations, and shall be called by the president of the congregation upon the written request of 10 (ten) of the voting members. The call for each special meeting shall specify the purpose for which it is to be held and no other business shall be transacted.

#### B10.02.01

No special meeting of the congregation may be held without notifying the pastor.

#### 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 to all voting members at least 10 days in advance of the date of the meeting. The posting of such notice in the regular mail, with the regular postage affixed or paid, sent to the last known address of such members shall be sufficient.

#### B10.03.01

The order of business as the annual congregation meeting shall be:

1. Opening devotions
2. Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting
3. Reports of the staff, council, Treasurer, committees, and others
4. Elections
5. Approval of budgets
6. Unfinished business
7. New business
8. Closing prayer

#### B10.03.02

In addition to the candidates submitted by the Nominating Committee, additional nominations may be made from the floor.

#### C10.04

Fifteen (15) voting members shall constitute a quorum.

#### C10.05

Voting by proxy or by absentee ballots shall not be permitted.

#### B10.05.01

Voting at the annual meeting and other congregation meetings shall be by voice or show of hands unless a request is made for ballot vote.

- a. To elect officers;
- b. To adopt or amend the constitution or by-laws;
- c. To sever official connections with the pastor;

- d. To suspend or dismiss any officer;
- e. To authorize an expenditure of more than the prescribed budget

#### C10.06

All actions approved by the congregation shall be by majority vote of those voting members present and voting, except as otherwise provided in this Constitution or by state law.

#### C10.07

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

### **Chapter 11 – Officers**

#### C11.01

The officers of this congregation shall be a President and Secretary/Treasurer.

- a. Duties of the officers shall be specified in the bylaws.
- b. The officers shall be voting members of the congregation.
- c. Officers of this congregation shall serve similar offices of the Congregation Council and shall be voting members of the Congregation Council.

#### B11.01.01

The President shall preside over all meetings of the Congregation Council. The Senior Deacon shall preside over all meetings of the congregation and the Congregation Council in the absence or disability of the President.

The Secretary/Treasurer duties are:

1. Keep the minutes of all meetings of the congregation and the Congregation Council.
2. Sign checks and disburse funds in accordance with the decisions of the Congregation Council.
3. Submit monthly treasurer reports to the Congregation Council and submit an audited report at the annual meeting.
4. Assist the Trustees in preparing the annual budget and reviewing the Membership roster.

The President has authority to sign checks.

#### C11.02

No officer shall hold more than one office at a time. The President and Secretary/Treasurer shall be elected for a term of two years and will be eligible to serve two successive terms in the same office. All officers will keep their office until a successor elected.

#### C11.03

The congregation shall elect its officers.

### **Chapter 12 – Congregation Council**

#### C12.01

The voting membership of the Congregation Council shall consist of the officers of the Congregation Council, three deacons and three trustees. The Pastor shall be a member of the Council by virtue of office but without a vote. Any voting member of the congregation may be elected to the council except the Pastor. A member's place on the Congregation Council shall be declared vacant if the member ceases to be a voting member of this congregation or if the member is absent four consecutive regular meetings without cause.

#### C12.02

The members of the Congregation Council, except the Pastor(s), shall be elected at a legally called annual meeting of the congregation to serve a position and term as defined below or until their successors are elected. Their terms shall begin February 1 following the annual meeting at which they are elected.

Trustees and deacons shall be elected to serve three-year terms or to fill the remaining term of a trustee or deacon who left before completing a full term. One trustee and one deacon shall be elected each year to full terms and partial term trustees and deacons shall be elected if needed. They are eligible to serve a partial term plus 2 full terms. All congregation council members shall keep their office until their successors are elected.

#### C12.03

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

#### C12.04

The Deacon's duties are:

- a. To help with communion service.
- b. It shall be the duty of the deacons to assist the pastor in the spiritual care of the congregation, look after the sick and the needy, and to examine and pass upon the qualifications for membership in the parish.

- c. In case of vacancy in the pastoral office, the deacons shall make temporary arrangement for the usual functions of this office.
- d. When a Pastoral vacancy occurs, the deacons represent this congregation on the Parish Call Committee.
- e. The Senior Deacon shall preside over all meetings of the congregation and the Congregation Council in the absence or disability of the President.

#### C12.05

The Trustee's duties are:

- a. Be responsible for the financial and property matters of this congregation.
- b. Be responsible for maintaining and protecting its property and the management of its business and fiscal affairs. It shall have the powers and be subject to the obligations that pertain to such boards under the law of the State of Minnesota, except as otherwise provided herein.
- c. Shall not have the authority to buy, sell, or encumber real property unless specifically authorized to do so by a meeting of the congregation.
- d. Prepare an annual budget for adoption by this congregation with the help of the secretary/treasurer and supervise the expenditures of funds in accordance therewith following its adoption.
- e. Ascertain that the financial affairs of this congregation are being conducted efficiently, giving particular attention to the prompt payment all obligations.
- f. Responsible for this congregation's investment and its total insurance program.
- g. Provide for an annual review of the membership roster in November of each year.
- h. Responsible for employment and supervision of the paid workers of this congregation.

#### B12.05.01

The Congregation Council shall ensure that the Treasurer and others who have access to the funds of this congregation are adequately bonded.

C12.06 Private property of the Pastor, Congregation Council members and members of the Congregation shall not be held responsible for debts of this Corporation.

#### C12.07

The Congregation 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.

The duties of the Council shall include the following:

- a. To lead the congregation in stating its mission, to do long-range planning, to set goal 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 pastor(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 good will, 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 seek out and encourage qualified person to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel.
- i. Shall provide for a review of its constitution, bylaws, and mission at least every five years.

#### B12.07.01

The pastor of the congregation shall be a member without vote, of the Congregation Council and all other boards, committees and organization of the congregation.

#### C12.08

The Congregation Council shall normally meet once a month. Special meetings may be called by the pastor, the president, or shall be called by the president at the request of at least one-half of the Congregation Council voting members. Notice of each special meeting shall be given to all members of the Congregation Council.

#### C12.09

A quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of a majority of the elected members.



## **Chapter 13 – Congregation Committees**

### **C13.01**

The officers of this congregation shall constitute the **Executive Committee** and the pastor shall be a member without vote. The Executive Committee shall act on matters for the Council in the interim between Council meetings and perform such duties as may be delegated to it by the Council.

### **C13.02**

A **Nominating Committee** of three voting members of this congregation shall be elected at the annual meeting for a term of one year. They are not eligible for a consecutive term.

- a. Nominate for president, secretary/treasurer, board of education, trustee, deacon and ushers.

### **C13.03**

A **Board of Education** of three members shall be elected at the annual meeting. Term of office to be for three years with one member elected each year. They can serve two consecutive terms.

- a. **Sunday School Superintendent** with the pastor and the board of education shall conduct the Sunday Schools and be an advisory member of the board of education. The Sunday School Superintendent will be selected by the Pastor and the board of education and they shall submit a report at the annual meeting of the parish.

### **CR.13.2003**

One member of the Board of Education will be added to the Six Mile Grove Council and have the right to make motions, seconds and vote.

### **C13.04**

The **Ushers** shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected at the annual meeting. Term of office to be for one year but can be re-elected for unlimited terms.

### **CR 13.04.AXX04**

Other committees are selected at the annual meeting by either volunteering or nominated from the floor:

- a. Outdoor Drive-In Committee: Two delegates serving two-year terms; one goes off and one stays on
- b. Good Earth Village: Two delegates; no term limit
- c. Audit Committee: Two voting members; term of office shall be for two years; with one member elected each year.

- d. Decorating Committee: Three to five volunteers; Christmas decorations are to be put up before Advent Sunday. They are to be removed two weeks after Christmas.
- e. Art Slinde Scholarship: Three voting members with no term limit

#### C13.05

Duties of permanent committees of this congregation shall be specified in the continuing resolutions. Duties of limited-term committees may be specified in continuing resolutions if the committee will be active during more than one Congregational Council term.

### **Chapter 14 – Organizations Within The Congregation**

#### C14.01

All organizations within this congregation shall exist to aid it in ministering to the members of this congregation and to all person who can be reached with the Gospel of Christ. This congregation shall receive reports concerning their work, and finances.

### **Chapter 15 – Discipline of Members and Adjudication**

#### C15.01

Denial of the Christian faith as described in this constitution, conduct grossly unbecoming a member of the Church of Christ, or persistent trouble-making this congregation are sufficient cause for discipline of a member. Prior to disciplinary action, reconciliation will be attempted following Matthew 18: 15-17, proceeding through these successive steps:

- A. Private admonition by the pastor,
- B. Admonition by the pastor in the presence of two or three witnesses, and
- C. Citation to appear before the Congregation Council

If for any reason, the pastor is unable to administer the admonitions required, the president or vice president shall administer such admonitions.

#### C15.02

If discipline against a member proceeds beyond counseling and admonition by the pastor, charges against the accused member(s) that are specific and in writing shall be prepared by member(s) of the congregation who shall sign the charges as the accuser(s). The written charges shall be filed with the pastor, who shall advise the Congregation Council of the need to issue a written citation to the accused and the accusers that specifies the time and place of the hearing before the Congregation Council. The written charges shall accompany the written citation to the accused. A member charged with the offense shall appear before the Congregation Council after having received a written citation, at least ten days prior to the meeting. If the member charged with the offense fails to appear at the scheduled hearing, the Congregation

Council may proceed with the hearing and may pass judgement in the member's absence.

#### C15.03

Member of the Congregation Council who participate in the preparation of the written charges or who present evidence or testimony in the hearing before the Congregation Council are disqualified from voting upon the question of the guilt of the accused member. Should the allegations be sustained by a two-thirds majority vote of the members of the Congregation Council who are not disqualified but who are present and voting, and renewed admonition prove ineffectual, the council shall impose one of the following actions:

- A. censure before the council or congregation;
- B. suspension from membership for a definite period of time; or
- C. exclusion from membership in this congregation.

Disciplinary actions B and C shall be delivered to the member in writing.

#### C15.04

Disciplinary actions may be reconsidered and revoked by the Congregation Council upon receipt of:

- a. evidence that injustice has been done of;
- b. evidence of repentance and amendment

#### C15.05

No member of a congregation shall be subject to discipline for offenses that the Congregation Council has previously heard and decided.

### **Chapter 16 – Bylaws**

#### C16.01

This congregation may adopt bylaws. No bylaw may conflict with this constitution.

#### C16.02

Bylaws may be adopted or amended at any legally called meeting of this congregation with a quorum present by a majority vote of those voting members present and voting.

#### C16.03

Changes to the bylaws may be proposed by any voting member provided, however, that such additions or amendments be submitted in writing to the Congregation Council at least 60 days before a regular or special Congregation Meeting called for that purpose and that the Congregation Council notify the congregation's members by mail of the

proposal with the council's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the Congregation Meeting.

## **Chapter 17 – Amendments**

### **C17.01**

Amendments may be proposed by at least 10 voting members of by the Congregation 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 the congregation's members by mail of the proposal together with the council's recommendation at least 30 day in advance of the meeting.

### **C17.02**

An amendment to this constitution, shall:

- a. Be approved at a legally called Congregation Meeting according to this constitution by a majority vote of those present and voting;
- b. Be ratified without change at the next annual meeting by a two-thirds majority vote of those present and voting; and
- c. Have the effective date included in the resolution and noted in the Constitution.

## **Chapter 18 – Continuing Resolutions**

### **C18.01**

The Congregation 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 two-thirds vote of all voting members of the Congregational Council.

## **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 Congregation 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**

### **C20.01**

This congregation may unite in partnership with one or more other congregations to form a parish. A written agreement, approved by the voting members of each

congregation participating in the parish, shall specify the powers and responsibilities that have been extended to a Parish Council.

#### C20.02

Whenever a letter of call is being recommended for extension to an ordained minister, such letter of call shall be first approved by a two-thirds vote at congregational meetings of each of the congregations forming a parish. If any congregation of the parish should fail to approve extending this call, the other congregation(s) in the same parish shall have the right to terminate the parish agreement.

#### C20.03

Any one of the congregations of a parish may terminate the call of a pastor. In such case, the other congregation(s) in the same parish shall have the right to terminate the parish agreement.

### **Appendix To The Constitution and Bylaws For Six Mile Grove Lutheran Church**

- C = Constitution Provisions
- B = Bylaw Provisions
- CR = Continuing Resolutions

Continuing resolutions are used to describe responsibilities of committees or create a long-term policy or establish a decision about an ongoing matter so that the matter will have continuing effect and future Congregation Councils will be aware of it. Continuing resolutions are subordinate to the Constitution and Bylaws and may not conflict with them. Congregation Councils may approve, revise or remove continuing resolutions with the need for a regular or special Congregation Meeting. This appendix should be republished and made available to the congregation whenever a continuing resolution is changed or added.

Continuing resolutions should be numbered in the following manner: CR13.07.A2004 where CR represents continuing resolution; 13 represents the chapter of the constitution referred to; 07 represents the subject matter within the chapter; A indicates that it is the first continuing resolution regarding that subject; 2004 indicates the year of approval.