

THE CONSTITUTION

Lutheran Church - International

(amended 2022)

Article I NAME

Article I, Section 1: Name

The name of this church body shall be the Lutheran Church - International.

Article II DOCTRINE

Article II, Section 1: Doctrines

As an evangelical Christian Fellowship in general and a Lutheran fellowship in particular, the Lutheran Church - International accepts and acknowledges the Holy Scriptures as the divinely inspired and revealed Word of God, inerrant and wholly reliable, and the only infallible rule and standard for faith and practice. The Lutheran Church - International is unreservedly and without compromise dedicated to the "holding fast the faithful Word" of the Holy Scriptures (Titus 1:9), and to the "contending earnestly for the faith once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 3). It accepts and confesses not only the three oldest creeds of Christendom (the Apostolic, the Nicene, and the Athanasian) as faithful summaries of the central truths of Scriptures, but also the unaltered Augsburg Confession as a true exposition of the fundamental doctrines of Christianity together with the further development of these doctrines as contained in the Lutheran Confessions found in the Book of Concord in the sense that these confessions themselves declare in the Preface of the Formula of Concord.

Article II, Section 2: Name Change

This article shall not be changed except for the name of this church body (Article I).

Article III PURPOSE

Article III, Section 1: Biblical Purpose

To fulfill its biblical and confessional mandate, the Lutheran Church - International, in accordance with Acts 2:42, shall promote:

- a. worship of God centered in Word and Sacrament (*leitourgia*);
- b. proclamation of the Good News of Jesus (*kerygma*);
- c. teaching of Christian Truth within the Church (*didache*);
- d. communion of saints in loving fellowship between Christians (*koinonia*);
- e. spiritual Life of Prayer, Bible-reading, and Devotion (*eusebia*);
- f. care of those in need (*diakonia*);
- g. evangelization of those who do not know Christ (*apostolé*); and
- h. good order and tranquility of the Church in accordance with the pattern of governance universally known in Christendom (*episcopé*).

Article III, Section 2: A Church Body

The Lutheran Church – International is a church body for ministers and communities of faith (as described in Article IV) who subscribe to the doctrines and confessions of the Lutheran Church – International as outlined in its supporting Constitution and By-Laws, who make proper application for membership and who are duly received as described in this Constitution.

Article III, Section 3: Activity

The Lutheran Church - International shall promote programs and activities which are in agreement with the purposes of the Lutheran Church - International.

Article III, Section 4: Ordination

The Lutheran Church - International shall examine and ordain candidates for the Holy Ministry.

Article III, Section 5: Funds

The Lutheran Church - International shall receive and distribute funds for the promotion of the Kingdom of God.

Article III, Section 6: Fellowship

The Lutheran Church - International shall promote unity in the Body of Christ in the bond of peace (Ephesians 4) as a non-profit Christian corporation organized solely for the mutual benefit and help of its members in the establishment of the Kingdom of God. It seeks to connect, guide, foster and encourage love and fellowship in accord with the faith and practices of the Lutheran Church - International.

Article IV
MEMBERS

Article IV, Section 1: Definition of Members

Members of the Lutheran Church - International are the ordained ministers, commissioned ministers and the communities of faith. They shall subscribe to the doctrinal statement in this Constitution, have been received into membership as described in this Constitution, and shall serve with mutual responsibilities.

Article IV, Section 2: Ministers

Ordained ministers in the Lutheran Church – International are those clergy in the Orders of Deacons, Pastors (Presbyters, Elders, Priests), and Bishops (Article IV, Sections 3, 4 and 5 and Article V, Sections 3 and 4). Commissioned ministers are other persons who are commissioned or consecrated servants of the Word in specific ministries for the Church; examples of commissioned ministers include teachers, evangelists, deaconesses, parish nurses, church musicians (“Ministers of Music”) and others accepted by the Executive Board. All ministers, ordained or commissioned, both active and retired, are full members of the ministeriums of the Lutheran Church - International and participate in its functions in their respective offices.

Article IV, Section 3: Deacons

The Order of Deacons as established by the Apostles in Acts 6 is a class of ordained clergy entrusted with a ministry of assisting in worship, preaching and baptizing with the permission of the bishop or pastor in authority, evangelizing, visiting, comforting the sick, and serving the world with Christ's love. In worship, the deacon traditionally distributes the Blood of Christ to communicants, and may take the Sacrament to the sick with the permission of the local authority. The deacon teaches and catechizes, and engages in other Christian work as determined by the local community. Deacons (male or female) are expected to exhibit the qualities described in I Timothy 3. The office of Deacon is permanent in duration and universal in its utilization in the Churches, conferred by a rite of Ordination administered by a bishop in apostolic orders.

Article IV, Section 4.1: Pastors (Presbyters, Elders, Priests)

The Order of Pastors witnessed to in the New Testament consists of males called from among the people of God ordered to the ministry of Word and Sacrament. In addition to those duties for the Order of Deacons (Article IV, Section 3), the following are the normal responsibilities of the pastoral office:

- a. preach the Word of God in the liturgies;
- b. preside at the celebration of Holy Communion (the Eucharist, Lord’s Supper, or Mass);
- c. be the minister of Holy Baptism;

- d. hear confession and pronounce absolution when appropriate;
- e. be the minister of Weddings and Funerals;
- f. be the minister of Confirmation in the community of faith being served unless the Archbishop or Diocesan Bishop is invited to preside (Article IV, Section 5.1 d);
- g. care for individuals and groups with evangelical counsel;
- h. be the minister of the Anointing of the Sick or Dying;
- i. participate with other ministers in available collegial and ecumenical activities, and in the ministeriums of the Lutheran Church - International;
- j. provide governance and judgment in the administration of the congregation or ministry to which he is called;
- k. oversee the ministry in a local place in all its general aspects;
- l. consult with and share in mutual responsibility with the Diocesan Bishop or representative overseeing the pastoral ministry;
- m. notify the Diocesan Bishop or representative and receive the approval of the Executive Board prior to acceptance into the roster or ministry of any other church body (see Article II, Section 1);
- n. retired pastors shall be responsible to the Diocesan Bishop in whose territory they live, for whatever assignments they are able to accept.

Article IV, Section 4.2: Pastors, Qualification

Pastors are expected to exhibit the qualities for elders stated in the Pauline and Johannine epistles of the New Testament. They are normally to be formed through a seminary recognized by the Lutheran Church - International, and to have served as a deacon for no less than six months prior to ordination, unless the Executive Board accepts alternative work. The office of Pastor is permanent in duration and universal in its utilization in the Churches, conferred by a rite of Ordination. Following the teaching and practice of the New Testament, the office of Pastor (Presbyter, Elder, Priest) is limited to males. The Archbishop, or a representative bishop in apostolic orders appointed by the Archbishop, is the ordaining minister on behalf of the Executive Board and of the Lutheran Church – International.

Article IV, Section 5.1: Bishops

The Order of Bishops witnessed to in the New Testament consists of males called from among the people of God ordered to the service of oversight in the ministry of Word and Sacrament. In addition to those duties of the Order of Pastors (Article IV, Section 4), the following are the responsibilities of the office of Bishop specifically within the diocese or area of ministry to which the Bishop is called and serves, under the guidance of the Executive Board:

- a. provide oversight and fraternal guidance for the ministries of the Lutheran Church – International within the diocese or area of ministry of the bishop;
- b. contact and visit the ministers and members of the Lutheran Church - International in the diocese or area of ministry and strive to build up the ministry of the Kingdom of God;
- c. provide pastoral care to the pastors and deacons, and to the commissioned ministers of the Lutheran Church - International (Article IV, Section 2) in the diocese or area of ministry.
- d. confirm in congregations of the diocese or ministry when invited by the local pastor;
- e. ordain candidates for the Orders of Deacons or Pastors who have been approved by the Executive Board of the Lutheran Church – International; the Archbishop, or a representative bishop in apostolic orders appointed by the Archbishop, is the ordaining minister on behalf of the Executive Board and of the Lutheran Church – International;
- f. participate in the laying on of hands in the ordination of bishops called to share in the Order of Bishops; and
- g. be a visible sign of the unity of the whole church, and engage in ecumenical activities for the Lutheran Church - International as assigned or approved by the Archbishop acting on the authority of the Board.

Article IV, Section 5.2: Bishops, Qualification

Bishops are expected to exhibit the qualities for the office of Bishop stated in the Pauline and Johannine epistles of the New Testament. Bishops are viewed as successors to the apostolic office, as recorded in the New Testament, and should have served in the office of Pastor for at least ten years. The office of Bishop is permanent in duration and universal in its utilization in the Churches, conferred by a rite of Ordination.

Article IV, Section 5.3: Bishops, Selection of

Pastors selected to be Bishops of the Lutheran Church - International shall be nominated at an Annual Synod of the Lutheran Church - International. The nomination may be put forward at the request of a Diocesan Synod (Article V, Section 6.2) or by a member of any House, but either the nomination or a second to the nomination must be made by a member of the House of Bishops to designate the nominee as a candidate for the Order of Bishops. Candidates shall have a period of discernment lasting no more than one year to accept or decline nomination. Candidates who accept nomination shall then be presented to the next Annual Synod for election. The presiding officer, who shall be a bishop in the Lutheran Church – International, shall lead in an invocation of the Holy Spirit after which the ballots for bishop shall be cast by written (secret) vote. A unanimous written vote of the House of Bishops present and voting, a three-quarters majority of the House of Clergy present and voting, and a simple majority of the House of Delegates present and voting shall constitute election of the candidate. Having accepted nomination, the candidate shall indicate his acceptance of the election, which completes the process of election. A date and place for the ordination of the bishop shall be set by the House of Bishops, including the bishop-elect, to be administered prior to the next Annual Synod.

Article IV, Section 5.4: Bishops, Selection of when urgent

When the Annual Synod, for reasons of apparent urgency recognized by a simple majority of each House, determines that an election must occur without the year of discernment, an election may be conducted at the same Annual Synod at which the nomination is made. The election procedure (Article IV, Section 5.3) shall occur at a session other than the session in which the Houses adopt a motion to exercise this procedure and in which the nomination is presented and accepted. This shall not be the normal procedure of election, but is to be used only in a time of unexpected urgency.

Article IV, Section 5.5: Bishops, Ordination

Ordination of a bishop is administered by the Archbishop with two additional bishops in apostolic orders with the laying on of hands. When the ordination of a bishop has been constitutionally scheduled and abnormal circumstances prevent three bishops from being present at the scheduled ordination, the Archbishop, or the ordaining bishop with the consent of the Archbishop, shall proceed as scheduled with at least one additional bishop present.

Article IV, Section 5.6: Bishops, Reception from other church bodies

A bishop of another church body who applies for membership in the Lutheran Church - International and who has been ordained in apostolic orders as stated in Article IV, Section 5.2 shall be received as a pastor in the Lutheran Church – International following approval by the Executive Board (Article IV, Section 7). The Archbishop or the Executive Board may present the member to the Annual Synod as a nomination to the office of Bishop. Following a period of discernment, the approval of membership of a bishop shall use the same procedure and form of ballot as in the nomination and election of a bishop, with the exception that the invocation of the Holy Spirit and the processes of nomination and ordination are omitted. The new member is seated as a bishop following the vote by the Annual Synod with all the rights and privileges of the office of Bishop.

Article IV, Section 5.7: Cooperative Responsibilities of Bishops

Since the office of Bishop in itself is permanent, all bishops of the Lutheran Church - International shall work in harmony with each other to carry out the purposes of the Lutheran Church – International (Article III) and shall exercise oversight in accord with the Book of Concord.

- a. All bishops, including retired bishops, shall be responsible to the Executive Board, on which they remain, for advice and counsel and for whatever assignments they are able to accept.
- b. Bishops shall not interfere in the work of other bishops.
- c. Bishops within dioceses may, upon request, assist the diocesan bishops under whose leadership they serve.
- d. One bishop, elected as Archbishop, shall be the chief administrative and executive officer of the Lutheran Church – International (Article VI) to whom all other bishops report.
- e. All bishops remain members of the House of Bishops no matter what their particular assignment, and are called to the mutual ministry of advice and counsel.

Article IV, Section 6.1: Communities of Faith

Communities of Faith are established assemblies gathering around the Word of God and the Holy Sacraments (Augsburg Confession VII). Some communities of faith are congregations formally established to fulfill the local function of being the Church of Jesus Christ in the Lutheran tradition. Some communities of faith are missions which may or may not become congregations. Communities of faith are:

- a. organized in some way acceptable to itself, with an ordained minister involved in its leadership;
- b. organized to involve more than two people;
- c. constitutionally mandated to accept the Lutheran Confessions and faith consistent with Article II;
- d. free to incorporate according to the mandate of local laws and customs;
- e. independent owners of their own property; as a normal practice, the Lutheran Church - International does not own or administer local property of or on behalf of a community of faith; and
- f. free to issue calls to their ministers without an appointment system from the Lutheran Church - International. Ministers who receive and accept a call to serve a community of faith shall, however, agree to be ordained by or become a member of the Lutheran Church – International.

A community of faith shall apply for membership in the Lutheran Church – International for approval by the Executive Board.

Article IV, Section 6.2: The Lutheran World Parish

The Lutheran Church - International shall provide a ministry for interested individual Lutherans, including members of the Lutheran Church – International, who may or may not be connected to another Lutheran congregation, and who are dispersed throughout the world, especially including those who have difficulty in relating to any established local congregation or community of faith. This ministry shall be known as the Lutheran World Parish and shall be regarded and function as a community of faith (Article IV, Section 6.1) although not primarily gathered around a local congregation or mission. Under the supervision of the Archbishop, diocesan bishops shall provide pastoral care in their geographical areas of ministry for those members of the Lutheran World Parish, including the attempt to provide at least an annual Word and Sacrament ministry to members of this parish. The lay members of the Lutheran World Parish shall be entitled to voting delegates as would any other community of faith. Under the supervision of the Archbishop, a Missionary Bishop or another pastor may be assigned pastoral care of those not reasonably able to be served in a diocesan area (Article V, Section 6.3; By-Laws, Section 1).

Article IV, Section 6.3: Affiliated Ministries

An affiliated ministry of the Lutheran Church - International may be established for a specific function but is not a community gathered around Word and Sacrament. Affiliated ministries may be schools, youth groups, hospitals, clinics, or social, educational, or service ministries. An affiliated ministry does not have membership privileges.

Article IV, Section 7: Acceptance of Members

Ordained and Commissioned Ministers and Communities of Faith shall be admitted to the membership of the Lutheran Church - International by the following procedure:

- a. the applicant minister, ministerial candidate or community of faith shall communicate with the appropriate diocesan bishop, or with the Archbishop, or with a representative appointed by the Archbishop, who will discuss the identity of the Lutheran Church - International, its doctrine, practice, history, and structure, in whatever format seems best to the applicant and the bishop;
- b. if the applicant desires to apply for membership in the Lutheran Church – International, the standard application form shall be provided to the candidate. Upon completion of the application for membership, the diocesan bishop or the Secretary of the Lutheran Church – International shall notify the members of the Executive Board, each member of which will have opportunity to express a preliminary opinion on acceptance to the Archbishop and Secretary. If there are substantial questions about a candidate, further dialogue shall take place between the candidate and the diocesan bishop and the Archbishop, including face-to-face visits if possible.
- c. The ministerial candidate or representatives of the community of faith shall be invited by the Archbishop to appear personally before the Executive Board, serving as a candidacy committee, at the Annual Synod, or at another convenient location, or by video or telephone conference. If the Executive Board finds the candidate acceptable, a simple majority vote of the Board shall admit the candidate (individual or community of faith) immediately to the roster or standing in the Lutheran Church – International. If the Executive Board determines not to accept a candidate, the candidate may re-apply in future years, or when the conditions set by the Executive Board are met.
- d. When an ordained or commissioned minister (Article IV, Section 2) has been accepted by the Executive Board, the member shall be received at the main liturgy or closing liturgy of the Annual Synod by the Archbishop or presiding minister or at another time and location deemed appropriate. If the new ministerial member has not been ordained previously by a bishop in apostolic orders, as defined by the Lutheran Church - International, the member is received by affirmation of ordination. Voting rights, however, shall be given immediately upon the vote of the Executive Board to accept the member.
- e. When a ministerial candidate is approved for ordination, a date and site, normally the site of the ministry to which the candidate is called, shall be set for the liturgy of Ordination to the office to which the candidate is called. The Archbishop or the diocesan bishop or a bishop of the Lutheran Church - International appointed to represent the Archbishop shall preside at the Ordination, and all members of the Lutheran Church - International and the members of its communities of faith will be invited to the Ordination.
- f. When a community of faith is received, its representatives shall be granted voting rights upon the vote of the Executive Board to accept the community as a member of the Lutheran Church - International. Representatives of the community of faith shall be received at the main liturgy or closing liturgy of the Annual Synod by the Archbishop or presiding minister at the liturgy, but the formal reception of the community into the Lutheran Church - International shall occur at its location in a liturgy scheduled to coincide with a visitation from the Archbishop or its diocesan bishop, or a bishop or representative of the Lutheran Church - International appointed to represent the Archbishop.
- g. The format for the application forms shall be reviewed periodically by the Executive Board, taking into account all possible factors and information desired. The form shall always require doctrinal acceptance of Article II of this Constitution. Various manuals or other literature may be issued to describe the Lutheran Church - International and its requirements.

Article IV, Section 8.1: Active Members

All members (communities of faith and ministers in the Lutheran Church – International), including those who are retired, are expected to fulfill their respective ministries (Article IV), attend and participate in ministerial and diocesan activities and the Annual Synods of the Lutheran Church - International, and to fulfill

the obligations of membership including financial support through the payment of annual dues as established by an Annual Synod. The Archbishop and the Diocesan and Missionary Bishops will provide pastoral oversight to those under their care and can waive obligations as necessary and appropriate, subject to the approval of the Executive Board. Upon recommendation of the Executive Board, those ministers and communities of faith who fulfill their obligations, or for whom certain obligations are waived, will be considered active members of the Lutheran Church - International and have the right to vote and hold office in the Lutheran Church – International and to receive clergy or community of faith credentials (Article VIII, Section 3f). Those not considered active members remain in the care of the Lutheran Church – International but will be urged to increase their faithful involvement in the life of the Lutheran Church – International.

Article IV, Section 8.2: Inactive Members

If a community of faith or minister in the Lutheran Church – International fails to fulfill their respective ministries (Article IV), attend and participate in ministerial and diocesan activities and the Annual Synods of the Lutheran Church - International, including financial support through the payment of annual dues as established by an Annual Synod within the first three months of the calendar year and has not had the obligation waived, the member is considered inactive and will be suspended from voting and holding any office in the Lutheran Church – International. The Archbishop and the Diocesan and Missionary Bishops will continue to provide pastoral oversight to those under their care and can waive obligations as necessary and appropriate, subject to the approval of the Executive Board. If a member resumes participation and payment of the annual dues, notification to and approval of the Executive Board will reinstate the member as active. A member who does not fulfill the obligations of membership and is persistent in being inactive for two consecutive years may be suspended (Article IV, Section 9a) or after four or more consecutive years will be notified and may be removed from membership (Article IV, Section 10.1c). The community of faith or minister shall be considered suspended or removed upon official notification by the Executive Board.

Article IV, Section 9: Temporary Suspension of Members

The Executive Board may suspend a community of faith or any minister from serving in or on behalf of the Lutheran Church–International, including holding credentials and the right to vote and hold office. A member must be notified in writing thirty days prior to the Executive Board meeting discussing the potential suspension of the member. The member has a right to appear before the Executive Board during this meeting. Grounds for suspension include:

- a. if the member fails to meet the standards of membership as stated in Article IV or in the By-Laws of the Lutheran Church – International or fails to meet the obligations imposed on all members by an Annual Synod for a period of two or more consecutive years.
- b. when the ministry, actions, words or reputation of the Lutheran Church – International is endangered by the actions or inactions of any member, the Executive Board may suspend the member from serving in or on behalf of the Lutheran Church – International if a suspension of membership serves to protect the Lutheran Church – International and its members from potential harm.

Suspension, with or without restrictions or conditions, is appropriate when the Executive Board:

- c. is considering or recommending disciplinary action against a member by the next Annual Synod;
- d. is investigating possible disciplinary action against a member;
- e. considers that a temporary suspension will protect the individual member or the Lutheran Church – International from potential danger or harm due to a temporary and non-disciplinary circumstance. A temporary suspension may require confidentiality, and notice of the temporary suspension is not required to be given to the Annual Synod. If the member objects to the suspension, the member has the right to appeal the decision of the Executive Board and to make a public presentation to the Annual Synod requesting a vote to discontinue the suspension.

Article IV, Section 10.1: Departure of Members

Membership in the Lutheran Church - International will end in the following ways:

- a. the death of a ministerial member or the dissolution of a community of faith;
- b. the voluntary resignation of a ministerial member or community of faith in writing or verbally to the Archbishop, or diocesan bishop or to a member of the Executive Board. Membership is voluntary and no compulsion is exercised to compel members to retain their membership. Withdrawal shall be recognized like the separation of St. Paul and St. Barnabas (cf. Acts 15:36-41). The departing minister or community shall be wished Godspeed, with no burdens placed upon the departing member other than that of prayer;
- c. the failure to meet the standards of membership as stated in Article IV or in the By-Laws of the Lutheran Church – International or the failure to meet the obligations imposed on all members by an Annual Synod for a period of four or more consecutive years; or
- d. the disciplinary removal of a member (Article IV, Section 10.2).

Article IV, Section 10.2: Disciplinary Removal of Members

A ministerial member or a community of faith may be removed when the member fails to meet the standards of membership as stated in Article IV or in the By-Laws of the Lutheran Church – International.

- a. The allegation of failure shall be brought to the attention of the Executive Board in writing by other members of the Lutheran Church – International, or by the member's Diocesan or Missionary Bishop, or by the Archbishop.
- b. The Executive Board shall consider the allegations at a regular or a specially called meeting as determined by the Archbishop dependent on the particular circumstances and offense. The Executive Board may suspend a member until the next Annual Synod if it determines that a failure exists and is serious enough to warrant disciplinary action.
- c. A formal hearing may be held by the Executive Board at the Annual Synod with the accused member present. An accused member has the right to a full hearing by the Executive Board or by a special committee appointed by the Archbishop.
- d. At any time during this process the member has the right to withdraw from membership, to prove the accusation false, or to show repentance and amendment of life acceptable to the Executive Board to merit dropping the accusation.
- e. The decision of the Executive Board shall be reported to the Annual Synod during the business session. If the Executive Board recommends disciplinary action or termination of the membership of a ministerial member or of a community of faith, this decision must be presented to the Annual Synod for final action. The member accused has the right to make a presentation to the Annual Synod before the vote on continuing or terminating membership.
- f. Disciplinary action or removal from membership is effected by a majority vote. For removal of a ministerial member, a majority vote of the House of Bishops and the House of Clergy is deemed sufficient. For removal of a community of faith, a majority of all three Houses is required.
- g. Removal from membership may be reconsidered by a subsequent Annual Synod upon request by the Executive Board or by the former member.
- h. God’s grace and mercy through Jesus Christ shall always be paramount in the forgiveness and restoration of the sinner upon repentance, confession, absolution, and amendment of life. Yet, where unrepentant sin remains or where the faith professed by the Lutheran Church - International is denied, the Law of God must be administered justly.

Article IV, Section 11: Roster of Members

The Lutheran Church – International shall maintain a current roster of the ministers (ordained and commissioned) and the communities of faith who are members of the Lutheran Church – International (Article IV, Section 1).

Article V
STRUCTURE

Article V, Section 1: The Annual Synod

The members of the Lutheran Church – International shall meet in an Annual Synod at a place and on the dates determined by the Executive Board. Notice of the time and place of the Annual Synod shall be given by mail or electronic means not less than 60 days prior to the Annual Synod to the members eligible to vote at the Annual Synod. The Annual Synod is the legislative and fellowship meeting of all ministers (ordained and commissioned) and delegates from all communities of faith on the roster of members of the Lutheran Church – International. The decisions of the Annual Synod other than directives in this Constitution and By-Laws shall constitute the policy and authority of the Lutheran Church - International. The quorum for an Annual Synod is those in attendance. The members belong to one of three Houses: the House of Delegates, the House of Clergy, and the House of Bishops (Article V, Sections 2, 3 and 4). All delegates have the right of voice and vote; all ministerial members have the right of voice, and all active ministerial members (Article IV, Section 8.1) have the right to vote. The simple majority of those present and voting, with all Houses concurring on issues, shall be sufficient to adopt a motion unless otherwise required by the Constitution. Votes may be taken simultaneously unless the chair requests separate votes by Houses. The chair of the Annual Synod is the Archbishop or, in his absence, the Vice-President or the Secretary.

Article V, Section 2: The House of Delegates

Each community of faith, as defined in Article IV, Sections 6.1 and 6.2, shall select two lay members of its community to be delegates to the Annual Synod and the House of Delegates. If a community of faith has more than 500 voting members in its own constitutional definition, it shall select an additional delegate for each additional 500 voting members. In addition, all commissioned or consecrated ministers, as defined in Article IV, Section 2, are members of the House of Delegates. Although a community of faith may bind their delegates to vote in a certain way on known issues before the Annual Synod, all delegates have the freedom to vote individually as they determine. One member of the House of Delegates shall be elected by the House of Delegates, meeting separately at the beginning of the Annual Synod, who shall serve as Chair of that House if it meets separately for votes or other business during the Annual Synod, and who shall serve as Vice President of the Lutheran Church – International (Article VII). If requested by the Chair, the Archbishop or a representative appointed by the Archbishop may serve as a resource to the House of Delegates when in session.

Article V, Section 3: The House of Clergy

All ordained ministers in the Orders of Deacons or Pastors of the Lutheran Church – International (Article IV, Sections 3 and 4), shall be members of the House of Clergy, with each active member (Article IV, Section 8.1) having one vote in this House. If this House meets separately during the Annual Synod, it selects a chair pro tem from the Order of Pastors. When this House meets together with the other two Houses, the Archbishop will preside.

Article V, Section 4: The House of Bishops

All ordained ministers in the Order of Bishops of the Lutheran Church – International (Article IV, Section 5), shall be members of the House of Bishops, with each active member (Article IV, Section 8.1) having one vote in this House. The Archbishop, or a bishop appointed by the Archbishop, shall preside over this House when meeting separately.

Article V, Section 5.1: The Executive Board, Authority

The authority to execute the decisions of the Annual Synod shall reside in the Executive Board, which shall submit a report of its activities to the Annual Synod. Between Annual Synods, it shall govern the Lutheran Church - International in conformity with this Constitution and By-Laws and the decisions of the Annual Synods. The Executive Board shall have the authority to schedule special meetings, and shall always meet at

the site of the Annual Synod in advance of the Annual Synod to carry out preparatory and constitutional duties. It may meet by telephone or other electronic means at times it determines. Decisions of the Executive Board are by majority vote of those present and voting at all meetings called to which appropriate notice has been given to all entitled to be present.

Article V, Section 5.2: The Executive Board, Members of

The Members of the Executive Board shall be:

- a. the Archbishop (Chair of the Executive Board);
- b. the Vice President of the Lutheran Church – International (Chair of the House of Delegates);
- c. the Secretary of the Lutheran Church – International;
- d. the Treasurer of the Lutheran Church - International;
- e. one member of the House of Delegates elected as its representative by that House at an Annual Synod to a three-year term of office on the Executive Board; the member is eligible for re-election at the conclusion of his or her term if a member of the House of Delegates at the time of that election;
- f. one member of the House of Clergy elected as its representative by that House at an Annual Synod to a three-year term of office on the Executive Board; the member is eligible for re-election at the conclusion of his or her term if an active member of the House of Clergy at the time of that election;
- g. all members of the House of Bishops, active or retired, of the Lutheran Church – International.

Article V, Section 5.3: The Executive Board, Resignation from

If a member of the Executive Board wishes to resign, the resignation shall be in writing and sent or given to the Secretary of the Lutheran Church - International with a copy to the Archbishop to be presented to the Executive Board. Vacancies in the Executive Board due to ineligibility or any other reason may be filled until the next Annual Synod by a person who meets the criteria for the office; and the balance of the term, if any, shall be filled at the following Annual Synod.

Article V, Section 5.4: The Executive Board, Emergency Authority

In the event of an emergency that prevents the Lutheran Church – International from holding an Annual Synod, the Executive Board shall continue to serve as authorized in Article V, Section 5.1, including the authority to extend terms of office. Suspension of an Annual Synod shall require a two-thirds affirmative vote of the Executive Board.

Article V, Section 6.1: Dioceses

The ministries of the Lutheran Church - International shall be organized in geographical areas, each area called a Diocese. The geographical boundaries of each diocese shall be described in the By-Laws. The ministerial members in each diocese, both ordained and commissioned (Article IV, Section 2) shall attempt to meet periodically, depending on geographical and financial circumstances, for fellowship, worship, prayer, Bible Study, and mutual support. The delegates and others of the communities of faith and affiliated ministries (Article IV, Section 6.3) in the diocese may be invited to meet with the ministers for mutual support in fellowship opportunities, missions, and possible joint ministries. The diocesan bishop may call for a Diocesan Synod when circumstances suggest, or when a majority of ministers and communities of faith in that diocese request a Diocesan Synod. The delegates who represented their communities of faith at the previous Annual Synod shall serve in the same capacity at a Diocesan Synod. If a local community of faith determines to select other delegates, the diocesan bishop and the Secretary of the Lutheran Church – International shall be notified in writing.

Article V, Section 6.2: Diocesan Bishops

A bishop of the Lutheran Church - International shall serve as the Diocesan Bishop to chair diocesan meetings and provide the diocesan ministers and communities of faith with oversight and pastoral care on behalf of the Lutheran Church - International. Whenever possible, he should be resident in the territory of the diocese. Upon a vacancy in the office of Diocesan Bishop in a diocese, the Archbishop may appoint a bishop or pastor to serve as a representative of the Archbishop in the diocese. The Archbishop may call a Diocesan Synod chaired by the Archbishop or a representative of the Archbishop to nominate a new Diocesan Bishop by ecclesiastical written ballot (Article IV, Section 5.3). The nomination shall be reported immediately to the Archbishop and to the Executive Board, and shall constitute the nomination of a candidate for bishop for election at the next Annual Synod. The appointed representative of the Archbishop shall serve only until the installation of the Bishop-elect. The Bishop shall be installed by the Archbishop either at his Ordination or at another convenient time.

Article V, Section 6.3: Missionary Bishops, Missionary Dioceses

Unless a bishop serves in a specific Diocese (Article V, Sections 6.1 and 6.2), he is designated a Missionary Bishop whose ministry is to seek to spread the Gospel anywhere in the world and to assist at the direction of the Archbishop in organizing new ministries and encouraging pastors who show interest in the Lutheran Church - International. There may be more than one missionary bishop; in this way the disparate regions of the world are given ministry. A missionary bishop is considered a pastor of the Lutheran World Parish with pastoral care responsibility for those not under the care of other bishops, who reside in the territory assigned to the missionary bishop. Missionary Dioceses may be established by the Executive Board for areas of mission development and may issue a Call stating the rights, duties and responsibilities of leadership to a bishop as the Missionary Bishop or to a pastor as the Missionary Pastor or Missionary Dean.

Article V, Section 7: Property, Ownership and Disposition of

The Lutheran Church - International is organized exclusively for charitable, religious, educational, and scientific purposes (Article III), including the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under section 501(c)(3) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code. In the event of dissolution of the Lutheran Church - International, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal government or to a state or local government, for a public purpose. Any assets not disposed of shall be disposed of by the Court of Common Pleas of the county in which the principal office of the organization is then located, exclusively for purposes or to an organization or organizations which are organized and operated exclusively for purposes as the Court shall determine.

Article VI**THE ARCHBISHOP****Article VI, Section 1: Archbishop, Office and Authority**

One pastor or bishop of the Lutheran Church - International shall be elected to serve as Archbishop and shall be the chief administrative and executive officer of the Lutheran Church - International without term until his death, resignation, or removal. The Archbishop shall chair the Executive Board (Article V, Section 5.2). If the Archbishop becomes the subject of charges which could result in his removal from office, the matter would be handled by the Executive Board (Article IV, Section 10.2), with authority to temporarily suspend him until the next Annual Synod, the duties being filled as described in Article V, Section 5.3.

Article VI, Section 2: Archbishop, Requirements for the Office

The Archbishop shall be a God-fearing man, pious and firmly established in evangelical and missionary zeal, of good judgment, just, and with a strong desire for fellowship among God's people. He shall give evidence by life and testimony that he is a sinner saved by God's grace, with an earnest desire and passion to be true to the heavenly vision of his calling and service to the Lord Jesus Christ. The Archbishop, shall be an ordained bishop or pastor of the Lutheran Church – International prior to his election as Archbishop.

Article VI, Section 3: Archbishop, Duties of the Office

The Archbishop shall serve as the chair of the Executive Board and the chief administrative and executive officer of the Lutheran Church – International, and he shall oversee the life and work of the Lutheran Church - International in ways that glorify Jesus Christ. The responsibilities of the office of Archbishop are:

- a. preside at the Annual Synod (Article V, Section 1);
- b. preside at meetings of the Executive Board (Article V, Section 5.1);
- c. give pastoral oversight to all ministers and communities of faith in the Lutheran Church - International, and particularly to the other bishops in their oversight responsibilities and care of souls;
- d. preside or appoint another bishop to preside at the Ordination of candidates for the Orders of Deacons and Pastors approved by the Executive Board of the Lutheran Church - International;
- e. preside at the Ordination of Bishops of the Lutheran Church - International, with other bishops as required;
- f. report his activities and recommendations to the Executive Board and to the Annual Synod;
- g. exercise general supervision of all activities and responsibilities of the Lutheran Church – International;
- h. fulfill the duties of the office as described elsewhere in the Constitution and By-Laws of the Lutheran Church - International; and
- i. nominate or appoint, depending on the position, those needed in various positions of leadership in the Lutheran Church – International.

Article VI, Section 4: Expansion of the Church

Acting under the authority and guidance of the Executive Board, the Archbishop shall oversee the administration of the Lutheran Church - International as structured including the expansion of mission and ministry. He may specify areas of mission outreach and development and assign leadership to a bishop to serve as a Missionary Bishop. When needed, the Archbishop may assign leadership to a coordinating pastor or dean.

Article VI, Section 5: Archbishop, Election of

When it is known that in the next year a new Archbishop is to be elected, the House of Bishops shall provide assistance to the Executive Board and to the Annual Synod in identifying candidates for the Office of Archbishop. Nominations shall be made by ecclesiastical written ballot for this office at the Annual Synod by all entitled to vote. Only those who are currently pastors or bishops of the Lutheran Church - International entitled to vote and hold office are eligible to be candidates, except that a pastor should have served in the office of Pastor for at least ten years. If a pastor is nominated who is not a bishop, he shall fulfill all the requirements for the election and ordination of a bishop (Article IV, Sections 5.2, 5.3, 5.4). No more than three nominees shall be selected, balloting taking place until only three candidates remain. During the following year a time of discernment is held. Candidates who remain in nomination at the Annual Synod of election shall be the only nominees allowed. The election shall be conducted as described in Article IV, Section 5.3: a unanimous written vote of the House of Bishops present and voting, a three-quarters majority of the House of Clergy present and voting, and a simple majority of the House of Delegates present and voting shall constitute election of the candidate. A pastor elected Archbishop shall be ordained a Bishop and installed as Archbishop at the same service. A bishop elected Archbishop shall be installed at the main liturgy of the Annual Synod at which he is elected. The installation shall be conducted by the outgoing Archbishop, or if

the outgoing Archbishop is unable, by the longest-serving other Lutheran Church - International bishop present at that Annual Synod. The authority to preside over administrative matters comes with the installation. If a pastor is elected and the installation delayed until ordination as a Bishop, the Annual Synod may vote to name the Archbishop-elect “Apostolic Administrator” and to serve in that administrative capacity until his ordination as a Bishop and installation as Archbishop. If no candidate is elected and the Holy Spirit leads the Annual Synod to a candidate not previously nominated, a unanimous vote of all three Houses is required for election. If no election has been completed, the procedure begins anew.

Article VI, Section 6: Archbishop, Incapacity or Inability to Fulfill Duties

If the Archbishop is unable to fulfill the duties of the office, and at the request of the Archbishop or by action of the Executive Board in consultation with medical and legal counsel, an interim Apostolic Administrator elected by a two-thirds written vote of the Executive Board shall temporarily assume both the administrative and spiritual duties of the Archbishop until the Archbishop can resume the responsibilities of the office or until the next Annual Synod (Article V, Section 5.3). Upon the death, resignation, or removal of the Archbishop, the Apostolic Administrator shall serve in the place of the Archbishop until a new Archbishop is elected and installed.

Article VII
VICE PRESIDENT

Article VII, Section 1: Vice President, Duties of

The Vice President of the Lutheran Church-International shall be a delegate of the House of Delegates elected as its Chair at each Annual Synod for a one-year term (Article V, Section 2) beginning immediately upon election. The Vice-President shall be eligible for re-election without limit of terms, if currently a member of the House of Delegates at the electing Annual Synod. The Vice-President shall serve (Article V, Section 2) unless removed from office (Article IV, Section 10.2). In the absence of the Archbishop, the Vice-President shall preside at meetings of the Executive Board or the Annual Synod.

Article VII, Section 2: Vice President, Vacancy of

If a vacancy occurs in the office of Vice President, the Executive Board shall appoint a member of the House of Delegates at the last Annual Synod to serve as Vice President pro tem with all rights and privileges of the office until the election of a Vice-President at the next Annual Synod.

Article VIII
SECRETARY

Article VIII, Section 1: Secretary, Requirements for the Office

The Secretary of the Lutheran Church - International shall be either a minister of the Lutheran Church - International or a person in a member community of faith and shall be a person of faith and dedication to the work of the Lord and the ministry and mission of the Lutheran Church - International.

Article VIII, Section 2: Secretary, Election and Term of Office

The Secretary of the Lutheran Church - International shall be elected upon nomination by the Annual Synod of the Lutheran Church - International by majority vote of all Houses voting jointly. The term of office shall be four years, and the incumbent may be re-elected without limit of terms. The full terms of office of the Secretary and the Treasurer shall begin two years apart. In the case of vacancy in the office of Secretary, the Archbishop shall appoint a qualified person to serve as Interim Secretary until the next Annual Synod, at which time a person shall be elected to serve for the remaining term of the Secretary. If the term of the Secretary would have expired at that Annual Synod, the election is for the full term.

Article VIII, Section 3: Secretary, Duties

The Duties of the Secretary of the Lutheran Church - International shall be:

- a. record, maintain, report, and distribute minutes of all official meetings and decisions of the Lutheran Church - International to its membership promptly;
- b. maintain, update, publish and distribute an official current roster of members at least annually;
- c. maintain, propose amendments to, and distribute as required, in cooperation with the Executive Board, the most current version of the Lutheran Church - International Constitution and By-Laws;
- d. maintain and present at Annual Synods a current listing of clergy ordination anniversaries;
- e. at the direction of the Archbishop, to assist all called Lutheran Church - International members, the Executive Board, and prospective calling congregations in the publication, completion, and distribution of all necessary call documents;
- f. oversee and facilitate the renewal of credentials of members;
- g. maintain and oversee storage of any historical documents, records, or files for the Lutheran Church - International organizational structure, and to assist the Executive Board and the Archbishop with any administrative or clerical activities as required;
- h. in the absence of the Archbishop or the Vice-President, the Secretary shall preside at meetings of the Executive Board or the Annual Synod.

Article IX
TREASURER

Article IX, Section 1: Treasurer, Requirements for the Office

The Treasurer of the Lutheran Church - International shall be either a minister of the Lutheran Church - International or a person in a member community of faith and shall be a person of faith and dedication to the work of the Lord and the ministry and mission of the Lutheran Church - International.

Article IX, Section 2: Treasurer, Election and Term of Office

The Treasurer of the Lutheran Church - International shall be elected upon nomination by the Annual Synod of the Lutheran Church - International by majority vote of all Houses voting jointly. The term of office shall be four years, and the incumbent may be re-elected without limit of terms. The full terms of office of the Treasurer and the Secretary shall begin two years apart. In the case of vacancy in the office of Treasurer, the Archbishop shall appoint a qualified person to serve as Interim Treasurer until the next Annual Synod, at which time a person shall be elected to serve for the remaining term of the Treasurer. If the term of the Treasurer would have expired at that Annual Synod, the election is for the full term.

Article IX, Section 3: Treasurer, Duties

The Duties of the Treasurer of the Lutheran Church - International shall be:

- a. maintain up to date financial records on a quarterly basis and initiate an annual audit of the financial records by an independent accredited financial advisor or institution;
- b. disburse funds as requested for any expenditures approved by the Executive Board or Annual Synod;
- c. consult with the Archbishop and other officers when questions arise concerning any particular disbursements;
- d. share the current financial situation of the Lutheran Church - International with members of the Executive Board;
- e. oversee and facilitate the annual renewal of the required legal documentation that shall insure ongoing non-profit organizational status with the U. S. Federal Government;
- f. prepare an annual report for the Annual Synod of all financial activity.

Article X**AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION****Article X, Section 1: Constitution, Amendments**

Amendments to this Constitution shall be consistent with Article II of this Constitution and the Apostolic, Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds, the unaltered Augsburg Confession and the Lutheran Confessions in the Book of Concord in the sense that these confessions themselves declare in the Preface of the Formula of Concord.

Article X, Section 2: Constitution, Procedure for Amendments

Proposed amendments to the Constitution shall be presented in writing to the Executive Board for review, consideration and recommendation at least ninety (90) days prior to the Annual Synod at which the amendments will be presented for adoption. The Executive Board shall prepare and present recommendations regarding the proposed amendments to the Annual Synod, and notify in writing all those with authority to vote at the Annual Synod of the proposed amendments in detail at least thirty (30) days prior to the Annual Synod.

Article X, Section 3: Constitution, Grammatical or Non-Substantive Minor Amendments

Amendments to the Constitution of a grammatical or minor nature, if in the opinion of the Archbishop they are determined not to be changes to the substance of a section or item, may be adopted by the Executive Board by a unanimous vote. A report of the changes shall be submitted to the following Annual Synod; if the changes are contested by the simple majority vote of all Houses voting together, they are null and void until discussed and voted upon at any business session of the Annual Synod in accord with Article X, Section 4.

Article X, Section 4: Constitution, Ratification and Adoption of Amendments

Proposed Amendments to the Constitution, with the recommendations from the Executive Board, shall be discussed during business at the Annual Synod. Because prior notice of an amendment is required, change in a proposed amendment is limited to the scope of the amendment, and any change in a proposed amendment shall require an affirmative vote by the Executive Board prior to the final vote at the Annual Synod. Amendments shall be approved if they receive a two-thirds affirmative vote by all Houses voting separately. Upon the declaration by the Archbishop, the amendments shall be approved and immediately in force.

Article XI**BY-LAWS AND AMENDMENTS TO THE BY-LAWS****Article XI, Section 1: By-Laws**

By-Laws may be adopted which are not in conflict with this Constitution, the Apostolic, Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds, the unaltered Augsburg Confession and the Lutheran Confessions in the Book of Concord in the sense that these confessions themselves declare in the Preface of the Formula of Concord.

Article XI, Section 2: By-Laws, Amendments

Proposed amendments to the By-Laws shall be presented in writing to the Executive Board for review, consideration and recommendation. Proposed amendments may be submitted prior to or during a business session of an Annual Synod.

Article XI, Section 3: By-Laws, Grammatical or Non-Substantive Minor Amendments

Amendments to the By-Laws of a grammatical or minor nature, if in the opinion of the Archbishop they are determined not to be changes to the substance of a section or item, may be adopted by the Executive Board by a unanimous vote. A report of the changes shall be submitted to the following Annual Synod; if the changes are contested by the simple majority vote of all Houses voting together, they are null and void until discussed and voted upon at any business session of the Annual Synod (Article XI, Section 4).

Article XI, Section 4: By-Laws, Ratification and Adoption of Amendments

Proposed amendments to the By-Laws, with the recommendations from the Executive Board, shall be discussed during business at the Annual Synod. Change in a proposed amendment to a By-Law may be considered but shall require an affirmative vote by the Executive Board prior to the final vote at the Annual Synod. Amendments shall be approved if they receive an affirmative majority vote of each House voting separately and a two-thirds affirmative vote by all Houses voting together. Upon the declaration by the Archbishop, the amendments shall be approved and immediately in force.

Article XII

PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

Article XII, Section 1: Parliamentary Authority

The rules contained in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall govern the Lutheran Church – International in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with the Constitution, By-Laws or other special rules of order the Lutheran Church – International may adopt.

[END OF CONSTITUTION]

[BY-LAWS continue on next page]

BY-LAWS - Lutheran Church - International (amended 2022)

By-Law 1: The Dioceses, Boundaries

The Dioceses of the Lutheran Church - International in North America are described as consisting of the following territory:

- a. The Northeastern Diocese consists of those ministers and communities of faith in the United States of America states of Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont; the Canadian provinces of New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, and that portion of Ontario south and east of the city of Greater Sudbury (south of latitude 46.973265° and east of longitude -81.597431°).
- b. The Mid-America Diocese consists of those ministers and communities of faith in the United States of America states of Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and the Canadian provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and that portion of Ontario north and west of the city of Greater Sudbury (north of latitude 46.973265° and west of longitude -81.597431°).
- c. The Southern Diocese consists of those ministers and communities of faith in the United States of America states of Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and the territories of the District of Columbia and the U. S. Virgin Islands.
- d. The Western Diocese consists of those ministers and communities of faith in the United States of America states of Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming, and the Canadian provinces of Alberta and British Columbia, and the Canadian territories of Northwest Territories, Nunavut and Yukon.

The formation and boundaries of a new diocese and a change in the geographical boundaries of an existing diocese may be altered to provide appropriate pastoral care. The Executive Board may change the boundaries temporarily by a two-thirds affirmative vote. The Executive Board shall report the changes to the next Annual Synod for approval by amendment of the By-Laws (Article XI, Sections 2 and 4). Those territories not embraced by a diocese herein described are under the pastoral care of the Archbishop or of a Missionary Bishop (or Missionary Pastor or Missionary Dean, if not a bishop) as assigned by the Archbishop. Missionary Dioceses may be established at any Executive Board meeting (Article V, Section 6.3) for areas of mission development and may be assigned by the Archbishop to the leadership of a Missionary Bishop or a coordinating pastor.

By-Law 2: Interchurch Relationships

- a. The Lutheran Church-International may enter into cooperative and non-binding relationships with other church bodies to promote an outreach of ministry and to strengthen the existing ministry of the Lutheran Church – International.
- b. All inter-church Lutheran and ecumenical relationships involving the Lutheran Church – International shall be approved by a majority vote of the Executive Board and will be coordinated through the Office of the Archbishop of the Lutheran Church – International.
- c. The Lutheran Church-International may enter into a binding relationship with another church body (traditionally referred to as “Altar and Pulpit Fellowship”) when the confession of faith and practices are harmonious with our own. A binding relationship shall be presented by the Executive Board for approval at an Annual Synod by a two-thirds majority of all Houses voting separately.
- d. Termination of the relationship entered into with another church body can be ended mutually or unilaterally by either party. A request for, or notice of the termination, shall be reported to the next Annual Synod.

By-Law 3: Emeritus Servants

Upon the recommendation of the Archbishop and the Executive Board for approval at an Annual Synod, a person who has provided exemplary service and time to the Lutheran Church – International can be publicly recognized and granted the honorary title of “Emeritus” without conferring any further rights or privileges. The member shall continue to have the same obligations of membership and responsibilities as all other members.

By-Law 4: Member Dues

An Annual Synod may establish the payment of annual dues for the financial support of the Lutheran Church – International as an obligation upon all members as defined in Article IV, Section 1. The dues for ministerial members and the dues for communities of faith do not have to be the same. Diocesan Bishops, Missionary Bishops and the Archbishop can recommend annually to the Executive Board that payment of the dues be waived on a case-by-case basis as necessary and appropriate.

By-Law 5: Disqualification of Individual Membership due to Criminal Conviction

Applicants for Membership:

- a All applicants for ministerial membership will submit to a criminal background check.
- b If the applicant has been convicted of a misdemeanor or felony offense (United States of America) or an indictable offense (Canada) or a comparable offense in another country, the applicant will be required to provide objective assurance from a third party qualified and competent in assessing criminal risk that the applicant is at a low level of risk to commit the same or different offense in the future. Such assurance will not guarantee admission to ministerial membership.
- c If the applicant is currently under investigation for such an offense or if, during the application process, the applicant is charged with such an offense, that applicant’s approval process will be suspended until resolution of the pending offense(s). Confidentiality may be requested and should be maintained whenever possible until the case is adjudicated.
- d Any applicant who has been convicted of an offense involving abuse or neglect of another person will be automatically disqualified.

Current Members:

- e Any ministerial member who has been charged with a misdemeanor or felony offense (United States of America) or an indictable offense (Canada) or a comparable offense in another country will report this charge immediately to his/her immediate supervisor, who will report this charge immediately to the Executive Board.
- f Any ministerial member who has been charged with such an offense involving abuse, neglect, or any other type of harm toward another person will be immediately suspended from any offices or duties pertaining to the LC-I.
- g If the charges against the ministerial member are dropped or if the ministerial member is found not guilty of the charges, petition for reinstatement may be made to the Executive Board, following the guidelines of Article IV, Section 7 of the Constitution.
- h If the ministerial member is found guilty of such offenses, the suspension will become permanent and the member will be removed from the ministerial roster of the LC-I. The removed member may re-apply for membership under the conditions stated above for applicants.
- i Confidentiality may be requested and should be maintained whenever possible until the case is adjudicated.

[END OF BY-LAWS]

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