

**GOVERNING DOCUMENTS**  
**CONSTITUTION**  
**BYLAWS**  
**CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS**

**REFORMATION LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
**COLUMBIA, SC**  
**ADOPTED**  
**APRIL 30, 2017**



**Evangelical Lutheran  
Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

**BASED ON  
MODEL CONSTITUTION FOR CONGREGATIONS  
OF THE  
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA®  
2016**

**INTRODUCTION to the *Model Constitution for Congregations***

The *Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, like the other governing documents of this church, reflects the theology and polity of this church as it organizes itself to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, share the sacraments, reach out to the neighbor with good news and share the love of God in the world. Each expression of this church — churchwide, synod, and congregation — is held together in a relationship of interdependence that encourages each to respond to its context. These documents also demonstrate our commitment to seeing ourselves with others as part of the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. As such, the *Model Constitution for Congregations* is deeply rooted in Scripture, the Lutheran Confessions, and the history of this church and its predecessors.

The *Model Constitution for Congregations* was adopted (April 30, 1987) by the Constituting Convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, as required by the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. This current edition of the *Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* contains changes adopted by all churchwide assemblies (since 1989), including the fourteenth Churchwide Assembly in 2016. It is consistent with the requirements of the governing documents of the ELCA's churchwide organization and synods, and it provides organizational flexibility to recognize the context of local congregations.

➤ **Required provisions:** Sections of this constitution marked by an asterisk [\*] are required when a congregation amends its governing documents. These sections must be used without alteration or amendment of the text in any manner (*i.e.*, neither additions nor deletions are permissible). This requirement is based on provision 9.52. in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. This provision requires that when a congregation of this church “wishes to amend any provision of its governing documents, the governing documents of that congregation shall be so amended to conform to 9.25.b.” in the churchwide constitution. Provisions in the *Model Constitution for Congregations* identified by an asterisk [\*] are those required under ELCA constitutional provision 9.25.b.

➤ **Review by synod:** Each congregation of this church is to provide a copy of its governing documents, and any amendments thereto, to its synod. In accordance with ELCA bylaw 9.53.03., amendments to a congregation constitution become effective *only* when approved by the synod. This bylaw provides:

All proposed changes in the constitution or incorporation documents of a congregation shall be referred to the synod with which the congregation is affiliated. The synod shall notify the congregation of its decision to approve or disapprove the proposed changes; the changes shall go into effect upon notification that the synod has approved them. The synod shall recognize that congregations may organize themselves in a manner which they deem most appropriate.

No governing document amendment will be approved by a synod if it conflicts with the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. In order to meet constitutional requirements and to avoid potential problems, all proposed amendments to a congregation's constitutional provisions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions should be submitted to the synod for review.

➤ **Amendment consistent with the *Model Constitution for Congregations*:** A congregation that amends its constitution to be in conformity with the *Model Constitution for Congregations* will report these changes to its synod. The amendments become effective upon adoption by the congregation, \*C16.04. While synod approval is not required, it is wise to work with the synod in preparing to present these amendments to the congregational meeting.

➤ **Codification explanation:** The *Model Constitution for Congregations* is organized into chapters by general subject matter and codified as (a) constitutional provisions, (b) bylaws, and (c) continuing resolutions. Each provision is preceded by a capital “C.” If a constitutional provision is mandatory, it will be preceded by an asterisk, “\*C.”

a. Constitutional provisions are codified with two sets of numbers, preceded by a “C”: the chapter number, followed by a period, and a two-digit number. A period follows the two-digit number. Thus, one required constitutional provision related to “Membership” in Chapter 8 is codified as “\*C8.02.” A provision in Chapter 12 relating to a report by the Congregation Council to the congregation at an annual meeting is codified as “C12.09.” Constitutional provisions are adopted and amended in accordance with Chapter 16 titled “Amendments.”

b. Bylaw provisions follow constitutional provisions to which they apply. They are not intended to be organized in a separate document at the end of the constitutional provisions. Bylaws are codified with three sets of numbers: the chapter number (preceded by a “C”), the related constitutional provision number, and a two-digit number. There are periods after the chapter number, after the reference to the constitutional provision, and

after the bylaw number. Thus, a bylaw provision related to “Membership” would be codified as “C8.02.01.” A bylaw relating to the contents of an annual report by the Congregation Council to the congregation at an annual meeting would be codified as “C12.09.01.” Because bylaws and continuing resolutions normally relate to specific practices and details of each congregation’s organization, operation, and life, there is not a model set of bylaws or continuing resolutions. Thus, each congregation has discretion and may develop its own bylaws and continuing resolutions, including bylaws and continuing resolutions under required constitutional provisions, but no such bylaw or continuing resolution may conflict with constitutional provisions in the *Model Constitution for Congregations, the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, or the constitution of the synod, as indicated in \*C6.03.e. Bylaws are adopted and amended in accordance with Chapters 16 and 17.

- c. Continuing resolutions are intended to provide descriptions of operational patterns and practices or of the ongoing responsibilities of committees or other units within the organizational structure of the congregation. They follow the relevant constitutional provision or bylaw to which they refer. Continuing resolutions also are codified with three sets of numbers, except that the third set is preceded by a capital letter. Thus, a continuing resolution describing congregational committees in Chapter 13 might be numbered “C13.07A13.” The initial numbers “C13.07” indicate that the continuing resolution relates to the designated constitutional provision, which in this case provides that the duties of congregational committees may be specified in bylaws or continuing resolutions. The final letter and numbers “A13” designate that this is the first continuing resolution “A” and the year that it was adopted, in this example 2013. Continuing resolutions are adopted and amended in accordance with Chapter 18. Unlike constitutional provisions and bylaws which are adopted by the congregation at a legally called and conducted meeting, continuing resolutions may be adopted either by a congregational meeting or by the Congregation Council.

➤ **Missing numbers:** You will notice that certain numbers are missing from the numbering sequence in some chapters. These omissions are intentional. For example, in some chapters the number “.10.” and multiples thereof have been reserved for possible use as section headings in future editions.

➤ **Selection of options:** Alternatives are provided in some places within the *Model Constitution for Congregations*. Alternatives are noted by brackets or blank lines. For example, constitutional provision \*C9.01. offers the alternative of election of a call committee by the congregation or by the Congregation Council. Only one alternative should be chosen in each instance where brackets appear in the text. In other provisions, alternative provisions are provided. Thus, in Chapters 11 and 12, regarding “Officers” and “Congregation Council,” options are provided separated by the word “or.” Each congregation should select one of those options, subject to approval through the synod’s constitutional review process. Where a blank line appears, such as in C1.01. or C10.02., the appropriate word, phrase, or number determined by the individual congregation should be inserted.

➤ **References to church:** In the governing documents, “Church” with a capital letter refers to the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. The words “church” or “this church” in lowercase letters refer to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The specific congregation may be identified, as provided in C1.02., as “this congregation.”

➤ **Guidelines:** A list of guidelines for a congregation engaging in review and amendment of its constitution is available through each synod office and at ELCA.org.

➤ **Consultation and concluding comments:** Each synod has a process to review proposed amendments to congregational constitutions. The work of both congregations in amending their governing documents and the synod in reviewing proposed amendments is facilitated by consultation and cooperation *before* proposed amendments are acted upon by the congregation. In addition, each congregation should establish a process for periodic review of its governing documents. You are encouraged to contact your synod office to assist your congregation in its periodic review of governing document provisions and to assess whether problems may exist with respect to proposed amendments.

The important task of amending a constitution is challenging. It is, however, an essential endeavor that merits thoughtful work. In addressing your constitutional responsibilities, may God grant you and your colleagues wisdom, discernment, and commitment to the unity of this church in faithful witness to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Secretary Wm Chris Boerger  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
August 17, 2016

## Governing Documents for Reformation Lutheran Church, Columbia SC

Constitution	coded C or *C + Chapter # + Section # (ie.: C5.02 or *C5.02 required by ELCA))
Bylaws	coded C + Chapter # + Section # + Bylaw # (ie.: C12.01.04)
Continuing Resolutions	coded C + Chapter# + Section# + CR letter & year (ie.: C13.02.A16)

### \*PREAMBLE

We, baptized members of the Church of Christ, responding in faith to the call of the Holy Spirit through the Gospel, desiring to unite together to preach the Word, administer the sacraments, and carry out God's mission, do hereby adopt this constitution and solemnly pledge ourselves to be governed by its provisions. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

### Chapter 1.

#### NAME AND INCORPORATION

- C1.01.** The name of this congregation shall be Reformation Lutheran Church.
- C1.02.** For the purpose of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws, the congregation of Reformation Lutheran Church is herein after designated as "this congregation."
- C1.11.** This congregation shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of South Carolina.

### Chapter 2.

#### CONFESSION OF FAITH

- \*C2.01.** This congregation confesses the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- \*C2.02.** This congregation confesses Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and the Gospel as the power of God for the salvation of all who believe.
  - a. Jesus Christ is the Word of God incarnate, through whom everything was made and through whose life, death, and resurrection God fashions a new creation.
  - b. The proclamation of God's message to us as both Law and Gospel is the Word of God, revealing judgment and mercy through word and deed, beginning with the Word in creation, continuing in the history of Israel, and centering in all its fullness in the person and work of Jesus Christ.
  - c. The canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the written Word of God. Inspired by God's Spirit speaking through their authors, they record and announce God's revelation centering in Jesus Christ. Through them God's Spirit speaks to us to create and sustain Christian faith and fellowship for service in the world.
- \*C2.03.** This congregation accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life.
- \*C2.04.** This congregation accepts the Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds as true declarations of the faith of this congregation.
- \*C2.05.** This congregation accepts the Unaltered Augsburg Confession as a true witness to the Gospel, acknowledging as one with it in faith and doctrine all churches that likewise accept the teachings of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession.
- \*C2.06.** This congregation accepts the other confessional writings in the Book of Concord, namely, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles and the Treatise, the Small Catechism, the Large Catechism, and the Formula of Concord, as further valid interpretations of the faith of the Church.
- \*C2.07.** This congregation confesses the Gospel, recorded in the Holy Scripture and confessed in the ecumenical creeds and Lutheran confessional writings, as the power of God to create and sustain the Church for God's mission in the world.

---

\* Required provision

### **Chapter 3.**

#### **NATURE OF THE CHURCH**

- \*C3.01. All power in the Church belongs to our Lord Jesus Christ, its head. All actions of this congregation are to be carried out under his rule and authority.
- \*C3.02. This church confesses the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church and is resolved to serve Christian unity throughout the world.
- \*C3.03. The Church exists both as an inclusive fellowship and as local congregations gathered for worship and Christian service. Congregations find their fulfillment in the universal community of the Church, and the universal Church exists in and through congregations. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, therefore, derives its character and powers both from the sanction and representation of its congregations and from its inherent nature as an expression of the broader fellowship of the faithful. In length, it acknowledges itself to be in the historic continuity of the communion of saints; in breadth, it expresses the fellowship of believers and congregations in our day.
- \*C3.04. This church, inspired and led by the Holy Spirit, participates in The Lutheran World Federation as a global communion of churches, engaging in faithful witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ and in service for the sake of God's mission in the world.
- \*C3.05. The name Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA or "this church") as used herein refers in general references to this whole church, including its three expressions: congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization. The name Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is also the name of the corporation of the churchwide organization to which specific references may be made herein.

### **Chapter 4.**

#### **STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

- \*C4.01. The Church is a people created by God in Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, called and sent to bear witness to God's creative, redeeming, and sanctifying activity in the world.
- \*C4.02. To participate in God's mission, this congregation as a part of the Church shall:
  - a. Worship God in proclamation of the Word and administration of the sacraments and through lives of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, witness, and service.
  - b. Proclaim God's saving Gospel of justification by grace for Christ's sake through faith alone, according to the apostolic witness in the Holy Scripture, preserving and transmitting the Gospel faithfully to future generations.
  - c. Carry out Christ's Great Commission by reaching out to all people to bring them to faith in Christ and by doing all ministry with a global awareness consistent with the understanding of God as Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier of all.
  - d. Serve in response to God's love to meet human needs, caring for the sick and the aged, advocating dignity and justice for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, 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.
- \*C4.03. To fulfill these purposes, this congregation shall:
  - a. Provide services of worship at which the Word of God is preached and the sacraments are administered.
  - b. Provide pastoral care and assist all members to participate in this ministry.
  - c. Challenge, equip, and support all members in carrying out their calling in their daily lives and in their congregation.
  - d. Teach the Word of God.
  - e. Witness to the reconciling Word of God in Christ, reaching out to all people.
  - f. Respond to human need, work for justice and peace, care for the sick and the suffering, and participate responsibly in society.
  - g. Motivate its members to provide financial support for the congregation's ministry and the ministry of other parts of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

- h. Foster and participate in interdependent relationships with other congregations, the synod, and the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- i. Foster and participate in ecumenical relationships consistent with churchwide policy.
- \*C4.04. This congregation shall develop an organizational structure to be described in the bylaws. The 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 on the Congregation Committees.
- \*C4.05. This congregation shall, from time to time, adopt a mission statement which will provide specific direction for its programs.

**C4.05.A11. Mission Statement**

*Our Affirmation of Welcome*

*Reformation, a congregation of Christ's Church, welcomes everyone to join with us in a journey of faith. We are committed to providing worship, programs, ministries and pastoral care to all, regardless of age, ability, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, religious background, color, economic status, or national origin. Everyone is welcome in this place, where the love of God is the foundation of all that we say and do.*

*There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male or female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:28)*

*Our Purpose*

*To serve our community near and far with the love of Christ by doing justice, by showing loving kindness, and by walking humbly with God (Micah 6:8)*

*Our Guiding Principles*

- *Radical Hospitality (Luke 7:36-47)*
- *Diligent Discipleship (Matt 28:19-20, Gal 5:22-23, Acts 1:8)*
- *Diversity is a sign of life (John 4:7-15, 27-30)*
- *Caring for all God creates (Psalm 8)*
- *Everyone has something to offer (I Corinthians 12: 1-11)*

- \*C4.06. References herein to the nature of the relationship between the three expressions of this church—congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization—as being interdependent or as being in a partnership relationship describe the mutual responsibility of these expressions in God's mission and the fulfillment of the purposes of this church as described in this chapter, and do not imply or describe the creation of partnerships, co-ventures, agencies, or other legal relationships recognized in civil law.

**Chapter 5.**

**POWERS OF THE CONGREGATION**

- \*C5.01. The powers of this congregation are those necessary to fulfill its purpose.
- \*C5.02. The powers of this congregation are vested in the Congregation Meeting called and conducted as provided in this constitution and bylaws.
- \*C5.03. Only such authority as is delegated to the 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 provided in Chapter 9;
  - b. terminate the call of a pastor as provided in Chapter 9;
  - c. call a minister of Word and Service;
  - d. terminate the call of a minister of Word and Service in conformity with the constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;

- e. adopt amendments to the constitution, as provided in Chapter 16, amendments to the bylaws, as specified in Chapter 17, and continuing resolutions, as provided in Chapter 18;
  - f. approve the annual budget;
  - g. acquire real and personal property by gift, devise, purchase, or other lawful means;
  - h. hold title to and use its property for any and all activities consistent with its purpose;
  - i. sell, mortgage, lease, transfer, or otherwise dispose of its property by any lawful means;
  - j. elect its Congregation Council and require the members of the Congregation Council to carry out their duties in accordance with the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions; and
  - k. terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as provided in Chapter 6.
- \*C5.04.** This congregation shall choose from among its voting members laypersons to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly as well as persons to represent it at meetings of any conference, cluster, coalition, or other area subdivision of which it is a member. The number of persons to be elected by the congregation and other qualifications shall be as prescribed in guidelines established by the *South Carolina Synod* of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- C5.05.** This congregation shall have an endowment fund that will operate as specified in this congregation's bylaws and continuing resolutions. The purpose of the endowment fund is to provide for work beyond the operational budget of this congregation.
- C5.05.01. The Congregation Council shall establish and maintain a separate fund that shall be known as the Endowment Fund. The purpose of this fund shall be to enhance the mission outreach of Reformation Lutheran Church. All assets of the fund shall be held in the name of the Evangelical Reformation Lutheran Church. Monies from the Endowment Fund shall not be used or transferred to the General Operating Fund; the goal is to grow and produce an annual income, except where designated otherwise in the terms of the gift. Distributions shall be done according to the distribution agreement including the distributions generated by the fund, which are held in trust on behalf of Reformation Lutheran Church. If endowment fund monies are transferred to the General Operating Fund, or to other church ministries or needs, not as specified elsewhere in Chapter 5, the transfer shall be considered a loan, and the loan process will include documentation and terms such that the interest "rate of return" on the loan is equivalent to the return the fund is receiving via its investment strategy, with a minimum of 2% interest, per annum. The Congregational Council may request a loan up to \$25,000 of the endowment fund by majority vote of the Congregation Council. Requests for all require written notification to the congregation.
- C5.05.02. The fund receives bequests, charitable remainders and other trusts, charitable gift annuities, assignments of life insurance, retirement funds and transfers of property (cash, stocks, bonds and real estate), which are designated for the fund by the donor.
- Undesignated gifts are disbursed at the discretion of Congregation Council.
- The Congregation Council has the right to refuse a gift that fails to meet the gift acceptance policy.
- C5.05.03. Earnings from the fund will be considered for distribution annually. The annual recommended disbursement from the fund shall be 5%, but not to exceed the prior year's earnings as of December 31. The annual distribution(s) from the fund shall be disbursed in accordance with the following priorities:
- a. A target of not less than 20% for Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) churchwide ministries and/or the SC Synod as the Committee determines;
  - b. The remaining 80% may be used in any of the following categories:
    - Outreach into the local community.
    - Extraordinary programs and other ministry initiatives within the congregation.
    - Extraordinary maintenance.
    - Any other need determined by the Endowment Committee.
- C5.05.04. The Congregation members of Reformation Lutheran Church shall elect an Endowment Committee which shall have custodial responsibility for the Endowment Fund. The Endowment Fund Committee shall consist of six voting members of the congregation and the pastor(s) serving under

call. Members of the committee should be mission minded and have the love of caring for others. They need not to have knowledge of money management. The elected members of the committee shall serve three-year terms and shall be eligible to serve no more than two consecutive terms. Their terms shall be arranged so that one-third of the terms expire each year. Any vacancy that occurs may be filled by the Congregation Council in accord with C5.05.05.

- a. The Nominating Committee shall propose for election at the annual meeting three nominees, one of whom shall be an alternate, for the Endowment Fund Committee.
- b. The Endowment Fund Committee shall elect a chair, secretary and other officers as needed.
- c. The Treasurer of the congregation will maintain the books and financial records for the Endowment Fund Committee as a separate account of the congregation.

C5.05.05. The specific responsibilities of this committee shall be to manage the assets of the Endowment Fund in a wise and prudent manner; to encourage, receive and administer gifts to the fund; to receive and act upon requests for grants (annual disbursements) from the fund, advertise for and act upon requests for grants; to maintain an accurate accounting of the fund activity; provide an annual report of the administration of the Endowment Fund to the Congregation and the Congregation Council; and to celebrate the reception of gifts to the fund and the distribution where appropriate. Where it is appropriate to maintain the anonymity of the recipient, the distribution shall be made to the Pastor's Discretionary Fund and then to the recipient. The Congregational Council may also request status and activity reports from the Endowment Committee at any time during the year.

The Committee will seek third party management (e.g.) the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Foundation or a local financial institution.

C5.05.06. The Endowment Fund Committee shall meet at least annually, or as appropriate to provide the means, date and deadlines for grant recipients, review such request and make disbursements when applicable.

Where there is the possibility of a conflict of interest with a person serving on the Endowment Fund Committee, that person shall refrain from voting.

C5.05.07. In the event the congregation ceases to exist, the Endowment Fund shall be used to satisfy outstanding debt of the congregation with the remainder distributed for ministry in accord with C5.05.03.

## **Chapter 6.**

### **CHURCH AFFILIATION**

**\*C6.01.** This congregation shall be an interdependent part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or its successor, and of the South Carolina Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. This congregation is subject to the discipline of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

**\*C6.02.** This congregation accepts the Confession of Faith and agrees to the purposes of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and shall act in accordance with them.

**\*C6.03.** This congregation acknowledges its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in which:

- a. This congregation agrees to be responsible for its life as a Christian community.
- b. This congregation pledges its financial support and participation in the life and mission of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- c. This congregation agrees to call pastoral leadership from the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in accordance with its call procedures except in special circumstances and with the approval of the bishop of the synod. These special circumstances are limited either to calling a candidate approved for the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or to contracting for pastoral services with a minister of Word and Sacrament of a church body with which the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America officially has established a relationship of full communion.

- d. This congregation agrees to consider ministers of Word and Service for call to other staff positions in the congregation according to the procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
  - e. This congregation agrees to file this constitution and any subsequent changes to this constitution with the synod for review to ascertain that all of its provisions are in agreement with the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and with the constitution of the synod.
- \*C6.04.** Affiliation with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may be terminated as follows:
- a. This congregation takes action to dissolve.
  - b. This congregation ceases to exist.
  - c. This congregation is removed from membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America according to the procedures for discipline of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
  - d. This congregation follows the procedures outlined in \*C6.05.
- \*C6.05.** This congregation may terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America by the following procedure:
- a. A resolution indicating the intent to terminate its relationship must be adopted at a legally called and conducted special meeting of the congregation by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present. Such meeting may be held no sooner than 30 days after written notice of the meeting is received by the bishop of the synod, during which time the congregation shall consult with the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any. The times and manner of the consultation shall be determined by the bishop in consultation with the Congregation Council. Unless he or she is a voting member of the congregation, the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any, shall have voice but not vote at the meeting.
  - b. The secretary of the congregation shall submit a copy of the resolution to the bishop, attesting that the special meeting was legally called and conducted and certifying the outcome of the vote, and shall mail a copy of the resolution to voting members of the congregation. This notice shall be submitted within 10 days after the resolution has been adopted.
  - c. The bishop of the synod and the congregation shall continue in consultation, as specified in paragraph a. above, during a period of at least 90 days after receipt by the synod of the notice as specified in paragraph b. above.
  - d. If the congregation, after such consultation, still seeks to terminate its relationship, such action may be taken at a legally called and conducted special meeting by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present. Notice of the meeting shall be mailed to all voting members and to the bishop at least 10 days in advance of the meeting. Unless he or she is a voting member of the congregation, the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any, shall have voice but not vote at the meeting.
  - e. A copy of the resolution, attesting that the special meeting was legally called and conducted and certifying the outcome of the vote, shall be sent to the bishop within 10 days after the resolution has been adopted, at which time the relationship between the congregation and this church shall be terminated subject to paragraphs g., h., and i. below. Unless this notification to the bishop also certifies that the congregation has voted by a two-thirds vote to affiliate with another Lutheran denomination, the congregation will be conclusively presumed to be an independent or non-Lutheran church.
  - f. Notice of termination shall be forwarded by the bishop to the secretary of the ELCA, who shall report the termination to the Churchwide Assembly.
  - g. This congregation shall abide by these covenants by and among the three expressions of this church:
    - 1) Congregations seeking to terminate their relationship with this church which fail or refuse to comply with each of the foregoing provisions in \*C6.05. shall be required to receive Synod Council approval before terminating their membership in this church.
    - 2) Congregations which had been members of the Lutheran Church in America shall be required, in addition to complying with the foregoing provisions in \*C6.05., to receive synodical approval before terminating their membership in this church.
    - 3) Congregations established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be required, in addition to complying with the foregoing provisions in \*C6.05., to satisfy all financial obligations to this church and receive Synod Council approval before terminating their membership in this church.
  - h. If this congregation fails to achieve the required two-thirds vote of voting members present at the congregation's first meeting as specified in paragraph a. above, another special meeting to consider termination of relationship with this church may be called no sooner than six months after that first

meeting. If this congregation fails to achieve the required two-thirds vote of voting members present at the congregation's second meeting as specified in paragraph d. above, another attempt to consider termination of relationship with this church must follow all requirements of \*C6.05. and may begin no sooner than six months after that second meeting.

- \*C6.06. If this congregation considers relocation, it shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located and the appropriate unit of the churchwide organization before any steps are taken leading to such action. The approval of the Synod Council shall be received before any such action is effected.
- \*C6.07. If this congregation considers developing an additional site to be used regularly for worship, it shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located and the appropriate unit of the churchwide organization before any steps are taken leading to such action.

## Chapter 7.

### PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

- \*C7.01. If this congregation ceases to exist, title to undisposed property shall pass to the South Carolina Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- \*C7.02. If this congregation is removed from membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America according to its procedure for discipline, title to property shall continue to reside in this congregation.
- \*C7.03. If two-thirds of the voting members of this congregation present at a legally called and conducted special meeting of this congregation vote to transfer to another Lutheran church body, title to property shall continue to reside in this congregation, provided the process for termination of relationship in \*C6.05. has been followed. Before this congregation takes action to transfer to another Lutheran church body, it shall consult with representatives of the South Carolina Synod.
- \*C7.04. If two-thirds of the voting members of this congregation present at a legally called and conducted special meeting of this congregation vote to become independent or relate to a non-Lutheran church body and have followed the process for termination of relationship in \*C6.05., title to property of this congregation shall continue to reside in this congregation only with the consent of the Synod Council. The Synod Council, after consultation with this congregation by the established synodical process, may give approval to the request to become independent or to relate to a non-Lutheran church body, in which case title shall remain with the majority of this congregation. If the Synod Council fails to give such approval, title shall remain with those members who desire to continue as a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- C7.05. Notwithstanding the provisions of \*C7.02. and \*C7.03. above, where this congregation has received property from the synod pursuant to a deed or other instrument containing restrictions under provision 9.71.a. of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, this congregation accepts such restrictions and:
  - a. Shall not transfer, encumber, mortgage, or in any way burden or impair any right, title, or interest in the property without prior approval of the Synod Council.
  - b. Shall—upon written demand by the Synod Council, pursuant to †S13.23. of the constitution of the South Carolina Synod—reconvey and transfer all right, title, and interest in the property to the synod.

## Chapter 8.

### MEMBERSHIP

- \*C8.01. Members of this congregation shall be those baptized persons on the roll of this congregation at the time that this constitution is adopted and those who are admitted thereafter and who have declared and maintain their membership in accordance with the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.
- \*C8.02. Members shall be classified as follows:
  - a. **Baptized** members are those persons who have been received by the Sacrament of Holy Baptism in this congregation, or, having been previously baptized in the name of the Triune God, have been received by certificate of transfer from other Lutheran congregations or by affirmation of faith.
  - b. **Confirmed** members are baptized persons who have been confirmed in this congregation, those who have been received by adult baptism or by transfer as confirmed members from other Lutheran congregations, or baptized persons received by affirmation of faith.
  - c. **Voting** members are confirmed members. Such confirmed members, during the current or preceding calendar year, shall have communed in this congregation and shall have made a contribution of

record to this congregation. Members of this congregation who have satisfied these basic standards shall have the privilege of voice and vote at every regular and special meeting of the congregation as well as the other rights and privileges ascribed to voting members by the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.

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

**\*C8.03.** All applications for confirmed membership shall be submitted to and shall require the approval of the Congregation Council.

**\*C8.04.** It shall be the privilege and duty of members of this congregation to:

- a. make regular use of the means of grace, both Word and sacraments;
- b. live a Christian life in accordance with the Word of God and the teachings of the Lutheran church; and
- c. support the work of this congregation, the synod, and the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America through contributions of their time, abilities, and financial support as biblical stewards.

**\*C8.05.** Membership in this congregation shall be terminated by any of the following:

- a. death;
- b. resignation;
- c. transfer or release;
- d. disciplinary action in accordance with ELCA constitutional provision 20.41. and the accompanying bylaws; or
- e. removal from the roll due to inactivity in accordance with the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.

Such persons who have been removed from the roll of members shall remain persons for whom the Church has a continuing pastoral concern.

C8.05.01. Members who have not communed and made a contribution of record for a period of two years shall be notified in writing of their pending inactive status. They will be classified as “inactive members” by action of the Congregation Council. These shall remain within the concern of the congregation.

## **Chapter 9.**

### **ROSTERED MINISTER**

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

- committee elected by the Congregation Council to recommend the call, shall seek the advice and help of the bishop of the synod.
- \*C9.02.** Only a member of the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or a candidate for the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament who has been recommended for the congregation by the synodical bishop may be called as a pastor of this congregation.
- \*C9.03.** Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,
- a. Every minister of Word and Sacrament shall:
    - 1) preach the Word;
    - 2) administer the sacraments;
    - 3) conduct public worship;
    - 4) provide pastoral care;
    - 5) seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel;
    - 6) impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through distribution of its communications and publications;
    - 7) witness to the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation, and abroad; and
    - 8) speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world.
  - b. Each pastor with a congregational call shall, within the congregation:
    - 1) offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead;
    - 2) relate to all schools and organizations of this congregation;
    - 3) install regularly elected members of the Congregation Council;
    - 4) with the Congregation Council, administer discipline; and
    - 5) endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the ELCA churchwide organization and of the South Carolina Synod of the ELCA.
- \*C9.04.** The specific duties of the pastor, compensation, and other matters pertaining to the service of the pastor shall be included in a letter of call, which shall be attested by the bishop of the synod.
- \*C9.05.** The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between a minister of Word and Sacrament and this congregation shall be as follows:
- a. The call of this congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment, which shall be terminated only by death or, following consultation with the synodical bishop, for the following reasons:
    - 1) mutual agreement to terminate the call or the completion of a call for a specific term;
    - 2) resignation of the pastor, which shall become effective, unless otherwise agreed, no later than 30 days after the date on which it was submitted;
    - 3) inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in the congregation in view of local conditions;
    - 4) physical disability or mental incapacity of the pastor;
    - 5) suspension of the pastor through discipline for more than three months;
    - 6) resignation or removal of the pastor from the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament of this church;
    - 7) termination of the relationship between this church and the congregation;
    - 8) dissolution of the congregation or the termination of a parish arrangement; or
    - 9) suspension of the congregation through discipline for more than six months.
  - b. When allegations of physical disability or mental incapacity of the pastor under paragraph a.4) above, or ineffective conduct of the pastoral office under paragraph a.3) above, have come to the attention of the bishop of this synod,
    - 1) the bishop in his or her sole discretion may investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson, or
    - 2) when such allegations have been brought to the synod's attention by an official recital of allegations by the Congregation Council or by a petition signed by at least one-third of the voting members of the congregation, the bishop personally shall investigate such conditions together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson.
  - c. In case of alleged physical disability or mental incapacity under paragraph a.4) above, the bishop's committee shall obtain and document competent medical opinion concerning the pastor's condition. When a disability or incapacity is evident to the committee, the bishop of this synod may declare the pastorate vacant. When the pastorate is declared vacant, the Synod Council shall list the pastor on the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament as disabled. Upon removal of the disability and the

restoration of the pastor to health, the bishop shall take steps to enable the pastor to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another appropriate call.

- d. In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of the congregation under paragraph a.3) above, the bishop's committee shall endeavor to hear from all concerned persons, after which the bishop together with the committee shall present their recommendations first to the pastor and then to the congregation. The recommendations of the bishop's committee must address whether the pastor's call should come to an end and, if so, may suggest appropriate severance arrangements. The committee may also propose other actions that should be undertaken by the congregation and by the pastor, if appropriate. If the pastor and congregation agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action need be taken by the synod.
  - e. If either party fails to assent to the recommendations of the bishop's committee concerning the pastor's call, the congregation may dismiss the pastor only at a legally called meeting after consultation with the bishop, either (a) by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee did not recommend termination of the call, or (b) by a majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee recommended termination of the call.
  - f. If, in the course of proceedings described in paragraph c. or paragraph d. above, the bishop's committee concludes that there may be grounds for discipline, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action in accordance with the provisions of this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions.
- \*C9.06.** At a time of pastoral vacancy, an interim pastor shall be appointed by the bishop of the synod with the consent of this congregation or the Congregation Council.
- \*C9.07.** During the period of service, an interim pastor shall have the rights and duties in the congregation of a regularly called pastor and may delegate the same in part to a supply pastor with the consent of the bishop of the synod and this congregation or Congregation Council. The interim pastor and any rostered minister providing assistance shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a pastor. Unless previously agreed upon by the Synod Council, an interim pastor is not available for a regular call to the congregation served.
- \*C9.08.** This congregation shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to a former pastor before calling a successor. A pastor shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to this congregation before beginning service in a call to another congregation or employment in another ministry setting related to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- \*C9.09.** When a pastor is called to serve in company with another pastor or pastors, the privileges and responsibilities of each pastor shall be specified in documents to accompany the call and to be drafted in consultation involving the pastors, the Congregation Council, and the bishop of the synod. As occasion requires, the documents may be revised through a similar consultation.
- \*C9.11.** With the approval of the bishop of the synod, the congregation may depart from \*C9.05.a. and call a pastor for a specific term. Details of such calls shall be in writing setting forth the purpose and conditions involved. Prior to the completion of a term, the bishop or a designated representative of the bishop shall meet with the pastor and representatives of the congregation for a review of the call. Such a call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of \*C9.05.a.
- \*C9.12.** The pastor of this congregation:
- a. shall keep accurate parochial records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from the congregation;
  - b. shall submit a summary of such statistics annually to the synod; and
  - c. shall become a member of this congregation upon receipt and acceptance of the letter of call. In a parish of multiple congregations, the pastor shall hold membership in one of the congregations.
- \*C9.13.** The pastor(s) shall submit a report of his or her ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.
- \*C9.14.** The parochial records of this congregation shall be maintained by the pastor and shall remain the property of the congregation. The secretary of this congregation shall attest in writing to the bishop of this synod that such records have been placed in his or her hands in good order by a departing pastor before the installation of that pastor in another field of labor or the granting by the synod of retired status to the pastor.
- C9.15.** Under special circumstances, subject to the approval of the synodical bishop and the concurrence of this congregation, a minister of Word and Sacrament of a church body with which the Evangelical Lutheran

Church in America officially has established a relationship of full communion may serve temporarily as pastor of this congregation under a contract between the congregation and the pastor in a form proposed by the synodical bishop and approved by the congregation.

- \*C9.21. Authority to call a minister of Word and Service shall be in this congregation by at least a two-thirds vote of voting members present and voting at a meeting legally called for that purpose. Before a call is issued, the officers, or a committee elected by the Congregation Council to recommend the call, shall seek the advice and help of the bishop of the synod.
- \*C9.22. Only a member of the roster of Ministers of Word and Service of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or a candidate for the roster of Ministers of Word and Service who has been recommended for this congregation by the synodical bishop may be called as a deacon of this congregation.
- \*C9.23. Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, every minister of Word and Service shall:
  - a. Be rooted in the Word of God, for proclamation and service;
  - b. Advocate a prophetic diakonia that commits itself to risk-taking and innovative service on the frontiers of the Church's outreach, giving particular attention to the suffering places in God's world;
  - c. Speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world, witnessing to the realm of God in the community, the nation, and abroad;
  - d. Equip the baptized for ministry in God's world that affirms the gifts of all people;
  - e. Encourage mutual relationships that invite participation and accompaniment of others in God's mission;
  - f. Practice stewardship that respects God's gift of time, talents, and resources;
  - g. Be grounded in a gathered community for ongoing diaconal formation;
  - h. Share knowledge of the ELCA and its wider ministry of the gospel and advocate for the work of all expressions of this church; and
  - i. Identify and encourage qualified persons to prepare for ministry of the gospel.
- \*C9.24. The specific duties of the deacon, compensation, and other matters pertaining to the service of the deacon shall be included in a letter of call, which shall be attested by the bishop of the synod.
- \*C9.25. The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between a minister of Word and Service and a congregation shall be as follows:
  - a. The call of a congregation, when accepted by a deacon, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment, which shall be terminated only by death or, following consultation with the synodical bishop, for the following reasons:
    - 1) mutual agreement to terminate the call or the completion of a call for a specific term;
    - 2) resignation of the deacon, which shall become effective, unless otherwise agreed, no later than 30 days after the date on which it was submitted;
    - 3) inability to conduct the ministry of Word and Service effectively in this congregation in view of local conditions;
    - 4) physical disability or mental incapacity of the deacon;
    - 5) suspension of the deacon through discipline for more than three months;
    - 6) resignation or removal of the deacon from the roster of Ministers of Word and Service of this church;
    - 7) termination of the relationship between this church and this congregation;
    - 8) dissolution of this congregation or the termination of a parish arrangement; or
    - 9) suspension of this congregation through discipline for more than six months.
  - b. When allegations of physical disability or mental incapacity of the deacon under paragraph a.4) above, or ineffective conduct of the office of minister of Word and Service under paragraph a.3) above, have come to the attention of the bishop of this synod,
    - 1) the bishop in his or her sole discretion may investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson, or
    - 2) when such allegations have been brought to the synod's attention by an official recital of allegations by the Congregation Council or by a petition signed by at least one-third of the voting members of this congregation, the bishop personally shall investigate such conditions together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson.
  - c. In case of alleged physical disability or mental incapacity under paragraph a.4) above, the bishop's committee shall obtain and document competent medical opinion concerning the deacon's condition.

When a disability or incapacity is evident to the committee, the bishop of this synod may declare the position vacant. When the position is declared vacant, the Synod Council shall list the deacon on the roster of Ministers of Word and Service as disabled. Upon removal of the disability and the restoration of the deacon to health, the bishop shall take steps to enable the deacon to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another appropriate call.

- d. In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of this congregation under paragraph a.3) above, the bishop's committee shall endeavor to hear from all concerned persons, after which the bishop together with the committee shall present their recommendations first to the deacon and then to this congregation. The recommendations of the bishop's committee must address whether the deacon's call should come to an end and, if so, may suggest appropriate severance arrangements. The committee may also propose other actions that should be undertaken by this congregation and by the deacon, if appropriate. If the deacon and congregation agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action need be taken by the synod.
  - e. If either party fails to assent to the recommendations of the bishop's committee concerning the deacon's call, this congregation may dismiss the deacon only at a legally called meeting after consultation with the bishop, either (a) by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee did not recommend termination of the call, or (b) by a majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee recommended termination of the call.
  - f. If, in the course of proceedings described in paragraph c. or paragraph d. above, the bishop's committee concludes that there may be grounds for discipline, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action in accordance with the provisions of this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions.
- \*C9.26.** The deacon shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to a former congregation before:
- a. installation in another field of labor, or
  - b. the issuance of a certificate of dismissal or transfer.
- \*C9.27.** When a deacon is called to serve in company with another rostered minister or other rostered ministers, the privileges and responsibilities of each rostered minister shall be specified in documents to accompany the call and to be drafted in consultation involving the rostered ministers, the Congregation Council, and the bishop of the synod. As occasion requires, the documents may be revised through a similar consultation.
- \*C9.28.** With the approval of the bishop of the synod, this congregation may depart from \*C9.25.a. and call a deacon for a specific term. Details of such calls shall be in writing setting forth the purpose and conditions involved. Prior to the completion of a term, the bishop or a designated representative of the bishop shall meet with the deacon and representatives of this congregation for a review of the call. Such a call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of \*C9.25.a.
- \*C9.29.** The deacon shall become a member of this congregation upon receipt and acceptance of the letter of call. In a parish of multiple congregations, the deacon shall hold membership in one of the congregations.
- \*C9.31.** The deacon(s) shall submit a report of his or her ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.

## **Chapter 10.**

### **CONGREGATION MEETING**

**C10.01.** The annual meeting of this congregation shall be held at a time specified in the bylaws.

C10.01.01. The congregational year shall be the calendar year, January 1 - December 31.

C10.01.02. The annual Congregation Meeting shall be the Second Sunday in November at a time set by the Congregation Council for the purposes of electing members to the Congregation Council, Endowment Fund, Nominating Committee, Synod Assembly voting members; adopting a budget; and transacting other business as may be required.

**C10.02.** A special Congregation Meeting may be called by the pastor, the Congregation Council, or the president of this congregation, and shall be called by the president of the congregation upon the written request of one-tenth of the voting members. The president of the Congregation Council shall call a special meeting

upon request of the synodical bishop. The call for each special meeting shall specify the purpose for which it is to be held, and no other business shall be transacted.

- C10.02.01. At Congregational Meetings, called for the purpose of selling, purchasing or encumbering real estate, or extensive repairs or construction of church buildings, only voting members at least eighteen years of age, shall be permitted to vote.
- C10.03.** Notice of all meetings of this congregation shall be given at the services of worship on the preceding two consecutive Sundays and by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law, to all voting-members at least 10 days in advance of the date of the meeting.
- C10.04.** Twenty percent of the voting members shall constitute a quorum.
- C10.05.** Voting by proxy or by absentee ballot shall not be permitted.
- 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, vice president, secretary, and treasurer.
- Duties of the officers shall be specified in the bylaws.
  - The officers shall be voting members of the congregation.
  - Officers of this congregation shall serve similar offices of the Congregation Council and shall be voting members of the Congregation Council.
  - If the Congregation Council elects its officers, the president, vice president, and secretary shall be selected from the elected membership of the Congregation Council. If the treasurer is not selected from the elected membership of the Congregation Council, the treasurer shall have voice but not vote at the meetings of the Congregation Council.
- C11.02.** The Congregation Council shall elect its officers and they shall be the officers of the congregation. The officers shall be elected by written ballot and shall serve for one year or until their successors are elected. Their terms shall begin on January 1 and end on December 31.
- C11.03.** No officer shall hold more than one office at a time. No elected officer, except the treasurer, shall be eligible to serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office.

### C11.03.01. Duties of the officers of Reformation Lutheran Church

Among the duties of all officers and the Congregation Council shall be the responsibility to uphold and carryout the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of Reformation Lutheran Church. Especially relevant to the work of the entire Congregation Council are Chapter 4: Statement of Purpose; Chapter 5:Powers of the Congregation; Chapter 10: Congregation Meeting; Chapter 11: Officers; Chapter 12: Congregation Council; Chapter 16:Amendments; Chapter 17: Bylaws; Chapter 18: Continuing Resolutions.

#### President

The president of the congregation shall:

- Serve as chief administrator for the congregation
- Prepare agenda for Congregation Council and Congregation Meetings in consultation with the pastor and executive committee.
- Preside at Congregation Council and Congregation Meetings.
- Convene executive committee meetings with the pastor as needed. See that a report of Congregation Council meetings is prepared for congregational newsletter.

- e. Serve as a contact for the congregation in the absence of the pastor, consulting with the executive committee as needed.
- f. See that Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the congregation are carried out, especially Chapters 4, 5, 10, 11, 12, 13, 16, 17, 18 as described above. Chapter 12 is specific to Congregation Council.

Vice President

The Vice President shall:

- a. Be a member of the Nominating Committee and serve as its convener and chair with voice but no vote.
- b. Assist the president as requested by the president or Congregation Council
- c. See that the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the congregation are carried out, especially Chapters 4, 5, 10, 11, 12, 16, 17, 18 as described above and Chapter 13.02 (Nominating Committee) and its bylaw C13.02.01.

Secretary

The Secretary shall:

- a. Take accurate minutes of all meetings of Congregation Council and congregation
- b. Be responsible for printing and distribution of the minutes as appropriate
- c. Maintain copies for a volume of minutes in the church archives
- d. Receive and send correspondence on behalf of Congregation Council as needed
- e. Report correspondence addressed to the congregation to the Congregation Council
- f. See that the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the congregation are carried out, especially Chapters 4, 5, 10, 11, 12, 16, 17, 18 as described above.

Treasurer

The Treasurer shall:

- a. Keep the books of accounts of the congregation and oversee deeds, mortgages, contracts, claims, revenues, trust funds and insurance policies
- b. Receive records of offerings, contributions, and bequests
- c. Disburse funds according to agreed upon procedures
- d. Send monthly benevolence share
- e. Report to Congregation Council monthly and to congregation annually
- f. Facilitate an annual audit.
- g. See that Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the congregation are carried out, especially Chapters 4, 5, 10, 11, 12, 16, 17, 18 as described above and Bylaws for C5.05 (Endowment Fund) and C13.03 (Audit Committee).

**Chapter 12.**

**CONGREGATION COUNCIL**

**C12.01.** The voting membership of the Congregation Council shall consist of the pastor(s), the officers of the congregation, and not more than twelve members of the congregation (except in the case of a treasurer who is not an elected member of Congregation Council; cf C11.01.d). Any voting member of the congregation may be elected, subject only to the limitation on the length of continuous service permitted in that office.

**C12.02.** The members of the Congregation Council except the pastor(s) shall be elected at a legally called meeting of the congregation at the time specified in the by-laws. Their term of office shall be for three (3) years, with the term of office beginning on January 1 and ending on December 31. Newly elected Congregation Council members shall be installed during worship services on a date to be determined by the pastor.

*C12.02A11. Those elected as Congregation Council members are expected to:*

- a. Work to insure that Reformation's worship, works, words and deeds are reflections of God's love to our congregation and to our neighbors, local and worldwide, by supporting and encouraging a ministry consistent with Reformation's purpose, guiding principles, and affirmation of welcome*

- b. Remember and practice promises made when installed as a member of the Congregation Council, working so that the one Lord who empowers all is glorified*
- c. Work in partnership with congregational leaders to enhance communication and coordination and effective use of all Reformation Lutheran Church's resources*
- d. Participate in and support congregational activities and programs*
- e. Attend monthly Congregation Council meetings regularly*
- f. Serve on Congregation Council committees or task groups as needed and able*
- g. Chair or serve on at least one ministry team of the congregation and insure that it: meets at least quarterly, involves others in planning and decision making, carries out tasks in its area of responsibility, and reports its work as appropriate*
- h. Insure regular reports to the Congregation Council, with an annual report for the congregation about the work of the ministry team*
- i. Help maintain the life and harmony of this congregation by being an example of faith active in love*
- j. Appoint members of congregation committees as described in Chapter 13.*

**C12.03.** A member's place on the Congregation Council shall be declared vacant if the member a) ceases to be a voting member of this congregation or b) is absent from four successive regular meetings of the Congregation Council without cause. Consistent with the laws of the state in which this congregation is incorporated, the congregation may adopt procedures for the removal of a member of the Congregation Council in other circumstances. 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.

**C12.03.A17.** *If a member of Congregation Council experiences an extended illness, the Congregation Council member may be declared "on leave" by the Congregation Council until able to return to meetings.*

**C12.04.** 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 and the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

The duties of the Congregation Council shall include the following:

- a. To lead this congregation in stating its mission, to do long-range planning, to set goals and priorities, and to evaluate its activities in light of its mission and goals.
- b. To seek to involve all members of this congregation in worship, learning, witness, service, and support.
- c. To oversee and provide for the administration of this congregation to enable it to fulfill its functions and perform its mission.
- d. To maintain supportive relationships with the rostered minister(s) and staff and help them annually to evaluate the fulfillment of their calling or employment.
- e. To be examples individually and corporately of the style of life and ministry expected of all baptized persons.
- f. To promote a congregational climate of peace and goodwill and, as differences and conflicts arise, to endeavor to foster mutual understanding.
- g. To arrange for pastoral service during the sickness or absence of the pastor.
- h. To emphasize partnership with the synod and churchwide organization of the ELCA as well as cooperation with other congregations, both Lutheran and non-Lutheran, subject to established policies of the synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- i. To recommend and encourage the use of program resources produced or approved by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- j. To seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel.

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

- a. The Congregation Council shall be the board of trustees of this congregation and, as such, shall be responsible for maintaining and protecting its property and managing its business and fiscal affairs. It

shall have the powers and be subject to the obligations that pertain to such boards under the laws of the State of South Carolina, except as otherwise provided herein.

- b. The Congregation Council shall not have the authority to buy, sell, or encumber real property unless specifically authorized to do so by a meeting of the congregation. However, the Congregation Council has the authority to receive gifts of real estate in accordance with the gift acceptance policy.
- c. The Congregation Council may enter into contracts of up to \$25,000 for items not included in the budget. The congregation shall be notified.
- d. The Congregation Council shall prepare an annual budget for adoption by this congregation, shall supervise the expenditure of funds in accordance therewith following its adoption, and may incur obligations of more than \$25,000 in excess of the anticipated receipts only after approval by a Congregation Meeting. The budget shall include this congregation's full indicated share in support of the wider ministry being carried on in partnership with the synod and churchwide organization.
- e. The Congregation Council shall ascertain that the financial affairs of this congregation are being conducted efficiently, giving particular attention to the prompt payment of all obligations and to the regular forwarding of benevolence monies to the synodical treasurer.
- f. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for this congregation's investments and its total insurance program.

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

- a. The Congregation Council shall see that this constitution, its bylaws, and continuing resolutions are kept up to date, being consistent with and including the latest updates from the ELCA Model Constitution
- b. The Congregation Council shall file any updates to this constitution, its bylaws, and continuing resolutions with the SC Synod and make them available to the congregation as needed.

***C12.06.A17. Document Review Process***

*The Congregation Council shall follow an ongoing process to maintain current documents, policies and procedures for the congregation insuring that each item is reviewed and updated as needed at least every five years. (This includes constitution, bylaws and continuing resolutions in Chapter 18.) This process shall include*

- a. Reviewing the existing documents (January) and the need for changes. Following every churchwide assembly, the Constitution should be reviewed.*
- b. Naming a task group of 3-5 people for each document needing update to recommend to Congregation Council any updates or changes needed.*
- c. Taking official action to make any proposed changes and to update the continuing resolution in the Constitution.*

**C12.07.** The Congregation Council shall provide for an annual review of the membership roster.

***C12.07.A17. Membership Review Process***

*To carry out the annual membership review process which determines those who are active members and who are eligible to vote and serve in elected leadership roles based on C8.05.01 and C12.07, Congregation Council shall:*

- a. Request in August or September from the financial secretary a list identifying members as contributing or non-contributing.*
- b. The pastor shall review and edit the list as appropriate.*
- c. The list edited by the pastor shall be the working list to determine leadership eligibility (for d) and active and inactive membership (e and f).*
- d. The list edited by the pastor is the list to be used by the Nominating Committee when vetting people for leadership roles.*
- e. Congregation Council shall authorize appropriate contact during October with those on the list who have not communed or contributed to remind them of their responsibility to remain active members.*

- f. The financial secretary and pastor shall present at the December Congregation Council meeting a list of those who did not respond (in “e”) and who have not communed and contributed of record in two calendar years. By Congregation Council action, those on this list shall be placed on the inactive membership list of the congregation but remain in the care and concern of the congregation. This action shall be recorded in the Parish Register and data base.*
- g. Any member on the inactive list who communes or contributes returns to the active membership list.*

- C12.08.** The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the employment and supervision of the staff of this congregation. The Congregation Council shall annually appoint a Personnel Committee, which shall make recommendations to the Congregation Council related to clergy and staff. Nothing in this provision shall be deemed to affect the congregation’s responsibility for the call, terms of call, or termination of call of any employees who are on a roster of this church.
- C12.09.** The Congregation Council shall annually submit a comprehensive report to this congregation.
- C12.11.** The Congregation Council shall normally meet once a month. Special meetings may be called by the pastor or the president, and shall be called by the president at the request of at least one-half of its members. Notice of each special meeting shall be given to all who are entitled to be present.
- C12.12.** A quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of a majority of the members of the Congregation Council, including the pastor or interim pastor, except when the pastor or interim pastor requests or consents to be absent and has given prior approval to the agenda for a particular regular or special meeting, which shall be the only business considered at that meeting. Chronic or repeated absence of the pastor or interim pastor who has refused approval of the agenda of a subsequent regular or special meeting shall not preclude action by the Congregation Council, following consultation with the synodical bishop.
- C12.12.01. Members “on leave” shall not be counted in determining the quorum. However, in all cases at least 40% of the total membership of Congregation Council must be present for a quorum.
- C12.13.** The Congregation Council and its committees may hold meetings by remote communication, including electronically and by telephone conference and to the extent permitted by state law, notice of all meetings may be provided electronically.

**Chapter 13.**  
**CONGREGATION COMMITTEES**

*C13.00.A17. The Committee structure of this congregation includes Administrative Committees, described in the Constitution and/or Bylaws, and Ministry Teams, described in Continuing Resolutions.*

*Administrative Committees*

*Except as otherwise noted, Administrative Committees are named annually by Congregation Council and have no other limitations.*

**C13.01.** The officers of this congregation and the pastor shall constitute *the Executive Committee*.

*C13.01.A17. The Executive Committee of Reformation Lutheran Church*

*The purpose of the Executive Committee is to discuss ideas and suggestions, ask questions, make decisions between Congregation Council meetings, and lead and assist the Congregation Council in decision making. The President of the congregation shall call and lead meetings of the executive committee. Duties of the Executive Committee include:*

- a. Leading the Congregation Council and congregation in planning for and carrying out its vision and mission.*
- b. Planning for regular meetings of Congregation Council.*
- c. Reviewing and recommending revisions to the organizational structure. (\*C4.04 and C13)*

- d. *Insuring that the mission statement and all documents and policies are up to date (C4.05 and C12.05 and C18.02) )*
- e. *Leading the Congregation Council in carrying out its responsibilities in the Constitution, Bylaws, and continuing resolutions, especially Chapter 12.*
- f. *Identifying chairpersons and at least two additional members for all administrative committees as appropriate and recommend approval by Congregation Council by December for the coming year.*
- g. *Appointing annually, for Congregation Council approval in November, a Ministry Coordinator to carry out duties in C13.07.A17.*
- h. *Collaborating with the Ministry Coordinator to insure there is a convener in place for each ministry team and a Congregation Council representative named for each by January of each year.*

**C13.02.** A *Nominating Committee* of six voting members of this congregation, two of whom, if possible, shall be outgoing members of the Congregation Council, shall be elected at the annual meeting for a term of one year. Members of the Nominating Committee are not eligible for consecutive re-election.

- C13.02.01. The Nominating Committee of Reformation Lutheran Church shall be guided as follows:
- a. The Vice President of the Congregation Council shall serve as ex-officio chair of the committee. The Vice President is responsible for asking the financial secretary to provide a list of members who have made a contribution of record in the past 18 months for use by the Nominating Committee in September.
  - b. The task of the Nominating Committee is, with congregational input, to provide at least one person to fill each vacancy for elected roles in the congregation:
    - Congregation Council (C12.02)
    - Endowment Committee (C5.05.04)
    - Nominations Committee (C13.02)
    - Voting Members (and alternates) to SC Synod Assembly (\*C5.04)
  - c. In August the Nominating Committee should meet to plan and organize for its work..
  - d. In September, the Nominating Committee shall inform the congregation about the elections to take place in November and invite members of the congregation to suggest persons to be considered as nominees.
  - e. Prior to the October meeting of Congregation Council, the Nominating Committee shall meet to review and vet all suggestions provided along with the list of members eligible to serve and shall compile a slate of nominees to be contacted.
  - f. Criteria in selecting nominees include:
    - 1.) All nominees must have made a financial contribution of record and have communed by the date of the Vice President's request to the Financial Secretary.
    - 2.) All nominees shall have participated actively in the life of the congregation for at least one year.
    - 3.) Consideration shall be given to the following factors:
      - Diversity of Congregation Council and other committees.
      - Leadership tasks and roles needed by Congregation Council and other committees.
      - Availability of special expertise, skills and backgrounds.
  - g. The Vice President shall report the slate of nominees at the October Congregation Council meeting and after the meeting shall provide the same to the church office to be included in the church newsletter with announcement of the annual meeting.
  - h. No further nominations may be made after the October Congregation Council meeting.
  - i. At the annual meeting in November, the Nominating Committee, acting on behalf of Congregation Council, presents the slate of nominees for election. (No further nominations may be taken at this meeting.)

**C13.03.** An *Audit Committee* of at least two voting members, excluding the Treasurer and Financial Secretary, shall be named annually by the Congregation Council. The Audit Committee should complete the audit

within nine months of the close of each fiscal year. A written summary report shall be submitted to Congregation Council within 30 days of the completion of the audit. Audit Committee members should not be members of the Congregation Council.

**C13.04. *Mutual Ministry Committee(s)*** (in the absence of a mutual ministry committee, the duties shall be fulfilled by the executive committee) shall be appointed jointly by the president and the rostered minister. Term of office shall be two years, with three members to be appointed each successive year.

**C13.05.** When a rostered minister vacancy occurs, a ***Call Committee*** of six voting members shall be elected by a majority of the Congregation Council. This committee carries out its task of selecting and calling a new rostered minister following the guidance provided by the South Carolina Synod bishop and staff. No more than one member of any immediate family shall serve on the Call Committee. Term of office will terminate upon installation of the newly called rostered minister.

**C13.06.** Other committees, ministry teams, and task forces of this congregation may be formed, as the need arises, by decision of the Congregation Council.

C13.06.01. ***Endowment Committee***  
Details guiding the Endowment Committee are included in C5.05.

C13.06.02. ***A Personnel Committee*** of three to five voting members of this congregation shall be appointed annually by Congregation Council to insure that all personnel matters are cared for, including:

- a. Insuring that there are current job descriptions for all paid staff, including office administrator, custodian, music director.
- b. Insuring that there are current personnel policies available and that these are being followed.
- c. Reviewing and recommending annual salary changes for all paid staff and the pastor.
- d. Conducting annual reviews with all paid staff and the pastor.

**C13.06.03. *An Archives and History Committee*** of three to five persons shall be charged with the task of preserving and maintaining the historical records and archives of the congregation. This team will insure that ELCA documents and guidelines for archives, retention management, and church records are followed, including that:

- a. Archival space is provided and the records protected in archival supplies.
- b. A record inventory is developed, updated, and maintained.
- c. Congregational records are maintained and appropriate guidelines for record retention followed.
- d. Files, records, and finding aids are processed in a timely manner.
- e. Official records and documents, including appropriate electronic communications, are preserved.
- f. Parish records, including an official parish register, are kept up to date and accurate.
- g. Information needed for annual reports to the SC Synod and ELCA is compiled and submitted (typically before February 15).

**C13.06.04. *Operations Administrative Committee***  
In regard to property, this committee will:

- a. See to the proper maintenance and protection of all property of the congregation.
- b. Be responsible, subject to the approval of the Congregation Council, for the congregation's total insurance program.
- c. Annually update the list of capital assets at costs and replacement value, along with an annual capital replacement schedule.
- d. Arrange for needed routine repairs and improvements in accordance with the annual budget. Contract for and oversee special projects and improvements as approved by Congregation Council that are funded outside the general fund budget.

In regard to finance, this committee will:

- a. Coordinate the drafting of the annual budget with all Ministry Teams for the succeeding year.

- b. Ensure the budget includes this congregation's full indicated share in the support of the wider ministry being carried on its behalf by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the synod and South Carolina Synod.
- c. Submit a draft budget to the Congregation Council for its action and later presentation to a congregational meeting.
- d. Exercise oversight of all the financial affairs of the congregation to make sure that they are being conducted appropriately and see to the regular payment of bills and other obligations and forwarding of benevolence monies to the synodical treasurer.
- e. Subject to the approval of the Congregation Council, be responsible for the congregation's investments.
- f. Oversee the work related to memorial or honoraria gifts to the congregation, including seeing that accurate records of all gifts are recorded with appropriate thanks and recognitions, arranging for the timely recording of special gifts (not monetary) in the Memorial Book, developing with approval from Congregation Council a list of memorial gifts which would benefit the congregation (listed in priority order), and assisting in the purchase of special items as approved by the Congregation Council and in cooperation with the families of those in whose names the gift(s) has been given.
- g. Provide information and recommendations to Congregation Council regarding gifts in accordance with the gift acceptance policy.
- h. Develop a plan for managing weekly offerings including counting, depositing, and posting.
- i. Initiate and use, whenever possible, the best practices as defined by and published by the ELCA (Financial matters in the congregation).
- j. Recommend to Congregation Council, annually, for approval a person to fill the role of financial secretary.

The Financial Secretary will:

- 1) Oversee the receipt of weekly offerings and special gifts
- 2) Record the giving by individual members
- 3) Provide members a record of their giving at least annually
- 4) Work with stewardship and finance as needed
- 5) Provide reports and statistical information as requested
- 6) Maintain confidentiality of giving.

### **Ministry Teams**

C13.06.05.

In addition to the Administrative Committees described above, the following Ministry Committees, known as Ministry Teams are normally part of the organization and structure of Reformation Lutheran Church. They are described in Continuing Resolutions to provide greater flexibility for ministry and mission. They seek to involve as many members as possible in planning for and carrying out ministry and mission activities for and on behalf of the congregation. The Ministry Teams are led by a Ministry Coordinator (C13.06.H17). Each Team is led by a Convener and includes a Congregation Council representative. Each December the Ministry Coordinator shall present recommendations for Conveners for each ministry team for the coming year to the Congregation Council. The duties and responsibilities of the ministry teams are described below.

***C13.06. A17. The Christian Education Ministry Team is to help people of all ages deepen their faith and understanding of the Christian message and how it applies to life in our world today.***

***The Christian Education Team will:***

- a. Encourage Christians to be lifelong learners in the faith by inspiring, informing, and challenging children, youth, and adults with opportunities to grow in their faith and to be equipped for their vocation in the Church and the world.***
- b. Provide opportunities for adults and children to learn to read, understand, and interpret the Bible and know the content of their faith.***
- c. Provide opportunities for discussing and studying social issues, ethics, science, and other religions in light of faith.***

- d. *Implement educational materials and programs that are rooted in the triune God, the Bible, and the Lutheran Confessions, to include encouraging the use of materials published or approved by the ELCA.*
- e. *Encourage the use of the church's periodicals and devotional materials.*
- g. *Establish a learning atmosphere that encourages the development of relationships across cultures, generations, and socio-economic levels.*
- h. *Insure that ongoing programs like Sunday School, confirmation, and the annual retreat/beach week are planned and coordinated, as well as other special educational events and opportunities.*

*C13.06.B17. The Finance Ministry Team is to provide for oversight of all financial affairs of the congregation. The treasurer is a member of this team. Those serving on this team work under the direct supervision of the Financial Secretary and the Treasurer.*

*The Finance Ministry Team will:*

- a. *Assist in records keeping and perform some tasks related to memorial or honoraria gifts to the congregation, including seeing that gifts are recorded with appropriate thanks and recognitions as directed by the Financial Secretary.*
- b. *Assist the Financial Secretary as needed in getting out mailings and notices.*
- c. *Serve on offering counting teams as directed by the Financial Secretary and Treasurer.*

*C13.06.C17. The Property Ministry Team is to provide for the maintenance and protection of all property and grounds of the church.*

*The Property Ministry Team will:*

- a. *Assist the ministry head and staff by helping with routine and special work projects.*
- b. *Assist the ministry head and staff with scheduling and occasionally being available for on-site appointments with repairmen and contractors.*

*C13.06.D17 The Outreach Ministry Team is to go and tell; invite others to come and see; and, invite all to respond by praising and serving God. The outreach ministry team is to help the congregation intentionally share the love of God in Jesus Christ by inviting and involving all people to participate in the body of Christ.*

*The Outreach Ministry Team will carry out its tasks in ministries expressed through:*

- a. *Radical hospitality;*
- b. *Events for and with the community for outreach purposes.*
- c. *Sharing news and information with and beyond the congregation;*
- d. *Innovations and conversations which invite others to God;*

*C13.06.E17. The Service Ministry Team is to help members and regular visitors share Christian compassion and helpfulness with those in our world, community, and congregation.*

*The Service Ministry Team will:*

- a. *Enlist members, regular visitors, and organizations of the congregation in service efforts*
- b. *Encourage the examination of social issues and help the congregation to respond appropriately.*
- c. *Lead events for and with the community for service purposes.*
- d. *Invite and involve all people to participate in service ministry*

**C13.06.F17.** *The Stewardship Ministry Team is to regularly present and encourage the Christian use and care of all of God's gifts – time, talents, financial resources, and the world we live in. The treasurer shall be a member ex officio of this team.*

*The Stewardship Ministry Team will:*

- a. Lead all members of the congregation to continued growth in proportionate giving for the Lord's work.*
- b. Promote stewardship as the use of time, talents, and financial resources.*
- c. Encouraging recycling, conservation, and other actions to help us care for God's gift of creation.*
- d. Teach Christian use of money.*
- e. Encourage an understanding of the congregation's local, national, and worldwide ministries.*
- f. Support other congregational efforts which lead to informed and grateful giving.*

**C13.06.G17.** *The Worship and Music Ministry Team will work with the pastor, congregation council, and music staff to insure an active and inviting worship life, including the necessary resources and supplies, as a part of the ministry of the congregation. This director of music shall be a member of this team.*

*The Worship and Music Ministry Team will:*

- a. Work with and support the pastor and Congregation Council in planning for and carrying out regular services of worship as well as special festival services as appropriate and conducted regularly and in accordance with the liturgy of the ELCA.*
- b. Provide, in consultation with the pastor and music leaders, weekly worship resources appropriate for use in a congregation of the ELCA.*
- c. Train and schedule all worship assistants, such as acolytes, crucifers, ushers, lectors, and lay assistants.*
- d. Assist in recruiting, developing, and training music groups.*
- e. Provide and care for worship supplies, including paraments, vestments, music, instruments, communion supplies, candles, flowers.*
- f. Arrange for set up before and clean up after all worship services and the care of paraments, vestments, and other worship aids.*
- g. Insure that the pew racks are maintained with up-to-date information.*
- h. Coordinate with other teams to decorate the sanctuary, fellowship hall, and grounds as appropriate.*
- i. Provide for a Nursery to care for children under the age of four during regular and special worship and education events-*

**C13.06.H17.** *The Fellowship Support Ministry Team is to plan and coordinate social and fellowship activities of the congregation.*

*The Fellowship Ministry Team will :*

- a. Coordinate various functions in cooperation with other ministry teams and groups.*
- b. Promote Christian fellowship for congregational members and guests.*
- c. Maintain the kitchen and stock the supply closet and pantry.*

**C13.06.I17.** *The Congregation Council shall annually appoint a Ministry Team Coordinator to:*

- a. Be familiar with working plans for all Ministry Teams*
- b. Coordinate and maintain a coordinated calendar of congregational activities, including liturgical dates to assist in planning.*
- c. Provide a monthly report to Congregation Council summarizing dates, activities, and requests for action as needed.*
- d. Meet with Ministry Team Conveners as appropriate to insure coordination and input for Congregation Council reports.*

- e. Encourage regular meetings of ministry teams to involve congregational members in planning for and carrying out ministry activities.*
- f. Insure information is shared for the newsletter, bulletin, annual reports and other communications as needed.*
- g. Support and consult with conveners and ministry teams as needed.*
- h. Meet, as appropriate, with pastor, staff, executive committee, Congregation Council, to keep them informed about plans and activities.*
- i. Collaborate annually with conveners, pastor and/or executive committee to recommend a convener for each ministry team and to suggest members to serve with the ministry team reporting to Congregation Council by the January meeting of each year.*

C13.06.01. At its first meeting in each congregational year, the Congregation Council shall appoint as many committees, ministry teams, and task forces as the local and wider concerns of the congregation shall require. Each such committee, ministry team, and task force shall be composed of at least one member of the Congregation Council and, in addition, other persons on the active roll of confirmed members of the congregation. Each committee, ministry team, and task force shall have a chair (convener) appointed by the Congregation Council. Although appointed by and responsible to the Congregation Council, these committees, ministry teams, and task forces shall be recognized as representatives of the interest of, and performing essential services for, the congregation as a whole. The pastor shall have voice and vote in all committees, ministry teams, and task forces.

C13.06.02. The duties of all committees, ministry teams, and task forces shall be assigned by the Congregation Council, along with such instructions as in its judgment are the best interest of the congregation. All actions of committees, ministry teams, and task forces shall be subject to review by the Congregation Council.

C13.06.03. Committees, ministry teams, and task forces shall meet on a regular schedule, monthly or as often as necessary, to accomplish their business on behalf of the congregation. If a committee, ministry team, or task force is not meeting on a regular basis, the Executive Committee shall confer with the committee, ministry coordinator and team, or task force chair and may, with the consent of the Congregation Council, reorganize it as needed.

**C13.07.** Duties of committees, ministry teams, and any task groups of this congregation shall be specified in the continuing resolutions.

**C13.07.A17.** *The work of each of the committees, ministry teams, and task forces, in addition to their specific duties, includes the following general responsibilities:*

- a. Meet on a regular schedule, as often as necessary, to accomplish the tasks on behalf of the committee.*
- b. Plan for its mission and ministry for the year.*
- c. Prepare budget requests for the next year for the Finance Committee, generally in September.*
- d. Monitor its expenses to stay within budget or, if needed, request an increase.*
- e. Study and recommend to Congregation Council any policy items for action.*
- f. Report program plans and activities to Congregation Council.*
- g. Follow through and carry out its tasks.*
- h. Prepare a written annual report for the congregation including goals, priorities, accomplishments, and hopes for the future.*
- i. Educate and inform the congregation about its purpose and tas.*
- j. Be familiar with and consider use of the South Carolina Synod and ELCA resources and participate in opportunities they provide for mission and ministry.*
- k. Be open to new information and ideas and consider them in light of the mission and purpose of Reformation Lutheran Church and the role and resources of the committee or team.*

**C13.08.** The pastor of this congregation shall be *ex officio* a member of all committees and boards of the congregation. The President of the congregation may also be *ex officio* except to the Nominating Committee.

#### **Chapter 14.**

#### **ORGANIZATIONS WITHIN THE CONGREGATION**

**C14.01.** All organizations within this congregation shall exist to aid it in ministering to all persons who can be reached with the Gospel of Christ and to the members of this congregation. As outgrowths and expressions of this congregation's life, the organizations are subject to its oversight and direction. This congregation at its meeting shall determine their policies, guide their activities, and receive reports concerning their membership, work, and finances.

**C14.02.** Special interest groups, other than those of the official organizations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, may be organized only after authorization has been given by the Congregation Council.

#### **Chapter 15.**

#### **DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS AND ADJUDICATION**

**\*C15.01.** Persistent and public denial of the Christian faith, willful or criminal conduct grossly unbecoming a member of the Church of Christ, continual and intentional interference with the ministry of the congregation, or willful and repeated harassment or defamation of member(s) of the congregation is sufficient cause for discipline of a member. Prior to disciplinary action, reconciliation and repentance will be attempted following Matthew 18:15–17, proceeding through these successive steps, as necessary: a) private counsel and admonition by the pastor, b) censure and admonition by the pastor in the presence of two or three witnesses, c) written referral of the matter by the Congregation Council to the vice president of the synod, who will refer it to a consultation panel drawn from the Consultation Committee of the synod, and d) written referral of the matter by the consultation panel to the Committee on Discipline of the synod. If, for any reason, the pastor is unable to administer the admonitions required by paragraphs a. and b. hereof, those steps may be performed by another pastor chosen by the Executive Committee of the Congregation Council.

**\*C15.02.** The process for discipline of a member of the congregation shall be governed as prescribed by the chapter on discipline in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. If the counseling, censure, and admonitions pursuant to \*C15.01. do not result in repentance and amendment of life, charges against the accused member(s) that are specific and in writing may be prepared by the Congregation Council, signed, and submitted to the vice president of the synod. The vice president shall select from the synod's Consultation Committee a panel of five members (three laypersons and two ministers of Word and Sacrament). A copy of the written charges shall be provided to the consultation panel and the accused member(s). The consultation panel, after requesting a written reply to the charges from the accused member(s), shall consider the matter and seek a resolution by means of investigation, consultation, mediation, or whatever other means may seem appropriate. The panel's efforts to reach a mutually agreeable resolution shall continue for no more than 45 days after the matter is submitted to it.

**\*C15.03.** If the consultation panel fails to resolve the matter, that panel shall refer the case in writing, including the written charges and the accused member's reply, to the Committee on Discipline of the synod for a hearing. A copy of the panel's written referral shall be delivered to the vice president of the synod, the Congregation Council, and the accused member(s) at the same time it is sent to the Committee on Discipline of the synod. The Executive Committee of the Synod Council shall then select six members from the Committee on Discipline to decide the case and shall appoint a member of the Synod Council to preside as nonvoting chair. Those six members, plus the nonvoting chair, comprise the discipline hearing panel for deciding the case. The Congregation Council and the accused member(s) are the parties to the case.

**\*C15.04.** The discipline hearing panel shall commence and conduct the disciplinary hearing in accordance with the provisions governing discipline of congregation members prescribed in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.

**\*C15.05.** By the vote of at least two-thirds of the members of the discipline hearing panel who are present and voting, one of the following disciplinary sanctions can be imposed:

- a. suspension from the privileges of congregation membership for a designated period of time;
  - b. suspension from the privileges of congregation membership until the pastor and Congregation Council receive evidence, satisfactory to them, of repentance and amendment of life;
  - c. termination of membership in the congregation; or
  - d. termination of membership in the congregation and exclusion from the church property and from all congregation activities.
- \*C15.06.** The written decision of the discipline hearing panel shall be sent to the vice president of the synod, the accused member(s), and the Congregation Council as required by the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. The decision of the discipline hearing panel shall be implemented by the Congregation Council and recorded in the minutes of the next council meeting.
- \*C15.07.** No member of the congregation shall be subject to discipline a second time for offenses that a discipline hearing panel has heard previously and decided pursuant to this chapter.
- \*C15.10. Adjudication**
- \*C15.11.** When there is disagreement among factions within this congregation on a substantive issue that cannot be resolved by the parties, members of this congregation shall have access to the synodical bishop for consultation after informing the chair of the Congregation Council of their intent. If the consultation fails to resolve the issue(s), the Consultation Committee of the synod shall consider the matter. If the Consultation Committee of the synod shall fail to resolve the issue(s), the matter shall be referred to the Synod Council, whose decision shall be final.

## Chapter 16.

### AMENDMENTS

- \*C16.01.** Unless provision \*C16.04. is applicable, those sections of this constitution that are not required, in accord with the *Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, may be amended in the following manner. Amendments may be proposed by at least ten percent voting members or 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 of the proposal together with the council's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the meeting. Notification may take place by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law.
- \*C16.02.** An amendment to this constitution, proposed under \*C16.01., shall:
- a. be approved at a legally called Congregation Meeting according to this constitution by a majority vote of those voting members present and voting;
  - b. be ratified without change at the next annual meeting by a two-thirds vote of those voting members present and voting; and
  - c. have the effective date included in the resolution<sup>2</sup> and noted in the constitution. \*\*\*
- \*C16.03.** Any amendments to this constitution that result from the processes provided in \*C16.01. and \*C16.02. shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod. The synod shall notify the congregation of its decision to approve or disapprove the proposed changes; the changes shall go into effect upon notification that the synod has approved them.
- \*C16.04.** This constitution may be amended to bring any section into conformity with a section or sections, either required or not required, of the *Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* as most recently amended by the Churchwide Assembly. Such amendments may be approved by a majority vote of those voting members present and voting at any legally called meeting of the congregation without presentation at a prior meeting of the congregation, provided that the Congregation Council has submitted by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law, notice to the congregation of such an amendment or amendments, together with the council's recommendations, at least 30 days prior to the meeting. Upon the request of at least two (2) voting members of the congregation, the Congregation Council shall submit such notice. Following the adoption of an

---

<sup>2</sup> Such an effective date must be stated in relation to the requirements of \*C16.03. to allow time for synodical review of the amendment.

amendment, the secretary of the congregation shall submit a copy thereof to the synod. Such provisions shall become effective immediately following a vote of approval.

## **Chapter 17.**

### **BYLAWS**

- \*C17.01. This congregation may adopt bylaws. No bylaw may conflict with this constitution.
- \*C17.02. Bylaws may be adopted or amended at any legally called meeting of this congregation with a quorum present by a two-thirds vote of those voting members present and voting.
- \*C17.03. Changes to the bylaws may be proposed by any voting member, provided that such additions or amendments be submitted in writing to the Congregation Council at least 60 days before a regular or special Congregation Meeting called for that purpose. The Congregation Council shall notify the congregation's members of the proposal with the council's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the Congregation Meeting. Notification may take place by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law.
- \*C17.04. Approved changes to the bylaws shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod.

## **Chapter 18.**

### **CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS**

- \*C18.01. The congregation in a legally called meeting or 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 majority vote of a meeting of the congregation or a two-thirds vote of all voting members of the Congregation Council. Continuing resolutions which are separate policy or working documents for Reformation Church, especially those not included elsewhere in this document, are listed here with their status.

*C18.02.A17. These are currently active Continuing Resolutions, policies, and/or agreements.*

*Baptism Practices*

*Communion Practices 1999*

*Confirmation Guidelines (pending)*

*Funeral Guidelines (pending)*

*Gift Acceptance Policy (pending)*

*LSC partnership Agreement*

*Mission Statement (see Chapter 4)- 2011*

*Organizational Chart and Ministry Structure Working Document – 2017 (updates 2016)*

*Ministry Team Descriptions (C13.06)*

*Ministry Coordinator Job Description*

*Personnel Policies – September 12, 2006 (Updates Personnel Policies from \_\_\_\_\_)*

*Job Description: Administrator – November 2013*

*Job Description: Music Director –*

*Job Description: Custodian –*

*Property Use – August 16, 2016 (Updates Facilities Use Guidelines from 2004)*

*Richland County First Steps Agreement*

*Transformation Covenant*

*Wedding Policy – November 1, 2014 (Updates Wedding Policies from 2002 and earlier)*

*Welcome Statement Approved and becoming Reconciled in Christ action*

*C18.02.B17. These Continuing Resolutions are out of date or no longer needed.  
Van Policy 1999*

*C18.02.C17. Continuing Resolutions are maintained in the church office files, the archive and history files, in a notebook along with a copy of the current constitution and bylaws in the church library.*

## **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** [*\* Required provisions when part of a parish*]

- \*C20.01.** This congregation may unite in partnership with one or more other congregations recognized by the synod named in \*C6.01. to form a parish. Except as provided in \*C20.02. and \*C20.03., a written agreement, developed in consultation with the synod and approved by the voting members of each congregation participating in the parish, shall specify the powers and responsibilities that have been delegated to the Parish Council. The Parish Agreement shall identify which congregation of the parish issues calls on behalf of the member congregations or shall establish a process for identifying which congregation issues calls on behalf of the member congregations.
- \*C20.02.** One congregation of a parish shall issue a call on behalf of the member congregations to a minister of Word and Sacrament or a candidate for the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament who has been recommended by the synodical bishop to serve the congregations of the parish. Such a call shall be approved prior to issuance by a two-thirds vote at a congregational meeting of each congregation forming the parish. If any congregation of the parish should fail to approve the call, the other congregations of the parish shall have the right to terminate the parish agreement.
- \*C20.03.** One congregation of a parish may issue a call on behalf of the member congregations to a minister of Word and Service or a candidate for the roster of Ministers of Word and Service who has been recommended by the synodical bishop to serve the congregations of the parish. Such a call shall be approved prior to issuance by a two-thirds vote at a congregational meeting of each congregation forming the parish. If any congregation of the parish should fail to approve the call, the other congregations of the parish shall have the right to terminate the parish agreement.
- \*C20.04.** Any one of the congregations of the parish may terminate their relationship with the pastor as provided in †S14.18.d. of the synodical constitution of the synod named in \*C6.01. In such case, the other congregation(s) of the same parish shall have the right to terminate the parish agreement.
- \*C20.05.** Any one of the congregations of the parish may terminate their relationship with a minister of Word and Service as provided in †S14.43.d. of the synodical constitution of the synod named in \*C6.01. In such case, the other congregation(s) of the same parish shall have the right to terminate the parish agreement.
- \*C20.06.** Whenever a parish agreement is terminated, the call of any rostered minister serving that parish is terminated. Should any congregation that was formerly part of the parish agreement desire to issue a new call to that rostered minister, it may do so in accordance with the call process of this church.