

The Constitution of the Augsburg Evangelical Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

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 to work, 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 Augsburg Evangelical Lutheran Church, Porter, Indiana

C1.02. For the purpose of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws, the congregation is hereinafter designated as "this congregation."

C1.03. This congregation shall be incorporated under the laws of the state of Indiana.

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.

C.2.05 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, Luther's Small Catechism, Luther's 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 Scriptures 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.

CHAPTER 3.

NATURE OF THE CHURCH

C.3.01. 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. 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. This church, therefore, derives its character and power 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.

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, and standing with the poor and powerless, and committing itself to their needs;

- e. Nurture its members in the Word of God so as to grow in faith and hope and love, to see daily life as the primary setting for the exercise of their Christian calling, and to use the gifts of the Spirit for their life together and for their calling in the world: and
- 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 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and
- 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 organization groups and shall review their actions.

C4.05. This congregation shall, from time to time, adopt a mission statement which will provide specific direction for its programs.

CHAPTER 5

POWERS OF THE CONGREGATION

C5.01. The powers of this congregation are those necessary to fulfill its purpose.

C5.02. The powers of this congregation are 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 the congregation's governing documents is recognized. All remaining authority is retained by the congregation. The congregation is authorized to:

- a. Call a pastor;
- b. Terminate the call of a pastor;
- c. Appoint or terminate the appointment of associates in ministry in conformity with the applicable policy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;
- d. Approve the annual budget;
- e. Acquire real and personal property by gift, devise, purchase, or other lawful means;
- f. Hold title to and use its property for any and all activities consistent with its purpose;
- g. Sell, mortgage, lease, transfer, or otherwise dispose of its property by any lawful means;
- h. Elect its Congregation Council, and require them to carry out their duties in accordance with the constitution bylaws, and continuing resolutions; and
- i. Terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as provided in Chapter 6.

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 Indiana-Kentucky 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 clergy roster of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in accordance with its call procedures except in special circumstance and with the approval of the bishop of the synod;

- d. This congregation agrees to consider associates in ministry for appointment to other staff positions in the congregation according to the procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and
- 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 or with the constitution of the synod.

C6.04. Affiliation with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may be terminated when:

- 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; or
- 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 desire of this congregation to terminate its relationship must be adopted at a legally called and conducted special meeting of this congregation by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present.
- b. The secretary of this congregation shall submit a copy of the resolution to the synodical bishop and shall mail a copy of the resolution to voting members of the congregation. This notice shall be submitted within 10 day after the resolution has been adopted.
- c. The bishop of the synod shall consult with this congregation during a period of at least 90 days.
- d. If this congregation, after consultation, still desires to terminate its relationship, such action may be taken at a legally called and conducted special meeting by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present, at which meeting the bishop of the synod or an authorized representative shall be present. Notice of the meeting shall be mailed to all voting members at least 10 days in advance of the meeting.
- e. A certified copy of the resolution to terminate its relationship shall be sent to the synodical bishop, at which time the relationship between this congregation and ELCA shall be terminated.
- f. Notice of termination shall be forwarded by the synodical bishop to the secretary of this church and published in the periodical of this church.

- g. If this congregation was a member of the Lutheran Church in America it shall be required, in addition to the provisions in C6.05., to receive synodical approval before terminating its membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

C6.06. If this congregation is considering relocation, it shall confer with the bishop of the synod before any steps are taken leading to such action. The approval of the Synod Council shall be received before any such action is effected.

CHAPTER 7.

PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

C7.01. If this congregation ceases to exist, title to undisposed property shall pass to the 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 a two-thirds majority of the voting members of this congregation present at a regularly 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. Before this congregation takes action to transfer to another Lutheran church body, it shall consult with representatives of the Indiana-Kentucky Synod.

C7.04. If a two-thirds majority of the voting members of this congregation present at a regularly called and conducted special meeting of this congregation vote to become independent or relate to a non-Lutheran church body, 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 the 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 the 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.

CHAPTER 8

MEMBERSHIP

C8.01. Members of this congregation shall be those baptized persons of the roll of the 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 the 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 shall have communed and made a contribution of record during the current or preceding year, and who have attained the age of 16 years.
- d. Associate members are persons holding membership in other Christian congregations which are in communion with the ELCA who wish to retain such membership but desire to participate in the life and mission of this congregation. They have all the privileges and duties of membership except voting rights and eligibility for elected offices or membership on the Congregation Council of this congregation.

C8.03. All applications for confirmed membership shall be submitted to and shall require the approval of the congregation council

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

- a. Make regular use of the means of grace, both Word and sacraments;
- b. Live a Christian life in accordance with the Word of God and the teachings of the Lutheran church; and
- c. Support the work of this congregation and 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. A death;
- b. Resignation;
- c. Transfer or release;
- d. Disciplinary action by the Congregation Council; or
- e. Removal from the roll due to inactivity. An inactive member of the Congregation, is one who is baptized, but fails to meet the criterium set forth in C8.02. Such persons who have been removed from the roll of members shall remain persons for whom the church has a continuing pastoral concern.

C8.06. If a person has been inactive because he or she fails to meet the criteria set forth in C8.02.c., following one year of such inactivity, said member will be contacted by a member of the Evangelism Committee who will express concern and inquire regarding their status and their future commitment to the church. If their inactivity continues through a third year, they shall be removed from the roll of members.

C9.01. Authority to call a pastor shall be in this congregation by at least a two-thirds majority ballot vote of members present and voting at a meeting regularly called for that purpose. Before a call is issued, the officers, or a committee appointed 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 clergy roster of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or who has been recommended for it 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 ordained minister shall:
 - 1) Preach the Word;
 - 2) Administer the sacraments;
 - 3) Conduct public worship;
 - 4) Provide pastoral care; and
 - 5) Speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world.
- b. Each ordained minister with a congregational call shall, within the congregation:
 - 1) Offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead;
 - 2) Supervise all schools and organizations of the congregation;
 - 3) Install regularly elected members of the Congregation Council; and
 - 4) With the council, administer discipline.
- c. Every pastor shall:
 - 1) Seek out and encourage qualified persons for the ministry of the Gospel; and strive to extend the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation, and abroad;
 - 2) Impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through distribution of its periodicals and other publications; and
 - 3) Endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the ELCA churchwide organization and of this ELCA synod.

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.

C9.05.a. The call of a congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment which, except in the case of the death of the pastor, shall be terminated only by following consultation with the synodical bishop and for the following reasons:

may temporarily suspend the pastor from service in the congregations (s) without prejudice and with pay provided through a joint churchwide/synod fund and with housing provided by the congregation (s)

C9.06. At a time of pastoral vacancy, a vacancy pastor may 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, a vacancy pastor shall have the rights and duties 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 vacancy pastor and any ordained pastor providing assistance shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a pastor.

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.

C9.09. Then 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.

C9.10. 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 of years. 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 call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of C9.05. a.

C9.11. The pastor shall keep accurate parochial records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from the congregation, and shall submit a summary of such statistics annually to the synod.

C9.12. 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.

CHAPTER 10

CONGREGATION MEETING

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

C10.02. A special Congregation meeting may be called by the pastor, the Congregation Council, or the vice-president of this congregation, or may be called a the written request of 10% voting members. The call for each special meeting shall specify the purpose for which it is to be held and no other business shall be transacted.

C10.03. Notice of all meetings of this congregation shall be given at the services of worship on the preceding two consecutive Sundays and by mail to all members at least 10 days in advance of the date of the meeting. The posting of such notice in the regular mail, with the regular postage affixed or paid, sent to the last known address of such members shall be sufficient.

- 1) Mutual agreement to terminate the call or the completion of a call for a specific term of years
- 2) Resignation of the pastor, which shall become effective unless otherwise agreed, 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, without reflection on the competence or the moral and spiritual character of the pastor;
- 4) The physical or mental incapacity of the pastor;
- 5) Disqualification of the pastor through discipline on grounds of doctrine, morality, or continued neglect of duty;
- 6) The dissolution of the congregation; or
- 7) Suspension of the congregation as a result of discipline proceedings.

b. When allegations of physical or mental incapacity of the pastor or ineffective conduct of the pastoral office, have come to the attention of the bishop of the synod, when such difficulties are personally known or 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, to investigate such conditions personally in company with a committee of two ordained ministers and one layperson.

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

d. In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of the congregation, all concerned persons shall be heard, after which the bishop of the synod together with the committee described in C9.05b. shall decide on the course of action to be recommended to the pastor and the congregation. If they agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action shall be taken by the synod. If either party fails to assent, the congregation may dismiss the pastor by a two-thirds majority vote of the voting members present at a regularly called meeting after consultation with the bishop.

e. If, in the course of proceedings described in C9.05.d., the committee concludes that there may be grounds for disciplinary action, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action to the synodical bishop who may bring charges, in accordance with the provisions of the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the constitution of this synod.

f. If, following the appointment of the committee described in C9.05.b or d., it should become apparent that the pastoral office cannot be conducted effectively in the congregations (s) being served by the ordained minister due to local conditions, the bishop of the synod

C10.04. 10% voting members shall constitute a quorum.

C10.05. Voting by proxy or by absentee ballot shall not be permitted.

C10.06. All actions by the congregation shall be by majority vote except as otherwise provided in this constitution.

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.

- a. Duties of the officers shall be specified in the bylaws.
- b. The officers shall be voting members of the congregation.
- c. Officers of this congregation shall serve similar offices of the Congregation Council and shall be voting members of the congregation Council.
- d. If the Congregation Council elects its officers, the president, vice president, and secretary shall be selected from the elected membership of the Congregation Council

C11.02. The pastor shall be *ex-officio* a member of the congregational council, and will hold no other major office within the Council or Congregation. The President of the Council and Congregation will preside at all meetings of the council and congregation, and substitution for the presiding officer will be directed by Robert's Rules of Order. The pastor will preside over the election of the President. The President, Vice President, and Secretary shall be elected by ecclesiastical ballot by the Congregational Council. The Treasurer shall be elected by written ballot. They shall serve for one year or until their successors are elected. Their terms shall begin as of January 1 of the succeeding year.

C11.03. No officer shall hold more than one office at a time. No elected officer shall be eligible to serve more than two years in the same office, with the exception of the Congregation Treasurer.

CHAPTER 12

CONGREGATION COUNCIL

C12.01. The voting membership of the Congregational Council shall include 12 members elected from the congregation, and pastor(s), and the treasurer. Any voting member of the congregation may be elected to the Council, subject only to the limitation on the length of continuous serviced permitted in that office. The officers of the Council, who are also the officers of the congregation, will be from the membership of the Council. If the treasurer is

elected from the congregation, he or she will become a member of the Council with voice and vote. A member's position on the council will be declared vacant if that member;

- a. ceases to be a voting member of this congregation.
- b. is absent from four (4) consecutive regular meetings of the Congregational Council without cause.

C12.02. The members of the Congregation Council, except the pastor (s), shall be elected by written ballot to serve for three (3) years or until their successors are elected. Such members shall be eligible to serve no more than two full terms consecutively. Their terms shall begin as of January of the succeeding year.

C12.03. Should a member's place on the Congregation Council be declared vacant, the Congregation Council shall elect, by majority vote, a successor to serve until the next annual meeting.

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 pastor (s) and staff and help them annually to evaluate the fulfillment of their calling, appointment, 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 difference 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 units of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America 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; and
- 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 the management of its business and fiscal affairs. It shall have the powers and be subject to the obligations that pertain to such boards under the laws of the State of Indiana, except as otherwise provided therein.
- 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.
- c. The congregation Council may expend non-budgeted funds not to exceed \$4000.00 without the prior consent of the Congregation.
- 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 more than \$1,500.00, in excess of the anticipated receipt 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.

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

C12.08. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the appointment and supervision of the salaried lay workers of this congregation.

C12.09. The Congregation Council shall submit a comprehensive report to this congregation at the annual meeting.

C12.10. The Congregation Council shall normally meet once a month. Special meetings may be called by the pastor or the vice-president, and shall be called 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.

C12.11. A quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of a majority of the members of the Congregation Council, including the pastor or vacancy pastor, except when such person requests or consents to be absent.

C12.12. When the pastor or vacancy pastor requests or consents to be absent from a meeting of the Congregation Council, the agenda at such a meeting must be given prior approval by the Executive Committee and routine matters shall be the only business of the meeting.

CHAPTER 13

CONGREGATIONAL COMMITTEES

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

C13.02. A Nominating Committee of four voting members of this congregation, one of whom shall be an outgoing member of the Congregation Council, shall be elected at the annual meeting for a term of one year. Members of the Nominating Committee are eligible for one additional term.

C13.03. An Audit Committee of three voting members shall be elected by the Congregation at its second Annual meeting, as noted in the bylaws. Audit Committee members shall not be members of the Congregation Council. Term of office will be three years, with one member elected each year. Members shall be eligible for re-election.

C13.04. A Staff Support Committee shall be appointed jointly by the president and the pastor. Term of office shall be two years, three members to be appointed each successive year. Not more than two members of this committee may be Congregational Council members, and officers of the Council may not serve on this committee. This committee shall serve as liaison between Council, Pastor, and Congregation in times of special need.

C13.05. A Call Committee of 6 to 9 voting members will be appointed by the Congregational Council when a pastoral vacancy occurs. Term of office will terminate upon installation of the newly-installed Pastor.

C13.06. Other congregational committees may be formed as the need arises, by decision of the Congregation Council.

C13.07. Duties of congregational committees shall be specified by continuing resolutions.

CHAPTER 14

ORGANIZATIONS WITHIN THE CONGREGATION

C14.01. All organizations within this congregation shall exist to aid it in ministering to the members of this congregation and to all persons who can be reached with the Gospel of Christ. As outgrowths and expressions of this congregation's life, the organizations are subject to its oversight and direction. This congregation at its meeting shall 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 or specified in a continuing resolution:

CHAPTER 15

DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS AND ADJUDICATION

C15.01. Denial of the Christian faith as described in this constitution, conduct grossly unbecoming a member of the Church of Christ, or persistent trouble-making in this congregation are sufficient cause for discipline of a member. Prior to disciplinary action, reconciliation will be attempted following Matthew 18: 15-17, proceeding through these successive steps:

- a. Private admonition by the pastor;
- b. Admonition by the pastor in the presence of two or three witnesses; and
- c. Citation to appear before the Congregation Council.

C15.02. A member charged with the offense shall appear before the Congregation Council, having received a written notice specifying the exact charges that have been made against the member at least 10 days prior to the meeting.

C15.03. Should the allegations be sustained by a two-thirds majority vote of the Congregation Council, the council shall impose one of the following disciplinary actions:

- a. Censure before the council or congregation;
- b. Suspension from membership for a definite period or time; or
- c. Exclusion from membership in this congregation. Disciplinary actions b. and c. shall be delivered to the member in writing.

C15.04. The member against whom disciplinary action has been taken by the Congregation Council shall have the right to appeal the decision to the Synod Council. Such right may not be abridged and the decision of the Synod Council shall be final.

C15.05. Disciplinary actions may be reconsidered and revoked by the Congregation Council upon receipt of:

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

CHAPTER 16

BYLAWS

C16.01. This congregation may adopt bylaws. No bylaw may conflict with this constitution.

C16.02. Bylaws may be adopted or amended at any legally called meeting of this congregation with a quorum present by a majority vote of those voting members present and voting.

C16.03. Changes to the bylaws may be proposed by any voting member provided, however, that such additions or amendments be submitted in writing to the Congregation Council at least 60 days before a regular or special Congregation Meeting called for that purpose and that the Congregation Council notify the member of the proposal with its recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the Congregation Meeting.

C16.04. Approved changes to the bylaws shall be sent to the synod.

CHAPTER 17

AMENDMENTS

C17.01. Amendments to this constitution may be proposed by at least two(2) 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 its regular or special meeting called for that purpose. The Congregation Council shall notify the members of the proposal with their recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the meeting.

C17.02. A proposed amendment to this constitution shall:

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

C17.03. Any amendments to this constitution shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod. The amendment shall become effective within 120 days from the date of the receipt of the notice by the synod unless the synod informs this congregation that the amendment is in conflict with the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, or the constitution of the Indiana-Kentucky Synod.

C17.04. Whenever the Model Congregations is amended by the Churchwide Assembly, this constitution may be amended to reflect any such amendment by a simple majority vote any subsequent meeting of the congregation without presentation at a prior meeting of the congregation, provided that the Congregation Council has submitted by mail notice to the congregation of such an amendment or amendments at least 30 days prior to the meeting. Following the adoption of an amendment, the secretary of the congregation shall submit a copy thereof to the synod, consistent with C17.03.

CHAPTER 18

CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

C18.01. The Congregation Council may enact continuing resolutions which describe the function of the various committees or organizations of this congregation.

C18.02. Continuing resolutions shall be enacted or amended by a two-thirds vote of all voting members of the Congregation Council.

BYLAWS
of the Constitution of the
Augsburg Evangelical Lutheran
Church

BYLAW NO. 1

ANNUAL MEETINGS (C10.01.)

This congregation shall have two annual meetings. The first meeting will convene before the 14th day of February. The purpose of the first meeting will be to receive the reports of: the Pastor; the Congregation Council; the Cemetery, Memorial, and Audit Committees; Women of the E.L.C.A.; Augsburg Youth Ministry and Augsburg Lutheran Youth Organization; and the Treasurer. The second meeting will be convened before the 15th day of November. The purpose of the second meeting will be to adopt a Mission Budget for the coming year, to receive and act on the report of the Nominating Committee, and to propose and adopt continuing resolutions for the coming year.

BYLAW NO. 2

THE CALL COMMITTEE (C13.05.)

A Call Committee will be formed at the time of a pastoral vacancy, as directed in article C13.05 of the constitution.

It will be the function of the Committee to:

- a. Communicate with the synod on the pastoral needs of the congregation;
- b. Develop a profile of the congregation;
- c. Develop with the Congregation Council a package of compensation and related items, based on Synod guidelines approved at the most recent assembly;
- d. Review pastoral candidates' profiles, as provided by the Office of the Bishop;
- e. Interview pastoral candidates and make recommendations to the Congregation Council.

BYLAW NO. 3 ELECTION PROCEDURE FOR CONGREGATION COUNCIL OFFICERS

Council officers shall be elected by current (those who will be serving the following year) and newly elected council members, and the election of the President, Vice President, and Secretary will be by ecclesiastical ballot at the December council meeting. The procedure for ecclesiastical ballot is as follows:

- a. The first ballot is a nominating ballot. All Congregation Council members are eligible for election. A 75% plurality is required to elect on the first ballot.
- b. The second ballot contains those nominated on the first ballot. A 75% plurality is required to elect on the second ballot.

- c. The five(5) top candidates are on the third ballot. A 66% plurality is required to elect on the third ballot.
- d. The two(2) top candidates are on the fourth ballot. A simple majority is required to elect on the fourth ballot.

The candidates for Treasurer are nominated by the Congregation Council. Election is by a simple majority.

BYLAW NO. 4 CONGREGATION COUNCIL OFFICERS (C11.01.A.)

The election of officers for the Congregation Council will take place at the December meeting of the Council. The terms will begin as of January 1 of the succeeding year, and will be for one year or until their successors are elected.

PRESIDENT

The President shall serve as chief executive officer of the congregation and will chair the executive committee of the Congregation Council. Also:

- a. Chair the Congregation Council meetings.
- b. Chair the meeting of the congregation.
- c. Serve with the Pastor, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer as an executive committee of the Congregational Council.
- d. Serve as a member of the standing committees of the Congregation Council, with voice but no vote.

VICE-PRESIDENT

The Vice President is a member of the Congregation Council. The Vice President shall:

- a. Assist the President in carrying out the duties of that office.
- b. Fill in for the President when the President is absent.

SECRETARY

The Secretary is to be a member of the Congregation Council. The Secretary shall be elected by the Congregation Council (C11.02.) at its first meeting of the year. Election shall be by ecclesiastical ballot (Bylaw No. 3). The Secretary shall:

- a. Keep accurate minutes of meetings of the Congregation Council and of the congregation;
- b. Oversee the preparation of the Annual Report of the Congregation Council;

- c. Serve with the President, Vice President, Treasurer and Pastor as an executive committee of the Congregation Council (C11.01.);
- d. In the absence of the Vice-President at a Congregation Council meeting, chair said meeting; and
- e. With the Pastor and the Treasurer prepare the appropriate reports required annually for the State of Indiana and for the Synod and Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

TREASURER

The Treasurer need not be an elected member of the Congregation Council, but must be a voting member of the congregation. The Treasurer is elected by the Congregation Council, subject to the provisions in the constitution (C11.02. and C11.03). The Treasurer shall:

- a. Keep the books of accounts of the congregation;
- b. Receive from the Financial Secretary all funds and disburse them on proper orders, making monthly remittance of benevolence receipts to the treasurer of the Indiana-Kentucky Synod;
- c. With the Finance/Stewardship Committee establish a plan for investment of church funds and implement said plan;
- d. Prepare a monthly financial report for the Congregation Council Meeting;
- e. Present financial records to the Auditing Committee for annual review;
- f. Prepare an annual report for the congregation;
- g. Serve with the President, Vice-President and Secretary and Pastor as an executive committee of the Congregation Council (C11.01.);
- h. With the Pastor and the Financial Secretary prepare the appropriate reports required annually for the State of Indiana and for the Synod and Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and
- i. Serve as a member *ex officio* of the Stewardship/Finance Committee, the Memorial Committee, the Cemetery Committee, and the Pre-Kindergarten Board, with voice, but no vote.

FINANCIAL SECRETARY(IES)

The Financial Secretary(ies) shall be appointed by the Congregation Council for a two(2) year term, and shall be eligible for reappointment, with such appointments not to exceed three(3) consecutive terms. Appointment shall be at the first meeting of the Congregation Council in January. The Financial Secretary(ies) shall:

- a. Receive and keep records of all income from members and other sources; and

- b. Serve as a member *ex officio* of the Stewardship/Finance Committee, with voice, but no vote.

BYLAW NO. 5

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (C13.01.)

The Executive Committee shall be comprised of the President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and Pastor. The Executive Committee shall:

- a. Develop the agenda for the Congregation Council meeting;
- b. Make standing committee appointments;
- c. Sign, when authorized to do so, on behalf of the Congregation legal contracts, etc.; and
- d. Identify candidates to fill vacant positions on the Congregation Council or other committees of the Congregation.

BYLAW NO. 6

ARCHIVIST

The Archivist is appointed by the Congregation Council at its first meeting in January. The Archivist serves for a two(2) year term, and shall be eligible for reappointment, with such appointment not to exceed three(3) consecutive terms. The Archivist shall:

- a. Promote the preservation of the history of the congregation;
- b. Care for the Archive Room and the records, pictures, and other various items contained therein;
- c. Seek to maintain an accurate contemporary record of the activities of the congregation as presented in the minutes of all meetings, newspaper articles, other publications, etc; and
- d. Serve as a member *ex officio* of the Memorial Committee, with voice, but no vote.

BYLAW NO. 7

THE MEMORIAL COMMITTEE

The congregation elects members to the Memorial Committee at its second meeting of the year (Bylaw No. 1). The Committee is comprised of six(6) members, who will serve two(2) year terms. Committee members are eligible for re-election, and may serve no more than three(3) consecutive terms. Election will be on a rotation basis, with three(3) members elected each year. Vacancies on the Committee will be filled by the Congregation Council, with the replacement member filling the position until the appointed Congregational Meeting for elections. The Pastor, Treasurer, and Archivist are members *ex officio* of the Memorial Committee, with voice, but no vote. The Memorial Committee shall:

- a. Keep an accurate record of memorial gifts made to the congregation;
- b. Respond, in a timely fashion, for memorial gifts given to the congregation;

- c. With the Congregation Council determine needs and make recommendations for the procurement of appropriate memorial items, with the financial limitations noted in C12.05.c. Keep a record of memorial items to be entered in the Congregation's Memorial Book;
- d. Oversee the Flag Memorial Fund, Eternal Light Fund, and other designated Memorial Funds, excluding the Estate Fund;
- e. Oversee Burstrom Chapel, the funds designated for the Chapel and its general upkeep. With the Archivist, promote the historical significance of the site for future generations; and
- f. Promote future memorials and Estate planning (Wills) in the congregation

BYLAW NO. 8

CEMETERY COMMITTEE

The congregation elects members to the Cemetery Committee at its second meeting of the year (Bylaw No. 1). The Committee is comprised of four(4) members, who will serve two(2) year terms. Committee members are eligible for re-election, and may serve no more than three(3) consecutive terms. Election will be on a rotation basis, with two(2) members elected each year. Vacancies on the Committee will be filled by the Congregation Council, with the replacement member filling the position until the appointed Congregation Meeting for elections. The Pastor and Treasurer are members *ex officio* of the Cemetery Committee, with voice, but no vote.

The Cemetery Committee shall:

- a. Have oversight responsibilities for the congregation's two cemeteries. Such oversight responsibilities will include:
 - 1) Arranging for grass mowing and leaf raking, annually;
 - 2) General clean-ups for flowers, plants, etc., at appropriate times throughout the year;
 - 3) Placing flags on veterans' graves at Memorial Day; and
 - 4) The contacting of families when grave markers are in need of care and/or making repairs necessary to graves when the family is no longer available for such repairs.
- b. Keep accurate records of burials in both cemeteries of the congregation, securing proper burial permits and noting locations on plot maps of the cemeteries; and
- c. As authorized by the congregation, sell burial lots in the Augsburg Cemetery and complete all necessary papers and transfers of cemetery properties.

BYLAW NO. 9

FUNCTION AND DUTIES OF THE STANDING COMMITTEES

Appointments to all standing committees of the Congregation are for a period of one year, with unlimited re-appointment.

Functions and duties of the standing committees will be established by standing resolutions.