

**SAINT LUKE'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
LINCOLN, LINCOLN COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA
CONSTITUTION**

- [PREAMBLE](#)
- [ARTICLE I – Name](#)
- [ARTICLE II – Confession of Faith](#)
- [ARTICLE III – Nature of the Church](#)
- [ARTICLE IV – Statement of Purpose](#)
- [ARTICLE V – Powers of the Congregation](#)
- [ARTICLE VI - Church Affiliation](#)
- [ARTICLE VII – Property Ownership](#)
- [ARTICLE VIII – Membership](#)
- [ARTICLE IX – Called Church Workers](#)
- [ARTICLE X – Congregational Meetings](#)
- [ARTICLE XI – Church Council](#)
- [ARTICLE XII – Officers](#)
- [ARTICLE XIII – Standing Committees](#)
- [ARTICLE XIV – Organizations within this Congregation](#)
- [ARTICLE XV – Discipline of Members and Adjudication](#)
- [ARTICLE XVI – By Laws](#)
- [ARTICLE XVII – Amendments](#)
- [ARTICLE XVIII – Continuing Resolutions](#)

PREAMBLE ([top](#))

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

11/12/2020

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.

ARTICLE I - Name ([top](#))

Section 1 - The name of this congregation Saint Luke's Evangelical Lutheran Church;" "Synod" refers to the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod; "District" refers to the Southeastern District LCMS; "Evangelical Lutheran Church" refers to the denomination of Lutherans that adhere to the confessional teachings of the Church including the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments and the Symbolical Books.

ARTICLE II - Confession of Faith ([top](#))

This congregation holds all the canonical books of the Old and New Testament to be the inspired Word of God and the sole rule of faith and norm. This congregation accepts all the Symbolic books of the Lutheran church contained in the Book of Concord of the year 1580, viz., the Ecumenical Creeds (the Apostles', the Nicene, and the Athanasian); the Unaltered Augsburg Confession of 1530; the Apology of the Augsburg Confession; the Catechisms of Martin Luther; the Smalcald Articles; the Formula of Concord as a correct and sound exposition of Christian Doctrine taken from and in full accord with the Holy Scriptures.

ARTICLE III - Nature of the Church ([top](#))

Section 1. 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.

Section 2. 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, 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.

ARTICLE IV - Statement of Purpose ([top](#))

Section 1. The Church is a people created by God in Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, called and set to bear witness to God's creative, redeeming, and sanctifying activity in the world.

Section 2. 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 ministries 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 it 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.

Section 3. 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 this 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 this congregation's ministry and the ministry of other parts of the Evangelical Lutheran Church.
- h. Foster and participate in interdependent relationships with other congregations and the synod.

Section 4. This congregation shall develop an organizational structure to be described in the bylaws.

The Church Council shall prepare descriptions of the responsibilities of each committee, task force, or other organizational groups and shall review their actions. [Such descriptions shall be contained in continuing resolutions of the Church Council.]

Section 5. This congregation may, from time to time, adopt a mission statement which will provide specific direction for its programs.

ARTICLE V - Powers of the Congregation ([top](#))

Section 1. The powers of this congregation are those necessary to fulfill its purpose.

Section 2. The powers of this congregation are vested in the Congregational Meeting called and conducted as provided in this constitution and bylaws.

Section 3. The congregation hereby delegates to the Church Council plenary authority to act for the congregation between meetings, except for items exclusively reserved for the Congregational Meeting as stated below and in the bylaws.

- a. call Ministers of Religion, both Ordained and Commissioned, and terminate such calls if necessary; as provided in Article IX;
- b. approve the annual budget;
- c. acquire real and personal property by gift, devise, purchase, or other lawful means;
- d. hold title to and use its property for any and all activities consistent with its purpose;
- e. sell, mortgage, lease, transfer, or otherwise dispose of its property by any lawful means;
- f. elect its Church Council and require them to carry out their duties in accordance with the constitution and bylaws.

ARTICLE VI - Church Affiliation ([top](#))

Section 1. This congregation shall be a member of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS) as long as the Synod conforms to this congregation's confessional standards as set forth in this constitution.

ARTICLE VII - Property Ownership ([top](#))

Section 1. If, at any time, a separation should take place within this congregation, and despite all efforts to reconcile differences in peace and love, a division into factions of the congregation shall occur, the property of the congregation shall remain with those members who continue to adhere to Article II of this constitution in confession and practice as determined by a panel of three persons appointed by the District President. The decision of this panel shall be final and not subject to appeal.

Section 2. In the event that this congregation dissolves, all property shall be disposed of by the final Congregational Meeting for the payment of debts and all just claims

against this congregation, and any and all surplus and all rights connected therewith shall be conveyed to and become the property of the Southeastern District of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

ARTICLE VIII - Membership ([top](#))

Section 1. 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.

Section 2. 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. Active members are confirmed members who have communed and made a contribution of record to this congregation during the current or preceding year.
- d. Voting members are active, confirmed members on the current roll of this congregation.
- e. Guest members are persons holding membership in other Lutheran congregations 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, cemetery privileges, and eligibility for elected offices or membership on the Church Council of this congregation.

Section 3. All applications for confirmed membership in this congregation shall be submitted to and shall require the approval of the Church Council.

Section 4. 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 Evangelical Lutheran church; and
- c. support the work of this congregation and the Synod through contributions of their time, abilities, and financial support as biblical stewards.

Section 5. Membership in this congregation shall be terminated by any of

the following:

- a. death;
- b. resignation;
- c. transfer or release;
- d. disciplinary action initiated by the Church Council and approved by a two thirds vote at a special called Congregational Meeting
- e. removal from the roll due to inactivity as defined in the constitution.

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

ARTICLE IX – Called Church Workers ([top](#)) See bylaws PROCEDURES FOR CALLING MINISTERS OF RELIGION and OFFICIAL DUTIES.

ARTICLE X - Congregational Meetings ([top](#))

Section 1. An annual meeting of this congregation shall be held on a date to be stated in the bylaws. A quorum of voting members is required for a valid Congregational Meeting.

Section 2. Special Congregational Meetings may be called by the Church Council or at the written request of one tenth of the voting members, or by special request from the pastor to the Church Council. The call for each special meeting shall specify the purpose for which it is to be held, and no other business shall be transacted thereat.

Section 3. Notice of all Congregational Meetings shall be given at the services of worship on the preceding two consecutive Sundays or by mail to all voting members at least ten days in advance of the date of the meeting.

Section 4. Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, shall be the governing parliamentary law of this congregation.

Section 5. One fourth of those on the current roll of this congregation who are eligible to vote in Congregational Meetings shall constitute a quorum.

Section 6. The form of voting for meetings of the congregation, the Church Council, and Boards shall normally be conducted in person by attendees only during duly constituted meetings. This may include voting by written ballot, show of hands/standing, or voice vote. However, under extraordinary circumstance when in-person meetings are not possible or permitted, the Church Council shall determine the method of voting used. In all such instances, reasonable measures shall be implemented to verify that each person participating, whether remotely or in person, is a voting member and is provided a reasonable opportunity to participate in the meeting and to vote on matters submitted to the members, including an opportunity to read or hear the proceedings of the meeting substantially concurrently with such proceedings.

ARTICLE XI - Church Council ([top](#)) See bylaws CHURCH COUNCIL OR BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

ARTICLE XII - Officers ([top](#)) See bylaws OFFICIAL DUTIES

Section 1. At its first meeting in each congregational year, the Church Council shall elect a President, Vice-President, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and, if desired, a Financial Secretary, who will serve both the Council and this congregation in their several capacities. The President and Vice-President shall be chosen from the membership of

the Church Council. The other officers, if not members of the Council, shall be accorded the privilege of voice without vote in its meetings.

Section 2. All officers shall be chosen from the voting membership of this congregation. If any of them ceases to be such, the office shall at once be declared vacant by the Council and a new officer elected.

Section 3. The Secretary shall keep accurate minutes of all meetings of this congregation and of the Council which shall be preserved permanently in its archives.

Section 4. The Financial Secretary, if such an office is activated, shall receive and record all the transactions in the ledger, and deposit the funds received from members and other sources. He/she shall receive all sales slips and invoices and pay all bills and disburse all funds by check.

Section 5. The President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer shall be the trustees of this congregation and shall hold the property of this congregation, both real and personal, in trust for this congregation in accordance with the laws of the State of North Carolina applying to trustees. The trustees shall not, however, have the authority to buy, sell, or encumber real property unless specifically authorized to do so by a meeting of this congregation.

Section 6. The Treasurer shall oversee the Financial Secretary if such office is activated, and shall reconcile the books of account of this congregation, submit monthly reports of all transactions to the Church Council and to this congregation at the annual Congregational Meeting.

ARTICLE XIII - Standing Committees ([top](#)) See bylaws STANDING COMMITTEES.

Section 1. At its first meeting in each congregational year, the Church Council shall appoint as many standing committees as the local and wider concerns of this congregation shall require. Each such committee shall be composed of one or more members of the Council and, in addition, other persons from the voting membership of this congregation. Although appointed by and responsible to the Church Council these committees shall be recognized as representative of the interest of, and performing essential services for, this congregation as a whole. The pastor shall have a voice and will serve on all committees in an advisory role when necessary.

Section 2. Except as stipulated in the bylaws, the duties of all committees shall be assigned by the Church Council, along with such instruction as in its judgment are in the best interests of this congregation.

ARTICLE XIV - Organizations within this Congregation ([top](#))

Section 1. All organizations within this congregation shall exist to aid it in ministering to its members and to all whom it can reach 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 meetings, or the Church Council, shall determine their policies, guide their activities and receive reports concerning their membership, work and finances.

Section 2. Special interest groups may be organized only after authorization has been given by the Church Council.

ARTICLE XV - Discipline of Members and Adjudication ([top](#))

Section 1. 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 Church Council.

Section 2. As outlined in the bylaws under Discipline of Members and Adjudication Sections 1-6.

Section 3. Should the allegations be sustained by a two-thirds majority vote of the members of the Church Council and renewed admonition prove ineffectual; the Council shall impose one of the following disciplinary actions:

- a. Censure before the Council or this congregation;

- b. Suspension from membership for a definite period of time; or
- c. Recommend exclusion from membership in this congregation at a special called Congregational Meeting, by a two thirds majority vote.
- d. Disciplinary actions b. and c. shall be delivered to the member in writing.

Section 4. The member against whom disciplinary action has been taken by the Church Council shall have the right to appeal the decision to the Congregation Meeting. They may also seek the assistance of a District Reconciler in this process.

Section 5. Disciplinary actions may be reconsidered and revoked by the Church Council upon receipt of;

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

Section 6. Adjudication - The members who are parties to the disagreement shall have the right to seek the assistance of a District Reconciler in the process of resolving the issues.

ARTICLE XVI - ByLaws ([top](#))

Section 1. This congregation may adopt bylaws. No bylaw may conflict with this constitution.

Section 2. 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.

Section 3. Changes to the bylaws may be proposed by any voting member provided, however, that such additions or amendments be submitted in writing to the Church Council at least 60 days before a regular or special Congregation Meeting called for that purpose and that the Church Council notify the members of the proposal with its recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the Congregation Meeting.

Section 4. Any amendments to the bylaws shall, as a condition of continued membership in the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, be submitted to the President of the District for review by the District’s constitution committee and favorable action by the district’s board of directors before being finally adopted or implemented by the congregation.

ARTICLE XVII - Amendments ([top](#))

Section 1. Amendments to this constitution may be proposed by at least 15 voting members or by the Church Council. Proposals must be filed in writing with the Church Council 60 days before formal consideration by this congregation at its regular or special meeting called for that purpose. The Church Council shall notify the members of the proposal with their recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the meeting.

Section 2. A proposed amendment to this constitution shall:

- a. be approved at a properly called Congregational Meeting according to this constitution by a majority vote of those present and voting;
- b. be ratified without change at the next annual Congregational 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.

Section 3. Any amendments to this constitution shall, as a condition of continued membership in the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, be submitted to the President of the District for review by the District’s constitution committee and favorable action by the district’s board of directors before being finally adopted or implemented by the congregation.

ARTICLE XVIII - Continuing Resolutions ([top](#))

Section 1. The Church Council may enact continuing resolutions which describe the function of the various committees or organizations of this congregation.

Section 2. Continuing resolutions shall be enacted or amended by a two-thirds vote of all voting members of the Church Council.

11/12/2020

Revised 17-September-2013 by the Constitution & Bylaws Committee, and;
Approved by Church Council October 3, 2013, and;
Approved by the Congregation of Saint Luke's Lutheran Church at the Congregational Meeting on Sunday, October 6, 2013