



Lutheran Church of Hope  
An ELCA Congregation

**CONSTITUTION, BYLAWS, AND CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS**  
**OF**  
**LUTHERAN CHURCH OF HOPE, BROOMFIELD, COLORADO**

(Note: Paragraphs preceded by an asterisk are required by the ELCA and may not be altered by the congregation.)

### **Codification explanation:**

A numerical codification indicates (a) general subject, (b) constitutional provisions, (c) bylaws, and (d) continuing resolutions.

a. Major sectors are designated as chapters. The chapter designation becomes the first number in the codification sequence and is followed by a period. Thus, provisions in “Chapter 8. Membership” are preceded by “8”.

b. Constitutional provisions are bold print and codified with two sets of numbers: the chapter number and a two-digit number preceding the second period in the codification. Thus, one constitutional provision related to “Membership” is codified \*C8.02.

c. Bylaw provisions are codified with three sets of numbers: the chapter number, the related constitutional provision number, and a two-digit number. Thus, one bylaw provision related to “Membership” would be codified C8.02.01. Because bylaws and continuing resolutions normally are so specifically related to details of each congregation’s organization, operation, and life, no model set of bylaws or continuing resolutions is provided. Each congregation may develop its own bylaws and continuing resolutions, but no such bylaws or continuing resolutions may conflict with this constitution, the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and the constitution of the synod, as indicated in \*C6.03.e.

d. The Congregation Council may adopt “continuing resolutions”, which may provide descriptions of operational patterns or of the ongoing responsibilities of committees or other units within the organizational structure of the congregation. Within the governing documents of a congregation, continuing resolutions are the provisions most easily amended. Unlike constitutional provisions and bylaws, continuing resolutions may be updated regularly by the Congregation Council without the necessity of calling a regular or special Congregation Meeting. 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 might be numbered C13 to designate the chapter; C13.07 to designate the subject matter within the chapter; and the third set might be numbered A05 in the codification C13.07.A05 to indicate by the “A” that it is the first continuing resolution regarding that subject and to indicate by the “05” that it was adopted in 2005.

**Ease of use:** The provisions of your congregation’s constitution, the bylaws, and the continuing resolutions that pertain to the same matter should be placed together for clarity and ease in use.

If chapter numbers are considered the major sequence number, constitution numbers as a fraction of the chapter number, and bylaw numbers as a fraction of the constitution number, then the codification can be said to provide a progressive sequence. Thus, \*C5.01 will precede C5.03.10 and C9.11.16 will precede \*C9.13.

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## **\*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 Bylaws, 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.<sup>1</sup>**

### **Chapter 1 NAME AND INCORPORATION**

- \*C1.01. The name of this congregation shall be Lutheran Church of Hope, Broomfield, Colorado.**
- \*C1.02. For the purpose of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws, the Lutheran Church of Hope congregation is hereinafter designated as "this congregation".**
- \*C1.03. This congregation shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of Colorado.**

### **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.**

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<sup>1</sup> Note: Constitution paragraphs proceed by as asterisk (\*) are prescribed by the ELCA, Rocky Mountain Synod.

- \*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 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**

- \*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.** 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.
- \*C3.03.** 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 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.

**\*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 Christ, reaching out to all people.
- f. Respond to human need, work for justice and peace, care for the sick and 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.

**\*C4.06.** 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(s) as provided in Chapter 9;
- b. terminates the call of a pastor(s) as provided in Chapter 9;
- c. call or terminate the call of associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers in conformity with the applicable policy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;
- d. adopt amendments to the constitution, as provided in Chapter 17, amendments to the bylaws, as specified in Chapter 16, and continuing resolutions, as provided in Chapter 18.
- e. approve the annual budget;
- f. acquire real and personal property by gift, devise, purchase, or other lawful means;
- g. hold title to and use its property for any and all activities consistent with its purpose;
- h. sell, mortgage, lease, transfer, or otherwise dispose of its property by any lawful means;
- i. elect its officers, Congregation Council, boards and committees, and require them to carry out their duties in accordance with the constitution, bylaws and continuing resolutions; and
- j. 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 Rocky Mountain 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 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 ordained ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or to contracting for pastoral services with an ordained minister 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 associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers 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.** A congregation may terminate its relationship with this church 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 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 this church, who shall report the termination to the Churchwide Assembly.**
- g. 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.**
- h. 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.

- i. 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.
- j. If a 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 a 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 church wide 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 church wide 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 Rocky Mountain 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 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 Rocky Mountain Synod.

**\*C7.04.** If a two-thirds majority of the voting members of this congregation present at a

legally called and conducted special meeting of this congregation vote to become independent or to 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 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 MEMBERSHIPS

**\*C8.01.** Members of this congregation shall be those baptized persons on 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 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 to 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.
- d. *Associate* 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, or persons who wish to retain a relationship with this congregation while being members of other congregations. They have all the privileges and duties of membership except voting rights and eligibility for elected offices or membership on the Congregation Council of this congregation.

**C8.02.01** Voting members who have not reached 18 years of age may not vote in matters which would be in violation of state or federal laws (e.g., financial and contractual

matters, appropriation of funds).

**\*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 provision 20.40 and the accompanying bylaws; or**
- e. removal from the roll due to inactivity as defined in the bylaws.**

**C8.05.01** Discontinuance of Membership:

- a. Members who move away shall be encouraged to transfer their membership. A confirmed member in good standing desiring to change his membership to another Lutheran congregation shall, upon request, receive a Letter of Transfer.
- b. A confirmed member who, in the judgment of the Congregation Council, shows no interest in attending church services and does not partake of Holy Communion; and does not contribute to the congregational treasury according to the congregation's records for a period of one year, shall be presumed no longer to desire membership, shall lose the right to vote, and shall not be counted in the membership statistics of the congregation. However, that person's name and record shall be kept in the files for a period of five years thereafter. Such a person shall be encouraged to take part in the congregational life, or to transfer elsewhere, as the situation may indicate to be advisable. If that person resumes activity within the five-year period, that person shall be restored to the active membership list; if not, that person shall be dismissed from the congregation and, if possible, shall be notified of this action.
- c. Children, neither of whose parents or guardians are active members of the congregation, shall be dropped from the baptized membership roll if they fail to participate in the Christian education program of the congregation for a one year time period.
- d. Members who have been excommunicated or dismissed, or who have resigned; and members who have transferred to other Lutheran

congregations; or who are definitely known to have become members of other congregations without transfer, have thereby terminated their membership in the congregation and have surrendered all membership rights.

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

## **Chapter 9 THE PASTOR**

- \*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 legally called for that purpose. Before a call is issued, the officers, or a committee elected by this congregation 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 a candidate for the roster of ordained ministers 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 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 this congregation;**
    - 3) install regularly elected members of the Congregation Council; and**
    - 4) with the council, administer discipline.**
  - c. Every pastor shall:**
    - 1) strive to extend the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation, and abroad;**
    - 2) seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel;**

(Note: Paragraphs preceded by an asterisk are required by the ELCA and may not be altered by the congregation.)

- 3) impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through distribution of its periodicals and other publications; and
- 4) endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the church wide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and of the Rocky Mountain 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.** a. The call of a 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 ~~and~~ 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, not 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 ordained ministers 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 the synod,

- 1) the bishop in his or her sole discretion may investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two ordained 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 ordained 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 and the pastor shall be listed on the clergy roster 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 ~~they~~ agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action need ~~shall~~ 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 majority 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 simple 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 disciplinary action, 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 ordained pastor 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; and
  - 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 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.

## **Chapter 10 CONGREGATION MEETING**

(Note: Paragraphs preceded by an asterisk are required by the ELCA and may not be altered by the congregation.)



**C10.01.**        **The annual meeting of the congregation shall be held during the month of May on a date and at a time set by the Congregation Council.**

**C10.01.01**     The current roster of voting, confirmed, and baptized members shall be determined prior to each annual and special meeting by the congregation secretary to insure a quorum is present for the meeting to be held.

**C10.01.02**     The order of business at the annual meeting shall include:

- a)     Opening devotions
- b)     Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting Elections
- c)     Reports of pastor(s), Congregation Council, Board of Trustees, treasurer, committees and others, as appropriate
- d)     Approval of the next fiscal year budget
- e)     Unfinished business
- f)     New business
- g)     Closing prayer

**C10.01.03**     In the following cases, voting shall be by written ballot:

- a)     Election of officers and Congregation Council members (excluding the pastor(s))
- b)     Adoption and/or amendment of the articles of incorporation, constitution, bylaws or continuing resolutions of the congregation
- c)     Call a pastor or to request the pastor's resignation
- d)     Excommunicate a member from the congregation or to remove an officer
- e)     Sever membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
- f)     Disposal of, encumber, or purchase real property
- g)     When requested by ten or more voting members

**C10.01.04**     No one shall be declared elected unless that candidate has received a majority of the votes cast.

**C10.01.05**     If more than one ballot is required in an election, a motion shall be in order to limit the second balloting to the three candidates (two if only three candidates were on the initial ballot) receiving the highest number of votes on the first ballot; and after the second ballot to limit the balloting to the two candidates receiving the highest number of votes.

**C10.01.06**     Prior to any vote at a Congregation Meeting, the chairperson of the meeting shall appoint three tellers. The duties of the tellers shall be to disburse, collect, count and verify all written ballots. The results are then given to the chairperson for announcement to the congregation. The results shall be the actual count with the exception of a voice vote election, at which time they are only noted as those elected. Actual Teller's Report per the guidelines of Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, will be available for inspection by church members in the church office for

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a period of one (1) year. If one fails to receive a majority of the votes, the chair shall entertain a motion as noted in the preceding paragraph, until someone has been elected.

- 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 at the written request of 10 percent or 25 voting members, whichever is less. 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.
- C10.03.** 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.** The pastor shall be notified of the time and place at which a special meeting of the congregation is to be held.
- C10.05.** Ten percent of voting members shall constitute a quorum.
- C10.06.** Voting by proxy or by absentee ballot shall not be permitted.
- C10.07.** 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.
- C10.08.** A meeting of the congregation may, by majority vote, recess to reconvene at a specified time and place. A meeting may also recess to convene upon call; provided, however, that the time and place of such a reconvened meeting must be announced at a public service of the congregation, or written notice be mailed to the voting members not less than three days in advance of the reconvened meeting.
- C10.09.** Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, shall serve as a guideline for parliamentary procedure of all meetings of this congregation.

## **Chapter 11 OFFICERS AND MISSION TENET LEADERS**

- C11.01.** The officers of this congregation shall be a president, president elect, secretary and treasurer. The officers shall be voting members (18 years of age or older) of the congregation. Duties of the officers shall be specified in the bylaws. Terms of office are as stated in paragraph C12.03, below.

- C11.01.01** Each congregation officer shall have a documented position description delineating responsibilities and desired skills.
- C11.01.02** The president shall preside over meetings of the Congregation Council, Board of Trustees and congregation.
- C11.01.03** The president-elect shall preside in the absence of the president.
- C11.01.04** The secretary shall record the minutes of Congregation Council, Board of Trustees and congregation meetings and shall preserve its archives. The secretary shall submit a copy of an amended constitution or bylaws to the synod.
- C11.01.05** The treasurer shall be custodian of all congregation funds and shall disburse such funds in accordance with the decisions of the Congregation or the Board of Trustees. The treasurer shall present an audited report to the Annual Congregation Meeting and other such reports to the Board of Trustees as may be required.
- C11.02.** **The congregation shall elect its officers and mission tenet leaders (18 years of age or older); Worship, Discipleship, Reaching Out and Loving Support.**
- C11.03.** **No officer or mission tenet leader shall hold more than one office at a time. No elected officer shall be eligible to serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office.**
- C11.04.** **A Nominating Committee of five voting members of this congregation shall serve for a term of one year. Three members of the Committee shall be elected by the congregation from non-Council members whom are not out going Council members. The Congregation Council shall appoint two Council members who are on the second year of their respective terms. Members of the Nominating Committee are not eligible for consecutive reelection.**
- a.** **The Committee will assure nominated candidates:**
    - 1) Are qualified to perform the duties of the position**
    - 2) Have the availability to meet position responsibilities**
    - 3) Are willing to meet the needs of the position, if elected**
  - b.** **In addition to the candidates submitted by the nominating committee, additional nominations may be made from the floor. The election for positions which have nominations from the floor shall be deferred two weeks to allow time for the Nominating Committee verify the requirements of sub-paragraph C11.04a, above, are satisfied. The election will be held at a special congregational meeting.**
  - c.** **In filling the position the Council will assure the requirements of sub-paragraph C11.04a, above, are satisfied.**
- C11.05.** **A seven member Pastoral Support Committee consisting of the four elected**

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congregation officers and three congregation members of pastoral choice shall provide special assistance to the pastor. Committee terms shall be the elected term of office for officers and three consecutive years for pastoral choices. Should the congregation have more than one pastor, each pastor shall have his/her own committee. Committee(s) shall meet with the pastor on a regular basis.

- C11.06.** When a pastoral vacancy occurs, a Call Committee of six voting members shall be appointed by the Congregation Council. Term of office will terminate at the installation of the newly called pastor.

## **Chapter 12 CONGREGATION COUNCIL**

- C12.01.** The voting membership of the Congregation Council shall consist of the president, president elect, secretary, treasurer, pastor(s), four mission tenet leaders and a youth representative. The duties and responsibilities of the mission tenet leaders shall be specified in the bylaws. 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, b) resigns, or c) is absent from three 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.

- C12.01.01** Each Congregation Council member shall have a documented position description delineating responsibilities and desired skills.

- C12.01.02** The Congregation Council shall consist of eight members, each elected for a term of two years, plus the pastor(s).

- C12.01.03** In addition to the requirements of congregational membership as stated in Chapter 8, Membership, Congregation Council members shall have such practical skills as are needed to carry out the mission and ministries of the Lutheran Church of Hope. These skills are outlined in the position descriptions for Council members.

- C12.01.04** A member of the Congregation Council may succeed themselves for one additional term, except that a term of one year or less shall not be considered a term of office.

- C12.01.05** In addition to the pastor(s) and officers, the four Council mission tenet leaders are:
- a) Worship Mission Tenet Leader, who is entrusted with the ministry teams focused to provide the congregation opportunities to worship God in proclamation of the Word and Sacraments. The Worship Ministry Teams include "Weekly Service", "Special Worship Services", "Music and Liturgy", "Home Communion", and "Worship Space"; and the respective subordinate ministry teams.

- b) Discipleship Mission Tenet Leader, who is entrusted with the ministry teams focused on proclaiming God’s saving grace by making Disciples of us all. The Discipleship Ministry Teams include “Youth and Family”, “Stewardship”, “Library”, “Confirmation”, “Sunday Education”, “Empty Nesters” and “Vacation Bible School”; and the respective subordinate ministry teams.
- c) Reaching Out Mission Tenet Leader, who is entrusted with the ministry teams focused to provide the congregation opportunities to Reach out to spread God’s Word. The Reaching Out ministry teams include “Evangelism”, “Early Childhood”, “Social Concerns”, “Ecumenical/Interfaith”, and “Communications”; and the respective subordinate ministry teams.
- d) Loving Support Mission Tenet Leader, who is entrusted with the ministry teams focused to provide loving support to all. The Loving Ministry teams include “Fellowship Teams”, “Caring Ministries”, “Transportation” “Event Coordinator” and “Affinity Ministry”; and the respective subordinate ministry teams.

**C12.02. The members of the Congregation Council, except the pastor, president and president elect shall be elected by written ballot to serve for two years or until their successors are elected. Such members shall be eligible to serve no more than two full terms consecutively. The president elect shall serve the first year as vice-president and the second year as president. Thereby a new president elect is to be elected each year. The terms shall begin on the first day of the fiscal year following their election.**

**C12.03. Should a member's place on the Congregation Council be declared vacant, the Congregation Council shall elect (except for the president or president elect), by majority vote, a successor to complete the unexpired term. The president elect shall assume the position of president should that position be vacated. The president elect position shall be elected at a special Congregation Meeting should the vacancy occur more than three months prior to the next scheduled annual meeting. If with three months of the annual meeting the position will remain vacant.**

**C12.04. The Congregation Council shall have general oversight of the mission and ministries 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 set goals and priorities, and to evaluate its activities in light of its vision and goals as stated in the Strategic Plan for Ministry.
- b. To seek to involve all members of this congregation in worship, discipleship, reaching out and loving support.

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- 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 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 church-wide 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.
- 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 see that the provisions of the congregation approved Constitution, Bylaws, Continuing Resolutions and Strategic Plan for Ministry are carried out.

**C12.06.** The Congregation Council shall provide for an annual review of the membership roster.

**C12.07.** The Congregation Board of Trustees shall be responsible for the employment and supervision of the staff of this congregation. 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.

**C12.08.** The Congregation Council shall submit a comprehensive report to this congregation at the annual meeting.

**C12.09.** The Congregation Council shall normally meet once a month. Special meetings may be called by the pastor(s) 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.

**C12.11.** A quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of a majority of the members of the Congregation Council, including the pastor(s) or interim pastor, except when the pastor(s) or interim pastor requests or consents to be absent and has given prior approval to an agenda of routine matters which shall be the

only business of the meeting. Chronic or repeated absence of the pastor(s) 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.

- a. Should a council member be unable to attend a Council meeting they may participate in the meeting to include voting via teleconference. However, the teleconferencing member(s) shall not be counted to establish a quorum of members present.
- b. In the event of a critical issue requiring immediate Council action on a specific topic the issue may be addressed and voted upon via electronic mail. Copies of all electronic correspondence related to the topic shall be saved and retained using the same retention criteria as formal minutes. All electronic votes shall be reaffirmed at the next Council meeting and the results included in the meeting minutes.

**C12.12.** The Congregation Council shall form ministry teams within the four mission tenets to the respective ministries. These teams shall be formed as needed and may have a specific or open-ended tenure. The descriptions and responsibilities of these teams shall be defined in the *Lutheran Church of Hope Organization and Position Descriptions* document.

**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 BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**C13.01.** The Board of Trustees shall manage the finances, administration and property of the Congregation. The Board of Directors will prepare the annual budget, update/maintain the Strategic Plan for Ministry, and manage the finances, staff relations and property of the Congregation. It shall carry out these responsibilities in accordance with the Word of God, the practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Congregation of America and the Constitution and Bylaws of Lutheran Church of Hope. Members of the Board of Directors shall be the Congregation officers and the lead pastor

- a. It shall have the powers and be subject to the obligations that pertain to such boards under the laws of the State of Colorado, except as otherwise provided herein.
- b. It 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. It may enter into contracts of up to \$10,000 for items not included in the budget.
- d. It 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 \$10,000 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 church wide organization.

- e. It 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 synod and other designated/approved benefactor(s).
- f. It shall be responsible for this congregation's investments and its total insurance program.

**C13.02.** The Board of Trustees of this congregation shall consist of the president, president elect, secretary, treasurer, and lead pastor.

- a. The Board of Trustees shall be empowered to secure such help as is needed to carry on the work of the congregation and shall recommend salaries to the congregation for approval. The lead pastor shall supervise salaried/paid employees.
- b. Adjustments in the salary of the pastor shall be the responsibility of the Board of Trustees and shall be approved by the Congregation.
- c. The Board of Trustees shall establish an endowment fund which shall be known as the LCH Foundation of Hope Fund. The fund(s) shall be used to enable and expand missions and ministries. Gift principal shall be managed, invested and preserved, except as may otherwise be provided by the terms of the gift, by rule of the congregation. Income from the Foundation of Hope Fund may be expended according to these bylaws.
  - 1) Endowments shall be of two general types:
    - i. Restricted as defined by the terms of the gift or for a specific purpose as defined by the Board of Trustees.
    - ii. Unrestricted is defined as an endowment given without restrictions or a designated specific purpose.
  - 2) Appreciation or depreciation, income and principal shall be determined according to generally accepted accounting principles.
  - 3) The annual audit and report accomplished by the Audit Team shall include the LCH Foundation of Hope Fund.

**C13.03.** Standing committees of the Board of Trustees are as follows.

The specific duties and responsibilities of these committees are defined in the *Lutheran Church of Hope Organization and Position Descriptions* document.

- a. **Financial Management:** Responsible for managing the financial resources, including accounting and financial reporting, budgeting, collecting accounts receivable, expenditures, auditing, risk management, and insurance.
- b. **Property Management:** Responsible for the operation of property as a



business, including accounting and reporting, leasing, maintenance and repair, paying taxes, provision of utilities and insurance, remodeling, and rent rate setting and collection.

- d. **Strategic Planning:** Responsible for developing and maintaining the **Strategic Plan for Ministry (covering 3-15 years forward)**, by which the following elements should be included, mission, needs assessment, strategic objectives, outcome measures, strategic priorities, strategies and performance feed-forward. Plans shall include ministries and facilities.
- e. **Foundation of Hope Board:** Responsible for providing education on the opportunities and advantages of planned giving and benefits of Christian stewardship. Seek endowments to further LCH missions and ministries, and manage the recording and recognition of memorials.
- f. **Staff Relations:** Responsible for maintaining an active relationship with the paid staff to ensure a safe and congenial work environment, clear position descriptions, and proper maintenance of personnel records. Responsibilities shall include compliance with federal and state employee related standards and providing a confidential grievance channel.
- g. **Columbarium Ministry Team:** Responsible for management, ministerial functions and use of the LCH Columbarium according to Board of Trustees approved policy and procedures.

**C13.04.01** Board of Trustees committee members, except as noted below, shall be appointed by the Board of Trustees with one member designated as the chairperson. Members shall serve staggered three year terms, except for the Property Committee which will not have term limits. The Committees shall submit annual reports through the Board of Trustees to the Congregation Council and Congregation.

- a. **Financial Management Committee:** The committee shall consist of five members and operate under the supervision of the Board of Trustees to manage and account for the all congregation funds. The committee shall include the treasurer and the financial secretary. All members of the Committee shall be bonded.
  - 1) The financial secretary shall be responsible for recording the income of the congregation. He/she shall provide each congregation member a quarterly status report of the member's monetary stewardship.
- b. **Property Management Committee:** The committee shall consist of at least five members and operate under the supervision of the Board of Trustees. The committee shall manage the care, maintenance and upgrades of congregation real property.
  - 1) The property of the congregation shall be for the use of the congregation functions as a Lutheran church and shall not be used in any way not in harmony with the mission of the congregation.

- 2) Buildings which are the property of the congregation shall not be lent or rented to any group or individual without the permission of the Board of Trustees.
- c. Foundation of Hope Fund Board: The Board, responsible to the Board of Trustees, shall consist of five members to include the Lead Pastor and President Elect.
- 1) The committee shall educate the congregation on Planned Giving and the purpose of the Foundation of Hope Fund. It will encourage members to make an endowment gift to the congregation.
  - 2) The committee shall receive and acknowledge all endowments, memorials and special gifts; monetary and property. It shall record these gifts in the Book of Remembrance (without dollar amounts) and made available for public display.
  - 3) Committee members and Trustees shall not be liable for the consequences of any investment decisions made as committee member or trustee or made by a donor prior to the date of the contribution.
  - 4) Income from gifts shall be allocated according to the restriction criteria after any operating costs have been paid. Income from unrestricted gifts and from released restricted gifts shall be retained in the Fund for Fund growth. Operating costs may include maintenance fees, services of legal or financial advisors, brokers, property managers and real estate agents.
- d. The Staff Relations Committee: The committee shall consist of five members and operate under the supervision of the Board of Trustees. The committee shall be chaired by the President Elect.
- 1) The committee shall meet with the paid members of the church staff on a regular basis (no less than once per fiscal year), and as other needs arise.
  - 2) It will be their responsibility to maintain active relationships with the staff and to report and make recommendations to the Board of Trustees as appropriate.
  - 3) The committee is responsible for the LCH Organization and Positions Descriptions document and will insure it is current, accurate and complete. Changes to the document shall be approved by the Congregation Council and Board of Trustees.
- e. The Strategic Planning Committee is appointed by and responsible to the Board of Trustees. It shall consist of six members with staggering 3-year terms. The committee shall prepare and maintain a long-range strategic plan based on the LCH Vision and Mission statements to include goals and objectives, staffing needs, and facility use, needs and maintenance. The plan shall be for 3 to 5 years into the future except for items dealing with property, which will be 15 years. The Committee shall submit annual reports through the Board of Trustees to the Congregation Council.

- f. Columbarium Ministry Team: Team members except the Lead Pastor and Loving Support Ministry Team Leader shall be selected by the Board of Trustees to serve a five-year term unless replaced by a majority vote of the Board. The Team members will select one of its members to be the Chairperson and a second member as the Vice-Chairperson/Secretary. A Team member may serve a maximum of two consecutive terms. Upon a member's resignation, death, disability or transfer from the LCH congregation, the member shall be replaced by the Board of Trustees.
- 1) The Columbarium Ministry Team shall prepare and present an annual report to the congregation. The report will contain a summary of the significant activity, financial status and future plans of the Columbarium.
  - 2) The Chair and the Vice-Chair/Secretary are authorized to sign the Reservation and Use Agreement with a Purchaser after The Columbarium Ministry Team has approved the application. Authority to approve or sign contracts remains with the Board of Trustees.
  - 3) The LCH Treasurer will maintain Columbarium financial records as a Columbarium Ministry Restricted Funds Account.

**C13.04. An Audit Team of three voting members shall be appointed for a one-year term by the Board of Trustees. Audit Team members shall not be members of the Congregation Council or Board of Trustees. Members shall be eligible for reappointment. The Audit Team shall audit all financial records of the congregation proper, and shall present its report to the annual Congregation Meeting in writing.**

## **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.**

**C14.02. The congregation organization shall consist of the Congregation Council, Board of Trustees, committees, and a network of ministry teams, pastor and staff.**

- a. **Committee is defined as a standing organization entrusted with legal, property and/or fiscal management of the congregation.**
- b. **Ministry team is defined as an ad hoc, network organization responsible for a specific mission ministry. A team may be formed, altered or terminated at the discretion of the Congregation Council.**

**C14.03. 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 lay persons and two clergy). 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 BYLAWS

(Note: Paragraphs preceded by an asterisk are required by the ELCA and may not be altered by the congregation.)

- \*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 that such additions or amendments be submitted in writing to the Congregation Council at least 60 days before a regular or special Congregational 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 Congregational Meeting. Notification may take place by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law.
- \*C16.04.** Approved changes to the bylaws shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod.

## **Chapter 17 AMENDMENTS**

- \*C17.01.** Unless provision **\*C17.04.** is applicable, those sections of this constitution that are not required, in accord with that *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 10 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.
- \*C17.02.** An amendment to this constitution, proposed under **\*C17.01** shall:
- a. be approved at a legally called Congregation Meeting according to this constitution by a majority vote of those present and voting;
  - b. be ratified without change at the next annual meeting by a two-thirds majority vote of those present and voting; and
  - c. have the effective date included in the resolution and noted in the constitution.
- \*C17.03.** Any amendments to this constitution that result from the processes provided in **\*C17.01** and **\*C17.02** 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.

- \*C17.04.** 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 Church wide Assembly. Such amendments may be approved by a simple 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 10 voting members of the congregation, the Congregation Council shall submit such notice. Following the adoption of an 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 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 the congregation or a two-thirds vote of all voting members of the Congregation Council.

## **Chapter 19 INDEMNIFICATION**

- \*C19.01.** Consistent with the provisions of the laws under which this congregation is incorporated, this congregation shall 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.
- C19.02.** The congregation shall purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of a person who is or was a Congregation officer, Congregation Council member, employee, agent or member of a committee or ministry team of this congregation against any liability asserted against or incurred by the person in or arising from that capacity, whether or not this congregation would have been required to indemnify the person against the liability under the provisions of the constitution

of this congregation.

**C19.02.** For the purpose of indemnification, C19.01 above, the term “committee” shall mean “committee” and/or “ministry team” as defined in paragraph C14.02 of this constitution.

Adopted	10/26/2011
Ratification of amendments by congregation	05/20/2012
Approval of amendments by synod	
Ratification of amendments by congregation	03/30/2013
Approval of amendments by synod	04/02/2013
Ratification of amendments by congregation	05/18/2014
Approval of amendments by synod	