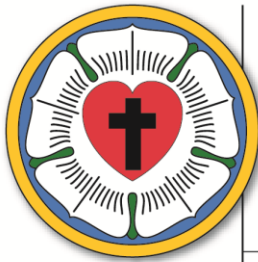


CONSTITUTION OF ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL
LUTHERAN CHURCH, GIBRALTAR, PA



NALC

North American Lutheran Church

CONSTITUTION
FOR
St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church
Adopted June 3, 2018

PREAMBLE

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

Chapter 1.

NAME AND INCORPORATION

- 1.01.** The name of this congregation shall be St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church of Gibraltar, PA.
- 1.02.** For the purpose of this constitution and any accompanying bylaws, the congregation of ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH is hereinafter designated as "this congregation."
- 1.03.** This congregation shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of Pennsylvania.
- 1.04.** The seal of this congregation presents in embossed letter the name of the congregation which is St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church of Gibraltar—and the date of its incorporation which is 1959.
- 1.05.** For the purpose of this Constitution and the accompanying By-Laws, the St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church of Gibraltar's Congregational Council is hereinafter designated as "Church Council".

Chapter 2.

CONFESSION OF FAITH

This congregation incorporates Article 2 of the constitution of the North American Lutheran Church (the "NALC"), confessing:

- 2.01. The Triune God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit¹**
- 2.02. Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and the Gospel as the power of God for the salvation of all who believe.**

¹ The NALC does not require congregations to adopt a particular constitution. However, it does require a subscription to the NALC Constitution and to the NALC Confession of Faith. By adopting Chapter 2, Section 6.02, and Section 6.03(c)-(d) from this model, all shown in bold, a congregation complies with these requirements.

- 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 the Holy Spirit speaking through their authors, they record and announce God’s revelation centering in Jesus Christ. Through them the Holy Spirit speaks to us to create and sustain Christian faith and fellowship for service in the world.**
- 2.03. **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, "according to which all doctrines should and must be judged." (Formula of Concord, Epitome, Part I)**
 - 2.04. **The Apostles’, Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds as true declarations of the faith of the Church.**
 - 2.05. **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.**
 - 2.06. **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. **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

- 3.01. **The Church is the universal assembly of all believers among whom the Gospel is preached in its purity and the holy sacraments are administered according to the Gospel. (Augsburg Confession VII)**
- 3.02. **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.**
- 3.03. **The Church exists both as an inclusive fellowship and as local congregations gathered for worship and Christian service. Congregations find their fulfillment in the universal community of the Church, and the universal Church exists in and through congregations.**
- 3.04. **This congregation exercises ministry within the mission of the NALC. This congregation embodies the Church in its community and, for the sake of mission, lives in cooperative partnership with other congregations and within the other structures of the NALC. This congregation shall share responsibility for the decision-making processes of the NALC.**

Chapter 4.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

- 4.01.** The hearers of the Gospel are a people, called and sent by God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, to be a community of faith, hope and love, who witness to Christ and His coming Kingdom before all the world.
- 4.02.** To participate in God’s mission, this congregation as a part of the Church shall:
- a. Give honor and glory to God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, worshipping Him in proclamation of the Word and administration of the sacraments and through lives of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, witness, obedience and service.
 - b. Carry out Christ’s Great Commission by proclaiming to all the world the Gospel of justification by grace through faith alone, according to the apostolic witness in Holy Scripture and in accordance with the Lutheran Confessions,
 - c. Preserve and transmit the Gospel faithfully to future generations.
 - d. Foster Christian fellowship and love, and extend a helping hand to humans in need.
 - e. Manifest the unity of our faith in Jesus Christ as God and Savior, and join with other Christians in prayer and action.
 - f. Nurture its members in the Word of God so as to grow in faith and hope and love, and to develop a sense of Christian vocation in daily life.
- 4.03.** To fulfill these purposes, this congregation shall:
- a. Provide services of worship at which the Word of God is rightly preached and the sacraments are rightly administered.
 - b. Provide pastoral care and assist all members to participate in this ministry.
 - c. Challenge, equip, and support all members in carrying out their calling in their daily lives and in their congregation.
 - d. Teach the Word of God.
 - e. Witness to the reconciling Word of God in Christ, reaching out to all people.
 - f. Respond to human need, work for justice and peace, care for the sick and the suffering, and participate responsibly in society.
 - g. Encourage its members to provide appropriate financial support for the congregation’s ministry and the ministry of other parts of the NALC.
 - h. Foster and participate in relationships with other congregations and structures of the NALC.
 - i. Foster and participate in ecumenical relations consistent with NALC policy.
- 4.04.** 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 group and shall review their actions. Such descriptions shall be contained in continuing resolutions in the section on the Church Council.
- 4.05.** This congregation shall, from time to time, adopt a mission statement which will provide specific direction for its programs.

Chapter 5.

POWERS OF THE CONGREGATION

- 5.01.** The powers of this congregation are those necessary to fulfill its purpose.

- 5.02. The powers of this congregation are vested in the Congregational Meeting called and conducted as provided in this constitution and bylaws.
- 5.03. Only such authority as is delegated to the Church Council or other organizational units in this congregation's governing documents is recognized. All remaining authority is retained by the congregation. The congregation is authorized to:
- a. call a pastor as provided in Chapter 9;
 - b. terminate the call of a pastor as provided in Chapter 9;
 - c. appoint or terminate the service of commissioned lay leaders.
 - d. approve the annual budget;
 - e. acquire real and personal property by gift, devise, purchase, or other lawful means;
 - f. hold title to and use its property for any and all activities consistent with its purpose;
 - g. sell, mortgage, lease, transfer, or otherwise dispose of its property by any lawful means;
 - h. elect its Church Council, boards, and committees, and require the members of the council, boards, and committees to carry out their duties in accordance with the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions.
 - i. adopt amendments to this constitution as provided in Chapter 17, and amendments to the bylaws, as specified in Chapter 16.
 - j. establish or terminate a relationship with a church body.
- 5.04. This congregation may select voting members of this congregation to serve as lay delegates and alternates to represent it at meetings of any conferences, convocations, and other meetings where this congregation is entitled to such representation.

Chapter 6.

CHURCH AFFILIATION

- 6.01. This congregation is a member of the NALC or any successor and is subject to the procedures of the NALC.
- 6.02. **This congregation subscribes to the constitution of the NALC and will act in accordance with it.**
- 6.03. This congregation will conduct its ministry in a manner consistent with its membership in the NALC:
- a. This congregation is responsible for its life as a Christian community.
 - b. This congregation pledges its participation in the life and mission of the NALC, including the prayerful consideration of appropriate financial support.
 - c. This congregation shall call only pastors who are members of the NALC or otherwise are authorized by the NALC to serve.**
 - d. This congregation shall appoint only commissioned lay leaders who are members of the NALC or otherwise are authorized by the NALC to serve.**
- 6.04. Affiliation with the NALC may be terminated as follows:
- a. This congregation dissolves.
 - b. This congregation ceases to exist.
 - c. This congregation is removed from membership in the NALC according to the procedures for discipline of the NALC.

d. This congregation, at a legally called and conducted special meeting, approves by at least a two-thirds majority of those present and voting a resolution directing that this congregation withdraw from the NALC. If this congregation adopts a resolution withdrawing from the NALC, all provisions of this constitution binding this congregation to the NALC shall be immediately ineffective. The congregation shall promptly deliver a copy of the withdrawal resolution to the NALC General Secretary.

Chapter 7.

PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

7.01. This congregation is an independent legal entity with rights to purchase, hold, and convey real and personal property in accord with applicable law. The NALC shall have no right to or interest in the property of this congregation unless this congregation expressly conveys such a right or interest to the NALC. If this congregation dissolves, its property shall be distributed in accord with applicable law and with the congregation's governing documents, including as otherwise provided herein.

Chapter 8.

MEMBERSHIP

8.01. Members of this congregation shall be those baptized persons (a) who are on the roll of this congregation at the time that this constitution is adopted or who are admitted thereafter, and (b) who have declared and maintain their membership in accordance with the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.

8.02. 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 who have communed and made a contribution of record during the current or preceding calendar year. 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 Christian 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 and eligibility for elected offices or membership on the Church Council of this congregation.

8.03. All applications for confirmed membership shall be submitted to and shall require the approval of the Church Council.

8.04. 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 NALC, and their ministries and structures through contributions of time, abilities, and financial support as biblical stewards.

8.05. Membership in this congregation shall be terminated by any of the following:

- a. death;
- b. resignation;
- c. transfer or release;
- d. disciplinary action by the Church Council; or
- e. removal from the roll due to inactivity as defined in the bylaws. 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

9.01. Authority to call a pastor shall be in this congregation by at least a two-thirds majority vote of members present and voting at a meeting legally called for that purpose.

9.02. Consistent with the faith and practice of the NALC,

- a. Every ordained minister shall:
 - 1) preach the Word;
 - 2) administer the sacraments;
 - 3) conduct public worship;
 - 4) provide pastoral care;
 - 5) serve as the chief evangelist in his or her ministry, and
 - 6) proclaim God's love to 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 Church Council; and
 - 4) with the Church 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; and
 - 3) impart knowledge of the NALC and its wider ministry through public provision of information, distribution of publications and other appropriate means,

9.03. 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.

9.04. a. The call of a congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment, which, except in the case of the death of the pastor, shall be terminated 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, 30 days after the date on which it was submitted;

- 3) inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in the congregation in view of local conditions, without reflection on the competence or the moral and spiritual character of the pastor;
- 4) the physical or mental incapacity of the pastor;
- 5) disqualification of the pastor through discipline on grounds of doctrine, morality, or continued neglect of duty; or
- 6) the dissolution of the congregation.

b. If the Church Council determines that it may be appropriate to end a call for one of the reasons set out in sub-section (a), the Council shall consult with the pastor regarding the matter in accord with Biblical principles. If the Church Council and pastor do not reach agreement, the Church Council shall inform the Bishop of the NALC, who shall consult with the Church Council and the pastor and shall attempt to reach an agreed resolution. If the Bishop fails to facilitate an agreed resolution, the Church Council or the pastor may call a special Congregational Meeting to consider the matter. At such a meeting, the pastor and the Church Council leadership shall have a full and fair opportunity to present their positions on all matters relevant for consideration. Thereafter, the congregation by a two-thirds vote may terminate the pastor's call. In all events, the Church Council by majority vote may suspend a pastor with pay if the Church Council determines that such suspension is necessary to protect the congregation and all whom it serves. No such suspension may last more than 90 days unless the pastor agrees otherwise.

- 9.05.** At a time of pastoral vacancy, an interim pastor may be appointed by the Church Council.
- 9.06.** 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 Church Council. The interim pastor and any ordained pastor providing assistance shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a pastor.
- 9.07.** 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.
- 9.08.** 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 and the Church Council. As occasion requires, the documents may be revised through the same consultation process.
- 9.09.** The congregation may depart from the requirements in section 9.04 (a) by calling a pastor for a term of years. Details of such a call shall be in a writing that sets forth the purpose and conditions involved. Such call may be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions in section 9.04 (a) and 9.04 (b).
- 9.10.** The pastor of this congregation:
 - a. shall keep accurate parochial records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from the congregation;
 - b. shall submit a summary of such statistics annually to the Church Council; 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.
- 9.11.** The parochial records of this congregation shall be maintained by the pastor and shall remain the property of the congregation.

Chapter 10.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

- 10.01.** The annual meeting and any other regular meetings of this congregation shall be held at times set by the congregation in bylaws or in other resolutions.
- 10.02.** A special Congregational Meeting may be called by the pastor, the Church Council, or the president of this congregation, and shall be called by the president of the congregation upon the written request of five percent (5%) of voting members. The call for each special meeting shall specify the purpose for which it is to be held and no other business shall be transacted.
- 10.03.** 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 e-mail to all voting members at least 10 days in advance of the date of the meeting. The posting of such notice in the regular mail, with the regular postage affixed or paid, sent to the last known address of such members, or sent to the last known e-mail address of such members, shall be sufficient.
- 10.04.** Ten percent (10%) of voting members shall constitute a quorum.
- 10.05.** Voting by proxy or by absentee ballot shall not be permitted.
- 10.06.** All actions approved by the congregation shall be by majority vote of those voting members present and voting, except as otherwise provided in this constitution or by applicable law.
- 10.07.** *Robert's Rules of Order*, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of all meetings of this congregation.

Chapter 11.

OFFICERS OF THE CONGREGATION

- 11.01.** The officers of this congregation shall be a president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer.
 - a. Duties of the officers shall be specified in the bylaws.
 - b. The officers shall be voting members of the congregation.
 - c. Officers of this congregation shall serve similar offices of the Church Council and shall be voting members of the Church Council.
 - d. If the Church Council elects its officers, the president, vice president, and secretary shall be selected from the elected membership of the Church Council. If the treasurer is not elected from the elected membership of the Church Council, the treasurer shall have voice but not vote at the meetings of the Church Council.
- 11.02.** The officers identified in this Chapter 11 shall be elected by the Church Council by majority vote and shall serve for one year or until their successors are elected. Their terms shall begin at the close of the meeting at which they are elected.
- 11.03.** The pastor shall serve as president ex-officio in circumstances deemed appropriate by Council, such as, but not limited to, inability or unwillingness of other members of Church Council to serve.
- 11.04.** No officer 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.
- 11.05.** If any elected office enumerated in this Chapter 11 becomes vacant, the Church Council shall elect a replacement as soon as practicable to serve the remainder of the unexpired

term. The time served under this Section 11.05 shall not count for purposes of term limits.

Chapter 12.

CHURCH COUNCIL

- 12.01.** The voting membership of the Church Council shall consist of the pastor(s), the officers of the congregation, and between five and eight (5-8) other members of the congregation. If the treasurer is not elected from the membership of the Church Council, the treasurer shall have voice but not vote. Any voting member of the congregation may be elected, subject only to the limitation on the length of continuous service permitted in that office. A member's place on the Church Council shall be declared vacant if the member a) ceases to be a voting member of this congregation or b) is absent from four (4) successive regular meetings of the Church 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 Church Council in other circumstances.
- 12.02.** The members of the Church Council except the pastor(s) shall be elected by majority vote at the annual meeting of the congregation. They shall serve terms of two (2) years or until their successors are elected. Their terms shall begin on the Sunday immediately after the meeting at which they are elected. Newly elected Church Council members shall be installed at worship on any Sunday after the date they assume office. Members shall be eligible to serve no more than two full terms consecutively.
- 12.03.** Should a member's place on the Church Council be declared vacant, the Church Council shall elect, by majority vote, a successor until the next annual meeting.
- 12.04.** The Church Council shall have general oversight of the life and activities of this congregation, and in particular its worship life, to the end that everything be done in accordance with the Word of God, the Lutheran Confessions and the faith and practice of the NALC. The duties of the Church Council shall include the following:
- a. To lead this congregation in stating its mission, to do long-range planning, to set goals and priorities, and to evaluate its activities in light of its mission and goals.
 - b. To seek to involve all members of this congregation in worship, learning, witness, service, and support.
 - c. To oversee and provide for the administration of this congregation to enable it to fulfill its functions and perform its mission.
 - d. To maintain supportive relationships with the pastor(s) and staff and help them annually to evaluate the fulfillment of their calling 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 foster resolution of such conflicts according to Biblical principles.
 - g. To arrange for pastoral service during the sickness or absence of the pastor.
 - h. To emphasize partnership with the NALC as well as cooperation with other Christian congregations, both Lutheran and non-Lutheran.
 - i. To seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel.
 - k. To approve all schools and organizations and the use of the facilities.
- 12.05.** The Church Council shall be responsible for the financial and property matters of this congregation.

- a. The Church Council shall be the board of directors of this congregation, and as such shall be responsible for maintaining and protecting its property and the management of its business and fiscal affairs. It shall have the powers and be subject to the obligations that pertain to such boards under the laws of the State of Pennsylvania, except as otherwise provided herein.
 - b. The Church Council shall not have the authority to buy, sell, or encumber real property unless specifically authorized to do so by a meeting of the congregation.
 - c. The Church Council may enter into contracts of up to \$2,500 for items not included in the budget.
 - d. The Church Council shall prepare an annual budget for adoption by this congregation, shall supervise the expenditure of funds in accordance therewith following its adoption, and may incur obligations of more than \$2,500 in excess of the anticipated receipts only after approval by a Congregational Meeting.
 - e. The Church Council shall ascertain that the financial affairs of this congregation are being conducted efficiently, giving particular attention to the prompt payment of all obligations and to the regular forwarding of benevolence monies to designated recipients.
 - f. The Church Council shall be responsible for this congregation's investments and its total insurance program.
- 12.06.** The Church Council shall see that the provisions of this constitution and of the congregation's bylaws and continuing resolutions are carried out.
- 12.07.** The Church Council shall provide for an annual review of the membership roster.
- 12.08.** The Church Council shall be responsible for the employment and supervision of the salaried lay workers of this congregation.
- 12.09.** The Church Council shall submit a comprehensive report to this congregation at the annual meeting.
- 12.10.** The Church Council shall normally meet once a month. Special meetings may be called by the pastor or the president, and shall be called by the president at the request of at least one-half of its members. Notice of each special meeting shall be given to all who are entitled to be present.
- 12.11.** A quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of a majority of the members of the Church Council. In addition, the pastor or interim pastor must be present, except when the pastor or interim pastor requests or consents to be absent and has given prior approval to the agenda for a particular regular or special meeting, or with the consent of the Bishop or Dean. In such a circumstance, the Church Council may not conduct any business beyond that which was included on the agenda as approved by the pastor, interim pastor, Bishop or Dean, as applicable. Chronic or repeated absence of the pastor or interim pastor who has refused approval of the agenda of a subsequent regular or special meeting shall not preclude action by the Church Council.

Chapter 13.

COMMITTEES OF THE CONGREGATION

- 13.01.** The officers of this congregation and the pastor shall constitute the Executive Committee.
- 13.02.** A Nominating Committee of not more than six voting members of this congregation, two of whom, if possible, shall be outgoing members of the Church Council, shall be elected at the annual meeting **OR** by the Church Council for a term of one year. Members of the Nominating Committee are not eligible to serve consecutive terms.

- 13.03.** An Audit Committee of three voting members shall be elected by the Church Council. Audit Committee members shall not be members of the Church Council. Term of office shall be three years, with one member elected each year. Members shall be eligible for reelection. Alternatively, if a full committee cannot be elected, the Church Council shall ensure that an independent yearly audit is obtained.
- 13.04.** A Mutual Ministry Committee of between four and six (4-6) voting members may be appointed jointly by the president and the pastor. Term of office shall be two years, with two to three members to be appointed each successive year.
- 13.05.** When a pastoral vacancy occurs, a Call Committee of six voting members shall be elected by this congregation **OR** by the Church Council. Term of office will terminate upon installation of the newly called pastor.
- 13.06.** Other committees of this congregation may be formed, as the need arises, by decision of the Church Council.
- 13.07.** Duties of committees of this congregation shall be specified in the bylaws or continuing resolutions.
- 13.08.** The pastor of this congregation shall be *ex officio* a member of all committees and boards of the congregation. The president of this congregation shall be *ex officio* a member of all committees and boards of the congregation, except the Nominating Committee.

Chapter 14.

ORGANIZATIONS WITHIN THE CONGREGATION

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

Chapter 15.

DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS AND ADJUDICATION

- 15.01.** Denial of the Christian faith as described in this constitution or the constitution of the NALC, 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. If, for any reason, the pastor is unable to administer the admonitions required by a. and b. hereof, the president (if the president is not the pastor) or vice president shall administer such admonitions.
- 15.02.** If discipline against a member proceeds beyond counseling and admonition by the pastor, charges against the accused member(s) that are specific and in writing shall be prepared by member(s) of the congregation who shall sign the charges as the accuser(s). The written charges shall be filed with the pastor, who shall advise the Church Council of the need to issue a written citation to the accused and the accusers that specifies the time and place of the hearing before the Church Council. The written charges shall accompany the written citation to the accused. The written citation that specifies the time and place of

the hearing before the Church Council and requests the presence of a member charged with an offense shall be sent at least ten days prior to the meeting. If the member charged with the offense fails to appear at the scheduled hearing, the Church Council may proceed with the hearing and may pass judgment in the member's absence.

- 15.03.** Members of the Church Council who participate in the preparation of the written charges or who present evidence or testimony in the hearing before the Church Council are disqualified from voting upon the question of the guilt of the accused member. Should the allegations be sustained by a two-thirds majority vote of the members of the Church Council who are not disqualified but who are present and voting, and renewed admonition prove ineffectual, the council shall impose one of the following disciplinary actions:
- a. censure before the council or congregation;
 - b. suspension from membership for a definite period of time; or
 - c. exclusion from membership in this congregation. Disciplinary actions b. and c. shall be delivered to the member in writing.
- 15.04.** The member against whom disciplinary action has been taken by the Church Council shall have the right to appeal to a Congregational Meeting, which may revise or overturn the Church Council's decision by a majority vote. Any such vote will be by secret ballot.
- 15.05.** 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.

Chapter 16.

BYLAWS

- 16.01.** This congregation may adopt bylaws. No bylaw may conflict with this constitution.
- 16.02.** 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.
- 16.03.** Changes to the bylaws may be proposed by any voting member provided, however, (a) that such additions or amendments be submitted in writing to the Church Council at least 60 days before a regular or special Congregational Meeting called for that purpose and (b) that the Church Council notify the members of the proposal with any recommendations regarding the disposition of the proposal at least [30] days in advance of the Congregational Meeting.

Chapter 17.

AMENDMENTS

- 17.01.** Amendments may be proposed by at least 10 percent (10%) of voting members or by the Church Council. Proposals must be filed in writing with the Church Council 60 days before a regular or special Congregational Meeting called for that purpose. The Church Council shall notify the members of the proposal with the council's recommendations regarding disposition of the proposal at least 30 days in advance of the meeting.
- 17.02.** An amendment to this constitution, shall:
- a. be approved at a legally 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.

Chapter 18.

CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

- 18.01.** This congregation in a legally called Congregational Meeting or the Church Council may enact continuing resolutions. Such continuing resolutions may not conflict with the constitution or bylaws of this congregation.
- 18.02.** Continuing resolutions shall be enacted or amended by a majority vote of a Congregational Meeting or a two-thirds vote of all voting members of the Church Council.

Chapter 19.

INDEMNIFICATION

- 19.01.** Consistent with the provisions of the laws under which this congregation is incorporated, this congregation may adopt provisions providing indemnification for each person who, by reason of the fact that such person is or was a Church Council member, officer, employee, agent, or other member of any committee of this congregation, was or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending, or completed civil, criminal, administrative, arbitration, or investigative proceeding.

Chapter 20.²

ORGANIZATION AND DISSOLUTION

- 20.01.** The purpose for which this congregation is formed, and the business and objectives to be carried on and promoted by it are to operate a religious organization exempt from income taxation under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code or corresponding section of any future federal tax code and as the same may be amended at any time and from time to time. This congregation is organized exclusively for charitable, religious and educational purposes, including, for such purposes, the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or any corresponding section of any future federal tax code.
- 20.02.** Upon the dissolution of this congregation, the assets of this congregation shall be distributed for one (1) or more exempt purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code and as the same may be amended at any time and from time to time, or in the absence of such designation, to the federal government, or to a state or local government, for a public purpose.

² This chapter should be used only by congregations located in the United States which (a) desire inclusion in the NALC's group tax exemption ruling from the IRS, and (b) are NOT incorporated entities. Congregations which desire inclusion in the NALC's group tax exemption ruling and are incorporated entities should include this language in their Articles of Incorporation as filed with the government of their state or commonwealth.

By-laws

- Section 1 Inactive members (non-voting Chapter 8.02(C)) shall be contacted every two years to assess their intent in terms of their relationship to the church. Unless they request removal from the rolls, they will remain on an inactive list.
- Section 2 Items for the agenda of Church Council meetings must be submitted to the president for consideration no fewer than 2 days prior to any meeting.
- Section 3 The duties and responsibilities of the officers of the Church Council/Congregation and the Financial Secretary are:
- A. President... The president shall preside at all meetings of the congregation and Church Council, and shall preserve strict order and decorum, and enforce the constitution and by-laws. He/she shall decide all questions of order subject to an appeal; shall have the deciding vote on all questions when both sides are equally divided. He/she shall sign all notices or certificates that require his/her signature to authenticate them. He/she shall facilitate communication among committees and shall be an ex-officio member of all committees.
 - B. Vice President... The vice-president shall assist the president in preserving order and decorum at all meetings of the congregation and Church Council, and shall, in the president's absence, perform his/her duties.
 - C. Secretary... The secretary of Council is responsible to take minutes of any official meetings of the Council or congregation. The secretary will promptly provide minutes of the same meeting and place them in a book provided for that purpose. The secretary will be responsible for all official communication of the Council. He/she shall perform all duties as may from time to time be enjoined upon him/her by the Church Council. He/she shall affix the common seal of the congregation to all instruments of writing, to the validity of which the same shall be necessary, on the request of Church Council. His/her books shall at all times be open for examination by the members of the congregation. At the expiration of his/her term, he/she shall hand over all books and papers in his/her possession, belonging to the congregation, to his/her successor.
 - D. Financial Secretary... The Financial Secretary shall receive all monies due or belonging to the congregation. He/she shall keep a correct account of monies received by him/her on account from the congregation, carefully noting the date on which, and sources from which received, and deposit the same in the church's bank account, giving receipt of same to the treasurer or church secretary. The church secretary can be designated by the Financial Secretary to keep a digital contribution record for each member of the congregation and the Financial Secretary shall ensure issuance of semi-annual statements to each member. At the expiration of

his/her official term, he/she shall hand over the books and papers in his/her possession, belonging to the congregation, to his/her successor.

- E. Treasurer... The treasurer shall receive from the financial secretary or designee a receipt for the monies deposited for the use of the congregation. He/she shall pay all orders, invoices, debts approved by Church Council. He/she shall have his/her account books, at the stated meeting of the Church Council, posted up and open for inspection of the members. He/she shall provide a monthly report of receipts and expenditures. He/she shall have his/her accounts ready for settlement on an agreed upon date, and hand the committee appointed to audit the same, his/her books, papers and vouchers, and he/she shall receive and disburse all funds as designated to benevolence. He/she shall, as well as all who handle money for the congregation, give corporate surety in amounts as determined by Church Council, which premiums shall be paid by the congregation.

Section 4 Guidelines for Use of the Church Building

- A. Children are not to be left unsupervised in nursery or other area of church property.
- B. Reports must be submitted to Council on a monthly basis.
- C. Groups must submit to Council requests for building use annually.
- D. Church functions have priority and may necessitate adjusting the activities of auxiliary groups.
- E. Requests for use of building must be cleared by the Pastor, President, or Vice-President of Council.
- F. Furniture must be returned to church use location at conclusion of each group's event.
- G. Rooms must be left clean and organized.
- H. The applicants agree to make good to the church for any loss or damages occurring during their use.
- I. Groups shall provide a Certificate of Insurance.
- J. The following are prohibited in the building:
 - a. Preparation of food without food certification.
 - b. Smoking
 - c. Alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, and/or weapons unless carrying in a professional capacity.

Section 5 Regularly scheduled church council meetings may follow the order of business agenda below:

1. Roll Call and action on excuses for absence
2. Devotions
3. Receipt of petitions and communications
4. Reading of minutes
5. Report of Pastor

6. Report of Treasurer
7. Report of Standing Committees
8. Report of Special Committees
9. Old/Unfinished Business
10. New/Other Business
11. Adjournment

Section 6 Amongst the members of Church Council up to 2 can be Junior Council Members, to serve up to 2 consecutive one (1) year terms. Junior Council members would be confirmed youth through 12th grade. (passed 2/10/19)

Continuing Resolutions

Section 1 The Duties and Responsibilities of Church Committees are:

A. Christian Ed

The Christian Education Committee shall provide opportunities for growth in Christian faith and education in the Holy Scripture and the Lutheran heritage through study and interaction with persons of all ages.

Duties of this committee include:

1. Choosing and ordering Sunday School Curriculum
2. Oversee attendance requirements and activities of confirmation class
3. Keep records of children of church families and contact them at least annually regarding our Sunday School Program
4. Organize Children's Church and Church Nursery
5. Plan and coordinate Vacation Bible School
6. Plan Special Programs; i.e. Christmas Program
7. Secure teachers and helps

B. Worship & Music

The Worship and Music Committee shall assist the Church Council in seeing that church services are conducted regularly in accordance with the liturgy of the NALC and other non-traditional liturgies approved by Church Council. The Committee shall supervise the entire music program, including choirs, music, instruments, and personnel as directed by the Church Council.

Duties of this committee include:

1. Pick Hymns
2. Plan Special Services and order bulletins, palms, confirmation gowns, etc. and other materials appropriate to the programs
3. Organize and Oversee

- a. Acolytes
 - b. Greeters
 - c. Lectors
 - d. Ushers
 - e. Altar Guild—Prepare the Nave for worship, especially on Sundays of Baptism and Holy Communion. Procure and maintain supplies and elements. Wash and return the items used for Communion and/or Baptisms. For detailed instructions, see top drawer in sacristy.
 - f. Bell Ringers
4. Plan special seasonal decorations

C. Stewardship/Finance Committee

The Stewardship/Finance Committee shall be responsible for promoting the expression of Christian faith in daily living, for teaching the members of the congregation the value of giving time, talent and money. This committee shall establish an ongoing stewardship program, maintain data on the individual talents and interests of congregation members, and provide growth opportunities for lay ministries. This committee is also responsible, along with Church Council, for supervising and administering all financial affairs of the congregation, including the preparation of a budget, receipt of income, payment of expenses, and payment of salaries.

Duties of this committee include:

1. Get budget needs from committees
2. Prepare budget
3. Submit budget to Church Council
4. Carry out responsibilities for bookkeeping, banking and investments
5. See that the bills and Benevolence Commitments are paid
6. Recommend to Church Council salaries and fringe benefits
7. Arrange annual audit
8. Ensure that the proper accounting and auditing procedures are maintained and keep the Council, Committees, and the Congregation informed of the ongoing financial status
9. Investigate and recommend to Council appropriate means for financing and refinancing, for use of investments and assets, for meeting special and unforeseen financial needs as they arise.
10. Develop Stewardship Strategies/Programs (Pledging, etc.)
11. Implement/Update/Maintain Computer Software Financial System
12. Educate Committee members, other Council Committees, and the Congregation at large as required
13. Train counters and oversee counting procedures

14. Seek to identify and train assistant Financial Secretary and Treasurer.

D. Social Ministry/Reach Out Committee

The purpose of this committee is to extend Christian compassion and helpfulness to the ill, the aged, the orphaned, the underprivileged, the imprisoned, and in general, to persons of all ages in need of aid in body or spirit. This committee also has the further purpose of addressing the social needs within our local community in order to bring the light of the Gospel upon critical problems. In order to accomplish our mission, the Social Ministry Committee will develop and implement programs to accomplish these goals. The responsibilities of this committee include, but are not limited to:

1. Develop methods of enhancing awareness and outreach to our community.
2. Welcome visitors
3. Organize and conduct various outreach programs.
4. Continue to explore ways to educate the congregation on the joy of inviting others to know Jesus Christ as Lord.
5. Advertising.

The following are currently active ministries:

1. Shut -in Ministry
 - a. Send birthday cards
 - b. Provide fruit & goodie trays and Christmas trays
2. Send “Missing You” and “Get Well” cards to members
3. Souper Bowl
4. Blanket Appeal
5. Support local food pantries
6. Support Needy Families: Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter
7. Christmas Cookie Exchange
8. Trunk or Treat
9. World Hunger: Crop Walk
10. Cancer Awareness

This committee encourages the congregation to support the following local programs which are considered worthwhile ministries:

1. Local Food Banks
2. Safe Berks
3. Opportunity House
4. Salvation Army

E. Property Committee

The Property Committee is responsible for the maintenance, protection and preservation of all property of the congregation.

Duties of this committee include:

1. Oversee care—repair, maintain and protect the building, grounds, and parking lot of the congregation
2. Supervise purchases related to the building, grounds, and parking lot
3. Maintain records of expenses and projects facilitated by the committee
4. Make recommendations to Church Council for the care of all properties
5. Supervise the Sexton
6. Enable and support the work of the pastor and staff and the programs and ministries of the church
7. Investigate needs for efficient operation of the facility, including electrical, heating, and water systems, safety of access to building and the building itself, first aid kits, and liability insurance coverage.
8. Develop a plan for replacing and repairing worn out or defective equipment and work with the direction of the Council to implement the plan.

F. Mutual Ministry

The responsibilities of the Mutual Ministry Committee are to:

1. Act as a liaison between staff members and staff and congregation
2. Discuss areas of controversy within the congregation and recommend to Council appropriate solutions
3. Develop job descriptions for staff to be approved by Council
4. Review staff annually and recommend salaries to Stewardship/Finance Committee.

Section 2 Auxiliary Groups

- A. Youth Groups—The purpose of St. John’s Youth Groups is to promote active participation as a group in the church; promote a positive attitude towards the church and its functions; put a positive image on the youth of this church; and provide community service for those in need.
- B. Women’s Group—The purpose of the Women’s Group is to promote fellowship, service, and learning among the women of St. John’s; and to supplement the ministries of the congregations through fundraisers.

Section 3 The Annual Congregational Meeting will be held the Sunday after the 3rd Thursday in January.