

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church Constitution

CHAPTER 1

NAME AND INCORPORATION

1.01. The name of this congregation shall be Good Shepherd Lutheran Church.

1.02. For the purpose of this constitution, the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church congregation is hereinafter designated as "this congregation."

1.03. This congregation is incorporated as a nonprofit corporation under the laws of the State of Illinois.

CHAPTER 2

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

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

2.02. 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;
- B. Proclaim God's saving Gospel of justification by grace for Christ's sake through faith alone, according to the apostolic witness in the Holy Scripture, preserving and transmitting the Gospel faithfully to future generations;
- C. Carry out Christ's Great Commission by reaching out to all people to bring them to faith in Christ and by doing all ministry with a global awareness consistent with the understanding of God as Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier of all;
- D. Serve in response to God's love to meet human needs, caring for the sick and the aged, advocating dignity and justice for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, and standing with the poor and powerless to commit itself to their needs;
- E. Nurture its members in the Word of God to grow in faith, hope, and love; see daily life as the primary setting for the exercise of their Christian calling; and use the gifts of the Spirit for their lives together and for their calling in the world;
- F. Demonstrate the unity given to the people of God by living together in the love of Christ and by joining with other Christians in active prayer to express and preserve the unity which the Spirit gives.

2.03. To fulfill these purposes, this congregation and its pastors shall:

- A. Provide services of worship at which the Word of God is preached, and the sacraments are administered.
- B. Provide care and assist all members to participate in this ministry.
- C. Challenge, equip, and support all members in carrying out their calling in their daily lives and in their congregation.
- D. Teach the Word of God.
- E. Witness to the reconciling Word of God in Christ, reaching out to all people.

- F. Respond to human need, work for justice and peace, care for the sick and the suffering, and participate responsibly in society.
- G. Motivate its members to provide financial support for the congregation's ministry.
- H. Foster and participate in relationships with other congregations and the churchwide organization of Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ.
- I. Foster and participate in ecumenical relationships consistent with churchwide policy.

2.04. This congregation shall develop an organizational structure to be described in this constitution. The Congregational Council shall prepare descriptions of the responsibilities of each committee, task force, or other organizational group and shall review their actions.

2.05. Good Shepherd Lutheran Church meets congregants where they are on their faith walk with life-transforming experiences that help them mature as disciples of Christ. It is the mission of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church to invite everyone to walk together in the calling of Christ for a life of eternal impact.

2.06. 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.

CHAPTER 3.

CONFESSION OF FAITH

3.01 Good Shepherd Lutheran Church is a Christian Church in the Lutheran tradition.

3.02. This congregation believes and confesses the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

3.03. This congregation believes and 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 this congregation 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.

3.04. The Holy Spirit uses the Scriptures to present Jesus to all who listen to or read them. The Bible is the source and norm of our teachings and practices.

3.05. This congregation believes and confesses the Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds as true declarations of the faith.

3.06. This congregation believes and confesses 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.

3.07. This congregation believes and confesses 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.

3.08. This congregation believes and confesses the Gospel, recorded in the Holy Scripture and confessed in the ecumenical creeds and Lutheran confessional writings, as the power of God to create and sustain the Church for God's mission in the world.

3.09. This congregation believes and confesses in infant or adult baptism. Baptism is a covenant-making moment and sacrament.

3.10. This congregation believes and confesses that all Christians are welcome to receive Communion.

CHAPTER 4

NATURE OF THIS CONGREGATION AND AFFILIATION

4.01. We believe God has a purpose for Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in this community and world. We are committed to listening for God's direction and changing personally and corporately to align with His Will. We believe this community of faith is called to be consistent, growing in faith and followers, and willing to sacrifice for God's bigger vision.

4.02. We believe that God expects each of us to grow and mature as new creations in Christ. Our growth is a never-ending process of learning, listening, worshiping, serving, and forgiving ourselves and others. As people of the Resurrection, we are intentional in our spiritual growth so we can be effective ambassadors for Jesus and use His teachings to bless ourselves, our families, the community, and the world we touch.

4.03. This congregation shall be an independent, voluntary member of Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ "LCMC" or its successor. Affiliation with LCMC or its successor may be terminated as follows:

A. A two-thirds majority vote to terminate the affiliation at a duly called congregation meeting for this specific purpose.

B. This congregation ceases to exist.

4.04. The policies and guidelines of this congregation will be maintained and managed by the Congregational Council or other organized units determined by the Congregational Council. These policies and guidelines are available for any member to review.

CHAPTER 5

POWERS OF THIS CONGREGATION

5.01. The powers of this congregation are those necessary to fulfill its mission and vision.

5.02. The powers of this congregation are vested in the Congregation Meeting called and conducted as provided in this constitution and as outlined in Chapter 6.

This congregation is authorized to:

- A. Approve the budget;
- B. Acquire real and personal property by gift, devise, purchase, or other lawful means;
- C. Hold title to and use its property for any and all activities consistent with its purpose;
- D. Sell, mortgage, lease, transfer, or otherwise dispose of its property by any lawful means;
- E. Elect its Congregational Council, and require them to carry out their duties in accordance with the constitution and policies; and
- F. Amend this constitution as outlined in Chapter 12.

5.03. All property that is acquired by this congregation will be held, owned, and titled in the name of this congregation. This congregation's real property, in excess of 10 percent of this congregation's annual budget, will not be purchased, disposed of, or encumbered in any manner except as approved by a two-thirds majority vote of a duly called Congregation Meeting.

5.04. A two-thirds majority vote at a duly called Congregation Meeting is required to terminate this congregation's existence. Should this congregation disband, title to its land and other property, real and personal, the land and property or the proceeds must be used for charitable purposes as directed by a two-thirds majority vote of a duly called Congregation Meeting.

5.05. All property acquired or owned by this congregation shall remain with this congregation if this congregation votes to disassociate with Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ pursuant to the process as outlined in 4.03.

5.06. If Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ removes this congregation from membership, according to its procedure for discipline, title to property shall continue to reside in this congregation.

5.07. If a two-thirds majority of a duly called Congregation Meeting votes to transfer to another church body, title to property shall continue to reside with the two-thirds majority.

CHAPTER 6

CONGREGATION MEETING

6.01. The annual Congregation Meeting of this congregation shall be held in May. The Congregational Council shall set the agenda, date, time, and place for the annual meeting.

6.02. A Congregation Meeting may be called by the Senior Pastor, the Congregational Council, or the President of this congregation. A Congregation Meeting shall be called at the written request of at least 10 percent of eligible voting members. The call for each meeting shall specify the purpose or purposes for which it is to be held and no other business shall be transacted.

6.03. Notice of all meetings of this congregation and their purpose shall be given at the worship services on the preceding two consecutive Sundays and by electronic mail to the congregation at least 10 days in advance of the date of the meeting.

6.04. Ten percent of the voting members present at any Congregation Meeting shall constitute a quorum.

6.05. Voting by proxy or absentee ballot shall not be permitted.

6.06. All actions by this congregation shall be by a simple majority vote of the members present, except as otherwise provided in this constitution.

6.07. Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of all meetings of this congregation.

6.08. Voting at any duly called meeting of this congregation can be in person, electronically, or both at the direction of the Congregational Council.

6.09. This congregation may hold meetings by remote communication, including electronically, and by telephone, or by any other means deemed appropriate by the Congregational Council.

6.10. A nominating team shall be discerned at the Congregation Meeting as outlined in 8.01.

6.11. This congregation shall discern from among its voting members persons to serve as voting members of the Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ Annual Gathering. Persons so discerned will serve a one-year term beginning on the first day of the fiscal year following their discernment and ending on the last day of the fiscal year of the year following their discernment.

CHAPTER 7

POWERS OF THE CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL

7.01. All remaining authority is retained by the Congregational Council or other organized units determined by the Congregational Council.

7.02. The voting membership of the Congregational Council shall consist of the Senior Pastor or Interim Lead Pastor and nine members of the Congregational Council. Any voting member of this congregation may be discerned to serve on the Congregational Council subject only to the limitation on the length of continuous service permitted in that office. The Congregational Council discerns annually the positions of President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. No person shall hold the position of President, Vice President, Secretary, or Treasurer for more than two consecutive years.

7.03. The members of the Congregational Council, except the Senior Pastor, shall be discerned by written or electronic ballot at the Congregation Annual Meeting to serve for a term of three years or until their successors are discerned. The term of office begins on the first day of the fiscal year following the meeting at which they were discerned and ending on the last day of the third fiscal year after their discernment. Such members shall be eligible to serve no more than two full terms consecutively. Should a member's place on the Congregational Council be declared vacant, the Congregational Council shall elect, by majority vote, a successor until the next annual meeting. A member's place on the Congregational Council shall be declared vacant if the member:

- A. ceases to be a voting member of this congregation; or
- B. is absent without cause from four successive regular Congregational Council meetings. Consistent with the laws of the state in which this congregation is incorporated, this congregation may adopt procedures for the removal of a member of the Congregational

Council in other circumstances. No member of the Congregational Council shall hold more than one office at a time.

7.04. The duties and responsibilities of the officers of this congregation are as follows:

- A. The President shall preside over all meetings of this congregation and the Congregational Council. They shall communicate regularly with the Senior Pastor and ensure all constitutional provisions and policies as they pertain to the Senior Pastor are followed.
- B. The Vice-President shall assume all responsibilities and perform all duties of the president in the event of the president's absence or shall perform select responsibilities and/or duties as requested by the president. They shall ensure this congregation's policies are up to date as required.
- C. The Secretary shall keep accurate minutes of all meetings of this congregation and of the Congregational Council, which shall be preserved permanently in this congregation's archives. The Secretary shall maintain this congregation's files of legal and other valuable documents, including the Organizational Structure and Congregation Policy documents and shall ensure compliance with all federal and state reporting requirements. If the workload requires the Congregational Council to appoint an additional council Secretary, he or she shall be a voting member of the Congregational Council and shall work with the Secretary as required.
- D. The Treasurer shall oversee and maintain the books of account of this congregation. If the Finance Director position is not occupied, the Executive Director of Operations shall temporarily assume all duties and responsibilities of the Finance Director until a new Finance Director can be selected. The Treasurer shall temporarily assume all duties and responsibilities of the Finance Director until the Congregational Council appoints a new person to the position.

7.05. A person who has been elected to the Congregational Council is not eligible to serve in the role of President in their first year unless they are serving consecutive terms.

7.06. The President and Vice President shall not both be in the final year of their term on the Congregational Council.

7.07. Only one member of a family may serve on the Congregational Council at any one time. Family members of the Senior Pastor, Associate Pastors, or staff are not eligible to serve on the Congregational Council. For the purpose of this section, "family" includes all of the following: spouse, mother, father, mother-in-law, father-in-law, sister, brother, sister-in-law, brother-in-law, and natural, step, and adopted children.

7.08. The Congregational Council shall meet at least once a month. Special meetings may be called by the Senior Pastor or the Congregational Council President. Special meetings shall be called by the Congregational Council 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.

7.09. The Congregational Council and its committees may vote in person, electronically, or both and may hold meetings electronically, by telephone, and by any other means deemed appropriate by the Congregational Council. To the extent permitted by state law, notice of all meetings may be provided by any means deemed appropriate by the Congregational Council, including electronically.

7.10. Approval for the transaction of business shall consist of at least a simple majority of the voting members of the Congregational Council.

7.11. The Congregational Council shall see that the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws are carried out.

7.12. The Congregational Council shall ensure that all constitutional provisions and policies, as they pertain to Pastors and church staff, are followed. They shall also ensure yearly written and oral evaluations are completed by an employee's direct supervisor. In the case of the Senior Pastor, the Congregational Council shall perform a written and oral evaluation.

7.13. The Congregational Council shall have general oversight of the life and activities of this congregation, and in particular its worship life, to the end that everything be done in accordance with the Word of God and the faith and practice of Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ. The duties of the Congregational 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 called Pastors and staff and help them to annually 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 service during the sickness or absence of the Pastor.
- H. To emphasize support of churchwide organizations of Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ as well as cooperation with other congregations, both Lutheran and non-Lutheran.
- I. To seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel.

7.14. The Congregational Council shall be responsible for the financial and property matters of this congregation.

- A. The Congregational Council shall be the board of trustees of this congregation and, as such, shall be responsible for maintaining and protecting its property and managing its business and fiscal affairs. It shall have the powers and be subject to the obligations that pertain to such boards under the laws of the State of Illinois, except as otherwise provided herein.
- B. The Congregational Council shall not have the authority to buy, sell, or encumber real property unless specifically authorized to do so by a meeting of this congregation.
- C. The Congregational Council shall prepare an annual budget for adoption by this congregation and shall supervise the expenditure of funds following the adoption of the budget.
- D. The Congregational Council may not enter into contracts that exceed 10 percent of the current approved budget for items not anticipated in the budget. Should additions to the approved budget exceed 10 percent, the Congregational Council must seek additional approval from this congregation in a Congregation Meeting.

- E. The Congregational Council shall ascertain that the financial affairs of this congregation are being conducted efficiently and in accordance with sound financial practices, while giving particular attention to the prompt payment of all obligations.
- F. The Congregational Council shall be responsible for this congregation's investments and its insurance program.

7.15. The Congregational Council shall provide for an annual review of the membership roster.

7.16. The Congregational Council shall be responsible for the employment and termination of staff. The Congregational Council will consult with the senior pastor before hiring or terminating the employment of any staff member. Nothing in this provision shall be deemed to affect this congregation's responsibility for the call of a Senior Pastor. The Senior Pastor and/or associate pastors will be responsible for overseeing the performance of all staff who report to them.

7.17. At a time of vacancy in the Senior Pastor position, an Interim Pastor shall be appointed by the Congregational Council.

7.18. The Congregational Council shall provide a comprehensive report on the state of this congregation at the annual Congregation Meeting.

7.19. In the absence of ordained ministers, the Congregational Council may appoint a member of the staff or congregation to administer sacraments.

CHAPTER 8

CONGREGATION COMMITTEES

8.01. The Congregational Council can form other committees as deemed necessary.

8.02. A Nominating Committee of six voting members of this congregation, two of whom, if possible, shall be outgoing members of the Congregational Council, shall be elected at the annual meeting for a term of one year. No person may serve more than two consecutive one-year terms. The Nominating Committee shall be assembled by the Executive Director of Operations or its organizational equivalent. If the Executive Director of Operations or its organizational equivalent are vacant, the Congregational Council President shall designate a voting member of this congregation to assemble this committee.

- A. The Nominating Committee shall also discern names of voting members who will be candidates to attend the Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ Annual Gathering. These names shall be provided to the Congregational Council to be included on the ballot at the annual Congregation Meeting.

8.03. The Senior Pastor and Congregational Council President shall be *ex officio* members and shall have voice but no vote on all teams, committees, task forces, and ministry boards.

CHAPTER 9

MEMBERSHIP

9.01. Members of this congregation shall be those members on the roll at the time this constitution is adopted and those who are admitted thereafter. Members must declare and maintain their membership in accordance with this congregation's policies.

9.02. Members shall be classified as follows:

- A. Baptized members are:
 - 1. Persons who have received the Sacrament of Holy Baptism in this congregation.
 - 2. Persons who have a certificate of transfer from other Lutheran congregations.
- B. Confirmed members are:
 - 1. Baptized persons who have been confirmed in this congregation or,
 - 2. Persons who have received the Sacrament of Holy Baptism or are confirmed members from other Christian congregations. These persons also need to complete new member classes and make an affirmation of faith to this congregation.
- C. Voting members are:

Confirmed members who have made a documented financial contribution and have received Communion during the current or preceding calendar year to be eligible to vote at a Congregation Meeting.

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

- A. Regularly receive Communion and study the Word of God as a means of receiving grace
- B. Live a Christian Life in accordance with the Word of God and teachings of the Lutheran church
- C. Serve the vision and mission of this congregation with their time, talents, and treasures.

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

- A. Transfer or release;
- B. Resignation;
- C. Death;
- D. Removal from the roll due to inactivity which is defined as no record of a financial contribution and/or receiving Communion for three (3) years or longer; or
- E. Due process and disciplinary action by the Congregational Council.

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

- A. Private admonition by the Senior Pastor or their designee;
- B. Admonition by the Senior Pastor or their designee in the presence of two or three witnesses; and
- C. Citation to appear before the Congregational Council. If, for any reason, the Senior Pastor or their designee is unable to administer the admonitions required by 9.05.A and 9.05.B, the President or Vice President shall administer such admonitions in the presence of witnesses.

The process for disciplining a voting member of this congregation shall be governed as outlined in this chapter. If discipline against a member goes beyond counseling and admonition by the Senior Pastor; their designee; or Congregational Council President, charges against the accused member(s) that are specific and in writing shall be prepared by member(s) of this congregation who shall sign the charges against the accuser(s). The written charges shall be filed with the Senior Pastor or Congregational Council President, who shall advise the Congregational Council of the need to issue a written citation to the accused and the accusers that specifies the time and place of a hearing before the Congregational Council. The written charges shall accompany the written citation to the accused. The member(s) charged with the offense shall appear before the Congregational Council after having received a written citation, at least ten days prior to the meeting. If the member(s) charged with the offense fail to appear at the scheduled hearing, the Congregational Council may proceed with the hearing and may pass judgment in the absence of the member(s).

Members of the Congregational Council who participate in the preparation of the written charges or who present evidence or testimony in the hearing before the Congregational Council are disqualified from voting upon the question of the guilt of the accused member(s). Should the allegations be sustained by a two-thirds majority vote of the members of the Congregational 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 this congregation;
- B. suspension from membership and/or participation for a defined period; or
- C. expulsion from membership and/or participation in this congregation.

Disciplinary actions B. and C. shall be delivered to the member in writing.

All actions and decisions made by the Congregational Council shall be considered final and may only be reconsidered and revoked by the Congregational Council upon receipt of:

- A. evidence that injustice has been done; or
- B. evidence of repentance and amendment.

No member of this congregation shall be subject to discipline for offenses that the Congregational Council has previously heard and decided.

CHAPTER 10

PASTORAL CALL, SERVICE, AND PRACTICE

10.01. A Call Committee shall be discerned by the Congregational Council and shall consist of at least six voting members of this congregation. The Call Committee shall be responsible for finding, interviewing, and discerning pastoral candidates who shall then be presented to the Congregational Council for approval before presenting the candidate to the congregation. The Call Committee shall ensure that any candidate for the position of Senior Pastor or any other pastoral positions believe in and adhere to the confessions of the Lutheran faith as stated in Chapter 3. The term of the Call Committee will terminate upon installation of a newly called Pastor. The Congregational Council shall draft and maintain as part of this congregation's records a job description for Senior Pastor and other pastoral called positions.

10.02. Any candidate for the position of Senior Pastor shall, at minimum, have a Master's in Divinity or equivalent.

10.03. This congregation shall extend a call to the Senior Pastor and/or other pastors upon a two-thirds majority vote of voting members present at a duly called meeting of this congregation called for this specific purpose.

10.04. In consultation with the Congregational Council, the Senior Pastor and/or other pastors shall oversee the position responsibilities and performance of all staff.

10.05. Any Pastor called by this congregation who is not ordained in a Lutheran denomination shall become certified in Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ. Failure to become certified as stated in this section may be grounds for termination. The time required to complete the certification process will be determined by the Congregational Council.

10.06. The relationship with the Senior Pastor may be dissolved by resignation or by action of the Congregational Council by a two-thirds vote recommending dissolution of the relationship followed by a simple majority vote of voting members present at a duly called meeting of this congregation called for this specific purpose.

10.07. The relationship with an Associate Pastor may be dissolved by resignation or by a two-thirds vote of the Congregational Council.

10.08. The call of this congregation, when accepted by a Pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment.

A. This relationship 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 office effectively in this congregation due to the physical or mental capacity of the Pastor; or the moral and spiritual character of the Pastor;
4. disqualification of the Pastor through discipline on grounds of doctrine, morality, or continued neglect of duty;
5. the dissolution of the congregation; or
6. death.
7. All Pastors will also be guided by the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church Employee Handbook and are subject to discipline for violating policies and practices outlined there.

B. When allegations of physical or mental capacity of any called Pastor or ineffective conduct of the office have come to the attention of the Congregational Council and are deemed plausible by the Congregational Council, or when such allegations have been brought to the Congregational Council's attention by a petition signed by at least one-third of the voting members of this congregation, the Congregational Council President shall investigate such conditions in company with a committee that includes the Congregational Council apart from the Senior Pastor and two ordained ministers from local congregations who are members of Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ.

10.09. During the period of service, an interim Pastor shall have the rights and duties in this congregation of a regularly called Senior Pastor. The interim Pastor and any ordained Pastor providing assistance shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a Senior Pastor.

10.10. This congregation shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to a former called Pastor before calling a successor. A called 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.

10.11. The specific duties of a Pastor, compensation, and other matters pertaining to the service of the Pastor shall be included in a letter of call, drafted and approved by the Congregational Council. This letter shall include a provision as outlined in 10.04 of this constitution.

10.12. The parochial records of this congregation, including records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from this congregation, shall be maintained by the Senior Pastor and/or their designee(s) and shall remain the property of this congregation. The Secretary of this congregation shall attest in writing that such records have been placed in their hands in good order by a departing Senior Pastor before their departure from call in this congregation.

CHAPTER 11

BYLAWS

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

11.02. Changes to the bylaws may be proposed by ten percent of the voting membership or by the Congregational Council. The proposed bylaw(s) must be filed in writing with the Congregational Council at least 60 days before formal consideration by this congregation at a Congregation Meeting called for that purpose. The Congregational Council shall notify this congregation's voting members of the proposal with the Congregational Council's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the meeting.

11.03. Bylaws proposed under 11.02 may be adopted or amended at any duly called meeting of this congregation by a majority vote of those voting members present and voting.

11.04. Approved changes to the bylaws shall be officially recorded by the Secretary of this congregation.

CHAPTER 12

AMENDMENTS

12.01. Amendments to this constitution may be proposed by at least five percent of voting members or by the Congregational Council. Proposals must be filed in writing with the Congregational Council 60 days before formal consideration by this congregation at a congregation meeting called for the purpose. The Congregational Council shall notify the members of the proposal with their recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the meeting.

12.02. A proposed amendment to this constitution shall:

- A. Be approved at a duly called Congregation Meeting according to this constitution by two-thirds majority vote of those present; and
- B. Have the effective date included in the resolution and noted in this constitution.

CHAPTER 13

LIMITATIONS OF LIABILITY AND INDEMNIFICATION

13.01. This congregation shall indemnify any and all of the following persons who may serve or have served this congregation:

- A. Senior Pastor;
- B. executive level staff position;
- C. church officer;
- D. member of a board or committee, or
- E. leader elected or appointed.

Indemnification applies to any and all expenses, including amounts paid on judgments, counsel fees, and amounts paid in settlement (before or after suit is commenced) actually and necessarily incurred by such persons in connection with the defense or settlement of any claim, action, suit, or proceeding in which they, or any of them, are made parties, or a party, or which may be asserted against any of them or any of them by reason of being or having been in one or more aforesaid positions of responsibility with this congregation, except in relation to matters as to which any such person shall be adjudged in any action, suit, or proceeding to be liable for his or her own negligence or misconduct in the performance of his or her duties. Such indemnification shall be in addition to any other rights to which those indemnified may be entitled under any law, agreement, or otherwise.