

Constitution and Bylaws For Immanuel Lutheran Church Independence, Iowa



*Constitution Revised as of September 4, 2009
by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*

*Bylaws Revised and Approved by Immanuel Church Council – October 20, 2010
Approved by Immanuel Lutheran Church Congregation Annual Meeting – November 21, 2010*

Table of Contents

Constitution	Page
Preamble	3
Chapter 1 Name and Incorporation.....	3
Chapter 2 Confession of Faith	3
Chapter 3 Nature of the Church.....	4
Chapter 4 Statement of Purpose	4
Chapter 5 Powers of the Congregation.....	5
Chapter 6 Church Affiliation	6
Chapter 7 Property Ownership	7
Chapter 8 Membership	8
Chapter 9 The Pastor	9
Chapter 10 Congregation Meeting.....	13
Chapter 11 Officers.....	13
Chapter 12 Congregation Council.....	14
Chapter 13 Congregation Committees	16
Chapter 14 Organizations within the Congregation	16
Chapter 15 Discipline of Members and Adjudication	17
Chapter 16 Bylaws.....	18
Chapter 17 Amendments.....	18
Chapter 18 Continuing Resolutions	19
Chapter 19 Indemnification	19
Chapter 20 Parish Authorization	20
Bylaws	
Part I Powers	21
Part II Worship.....	21
Part III Meetings of the Congregation	22
Part IV Officers and Board	23
Congregational Council.....	24
Duties of Officers.....	24
Part V Committee Structure	25
Endowment	26
Evangelism	27
Fellowship	27
Finance	27
Mutual Ministry	28
Nominating.....	29
Parish Education	29
Personnel.....	29
Property	30
Social Action	30
Stewardship	31
Worship and Music.....	31
Youth Board	31
Preschool Board.....	32
Part VI Methods of Changing Bylaws.....	32
Part VII Parish Records.....	32

**CONSTITUTION FOR
IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH
INDEPENDENCE, IOWA**

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

- C1.01** The name of this congregation shall be Immanuel Lutheran Church. It is located at Independence, Iowa.
- C1.02** For the purpose of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws, the congregation of Immanuel Lutheran Church, Independence, Iowa, is hereinafter designated as "this congregation."
- C1.11** This congregation shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of Iowa.

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.

- 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.

Chapter 4. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

- C4.01** The Church is a people created by God in Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, called and sent to bear witness to God's creative, redeeming, and sanctifying activity in the world.
- C4.02** To participate in God's mission, this congregation as a part of the Church shall:
- a. Worship God in proclamation of the Word and administration of the sacraments and through lives of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, witness, and service.
 - b. Proclaim God's saving Gospel of justification by grace for Christ's sake through faith alone, according to the apostolic witness in the Holy Scripture, preserving and transmitting the Gospel faithfully to future generations.
 - c. Carry out Christ's Great Commission by reaching out to all people to bring them to faith in Christ and by doing all ministry with a global awareness consistent with the understanding of God as Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier of all.
 - d. Serve in response to God's love to meet human needs, caring for the sick and the aged, advocating dignity and justice for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, and standing with the poor and powerless, and committing itself to their needs.
 - e. Nurture its members in the Word of God so as to grow in faith and hope and love, to see daily life as the primary setting for the exercise of their Christian calling, and to use the gifts of the Spirit for their life together and for their calling in the world.

- f. Manifest the unity given to the people of God by living together in the love of Christ and by joining with other Christians in prayer and action to express and preserve the unity which the Spirit gives.

C4.03 To fulfill these purposes, this congregation shall:

- a. Provide services of worship at which the Word of God is preached and the sacraments are administered.
- b. Provide pastoral care and assist all members to participate in this ministry.
- c. Challenge, equip, and support all members in carrying out their calling in their daily lives and in their congregation.
- d. Teach the Word of God.
- e. Witness to the reconciling Word of God in Christ, reaching out to all people.
- f. Respond to human need, work for justice and peace, care for the sick and the suffering, and participate responsibly in society.
- g. Motivate its members to provide financial support for the congregation's ministry and the ministry of other parts of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- h. Foster and participate in interdependent relationships with other congregations, the synod, and the 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 Council.

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

Chapter 5. POWERS OF THE CONGREGATION

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

C5.02 The powers of this congregation are vested in the Congregation Meeting called and conducted as provided in this constitution and bylaws.

C5.03 Only such authority as is delegated to the Congregation Council or other organizational units in 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. 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, and amendments to the bylaws, as specified in Chapter 16.

- 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 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.

C5.04 This congregation shall choose from among its voting members laypersons to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly as well as persons to represent it at meetings of any conference, cluster, coalition, or other area subdivision of which it is a member. The number of persons to be elected by the congregation and other qualifications shall be as prescribed in guidelines established by the Northeastern Iowa Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

C5.05. This congregation shall have a mission endowment fund that will operate as specified in this congregation's bylaws. The purpose of the mission endowment fund is to provide for mission work beyond the operational budget of this congregation.

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 Northeastern Iowa 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.
- 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** This congregation may terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America by the following procedure:
- a. A resolution indicating the desire of this congregation to terminate its relationship must be adopted at a legally called and conducted special meeting of this congregation by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present.
 - b. The secretary of this congregation shall submit a copy of the resolution to the synodical bishop and shall mail a copy of the resolution to voting members of this congregation. This notice shall be submitted within 10 days after the resolution has been adopted.
 - c. The bishop of the synod shall consult with this congregation during a period of at least 90 days.
 - d. If this congregation, after consultation, still desires to terminate its relationship, such action may be taken at a legally called and conducted special meeting by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present, at which meeting the bishop of the synod or an authorized representative shall be present. Notice of the meeting shall be mailed to all voting members at least 10 days in advance of the meeting.
 - e. A certified copy of the resolution to terminate its relationship shall be sent to the synodical bishop, at which time the relationship between this congregation and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be terminated.
 - f. Notice of termination shall be forwarded by the synodical bishop to the secretary of this church and published in the periodical of this church.
- 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 program unit of the churchwide 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 program unit of the churchwide 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 Northeastern Iowa 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. Before this congregation takes action to transfer to another Lutheran church body, it shall consult with representatives of the Northeastern Iowa 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 relate to a non-Lutheran church body, title to property of this congregation shall continue to reside in this congregation only with the consent of the Synod Council. The Synod Council, after consultation with this 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 this 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.
- C7.05.** Notwithstanding the provisions of C7.02 and C.7.03 above, where this congregation has received property from the synod pursuant to a deed or other instrument containing restrictions under provision 9.71.a of the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, this congregation accepts such restrictions and:
- a. Shall not transfer, encumber, mortgage, or in any way burden or impair any right, title, or interest in the property without prior approval of the Synod Council.
 - b. Shall—upon written demand by the Synod Council, pursuant to †S13.23. of the constitution of the Northeastern Iowa Synod of the ELCA—reconvey and transfer all right, title, and interest in the property to the synod.

Chapter 8. MEMBERSHIP

- C8.01** Members of this congregation shall be those baptized persons on the roll of this congregation at the time that this constitution is adopted and those who are admitted thereafter and who have declared and maintain their membership in accordance with the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.
- 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 in 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 Christian 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.

C8.03 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, 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 by the Congregation 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

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 the Congregation Council to recommend the call, shall seek the advice and help of the bishop of the synod.

C9.02 Only a member of the clergy roster of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or 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;
 - 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 churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and of the Northeastern Iowa 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, except in the case of the death of the pastor, shall be terminated only 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, 30 days after the date on which it was submitted;
 - 3) inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in the congregation in view of local conditions, without reflection on the competence or the moral and spiritual character of the pastor;
 - 4) the physical or mental incapacity of the pastor;
 - 5) disqualification of the pastor through discipline on grounds of doctrine, morality, or continued neglect of duty;
 - 6) the dissolution of the congregation; or the termination of a parish arrangement; or
 - 7) suspension of the congregation as a result of discipline proceedings.

- b. When allegations of physical or mental incapacity of the pastor or ineffective conduct of the pastoral office have come to the attention of the bishop of the synod, the bishop in his or her sole discretion may, or 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 shall, investigate such conditions personally in company with a committee of two ordained ministers and one layperson.
- c. In case of alleged physical or mental incapacity, competent medical testimony shall be obtained. When such disability is evident, the bishop of the synod with the advice of the committee shall declare the pastorate vacant. Upon the restoration of a disabled pastor to health, the bishop of the synod shall take steps to enable the pastor to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another field of labor.
- d. In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of the congregation, all concerned persons shall be heard, after which the bishop of the synod together with the committee described in *C9.05.b. shall decide on the course of action to be recommended to the pastor and the congregation. If they agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action shall be taken by the synod. If either party fails to assent, the congregation may dismiss the pastor 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.
- e. If, in the course of proceedings described in C9.05.d., the committee concludes that there may be grounds for disciplinary action, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action to the synodical bishop who may bring charges, in accordance with the provisions of the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the constitution of this synod.
- f. If, following the appointment of the committee described in C9.05.b. or d., it should become apparent that the pastoral office cannot be conducted effectively in the congregation(s) being served by the ordained minister due to local conditions, the bishop of the synod may temporarily suspend the pastor from service in the congregation(s) without prejudice and with pay provided through a joint synodical and churchwide fund and with housing provided by the congregation(s).

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.

- 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;
 - 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(s) shall submit a report of his or her ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.
- 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.
- C9.20** Ecumenical pastoral ministry.
- C9.21** Under special circumstances, subject to the approval of the synodical bishop and the concurrence of this congregation, an ordained minister of a church body with which the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America officially has established a relationship of full communion may serve temporarily as pastor of this congregation under a contract between the congregation and the ordained minister in a form proposed by the synodical bishop and approved by the congregation.

Chapter 10. CONGREGATION MEETING

- C10.01** The annual meeting of this congregation shall be held at a time specified in the bylaws.
- C10.02** A special Congregation Meeting may be called by the pastor, the Congregation Council, or the president of this congregation, and shall be called by the president of the congregation upon the written request of 75 of the voting members. The call for each special meeting shall specify the purpose for which it is to be held and no other business shall be transacted.
- C10.03** Notice of all meetings of this congregation shall be given at the services of worship on the preceding two consecutive Sundays and by mail to all 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 shall be sufficient.
- C10.04** 75 voting members shall constitute a quorum.
- C10.05** Voting by proxy or by absentee ballot shall not be permitted.
- C10.06** 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 state law.
- C10.07** Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of all meetings of this congregation.

Chapter 11. OFFICERS

- C11.01** The officers of this congregation shall be a president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer.
- a. Duties of the officers shall be specified in the bylaws.
 - b. The officers shall be voting members of the congregation.
 - c. Officers of this congregation shall serve similar offices of the Congregation Council and shall be voting members of the Congregation Council.
 - d. If the Congregation Council elects its officers, the president, vice president, and secretary shall be selected from the elected membership of the Congregation Council. If the treasurer is not selected from the elected membership of the Congregation Council, the treasurer shall have voice but not vote at the meetings of the Congregation Council.
 - e. The congregation council shall elect a treasurer and a financial secretary who are not members of the congregation council
- C11.02** The Congregation Council shall elect its officers and they shall be the officers of the congregation. The officers shall be elected by written ballot and shall serve for one year or until their successors are elected. Their terms shall begin at the close of the annual meeting at which they are elected.

C11.03 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.

Chapter 12. CONGREGATION COUNCIL

C12.01. The voting membership of the Congregation Council shall consist of the pastor(s), and not more or fewer than nine (9) congregational members. 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 Congregation Council shall be declared vacant if the member a) ceases to be a voting member of this congregation or b) is absent from four successive regular meetings of the Congregation Council without cause. Consistent with the laws of the state in which the congregation is incorporated, the congregation may adopt procedures for the removal of a member of the Congregation Council in other circumstances.

C12.02 The members of the Congregation Council shall be elected by written ballot to serve for 3 years or until their successors are elected. Such members shall be eligible to serve no more than one full term consecutively. Their term shall begin at the close of the annual meeting at which they are elected.

C12.03 Should a member's place on the Congregation Council be declared vacant, the Congregation Council shall elect, by majority vote, a successor to fill the unexpired term of the member.

C12.04 The Congregation Council shall have general oversight of the life and activities of this congregation, and in particular its worship life, to the end that everything be done in accordance with the Word of God and the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The duties of the Congregation Council shall include the following:

- a. To lead this congregation in stating its mission, to do long-range planning, to set goals and priorities, and to evaluate its activities in light of its mission and goals.
- b. To seek to involve all members of this congregation in worship, learning, witness, service, and support.
- c. To oversee and provide for the administration of this congregation to enable it to fulfill its functions and perform its mission.
- d. To maintain supportive relationships with the pastor(s) and staff and help them annually to evaluate the fulfillment of their calling 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 churchwide organization 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 be responsible for the financial and property matters of this congregation.
- a. The Congregation 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 Iowa, except as otherwise provided herein.
 - b. The Congregation Council shall not have the authority to buy, sell, or encumber real property unless specifically authorized to do so by a meeting of the congregation.
 - c. The Congregation Council may enter into contracts of up to \$2,500.00 for items not included in the budget.
 - d. The Congregation Council shall prepare an annual budget for adoption by this congregation, shall supervise the expenditure of funds in accordance therewith following its adoption, and may incur obligations of more than \$2,500.00 in excess of the anticipated receipts only after approval by a Congregation Meeting. The budget shall include this congregation's fully indicated share in support of the wider ministry being carried on in partnership with the synod and churchwide organization.
 - e. The Congregation Council shall ascertain that the financial affairs of this congregation are being conducted efficiently, giving particular attention to the prompt payment of all obligations and to the regular forwarding of benevolence monies to the synodical treasurer.
 - f. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for this congregation's investments and its total insurance program.
- C12.06** The Congregation Council shall see that the provisions of this constitution, its bylaws, and the continuing resolutions are carried out.
- C12.07** The Congregation Council shall provide for an annual review of the membership roster.
- C12.08** The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the employment and supervision of the salaried lay workers of this congregation.
- C12.09** The Congregation Council shall submit a comprehensive report to this congregation at the annual meeting.
- C12.11** The Congregation 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 at least 5 days prior to all who are entitled to be present.
- C12.12** A quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of a majority of the members of the Congregation Council.

Chapter 13. CONGREGATION COMMITTEES

- C13.01** The officers of this congregation shall constitute the Executive Committee. The Pastor(s) are advisory members.
- C13.02** A Nominating Committee of five voting members of this congregation, three of whom, if possible, shall be outgoing members of the Congregation Council, shall be elected at the annual meeting for a term of one year. Members of the Nominating Committee are not eligible for consecutive reelection.
- C13.03** An Audit Committee of three voting members shall be elected by the Congregation Council. Audit Committee members shall not be members of the Congregation Council. Term of office shall be three years, with one member elected each year. Members shall be eligible for reelection.
- C13.04** A Mutual Ministry Committee of three voting members shall be elected by the congregation. Term of office shall be three years, one member to be elected each successive year. Committee members will hold no other office in the congregation during their term.
- C13.05** When a pastoral vacancy occurs, a Call Committee of six voting members shall be elected by the Congregation Council. Term of office will terminate upon installation of the newly called pastor.
- C13.06** Other committees of this congregation may be formed, as the need arises, by decision of the Congregation Council.
- C13.07** Duties of committees of this congregation shall be specified in the bylaws, and continuing resolutions.
- C13.08** The [senior] 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

- C14.01** All organizations within this congregation shall exist to aid it in ministering to the members of this congregation and to all persons who can be reached with the Gospel of Christ. As outgrowths and expressions of this congregation's life, the organizations are subject to its oversight and direction. This congregation at its meeting shall determine their policies, guide their activities, and receive reports concerning their membership, work, and finances.
- C14.02** Special interest groups, other than those of the official organizations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, may be organized only after authorization has been given by the Congregation Council and specified in a continuing resolution.

Chapter 15. DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS AND ADJUDICATION

- C15.01** Denial of the Christian faith as described in this constitution, conduct grossly unbecoming a member of the Church of Christ, or persistent trouble-making in this congregation are sufficient cause for discipline of a member. Prior to disciplinary action, reconciliation will be attempted following Matthew 18:15-17, proceeding through these successive steps: a) private admonition by the pastor, b) admonition by the pastor in the presence of two or three witnesses, and c) citation to appear before the Congregation Council. If for any reason, the pastor is unable to administer the admonitions required by a. and b. hereof, the president (if not the pastor) or vice president shall administer such admonitions.
- 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 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 Congregation 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 Congregation 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 Congregation Council and requests the presence of a member charged with the 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 Congregation Council may proceed with the hearing and may pass judgment in the member's absence.
- C15.03** Members of the Congregation Council who participate in the preparation of the written charges or who present evidence or testimony in the hearing before the Congregation 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 Congregation 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.
- C15.04** The member against whom disciplinary action has been taken by the Congregation Council shall have the right to appeal the decision to the Synod Council. Such right may not be abridged and the decision of the Synod Council shall be final.
- C15.05** Disciplinary actions may be reconsidered and revoked by the Congregation Council upon receipt of a) evidence that injustice has been done or b) evidence of repentance and amendment.

- C15.06** For disciplinary actions in this congregation, “due process” shall be observed as specified in 20.41.04. in the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- C15.07** No member of a congregation shall be subject to discipline for offenses that the Congregation Council has previously heard and decided, unless so ordered by the Synod Council after an appeal.
- 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

- C16.01** This congregation may adopt bylaws. No bylaw may conflict with this constitution.
- C16.02** Bylaws may be adopted or amended at any legally called meeting of this congregation with a quorum present by a majority vote of those voting members present and voting.
- C16.03** Changes to the bylaws may be proposed by any voting member provided, however, that such additions or amendments be submitted in writing to the Congregation Council at least 60 days before a regular or special Congregation Meeting called for that purpose and that the Congregation Council notify the congregation’s members by mail of the proposal with the council’s recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the Congregation Meeting.
- 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, sections of this constitution that are not required, in accord with the 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 by mail of the proposal together with the council’s recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the meeting.

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 amendment shall become effective within 120 days from the date of the receipt of the notice by the synod unless the synod informs this congregation that the amendment is in conflict with the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or the constitution of the Northeastern Iowa Synod of the ELCA.

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 Churchwide Assembly—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 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 a meeting 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 may 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.

Chapter 20. PARISH AUTHORIZATION

- C20.01** This congregation may unite in partnership with one or more other congregations recognized by the synod named in C6.01. to form a parish. Except as provided in C20.02. and C20.03., a written agreement, developed in consultation with the synod and approved by the voting members of each congregation participating in the parish, shall specify the powers and responsibilities that have been delegated to a Parish Council.
- C20.02** Whenever a letter of call is being recommended for extension to an ordained minister of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or a candidate for the roster of ordained ministers who has been recommended to the congregation by the synodical bishop to serve the congregations of a parish, such letter of call shall be first approved by a two-thirds vote at congregational meetings of each of the congregations forming the parish. If any congregation of the parish should fail to approve extending this call, the other congregation(s) in the same parish shall have the right to terminate the parish arrangement.
- C20.03** Any one of the congregations of a parish may terminate the call of a pastor as provided in S14.13.d. of the Synod Constitution of the synod named in C6.01. In such case, the other congregation(s) in the same parish shall have the right to terminate the parish arrangement.
- C20.04** Whenever a parish arrangement is terminated, the call of any rostered person serving that parish is terminated. Should any congregation that formerly was part of the parish arrangement desire to issue a new call to that rostered person, it may do so in accordance with the call process of this church.

**Bylaws to the Constitution Of
Immanuel Lutheran Church
Independence, Iowa**

Part I – Powers

1. All power in the congregation has its source in the Word of God, which is the norm for its faith and life. All individuals and groups within the congregation shall submit to the authority of the Word; and the life and activity of the congregation and its organizations shall conform to it.
2. The powers of the congregation shall be vested in the congregational meeting, called and conducted in such manner as is provided in this constitution, and to the extent conveyed by this constitution or as assigned from time to time by the congregational meeting, in the boards elected by the congregation.
3. In the fulfillment of its purpose, the congregation is empowered to:
 - a. acquire real and personal property by gift, devise, bequest, purchase, or other lawful means;
 - b. hold title to and use its property for any and all activities consistent with its purpose;
 - c. sell, mortgage, lease, transfer, or otherwise dispose of its property by any lawful means;
 - d. enter into contract;
 - f. elect officers and boards for the exercise of their powers and authority and require them to conduct their affairs in accordance with this constitution and its bylaws, and the resolutions of the congregation.
4. Real property shall not be purchased, disposed of, or encumbered in any manner except by resolution adopted by not less than a two-thirds majority vote of the members present and voting at a legally called meeting of the congregation.

Part II – Worship

As an expression of the unity of the Church in Christ the congregation recognizes the desirability of conforming to the practices of other member congregations in using such forms of worship, including liturgies and hymn books, as are recommended by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Part III – Meetings of the Congregation

1. The power and authority of the congregation shall be exercised throughout the congregational meeting, which shall be called and conducted in conformity with civil laws and the provisions of the constitution and bylaws of the congregation.
2. The time and place of the annual meeting of the congregation shall be determined by the congregation council. The congregation council shall announce the time and place at two public services immediately preceding the meeting, said services to be at least a week apart; and in such publications as the congregation or the pastor(s) may periodically issue, or by written notice to the voting members mailed or by electronic transmission not less than ten (10) days in advance of the meeting.
3. The current rosters of voting, confirmed, baptized and associate members shall be available at each annual meeting of the congregation.
4. The annual meeting shall receive reports from all the organizations of the congregation. Such reports shall be submitted in writing to the church office not less than 20 days before such meeting. The financial statement shall be submitted not less than 14 days before such meeting.
5. The annual meeting of the congregation shall elect a Nominating Committee of at least five members. The pastor shall serve as convener and as an advisory member. The term of office of the members of the nominating committee shall be one year. The Nominating Committee shall attempt to nominate two candidates for each office to be filled and shall secure the consent of each candidate. The list of nominees shall be announced to the congregation in conjunction with the announcements of the meeting of the congregation at which the elections are to take place. In addition to the candidates submitted by the nominating committee, additional nominations may be made from the floor. The congregation council shall fill vacancies on the nominating committee.
6. The pastor(s) shall be notified of the time and place at which the special meeting of the congregation is to be held.
7. Only the business for which a special meeting has been called shall be transacted at the meeting.
8. A meeting of the congregation may, by majority vote, recess to reconvene at a specified time and place. A meeting may also recess to reconvene upon call; provided, however, that the time and place of such a reconvened meeting must be announced at a public service of the congregation, and not less than three (3) day's written notice be given of the reconvened meeting.

Part IV – Officers and Boards

At its annual meeting the congregation shall elect a congregation council of nine (9) members for terms of three (3) years each, with one-third of the terms expiring annually. No member shall be eligible to succeed himself. The pastor(s) shall be an advisory member of the congregation council by virtue of the office.

1. The congregation council shall serve as the trustees of the congregation. They shall be responsible for all matters relating to legal and corporate affairs, and shall supervise the maintenance of the properties of the congregation. The duly elected president and secretary of the congregation council shall be authorized to sign all documents pertaining to the legal and corporate affairs of the congregation. The congregation council vice president may substitute his or her signature for either the president or secretary if either of those individuals is unable to perform the duties of their office. Both the signature of the congregation council president and secretary must appear on all documents to make them official.
2. The congregation council shall serve as the deacons of the congregation, unless the congregation elects people to serve as deacons. The deacons shall provide spiritual leadership in the congregation, working with the pastor(s), to guide the work, witness, worship, and service of the congregation in the world.
3. The congregation council shall establish such committees as are provided in the bylaws and supervise their work. The pastor(s) shall be an advisory member of all committees.
4. The congregation council shall determine rosters of the baptized, the confirmed, the voting, and the associate members of the congregation. A confirmed member who does not, for a period of one year, partake of Holy Communion, support the church with his/her offerings, and does not appear to desire to participate in the life, worship and ministry of the congregation, shall be contacted by the pastor(s) and/or the congregation's officers to encourage them to become active members. If, during the second year, the confirmed member remains inactive, his/her name shall be removed from the active membership roster and placed on the responsibility list as one who is in special need of the congregation's prayer and concern. A child, neither of whose parents or guardians is a member of the congregation, may be removed from the roster of baptized members if he/she fails to participate in the life, worship and ministry of the congregation. All records of baptism, confirmation, marriage, funerals, and church membership are permanently stored for future use.

A. Duties and Responsibilities of the Congregation Council

In addition to the general duties and responsibilities listed at the beginning of this part of the bylaws, the congregation council shall:

1. Review annually the salary of the pastor(s) and make adjustments from time to time within the limits of the budget approved by the congregation.
2. Receive reports monthly from the treasurer to ascertain that the expenditures are within the budget approved by the congregation.
3. Be responsible for the preparation of a budget for submission to the annual meeting of the congregation.
4. Assure itself that the treasurer and others who have access to the funds of the congregation are adequately insured.
5. Appoint annually an auditing committee composed of at least three (3) members of the congregation which shall audit the fiscal records of the congregation, including the Endowment Fund, and report its findings (in writing) to the annual meeting. Such audits shall include examination of existing insurance coverage.
6. Be responsible for the buildings and premises of the congregation so that their use is available for the functions of the congregation. Should groups or individuals not associated with the congregation desire to use such property, the procedures outlined in the Church Use Policy document shall be followed.
7. Arrange an exit interview with departing Pastor.
8. Exercise discipline in accordance with the provisions of the constitution.

B. Duties of Officers. Treasurer and Financial Secretary

1. The chairperson shall preside at meetings of the congregation council and of the congregation.
2. The vice-chairperson shall preside at the meetings of the congregation council and of the congregation in the absence of the chairperson.
3. The secretary shall keep the minutes of the congregation council and of the congregation and shall have oversight of the archives of the congregation. Records shall be recorded on a computer back-up disk and/or photo-copied.
4. The treasurer shall have custody of all funds of the congregation. The treasurer shall receive and disburse such funds in accordance with the decisions of the congregation and the congregation council, and make monthly reports to the congregation council. All financial transactions shall be signed by the treasurer and at least one congregation council officer.
5. The financial secretary shall maintain records of all contributions and make regular reports to the members as required by the congregation council.

Part V – Committee Structure and Responsibilities

A. Committee Structure

1. The congregation council shall establish the following committees and supervise activities:

Endowment Committee	Personnel Committee
Evangelism Committee	Property Committee
Fellowship Committee	Social Action Committee
Finance Committee	Stewardship Committee
Mutual Ministry Committee	Worship and Music Committee
Parish Education Committee	Preschool Board
Youth Board	

2. The congregation council shall also establish any special committees in addition to the above. The congregation council will appoint the original committee members until the next annual meeting is held and members can be elected by the congregation.
3. The congregational committees shall consist of at least six (6) non-council members with the exception of Personnel, Mutual Ministry and Finance Committees, who shall have three non-council members each and one congregation council member. The congregation council member may vote on committee business but may not hold committee offices.
 - a. The non-council members shall each serve a two (2) year term.
 - b. One-half the members terms shall expire annually.
 - c. There shall be no limit to the number of terms a person may serve.
 - d. In addition to the above, the president of the senior youth group shall serve as a voting member of the youth Board.
4. The non-council members shall each be elected by the congregation at its annual meeting (half the members each year). Parish Education committee shall recommend Sunday School Superintendent.
 - a. The Nomination Committee shall put together a list of names of candidates for the open non-council membership positions to be submitted to the congregation at its annual meeting.
5. The chairperson and a secretary for each committee shall be elected at the first meeting of each committee following the congregation's annual meeting. Minutes shall be kept.
 - a. The council representative will report to the congregation Council monthly.
 - b. The chairperson shall also prepare an annual summary to be included in the congregation's annual report.

6. Each committee shall be directly responsible to the congregation council. Should the congregation council reject a committee recommendation, it shall:
 - a. Definitely state whether the committee should restructure its proposal or drop the matter totally.
 - b. Give specific reasons as to why a proposal is rejected or what can be done by the committee to make the proposal acceptable to the congregation council.
7. Each committee shall meet on a minimum bimonthly schedule with the exception of the Finance, Personnel and Mutual Ministry committees, which shall meet on a minimum quarterly schedule. Due to the uniqueness of the Nominating Committee, a minimum of two meetings will be held prior to the required submission of their slate of candidates for the annual meeting.
8. Each new committee member shall receive an outline of the committee's general purpose for existence.

The outline shall include:

- a. A list of committee responsibilities.
- b. A list of projects, programs, or undertakings, carried out by the committee in the past or for the coming year.

The above list may be altered or changed by the committee members, subject to council approval.

9. A joint meeting of the congregation council, pastor(s), and all committees shall be held within 30 days after the annual meeting of the congregation. The first session should include background information on the committee, its reason for existence and current lines of thought in regard to potential programs and functions. Every new committee member will be given a copy of this congregation's constitution and bylaws. Committee officers shall be elected and meeting dates scheduled.

B. Responsibilities of Congregation Committees

1. Endowment Committee

The Endowment Committee shall:

- a. Maintain a permanent Endowment Fund, the principal of which may not be spent.
- b. Administer the income of the fund as outlined in the Resolution establishing Immanuel Lutheran Church, Independence, Iowa Endowment Fund, 1981.
- c. This committee shall meet on a minimum bimonthly schedule.

2. Evangelism Committee

The Evangelism Committee shall:

- a. Be responsible for outreach to unchurched Lutherans in the community.
- b. Be responsible for outreach to newcomers in the community.
- c. Be responsible for outreach to the unchurched in the community.
- d. Seek to develop an up-to-date "prospect file".
- e. Be responsible for the selection and training of lay visitors in the congregation.
- f. Be responsible for a special lay visitation program to prospective members before the organization of each new pastor's class.
- g. Make sure the pastors and Evangelism Committee regularly review communion and church attendance of all members and be responsible for reactivation of inactive members.
- h. Emphasize the use of such programs and helps as church periodicals, devotional booklets, Lutheran Vespers, and Christian Crusaders radio programs.
- i. Encourage the transfer of all members who move away from the community and of new Lutheran families moving into the community.
- j. This committee shall meet on a minimum bimonthly schedule.

3. Fellowship Committee

The Fellowship Committee shall:

- a. Be responsible for providing a reception for new members into the congregation.
- b. Be responsible for encouraging and promoting wider participation by members in the life of the congregation for fellowship and growth.
- c. Be responsible for the pictorial membership directory of the congregation.
- d. Provide the greeters at the worship services.
- e. Provide for the distribution of altar flowers to the sick and shut-ins.
- f. Provide refreshments for Fellowship Hour on Sundays, receive freewill donations, and properly distribute these funds to meet appropriate needs.
- g. Properly decorate the church property for the Christmas season.
- h. This committee shall meet on a minimum bimonthly schedule.

4. Finance Committee

Duties

- a. Be responsible for establishing annually the budget for the coming year. This involves receiving budgets from other appropriate committees.
- b. Communicate to the Stewardship Committee and Church Council any financial concerns and trends they perceive as significant.

Structure

- a. The committee shall be composed of the Church Treasurer and two other non-council members, who will be appointed by the Church Council. The congregational chairperson and pastors are advisory members.
- b. This committee shall meet on an as needed basis in order to prepare the Church's annual budget.
- c. Provide guidance in other financial matters as may be requested by the Church Council.

5. Mutual Ministry Committee

Support

- a. Pray for the pastor(s) and their families and encourage the congregation to do the same.
- b. Provide a relaxed, non-judgmental atmosphere for the pastor(s) to air their concerns.
- c. Be a personal, confidential support group concerned with the welfare of the pastor(s) and their families.
- d. Be a sounding board regarding conditions and attitudes in the congregation.

Evaluate

- a. Assist the pastor(s) in development of priorities of ministry based on the congregation's needs.
- b. Provide an opportunity to discuss Lutheran Social Services sessions (regarding team ministry).
- c. Do an annual evaluation of the pastors' professional work on the basis of responsibilities specified in the letters of call.
- d. Do an annual review of the pastor(s) salaries and benefits and submit recommendations to the church council no later than two (2) months before the annual meeting.
- e. Provide on-going positive reinforcement and constructive criticism of the pastor(s)' work.
- f. Clarify expectations and images that pastors and congregational members have of each other.

Communicate

- a. Encourage and aid communication between pastor(s).
- b. Relay concerns and expectations of the congregational members to the pastor(s).
- c. Relay concerns and expectations of the pastors to the church council and the congregation.
- d. Provide time at each meeting for congregational members to express their concerns in a relaxed, non-judgmental atmosphere.
- e. Help to resolve conflict in the congregation in a Christ-like way.

Educate

- a. Help the pastor(s) identify continuing education needs.
- b. Educate the congregation about the pastor(s)' role among them and their own role in the mutual ministry.

Structure

- a. The committee shall consist of three (3) members.
- b. A chairperson will be elected annually.
- c. A secretary will be elected annually. Minutes not to be publicly available, referred to only when needed for clarification of an item under discussion by the committee and the council, only if requested by a majority vote of the council.
- d. This committee shall meet on a minimum quarterly schedule.

Accountability

- a. The mutual ministry committee is accountable to the church council and reports regularly to the council. The chairperson of the mutual ministry committee and the chairperson of the council will meet following each meeting of the mutual ministry committee to keep communication open between the two (2) groups.
- b. A joint meeting of the church council, the pastor(s), and mutual ministry committee may be called by a majority vote of either group or by the pastor(s). Such a meeting shall be held at a mutually convenient time.
- c. The mutual ministry committee shall prepare a general summary for the annual report.

6. Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee shall:

- a. Consist of 5 members 3 of which are out going council members and 2 are elected at the congregational annual meeting.
- b. Attempt to nominate two (2) candidates for each office to be filled and secure the consent of each candidate.
- c. Each committee has unique responsibilities and every attempt should be made to secure candidates with expertise/interest in the position to be filled.
- d. Submit a complete slate of candidates to the pastor, to be included in the annual report, thirty (30) days before the annual meeting.

7. Parish Education Committee

The Parish Education Committee shall:

- a. Be responsible for the organization, administration, and supervision of Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, and approval of the Confirmation program annually.
- b. Be responsible for securing and enlisting leaders in the above areas.
- c. Recommend Sunday School Superintendent annually to the nominating committee.
- d. Appoint Sunday School Treasurer annually.
- e. Be responsible for the evaluation and supervision of teaching materials used.
- f. Be responsible for special emphasis on missions, Lutheran World Relief, etc., within the schools of the congregation.
- g. Be responsible for the spread and use of the Bible within the congregation.
- h. Consider provision of special education opportunities special needs individuals.
- i. Provide for and promote the use of audiovisual aids and establish and maintain a file library and equipment.
- j. Supervise and support the educational program of all societies in the congregation.
- k. This committee shall meet on a minimum bimonthly schedule.

8. Personnel Committee

The Personnel Committee shall:

- a. Pray for the paid lay staff and their families and encourage the congregation to do the same.
- b. Provide for a relaxed, non-judgmental atmosphere for paid lay staff to air their concerns.
- c. Design a job description for each paid lay staff person.
- d. Do an annual review/evaluation of each paid lay staff on the basis of the responsibilities specified in the job description.
- e. Annually review and negotiate salaries and benefits of each paid lay staff person and submit recommendations to the Finance Committee at the appropriate time.
- f. Participate in the selection of new paid lay staff.
- g. Conduct an exit interview for each paid staff upon that person's departure from employment in the congregation.
- h. Be responsible for the review and updating of the Employment Policy and Procedures.
- i. This committee shall meet on a minimum quarterly schedule.

Structure -- the committee shall consist of three members, each serving a three-year term. The terms shall initially be staggered. The committee shall elect its own chairperson annually for a one-year term.

9. Property Committee

The Property Committee shall:

- a. Be responsible for an annual inspection of all church properties.
- b. Be responsible for an inventory list of all church property and equipment with approximate value.
- c. Be responsible for service and maintenance of equipment.
- d. Be responsible for the care of buildings (custodial and cleaning service, lawn care and snow removal, etc.).
- e. Work together with the church office to make, issue and recover keys for church property, and keep and review annually a list of the keys issued.
- f. Check the safety of building facilities -- (steps, handrails, lights, exits, housekeeping practices, etc.) on a regular basis.
- g. Special projects as directed by council.
- h. This committee shall meet on a minimum bimonthly schedule.

10. Social Action Committee

Because faithful participation in society is integral and vital to the mission and ministry of our congregation, this committee shall:

- a. Study the social statements of the ELCA and provide opportunities in the congregation to interact with and discuss these statements.
- b. Develop an action calendar of all the groups throughout the church who participate in social service projects such as:
 1. Make sure the sick and shut-ins are remembered and coordinate any programs that carry out such ministry other than those done by pastors.
 2. Develop and promote the congregation's role in the community, especially in areas of social concerns, and develop useful means of helping the congregation be a better servant in the community by maintaining contact with local community service projects.
 3. Establish a method for this congregation's cooperation with those public, private, and church-related agencies that seek to enhance the dignity of all persons and work together for peace and justice.
 4. Coordinate and emphasize the congregation's relationships to EWALU Bible Camp, nursing homes, Lutheran Social Service, and other institutions of the church.
 5. Be responsible for this congregation's involvement in Food Pantry, Crop Walk, World Hunger, and other social action concerns and ministries.
- c. The committee will establish and/or support other groups with their social services projects.
- d. This committee shall meet on a minimum bimonthly schedule.

11. Stewardship Committee

The Stewardship Committee shall:

- a. Be responsible for educating and informing the membership in Christian stewardship throughout the year.
- b. Be responsible for planning and carrying out an annual stewardship emphasis.
- c. Be responsible for informing the congregation about the ministry and needs of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- d. Be responsible for securing commitments of time and talents by members for tasks of the church.
- e. Be responsible for reviewing and evaluating the giving of the congregation.
- f. Be responsible for the reporting of income and needs to the congregation.
- g. Receive memorials given to the congregation, determine how they will be used, and provide for listing them in the memorial books of the congregation. It is the policy of this congregation not to have name plates on gifts given as memorials
- h. Oversee Director of Volunteer Services.
- l. This committee shall meet on a minimum bimonthly schedule.

12. Worship and Music Committee

The Worship and Music Committee shall:

- a. Be responsible for providing music for all the services of the congregation.
- b. Be responsible for securing choir directors, organists, and accompanists.
- c. Be responsible for the recruitment of choir members.
- d. Be responsible for choir robes.
- e. Be responsible for the ushering program of the congregation.
- f. Be responsible for the interpretation of the Liturgy of the Church, Church year, etc., to both adults and children.
- g. Maintain a supply of items for worship such as communion cards, pencils, communion wine and wafers, baptismal napkins, candles, etc., in conjunction with the Altar Guild.
- h. Provide for lectors at the worship service.
- i. Coordinate with the Altar Guild all church chancel decorations throughout the year.
- j. Provide for acolytes at the worship services of the congregation.
- k. This committee shall meet on a minimum bimonthly schedule

13. Youth Board

The Youth Board shall:

- a. Serve as a selection committee for the Youth Director
- b. Work with the pastor(s) in supervising the work of the Youth Director. Assist the Youth Director wherever possible.
- c. Provide overall direction for all youth programs in accordance with the Youth Ministry Policy Manual. Update and revise the plan annually.
- d. Serve as advocates for the Youth Ministry program.
- e. This committee shall meet on a minimum bimonthly schedule.

14. Preschool Board

The Preschool Board shall:

Provide overall direction for the Preschool Program in accordance with the Wee Care Preschool Policy Manual. Review and update Policy Manual annually or as needed.

Part VI – Methods of Changing Bylaws

These Bylaws may be adopted or amended at any legally called and conducted meeting of the congregation by a simple majority vote of those present and voting.

Part VII – Parish Records

The records of the congregation shall be and remain the property of the congregation. The pastor shall be responsible for the maintenance of the records, except as otherwise provided herein. Upon the termination of his/her service to the congregation, he/she shall have brought the records up to date prior to his/her departure. The records shall consist of:

- a. The roster of baptized, confirmed, and voting members.
- b. The ministerial acts performed by the pastor.
- c. The minutes of the meetings of the congregation and church council.
- d. The financial records of the congregation, for which the treasurer of the congregation shall be responsible.

The pastor(s) shall report to the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America such statistics as may be requested and shall annually report to the congregation a summary of preformed ministerial acts.