

GRACE EVANGELICAL
LUTHERAN CHURCH OF
BIG SANDY



FUNDAMENTAL DOCUMENT
CONSTITUTION, BYLAWS, CONTINUING
RESOLUTIONS
2024

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church of Big Sandy
Constitution Amended June 19, 2024

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Preamble

We, baptized member of the church of Christ, responding in the 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 ***GRACE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF BIG SANDY.***
- C1.02. For the purpose of this constitution, the accompanying bylaws, and the continuing resolutions, the ***GRACE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF BIG SANDY*** congregation is hereinafter designated as "this congregation"
- C1.03. The seal of this congregation as it appears on the cover of this document, represents a cross planted at the foot of a tree, the branches of which bear fruit symbolic of the Christian life; encircled by the name of the congregation.
- C1.04. This congregation is incorporated under the laws of the State of Minnesota.
- C1.05. This congregation is a member of ***Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ (LCMC)***. (effective 2021)

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 judgement and mercy through word and deed, beginning with the word in creation, continuing in the history of Israel, and centering in all its fullness in the person and work of Jesus Christ.
 - c. The canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the written Word of God. Inspired by the Holy Spirit speaking through their authors, they record and announce God's revelation centering in Jesus Christ. Through them the Holy Spirit speaks to us to create and sustain Christian faith and fellowship for service in the world.
 - d. Sinners are made right with God by Grace alone through faith alone on account of Christ alone. This is the article of faith by which the church stands or falls.

- 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 scriptural faith we believe, teach and confess.
- C2.05. This congregation accepts the Unaltered Augsburg Confession as a true witness to the Word of God, 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 of God's mission in the world.
- C2.08. We believe and confess that the Holy Spirit makes all who believe in Jesus Christ to be priests for service to others in Jesus' name, and that God desires to make use of the spiritual gifts he has given through the priesthood of all believers.

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 is the universal assembly of all believers among whom the Gospel is preached in its purity and the holy sacraments are administered according to the Gospel. (Augsburg Confession VII). Our association with the LCMC affirms the priesthood of all believers. It commits itself in function and structure to the equipping and supporting of all members of its congregation for their ministries within and outside of the household of faith. It is within and from this context of ministry that we declare that some are called by God to the public ministry of Word and Sacrament and other specific ministries. At the same time, all baptized members of our congregations are priests called by God to ministries in their daily lives.
- C3.03. The church exists both as an inclusive fellowship and, as local congregations, gathers for worship and Christian service. Congregations find their fulfillment in the universal community of the Church and the universal Church in and through congregations.

- C3.04. The LCMC as used herein refers in general references to Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ. These include congregations, the Augustana District, and the Churchwide organizations of which we are a member.
- C3.05. This congregation exercises ministry within the mission of the LCMC. This congregation embodies the Church in its community and, for the sake of mission, lives in cooperative partnership with other congregations and within the other structures of the LCMC. This congregation shall share responsibility for the decision-making processes of the LCMC. All ordained ministers and the lay delegates elected by the congregations, as well as congregations themselves, shall participate in the decision-making process of the LCMC.

Chapter 4: STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

- C4.01. To participate in God's mission, this congregation 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 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.
 - d. Serve to meet the human needs of the poor and powerless, caring for the sick and aged, advocating for dignity and justice for all, working for peace among all nations.
 - e. Manifest the unity given to God's people by living together in Christ's love and by joining with other Christians in prayer and action.
 - f. Nurture its members in the Word of God so as to grow in faith and hope and love, and to develop a sense of Christian vocation in daily life.
- C4.02. 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 reconciling the Word of God in Christ, reaching out to all people.
 - f. Respond to human need, work for justice and peace, care for the sick and the suffering, and participate responsibly in society.
 - g. Encourage its members to provide appropriate financial support for the congregation's ministry and the ministry of other parts of the LCMC and Augustana District.
 - h. Foster and participate in relationships with other congregations and structures of the LCMC.

- i. Foster and participate in ecumenical relations consistent with LCMC policy.
- C4.03. The Church Council, hereinafter designated as “Council”, shall develop an organizational structure and prepare descriptions of the responsibilities of each team, or other organizational group and shall review their actions.
- C4.04. This congregation shall, from time to time, adopt a mission statement which will provide specific direction for its programs. The Mission Statement for this congregation is: ***Through grace we Grow, Share and Spread God’s love.***

The GROW ministry shall emphasize the meaning and living of Christianity.
The SHARE ministry shall emphasize the giving of our talents and possessions.
The SPREAD ministry shall emphasize the promulgating of the Word of God.

Chapter 5: POWERS OF 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 fundamental document.
- C5.03. Only such authority as is delegated to the 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.
 - d. Approve the annual budget;
 - e. Acquire real and personal property by gift, purchase, or other lawful means;
 - f. Hold title to and use its property for any and all activities consistent with its purpose;
 - g. Sell, mortgage, lease, transfer, or otherwise dispose of its property by any lawful means;
 - h. Elect its Council and require them to carry out their duties in accordance with the Constitution.
 - i. The Financial Secretary shall be elected by the congregation at the annual meeting. The Financial Secretary may be reelected. The Financial Secretary shall make deposits, record all designated contributions, and issue annual statements of accounts to the contributors. The books of the Financial Secretary shall be a confidential record available only to the Financial Secretary and Pastor(s). The term of the Financial Secretary will be one year and will be concurrent with the fiscal year.
 - j. Adopt amendments to the constitution, as provided in Chapter 17, amendments to the bylaws, as specified in Chapter 16, and continuing resolutions, as provided in Chapter 18.

C5.04. This congregation shall choose from among its voting members, lay persons to serve as voting members for representation at the LCMC church wide assemblies as well as those of other organizations as needed.

Chapter 6: CHURCH AFFILIATION

C6.01. This congregation is a member of the LCMC and is subject to the procedures of the LCMC as established in the LCMC Constitution.

C6.02. This congregation subscribes to the LCMC constitution and will act in accordance with it.

C6.03. This congregation will conduct its ministry in a manner consistent with its membership in the LCMC in which:

- a. This congregation is responsible for its life as a Christian community.
- b. This congregation pledges its participation in the life and mission of the LCMC, including the prayerful consideration of appropriate financial support.
- c. Per Section 9.02, this congregation shall call only pastors who subscribe to the LCMC Statement of Faith. A called minister of Word and Sacrament of the church and LCMC association shall subscribe to the LCMC confession of faith and otherwise comply with the ministry standards as established by the LCMC and shall be subject to discipline as set forth in the rules and regulations adopted by the LCMC.
- d. This congregation shall appoint only commissioned lay leaders who are members of the LCMC and otherwise authorized by the LCMC to serve, with the exception of Pulpit Supply and Guest Speakers/Preachers.

C6.04. Affiliation with the LCMC may be terminated as follows:

- a. This congregation dissolves or ceases to exist.
- b. This congregation is removed from membership in the LCMC according to the procedures for discipline by the LCMC.
- c. Following a majority vote of the Church Council to disassociate, this congregation, at a legally called and conducted special meeting called by the Church Council, approves by at least a simple majority of those present and voting a resolution directing that this congregation disassociate from the LCMC. If the measure to disassociate passes by a simple majority, a second and final vote will be called for, at a legally called special meeting, no sooner than 45 days afterwards whereby a two-thirds vote of those present is required to disassociate from the LCMC. If this congregation adopts a final resolution withdrawing from the LCMC, all provisions of this constitution binding this congregation to that denomination shall be immediately ineffective. The congregation shall promptly deliver a copy of the withdrawal resolution to the LCMC office.

Chapter 7: PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

- C7.01. This congregation is an independent legal entity with rights to purchase, hold, and convey real and personal property in accordance with applicable law. The LCMC shall not have any rights to or interest in the property of the congregation unless this congregation expressly conveys such a right or interest to them. If this congregation dissolves, its property shall be distributed in accord with applicable law and with the congregation's governing documents, including as otherwise provided herein.

Chapter 8: MEMBERSHIP

- C8.01. Members of this congregation shall be those 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 maintained their membership in accordance with the provisions of this constitution.
- C8.02. Members shall be classified as follows:
- a. **Active members** are baptized persons who have been confirmed in this congregation, have been received by adult baptism and affirmation of faith, or by transfer as confirmed members from other Lutheran congregations. *Active members* of this congregation who have satisfied these basic standards and have communed and made a contribution of record during the current or preceding year shall have the privilege of voice and vote at every regular and special meeting of the congregation and may participate in all church functions, assemblies, teams, and committees. (Exceptions due to extenuating circumstances may be approved by the Council.) Baptized persons are those persons who have been received by the sacrament of Holy Baptism in the name of the Triune God, have been previously baptized in the name of the Triune God and have been received by certificate of transfer from other Christian congregations, or by affirmation of faith.
 - b. **Inactive members** are members who have not communed or made a contribution of record to this congregation within the past two years. *Inactive members* may petition the Council for reinstatement to *Active* membership but are not eligible to vote until *Active* membership is granted.
 - c. **Associate members** are those 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 are 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, membership on the council of this congregation, or teams and committees that prohibit non-member involvement.

- d. **All Active, Inactive, and Associate members** of this congregation will continue their status if this church votes to change to another Lutheran denomination.
- C8.03. All applicants for membership shall be referred to the pastor. The pastor shall review the applications and make appropriate recommendations to the Council for approval. If the congregation is without a pastor at the time of application, the Council President will review and make appropriate recommendations to the 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 through both Word and Sacraments;
 - b. Live a Christian life in accordance with the Word of God and the teachings of the Lutheran Church;
 - c. Support the work of this congregation and our affiliated LCMC denominational organizations and churches 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 Council;
- Such persons who have been removed from the roll of members shall remain persons for whom the church has a continuing pastoral concern.
- C8.06. On an annual basis, the pastor will review the membership rolls and determine if a member is still active as defined in the constitution C8.02.a. The pastor will refer, to the Council, those persons that should be terminated from the roster of *Active* members and placed on the *Inactive* roster, *Associate* roster, or dropped.

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 those present and voting at a meeting legally called for that purpose. Before a call is issued, the officers, or a Call Committee elected by the Council to recommend the call, may seek the advice and help of LCMC leadership designee assigned to working with Calls for congregations.
- C9.02. God's call of a particular man or woman to the office of public ministry is confirmed by the call of the congregation. All calls to the public ministry will be issued by the congregation. A called minister will need to be certified by the LCMC.

- C9.03. Consistent with the faith and practice of the LCMC church denomination,
- a. Every ordained minister shall:
 1. Preach the Word
 2. Administer the sacraments
 3. Conduct public worship
 4. Provide pastoral care
 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. Oversee education of the congregation
 3. Install regularly elected members of the Council
 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 ministry of the Gospel
 3. Impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through distribution of its periodicals and other publications
 4. Endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to missions and benevolent needs and organizations

C9.04. The specific duties of the pastor, compensation, and other matters pertaining to the service of pastor shall be included in a letter of call.

C9.05. 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 for the following reasons.

- a. Mutual agreement to terminate the call or continue the call for a specific contracted term that shall be affirmed at the Annual Meeting
- b. Resignation of the pastor, which shall become effective, unless otherwise agreed, thirty (30) days after the date on which it was submitted
- c. Inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in the congregation in view of local conditions, without reflection on the competence or the moral or spiritual character of the pastor
- d. The physical or mental incapacity of the pastor
- e. Disqualification of the pastor through discipline on ground of doctrine, morality, or continued neglect of duty
- f. The dissolution of the congregation

C9.06. If the Council determines that it may be appropriate to end a call, the Council shall consult with the pastor regarding the matter in accord with Biblical principles. If the Council and

pastor do not reach agreement, the Council or the pastor may call a Special Congregational Meeting to consider the matter. At such a legally called meeting, the pastor and the Council leadership shall have a full and fair opportunity to present their positions on all matters relevant for consideration. Thereafter, the congregation by a two-thirds vote of those present may terminate the pastor's call. In all events, the Council by majority vote may suspend a pastor if the Council determines that such suspension is necessary to protect the congregation and all whom it serves.

- C9.07. At a time of pastoral vacancy, an interim pastor may be appointed by the Council.
- C9.08. 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 Council. The interim pastor and any ordained pastor providing assistance shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a pastor.
- C9.09. 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.
- C9.10. When a pastor is called to serve in company with another pastor or pastors, the privileges and responsibilities of each pastor shall be specified in documents to accompany the call and to be drafted in consultation involving the pastors and the Council. As occasion requires, the documents may be revised through the same consultation process.
- C9.11. 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 an accurate summary of such statistics annually to the Council for the Annual Report;
 - 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.
- C9.12. The parochial records of this congregation shall be maintained by the pastor, with the assistance of the Parish Administrator, and shall remain the property of the congregation.
- C9.13. The pastor of this congregation is an ex-officio, non-voting member of the Council.

Chapter 10: CONGREGATION MEETING

- C10.01. The regularly scheduled Annual meeting of this congregation shall be held in September unless there are extenuating circumstances whereby the Council may reschedule to an appropriate meeting time.
- C10.02. A Special congregation meeting may be called by the pastor, the Council, or the president of this congregation, and shall be called by the president of the congregation upon written request of ten percent (10%) of active members. The call for each Special meeting shall specify the purposes for which it is to be held and no other business shall be transacted.
- C10.03. The minutes of all meetings of the congregation will be approved by the Council at its next regular meeting.
- C10.04. Notice of all meetings of this congregation shall be given at the services of worship on the preceding two consecutive Sundays and either by mail, email, or TEXT message to all voting members at least ten (10) days in advance of the date of the meeting. For this purpose, it is the duty and responsibility of each Active member to inform the church office of their current mail address, email address and telephone number(s).
- C10.05. Ten percent (10%) of the active members of the congregation shall constitute a quorum. Only active members of the congregation are eligible to vote on measures presented.
- C10.06. Voting by proxy or by absentee ballot shall not be permitted. The Council may allow for alternative voting measures. A two-thirds vote of the full Council is required to change voting procedures.
- C10.07. All actions by the congregation shall be by a simple majority vote except as otherwise provided in this Constitution.
- C10.08. 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.
- C11.02. (*Bylaw*) The duties of the officers of the congregation shall be as follows:
- a. The president shall preside over the meetings of the congregation and the Council.
 - b. The vice-president shall preside over all meetings of the congregation and the Council in the absence of the president.

- c. The Secretary shall be responsible for recording minutes of all congregation and Council meetings and shall provide minutes to the Council and distribute all correspondence of the congregation to the Council as directed. The Council meeting minutes shall be posted for congregation review.
- d. The treasurer shall see to the receipt of and disbursement of congregational funds as directed by the Council and shall provide the Council with an accurate written monthly accounting of all financial activity of all church accounts. A yearly written report shall also be included in the annual report. The treasurer shall assist the Council in developing a proposed budget to be presented at the annual meeting of the congregation.

C11.03. The officers shall be active voting members of the congregation.

C11.04. The president, vice-president, and secretary of this congregation shall serve similar offices of the Council and shall be voting members of the Council. The other officers, if not members of the Council, shall be accorded the privilege of voice without vote in its meetings. Paid employees shall not be the following Council members: president, vice-president, and secretary. If a matter comes before Council affecting a Council member who is a paid employee of the church, the affected Council member shall recuse him or herself.

C11.05. The Council shall elect its president, vice-president, and secretary, and they shall be the officers of the congregation. The officers may be elected by written ballot and shall serve for one year or until their successors are elected. Their terms shall begin at the Council meeting at which they are elected, which shall be the first council meeting of the fiscal year. The treasurer of the congregation shall be elected by the congregation at its annual meeting for a one year term.

C11.06. No officer shall hold more than one office at a time.

C11.07. No elected officer shall be eligible to serve more than two consecutive one-year terms in the same office, with the exception of the treasurer.

Chapter 12: CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL

C12.01. The voting membership of the Council shall consist of not more than nine (9) members of the congregation. Terms of the Council member shall be arranged so that 1/3 expire each year. Any active member of the congregation may be elected, subject only to the limitations on the length of continuous service permitted in that office. A member's place on the Council shall be declared vacant if the member:

- a. Ceases to be an active member of this congregation; or
- b. Is absent from four successive regular meetings of the Council without cause.
- c. Resigns.

d. Is removed by the Congregation for cause.

C12.02. The members of the Council, shall be elected at the annual meeting, by written ballot if needed, to serve for three (3) years or until their successors are elected. Such members shall be eligible to serve no more than two (2) full terms consecutively. Previous Council members may be elected to the Council after one year absence. Their terms shall begin at the beginning of the fiscal year following the annual meeting at which they are elected. Newly elected Council members shall be installed at worship on any Sunday prior to the date they assume office.

C12.03. Should a member's place on the Council be declared vacant, the Council shall elect, by majority vote, a successor until the next annual meeting.

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

- a. To lead this congregation in setting 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 to evaluate the fulfillment of their calling, appointment, 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 sickness or absence of the pastor.
- h. To emphasize and promote partnerships with denominational organizations and area churches.
- i. To recommend and encourage the use of program resources produced or approved by the LCMC.
- j. To seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel.

C12.05. The fiscal year of the congregation shall be the same as the calendar year.

C12.06. The Council shall be responsible for the financial and property matters of this congregation:

- a. The Council shall be the board of trustees of the congregation, and as such, shall be responsible for maintaining and protecting its property and the managing 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 Minnesota, except as otherwise provided herein.

- b. The Council shall not have the authority to buy, sell, or encumber real property unless specifically authorized to do so by a Special meeting of the congregation.
- c. The Council shall ascertain that the financial affairs of this congregation are being conducted efficiently, giving particular attention to the prompt payment of all obligations.
- d. The Council shall be responsible for this congregation's investments and its total insurance program. The Council will manage all endowments, investments, the church's insurance program, benevolence efforts, scholarship awards, and memorial donations.
- e. *(Bylaw)* The purpose of endowment funds (here in after known as the "Fund") is to provide opportunities for this church to initiate and/or support programs in the following areas:
 1. Mission outreach;
 2. Capital funding (building and grounds, equipment and furnishings);
 3. Seminary scholarships;
 4. Other pertinent projects of the congregation, in accordance with Grace's mission of grow, share, spread, including general operations of the church when deemed necessary by the church Council.
- f. The Council shall provide for the annual review of the financial records of the congregation.
 1. *(Bylaw)* The Council shall approve the annual budget for adoption by this congregation and shall supervise the expenditure of funds in accordance therewith following adoption. Approval at a meeting of the congregation is required to spend more than ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) in excess of budgeted expenditures.
 2. *(Bylaw)* No obligation in excess of budgeted expenditures may be incurred by the Council unless funds can be reallocated from the original budget, or surplus funds on hand are sufficient to cover the obligation.
 3. *(Bylaw)* The Council may enter into contracts up to ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) for items not included in the budget.
 4. *(Continuing Resolution)* It is the policy of the Council that funds contributed with a designated purpose shall, in so far as it is possible to do so and consistent with the purpose of this church (C4.01-C4.04), be spent in accordance with the designation. Such funds shall be treated as funds outside the budget process and, as such, shall not be subject to the limitations contained in the bylaws of C12.06.
- g. Grace Lutheran Church may assist individuals, families, or organizations when need exists due to hardship or crises, or when there are other specific needs. The Council will gather and consider benevolence needs and requests. Endowment funds may be used in responding to benevolence requests.

(Bylaw) General Endowment Fund and future gifts, whose purpose, governance, and operational procedures shall be defined in the bylaws of this congregation is hereby established.

(Bylaw) The purpose of the Fund is to provide opportunities for this church to initiate and/or support programs in the following areas:

1. Mission outreach
2. Capital funding (building and grounds, equipment and furnishings)
3. Support our youth in the development of their faith
4. Other pertinent projects of the congregation, in accordance with Grace's mission of grow, share, spread, including general operations of the church when deemed necessary by the Council

- C12.07. The Council shall see that the provision of the constitution, its bylaws, and the continuing resolutions are carried out.
- C12.08. The Council shall provide for an annual review of the active membership roster.
- C12.09. The Council shall be responsible for the employment and supervision of the staff of this congregation.
- C12.10. The Council shall submit a comprehensive report to this congregation at the annual meeting.
- C12.11. The 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 written request of at least one-half of the Council members. Notice of each special meeting shall be given to all who are entitled to be present. Meetings can be conducted at a common location or electronically as deemed appropriate. Council members agree to serve on at least one ministry team.
- C12.12. A quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of a majority of the members of the council.

CHAPTER 13: OPERATIONAL UNITS OF THE CONGREGATION

C13.01. The officers of this congregation and the pastor shall constitute the Executive Committee, which shall meet prior to the council meetings to work on the agenda and matters as requested by the Council. The president or Council may assign special tasks to this committee.

C 13.02. Operational units of the congregation, with Council approval may be, but are not limited to:
a. Building and Property Team.

The building and property team shall be responsible to provide for timely maintenance and improvements to church grounds and property. The team shall keep the council informed of any building or property needs as well as current and prospective projects. The team shall be responsible for purchase or removal of all major equipment and property.

b. Cemetery team.

The cemetery team shall have the responsibility to:

Provide for the purchase of cemetery lots and the documentation of all cemetery deeds and ensure that all such deeds are issued a \$1 form acceptable for recording with the office of the County Recorder. The team will mark out grave lots and plan any future cemetery expansions. This team will also provide for the general maintenance of the cemetery and provide guidelines for memorial markers and grave decorations. The team will recommend to the Council all policies necessary for cemetery operation.

c. Worship and Music Team

The worship and music team shall have the responsibility to work with the pastor(s), organists, choir director, and head usher to provide meaningful worship services. It shall have responsibility for hymn selection, acolytes, special services (i.e. Lent, Advent, Thanksgiving, etc.), special music, and any special congregational programs. The worship and music team shall also have the responsibility for coordinating lay worship leaders, lay preachers, pulpit supply.

d. Personnel Team.

The Personnel team shall be appointed by the Council and consist of Council members. The team shall interview and recommend to the Council persons to be hired for non-clergy positions. The team will establish and maintain job descriptions and personnel policies for non-clergy employees, be responsible for job performance evaluations and recommend and necessary salary adjustments to the Council for approval. The team will perform annual job performance evaluations of clergy and ministry personnel and prepare annual contracts for those positions as needed.

- C 13.03. When a pastoral vacancy occurs, a Call committee shall be selected by this council from the voting members of the congregation. Council members are precluded from voting membership on the Call Committee. The committee's term of office will terminate at the installation of the newly called pastor. The Call Committee Chair may be a member of the Council but not as a voting member of the Call Committee.

Chapter 14: ORGANIZATIONS WITHIN THE CONGREGATION

- C14.01. All organizations within this congregation shall exist to aid 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.

Chapter 15: DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS

- 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.
 - c. Citation to appear before the 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 the admonitions.
- C15.02. The member against whom disciplinary action has been taken by the Church Council shall have the right to appeal to a Special Congregational Meeting, which may revise or overturn the Church Council's decision by a majority vote. Any such vote will be by secret ballot.

Chapter 16: BYLAWS

- C16.01. Bylaws are the subordinate rules adopted by the church to augment the constitution, to maintain an orderly, efficient and clear church life that meets the needs of its members.
- C16.02. This congregation may adopt bylaws. No bylaw may conflict with this constitution or the constitution of the LCMC.
- C16.03. 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.
- C16.04. Changes to the bylaws may be proposed by any voting member provided, however, that such additions or amendments be submitted in writing to the Council at least sixty (60) days before a regular or special congregation meeting called for that purpose. The Council shall notify the members of the proposal with its recommendations at least thirty (30) days in advance of the congregation meeting.

Chapter 17: AMENDMENTS

- C17.01. Amendments to this constitution may be proposed by at least two (2) voting members or by the Council. Proposals, made by at least two voting members, must be filed in writing with the council sixty (60) days before formal consideration by this congregation at a regular or special meeting called for that purpose. The Council shall notify the members of the proposal with the council's recommendations at least thirty (30) days in advance of the meeting.
- C17.02. A proposed amendment to this constitution shall:
- a. Be approved at a legally called congregational meeting by a majority vote of those present and voting.
 - b. Have the effective date included in the amendment and noted in the constitution.

Chapter 18: RESOLUTIONS

- C18.01. The Council may enact continuing resolutions which describe the functions of church organizations and establish policies and procedures. 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 two-thirds vote of all voting members of the Council.

Chapter 19: INDEMNIFICATION

- C19.01. Consistent with the provisions of the laws under which this congregation is incorporated, this congregation may adopt provisions of indemnification for each person who, by reason of the fact that such person is or was a 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: ORGANIZATION AND DISSOLUTION

- C20.01. The purpose for which this congregation is formed and the business and objectives to be carried on, and promoted by it, are to operate a religious organization exempt from income

taxation under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code or corresponding section of any future federal tax code and as the same may be amended at any time and from time to time. This congregation is organized exclusively for charitable, religious and educational purposes, including, for such purposes, the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or any corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

C20.02. Upon the dissolution of this congregation, the assets of this congregation shall be distributed for one (1) or more exempt purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code and as the same may be amended at any time and from time to time, or in the absence of such designation, to the federal government, or to a state or local government, for a public purpose.

