

Constitution and Bylaws of
OUR FATHER'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
6025 South 27th Street
Greenfield, WI 53221
May 6th, 2018

PREAMBLE

It is the will of our Lord Jesus Christ that His disciples should preach the Gospel to the world (Mark 16:16, Matthew 28:18-20, Acts 1:8). That Christ's mission for his Church might be carried out according to His will He has given the Gospel to be preached in its purity and the holy sacraments to be administered according to the Gospel (AC VII). He has commanded that Christians unite in worship (Hebrews 10:24-25), practice fellowship with one another (Acts 2:42), witness to all men (Acts 1:8), help each other grow in the word (Ephesians 4:11-14), serve the needs of all men in Christian love (Ephesians 4:7-16, Mark 10:42-44, John 13:35, Galatians 6:10), administer the Office of the Keys as His Church (John 20:21-23, Matthew 18:15-20), and maintain decency and order in the church (1 Corinthians 14:40).

Therefore we, a number of Lutherans living in and near Greenfield, Wisconsin, accept and subscribe to the following Constitution and bylaws, in accordance with which all spiritual and material affairs of our congregation shall be governed. We do so in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

THE CONSTITUTION

1.0 NAME

The name of this congregation shall be: OUR FATHER'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, the City of Greenfield, County of Milwaukee, State of Wisconsin.

2.0 CONFSSIONAL STANDARD

This congregation accepts and confesses without reservation:

- 3.1 The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the written Word of God and the only rule and norm of faith and practice.
- 3.2 All the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church contained in the Book of Concord of 1580 as a true and unadulterated statement and exposition of the Word of God, to wit: the three Ecumenical Creeds (the Apostles Creed, the Nicene Creed, the Athanasian Creed), the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles, Treatise on the Authority and Primacy of the Pope, the Large Catechism of Luther, the Small Catechism of Luther, and the Formula of Concord.

3.0 MISSION

The purpose of this congregation shall be to give honor and glory to the Triune God, to carry out the will of the Father by proclaiming the Gospel of His Son Jesus Christ in our community and to all the world, to nurture the faith of its members, to manifest the unity of our faith in Jesus Christ by gathering around His altar, to foster Christian love and fellowship, to extend a helping hand to those in physical need, and to achieve all these objectives by the faithful preaching of the pure Word of God, the administration of the Sacraments according to the Word of Christ, and by instructing all members according to the confessional standard of the Evangelical Lutheran Church.

4.0 SYNODICAL MEMBERSHIP

This congregation shall be a member of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod as long as the Synod conforms to the congregation's confessional standards set forth in this constitution.

5.0 MEMBERSHIP

This congregation distinguishes between three types of congregational membership.

5.1 The membership of this congregation includes the following:

5.1.1 Baptized members are all who have been baptized in the name of the Triune God and who are under the spiritual care of the pastor of this congregation, including the children who have not yet been admitted to the Sacrament of the Altar.

5.1.2 Communicant members are those baptized members who have been instructed and are familiar with the contents of Luther's Small Catechism, have been admitted to the Sacrament of the Altar, and accept the confessional standard of Section 3 of this Constitution.

5.1.3 Voting members are communicant members who have reached the age of 18 years. Board members and officers must be at least 21 years of age.

5.2 The members of this congregation are received in the following manner:

5.2.1 Baptized members are received through the Sacrament of Holy Baptism or through the consent of one or both parents in the case of children who have been baptized in another Christian congregation.

5.2.2 Adult members are received through the rite of confirmation and the Sacrament of Holy Baptism as appropriate, through transfer from a sister congregation, through profession of faith, or reaffirmation of faith.

5.2.3 Eligible communicant members may be received as voting members upon application for such privilege, upon approval by the Voters' Assembly.

5.3 Members of the congregation shall conform their entire lives to the authority of God's Word and to that end shall make diligent use of the means of grace, exercise faithful stewardship of God's many gifts and talents, impart and accept brotherly admonition as the need of such admonition becomes apparent, and be readily

available for service in the kingdom of Christ within and beyond the congregation. Membership in organizations whose principles and conduct conflict with the Word of God is prohibited.

- 5.4 Membership in this congregation shall be terminated as follows:
- 5.4.1 Membership shall be terminated by transfer to a sister congregation, by death, by joining a congregation outside the fellowship of this congregation, by self-exclusion, or by excommunication.
 - 5.4.2 Communicant members who conduct themselves in an un-Christian manner shall be admonished according to Matthew 18:15-20. If they remain impenitent after proper admonition, they shall be excommunicated. Each case of excommunication or self-exclusion shall be presented to the Voters' Assembly for a decision. A two-thirds majority vote of the Voters' Assembly shall be required.

6.0 CALLED CHURCH WORKERS

The Voters' Assembly of this congregation shall have the exclusive right to call ordained ministers. The right to call principals, teachers, and other church workers also belongs to the congregation and ordinarily shall not be delegated to a smaller body and never to an individual.

- 6.1 The pastoral office shall be conferred only upon ordained ministers who are members of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, candidates for the pastoral ministry who have satisfied the qualifications and requirements for assignment of first calls by Synod, or ordained ministers who are members in good standing of church bodies that have been formally recognized to be in altar and pulpit fellowship with the Synod when agreements for such calls are in place.
- 6.2 Only those principals, teachers, and church workers shall receive a call who adhere to the confessional standard set forth in this constitution, who are qualified for the office to which they are called, and who have been endorsed by and are members of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, who are candidates of LCMS colleges and universities who have satisfied the qualifications and requirements for assignment of first calls, and who are church workers in good standing from church bodies that are in altar and pulpit fellowship with The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.
- 6.3 Called ordained ministers or other church workers may be removed from office in Christian and lawful order by a two-thirds majority vote of the Voters' Assembly for one of the following reasons: persistent adherence to false doctrine, scandalous life, willful neglect of the duties of office, or the inability to perform those duties.
- 6.4 When a vacancy occurs in an office of an ordained minister or church worker, the congregation shall notify the District President to receive assistance in temporarily filling the vacancy and to receive his counsel in calling a new pastor, principal, teacher, or other church worker (Bylaw 2.5.1)

7.0 AUTHORITY OF THE CONGREGATION

The Voters' Assembly shall be the governing body of this congregation and shall be empowered to administer and manage all its affairs.

- 7.1 The establishment and conduct of all organizations within the congregation or related directly to it shall be subject to the overall authority and general oversight of the Voters' Assembly.
- 7.2 All matters before the Voters' Assembly shall be decided by a majority vote unless otherwise specified by this constitution or bylaws. Matters of doctrine and conscience shall be decided only on the basis of the Word of God.

8.0 MEETINGS

Regular meetings of the Voters' Assembly shall be held as determined in the bylaws.

- 8.1 Announcement of the meeting shall be made in the services of the two previous Sundays.
- 8.2 Special meetings require announcement in the services of two previous Sundays or notification by mail and/or email of their purposes and announcement in the services of one previous Sunday. Special meetings may be called at the request of the pastor, congregational president, church council, or ten voting members.
- 8.3 All voting members present at a validly called meeting shall constitute a quorum.

9.0 OFFICERS AND BOARDS

This congregation shall have the following officers and boards, in addition to any which the congregation shall authorize from time to time, and they shall be subject to the additional guidelines shown in the bylaws and the operating manual of the congregation. The officers and the chairpersons of the boards, and the pastor as an advisory member, shall constitute the membership of the church council. Those officers identified by the state law shall serve as legal representatives of the congregation. The number of members on a board will be determined by voter resolution.

- 9.1 The officers of this congregation shall be:
 - 9.1.1 A president, who shall conduct the meeting of the Voters' Assembly.
 - 9.1.2 A vice president, who shall serve in the president's absence or inability to act.
 - 9.1.3 A secretary, who shall record and keep the minutes of the meetings of the church council and Voters' Assembly.
 - 9.1.4 A treasurer, who shall be responsible for keeping the financial records of the congregation.
- 9.2 The boards of this congregation shall be:
 - 9.2.1 A Board of Elders which shall assist the pastor/s in the spiritual life of the congregation.
 - 9.2.2 A Board of Trustees which shall be responsible for the physical properties of the congregation
 - 9.2.3 A Board for Christian Education which shall be responsible for the nurture and Christian growth of the members of the congregation.
 - 9.2.4 A Board for Parish Fellowship and Evangelism which shall be responsible for strengthening the fellowship between congregational members, spiritually and socially, and to integrate new members into the life of the congregation .
 - 9.2.5 A Board for Finance which shall be responsible for the administration of church finances and legal concerns of the congregation.

- 9.2.6 A Board of Communication, Marketing, and Public Relations which shall provide current information to families about the operations of Our Father's Lutheran Church, School, and Child Care. The Board will also serve to provide effective and meaningful marketing strategies for the recruitment of new families into our School and Child Care.
- 9.2.7 Any officer or board member who fails to perform the duties of the office or the responsibilities of communicant membership may be removed from office by the Voters' Assembly by a two-thirds majority vote, in Christian and lawful order. Matthew 18 should be followed under such circumstances.

10.0 DIVISION AND DISSOLUTION

If at any time a division should take place for any reason, the following principles will govern.

- 10.1 The property of the congregation and all benefits connected therewith shall remain with those communicant members who continue to adhere in confession and practice to the confessional standards set forth in this constitution.
- 10.2 In the event the congregation should dissolve, all property shall be disposed of by the final Voters' Assembly for the payment of debts and all just claims against the congregation, and any and all surplus and all rights connected therewith shall be conveyed to and become the property of the South Wisconsin District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

11.0 AMENDMENTS

This constitution shall be amended in the following manner:

- 11.1 Amendments to the provisions of this constitution not identified in the following paragraph shall be submitted in writing at a meeting of the Voters' Assembly, and published by posting in a conspicuous place in the church or by mail prior to the meeting at which the proposed amendment will be acted upon. An affirmative vote of two-thirds majority of the voters present shall be required for adoption.
- 11.2 Amendments to Articles 2.0, 3.0, 4.0, 5.0, 6.0, 7.0, 10.0, and/or 11.0 shall not destroy their essential meaning. Amendments and discussion of the same shall be presented at two regular meetings of the Voters' Assembly before the meeting at which the proposed amendment is to receive action. Information that a vote will be taken shall be given to all voting members of the congregation prior to the vote. The date of approval shall be referenced in any amendment adopted.
- 11.3 The revised constitution shall, as a condition of continued membership in good standing in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, be submitted to the president of the district for review by the district's constitution committee and favorable action by the district's board of directors before being adopted by the congregation.

THE BYLAWS

1.0 PROCEDURES FOR CALLING PASTORS AND CHURCH WORKERS

- 1.1 When a pastor or a church worker is to be called, every member of the congregation shall have the privilege of making one or more nominations.
- 1.2 In the case of a pastoral call the board of Elders shall serve as the call committee and in the case of the calling of a teacher the Board of Christian Education shall perform that function.
- 1.3 In the calling process the respective board shall submit all names to the respective district president for information and evaluation. The committee shall then present to the congregation, by means of public announcement its proposed list of candidates and their biographical sketches.
- 1.4 At the Voters' Assembly called for the purpose of calling a new pastor or other church worker, the proposed list may be amended by means of a two-thirds vote of the assembly. When possible, information regarding additional candidates shall be provided by the district president and/or his representative at the meeting.
- 1.5 Ballot voting shall proceed until a majority vote determines the disposition of the call.

2.0 CHURCH COUNCIL

The church council shall provide direction to the congregation on behalf of the Voters' Assembly.

- 2.1 The church council shall consist of the congregation's president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and the chairmen of all boards of the congregation. The head pastor, the associate/assistant pastor, and the principal shall be advisory members of the church council. The president and secretary of the congregation shall serve as chairman and secretary of the church council.
- 2.2 The church council shall meet in regular sessions at least prior to all regular Voters' Assembly meetings. Special meetings may be called by the president, pastor or any three members of the church council. The council shall be notified at least 24 hours in advance. A majority of the voting members of the council shall constitute a quorum.
- 2.3 The principle duty of the church council shall be to coordinate the program and activities of the various departments of the congregation. It shall have power to act in behalf of the congregation between meetings of the Voters' Assembly within limitations established by the Voters' Assembly, which actions shall be reported to the next meeting of the Voters' Assembly.

3.0 NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

The procedure for the nomination and election of elected and appointed officers shall be as follows.

- 3.1 A nominating committee appointed by the church council, shall present a slate of candidates for all elected offices. Additional nominations may be made from the floor. No person shall be nominated without his or her consent.

- 3.2 A majority of the votes cast shall be required for all elections. If no one receives a majority, candidates receiving the lowest number of votes shall be eliminated in each succeeding ballot.
- 3.3 The president and vice president are to be elected to 2-year terms in alternating years. The secretary is appointed by the church council. The treasurer is appointed by the Board for Finance. The members of all boards shall be elected for a term of 3 years.
- 3.4 Officers and board members shall be inducted into office in a public service of the congregation.
- 3.5 In case of a vacancy in an elective office, the church council shall elect a successor to fill the unexpired term and shall submit the candidate's name to the Voters' Assembly for ratification.

4.0 OFFICIAL DUTIES

Officers and members of boards shall perform the duties prescribed in the constitution and the bylaws. The congregation shall also have the privilege from time to time of detailing and enlarging these responsibilities by majority vote of the Voters' Assembly. It may also call into being such other boards and committees as it may need from time to time.

5.0 MEETINGS AND MEMBERSHIP OF THE VOTERS' ASSEMBLY

The annual meeting of the Voters' Assembly shall be a Sunday of May, the time to be set by the church council. The Voters' Assembly shall hold subsequent meetings in September and January at a time designated by the council. Nominations and elections for the next year will be held at the May annual meeting. The budget for the following year will be discussed and adopted at the May meeting.

6.0 AUXILIARY ORGANIZATIONS

- 6.1 The church council shall have authority to review and approve the organizational procedures and/or bylaws of the auxiliary organizations. An approved copy of such documents for each organization shall be provided to the council. Only communicant members of this congregation shall be officers of such organizations.
- 6.2 Contributions for all improvements and refurbishments to church buildings and grounds (by church auxiliaries and by individuals) shall be approved by the Voters' Assembly. After a project is approved, invoices should be submitted to the treasurer of the congregation. The treasurer shall provide receipts to the donors for tax deductibility purposes.

7.0 RULES OF ORDER

In addition to principles laid down in Scripture, the latest edition of *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised* shall be followed.

8.0 AMENDMENTS

These bylaws may be amended in a properly convened meeting of the Voters' Assembly

- 9.1 Amendments shall be adopted by a majority of all votes cast, provided the proposed change has been announced in a previous meeting or has been submitted in writing to all communicant members at least two weeks prior to the meeting.
- 9.2 The revised bylaws shall, as a condition of continued membership in good standing of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, be submitted to the president of the district for review by the district's constitution committee and favorable action by the district's board of directors before being adopted by the congregation.