

CONSTITUTION
Our Savior Lutheran Church
Livermore, California

Adopted: October 21, 2007
(Amended: August 10, 2014, June 19, 2016, November 3, 2019, January 19, 2020,
January 30, 2022)

PREAMBLE

According to the Word of God found in 1 Corinthians 14:40, everything in a Christian Congregation should be done in a fitting and orderly manner. Therefore, we, a group of Lutheran Christians residing in Livermore, California and vicinity, create this document that defines the principles under which we constitute a Christian Congregation and determine how all spiritual and material affairs of the Congregation shall be administered.

ARTICLE I - NAME AND LOCATION

The name of the Congregation and Corporation shall be Our Savior Lutheran Church of Livermore, County of Alameda, State of California, hereinafter referred to as "the Congregation" and/or "Our Savior Lutheran Ministries."

ARTICLE II - VALIDITY

When this Constitution is adopted, it becomes the Constitution of Our Savior Lutheran Church of Livermore, County of Alameda, State of California.

ARTICLE III - PURPOSE

We, the people of Our Savior Lutheran Church of Livermore, aspire to unity in and through Christ, encouraging each other to mature as Christians in order that we may make God's wisdom, the Gospel, known to the world. In carrying out the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, our purpose is to proclaim the Word of God, unite in worship, administer the sacraments, and practice fellowship with one another. We shall strive to be Christ's witnesses to all people, helping them to grow in the Word and serving their needs in Christian charity.

The Congregation has the right to corporately acquire, hold title to, and sell, transfer, convey and/or dispose of assets real, personal, and mixed. All assets of this Congregation are declared irrevocably dedicated to religious and/or charitable purposes.

ARTICLE IV - DOCTRINE

The Congregation accepts and acknowledges all the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God, and all the Confessional Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church contained in the Book of Concord as a true and sound exposition of the Christian doctrine taken from and in full agreement with the Holy Scriptures.

No doctrine shall be taught or tolerated which is at variance with the Confessional Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church: (1) The Three Ecumenical Creeds (Apostles', Nicene and Athanasian); (2) The Unaltered Augsburg Confession; (3) the Apology of the same; (4) The Smalcald Articles; (5) Luther's Large Catechism; (6) Luther's Small Catechism; and (7) The Formula of Concord.

All doctrinal controversies which may arise in the Congregation shall be decided and adjudicated in accordance with the above doctrines.

ARTICLE V - SYNODICAL AFFILIATIONS

This Congregation and its Senior Pastor shall be affiliated with The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (or its successor) as long as the Confessions and Constitution of said Synod are in accord with the Confessions and Constitution of this Congregation as described in Article IV.

This Congregation shall, to the best of its ability, cooperate with said Synod and assist in implementing sound measures intended for the building up of the Kingdom of God.

ARTICLE VI - MEMBERSHIP

Qualifications for membership shall be as follows:

A. Baptized Members - Those who have been baptized in the name of the Triune God and who are under the spiritual care of the Congregation.

B. Communicant Members - Those who have been baptized in the name of the Triune God; accept the Doctrine as set forth in Article IV; and respect and observe Congregational documents. Membership is acquired by confirmation, profession of faith, or transferring from a Lutheran Congregation and presenting a letter of transfer. New members are accepted by the Senior Pastor with the concurrence of the Board of Elders and are reported to the next regular meeting of the Voters' Assembly.

ARTICLE VII – VOTERS' ASSEMBLY

The Voters' Assembly is made up of Communicant members who are 18 years or older. For Call activities, all Communicant members are eligible to participate and vote.

ARTICLE VIII – MANAGEMENT

A. General

The Congregation has the supreme power and authority in its own affairs. Such power and authority shall be exercised by the Voters' Assembly. The officers shall have no authority beyond that which has been conferred upon them by the Congregation. The Voters' Assembly may adopt Bylaws to accomplish the goals of the Congregation provided they are in accord with this Constitution.

B. Selection

1. The right of calling a pastor or other workers with tenure shall at all times remain with the Communicant Members of the Congregation.
2. Workers without tenure shall be selected by the Congregation through its Voters' Assembly, or administrators designated by the Senior Pastor.

C. Removal from Office

Any Director, pastor, called or contracted church worker may be removed from office by the Voters' Assembly or its delegated representatives. Removal from office must be in Christian and lawful order, for one of the following causes: persistent adherence to false doctrine, incompetence, scandalous life, inability to perform his/her official duties or willful neglect of them.

1. Any Director may be removed by two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the voting members present at a meeting of the Voters' Assembly.
2. Any tenured called church worker may only be removed by a three-fourths (3/4) majority vote of the voting members present at a meeting of the Voters' Assembly.
3. A non-tenured employee can be removed by administrators.

ARTICLE IX – BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of Directors shall represent all of the members of the Congregation, seeing to it that the resources of the Congregation are used to support the Congregation's Mission and Ministry.

The Board of Directors shall be elected from the Congregational Membership and consist of seven Directors serving three-year terms. Directors shall be elected on a rotation basis, 2—2—3. The Senior Pastor shall be an ex-officio voting member of the Board of Directors.

The Board of Directors shall elect its own officers.

ARTICLE X - CORPORATE OFFICERS

Corporate Officers of the Congregation shall be the Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary of the Board of Directors and the Treasurer of the Congregation.

ARTICLE XI - CALLED STAFF

All Called staff of Our Savior Lutheran Ministries shall come from the official roster of The Lutheran Church -- Missouri Synod (Pastors, Teachers, DCEs, et al.) and must profess and adhere to the confessional standard set forth in Article IV of this Constitution.

ARTICLE XII - AMENDMENTS

Any Article of the Constitution may be amended or repealed by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the members present and voting at each of two (2) consecutive, legally called, Voters' Assembly meetings. Proposed amendments shall be posted at least one (1) week prior to each of the consecutive meetings. Note: Article IV, Doctrine, may only be amended or repealed by a 90% majority vote following the same procedures as for amending others articles in the constitution.

The revised constitution shall, as a condition of continued membership in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, be submitted to the president of the CNH District for review by the District's constitution committee and favorable action by the District's board of directors before being implemented by the congregation.

ARTICLE XIII – BYLAWS

The Voters' Assembly may adopt Bylaws to accomplish the purpose(s) of the Congregation. Bylaws will be presented/structured in accordance with the guidelines of Our Savior Lutheran Church Constitution.

ARTICLE XIV – QUORUMS AND BALLOTING

The quorum for any meeting of the Voters' Assembly shall be thirty (30) members unless amended at a previous Voters' Assembly meeting. The order of business shall be established by the Chair of that meeting. Questions of parliamentary procedure not governed by the Constitution shall be decided by *Robert's Rules of Order* (latest edition). Decisions by a simple majority of those present and voting shall be valid as an act of the Congregation. In case of a tie, the Chair casts the deciding vote. Proxies or mail ballots are not recognized.

ARTICLE XV – DIVISION AND DISSOLUTION OF PROPERTY RIGHTS

The Congregation cannot be dissolved as long as three (3) members still remain and are opposed to its dissolution.

At the time of a division or separation, the assets of this Congregation, together with all benefits therewith connected, shall remain with those members who adhere to this Constitution.

In the event of division/dissolution of the Congregation or the abandonment of its property, no portion thereof shall inure to the benefit of any member or person, and all said property shall immediately vest and become the property of the California-Nevada-Hawaii District of The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod (a religious nonprofit organization) or its successor.

Chair

Secretary

BYLAWS

Our Savior Lutheran Church
Livermore, California

Adopted: October 21, 2007

(Amended: August 10, 2014, June 19, 2016, January 19, 2020, January 30, 2021)

ARTICLE I. — MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Baptized Members

Baptized members are a valuable resource to the Congregation. The Congregation desires to care for and to be part of their spiritual development to the point where they become Communicant Members of the Congregation.

B. Communicant Members

It is the privilege and duty of all Communicant members to regularly attend worship; to partake of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper; to support the work of the Congregation with time, talents, and financial assistance; and to participate in the life of the Congregation and thus become stewards of the mission and ministry of the Congregation. If 18 or older, they are encouraged to participate in the Voters' Assembly. It is the Communicant's privilege and duty to live a Christian life under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and His Holy Word.

ARTICLE II. — OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Officers of the Board of Directors shall be a Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary, and they shall constitute the Executive Committee. The Senior Pastor shall be an ex-officio member of the Board of Directors and shall attend meetings of the Executive Committee.

B. The Board of Directors shall annually elect its own officers prior to or at the first meeting of the new Board of Directors. Newly elected Board of Directors and Board of Directors with terms extending after June 30th may participate in the election.

C. The Board of Directors shall decide, by Policy, the method of choosing the Treasurer and shall determine his/her responsibilities (consistent with legal requirements).

D. A Director will have served at least one full year immediately prior to election as Chair and shall not serve more than two consecutive years as Chair.

E. The responsibilities of the officers shall be as follows:

1. CHAIR

The Chair shall:

- a. Serve as Chair of the Congregation and serve on the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors.
- b. See to it that the resolutions of the Voters' Assembly are carried out.
- c. Sign, pursuant to instructions of the Voters' Assembly, all contracts and other legal documents issued in the name of the congregation.
- d. Work with the Executive Committee and Senior Pastor to establish the agenda for all meetings of the Board of Directors and Voters' Assembly.
- e. Preside at all meetings of the Board of Directors and Voters' Assembly, attending at least three-quarters of all meetings.
- f. Prepare and distribute an agenda one week prior to board meetings and Voters' Assembly meetings.

- g. Initiate counsel with any Director of the Board of Directors who violates the Our Savior Lutheran Ministries (OSLM) Policy Manual, insuring that the policy is followed.
- h. Take appropriate actions, which may not be stipulated but are essential for the thorough management of the Board of Directors's work, so long as those actions are not in violation of other Board of Directors policies.
- i. Assume responsibility for overseeing the work of the Executive Committee.

2. VICE-CHAIR

The Vice-Chair shall:

- a. Serve as Vice-Chair of the Congregation and serve on the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors
- b. Preside at all meetings of the Board of Directors and Voters' Assemblies when the Chair is absent or when requested to do so by the Chair of the Board of Directors.
- c. Serve as chair of the Nominating Committee.
- d. Initiate counsel with the Chair of the Board of Directors should the Chair violate the OSLM Policy Manual, insuring that the policy is followed.
- e. Be authorized, in the absence or inability of the Chair, to sign legal documents on behalf of the Congregation and pursuant to instructions of the Voters' Assembly.

3. SECRETARY

The Secretary shall:

- a. Serve as Secretary of the Congregation and serve on the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors.
- b. Record and maintain the minutes of all meetings of the Board of Directors and make them available upon request.
- c. Conduct all official correspondence of the Board of Directors.
- d. Be thoroughly familiar with the Congregation's Constitution and Bylaws and serve as the primary resource to the Board of Directors and Congregation for questions concerning the same.
- e. Keep or cause to be kept a manual incorporating all policy-making resolutions, standard procedures, and standing resolutions of the Congregation. This manual shall be kept up to date and subject to review by the Board of Directors.
- f. Safeguard the valuable papers of the Congregation.
- g. Share the custody of the official seal with the Senior Pastor.
- h. Take minutes at Voters' Assemblies and keep record of such minutes and actions of the Voters' Assembly and see that Voters' meeting archives are kept in a safe and accessible location.

ARTICLE III. — ELECTION OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The number of Directors shall be seven. Directors shall be elected on a rotation basis with approximately one-third of the Board of Directors being elected each year. The Senior Pastor shall be an ex-officio, voting member of the Board of Directors.

A. Nominating Committee

- 1. A Nominating Committee, consisting of the Vice-Chair, one other director and two members at large nominated from the floor and elected by the congregation shall be chartered each year at the regular meeting in January/February. The Senior Pastor shall serve as an ex-officio voting member of this committee.
- 2. The Vice-Chair of the Board of Directors shall chair the Nominating Committee.
- 3. The Nominating Committee shall solicit, and receive, the names of prospective candidates from the Board of Directors or any member of the Congregation.

4. The Nominating Committee shall not fail to present a slate of at least one qualified candidate to fill each of the upcoming vacancies (approximately one-third of the Board of Directors). The Nominating Committee will make every attempt to present a final slate of a minimum of two people per vacancy to the congregation at least two weeks prior to its regular meeting in May or June.

B. Qualifications and Other Considerations

In preparing its recommended slate of candidates for Board of Directors directorship, the Nominating Committee must seek candidates who:

1. Regularly participate in the worship and educational life of the congregation.
2. Undertake personal spiritual disciplines for the development of their own faith lives.
3. Are good communicators.
4. Are visionary.
5. Can effectively represent the concerns of the members of the Congregation.
6. Have had sufficient years' experience in the ministry of the Congregation or in another congregation.
7. Understand and support the basic concepts of our governance.
8. Are willing and able to support the values of the Congregation.
9. Are willing and able to accept the Director responsibilities.
10. Are not on the payroll of the Congregation.
11. Are not the spouse of a currently serving Board of Directors Director.

There shall be no more than two spouses of paid staff on the board.

C. Election

1. Election of Directors shall take place each year at the regular meeting of the Congregation in May or June.
2. The Nominating Committee shall be responsible for:
 - a. Determining and administering the election process.
 - b. Determining procedures and time lines for recommending further candidates.
 - i. When presenting the slate to the Congregation, the Nominating Committee shall include:
 - a. The list of criteria used to qualify nominees.
 - b. Information regarding each nominee that addresses the qualifying criteria.
 - ii. Procedures for the election process shall include that:
 - a. The election is by written ballot.
 - b. Election procedures follow the latest edition of *Robert's Rules of Order*.
3. The Congregation shall elect only Directors who have been deemed qualified by the Nominating Committee prior to the day of election, therefore nominations from the floor will not be accepted.
4. The Nominating Committee shall present the initial slate to the Congregation no later than three weeks prior to the election, which allows input from the Congregation.

D. Terms of Service

1. A term of service for a Board of Directors Director shall be three years.
2. Board of Directors may not be elected to more than two consecutive terms and if appointed to fill a vacancy, may not stand for re-election if another term would extend their service to more than seven consecutive years.
3. Approximately one-third of the Board of Directors shall be elected each year to assure continuity of service and experience on the Board of Directors.
 - a. No more than three Directors shall be elected in any given year.
 - b. Should the number of Board of Directors or their terms of service fall out of alignment with the Bylaws, no other process shall be used for realignment except the election process as outlined in these Bylaws.

E. Vacancies

1. Vacancies that occur on the Board of Directors shall be filled with qualified individuals who are appointed by the Board of Directors and confirmed by the Voters' Assembly at the next Voters' meeting or in 60 days, whichever is shorter.
2. Appointment to fill a vacancy on the Board of Directors shall always be to complete an unexpired term, and in no case shall such an appointment work in contradiction to the election of approximately one-third of the Board of Directors each year.
3. Every effort shall be made to fill vacancies within three months of their occurrence. However, if there is less than one year of service left in the term, the position may remain vacant until it is filled through the election process.

ARTICLE IV. — RESPONSIBILITIES OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS

A. General Responsibilities

The main responsibility of the Board of Directors is to represent all members of Our Savior Lutheran Ministries, and especially to represent the Stewards of Our Savior Lutheran Ministries. Stewards are those members who invest dollars, time, and emotion with some conscious risk, in order to enhance and expand the spread of the Gospel through the Congregation's mission and ministry. The Board of Directors recognizes that no individual or group is the owner of the Congregation.

1. Listening to the Stewards: The Board of Directors shall listen to the ideas, the concerns and values of the Stewards. It shall use a variety of appropriate methodologies to seek out the desires of the Stewards.
2. Reporting to Stewards: The Board of Directors shall keep its Stewards informed of its progress toward Desired Outcomes. It shall use a variety of methods for this reporting.
3. The Board of Directors' responsibilities to the Stewards are to:
 - a. Conduct Voters' Assembly Meetings.
 - b. Inform the Stewards of the degree of success in meeting the Desired Outcomes.
 - c. Solicit input annually on the appropriateness of the Strategic Plan Policies.
 - d. Identify and establish relationships with groups (District, other organizations of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, etc.) that have the potential to have a felt or perceived stake in the Congregation.

B. Specific Responsibilities

1. Develop and maintain written policies of four types to implement the ministry of the Congregation.
 - a. Policies with respect to Desired Outcomes—Affirmative statements setting forth the purposes, effects and acceptable costs of operations.
 - b. Policies with respect to Board of Directors Self Governance—Statements setting forth the style and rules with respect to the Board of Directors own task and processes.
 - c. Policies with respect to Senior Pastor Limitations—Limiting statements that bind management or administration.
 - d. Policies with respect to Board of Directors and Senior Pastor Relationship—Clarifying statements about delegation to and monitoring of management or administration.
2. Group Action
The Board of Directors shall exercise its governing authority as a whole. No individual Board of Directors Director shall exercise such authority except as instructed by the Board of Directors.
3. Policy Development

The Board of Directors policies are to be active and dynamic. They are meant to be changed and refined regularly, based on the intent of each section, the values of the Board of Directors, and the changing context within which the Congregation functions. These changes will be communicated yearly to the Congregation.

- a. Resolutions—The Board of Directors will pass resolutions for specific actions only when these policies, law, or the Bylaws require those actions, or when they will affect only the Board of Directors. Passage of resolutions by the Board of Directors requires a 2/3-majority vote of the entire Board of Directors.
- b. Executive Actions—All Board of Directors actions governing activities of the Senior Pastor shall be done through policy. Any actions taken or contemplated by the Senior Pastor or any which may be or have been approved through the Senior Pastor, will only be considered in light of the appropriate governing policies. The Board of Directors will only review the policies for their soundness as a test of ethical and prudent behavior and will not dictate what are appropriate actions except for compliance with policies. The Board of Directors shall rewrite policies when appropriate.
- c. Policy review—Any Board of Directors member or the Senior Pastor may ask for a Board of Directors review of specific policies. However, never does the responsibility for effective and appropriate policy rest with anyone other than the Board of Directors.
- d. Policy Review Schedule—The Board of Directors shall establish an annual policy review calendar to coordinate the review of every policy at least once a year. It will make every effort to coordinate the calendar with the business cycles of the Congregation, reviewing appropriate policies just prior to management actions for decisions.

4. Fiscal Responsibility

- a. The Board of Directors fiscal responsibility shall be fulfilled by:
 - i. Establishing policies limiting Senior Pastor's financial authority, budget development and control of assets and systematically monitoring compliance with these policies.
 - ii. Monitoring the fiscal soundness of the Congregation.
- b. The Board of Directors may establish a line of credit for short-term debt up to 5% of the annual budget.

5. Board of Directors Limitations

The Board of Directors shall act on behalf of Our Savior Lutheran Ministries in all matters delegated to it by the Constitution and Bylaws or by specific action of the Voters' Assembly. However, the Board of Directors shall not:

- a. Incur long-term debt.
- b. Buy, sell, mortgage or transfer real estate or capital assets with a combined value in excess of \$50,000, with the exception of stock donations.
- c. Give final approval to the annual budget.

ARTICLE V. — VOTERS' ASSEMBLY PROCEDURE

- A. Voters' Assembly meetings shall be held at least twice a year. One of the meetings shall be an "Annual Meeting" which shall include reporting on Desired Outcomes, election of Board of Directors Members, and approval of the budget. This meeting will normally take place in May or June. The second meeting will normally take place in January or February and serve as an update on progress toward the Desired Outcomes. A proposed agenda for each Voters' Assembly shall be posted one week prior to the meeting.
- B. Special meetings of the Voters' Assembly may be called by the Senior Pastor, Chair of the Board of Directors, or by petition of 20 communicant members. Notice of time, place, and purpose of a special meeting shall be posted at least one week prior to the special meeting.

Voters' Assembly called by petition shall be organized and led by the Chair of the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE VI. — MINISTRY WORKERS

Ministry workers are selected by the Congregation through its Call process, Voters' Assembly, or administrators to provide competent leadership, organization, lay training and ministry skills as part of a ministry team.

Members of the Congregation obligate themselves to receive these ministers as servants of the Word; to honor and love them as such; to support their work among us with diligent, faithful assistance and prayer; to assist them with a peaceful and cooperative spirit; to encourage them by word and action; and to provide for their care and financial support according to the ability of the Congregation.

A. Definitions of Workers' Relationship to the Congregation

1. Call with Tenure: A secured relationship that does not need to be renewed. A call with tenure is eligible to those on a current professional workers roster of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) and deemed "in good standing" by their district president.
2. Call Without Tenure: A relationship that needs to be renewed on an one or two year basis or until the Communicant Members "tenure" the call. It is eligible to those on a current professional workers roster of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and deemed "in good standing" by their district president.
3. Contract: A relationship that needs to be renewed on a yearly basis. It is eligible to those not on a current professional workers roster of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

B. Description of the Office of Senior Pastor

The pastoral office is the prime office of the Congregation from which all other offices of the Congregation issue. Through its tenured call the Congregation affirms the authority given to the Senior Pastor by God to exercise, in a prime way and public way, the common rights of the spiritual priesthood on behalf of all. However, the Voters' Assembly may establish as many auxiliary offices as deemed necessary and determine what work is to be assigned such offices.

In calling a Senior Pastor to preach the Word of God and administer the sacraments on their behalf, the members of the Congregation continue to exercise their royal priesthood of all believers, which is their privilege and responsibility.

C. Procedure for Calling a Senior Pastor

After consultation with the Board of Elders, Board of Directors, and the President of the California-Nevada-Hawaii District or his representative, a Call Committee shall be created by the Chair of the Board of Directors and a job description provided to the Call Committee by the Board of Elders. This Call Committee will:

1. Solicit the Congregation for possible candidates eligible from the current clergy roster of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod;
2. Solicit the District President of the California-Nevada-Hawaii District for possible candidates that are eligible for consideration;
3. Review the names and biographical information made available and select viable candidates from that group;
4. Design and execute an interviewing process with viable candidates;
5. Present a slate of at least two (2) viable candidates for approval at a Voters' Assembly. Additional candidates may be proposed by any voting member before the slate is approved. Following adequate discussion as determined by the Chair within *Robert's*

Rules of Order (latest revision), the voters will elect one of the proposed candidates by ballot and simple majority. Should a majority not be obtained on the first ballot, the candidate with the least votes will be dropped and subsequent ballot(s) taken, dropping the lowest vote receiver until a majority is received.

It will be the duty of the Chair of the Board of Directors to see that notice of election is delivered promptly to the candidate.

D. Procedure for Securing Other Workers With Tenure

A Call Committee shall be created by the Chair of the Board of Directors and a job description provided to the Call Committee. This Call Committee will:

1. Solicit the Congregation for eligible candidates;
2. Solicit the appropriate District staff for eligible candidates;
3. Review the names and biographical information and select viable candidates from that group;
4. Design and execute an interviewing process with viable candidates;
5. Present one or more candidates for approval of a tenured call at a Voters' Assembly called for that purpose. Should more than one candidate be presented, the voters will elect one of the proposed candidates by simple majority. Should a majority not be obtained on the first ballot, the candidate with the least votes will be dropped and subsequent ballot(s) taken, dropping the lowest vote receiver until a majority is received.

It will be the duty of the Chair of the Board of Directors to see that notice of the election is delivered promptly to the candidate.

E. Procedure for Securing Workers Without Tenure

An administrator may hire, contract with, or issue a limited tenure Call to a worker in consultation with the Senior Pastor. The administrator will provide a current job description for the position.

ARTICLE VII. — ELDERS

- A. The Elders will attend to the spiritual life of the Congregation by:
1. Caring for, nurturing, and encouraging individuals and families within the fellowship.
 2. Providing assistance and support for all aspects of congregational worship.
 3. Caring for, nurturing, and encouraging the Senior Pastor and other ministry staff.
 4. Assuring that the Congregation and its ministry staff remain consistent with its doctrinal stance as delineated in the Constitution Article IV.
- B. Qualifications for the Elders include spiritual maturity, active participation in the worship and fellowship events of the Congregation, a healthy discipleship process in their personal lives of faith, supportive of the congregation and its Senior Pastor and ministry staff, and a sense of calling to serve in this type of ministry (see I Timothy 3:1-7). Since the Elders "carry out official functions that would involve public accountability for the function of the pastoral office" (cf. LCMS Resolution 3-08A, 2004), Elders shall be male Communicant members of the Congregation.
- C. The number and organization of the Elders will be set by the Elders themselves in consultation with the Senior Pastor.
- D. Candidates for Elder will be ratified by the Voters' Assembly after being interviewed by the Elders or a selected group of Elders and the Senior Pastor.

- E. Each year the Elders will go through a reflective process that encourages them in their ministry and helps them to determine whether they should continue. Should an Elder resign, this will be reported at the next Voters' Assembly.
- F. The Elders will be represented at the Board of Directors by the Senior Pastor. They will be asked to make a report to the Voters' Assembly at least once per year.

ARTICLE VIII. — TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

- A. **Transfer to Other Lutheran Congregations**
Communicant Members desiring to join another Lutheran Congregation shall present their request for transfer to the Senior Pastor or his representative. Transfer authorization is granted by the Senior Pastor/Elders. Transfer of membership(s) shall be reported to the Voters' Assembly in a subsequent meeting.
- B. **Joining Non-Lutheran Churches**
In cases where Communicant Members desire to join non-Lutheran congregations, they shall, with the recommendation of the Senior Pastor and Elders, be granted a peaceful release from Our Savior Lutheran Ministries. Removals from membership rolls shall be reported to the Voters' Assembly in a subsequent meeting.
- C. **Excommunication and Self-Exclusion**
Any member who conducts himself/herself in any publicly, unchristian manner shall be admonished according to Matthew 18:15-20. If he/she refuses to amend his/her sinful life after proper admonition through the Senior Pastor and Board of Elders, he/she may be excommunicated after a recommendation by the Elders. A unanimous vote for excommunication [excluding the member(s) under disciplinary action] shall be required by the Voters' Assembly.

If the member(s) refuse to attend the Voters' Assembly meeting to discuss said case, he/she has thereby automatically excluded himself/herself. Excommunication or self-exclusion terminates membership.
- D. **Failure to Participate in the Life of the Congregation**
Any member of the Congregation who fails to participate in the life of the Congregation for a period of one (1) year may be placed on inactive status. The names of inactive members will be reviewed periodically to determine if membership should be terminated. A recommendation by the Board of Elders or Senior Pastor, with approval by the Voters' Assembly, is required for termination.
- E. **Status**
A person who has been transferred, released, removed, or excommunicated from membership, forfeits all rights as a member of the Congregation. All claims upon the property of the Congregation as such, or upon any part thereof, are null and void unless he/she is reinstated into membership.
- F. **Reinstatement**
A person who has been removed from membership for failure to participate or is excommunicated if he/she fails to amend a sinful life, can be reinstated by demonstrating true contrition and repentance. Reinstatement can only be considered with the recommendation of the Pastor and the Board of Elders with approval by the Voters' Assembly.

ARTICLE IX. — AMENDMENTS

The Bylaws may be amended or repealed by a simple majority of members present and voting at each of two consecutive, legally called, Voters' Assembly meetings. Proposed amendments shall be posted at least one (1) week prior to each of the consecutive meetings.

The revised bylaws shall, as a condition of continued membership in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, be submitted to the president of the CNH District for review by the District's constitution committee and favorable action by the District's board of directors before being implemented by the congregation.

ARTICLE X. — FISCAL YEAR

The Congregations' fiscal year starts July 1st and continues through June 30th.

Chair

Secretary