

**CONSTITUTION  
FOR THE CONGREGATION OF  
FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH  
FLORESVILLE, TEXAS  
(Adopted January 2012. Amended July 14, 2013.)**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

This Constitution is written as a caretaking instrument for ordering the life and ministry of First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Floresville, Texas as it transitions into a new denomination-the North American Lutheran Church (NALC). As this new denomination forms and grows, this instrument shall also change to meet the needs of this body of Christ and the provisions of our work together.

The NALC does not require Congregations to adopt a particular Constitution. However, it does require a subscription to the NALC Constitution and the NALC Confession of Faith. By adopting Chapter 2, Section 6.02, and Section 6.03 (c)-(d), a Congregation complies with these requirements.

## **CONSTITUTION**

### **PREAMBLE**

We, the baptized members of the Church of Jesus Christ, responding in faith to the call of the Holy Spirit through the Gospel, desiring to unite together to preach the Word, administer the Sacraments, and carry out God's mission, do hereby adopt this Constitution and solemnly pledge ourselves to be governed by its provisions; in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

### **Chapter 1**

#### **NAME AND INCORPORATION**

- Co1.01** The name of this Congregation shall be First Evangelical Lutheran Church.
- Co1.02** For the purpose of this Constitution and the accompanying Bylaws, First Evangelical Lutheran Church is hereinafter designated as "this Congregation".
- Co1.03** This Congregation shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of Texas.
- Co1.04** 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.
- Co1.05** Except as otherwise limited herein, this Congregation shall have all power necessary or convenient to effect or transact any or all of the business or purposes for which this Congregation is organized and shall likewise have all the powers provided by the Act.
- Co1.06** This Congregation is organized exclusively for the charitable 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 IRC. This Congregation shall not afford pecuniary gain, incidentally or otherwise, to its directors, officers or other private persons; no part of the net earnings of this Congregation shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its directors, officers or other private persons, except that this Congregation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered. Notwithstanding any other provisions of these Articles, all of the work of this Congregation shall be carried on, and all funds of this Congregation, whether revenue or principal and whether acquired by gift or contribution or otherwise, shall be used exclusively for the purposes and programs permitted by the Act, and this Congregation shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of

any candidate for federal, state or local public office, unless otherwise permitted under the IRC, any future federal tax code and the Act. No substantial part of the activities of this Congregation shall be carrying on of propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation.

**Co1.07** Upon the dissolution of this Congregation, the Board shall distribute the assets of this Congregation for one (1) or more exempt purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the IRC, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or the assets shall be distributed to the federal government, or to a state or local government, for a public purpose.

## **Chapter 2**

### **CONFESSION OF FAITH**

This Congregation incorporates Article 2 of the Constitution of the North American Lutheran Church (NALC) confessing:

**Co2.01** **The Triune God-Father, Son, and Holy Spirit**

**Co2.02** **Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and the Gospel as the power of God for the salvation of all who believe.**

- a. **Jesus Christ is the Word of God incarnate, through whom everything was made and through whose life, death, and resurrection God fashions a new creation.**
- b. **The proclamation of God’s message to us as both Law and Gospel is the Word of God, revealing judgment and mercy through word and deed, beginning with the Word in creation, continuing in the history of Israel, and centering in all its fullness in the person and work of Jesus Christ.**
- c. **The canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the written Word of God. Inspired by 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.**

**Co2.03** **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, “according to which all doctrines should and must be judged.” (Formula of Concord, Epitome, Part I)**

**Co2.04** **The Apostles’, Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds as true declaration of the faith of the Church.**

**Co2.05** **The unaltered Augsburg Confession as a true witness to the Gospel, acknowledging as one with it in faith and doctrine all churches that likewise accept the teachings of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession.**

**Co2.06** **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.**

**Co2.07** **The Gospel, recorded in the Holy Scriptures and confessed in the ecumenical creeds and Lutheran confessional writings, as the power**

**of God to create and sustain the Church for God's mission in the world.**

### **Chapter 3**

#### **NATURE OF THE CHURCH**

**Co3.01** 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.

**Co3.02** The Church exists both as an inclusive fellowship and as local congregations gathered for worship and Christian service. Congregations find their fulfillment in the universal community of the Church, and the universal Church exists in and through congregations. The North American Lutheran Church (NALC), therefore, derives its character and powers both from the sanction and representation of its congregations and from its inherent nature as an expression of the broader fellowship of the faithful. In length, it acknowledges itself to be in the historic continuity of the Communion of Saints; in breadth, it expresses the fellowship of believers and congregations in our day.

### **Chapter 4**

#### **STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

**Co4.01** The Church is a people created by God in Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, called and sent to bear witness to God's creative, redeeming, and sanctifying activity in the world.

**Co4.02** To participate in God's mission, this Congregation as a part of the Church shall:

- a. Worship God in proclamation of the Word and administration of the Sacraments and through lives of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, witness, and service.
- b. Proclaim God's saving Gospel of justification by grace for Christ's sake through faith alone, according to the apostolic witness in the Holy Scripture, preserving and transmitting the Gospel faithfully to future generations.
- c. Carry out Christ's Great Commission by reaching out to all people to bring them to faith in Christ and by doing all ministries with a global awareness consistent with the understanding of God as Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier of all.
- d. Serve in response to God's love to meet human needs, caring for the sick and the aged, advocating dignity and justice for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, and standing with the poor and powerless, and committing it to their needs.
- e. Nurture its members in the Word of God so as to grow in faith and hope and love, to see daily life as the primary setting for the exercise of their Christian calling, and to use the gifts of the Spirit for their life together and for their calling in the world.
- f. Manifest the unity given to the people of God by living together in the love of Christ and by joining with other Christians in prayer and action to express and preserve the unity which the Spirit gives.

**Co4.03** To fulfill these purposes, this Congregation shall:

- a. provide services of worship at which the Word of God is preached and the Sacraments are administered.
- b. provide pastoral care and assist all members to participate in this ministry.
- c. challenge, equip, and support all members in carrying out their calling in their daily lives and in their congregation.
- d. teach the Word of God.
- e. witness to the reconciling Word of God in Christ, reaching out to all people.
- f. respond to human need, work for justice and peace, care for the sick and the suffering, and participate responsibly in society.
- g. motivate its members to provide financial support for the Congregation's ministry and the ministry of other parts of the NALC.
- h. foster and participate in interdependent relationships with other congregations, the districts, and the national expression of the NALC.
- i. foster and participate in ecumenical relationships consistent with churchwide policy.

**C04.04** This Congregation shall develop an organizational structure to be described in the Bylaws. The Congregation Council shall prepare descriptions of the responsibilities of each committee, task force, or other organizational group and shall review their actions. Such descriptions shall be contained in Continuing Resolutions in the section on the Congregation Council.

**C04.05** This Congregation shall, from time to time, adopt a mission statement which will provide specific direction for its programs.

## **Chapter 5**

### **POWERS OF THE CONGREGATION**

**C05.01** The powers of this Congregation are those necessary to fulfill its purpose.

**C05.02** The powers of this Congregation are vested in the Congregation Meeting called and conducted as provided in this Constitution and Bylaws.

**C05.03** Only such authority as is delegated to the Congregation Council or other organizational units in this Congregation's governing documents is recognized. All remaining authority is retained by the Congregation. The Congregation is authorized to:

- a. call a pastor as provided in Chapter 9;
- b. terminate the call of a pastor as provided in Chapter 9;
- c. call or terminate the call of associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers in conformity with the applicable policy of the NALC;
- d. adopt amendments to the Constitution, as provided in Chapter 17, and amendments to the Bylaws, as specified in Chapter 16;
- e. approve the annual budget;
- f. acquire real and personal property by gift, devise, purchase, or other lawful means;
- g. hold title to and use its property for any and all activities consistent with its purpose;
- h. sell, mortgage, lease, transfer, or otherwise dispose of its property by any lawful means;

- i. elect its Congregation Council, boards, and committees, and require them to carry out their duties in accordance with the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions; and
- j. terminate its relationship with the NALC as provided in Chapter 6.

**Co5.04** This Congregation shall choose from among its voting members laypersons to serve as delegates of the annual Convocation as well as persons to represent it at meetings of any district, conference, cluster, coalition, or other area subdivision of which it is a member. The number of persons to be elected by the Congregation and other qualifications shall be prescribed in guidelines established by the NALC.

## **Chapter 6**

### **CHURCH AFFILIATION**

**Co6.01** This Congregation is an interdependent part of the NALC or any successor and is subject to the disciplinary rules of the NALC.

**Co6.02** **This Congregation subscribes to the Constitution of the NALC and will act in accordance with it.**

**Co6.03** This Congregation will conduct its ministry in a manner consistent with its membership in the NALC:

- 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 NALC, including the prayerful consideration of appropriate financial support.
- c. **This Congregation shall call only pastors who are members of the NALC or otherwise are authorized by the NALC to serve.**
- d. **This Congregation shall appoint only commissioned lay leaders who are members of the NALC or otherwise are authorized by the NALC to serve.**

**Co6.04** Affiliation with the NALC may be terminated as follows:

- a. This Congregation dissolves.
- b. This Congregation ceases to exist.
- c. This Congregation is removed from membership in the NALC according to the procedures for discipline of the NALC.
- d. This Congregation, at a legally called and conducted special meeting, approves by at least a two-thirds majority of those present and voting a resolution directing that this Congregation withdraw from the NALC. If this Congregation adopts a resolution withdrawing from the NALC, all provisions of this Constitution binding this Congregation to the NALC shall be immediately ineffective. The Congregation shall promptly deliver a copy of the withdrawal resolution to the NALC general secretary.

## **Chapter 7**

### **PROPERTY OWNERSHIP**

**Co7.01** If this congregation ceases to exist, title to undisposed property shall pass to the NALC.

**Co7.02** If this Congregation is removed from membership in the NALC according to its procedure for discipline, title to property shall continue to reside in this Congregation.

- Co7.03** If a two-thirds majority of the voting members of this Congregation present at a legally called and conducted special meeting of this Congregation vote to transfer to another Lutheran church body, title to property shall continue to reside in this Congregation. Before this Congregation takes action to transfer to another Lutheran church body, it shall consult with representatives of the NALC.
- Co7.04** If a two-thirds majority of the voting members of this Congregation present at a legally called and conducted special meeting of this Congregation vote to become independent or relate to a non-Lutheran church body, title to property of this Congregation shall continue to reside in this Congregation.
- Co7.05** Notwithstanding the provisions of Co7.02. and Co7.03. above, where this Congregation has received property from the NALC pursuant to a deed or other instrument containing restrictions under provisions of the Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions of the NALC, this congregation accepts such restriction and:
- a. shall not transfer, encumber, mortgage, or in any way burden or impair any right, title, or interest in the property without prior approval of the NALC Council.
  - b. shall, upon written demand by the NALC Council, pursuant to the Constitution re-convey and transfer all right, title, and interest in the property to the NALC.

## **Chapter 8**

### **MEMBERSHIP**

- Co8.01** Members of this Congregation shall be those baptized persons on the roll of this Congregation at the time that this Constitution is adopted and those who are admitted thereafter and who have declared and maintain their membership in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution and its Bylaws.
- Co8.02** Members shall be classified as follows:
- a. **Baptized** members are those persons who have been received by the Sacrament of Holy Baptism in this Congregation, or, having been previously baptized in the name of the Triune God, have been received by certificate of transfer from other Lutheran congregations or by affirmation of faith.
  - b. **Confirmed** members are baptized persons who have been confirmed in this Congregation, those who have been received by adult baptism or by transfer as confirmed members from other Lutheran congregations, or baptized persons received by affirmation of faith.
  - c. **Voting** members are confirmed members who have made an annual commitment via the *Covenant Form*. Such confirmed, voting members, during the current or preceding calendar year, also shall have at least one communion of record in this Congregation, as well as having filled out, signed, and filed their *Covenant Form*. Any person may complete a *Covenant Form* up to 60 days prior to a regular or special called meeting of the Congregation. Members of this Congregation who have satisfied these basic standards shall have the privilege of voice and vote at every regular and special meeting of the Congregation. The wording and stipulations of the *Covenant Form* will be determined in the Continuing Resolutions of this Constitution by the pastor and Congregation Council.

- d. **Associate** members are persons holding membership in other Lutheran or Christian congregations who wish to retain such membership but desire to participate in the life and mission of this Congregation, or persons who wish to retain a relationship with this Congregation while being members of other congregations. They have all the privileges and duties of membership except voting rights and eligibility for elected offices or membership on the Congregation Council of this Congregation.

**Co8.03** All applications for confirmed membership shall be submitted to and shall require the approval of the Congregation Council.

**Co8.04** It shall be the privilege and duty of members of this Congregation to:

- a. make regular use of the means of grace, both Word and Sacraments;
- b. live a Christian life in accordance with the Word of God and the teachings of the Lutheran church; and
- c. support the work of this Congregation, and the national expression of the NALC through contributions of their time, abilities, and financial support as biblical stewards.

**Co8.05** Membership in this Congregation shall be terminated by any of the following:

- a. death;
- b. resignation;
- c. transfer or release;
- d. disciplinary action by the Congregation Council; or
- e. removal from the roll due to inactivity as defined in the Bylaws.

Such persons who have been removed from the roll of members shall remain persons for whom the Church has a continuing pastoral concern.

## **Chapter 9**

### **THE PASTOR**

**Co9.01** Authority to call a pastor shall be in this Congregation by at least a two-thirds majority ballot vote of a quorum of members present and voting at a meeting legally called for that purpose. Before a call is issued, the officers, or a committee elected by the Congregation Council to recommend the call, shall seek the advice and help of the Bishop or designated dean of the NALC.

**Co9.02** Only a member of the clergy roster of the NALC or a candidate for the roster of ordained ministers who has been recommended for the Congregation by the NALC Bishop or designated dean may be called as a pastor of this Congregation.

**Co9.03** Consistent with the faith and practice of the NALC,

- a. Every ordained minister shall:
  - 1) preach the Word;
  - 2) administer the Sacraments;
  - 3) conduct public worship;
  - 4) provide pastoral care; and
  - 5) speak publicly in mission to make disciples of all nations and proclaim God's love for the world.
- b. Each ordained minister with a congregational call shall, within the Congregation:
  - 1) offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead;

- 2) supervise all schools and organizations of this Congregation;
  - 3) install regularly elected members of the Congregation Council; and
  - 4) with the Council, administer discipline.
- c. Every pastor shall:
- 1) strive to extend the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation, and abroad;
  - 2) seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel;
  - 3) impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through distribution of its publications; and
  - 4) endeavor to increase the support given by the Congregation to the work of the national expression of the NALC.

**Co9.04**

The specific duties of the pastor, compensation, and other matters pertaining to the service of the pastor shall be included in a letter of call, which shall be attested by the Bishop and the designated dean of the NALC.

- a. The call of a congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment, which, except in the case of death of the pastor, shall be terminated only following consultation with the NALC Bishop or designated dean and for the following reasons:
- 1) mutual agreement to terminate the call or the completion of a call for a specific term;
  - 2) resignation of the pastor, which shall become effective, unless otherwise agreed, 30 days after the date on which it was submitted;
  - 3) inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in the Congregation in view of local conditions, without reflection on the competence or the moral and spiritual character of the pastor;
  - 4) the physical or mental incapacity of the pastor;
  - 5) disqualification of the pastor through discipline on grounds of doctrine, morality, or continued neglect of duty;
  - 6) the dissolution of the congregation or the termination of a parish arrangement; or
  - 7) suspension of the congregation as a result of discipline proceedings.
- b. When allegations of physical or mental incapacity of the pastor or ineffective conduct of the pastoral office have come to the attention of the Bishop of the NALC, the Bishop in his or her sole discretion may, or when such allegations have been brought to the attention of the NALC by an official recital of allegations by the Congregation Council or by a petition signed by at least one-third of the voting members of the Congregation, the Bishop shall, investigate such conditions personally in company with a committee of two ordained ministers and one layperson.
- c. In case of alleged physical or mental incapacity, competent medical testimony shall be obtained. When such disability is evident, the Bishop of the NALC with the advice of the committee shall declare the pastorate vacant. Upon the restoration of a disabled pastor to health, the Bishop of the NALC shall take steps to enable the pastor to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another field of labor.

- d. In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of the Congregation, all concerned persons shall be heard, after which the Bishop or designated dean of the NALC together with the committee described in CO9.04.b. shall decide on the course of action to be recommended to the pastor and the Congregation. If they agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action shall be taken by the NALC. If either party fails to assent, the Congregation may dismiss the pastor at a legally called meeting after consultation with the Bishop or designated dean, either (a) by a two-thirds majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the Bishop and the committee did not recommend termination of the call, or (b) by a simple majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the Bishop and the committee recommended termination of the call.
- e. If, in the course of proceedings described in CO9.04.d., the committee concludes that there may be grounds for disciplinary action, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action to the NALC Bishop, who may bring charges in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution and Bylaws of the NALC.
- f. If, following the appointment of the committee described in CO9.04.b. or d., it should become apparent that the pastoral office cannot be conducted effectively in the congregation(s) being served by the ordained minister due to local conditions, the Bishop or designated dean of the NALC may temporarily suspend the pastor from service in the congregation(s) without prejudice and with pay and with housing provided by the congregation(s).

- CO9.05** At a time of pastoral vacancy, an interim pastor shall be appointed by the Bishop or designated dean of the NALC with the consent of the Congregation Council.
- CO9.06** During the period of service, an interim pastor shall have the rights and duties in the Congregation of a regularly called pastor and may delegate the same in part to a supply pastor with the consent of the Bishop or designated dean of the NALC and the Congregation Council. The interim pastor and any ordained pastor providing assistance shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a pastor.
- CO9.07** This Congregation shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to a former pastor before calling a successor. A pastor shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to this Congregation before beginning service in a call to another congregation or employment in another ministry setting related to the NALC.
- CO9.08** When a pastor is called to serve in company with another pastor or pastors, the privileges and responsibilities of each pastor shall be specified in documents to accompany the call and to be drafted in consultation involving the pastors, the Congregation Council, and the Bishop or designated dean of the NALC. As occasion requires, the documents may be revised through a similar consultation.
- CO9.09** With the approval of the Bishop or designated dean of the NALC, the Congregation may depart from CO9.04.a., and call a pastor for a specific term. Details of such calls shall be in writing setting forth the purpose and conditions involved. Prior to the completion of a term, the Bishop shall meet with the pastor and representatives of the congregation for a review of the call. Such a call may

also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of Co9.04.a.

- Co9.10** The pastor of this Congregation:
- a. shall keep accurate parochial records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from the Congregation;
  - b. shall submit a summary of such statistics annually to the NALC; and
  - c. shall become a member of this Congregation upon receipt and acceptance of the letter of call. In a parish of multiple congregations, the pastor shall hold membership in one of the congregations.
- Co9.11** The pastor(s) shall submit a report of his or her ministry to the Bishop of the NALC at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the NALC annual Convocation.
- Co9.12** The parochial records of this Congregation shall be maintained by the pastor and shall remain the property of the Congregation. The secretary of this Congregation shall attest in writing to the Bishop or designated dean of this NALC that such records have been placed in his or her hands in good order by a departing pastor before the installation of that pastor in another field of labor or the granting by the NALC of retired status to the pastor.

## **Chapter 10**

### **CONGREGATION MEETING**

- C10.01** The Annual and Quarterly Meetings of this Congregation shall be held at a time specified in the Bylaws.
- C10.02** A special Congregation Meeting may be called by the pastor, the Congregation Council, or the president of this Congregation, and shall be called by the president of the Congregation upon the written request of 25 voting members. The call for each special meeting shall specify the purpose for which it is to be held and no other business shall be transacted.
- C10.03** Notice of all meetings of this Congregation shall be given at the services of worship on the preceding two consecutive Sundays and by mail in the *Call to Worship* newsletter to all voting members at least 10 days in advance of the date of the meeting. The posting of such notice in the regular mail with the regular postage affixed or paid, sent to the last known address of such members shall be sufficient.
- C10.04** 25% of voting members on the roster of voting members shall constitute a quorum.
- C10.05** Voting by proxy or by absentee ballot shall not be permitted.
- C10.06** All actions approved by the Congregation shall be by two-thirds majority vote of a quorum of those voting members present and voting, except as otherwise provided in this Constitution or by state law.
- C10.07** *Robert's Rules of Order*, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of all meetings of this Congregation.

## **Chapter 11 OFFICERS**

- C11.01** The officers of this Congregation shall be a President, Vice-President, Recording Secretary, Financial Secretary, and Treasurer.
- a. Duties of the officers shall be specified in the Bylaws.
  - b. The officers shall be voting members of the Congregation.
  - c. Officers of this Congregation shall serve similar offices of the Congregation Council and shall be voting members of the Congregation Council.
  - d. The Congregation Council will elect its officers (*President, Vice-President, Recording Secretary, Treasurer, and Financial Secretary*) and shall be selected from the elders-elect of the Congregation Council.
- C11.02** The pastor under call shall be the *spiritual* leader of the Congregation and the Council with voice and vote at all meetings. The Congregation Council shall elect by written ballot the other officers of the Congregation at the first Council Meeting following the Congregation Annual Meeting. These officers shall serve for one year or until their successors are elected. Their terms shall begin at the close of the first Council Meeting at which they are elected as executive officers following the Annual Meeting of the Congregation at which they are elected as elders. The Congregation Council will convene as soon as possible after the Annual Meeting.
- C11.03** No officer shall hold more than one office at a time. No elected officer shall be eligible to serve more than two (2) consecutive terms in the same office.

## **Chapter 12 CONGREGATION COUNCIL**

- C12.01** The Congregation Council shall consist of the pastor(s), the officers and two additional elders all of whom have voice and vote. Any voting member of the Congregation may be elected, subject only to the limitation on the length of continuous service permitted in that office. An elder or officer seat on the Congregation Council shall be declared vacant if the elder or officer: a) ceases to be a voting member of this Congregation or b) is absent from three successive regular meetings of the Congregation Council without cause. Consistent with the laws of the State of Texas in which this Congregation is incorporated, the Congregation may adopt procedures for the removal of a member of the Congregation Council in other circumstances. These procedures for removal shall be stated in the Continuing Resolutions of this Constitution.
- C12.02** The members of the Congregation Council, except the pastor(s), shall be elected by written ballot as elders at the Annual Meeting to serve for two (2) years or until their successors are elected. Such members shall be eligible to serve no more than two (2) full terms consecutively. Their terms shall begin at the close of the Annual Meeting at which they are elected.
- C12.03** Should an elder's or officer's seat on the Congregation Council be declared vacant, the Congregation Council shall elect, by majority vote, a successor until the next Annual Meeting.
- C12.04** The Congregation Council shall have general oversight of the life and activities of this Congregation, and in particular its worship life, to the end that everything be

done in accordance with the Word of God and the faith and practice of the NALC. The duties of the Congregation Council shall include the following:

- a. To lead this Congregation in stating its mission as approved by the Congregation (as per Section Co4.05), to do long-range planning, to set goals and priorities, and to evaluate its activities in light of its mission and goals.
- b. To seek to involve all members of this Congregation in worship, learning, witness, service, and support.
- c. To oversee and provide for the administration of this Congregation to enable it to fulfill its functions and perform its mission.
- d. To maintain supportive relationships with the pastor(s) and staff and help them annually to evaluate the fulfillment of their calling or employment.
- e. To be examples individually and corporately of the style of life and ministry expected of all baptized persons.
- f. To promote a congregational climate of peace and goodwill, and, as differences and conflicts arise, to endeavor to foster mutual understanding.
- g. To arrange for pastoral service during the sickness or absence of the pastor.
- h. To emphasize partnership with the national expression of the NALC as well as cooperation with other congregations, both Lutheran and non-Lutheran, subject to established policies of the NALC.
- i. To recommend and encourage the use of program resources produced or approved by the NALC.
- j. To seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel.

**C12.05** The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the financial and property matters of this Congregation.

- a. The Congregation Council shall be the board of trustees of this Congregation, and as such shall be responsible for maintaining and protecting its property and the management of its business and fiscal affairs. It shall have the powers and be subject to the obligations that pertain to such boards under the laws of the State of Texas, except as otherwise provided herein.
- b. The Congregation Council shall not have the authority to buy, sell, or encumber real property unless specifically authorized to do so by a legally called meeting of the Congregation.
- c. The Congregation Council may enter into contracts of up to \$2,000.00 for items not included in the budget.
- d. The Congregation Council shall prepare an annual budget for adoption by this Congregation, shall supervise the expenditure of funds in accordance therewith following its adoption, and may incur obligations of no more than \$3,000.00 in excess of the anticipated receipts only after approval by a Congregation Meeting. The budget shall include this Congregation's full indicated share in support of the wider ministry being carried on in partnership with the NALC.
- e. The Congregation Council shall ascertain that the financial affairs of this Congregation are being conducted efficiently, giving particular attention to the prompt payment of all obligations and to the regular forwarding of apportionment monies to the NALC treasurer.

- f. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for this Congregation's investments and its total insurance program.
- C12.06** The Congregation Council shall see that the provisions of this Constitution, and its Bylaws, and the Continuing Resolutions are carried out.
- C12.07** The Congregation Council shall provide for an annual review of the membership roster.
- C12.08** The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the employment and supervision of the salaried lay workers of this Congregation.
- C12.09** The Congregation Council shall submit a comprehensive report to this Congregation at the Annual Meeting.
- C12.10** The Congregation Council shall normally meet once a month. Special meetings may be called by the pastor or the president, and shall be called by the president at the request of at least one-half of its members. Notice of each special meeting shall be given to all who are entitled to be present.
- C12.11** A quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of a majority of the members of the Congregation Council, including the pastor or interim pastor, except when the pastor or interim pastor requests or consents to be absent and has given prior approval to the agenda for a particular regular or special meeting, which shall be the only business considered at that meeting. Chronic or repeated absence of the pastor or interim pastor, who has refused approval of the agenda of a subsequent regular or special meeting, shall not preclude action by the Congregation Council, following consultation with the NALC Bishop or designated dean.

## **Chapter 13**

### **CONGREGATION COMMITTEES**

- C13.01** The officers of this Congregation and the pastor shall constitute the ***Executive Committee***.
- C13.02** A ***Nominating Committee*** of four (4) voting members of this Congregation, two (2) of whom shall be outgoing members of the Congregation Council, shall be elected at the Annual Meeting for a term of one year. Members of the Nominating committee are not eligible for consecutive reelection.
- C13.03** An ***Audit Committee*** of three (3) voting members shall be elected by the Congregation Council. Audit Committee members shall not be members of the Congregation Council. Term of office shall be three (3) years, with one member elected each year. Members shall be eligible for reelection.
- C13.04** A ***Mutual Ministry Committee*** of up to five (5) confirmed members plus the pastor(s) shall be appointed jointly by the president and the senior pastor under call. Term of office shall be two (2) years, with three (3) members to be appointed each successive year. In the absence of a Mutual Ministry Committee, the duties shall be fulfilled by the Executive Committee of the Congregation Council.
- C13.05** A ***Call Committee*** of six (6) voting members shall be elected by the Congregation Council when a pastoral vacancy occurs. Term of office will terminate upon installation of the newly called pastor.
- C13.06** Other committees of this Congregation may be formed, as the need arises, by decision of the Congregation Council.

- C13.07** Duties of committees of this Congregation shall be specified in the Continuing Resolutions.
- C13.08** The lead pastor of this Congregation shall be *ex officio* a member of all committees and boards of the Congregation.

#### **Chapter 14**

##### **ORGANIZATIONS WITHIN THE CONGREGATION**

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

#### **Chapter 15**

##### **DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS AND ADJUDICATION**

- C15.01** Denial of the Christian faith as described in this Constitution, conduct grossly unbecoming a member of the Church of Christ, or persistent trouble-making in this Congregation are sufficient cause for discipline of a member. Prior to disciplinary action, reconciliation will be attempted following Matthew 18:15-17, proceeding through these successive steps: a) private admonition by the pastor, b) admonition by the pastor in the presence of two or three witnesses, and c) a citation to appear before the Congregation Council. If, for any reason, the pastor is unable to administer the admonitions required by a. or b. hereof, the president or vice-president shall administer such admonitions.
- C15.02** The process for discipline of a member of the Congregation shall be governed as prescribed by the chapter on discipline on the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the NALC. If discipline against a member proceeds beyond counseling and admonition by the pastor, charges against the accused member(s) that are specific and in writing shall be prepared by member(s) of the Congregation who shall sign the charges as the accuser(s). The written charges shall be filed with the pastor, who shall advise the Congregation Council of the need to issue a written citation to the accused and the accusers that specifies the time and place of the hearing before the Congregation Council. The written charges shall accompany the written citation to the accused. The written citation that specifies the time and place of the hearing before the Congregation Council and requests the presence of a member charged with the offense shall be sent at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting. If the member charged with the offense fails to appear at the scheduled hearing, the Congregation Council may proceed with the hearing and may pass judgment in the member's absence.
- C15.03** Members of the Congregation Council who participate in the preparation of the written charges or who present evidence or testimony in the hearing before the Congregation Council are disqualified from voting upon the question of the guilt of the accused member. Should the allegations be sustained by a two-thirds

majority vote of the members of the Congregation Council who are not disqualified but who are present and voting, and renewed admonition prove ineffectual, the Council shall impose one of the following disciplinary actions:

- a. censure before the Council or Congregation;
- b. suspension from membership for a definite period of time; or
- c. exclusion from membership in this Congregation.

Disciplinary actions b. and c. shall be delivered to the member in writing.

**C15.04** The member against whom disciplinary action has been taken by the Congregation Council shall have the right to appeal the decision to the NALC Council. Such right may not be abridged and the decision of the NALC Council shall be final.

**C15.05** Disciplinary actions may be reconsidered and revoked by the Congregation Council upon receipt of: a) evidence that injustice has been done, or b) evidence of repentance and amendment.

**C15.06** For disciplinary actions in the Congregation, “due process” shall be observed as specified in the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the NALC.

**C15.07** No member of a Congregation shall be subject to discipline for offenses that the Congregation Council has previously heard and decided, unless so ordered by the NALC Council after an appeal.

**C15.08** Adjudication may be required when there is disagreement among factions within this Congregation on a substantive issue that cannot be resolved by the parties. Members of this Congregation shall have access to the NALC Bishop or designated dean for consultation after informing the chair of the Congregation Council of their intent. If the consultation fails to resolve the issue(s), the Committee on Discipline of the NALC shall consider the matter. If the Committee on Discipline of the NALC shall fail to resolve the issue(s), the matter shall be referred to the NALC Council, whose decision shall be final.

## **Chapter 16**

### **BYLAWS**

**C16.01** This Congregation may adopt Bylaws. No Bylaw may conflict with this Constitution.

**C16.02** Bylaws may be adopted or amended at any legally called meeting of this Congregation with a quorum present by a majority vote of those voting members present and voting.

**C16.03** Changes to the Bylaws may be proposed by any voting member provided, however, that such additions or amendments be submitted in writing to the Congregation Council at least 60 days before a regular or special Congregation Meeting called for that purpose and that the Congregation Council notify the Congregation’s members by mail in the *Call to Worship* newsletter of the proposal with the Council’s recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the Congregation Meeting.

**C16.04** Approved changes to the Bylaws shall be sent by the secretary of this Congregation to the NALC.

## **Chapter 17**

### **AMENDMENTS**

- C17.01** Unless provision C17.04. is applicable, those sections of this Constitution that are not required, in accord with the NALC, may be amended in the following manner. Amendments may be proposed by at least 25 voting members or by the Congregation Council. Proposals must be filed in writing with the Congregation Council 60 days before formal consideration by this Congregation at a regular or special Congregation Meeting called for that purpose. The Congregation Council shall notify the Congregation's members by mail in the *Call to Worship* newsletter of the proposal together with the Council's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the meeting.
- C17.02** An amendment to this Constitution, proposed under C17.01., shall:
- a. be approved at a legally called Congregation Meeting according to this Constitution by a majority vote of those present and voting.
  - b. be ratified without change at the next Annual Meeting by a two-thirds majority vote of those present and voting; and
  - c. have the effective date included in the resolution and noted in the Constitution.
- C17.03** Any amendments to this Constitution that result from the processes provided in C17.01. and C17.02. shall be sent by the secretary of this Congregation to the NALC. The amendment shall become effective within 120 days from the date of the receipt of the notice by the NALC unless the NALC informs this Congregation that the amendment is in conflict with the Constitution and Bylaws of the NALC.
- C17.04** This Constitution may be amended to bring any section into conformity with a section or sections, either required or not required, by the NALC-as most recently amended by the annual Convocation-by a simple majority vote of a quorum of those voting members present and voting at any legally called meeting of the Congregation without presentation at a prior meeting of the Congregation, provided that the Congregation Council has submitted by mail notice to the Congregation of such an amendment or amendments, together with the Council's recommendations, at least 30 days prior to the meeting. Upon the request of 25 voting members of the Congregation, the Congregation Council shall submit such notice. Following the adoption of an amendment, the secretary of the Congregation shall submit a copy thereof to the NALC. Such provisions shall become effective immediately following a vote of approval.

## **Chapter 18**

### **CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS**

- C18.01** The Congregation in a legally called meeting or the Congregation Council may enact Continuing Resolutions. Such Continuing Resolutions may not conflict with the Constitution or Bylaws of this Congregation.
- C18.02** Continuing Resolutions shall be enacted or amended by a majority vote of a meeting of the Congregation or a two-thirds vote of all voting members of the Congregation Council.
- C18.03** Continuing Resolutions enacted or amended by the Congregation Council shall be published in the next *Call to Worship* newsletter.

## **Chapter 19**

### **INDEMNIFICATION**

**C19.01** Consistent with the provisions of the laws under which this Congregation is incorporated, this Congregation may adopt provisions providing indemnification for each person who, by reason of the fact that such person is or was a Congregation Council member, officer, employee, agent, or other member of any committee of this Congregation, was or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending, or completed civil, criminal, administrative, arbitration, or investigative proceeding.

## BYLAWS

### Chapter 1

#### DUTIES OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS

##### B01.01

The duties of the Executive Members of the Congregation Council are as follows:

- a. The **President** shall conduct all meetings of the Congregation Council and all regular and called Congregation Meetings; oversee and ensure agendas are prepared for every meeting; sign, as required, all legal, financial, and official correspondence; oversee all operations of the various ministries; be present, when possible, at all congregation worship, functions and events, serve as a spiritual and administrative leader; as well as annually casting a vision for the future ministry and overall good of the congregation.
- b. The **Vice-President** shall serve alongside and, when necessary, in the absence of the President in all the capacities listed above; plus as *ex officio* member of the Sonshine Ark Preschool and Daycare Board; as oversight leader of the Congregation's annual stewardship emphasis ensuring that the presentations and programs are carried out; and being *Parliamentarian* at all regular and called meeting of the Congregation and Congregation Council.
- c. The **Recording Secretary** shall record the minutes of all meetings of the Congregation and the Congregation Council; oversee and sign all official correspondence of the Congregation; oversee the assembly and preservation of the archives of all the official meetings of the Congregation; and provide for a substitute from among the Congregation Council when absent or unable to attend any of the meetings listed above.
- d. The **Treasurer** shall oversee and ensure the recording and accounting of the outgoing funds and financial obligations of the Congregation; oversee and sign all checks; oversee and ensure that all bills and financial obligations are paid in timely manner; oversee and ensure that all insurance policies are reviewed and kept up to date; oversee and ensure that an annual *ministry spending plan (budget)* is prepared for approval by the Congregation Council and adoption at the Congregation's Annual Budget meeting in December of each year; and provide for a substitute from among the Congregation Council when absent or unable to perform these duties.
- e. The **Financial Secretary** shall oversee and ensure the recordings and accounting of all the incoming funds and financial transactions of the Congregation; oversee and ensure the work of the *Committee of Tellers*, oversee and ensure that bank and financial institution deposits of the Congregation are made in a timely manner; and provide for a substitute from among the Congregation Council whenever absent or unable to perform these duties.

### Chapter 2

#### QUALIFICATIONS FOR ELDERS

##### B02.01

**Elders** may be men or women who are voting members of the Congregation, who are of good repute, sound morals, strong in their Christian faith, conversant

in the Holy Scriptures, agree with the Lutheran confessions; and who display spiritual maturity.

**B02.02** *Disqualification and removal* of an elder can occur if certain information is obtained and verified by the Congregation Council pertaining to: alleged mental incapacity or physical disability; denying the Christian faith; moral sin; theological heresy; ethical sin; troublemaking; disrupting the life of the Congregation; or causing dissention within the Congregation; then the rights and titled position of that person are suspended until Council action, adjudication, or discipline hearings are completed according to the provisions of this Constitution and as referenced in C08.05. and in C15.01.-C15.08.

- a. In the case of alleged mental incapacity or physical disability that would prevent effective leadership by an elder in the Congregation, the Congregation Council is charged with using the utmost methods of caring, compassion, and competent medical discovery and counsel before disqualifying and removing a person from this position.

### Chapter 3

#### ANNUAL, BUDGET, AND QUARTERLY MEETINGS

**B03.01** The *Annual Meeting* of the Congregation shall be held every January on the fourth Sunday following the last worship service on that day. The meeting shall contain the following basic elements:

- a. Reports from the Congregation Council, preschool and Sunday school boards, plus other groups, and ministries of the Congregation shall be printed and received by all voting members present at the meeting.
- b. An agenda for the meeting shall be approved by the voting members present.
- c. Minutes of the previous *Annual Meeting* are read by the Secretary and received.
- d. Financial reports are presented by the Treasurer and received.
- e. Elections for the *Elders*, *Nominating Committee* members, *Delegates* to the *NALC Convocation*, and the *Sonshine Ark Board* are held.
- f. Plus, any other business that is required for the good of the mission and ministry of the Congregation.

**B03.02** The *Budget Meeting* of the Congregation shall be held every December on the second Sunday following the last worship service of that day. The sole purpose of that meeting shall be to receive and adopt the proposed or amended budget for the coming year and receive nominations for the vacancies on Congregation Council.

- a. The Treasurer shall present the proposed budget and explain the rationale for the ministry spending plan and answer questions from the voting members present.
- b. Any motions from the voting members to amend the proposed budget may be received.
- c. The budget is then adopted as presented or amended by majority vote.
- d. The nominations for Congregation Council are presented and additional nominations for the Council and any other elected positions, if any, may be received from the floor of the meeting.

- B03.03** The *Quarterly Meetings* of the Congregation are held on the second Sunday in the months of April, July, and October after the last worship service on that day. The Congregation Council may adjust the date of a Quarterly Meeting, if necessary. The *Budget Meeting* in December shall serve as the fourth Quarterly Meeting of the congregation. These meetings shall contain the following basic elements:
- a. An agenda is approved for the meeting by the voting members present.
  - b. The minutes of the previous *Quarterly Meeting* are received.
  - c. Financial reports are received.
  - d. Any business of the church that requires the voting member's attention.

## **Chapter 4**

### **MEMBERSHIP REMOVAL**

- B04.01** *Removal due to inactivity* from the Membership Rolls of this Congregation is defined as follows:
- a. When there is no record of *attendance, communion, and/or contribution* for one year, a person will be placed on the *Inactive Roll*.
  - b. If after an additional year on the *Inactive Roll* there is still no record of attendance, communion, and/or contribution then that person's name will be removed permanently from the membership rolls of this Congregation.
  - c. A letter stating the removal of a person's name from the membership of this Congregation shall be mailed to the last known address of that person(s).
  - d. A person who is removed due to inactivity will be someone for whom the Congregation will have a continuing pastoral concern.

## CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

### Chapter 1

#### GROUPS, MINISTRIES, AND TEAMS

- Ro1.01** The following is the approved list of **Groups** at First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Floresville, Texas:
- a. **First Lutheran Church Women** (FLCW) is a fellowship, service and learning group in the Congregation. Women of post-high school age are welcome to join.
  - b. **Men in Mission** (MIM) is a fellowship, learning, and service group in the congregation. Men of post-high school age are welcome to join.
  - c. **Celebration in Christ Choir** (CCC) is a choir group that provides special worship music for the Congregation at any of the worship services or events throughout the year. All confirmed members are welcome to join.
  - d. **Youth in Christ Choir** (YCC) is a choir group that provides special worship music for the Congregation at any of the worship services and events throughout the year. All unconfirmed children are welcome to join.
- Ro1.02** The following is the approved list of **Ministries** at First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Floresville, Texas:
- a. **Sonshine Ark Preschool and Daycare** is a ministry of Christian and Pre-K education and childcare offered to the parents and guardians of the Floresville and Wilson County area. Children from age six-weeks to 12 years can enroll.
  - b. **Prayer Shawl Ministry** is a ministry of care and comfort to those who are ill, recovering from crisis, or transitioning into a life change. Women or men are welcome to join this outreach service ministry of the Congregation.
  - c. **Helping Hands** is a ministry of food, care, and comfort extended to families after a funeral at the death of a loved one. Women or men are welcome to join this outreach service ministry of the Congregation.
  - d. **Quiet Communion** is a ministry of Word and Sacrament, as well as lunchtime fellowship for semi-homebound and other seniors and guests. Women and men are welcome to join the serving groups of this ministry.
  - e. **Prayer Chain Ministry** is a ministry of directed prayer for the needs and requests of the Congregation. All confirmed members of the Congregation are welcome to join.
  - f. **Quilting Hands Ministry** is a ministry of care and comfort to mission fields across the world. Women or men are welcome to join this global outreach service ministry of the Congregation.
- Ro1.03** The following is the approved lists of **Teams** at First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Floresville, Texas:
- a. The **Ambassadors for Christ** is the visitation team of the Congregation that provide contact with visitors, prospective members, inactive members, members who are ill or infirm, those requesting home communion, those requesting anointing for healing, and those in crisis. Women and men who have a heart for serving and can love people in Christ are welcome to join.

- b. The ***Sunday School Board*** is the team of teachers and assistants who administer Christian education ministry of the Congregation. This team selects and orders curricula, keeps records of attendance and offerings, plans events, oversees and supports the other Christian education classes beyond the Sunday school program.
- c. The ***Long-Range Planning Team*** is a visioning team of the Congregation that helps set future goals for ministries, facilities, and organizational structure for the life of the Congregation. Women or men may be part of this team who are nominated by and appointed by the Congregation Council.
- d. The ***Finance Team*** is the budget planning team for the Congregation. Members of this team are nominated by the Treasurer and appointed by the Congregation Council.
- e. The ***Usher Team*** is a group of service teams who provide logistical support for the Congregation during worship. Women or men who have a heart to serve others may join one of these teams.
- f. The ***Altar Guild*** is a group of service teams who prepare and care for the worship appointments-altar linens, paraments, communion ware, etc. for the worship needs of the Congregation. Women or men who have a heart to support the ministry of worship may join one of these teams.
- g. The ***Acolyte Team*** is a group of service teams who support the worship leaders and pastor during worship. Elementary age children through adults who have a heart for assisting in worship may join one of these teams.
- h. The ***Worship Assistants*** are a team of assisting worship leaders who are trained by the pastor to perform the duties of an *Assisting Minister* during worship. Women or men who have a heart for orderly and meaningful worship experiences may apply to the pastor to be trained for this ministry.
- i. The ***Committee of Tellers*** is a team that does the accounting for the offering received after the worship services of the congregation, prepare the bank deposit, and secure the receipts until the deposit is delivered and received by the bank. Any confirmed member who has a heart for financial accountability may join one of the teller teams.
- j. The ***Audit Team*** is an appointed committee of three (3) persons charged with auditing all the financial accounts of the Congregation, which are approved by the Congregation Council.
- k. The ***Stewardship Team*** is a short term committee of at least three (3) voting members, appointed by the Congregation Council, charged with formulation of a stewardship emphasis program for the Congregation, beginning in August and concluding by the end of November each calendar year. A Congregation Council Elder will be a member of this committee overseeing the work of the team.

## **APPENDIX-A: The Common Confession (2005)**

1. The Lord Jesus Christ
  - a. We are people who believe and confess our faith in the Triune God-Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We trust and believe in Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord.
2. The Gospel of Salvation
  - a. We believe and confess that all human beings are sinners, and that sinners are redeemed by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. God alone justifies human beings by faith in Christ—a faith that God creates through the message of the Gospel. As ambassadors for Christ, God uses us to speak His Word and build His kingdom.
3. The Authority of Scripture
  - a. We believe and confess that the Bible is God’s revealed Word to us, spoken in Law and Gospel. The Bible is the final authority for us in all matters of our faith and life.
4. A Common Confession of Faith
  - a. We accept and uphold that the Lutheran Confessions reliably guide us as faithful interpretations of Scripture, and that we share a unity and fellowship in faith with others among whom the Gospel of Jesus Christ is preached and the Sacraments are administered in accordance with the Gospel.
5. The Priesthood of All Believers
  - a. 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.
6. Marriage and Family
  - a. We believe and confess that the marriage of male and female is an institution created and blessed by God. From marriage, God forms families to serve as the building blocks of all human civilization and community. We teach and practice that sexual activity belongs exclusively within the Biblical boundaries of a faithful marriage between one man and one woman.
7. The Mission and Ministry of the Congregation
  - a. We believe and confess that the church is the assembly of believers called and gathered by God around Word and Sacrament, and that the mission and ministry of the church is carried out within the context of individual congregations, which are able to work together locally and globally.

## APPENDIX-B: From the Model Constitution of the NALC

*The following confession of Faith and Church Affiliation was directly received from the NALC as printed below.*

### Chapter 2

#### CONFESSION OF FAITH

This Congregation incorporates Article 2 of the Constitution of the North American Lutheran Church (the “NALC”), confessing:

- 2.01 The Triune God-Father, Son, and Holy Spirit<sup>1</sup>**
- 2.02. Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and the Gospel as the power of God for the salvation of all who believe.**
  - a. Jesus Christ is the Word of God incarnate, through whom everything was made and through whose life, death, and resurrection God fashions a new creation.**
  - b. The proclamation of God’s message to us as both Law and Gospel is the Word of God, revealing judgment and mercy through word and deed, beginning with the Word in creation, continuing in the history of Israel, and centering in all its fullness in the person and work of Jesus Christ.**
  - c. The canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the written Word of God. Inspired by 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.**
- 2.03. 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, "according to which all doctrines should and must be judged." (Formula of Concord, Epitome, Part I)**
- 2.04. The Apostles’, Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds as true declarations of the faith of the Church.**
- 2.05. The Unaltered Augsburg Confession as a true witness to the Gospel, acknowledging as one with it in faith and doctrine all churches that likewise accept the teachings of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession.**
- 2.06. 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. The Gospel, recorded in the Holy Scriptures and confessed in the ecumenical creeds and Lutheran confessional writings, as the power of God to create and sustain the Church for God’s mission in the world.**

### Chapter 6.

#### CHURCH AFFILIATION

- 6.01. This congregation is a member of the NALC or any successor and is subject to the procedures of the NALC.**

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<sup>1</sup> The NALC does not require Congregations to adopt a particular Constitution. However, it does require a subscription to the NALC Constitution and to the NALC Confession of Faith. By adopting Chapter 2, Section 6.02, and Section 6.03 (c) and (d) from this model, all shown in bold, a Congregation complies with these requirements.

- 6.02. This congregation subscribes to the constitution of the NALC and will act in accordance with it.**
- 6.03.** This congregation will conduct its ministry in a manner consistent with its membership in the NALC:
- 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 NALC, including the prayerful consideration of appropriate financial support.
  - c. This congregation shall call only pastors who are members of the NALC or otherwise are authorized by the NALC to serve.**
  - d. This congregation shall appoint only commissioned lay leaders who are members of the NALC or otherwise are authorized by the NALC to serve.**
- 6.04.** Affiliation with the NALC may be terminated as follows:
- a. This congregation dissolves.
  - b. This congregation ceases to exist.
  - c. This congregation is removed from membership in the NALC according to the procedures for discipline of the NALC.
  - d. This congregation, at a legally called and conducted special meeting, approves by at least a [*insert percentage if greater than simple majority*] majority of those present and voting a resolution directing that this congregation withdraw from the NALC. If this congregation adopts a resolution withdrawing from the NALC, all provisions of this constitution binding this congregation to the NALC shall be immediately ineffective. The congregation shall promptly deliver a copy of the withdrawal resolution to the NALC General Secretary.