

BYLAWS TO THE CONSTITUTION

OUR REDEEMER'S LUTHERAN BRETHREN CHURCH

Revised as of February 3rd, 2025

(with 02/03/2025 proposed changes)

ARTICLE I – CONGREGATIONAL LEADERSHIP

A. Pastor(s)

1. The Call Committee is responsible for calling the pastor(s) who will shepherd the congregation.
2. The Call Committee shall be composed of:
 - a. The chairman of the congregation
 - b. All pastors
 - c. No less than two (2) elders (non-pastoral)
 - d. ~~All ministry boards and standing committees shall be offered the opportunity to appoint one (1) representative. The Business Administrator~~
 - e. Two (2) non-pastoral staff members
 - f. ~~Two (2) Five (5)~~ active members from the congregation at large, **appointed by the Board of Elders.**
3. The Call Committee shall be chaired by the chairman of the congregation. In consultation with the synodical president, it shall evaluate the needs of the congregation and seek candidates for consideration.
 - a. Once a candidate has been identified, the Call Committee shall present the candidate to the congregation. The congregation shall be notified no less than ten (10) days prior to the presentation of the candidate.
 - b. The Call Committee shall schedule an informal meeting to receive feedback from the congregation no more than ten (10) days after the presentation of the candidate.
 - c. No more than ten (10) days after the meeting, the Call Committee will vote to determine whether or not to extend a letter of call to the candidate.
 - d. The candidate must receive a two-thirds (2/3) vote of approval by the call committee.

4. The dismissal of a pastor shall take place according to the same process as the dismissal of an elder.

B. Ministry Support Staff

1. Ministry Support Staff positions will be created by the Board of Elders.
2. A detailed description of each Ministry Support Staff position shall be included in the policy manual.
3. Business Administrator
 - a. The Business Administrator is accountable to the Board of Elders.
 - b. The Business Administrator shall provide monthly financial and facility reports to the Board of Trustees and the Our Redeemer's Christian School Board.
 - c. A detailed description of the Business Administrator's role and responsibilities is included in the Business Administrator's job description.

C. The Board of Elders

1. Election
 - a. The Board of Elders shall prepare a list of prospective elder candidates. These prospective candidates will be contacted to determine if they are interested in serving as elders. Those that wish to serve as elders are then considered elder candidates.
 - b. The Board of Elders will then introduce these elder candidates to the congregation via mail, email, or another designated method.
 - c. The elder candidate will generally serve a year before being recommended for a vote of confidence as an elder at an annual or special congregational meeting. It is at the discretion of the Board of Elders if this elder candidacy period is shorter or longer than one year. Ordained pastoral candidates will become elders upon acceptance of a call to serve as pastor at Our Redeemer's Lutheran Brethren Church.
 - d. Election to the Board of Elders requires a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the active members in attendance at that meeting.
2. Additionally, the Board of Elders shall:
 - a. Determine the date and time for the annual, and any special business meetings, or any other informational meetings.
 - b. Develop, promote, and supervise a continuing program of evangelism and

discipleship with activities suited for all congregational age groups. They shall provide the leadership for this program and shall recruit, and train lay leaders from the congregation to carry it out.

3. Dismissal of an Elder/Pastor - An elder/pastor who violates the responsibility of his office, or does not receive the vote of confidence at an annual business meeting, may be removed from the office by applying the following procedure:

- a. The office of elder/pastor comes up for review every three years on a rotating basis at which time both the elder and the congregation are free to express themselves as to his continued service. This "vote of confidence" requires a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the active members in attendance at a duly convened annual business meeting. If the elder does not receive a two-thirds (2/3) vote of confidence, the matter will be sent to the Board of Elders.

Alternatively, an elder/pastor or other member of the congregation may bring a charge before the entire Board of Elders which will carefully review its validity.

- b. The elder/pastor in question must be allowed to answer the charge in person before the board but will leave the room during the discussion of his case and final vote.
 - c. If, by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of all elders excluding the elder/pastor in question, the board concurs with the charge, the elder/pastor shall forfeit his position and duties, or, at his discretion, be allowed to gracefully resign.
 - d. The Board of Elders shall, to the greatest extent practical, follow all Biblical guidance and/or procedure in matters of discipline.
 - e. Upon the dismissal of an elder/pastor, the Board of Elders shall call a congregational meeting for communication and feedback. Upon the resignation of an elder, the Board of Elders shall communicate this event to the active church members in a timely and effective manner, whether that be at a congregational meeting, via mail, email, or another designated method.

4. Voluntary Change of Status

- a. An elder may retire because of ill health, advanced age, or for any other valid reason.
 - b. An elder may take a leave of absence with the approval of the Board of Elders.
 - c. An elder may, upon recommendation of the Board of Elders, become an elder emeritus.

- d. **Non-pastoral Elders may serve six (6) years and then are required to take a six (6) months to one (1) year sabbatical. Not more than two (2) Elders may be on sabbatical at a time.**

ARTICLE II – MINISTRY BOARDS AND STANDING COMMITTEES

All boards and standing committees of the congregation operate under the authority of the Board of Elders.

A. General Provisions

1. Board Provisions

- a. A quorum of more than fifty (50) percent of voting board members is required at meetings to conduct business.
- b. Filling an unexpired term does not constitute a full term.
- c. If a ministry board has a vacancy, the Board of Elders may appoint a replacement. The appointee will appear on the ballot for election at the next annual business meeting of the congregation to fill the remainder of the unexpired term.
- d. Boards will conduct closed meetings consisting only of the members, ex-officio members, and any invited non-member guests.
- e. Ex-officio members of the board have all the same rights, privileges, duties and obligations as any other board member. Ex-officio members serve on the board for as long as they hold the title or position that provides them with board membership. As with all other board members, ex officio board members must always act in the organization's best interest.
- f. Any guests must be invited by the Board Chairperson, and generally attend to speak towards a specific item of business at a particular board meeting.
- g. ~~Individuals may not serve as a board or committee member if they have immediate family employed by the church. If a family member accepts employment by the church, an immediate family member currently serving on a board or committee will resign from that board or committee prior to the relative beginning their employment. The Board of Elders may vote to waive this requirement if the situation is deemed necessary or prudent.~~
Individuals may serve as a board or committee member regardless of whether they have immediate family members employed by the church. In areas of discussion or a vote where conflicts of interest occur, it is the mutual obligation of the member and the board/committee chairperson to identify and recuse the member of involvement in topics of conflicting personal and group interest. The Board of Elders may vote to

intercede if the situation is deemed necessary or prudent.

2. Standing Committee Provisions

- a. A quorum of more than fifty (50) percent of voting committee members is required at meetings to conduct business.
- b. Upon the recommendation of the Committee Chairperson and the Executive Pastor, Standing Committee members will be appointed by the Elder Board Chairman with Board of Elder approval.
- c. Standing Committee members will not have a defined term of service.

B. Board of Trustees - This board shall:

1. Be composed of a minimum of five (5) active members of the congregation and a minimum of two one (1) representatives from the Board of Elders appointed on an annual basis.
2. The Business Administrator will serve as an ex-officio member of this board.
3. Have a term of office consisting of three (3) years and limited to two (2) consecutive terms.
4. Oversee the management of the facilities and the financial affairs of the congregation under the direction of the Board of Elders and submit reports to the Board of Elders and all congregational business meetings.
5. Work with the Business Administrator to efficiently and effectively manage all real and personal property belonging to the congregation.
6. Transact all other business of the congregation assigned it at a congregational business meeting or by the Board of Elders.

C. Our Redeemer's Christian School Board - This board shall:

1. Provide for and promote the opportunity for education in a Christian environment to the families of Minot and the surrounding area.
2. Have a term of office consisting of three (3) years and limited to two (2) consecutive terms.
3. Consist of sixteen (16) members where:
 - a. Seven (7) of these board members must be active members of Our Redeemer's Lutheran Brethren Church.
 - b. Four (4) board members shall be non-members of Our Redeemer's

Lutheran Brethren Church who are confessing Christians from within the school body and/or the community at large.

- c. The remaining five (5) board members are ex-officio members consisting of the Executive Pastor, Business Administrator, School Administrator, an Assistant School Administrator, and an Elder Representative appointed by the Board of Elders on an annual basis. The Assistant School Administrator will be a non-voting board member.
- d. The chair and vice-chair of the board shall be active members of Our Redeemer's Lutheran Brethren Church.

4. Recommend School Administrator candidates to the Board of Elders for approval to call or recommend for dismissal.
5. In concert with the School Administrator, oversee the educational and extracurricular programs, as well as other functions, of Our Redeemer's Christian School.
6. Submit annually an itemized budget of projected income and expenditures to the Board of Trustees.

D. Nominating Board - This board shall:

1. Be composed of:
 - a. the Business Administrator
 - b. two (2) elders selected by the Board of Elders
 - c. three (3) active members elected by the congregation at the annual business meeting.
2. Present a candidate for each elective office (with the exception of elders, whose nominations will be made by the Board of Elders) which must be filled at the annual meeting.
3. Have a term of office for the elected members consisting of one (1) year and limited to two (2) consecutive terms.

E. Children's Ministries Standing Committee - This standing committee shall:

1. Provide for the spiritual development of the children (preschool through grade 5) of the congregation through Sunday school, mid-week children's ministry, Vacation Bible School, or other appropriate programs.
2. Serve and support the Children's Ministries staff. The Children's Ministry Director will serve as the chairperson of the committee.

3. Select or supervise, in conjunction with the Board of Elders, the selection of curricula, texts, and other educational materials to be used by the various groups and programs under its supervision.
4. Submit annually an itemized proposed budget of projected income and expenditures to the Board of Trustees.

F. Student Ministries Standing Committee - This standing committee shall:

1. Organize, supervise, and encourage appropriate activities in order to foster the spiritual growth of and provide Christian fellowship opportunities for the youth (grades 6-12). The initiation and oversight of discipling activities among the youth will be a paramount duty.
2. Provide Sunday school or Bible study classes and participation in other available Christian educational activities for the youth in the congregation.
3. Serve and support the Student Ministry staff. The Student Ministries Director will serve as the chairperson of the committee.
4. Submit annually an itemized proposed budget of projected income and expenditures to the Board of Trustees.

ARTICLE III – MEETINGS

A. Annual Congregational Business Meeting

1. The annual business meeting of the congregation shall be held on or before March 1st.
2. Active members shall be notified by mail, email, or another designated method not less than ten (10) days or more than fifty (50) days prior to the meeting.
3. Only active members who have attained legal voting age shall be eligible to vote at this meeting. However, all parishioners of the congregation are also to be encouraged to attend and may be given speaking rights by vote of the congregation.
4. At the annual meeting, the officers and board members of the congregation shall be elected, and the budget approved. Reports from the officers, Board of Elders, and other boards and committees shall be presented.

B. Special Business Meetings

1. Special business meetings may be held as often as deemed necessary by the Board of Elders. In the event of a special meeting, the notice shall contain the purpose of the meeting (Note – this section is North Dakota law).

2. All active members shall be notified by mail, email, or another designated method not less than seven (7) days or more than fifty (50) days prior to the meeting. In the case of an urgent need, as determined by the Board of Elders and Board of Trustees, a special business meeting may be called in less than seven (7) days with members being notified by telephone or another electronic method.

C. Quorum

1. A quorum of twenty-five (25) percent of the active members is required at every business meeting of the congregation in order to transact legal business.
2. Active members may notify the church office of their inability to attend a business meeting. Those individuals will not be counted in the number needed to reach a quorum as long as one (1) of the following conditions are met:
 - a. The member is out of town and it is impractical for them to return for the meeting.
 - b. The member is experiencing prolonged illness or another condition or circumstance that makes attendance impractical.

D. Meeting Procedures

1. Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, shall govern all annual and special business meetings except when it is in contradiction with the church constitution or bylaws.

ARTICLE IV – LIMITS TO EXPENDITURES

Non-budgeted Expenditures exceeding \$100,000.00 must be approved by the congregation, except in the case of emergencies. No long-term debt exceeding \$15,000.00 shall be incurred without the approval of the active members at a special or annual business meeting.

ARTICLE V – BUDGETING PROCESS

- A. The Business Administrator, working with the Board of Trustees, will contact the church's boards, standing committees, and other volunteer ministry leaders asking that all budget requests be submitted to the Business Administrator in late September/early October of each year.
- B. The Business Administrator will compile the initial budget, including all unadjusted funding requests they have received from the church's boards, standing committees, and volunteer ministry leaders. This initial proposed budget will be then presented to the Board of Trustees to begin the review and preparation of the upcoming year's budget.
- C. The Board of Trustees will initiate the formation of the Budget Committee, asking the Board of Elders to appoint elder representatives to this committee. All Trustee board members may serve on this committee, or alternatively the Board of Trustees may appoint board members to serve with the elder representatives on this committee.

- D. Numerous Budget Committee meetings may be held, with this committee communicating throughout this process with both the Board of Elders and the Board of Trustees.
- E. The Joint Boards will meet to review the final budget before release to the church members, with the Board of Elders formally making a motion for approval and release to the church's active members.
- F. The Board of Trustees shall notify all active members when the proposed budget is available for review.
- G. Active members shall have no less than ten (10) days to submit a written request to amend the proposed budget to the Board of Trustees using a provided form.
- H. The Board of Elders and the Board of Trustees shall consider all requests, and if amended, release an amended budget within fourteen (14) days.
- I. All active members shall be notified of the congregational budget review meeting to be held after members have had sufficient time to review the amended budget. No changes may be made to the proposed or amended budget at this meeting.
- J. All active members who attend the budget review meeting will vote to approve a budget to be sent to the annual business meeting for final approval.

ARTICLE VI – FINANCIAL AUDIT

There will be an annual financial audit or review conducted by a qualified independent auditor.

- A. The audit shall include all ministries and functions of Our Redeemer's Lutheran Brethren Church.
- B. The audit shall be scheduled by the Board of Trustees in cooperation with the Treasurer and Business Administrator.
- C. The Board of Elders will be the official recipient of the report from the auditor.
- D. The Board of Trustees, working with the Board of Elders, will be responsible for reviewing the report in detail and implementing any changes required from the auditor's report and any associated recommendations.
- E. A copy of the report shall be available in the church office for review by any active member of Our Redeemer's Lutheran Brethren Church.