



**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

**CONSTITUTION, BYLAWS AND CONTINUING
RESOLUTIONS**

FOR

**FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH,
COLUMBIA HEIGHTS, MN**

DRAFT 11.01.2022

2022

***PREAMBLE**

We, baptized members of the Church of 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.

Chapter 1.

NAME AND INCORPORATION

- C1.01.** The name of this congregation shall be [First Lutheran Church of Columbia Heights, Minnesota.](#)
- C1.02.** For the purpose of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws, the congregation of [First Lutheran Church of Columbia Heights, Minnesota](#) is hereinafter designated as "this congregation."
- C1.11.** This congregation shall be incorporated under the laws of the State [of Minnesota.](#)

Chapter 2.

CONFESSION OF FAITH

- *C2.01.** This congregation confesses the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- *C2.02.** This congregation confesses Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and the Gospel as the power of God for the salvation of all who believe.
 - a. Jesus Christ is the Word of God incarnate, through whom everything was made and through whose life, death, and resurrection God fashions a new creation.
 - b. The proclamation of God's message to us as both Law and Gospel is the Word of God, revealing 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 God's Spirit speaking through their authors, they record and announce God's revelation centering in Jesus Christ. Through them God's Spirit speaks to us to create and sustain Christian faith and fellowship for service in the world.
- *C2.03.** This congregation accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life.
- *C2.04.** This congregation accepts the Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds as true declarations of the faith of this congregation.
- *C2.05.** This congregation accepts 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.
- *C2.06.** This congregation accepts the other confessional writings in the Book of Concord, namely, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles and the Treatise, the Small Catechism, the Large Catechism, and the Formula of Concord, as further valid interpretations of the faith of the Church.
- *C2.07.** This congregation confesses the Gospel, recorded in the Holy Scripture 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

- *C3.01.** All power in the Church belongs to our Lord Jesus Christ, its head. All actions of this congregation are to be carried out under his rule and authority.
- *C3.02.** This church confesses the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church and is resolved to serve Christian unity throughout the world.
- *C3.03.** 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 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,

* Required provision

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.

- *C3.04. This church, inspired and led by the Holy Spirit, participates in The Lutheran World Federation as a global communion of churches, engaging in faithful witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ and in service for the sake of God's mission in the world.
- *C3.05. The name Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA or "this church") as used herein refers in general references to this whole church, including its three expressions: congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization. The name Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is also the name of the corporation of the churchwide organization to which specific references may be made herein.

Chapter 4.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

- *C4.01. 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.
- *C4.02. 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 ministry 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, justice, and equality for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations, and standing in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, and committing itself 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.
- *C4.03. 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 this congregation's ministry and the ministry of the other expressions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - h. Foster and participate in interdependent relationships with other congregations, the synod, and the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - i. Foster and participate in ecumenical relationships consistent with churchwide policy.
- *C4.04. 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 Committees.]
- *C4.05. This congregation shall adopt and periodically review a mission statement which will provide specific direction for its programs.

C4.05.01 First Lutheran Church of Columbia Heights, Mn. Mission Narrative: Living Connected...to God and each other! At First Lutheran Church we are called in connection with God, each other and our neighbors in and beyond Columbia Heights, Mn. God connects with us through the reconciling act of Jesus Christ and the daily ministry of God’s spirit. We connect to God as a spiritual community through worship and prayer, study and the sacraments, and mutual support and service. This sacred connection calls us into relationship with our neighbors with whom God’s love has knit us together. We connect especially to the neighborhood and its youth who have been an essential part of our story from the very beginning when a rural ministry to immigrant children evolved into a long-standing and ever-present calling to love, nurture, and mentor young people in our community. As our neighborhood and world changes we commit to adjust as well, making space for growth, healing, generosity, and community-building. We will honor each other’s diverse stories and continue living connected to God and to each other. We rely on God’s spirit to guide us.

***C4.06.** References herein to the nature of the relationship between the three expressions of this church—congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization—as being interdependent or as being in a partnership relationship describe the mutual responsibility of these expressions in God’s mission and the fulfillment of the purposes of this church as described in this chapter, and do not imply or describe the creation of partnerships, co-ventures, agencies, or other legal relationships recognized in civil law.

Chapter 5. POWERS OF THE CONGREGATION

***C5.01.** The powers of this congregation are those necessary to fulfill its purpose.

***C5.02.** The powers of this congregation are vested in the Congregation Meeting called and conducted as provided in this constitution and bylaws.

***C5.03.** 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 this congregation. This 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 a minister of Word and Service;
- d. terminate the call of a minister of Word and Service in conformity with the constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;
- e. adopt amendments to the constitution, as provided in Chapter 16, amendments to the bylaws, as specified in Chapter 17, and continuing resolutions, as provided in Chapter 18;
- f. approve the annual budget;
- g. acquire real and personal property by gift, devise, purchase, or other lawful means;
- h. hold title to and use its property for any and all activities consistent with its purpose;
- i. sell, mortgage, lease, transfer, or otherwise dispose of its property by any lawful means;
- j. elect its officers and Congregation Council and require them to carry out their duties in accordance with the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions and
- k. terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as provided in Chapter 6.

***C5.04.** This congregation shall elect from among its voting members laypersons to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly as well as persons to represent it at meetings of any conference, cluster, coalition, or other area subdivision of which it is a member. The number of persons to be elected by this congregation and other qualifications shall be as prescribed in guidelines established by the Minneapolis Area Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Chapter 6. CHURCH AFFILIATION

***C6.01.** This congregation shall be an interdependent part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or its successor, and of the Minneapolis Area Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. This congregation is subject to the discipline of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

***C6.02.** This congregation accepts the Confession of Faith and agrees to the purposes of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and shall act in accordance with them.

- *C6.03.** This congregation acknowledges its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in which:
- a. This congregation agrees to be responsible for its life as a Christian community.
 - b. This congregation pledges its financial support and participation in the life and mission of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - c. This congregation agrees to call pastoral leadership from the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in accordance with its call procedures except in special circumstances and with the approval of the bishop of the synod. These special circumstances are limited either to calling a candidate approved for the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or to contracting for pastoral services with a minister of Word and Sacrament of a church body with which the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America officially has established a relationship of full communion.
 - d. This congregation agrees to consider ministers of Word and Service for call to other staff positions in this congregation according to the procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - e. This congregation agrees to file this constitution and any subsequent changes to this constitution with the synod for review to ascertain that all of its provisions are in agreement with the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and with the constitution of the synod.
- *C6.04.** Affiliation with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is terminated as follows:
- a. This congregation takes action to dissolve.
 - b. This congregation ceases to exist.
 - c. This congregation is removed from membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America according to the procedures for discipline of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or in accordance with provision 9.23. of the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - d. The [Minneapolis Area Synod](#) takes charge and control of the property of this congregation to hold, manage, and convey the same on behalf of the synod pursuant to †S13.24. of the synod constitution. This congregation shall have the right to appeal the decision to the next Synod Assembly.
 - e. This congregation follows the procedures outlined in *C6.05.
- *C6.05.** This congregation may terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America by the following procedure:
- a. A resolution indicating the intent to terminate its relationship must be adopted at two legally called and conducted special meetings of this congregation by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present at each meeting. The first such meeting may be held no sooner than 30 days after written notice of the meeting is received by the bishop of the synod, during which time this congregation shall consult with the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any. The times and manner of the consultation shall be determined by the bishop in consultation with the Congregation Council. Unless [the bishop and/or the bishop's designees are](#) voting members of this congregation, [they](#) shall have voice but not vote at the first meeting.
 - b. Within 10 days after the resolution has been voted upon at the first meeting, the secretary of this congregation shall submit a copy of the resolution to the bishop, attesting that the special meeting was legally called and conducted and certifying the outcome of the vote, and shall send copies of the resolution and certification to voting members of this congregation.
 - c. If the resolution was adopted by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present at the first meeting, the bishop of the synod and this congregation shall continue in consultation, as specified in paragraph a. above, during a period of at least 90 days after receipt by the bishop of the attestation and certification as specified in paragraph b. above.
 - d. If this congregation, after such consultation, is still considering termination of its relationship with this church, such action may be taken at a legally called and conducted special meeting by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present. Notice of the second meeting shall be sent to all voting members and to the bishop at least 10 days in advance of the meeting. Unless [the bishop and/or the bishop's designees are](#) voting members of this congregation, [they](#) shall have voice but not vote at the second meeting.
 - e. Within 10 days after the resolution has been voted upon, the secretary of this congregation shall submit a copy of the resolution to the bishop, attesting that the second special meeting was legally called and conducted and certifying the outcome of the vote, and shall send copies of the resolution and certification to the voting members of the congregation. If the resolution was adopted by a two-thirds

vote of the voting members present at the second meeting, the relationship between the congregation and this church shall be terminated subject to Synod Council approval as required by paragraphs f. and g. below.

- f. Unless this notification to the bishop also certifies that this congregation has voted to affiliate with another Lutheran denomination, this congregation shall be deemed an independent or non-Lutheran church, in which case *C7.04. shall apply.
 - g. This congregation shall abide by these covenants by and among the three expressions of this church:
 - 1) Congregations seeking to terminate their relationship with this church which fail or refuse to comply with each of the foregoing provisions in *C6.05. shall be required to receive Synod Council approval before terminating their membership in this church.
 - 2) Congregations which had been members of the Lutheran Church in America shall be required, in addition to complying with the foregoing provisions in *C6.05., to receive synod approval before terminating their membership in this church.
 - 3) Congregations established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be required, in addition to complying with the foregoing provisions in *C6.05., to satisfy all financial obligations to this church and receive Synod Council approval before terminating their membership in this church.
 - h. If this congregation fails to achieve the required two-thirds vote of voting members present at this congregation's first meeting as specified in paragraph a. above or fails to achieve the required two-thirds vote of voting members present at this congregation's second meeting as specified in paragraph d. above, another attempt to consider termination of relationship with this church must follow all requirements of *C6.05. and may begin no sooner than six months after the meeting at which the two-thirds vote was not achieved.
- *C6.06.** If this congregation considers relocation, it shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located and the appropriate unit of the churchwide organization before any steps are taken leading to such action. The approval of the Synod Council shall be received before any such action is taken.
- *C6.07.** If this congregation considers developing an additional site to be used regularly for worship, it shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located and the appropriate unit of the churchwide organization before any steps are taken leading to such action.

Chapter 7.

PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

- *C7.01.** If this congregation ceases to exist, title to undisposed property shall pass to the [Minneapolis Area Synod](#) of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- *C7.02.** If this congregation is removed from membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America according to its procedure for discipline or pursuant to 9.23. of the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, title to property shall continue to reside in this congregation.
- *C7.03.** If 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, provided the process for termination of relationship in *C6.05. has been followed. Before this congregation takes action to transfer to another Lutheran church body, it shall consult with representatives of the [Minneapolis Area Synod](#).
- *C7.04.** If 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 and have followed the process for termination of relationship in *C6.05., title to property of this congregation shall continue to reside in this congregation only with the consent of the Synod Council. The Synod Council, after consultation with this congregation by the process established by the synod, may give approval to the request to become independent or to relate to a non-Lutheran church body, in which case title shall remain with the majority of this congregation. If the Synod Council fails to give such approval, title shall remain with those members who desire to continue as a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. In neither case does title to this congregation's property transfer to the synod.
- *C7.05.** Notwithstanding the provisions of *C7.02. and *C7.03. above, where this congregation has received property from the synod pursuant to a deed or other instrument containing restrictions under provision 9.71.a. of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, this congregation accepts such restrictions 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 Synod Council.
- b. Shall—upon written demand by the Synod Council, pursuant to †S13.23. of the constitution of the [Minneapolis Area Synod](#) reconvey and transfer all right, title, and interest in the property to the synod.

Chapter 8. MEMBERSHIP

***C8.01.** 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.

***C8.02.** 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. Such confirmed members, during the current or preceding calendar year, shall have communed in this congregation and shall have made a contribution of record to this 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 this congregation as well as the other rights and privileges ascribed to voting members by the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws. They shall not have voted as a seasonal member of another congregation of this church in the previous two calendar months.
- d. **Associate** members are persons holding membership in other ELCA congregations who wish to retain such membership but desire to participate in the life and mission of this congregation. These individuals have all the privileges and duties of membership except voting rights or other rights and privileges ascribed to voting members by the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.
- e. **Seasonal** members are voting members of other congregations of this church who wish to retain such membership but desire to participate in the life and mission of this congregation, including exercising limited voting rights in this congregation. The Congregation Council may grant seasonal membership to such persons provided that this congregation is a member of a synod where the Synod Council has approved seasonal member voting on its territory. Such seasonal members shall have all the privileges and duties of voting members except that:
 - 1) they shall not be eligible for elected office in, or for membership on the Congregation Council or on a call committee of, this congregation;
 - 2) they shall not have the right to vote on any matter concerning or affecting the call or termination of call of any minister of this congregation;
 - 3) they shall not have the right to vote on any matter concerning or affecting the affiliation of this congregation with this church;
 - 4) they shall not be eligible to serve as voting members from this congregation of the Synod Assembly or the Churchwide Assembly;
 - 5) they shall not, even if otherwise permitted by this congregation, vote by proxy or by absentee ballot; and
 - 6) they shall not, within any two calendar month period, exercise voting rights in this congregation and in the congregation where they remain voting members.

[C8.02.01](#) In the absence of accurate and available records regarding members who have communed with the congregation and have made a contribution of record to First Lutheran Church of Columbia Heights, Minnesota, a member of any classification (other than “Baptized”) will be considered a “Voting Member” by virtue of their being named in the First Lutheran Church of Columbia Heights, Minnesota official roster of members.

***C8.03.** All applications for confirmed membership shall be submitted to and shall require the approval of the Congregation Council.

***C8.04.** It shall be the privilege and duty of members of this congregation to:

- a. make regular use of the means of grace, 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, the synod, and the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America through contributions of their time, abilities, and financial support as biblical stewards.

***C8.05.** Membership in this congregation shall be terminated by any of the following:

- a. death;
- b. resignation;
- c. transfer or release;
- d. disciplinary action in accordance with Chapter 20 of the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; or
- e. removal from the roll due to inactivity in accordance with the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.

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

[C8.05.01 A member who, in the judgement of the pastor\(s\) and the Congregational Council, shows no interest in attending church services and who has not made a contribution of record to First Lutheran Church of Columbia Heights, Mn. for a period of two \(2\) years shall be called upon by the pastor\(s\). If in the opinion of the pastor\(s\) the member no longer desires membership in First Lutheran Church of Columbia Heights, Mn., then they will lose their right to vote and will no longer be counted as a member \(as defined in C8.02.\).](#)

Chapter 9. ROSTERED MINISTER

***C9.01.** Authority to call a pastor shall be in this congregation by at least a two-thirds vote of voting members present and voting at a meeting legally called for that purpose. Before a call is issued, the officers, or a committee elected by this congregation to recommend the call, shall seek the advice and help of the bishop of the synod.

***C9.02.** Only a member of the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or a candidate for the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament who has been recommended for this congregation by the synod bishop may be called as a pastor of this congregation.

***C9.03.** Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,

- a. Every minister of Word and Sacrament shall:
 - 1) preach the Word;
 - 2) administer the sacraments;
 - 3) conduct public worship;
 - 4) provide pastoral care;
 - 5) seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel;
 - 6) impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through available channels of effective communication;
 - 7) witness to the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation, and abroad; and
 - 8) speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, [advocating dignity, justice, and equality for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, and embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations.](#)
- b. Each pastor with a congregational call shall, within the congregation:
 - 1) offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead;
 - 2) relate to all schools and organizations of this congregation;
 - 3) install regularly elected members of the Congregation Council;
 - 4) with the council, administer discipline;
 - 5) endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the churchwide organization and of the [Minneapolis Area Synod](#); and
 - 6) encourage adherence to covenantal relationship with this church as expressed in the *Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.

***C9.04.** 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 of the synod.

***C9.05.** The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between a minister of Word and Sacrament and this congregation shall be as follows:

- a. The call of this congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment, which shall be terminated only by the pastor's death or, following consultation with the synod bishop, for any of 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, no later than 30 days after the date on which it was submitted;
 - 3) inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in this congregation in view of local conditions;
 - 4) inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in view of disability or incapacity of the pastor;
 - 5) suspension of the pastor through discipline for more than three months;
 - 6) resignation or removal of the pastor from the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament of this church;
 - 7) termination of the relationship between this church and this congregation;
 - 8) dissolution of this congregation or the termination of a parish arrangement; or
 - 9) suspension of this congregation through discipline for more than six months.
- b. When allegations of disability or incapacity of the pastor under paragraph a.4) above, or ineffective conduct of the pastoral office under paragraph a.3) above, have come to the attention of the bishop of this synod,
 - 1) the bishop who has sole discretion, may investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson, or
 - 2) when such allegations have been brought to the synod's attention 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 this congregation, the bishop personally shall investigate such conditions together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson.
- c. In case of alleged disability or incapacity under paragraph a.4) above, the bishop's committee shall obtain and document competent medical opinion concerning the pastor's condition. When a disability or incapacity is evident to the committee, the bishop of this synod may declare the pastorate vacant. When the pastorate is declared vacant, the Synod Council shall list the pastor on the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament with disability status. Upon resumption of the ability to conduct the office effectively the bishop shall take steps to enable the pastor to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another appropriate call.
- d. In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of this congregation under paragraph a.3) above, the bishop's committee shall endeavor to hear from all concerned persons, after which the bishop together with the committee shall present their recommendations first to the pastor and then to this congregation. The recommendations of the bishop's committee must address whether the pastor's call should come to an end and, if so, may suggest appropriate severance arrangements. The committee may also propose other actions that should be undertaken by this congregation and by the pastor, if appropriate. If the pastor and congregation agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action need be taken by the synod.
- e. If either party fails to assent to the recommendations of the bishop's committee concerning the pastor's call, this congregation may dismiss the pastor only at a legally called meeting after consultation with the bishop, either (a) by a two-thirds 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 majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee recommended termination of the call.
- f. If, in the course of proceedings described in paragraph c. or paragraph d. above, the bishop's committee concludes that there may be grounds for discipline, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action in accordance with the provisions of this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions.

C9.05.01 In the absence of accurate and available records regarding members who have communed with the congregation and have made a contribution of record to First Lutheran Church of Columbia Heights, Minnesota then C9.05 (b) (2) will be satisfied by a minimum of 25 voting members.

***C9.06.** At a time of pastoral vacancy, an interim pastor shall be appointed by the bishop of the synod with the consent of this congregation or the Congregation Council.

- *C9.07.** During the period of service, an interim pastor shall have the rights and duties in this congregation of a regularly called pastor and may delegate the same in part to a supply pastor with the consent of the bishop of the synod and this congregation or Congregation Council. The interim pastor and any rostered minister providing assistance shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a pastor. Unless previously agreed upon by the Synod Council, an interim pastor is not available for a regular call to the congregation served.
- *C9.08.** 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.
- *C9.09.** 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 of the synod. As occasion requires, the documents may be revised through a similar consultation.
- *C9.11.** With the approval of the bishop of the synod, this congregation may depart from *C9.05.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 or a designated representative of the bishop shall meet with the pastor and representatives of this congregation for a review of the call. Such a call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of *C9.05.a.
- *C9.12.** The pastor of this congregation:
- a. shall keep accurate records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from this congregation;
 - b. shall submit a summary of such statistics annually to the synod; 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.
- *C9.13.** The pastor(s) shall submit a report of ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.
- *C9.14.** The records of this congregation shall be maintained by the pastor and shall remain the property of this congregation. The secretary of this congregation shall attest in writing to the bishop of this synod that such records have been placed in [the secretary's](#) hands in good order by a departing pastor before the installation of that pastor in another call or approval of a request for change in roster status.
- C9.15.** Under special circumstances, subject to the approval of the synod bishop and the concurrence of this congregation, a minister of Word and Sacrament of a church body with which the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America officially has established a relationship of full communion may serve temporarily as pastor of this congregation under a contract between this congregation and the pastor in a form proposed by the synod bishop and approved by this congregation.
- *C9.21.** Authority to call a deacon shall be in this congregation by at least a two-thirds vote of voting members present and voting at a meeting legally called for that purpose. Before a call is issued, the officers, or a committee elected by this congregation to recommend the call, shall seek the advice and help of the bishop of the synod.
- *C9.22.** Only a member of the roster of Ministers of Word and Service of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or a candidate for the roster of Ministers of Word and Service who has been recommended for this congregation by the synod bishop may be called as a deacon of this congregation.
- *C9.23.** Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, every minister of Word and Service shall:
- a. Be rooted in the Word of God, for proclamation and service;
 - b. Advocate a prophetic diakonia that commits itself to risk-taking and innovative service on the frontiers of the Church's outreach, giving particular attention to the suffering places in God's world;
 - c. Speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, [advocating dignity, justice, and equality for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, and embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations](#);
 - d. Equip the baptized for ministry in God's world that affirms the gifts of all people;
 - e. Encourage mutual relationships that invite participation and accompaniment of others in God's mission;
 - f. Practice stewardship that respects God's gift of time, talents, and resources;
 - g. Be grounded in a gathered community for ongoing diaconal formation;

- h. Share knowledge of this church and its wider ministry of the gospel and advocate for the work of all expressions of this church; and
 - i. Identify and encourage qualified persons to prepare for ministry of the gospel.
- *C9.24.** The specific duties of the deacon, compensation, and other matters pertaining to the service of the deacon shall be included in a letter of call, which shall be attested by the bishop of the synod.
- *C9.25.** The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between a minister of Word and Service and this congregation shall be as follows:
- a. The call of this congregation, when accepted by a deacon, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment, which shall be terminated only by the deacon's death or, following consultation with the synod bishop, for any of the following reasons:
 - 1) mutual agreement to terminate the call or the completion of a call for a specific term;
 - 2) resignation of the deacon, which shall become effective, unless otherwise agreed, no later than 30 days after the date on which it was submitted;
 - 3) inability to conduct the ministry of Word and Service effectively in this congregation in view of local conditions;
 - 4) inability to conduct the office effectively in view of disability or incapacity of the deacon;
 - 5) suspension of the deacon through discipline for more than three months;
 - 6) resignation or removal of the deacon from the roster of Ministers of Word and Service of this church;
 - 7) termination of the relationship between this church and this congregation;
 - 8) dissolution of this congregation or the termination of a parish arrangement; or
 - 9) suspension of this congregation through discipline for more than six months.
 - b. When allegations of disability or incapacity of the deacon under paragraph a.4) above, or ineffective conduct of the office of minister of Word and Service under paragraph a.3) above, have come to the attention of the bishop of this synod,
 - 1) the bishop who has sole discretion, may investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson, or
 - 2) when such allegations have been brought to the synod's attention 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 this congregation, the bishop personally shall investigate such conditions together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson.
 - c. In case of alleged disability or incapacity under paragraph a.4) above, the bishop's committee shall obtain and document competent medical opinion concerning the deacon's condition. When a disability or incapacity is evident to the committee, the bishop of this synod may declare the position vacant. When the position is declared vacant, the Synod Council shall list the deacon on the roster of Ministers of Word and Service with disability status. Upon resumption of the ability to conduct the office effectively, the bishop shall take steps to enable the deacon to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another appropriate call.
 - d. In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of this congregation under paragraph a.3) above, the bishop's committee shall endeavor to hear from all concerned persons, after which the bishop together with the committee shall present their recommendations first to the deacon and then to this congregation. The recommendations of the bishop's committee must address whether the deacon's call should come to an end and, if so, may suggest appropriate severance arrangements. The committee may also propose other actions that should be undertaken by this congregation and by the deacon, if appropriate. If the deacon and congregation agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action need be taken by the synod.
 - e. If either party fails to assent to the recommendations of the bishop's committee concerning the deacon's call, this congregation may dismiss the deacon only at a legally called meeting after consultation with the bishop, either (a) by a two-thirds 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 majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee recommended termination of the call.
 - f. If, in the course of proceedings described in paragraph c. or paragraph d. above, the bishop's committee concludes that there may be grounds for discipline, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action in accordance with the provisions of this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions.

- *C9.26. This congregation shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to a former deacon before calling a successor. A deacon 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.
- *C9.27. When a deacon is called to serve in company with another rostered minister or other rostered ministers, the privileges and responsibilities of each rostered minister shall be specified in documents to accompany the call and to be drafted in consultation involving the rostered ministers, the Congregation Council, and the bishop of the synod. As occasion requires, the documents may be revised through a similar consultation.
- *C9.28. With the approval of the bishop of the synod, this congregation may depart from *C9.25.a. and call a deacon 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 or a designated representative of the bishop shall meet with the deacon and representatives of this congregation for a review of the call. Such a call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of *C9.25.a.
- *C9.29. The deacon shall become a member of this congregation upon receipt and acceptance of the letter of call. In a parish of multiple congregations, the deacon shall hold membership in one of the congregations.
- *C9.31. The deacon(s) shall submit a report of ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.

Chapter 10.

CONGREGATION MEETING

C10.01. This congregation shall have at least one regular meeting per year. The regular meeting(s) of the congregation shall be held at the time(s) specified in the bylaws. Consistent with the laws of the State of [Minnesota](#), the bylaws shall designate one regular meeting per year as the annual meeting of this congregation.

C10.01.01 [The Congregational Meeting of First Lutheran Church of Columbia Heights, Minnesota will be held on a Sunday in January.](#)

C10.02. A special Congregation Meeting may be called by the senior pastor, the Congregation Council, or the [president](#)¹ of this congregation, and shall be called by the president of this congregation upon the written request of [25](#) of the voting members. The president of the Congregation Council shall call a special meeting upon request of the synod bishop. The call for each special meeting shall specify the purpose for which it is to be held, and no other business shall be transacted.

¹ [If the pastor is the president of the congregation, the congregation may consider giving the vice president the authority to call a special meeting.](#)

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 or electronic means, as permitted by state law, to all members at least 10 days in advance of the date of the meeting.

C10.04. [Fifty \(50\)](#) 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 this congregation shall be by majority vote 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.

C10.08. This congregation may hold meetings by remote communication, including electronically and by telephone conference, as long as there is an opportunity for simultaneous aural communication [or its equivalent](#). To the extent permitted by state law, notice of all meetings may be provided electronically.

C10.09. ["Ex officio" as used herein means membership with full rights of voice and vote unless otherwise expressly limited.](#)

Chapter 11: OFFICERS

- C11.01.** The officers of this congregation shall be a president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer.
- a. Duties of the officers shall be specified in the bylaws.
 - b. The officers shall be voting members of this congregation.

- c. Officers of this congregation shall serve similar offices of the Congregation Council and shall be voting members of the Congregation Council.

C11.01.01 The duties of the president shall include, but not be limited to the following:

- a) Conducting meetings of the Congregation
- b) Presiding over Congregational Council meetings
- c) Assuring liaison between all committees of this Congregation
- d) Providing leadership to the Congregational Council and this congregation in support of the mission and ministry of this congregation and the Church and,
- e) Other duties as specified in this constitution, its bylaws, and continuing resolutions or as assigned by the Congregational Council and/or pastor(s) and accepted by the office holder.

C11.01.02 The duties of the vice president shall include, but not be limited to the following:

- a) Presiding over all meetings of the congregation and Congregation Council in the absence of the president
- b) In the event of vacancy, assuming the office of president
- c) The vice president shall chair a constitution, bylaws and continuing resolution committee if formed
- d) Other duties as specified in this constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions or as assigned by the Congregational Council and/or pastor(s) and accepted by the office holder.

C11.01.03 The duties of the secretary shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- a) Keeping and publishing accurate minutes of all Congregation Council meetings and meetings of this congregation, which shall be preserved permanently in its archives, and
- b) Other duties as specified in this constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions or as assigned by the Congregational Council and/or pastor(s) and accepted by the office holder.

C11.01.04 The duties of the treasurer shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- a) Reporting to the Congregation Council the financial position of the Church
- b) Disperse all such funds approved by the Congregation Council in accordance with the approved budget
- c) Shall be a member of the Memorial and Endowment Committee and
- a)d) Other duties as specified in this constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolution or as assigned by the Congregational Council and/or pastor(s) and accepted by the office holder.

C11.02. The congregation shall elect its officers and they shall be the officers of this congregation. The officers shall be elected by written ballot and shall serve for one year or until their successors are elected. Their terms shall begin at the close of the annual meeting at which they are elected.

C11.03. No officer shall hold more than one office at a time. No elected officer shall be eligible to serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office.

Chapter 12. CONGREGATION COUNCIL

C12.01. The voting membership of the Congregation Council shall consist of the pastor(s), the deacon(s), the officers of this congregation and not more than fourteen (14) and not less than ten (10) members of this congregation, at least one of whom shall be a youth and at least one of whom shall be a young adult. Any voting member of this congregation may be elected, subject only to the limitation on the length of continuous service permitted in that office. A member's place on the Congregation Council shall be declared vacant if the member a) ceases to be a voting member of this congregation or b) is absent from four successive regular meetings of the Congregation Council without cause. Consistent with the laws of the state in which this congregation is incorporated, this congregation may adopt procedures for the removal of a member of the Congregation Council in other circumstances.

C12.01.01 The voting members of the Congregational Council other than the pastor(s), the deacon(s) and the officers of this congregation shall include the Chair and Vice Chair of all Boards.

C12.01.02 The Chair of the Personnel Committee shall be an ad-hoc member of the Congregational Council but not vote on Council matters.

C12.02. The members of the Congregation Council except the pastor(s) and the deacon(s) shall be elected by written ballot to serve for one year or until their successors are elected. Such members shall be eligible to serve no more than two full terms consecutively. Their terms shall begin at the close of the annual meeting at which they are elected.

- C12.03.** Should a member's place 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 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The duties of the Congregation Council shall include the following:
- a. To lead this congregation in stating its mission, to do long-range planning, to set goals and priorities, and to evaluate its activities in light of its mission and goals.
 - b. To seek to involve all members of this congregation in worship, learning, witness, service, and support.
 - c. To oversee and provide for the administration of this congregation to enable it to fulfill its functions and perform its mission.
 - d. To maintain supportive relationships with the rostered minister(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 support of the synod and churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as well as cooperation with other congregations, both Lutheran and non-Lutheran, subject to established policies of the synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - i. To recommend and encourage the use of program resources produced or approved by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - 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 directors of this congregation and, as such, shall be responsible for maintaining and protecting its property and managing its business and fiscal affairs. It shall have the powers and be subject to the obligations that pertain to such boards under the laws of the State of [Minnesota](#), except as otherwise provided herein.
 - b. The Congregation Council shall not have the authority to buy, sell, or encumber real property unless specifically authorized to do so by a meeting of this congregation.
 - c. The Congregation Council may enter into contracts of up to [0.5% of the total annual budget](#) 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 more than [0.5% of the total annual budget](#) 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 collaboration with the synod and churchwide organization.
 - 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 mission support monies to the synod.
 - 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, its bylaws, and the continuing resolutions are carried out.
- C12.07** The Congregation Council shall submit a comprehensive report to this congregation at the annual meeting.
- C12.08.** 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.
- [² If the pastor is the president of the congregation, the congregation may consider giving the vice president the authority to call a special meeting.](#)
- C12.12.** A quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of a majority of the members of the Congregation Council, including the [pastor\(s\)](#) or interim pastor, except when [a](#) 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 a 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 synod bishop.

C12.13. The Congregation Council and its committees may hold meetings by remote communication, including electronically and by telephone conference, as long as there is an opportunity for simultaneous aural communication or its equivalent. To the extent permitted by state law, notice of all meetings may be provided electronically.

C12.14.01 Healthy Congregations Covenant of Conduct

In order for the congregation and the church council to deal effectively with issues, the following guidelines are to be followed:

- a. All members affirm their right to express their opinions about the life and ministry of the congregation.
- b. The congregation operates with a direct democracy form of government that allows members to share opinions directly with the pastor, church council, committees, and at congregational meetings.
- c. When members of the congregation express an opinion to a member of the council, the council person shall ask, "What would you like me to do with this information?"
- d. If the member desires to have the information transmitted to the council, the member shall be invited to bring the information/opinion to the next council meeting. The time and date shall be given.
- e. If the member does not wish to appear in person, the council member shall ask the member for permission to use their name in reporting. If permission is not given, the council member shall say, "I'm sorry but I will not be able to report this to the council since we do not deal with anonymous letters or comments."
- f. If permission is given, the council member shall report the information/opinion to the council and use the member's name.
- g. At his/her discretion, a council member may ask that the member refer this issue to another council member for presentation.
- h. Each issue shall be placed on the agenda and written in the minutes along with the action taken by the council. Action may include: "Received as information," "Pastor and/or President to visit member and report at next meeting," etc.
- i. Opinions may be shared in writing with the council and shall be handled in the above-mentioned manner if the letter or statement is signed.

C12.15.01 Motions before the Congregation Council shall be approved by majority vote unless otherwise determined by this constitution, bylaws, or continuing resolutions.

Chapter 13. CONGREGATION COMMITTEES

C13.01 The officers of this congregation and the pastor(s) shall constitute the *Executive Committee*.

C13.01.01 The congregation shall have the following standing committees each of which shall be composed of voting members of this congregation and at least one member of the Congregational Council: The Nominating Committee, the Memorial and Endowment Committee, the Personnel Committee, the Facilities and Maintenance Committee and the Call Committee. The Committees shall be responsible to the Congregation Council and shall be recognized as representative of the interest of and performing essential services for this congregation as a whole.

C13.02.01 A *Nominating Committee* consisting of five (5) voting members of this congregation, two of whom, if possible, 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 re-election.

- a) The Nominating Committee term of office shall run from October 1st following their election to September 30th of the subsequent year.
- b) The Nominating Committee shall nominate one or more candidates for each elected office and Congregation Council positions and shall secure the consent of each candidate.

- c) The Nominating Committee shall nominate candidates to serve as delegates representing the Church on outside boards and conventions.
- d) The list of nominees shall be announced to the congregation in conjunction with the announcements of the congregational meeting in which the elections are to take place.
- e) The Nominating Committee shall be encouraged to reflect the diversity of the congregation in the selection of candidates.
- f) The Nominating Committee shall be reconvened in the event of any vacancy in an elected position. The Nominating Committee shall then submit the name(s) of individual(s) to fill those positions to the Congregation Council for approval.
- g) The Congregation Council shall fill vacancies on the Nominating Committee

C13.02.02 The Memorial and Endowment Committee shall administer the Memorial and Endowment funds in accordance with this bylaw:

NOW, THEREFORE, in order to carry out the purpose of FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH OF COLUMBIA HEIGHTS, MINNESOTA, as we understand it and to establish a permanent Memorial and Endowment Fund within this congregation to enable the further extension of the work of this congregation, BE IT RESOLVED:

1. Establishment of Plan: A Memorial and Endowment Plan for First Lutheran Church of Columbia Heights is hereby established. The Plan shall be administered by the Memorial and Endowment Committee.

2. Objective of Plan: The object of the Plan is to create two separate Funds, both Funds to be dedicated Funds. One Fund shall be known as the First Lutheran Memorial Fund. The other shall be known as the First Lutheran Endowment Fund. Any monies or property received by the Plan shall be designated by the committee into either one or both of the two Funds, unless otherwise directed by the donor.

(1) Any Funds received by the Memorial Fund, unless otherwise specifically designated by the donor, shall be put in a separate account and the principal shall be disbursed as suggested by the Memorial and Endowment Committee, subject to approval by the Board of Finance and the Congregation Council.

(2) Any Funds received for the Endowment Fund shall be invested with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Investment Services, a Bank Trust, or invested in such other manner as the Board of Finance and the Congregation Council shall designate. The principal of gifts, devises and bequests to the Endowment Fund shall be held in perpetuity unless the terms of any such gift, devise or bequest made for a specific purpose shall require that they be held, distributed and disbursed in accordance with the directions of the donor.

3. Use of Endowment Income: The designated and approved financial institution or service defined under (2) of paragraph 2 shall invest the principal of the Endowment Funds received. The accumulated income from investment shall be paid to this congregation on a schedule to be agreed upon between the Memorial and Endowment Committee and the Investment Agency having custody of the invested Funds, with approval of the Board of Finance and the Congregation Council. The income received shall be used for the following general purposes:

A. Special needs and programs within this congregation.

B. Benevolent programs approved by the Board of Finance and the Congregation Council. These Funds shall not be used for the support of the annual First Lutheran budget unless the donor of a particular gift specifically directs that it be so used.

4. Use of Memorial Fund: Monies that are designated for the Memorial Fund shall be disbursed as requested with the approval of the Board of Finance. Monies that are undesignated shall be disbursed for special needs and opportunities within First Lutheran Church which lie beyond its annual budget. For example:

A. Occasional programs and projects.

B. Capital improvements and repairs.

5. Undesignated Devises, Bequests, Annuities and Gifts: Any devises, bequests, annuities, or gifts which have not been used or specifically designated for some purpose within one (1) year of the actual receipt of such Fund by this congregation shall be allocated to the First Lutheran Church Endowment Fund. In addition, the Committee in its discretion, may allocate other gifts or property to the First Lutheran Church Endowment Fund so long as such allocation does not violate the directions of the donor.

6. Disposition of Gifts Other Than Cash: Real estate, corporate stocks and bonds or other property given to the First Lutheran Church without designation as to their investment or use may be sold at the discretion of the Board of Finance and the Congregation Council at such time and in such manner as it may designate.

However, real estate, corporate stocks or bonds or other property in the First Lutheran Church Endowment Fund may, at the discretion of the Investment Agency, be retained in its existing form or may be sold and reinvested unless the donor has specifically designated otherwise.

7. Committee Organization: The Memorial and Endowment Committee shall consist of five (5) members who shall represent the congregation at large and shall initially be elected by a majority vote of the Congregation at the Annual Congregational meeting for terms of one (1), two (2), and three (3) years. One person shall be elected the first year to fill the one-year term, two persons to fill the two-year terms and two persons to fill the three-year terms, and thereafter replacements shall be elected by a majority vote of the congregation at the Annual Congregational meeting for three (3) year terms. In addition, each year one (1) active member of the Board of Worship and one (1) active member of the Board of Spiritual Growth, and the Treasurer of this congregation shall be appointed to such Committee. Any member of the Committee shall be eligible for reappointment. The Congregation Council shall have the authority to appoint the members from the Board of Spiritual Growth and the Board of Worship.

8. Committee Responsibilities: The Memorial and Endowment Committee shall have the following responsibilities:

A. To acquaint congregational members with the Memorial and Endowment Fund and to promote gifts and bequests to the Fund.

B. To present to the Board of Finance and Congregation Council no later than the 15th of October of each year a report of the status of the Funds, and a proposed program for their use during the following year. The final determination of such programs is to be the responsibility of the Board of Finance and the Congregation Council. However, the administration of the programs shall be the responsibility of the Committee.

C. In the event of a vacancy on the Committee, the Congregation Council shall appoint a member to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the term.

D. The Committee shall elect from its membership a chairperson, a vice-chairperson, treasurer and secretary.

E. A quorum shall consist of three (3) members. The affirmative vote of a majority present and voting shall carry any motion or resolution

F. The committee shall establish written rules and regulations as may be necessary for the conduct of its business.

G. The committee shall maintain accounts with banks and brokerage firms as it may be necessary. All checks and other documents transferring or expending any funds or assets in the Fund shall be executed by the treasurer and either the chairperson, vice-chairperson, or secretary of the Committee.

a. The recommended signers for all Memorial and Endowment accounts should consist of two (2) to three (3) members of the Memorial and Endowment Committee. Suggestions include the M&E Chair, M&E Vice Chair and/or M&E Treasurer.

b. It is also recommended to include one (1) or two (2) staff members as signers. These could be the Business Manager, Finance Manager, Office Manager, Bookkeeper and/or the Administrative Assistant, or similar title as appropriate.

c. A total of three (3) to five (5) individual signers are recommended. Once the signer is no longer in the designated position a signer update shall be processed at the financial institution to remove/replace that individual.

d. In addition, any check exceeding \$2,500 USD shall require a minimum of two (2) signatures.

H. The members of the Committee, at the expense of the Fund, shall provide a corporate Fidelity Bond in a principal amount to be determined from time to time by the Committee.

I. At its discretion the Committee may employ at the expense of the Fund such professional Counseling on investments and legal matters as it deems to be for the best interest of the Fund. It is also empowered to employ a corporate trustee to invest assets of the Fund under customary agency relationships and to delegate to it in the name of First Lutheran Church of Columbia Heights any powers with reference to investment held by the Committee.

J. The Committee shall maintain complete and accurate book of accounts in accordance with standard accounting procedures and may employ such professional help as it deems necessary in this connection.

K. No member of the committee shall engage in any self-dealing or transactions with the

Fund in which the member of the Committee has direct or indirect financial interest and shall at all times refrain from any conduct in which his/her personal interests would conflict with the interests of the Fund.

L. The Committee shall not permit income to accumulate unreasonably but shall use it with all diligence to accomplish the Christian purposes for which this Fund has been established.

M. Such other responsibilities related to the Memorial and Endowment Funds as may be assigned to the Committee by the Board of Finance and the Congregational Council.

9. Church Consolidation, Merger or Dissolution: If at any time the First Lutheran Church of Columbia Heights should be lawfully merged or consolidated with any other Church, all of the provisions hereof shall be deemed to have been made for and in behalf of such merged or consolidated Church, which shall be entitled to receive all of the benefits of said Memorial and Endowment Funds, and shall be obligated to administer the same in all respects in accordance with the terms thereof. In the event of the dissolution of First Lutheran Church, the Minneapolis Synod of the Evangelical Church of America shall be entitled to the benefits and obligated to administer the Funds in a similar fashion.

10. Amendment Procedure: The provisions of this Resolution establishing the First Lutheran Church Memorial and Endowment Plan, consisting of two (2) Funds, namely, the Memorial Fund and the Endowment Fund may be amended by the Congregation. Any amendment or revision shall not affect gifts, devises and bequests made to the Funds prior to such amendments. All such donations to either Fund shall be administered for the purposes in effect at the time the donation was made.

C13.02.03. The Personnel Committee shall consist of one (1) person from the Executive Committee, one (1) person from the Board of Finance and three (3) “at large” members of the congregation elected by a majority vote at an Annual meeting of the congregation.

a) The terms of “at large” Committee members shall be three (3) years with staggered terms for continuity. Members of the Committee are approved by a majority written vote by the congregation at the Annual Congregational Meeting. Any member shall be eligible for reappointment.

b) The Personnel Committee shall be accountable to the Congregation Council.

c) The Personnel Committee shall provide an annual performance review for the senior pastor. The senior pastor is accountable to provide annual performance reviews for all Staff directly reporting to the senior pastor.

d) The Personnel Committee shall create, review, and revise all job descriptions on an annual basis in concert with the senior pastor.

e) The Personnel Committee shall oversee the development of and annual review of the First Lutheran Church of Columbia Heights, Mn Personnel Handbook.

C13.02.04 The Facilities Maintenance Committee shall report monthly to the Board of Finance and shall include the Business Administrator, the Head Custodian, at least one member of the Board of Finance and additional members as appointed by the Board of Finance. This committee shall be responsible for maintaining an attractive, safe and energy-efficient building, a productive work environment, maximum building service life, and a positive image of First Lutheran Church. To do this, the committee shall provide a system to track all maintenance projects and functions in support of an on-going maintenance program, shall identify facility needs for maintenance, preventive action, or repair, and shall provide planning, cost control, scheduling and other necessary activities for carrying out the program.

C13.02.05 When a vacancy occurs in a position for which this congregation calls a rostered minister, a **Call Committee** of six voting members shall be elected by the congregation. Term of office will terminate upon installation of the newly called rostered minister.

C13.02.06. Duties of committees of this congregation shall be specified in the bylaws and continuing resolutions.

C13.02.07. The senior pastor of this congregation shall be *ex officio* a member of all committees and boards of this congregation. The president⁴ of this congregation shall be *ex officio* a member of all committees and boards of this congregation, except the Nominating Committee.

⁴ If the pastor is the president of the congregation, the congregation may consider selecting the vice president.

C13.02.08 Other committees of this congregation may be formed by decision of the Congregation Council.

Chapter 14. BOARDS AND ORGANIZATIONS WITHIN THIS 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. The

Congregational Council at its meeting shall determine their policies, guide their activities, and receive reports concerning their membership, work, and finances.

C14.01.01 Organizations within this congregation include the formation of certain Boards. Only voting members of the congregation shall be eligible for membership on the Boards of this congregation.

- a. Members can serve on only one (1) Board at a time.
- b. Each Board shall elect a secretary from its membership.
- c. Each Board shall conduct regular meetings at such time and place as the Board itself may determine.
- d. A quorum for any meeting of a Board shall consist of a simple majority of members of the Board.
- e. A special meeting of a board may be called by the pastor, the president, or the chairperson of the board. Notice of such meeting shall be given to all board members. When previously agreed to by a board, the gathering of a board consensus by telephone, electronic mail or other form of direct communication with all available voting members shall be considered a valid special meeting.
- f. Each board shall submit a written report of their activities to the annual meeting of the congregation and at such other times the congregation may decide.
- g. Each board may recommend to the congregation such help as may be necessary to help carry out its program.
- h. Each board shall be responsible for committee guidelines as appropriate to their individual boards.
- I. The term of office for each board member shall be two years with approximately one-half of the members' terms commencing each year.
- j. The filling of vacancies on a board shall be approved by the Congregation Council.
- k. Each board shall be responsible for setting goals and objectives concerning the current year, and participate in any long-term goals as directed by the Congregation Council.
- l. To enhance continuity between successive boards, each board shall maintain records in a notebook to be passed to the successive board, the contents of the notebook to include:
 1. Minutes of board meetings from the current year and the previous year
 2. A calendar of yearly events which involve board participation or responsibility
 3. A list of functions and activities normally undertaken by board, and, where applicable, the persons responsible for them
 4. A copy of the by-laws pertaining to the board.
- m. Checking or savings accounts are permitted for various church organizations, i.e. circles. Required signatures for these accounts will be persons determined by the individual organization. A minimum of 2 individual signers is highly recommended.
- n. Once a signer is no longer in the designated position, a signer update should be processed at the financial institution as soon as reasonably possible. In the case of dissolution of the individual organization, any funds remaining in the respective account shall be returned to the main operating account of the church.
- p. The organization could recommend designation of the funds, which may be approved by the Board of Finance, who would subsequently request approval by Council.

C14.01.02 Board of Worship

- a. Voting members will include the Chair, Vice Chair, Representative of the Altar Guild and at least four (4) members of the Congregation appointed by the Congregational Council.
- b. Non-voting members include the Pastor(s) and the Director of Music Ministry. The Board of Worship shall work in partnership with Staff to oversee the worship life of this congregation and to make recommendations to the Congregational Council related to (but not limited to):
 1. Weekly worship and music centered in Word and Sacrament
 2. Scheduling of readers, ushers and communion servers.
 3. Assuring the preparation of the worship space which may include establishing an Altar Guild team and a Worship Environment team both of which would be accountable to the Board of Worship.

4. One member of the Board of Worship shall be appointed to serve as a member of the Memorial and Endowment Committee for a term of one (1) year

C14.01.03 Board of Finance

a. Voting members will include Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer and at least four (4) members from the congregation appointed by the Congregational Council.

b. Non-voting members will include the Pastor(s) and Business Administrator

c. The Board of Finance shall work in partnership with staff to oversee the financial health of the congregation and make recommendations to the Congregation Council relating but not limited to:

1. Preparing the annual budget and recommending modifications to the approved budget as needed

2. Monitoring and authorizing spending

3. Approving invoices

4. Securing insurance for the church

5. Providing appropriate financial reports

6. Providing for audits annually and as otherwise appropriate

7. Balancing ledgers

8. Maintaining assets

9. Managing cash flow including the authorization to borrow money on a short term basis

10. Authorizing the borrowing of funds from external source

11. Approving compensation packages

12. Assuring all offerings are collected and securely stored immediately following a service in which a collection is taken.

d. First Lutheran Church of Columbia Heights shall maintain checking and savings accounts as deemed appropriate by the Board of Finance. The main accounts for the church contain checking and savings accounts. There could also possibly be a short-term investment, such as a Certificate of Deposit (CD).

e. The recommended signers for all finance accounts should consist of 3 members of the executive committee. Suggestions include the Congregational President, the Vice President, and the Congregational Treasurer.

f. It is also recommended to include 2 staff members as signers. These could be the Business Manager, Finance Manager, Office Manager, Bookkeeper, Administrative Assistant, or similar title as appropriate.

g. A total of five (5) individual signers are recommended. Once a signer is no longer in the designated position, a signer update should be processed at the financial institution to remove/replace that individual as soon as reasonably possible.

h. In addition, any check exceeding \$2,500 shall require two signatures.

i. All payments, whether by check, electronic transfer, or other, that are not included in the budget and that exceed \$2,500 shall require pre-approval of Board of Finance.

C14.01.04 Board of Spiritual Growth

a. Voting members will include the Chair, Vice Chair and at least four (4) members from the congregation appointed by the Congregational Council.

b. Non-voting members shall include the Pastor(s).

c. The Board of Spiritual Growth shall work in partnership with staff to create and implement ministries that develop and nurture faith in adults, making recommendations to the Congregation Council relating but not limited to:

1. Year-round stewardship education

2. Assisting with special fund drives as directed by the Congregation Council

3. Create paths for members to increase their understanding of their place in the biblical story

4. Provide platforms and vehicles for connecting faith and daily life

5. Provide at least yearly opportunity for adults to communicate financial commitment to the church

6. Coordinate ongoing education and process for identifying gifts of members to be used for ministry and mission within the congregation and greater community

7. One member of the Board of Spiritual Growth will be appointed to serve as a member of the Memorial and Endowment Committee for a term of one (1) year.

C14.01.05 Board of Hospitality and Outreach

a. Voting members will include the Chair, Vice Chair and at least four (4) members of the congregation as appointed by the Congregational Council.

b. Non-voting members shall include the Pastor(s), the Director of Community Engagement and a representative of the Young at Heart Committee.

c. The Board of Hospitality and Outreach shall work in partnership with staff to create relational and service opportunities between the First Lutheran community members, neighborhood, and world, making recommendations to the Congregation Council relating but not limited to:

1. Coordinating hospitality ministry to First Lutheran community and guests, facilitating their integration into the life of the congregation

2. Creating and identifying one-time event and ongoing opportunities for the congregation to partner in the work of being the hands and feet of Christ in the neighborhood and the world

3. Directing the use of effective methods and tools of communication, ensuring that the message is consistent with the vision, mission and core values of First Lutheran Church.

d. The Mission Workshop shall be accountable to the Board of Hospitality and Outreach.

C14.01.06 Board of Children, Youth and Family

a. Voting members will include the Chair, Vice Chair and at least four (4) baptized members comprised of youth and adults and appointed by the Congregational Council.

b. Non-voting members shall include the Pastor(s) and the Director of Children, Youth and Family Ministry.

c. The Board of Children, Youth and Family shall work in partnership with staff to create and implement ministries that develop and nurture faith in children, youth and families, making recommendations to the Congregation Council relating but not limited to:

1. Faith Formation: providing opportunities to teach children and youth about the love of God, the stories of faith, and creating ways for them to connect the Christian faith with their daily life

2. Leadership: nurturing and supporting the volunteer leaders in children, youth and family ministry and to actively engage and train youth in leadership

3. Service: Create experiences in which children, youth and families have the opportunity to be of service to their peers, the church and the community

4. Fellowship: Facilitate gatherings and outings to provide opportunities for children and youth to develop relationships and socialize

5. Equipping parents: Creating a process to equip parents to engage families in lifelong faith development and spiritual practices

6. Safety: Ensuring a process is in place to effectively train all children, youth and family volunteers in abuse prevention policies and to provide adequate screening and safety procedures.

C14.01.07 Special interest groups, other than those of the official organizations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, may be organized only after authorization has been given by the Congregation Council (and specified in a continuing resolution).

Chapter 15.

DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS AND ADJUDICATION

***C15.01.** Persistent and public denial of the Christian faith, willful or criminal conduct grossly unbecoming a member of the Church of Christ, continual and intentional interference with the ministry of this congregation, or willful and repeated harassment or defamation of member(s) of this congregation is sufficient cause for discipline of a member. Prior to disciplinary action, reconciliation and repentance will be attempted following Matthew 18:15–17, proceeding through these successive steps, as necessary: a) private counsel and admonition by the pastor, b) censure and admonition by the pastor in the presence of

two or three witnesses, c) written referral of the matter by the Congregation Council to the vice president of the synod, who will refer it to a consultation panel drawn from the Consultation Committee of the synod, and d) written referral of the matter by the consultation panel to the Committee on Discipline of the synod. If, for any reason, the pastor is unable to administer the admonitions required by paragraphs a. and b. hereof, those steps may be performed by another pastor chosen by the Executive Committee of the Congregation Council.

- *C15.02.** The process for discipline of a member of this congregation shall be governed as prescribed by the chapter on discipline in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. If the counseling, censure, and admonitions pursuant to *C15.01. do not result in repentance and amendment of life, charges against the accused member(s) that are specific and in writing may be prepared by the Congregation Council, signed, and submitted to the vice president of the synod. The vice president shall select from the synod's Consultation Committee a panel of five members (three laypersons and two [rostered](#) ministers). A copy of the written charges shall be provided to the consultation panel and the accused member(s). The consultation panel, after requesting a written reply to the charges from the accused member(s), shall consider the matter and seek a resolution by means of investigation, consultation, mediation, or whatever other means may seem appropriate. The panel's efforts to reach a mutually agreeable resolution shall continue for no more than 45 days after the matter is submitted to it.
- *C15.03.** If the consultation panel fails to resolve the matter, that panel shall refer the case in writing, including the written charges and the accused member's reply, to the Committee on Discipline of the synod for a hearing. A copy of the panel's written referral shall be delivered to the vice president of the synod, the Congregation Council, and the accused member(s) at the same time it is sent to the Committee on Discipline of the synod. The Executive Committee of the Synod Council shall then select six members from the Committee on Discipline to decide the case and shall appoint a member of the Synod Council to preside as nonvoting chair. Those six members, plus the nonvoting chair, comprise the discipline hearing panel for deciding the case. The Congregation Council and the accused member(s) are the parties to the case.
- *C15.04.** The discipline hearing panel shall commence and conduct the disciplinary hearing in accordance with the provisions governing discipline of congregation members prescribed in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.
- *C15.05.** By the vote of at least two-thirds of the members of the discipline hearing panel who are present and voting, one of the following disciplinary sanctions can be imposed:
- suspension from the privileges of congregation membership for a designated period of time;
 - suspension from the privileges of congregation membership until the pastor and Congregation Council receive evidence, satisfactory to them, of repentance and amendment of life;
 - termination of membership in this congregation; or
 - termination of membership in this congregation and exclusion from the church property and from all congregation activities.
- *C15.06.** The written decision of the discipline hearing panel shall be sent to the vice president of the synod, the accused member(s), and the Congregation Council as required by the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. The decision of the discipline hearing panel shall be implemented by the Congregation Council and recorded in the minutes of the next council meeting.
- *C15.07.** No member of this congregation shall be subject to discipline a second time for offenses that a discipline hearing panel has heard previously and decided pursuant to this chapter.
- *C15.10. Adjudication**
- *C15.11.** When there is disagreement between or among factions within this congregation on a substantive issue which cannot be resolved by the parties, members of this congregation may petition the synod bishop for consultation after informing the president of this congregation of their intent to do so. The synod bishop shall seek a timely resolution of the dispute. If the issue relates directly to the pastor, the bishop may begin the process in †S14.18.d. In all other matters, if the bishop's consultation fails to resolve the issue, the bishop shall refer the matter to the Consultation Committee of the synod, which shall undertake efforts to find an appropriate solution. If the Consultation Committee's efforts fail to resolve the dispute, the entire matter shall be referred to the Synod Council for adjudication by whatever process the Council deems necessary. The Synod Council's decision shall be final.

Chapter 16. **AMENDMENTS**

- *C16.01. Unless provision *C16.04. is applicable, those sections of this constitution that are not required, in accord with the *Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, 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 this congregation's members of the proposal together with the council's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the meeting. Notification may take place by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law.
- *C16.02. An amendment to this constitution, proposed under *C16.01., shall:
 - a. be approved at any legally called meeting of this congregation by a majority vote of those voting members present and voting; and
 - b. be ratified without change at the next regular meeting of this congregation by a two-thirds vote of those voting members present and voting.
- *C16.03. Any amendments to this constitution that result from the processes provided in *C16.01. and *C16.02. shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod. The synod shall notify this congregation of its decision to approve or disapprove the proposed changes; the changes shall go into effect upon notification that the synod has approved them.
- *C16.04. This constitution may be amended to bring any section into conformity with a section or sections, either required or not required, of the *Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* as most recently amended by the Churchwide Assembly. Such amendments may be approved by a majority vote of those voting members present and voting at any legally called meeting of this congregation without presentation at a prior meeting of this congregation, provided that the Congregation Council has submitted by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law, notice to this 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 at least two (2) voting members of this congregation, the Congregation Council shall submit such notice. Following the adoption of an amendment, the secretary of this congregation shall submit a copy thereof to the synod. Such provisions shall become effective immediately following the congregation's vote of approval.

Chapter 17.

BYLAWS

- *C17.01. This congregation may adopt bylaws. No bylaw may conflict with this constitution.
- *C17.02. Bylaws may be adopted or amended at any legally called meeting of this congregation with a quorum present by a two-thirds vote of those voting members present and voting.
- *C17.03. Changes to the bylaws may be proposed by any voting member, provided 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. The Congregation Council shall notify this congregation's members of the proposal with the council's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the Congregation Meeting. Notification may take place by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law.
- *C17.04. Adopted or amended bylaws shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod.

Chapter 18.

CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

- *C18.01. This 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 this congregation or a two-thirds vote of all voting members of the Congregation Council.

² Such an effective date must be stated in relation to the requirements of *C16.03. to allow time for synod review of the amendment.

- *C18.03.** Adopted or amended continuing resolutions shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod.

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.

Chapter 20.

PARISH AUTHORIZATION

[Required provisions when congregation is part of a parish]*

- *C20.01.** This congregation may unite with one or more other congregations recognized by the synod named in *C6.01. to form a parish. Except as provided in *C20.02. and *C20.03., a written agreement, developed in consultation with the synod and approved by the voting members of each congregation participating in the parish, shall specify the powers and responsibilities that have been delegated to the Parish Council. The Parish Agreement shall identify which congregation of the parish issues calls on behalf of the member congregations or shall establish a process for identifying which congregation issues calls on behalf of the member congregations.
- *C20.02.** One congregation of a parish shall issue a call on behalf of the member congregations to a minister of Word and Sacrament or a candidate for the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament who has been recommended by the synod bishop to serve the congregations of the parish. Such a call shall be approved prior to issuance by a two-thirds vote at a congregation meeting of each congregation forming the parish. If any congregation of the parish should fail to approve the call, the other congregations of the parish shall have the right to terminate the parish agreement.
- *C20.03.** One congregation of a parish may issue a call on behalf of the member congregations to a minister of Word and Service or a candidate for the roster of Ministers of Word and Service who has been recommended by the synod bishop to serve the congregations of the parish. Such a call shall be approved prior to issuance by a two-thirds vote at a congregation meeting of each congregation forming the parish. If any congregation of the parish should fail to approve the call, the other congregations of the parish shall have the right to terminate the parish agreement.
- *C20.04.** Any one of the congregations of the parish may terminate their relationship with the pastor as provided in †S14.18.d. of the synod constitution of the synod named in *C6.01. In such case, the other congregation(s) of the same parish shall have the right to terminate the parish agreement.
- *C20.05.** Any one of the congregations of the parish may terminate their relationship with a minister of Word and Service as provided in †S14.43.d. of the synod constitution of the synod named in *C6.01. In such case, the other congregation(s) of the same parish shall have the right to terminate the parish agreement.
- *C20.06.** Whenever a parish agreement is terminated, the call of any rostered minister serving that parish is terminated. Should any congregation that was formerly part of the parish agreement desire to issue a new call to that rostered minister, it may do so in accordance with the call process of this church.