

**BETHEL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS**

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BETHEL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH UNIVERSITY CITY, MISSOURI

CONSTITUTION

PREAMBLE

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

It being the will of the Lord that among Christians all things shall be done decently and in order (I Corinthians 14:40), and because the history of the Christian Church of all times shows that certain ordinances are necessary to properly attain the purposes and fulfill the obligations of congregations, we, the members of this congregation, adopt this Constitution and By-Laws, according to which all spiritual and material affairs of this congregation shall be regulated.

ARTICLE I – NAME

The name of the congregation is: BETHEL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THE UNALTERED AUGSBURG CONFESSION, UNIVERSITY CITY, MISSOURI.

For the purpose of this constitution and the accompanying By-Laws, BETHEL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THE UNALTERED AUGSBURG CONFESSION, UNIVERSITY CITY, MISSOURI is hereinafter designated as "the congregation" or "Bethel."

Bethel is incorporated under the laws of the State of Missouri.

ARTICLE II – NATURE AND MISSION

The purpose of Bethel Lutheran Church is to help the fellowship of believers who are joined in membership to preserve and move toward the fulfillment of their distinctive nature as people supporting one another in living out their responses to God's call in Jesus Christ.

The mission of Bethel shall be to glorify God, to carry out the divine will, and through the power of the Holy Spirit to confess Jesus Christ as Lord. As God's mission we recognize that all our ministries of worship, service, fellowship, and nurture have a missionary dimension, so that Bethel may carry out the Lord's directive in Matthew 28:18-20 and be in harmony with prophetic and apostolic vision (see, e.g., Exodus 19:5-6 and I Peter 2:9-10; John 20:21-23; Matthew 5:13-16; II Corinthians 8 and 9; Ephesians 1 and 4; Romans 10:8-17; Colossians 1:3-29; Philippians 1:12-18). In keeping with its mission, Bethel shall be a member of THE EVANGELICAL

LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA and make such other affiliations as are in accord with the divine purpose for this congregation.

ARTICLE III – CONFSSIONAL BASIS

In accordance with the letter to the Ephesians, Bethel confesses that it is "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Jesus Christ himself as the cornerstone" (Ephesians 2:20). Bethel therefore accepts without reservation and without any need for additions, deletions or other alterations

- A. the Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament as the written Word of God and the only rule and norm for its proclamation, faith, and practice; and
- B. all the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as contained in the Book of Concord (1580 A.D.) as a true and unadulterated statement and exposition of the Word of God, to wit: the three Ecumenical Creeds (the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed and the Athanasian Creed), the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles, the Treatise on the Power and the Primacy of the Pope, the Large Catechism of Luther, the Small Catechism of Luther and the Formula of Concord.

ARTICLE IV – MEMBERSHIP

Membership in Bethel shall be designated as a) baptized, b) communicant, c) confirmed, and d) voting membership. The baptized members shall constitute the congregation. The Congregation Meeting is a meeting of the entire congregation, but only voting members have voice and vote at the Congregation Meeting. Confirmed members are baptized persons who have been confirmed in the 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.

ARTICLE V – QUALIFICATIONS OF MEMBERSHIP

The privileges of membership shall be effected as follows:

- A. Reception into baptized membership through the sacrament of Holy Baptism administered on behalf of Bethel congregation or through reception by the congregation of a person who has already received Christian baptism;
- B. Reception into communicant membership by rite of confirmation, by affirmation of faith, or by letter of transfer from a congregation which the congregation recognizes to be in fellowship.

The privilege of communicant membership is therefore available to anyone who:

1. is baptized and confesses faith in the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit;
 2. declares belief in the Holy Bible as the written Word of God and submits to its rule in faith and practice;
 3. declares acceptance of the teachings of Luther's Small Catechism;
 4. promises to attend divine services faithfully, partake of the Lord's Supper frequently and strive diligently to lead a Christian life; and
 5. declares willingness to support and participate in the life and work of the congregation and to contribute financially, according to the Lord's blessing, to the congregation for its Christian mission and ministry in the community and in the world.
- C. Reception into voting membership is granted to any communicant member who:
1. is a confirmed member;
 2. applies for voting membership by attending a first Congregation Meeting; and
 3. is approved by a majority of those present at a regular Congregation Meeting at which application for membership is considered. (See By-Laws, Section I, Paragraph B)

ARTICLE VI – TRANSFER OF MEMBERS

A member in good standing who desires to withdraw from membership in Bethel and join a congregation whose confession of faith and practice is in harmony with Bethel shall receive, upon application to the pastor, a letter of transfer. All such transfers shall be reported to the Congregation Meeting at its next regular meeting. Such a transferred member voluntarily severs connection with Bethel and thereby surrenders any and all the rights and privileges of a member of Bethel Evangelical Lutheran Church and all claims upon its property.

ARTICLE VII – DISCIPLINE AND TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

- A. If members change their place of residence and leave no forwarding address and all efforts made on behalf of Bethel to communicate with them fail to establish contact over a period of two full years, their name may be stricken from the membership roster by action of the Congregation Meeting.
- B. If members neglect to attend divine services without good reason over an extended period of time, do not participate in the work of the congregation and do not contribute to its support, and

if all efforts made on behalf of Bethel fail to bring about a change in attitude and conduct, their names may be stricken from the membership roster by action of the Congregation Meeting.

- C. In the event that members should become guilty of adherence to and propagation of doctrine contrary to the Christian faith or are flagrantly living in unrepented sin, all possible efforts should be made on behalf of Bethel in accordance with the principles set forth in the Sacred Scriptures (e.g., Gal. 6:1, Matt. 18:15-17, 1 Cor. 5:1-5) to convince them of the error of their ways and to depart from them. If they steadfastly refuse to repent and make proper amends, their membership in the congregation may be terminated through excommunication by a unanimous decision of the Congregation Meeting, provided that the proposed action shall have been announced to the voting members by mail and to the congregation in the Sunday services prior to the Congregation Meeting at which this matter is to be considered.
- D. Members whose names are stricken from the roster or who are excommunicated shall, as long as the conditions giving rise to this action, lose the rights and privileges of membership in the congregation and all claims upon its property. They shall be ineligible to receive a letter of transfer to another congregation. If, however, they repent and ask forgiveness and desire to be reinstated in the congregation or to transfer to a sister church, the request together with testimony to the sincerity of their attitudes and intentions, shall be presented to the Congregation Meeting. A two-thirds majority vote shall be required for affirmative action.
- E. The member against whom disciplinary action has been taken by the congregation shall have the right to appeal the decision to the synod council. Such right may not be abridged and the decision of the synod council shall be final.

ARTICLE VIII – AUTHORITY VESTED IN THE CONGREGATION MEETING

The Congregation Meeting shall have the authority to administer and manage all external and internal matters relating to the congregation and its welfare. No decision, enactment or performance in behalf of the congregation or in matters involving a member thereof shall be valid, whether it has proceeded from an individual or from a body within the congregation, unless it shall have been enacted or performed according to a general or special authority conferred by the Congregation Meeting. Whatever may have been ordered or decided by an individual or by a subordinate body within the congregation under authority conferred by the Congregation Meeting shall always be subject to review, revision and final decision by the Congregation Meeting. All decisions made by the Congregation Meeting must be in accord with the Holy Scriptures and the Confession of Faith as stated in Article III. Otherwise they shall be null, void and of no effect.

The Congregation Meeting was known prior to May 2015 as the meeting of the Assembly of Voters. All references to any meeting of the Assembly of Voters in documents existing prior to June 2015 are to be construed as meaning the Congregation Meeting. All references to members of the Assembly of Voters in documents existing prior to June 2015 are to be construed as meaning the voting members of this congregation.

ARTICLE IX – MEETINGS

The Congregation Meeting shall hold regular and special meetings as provided for in the by-laws.

Resolutions are to be deemed valid and in effect only when carried by an affirmative vote of the majority of the members present at a regular or properly convened special Congregation Meeting having a quorum of at least twenty-five voting members present, except that,

- a) resolutions pertaining to rules and regulations governing the Board of Trustees of the Bethel Foundation shall require a two-thirds majority (See Article XV);
- b) resolutions pertaining to control of the church property in certain cases of schism shall require a two-thirds majority (See Article XVI);
- c) resolutions pertaining to the calling of a Pastor shall require a three-fifths majority (See Section I Paragraph C of By-Laws); and
- d) resolutions calling for the amendment of any part of this constitution or by-laws shall require a two-thirds majority vote for passage; and
- e) resolutions pertaining to excommunication can be adopted only by a unanimous affirmative vote.

Any member of the Congregation Meeting who is absent from any regular or special meeting forfeits the right to vote at that meeting.

ARTICLE X – CORPORATE OFFICERS

The corporate officers of Bethel shall be President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer.

Any member of the Congregation Meeting shall be eligible for a corporate office in the congregation.

ARTICLE XI – PROFESSIONAL MINISTRY

All positions of professional ministry in the congregation shall be conferred on only such people as profess and adhere to the confessional standard set forth in Article III and are well-qualified for their duties.

The Congregation Meeting shall determine division of labor and titles for the professional ministers in its employ. All professional ministers shall participate in a periodic review, as directed by the Congregation Council.

A. Pastors

Only a person who has completed an acceptable and accredited course of theological training or its equivalent, has satisfied the Congregation Meeting that he or she is well qualified to serve the congregation as its pastor, and accepts without reservation the confession of faith as set forth in Article III of this constitution shall be considered for the office of pastor.

Pastors of the congregation shall faithfully teach and preach in accordance with this confessional standard and conscientiously and diligently promote the spiritual and general welfare of the congregation and its mission and ministry in the community and in the world.

B. Professional Staff Workers

When a professional staff worker is to be called or otherwise employed by the congregation, the Board under whom the professional staff worker is to serve shall prepare a detailed description of the work to be done in the specific position to be filled. This shall be done in consultation with the Pastor and the President of the congregation.

No people shall be called or employed unless they have satisfied the qualifications and requirements set forth in the description of the position for which they are being considered.

In every case, a copy of the position description shall be attached to and made part of the call or the contract of employment.

ARTICLE XII – RIGHT TO ISSUE CALLS

Bethel unequivocally reserves the right and authority to call a pastor, and to call or hire a teacher or professional staff worker. The authority to hire a teacher is delegated to the appropriate Board.

ARTICLE XIII – REMOVAL OF A PASTOR, CALLED TEACHER, PROFESSIONAL STAFF WORKER, TRUSTEE, OR OFFICER OF THE CONGREGATION

A pastor, called teacher, professional staff worker, corporate officer, member of the Congregation Council as defined in the By-Laws, trustee or any other officer of the congregation may in Christian and lawful order be removed from office for cause by action of the Congregation Meeting. Sufficient causes for removal shall include but are not limited to persistent adherence to false doctrine, scandalous conduct, willful neglect of official duties and gross incompetence,

abusive behavior and substance abuse. Should any person or persons named above be unable to perform their duties because of physical or mental disability, the Congregation Meeting may relieve them of their duties and terminate their tenure of office or employment. All such cases shall be dealt with in Christian charity.

Removal shall be by action of the majority of the Congregation Meeting.

ARTICLE XIV – BUSINESS AND PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

All of the congregation's property is entrusted to the care and custody of the corporate officers, who in this capacity shall serve as the congregation's Board of Trustees.

ARTICLE XV – THE BETHEL FOUNDATION

The Bethel Foundation shall at all times be under the management, custody, supervision and control of a Board of Trustees consisting of three voting members of the congregation who shall be elected by that Assembly for terms of three years each commencing July 1, said terms to be staggered so that the term of one of the trustees expires on June 30 of each calendar year. A trustee whose term has expired may be re-elected or a new successor trustee may be elected. There shall be no limit on the number of terms a trustee may serve, except as may be determined by the Congregation Meeting.

When a vacancy occurs on the Foundation's Board of Trustees for any reason, nominations from the remaining trustees shall be presented to the president, who may add additional names to the list of candidates. Then the Congregation Meeting shall elect a new trustee from the list to fill the vacancy.

The Board of Trustees of the Bethel Foundation shall be governed by such rules and regulations as the Congregation Meeting may adopt by a two-thirds majority and shall make an annual report at the Assembly's regular fourth quarter meeting. The legal provisions governing the Bethel Foundation are set forth in the Trust Agreement by which the Foundation was established on September 14, 1964, pursuant to an enabling resolution adopted by the Congregation Meeting at its meeting on June 22, 1964.

PLEASE NOTE: For transition purposes, the current Bethel Foundation Trustees shall serve an additional six months.

ARTICLE XVI – SCHISM AND DISSOLUTION

Bethel may terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America by the following procedure:

- A. A resolution indicating the desire of Bethel to terminate its relationship must be adopted at a legally called and conducted special meeting of Bethel by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present.
- B. The secretary of Bethel shall submit a copy of the resolution to the synodical bishop and shall mail a copy of the resolution to voting members of the congregation. This notice shall be submitted within 10 days after the resolution has been adopted.
- C. The bishop of the synod shall consult with Bethel during a period of at least 90 days.
- D. If Bethel, after consultation, still desires to terminate its relationship, such action may be taken at a legally called and conducted special meeting by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present, at which meeting the bishop of the synod or an authorized representative shall be present. Notice of the meeting shall be mailed to all voting members at least 10 days in advance of the meeting.
- E. A certified copy of the resolution to terminate its relationship shall be sent to the synodical bishop at which time the relationship between Bethel and ELCA shall be terminated.
- F. Notice of termination shall be forwarded by the synodical bishop to the secretary of this church and published in the periodical of this church.

If schism or separation because of doctrinal differences should ever occur--from which we pray God to spare us--the property of the congregation and all benefits and appurtenances connected therewith shall remain with and belong to those members who abide by the Confession of Faith as contained in Article II of this Constitution and who continue to use the church buildings and facilities for public worship and Christian education.

In disagreements not touching upon doctrine two-thirds majority of the Congregation Meeting shall determine who retains the full right to hold and use the church property.

In the event of the final dissolution of the congregation its property shall be sold by the remaining voting members of the congregation. After all contractual financial obligations of the congregation have been met, the residual funds shall be contributed to well-established Christian institutions, organizations or services for purposes of Christian evangelism and Christian education (who are qualified as 501(c)3 organizations) in such amounts or shares as may be decided by the voting members of the congregation. None of these residual funds shall be given or paid to any individual or to any unincorporated or unchartered or for profit group.

The assets of the Bethel Foundation of whatever nature, form or description shall be deemed to be and treated as property of the congregation within the scope and meaning of this Article XVI of this constitution.

In making a decision about any of the matters included in this article, only those voting members of the congregation who have been present at three regular or special meetings of the

Assembly within the 12 months immediately preceding the meeting at which the decision is being made, shall have the right to vote.

ARTICLE XVII – BY-LAWS

The congregation may adopt such By-Laws as the fulfillment of its mission may demand. Any of its By-Laws may be suspended, revised, or revoked by a two-thirds majority vote of those present at a regular Congregation Meeting. Amendments to existing By-Laws shall be submitted in writing to the President of Bethel and published at least two weeks prior to a Congregation Meeting, and may not conflict with any section of this constitution.

ARTICLE XVIII – AMENDMENT OR REPEAL

When any amendment of the Articles of this constitution is to be considered, the proposed change or changes shall be either (1) published in the church bulletin on two successive Sundays preceding the Congregation Meeting at which this matter is to be acted on, or (2) shall be sent to all voting members of the congregation by mail at least 10 days prior to the date of the meeting, with mention in the church bulletin on two successive Sundays preceding the meeting. After such notice has been given, the proposed change or changes may be adopted by the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the voting members at a regular or properly convened special Congregation Meeting, provided that any such action is in harmony with the confession of faith as stated in Article II of this constitution.

CERTIFICATION

This revision of the Constitution of Bethel Lutheran Church was approved and adopted by the Congregation Meeting at its meeting held on May 17, 2015 and supersedes all previous constitutions of Bethel congregation.

Kristina Stierholz, President

Laura Severson, Vice President

John Holahan, Treasurer

Mark Scharff, Secretary

BY-LAWS

SECTION I – PROCEDURES FOR THE CONGREGATION MEETING

A - PROCEDURES AND RULES FOR THE CONDUCT OF MEETINGS

All meetings shall be conducted in Christian charity with Robert's Rule of Order as the parliamentary guide.

The regular meetings of the Congregation Meeting shall be held semi-annually, usually in the second quarter and fourth quarter of the calendar year.

The order of business at all regular meetings of the Congregation Meeting shall ordinarily be:

1. Opening devotion
2. Roll call
3. Reading of the minutes
4. Reception of new voting members
5. Elections and appointments
6. The Pastor's report
7. Treasurer's report
8. Board and committee reports
9. Unfinished business
10. New business
11. Adjournment
12. Closing devotion

A special meeting may be called by the president, by the Congregation Council, or by a petition signed by at least ten voting members. Any such meeting shall be announced in the church bulletin on the Sunday preceding the date of the meeting and by notices from the secretary to the individual voting members of the congregation, such notices to be mailed at least ten days before the date of the meeting.

The call and notice for such a special meeting must state explicitly each matter that is to be considered and acted on at that meeting, and no other business shall be brought before the meeting for consideration, except routine announcements or emergency items. If action is taken regarding any emergency matter, that action must be reported to the Assembly at its next regular meeting for ratification.

B – PROCEDURES FOR ACCEPTING NEW VOTING MEMBERS

The rights and privileges of voting membership shall be conferred upon an applicant in the following manner:

Confirmed members of the congregation applying for voting membership shall be asked by the chair if they wish to become voting members of the congregation. If the applicants reply affirmatively, the chair shall ask for a motion to accept the applicants. Such a motion having been made and seconded, the matter shall be put to a vote. If the vote is favorable, the chair shall direct new members to sign the official roster, after which the chair and the pastor shall officially welcome them into the Assembly, and they will be given a copy of the constitution and by-laws.

New voting members shall be received only at regular meetings of the Congregation Meeting.

C – PROCEDURE FOR ISSUING A CALL TO A PASTOR

According to The Book of Concord (Tappert, p.331), "wherever the church exists, the right to administer the Gospel also exists. Wherefore it is necessary for the church to retain the right of calling, electing, and ordaining ministers." What is reserved to the church as a whole is also reserved to the local congregation. Therefore, in accordance with good order, at a Congregation Meeting, properly convened, a committee of no less than seven members shall be elected to compile a list of candidates from the clergy roster of the ELCA and their qualifications for the pastorate(s) of Bethel. The committee shall seek the advice and help of the bishop of the synod in the compilation of this list. The compiled list shall be presented to the Congregation Meeting at its next regular or special meeting, at which time additional candidates may be nominated from the floor, no second being required. The committee shall then compile the necessary information about such additional candidates and, after reviewing them in consultation with the bishop, present the list of additional nominees to the Assembly at its next meeting.

Before the final list is submitted to the Congregation Meeting, the bishop shall be consulted to determine if there is any person on the list whose letter of call could not be signed by the bishop.

A definite list of candidates shall then be chosen by ballot, the number of names to be included to be determined by the Assembly. The names and a biographical summary of the persons on this list shall be published in the church bulletin on the two Sundays immediately following the meeting and mailed to all members of the congregation. If no protest against any candidate is presented, the list shall stand as published.

At the next regular or special Congregation Meeting, a vote shall be taken by ballot to choose one of the candidates to be the pastor of this congregation. The person receiving a three-fifths majority of all votes cast shall be declared elected. If no person receives a three-fifths majority on the first ballot, the name of the candidate having the fewest votes shall be stricken and a new vote taken by ballot. This procedure shall be followed until one of the candidates receives a three-fifths majority of the votes. The Executive Board shall then issue a formal diploma of vocation to the

chosen candidate in the name and by authority of Bethel. The same procedure shall be followed until the position has been filled.

When the Congregation Meeting determines in a regular or special meeting that a special timing situation necessitates accelerated action, the procedure will be as follows: A call may be issued at any regular or special Congregation Meeting subsequent to the meeting at which the search committee is elected. In carrying out their search, evaluation and recommendation functions in consultation with the bishop, the committee is to publicize its activities and involve the congregation to the maximum extent that the need for timely action will allow. As a minimum, the search committee will present to the Congregation Meeting a report of its actions and complete information on those who are possible candidates for a call in the judgement of the committee. The Congregation Meeting may designate several candidates who shall sequentially receive calls in the event that the first candidate to whom the call is offered does not accept.

D – INTERRELATIONSHIP OF PASTOR AND CONGREGATION

Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, every ordained minister shall proclaim the Gospel, administer the Sacraments, conduct public worship, provide pastoral care, and shall speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world. The pastor(s) shall be responsible for instructing, confirming, marrying, visiting the sick and distressed, and burying the dead; for oversight of any schools and organizations of the congregation; for installation of regularly elected officials of the congregation, and administration of discipline. The pastor(s) shall make use of the gifts of the Holy Spirit that are present in the congregation and shall urge their use in carrying out the office of the ministry in the congregation. When the congregation requires the services of more than one ordained minister, division of labor shall be made in accordance with the provisions outlined below, but not to the neglect of the qualifications of the people of God for ministerial functions that are required in the local context. Every pastor shall also seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel and shall so use the gifts which the Holy Spirit imparts that the Reign of God may become even more manifest in the community, in the nation, and abroad. To that end the pastor(s) shall impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through distribution of its periodicals and other publications; and shall endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the ELCA, the synod of the ELCA, and such other work and needs which the Lord may lay before the congregation.

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.

- a. The call of a congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment which, except in the case of the death of the pastor, shall be terminated only following consultation with the synodical bishop and for the following reasons:
 1. mutual agreement to terminate the call or the completion of a call for a specific term of years;

2. resignation of the pastor;
 3. inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in the congregation in view of local conditions, without reflection on the competence or the moral and spiritual character of the pastor;
 4. the physical or mental incapacity of the pastor;
 5. disqualification of the pastor through discipline on grounds of doctrine, morality, or continued neglect of duty; or
 6. the dissolution of the congregation.
- b. In the case of alleged physical or mental incapacity of the pastor or ineffective control of the pastoral office, it shall be the responsibility of the bishop of the synod, when such difficulties are personally known or have been brought to the synod's attention by an official recital of allegations by an appointed board or committee of the congregation, or by a petition signed by at least one-third of the voting members of the congregation, to investigate such conditions personally in company with a committee of two ordained ministers and two laypersons.
 - c. In case of alleged physical or mental incapacity competent medical testimony shall be obtained. When such disability is evident, the bishop of the synod with the advice of the committee shall declare the pastorate vacant. Upon the restoration of a disabled pastor to health, the bishop of the synod shall take steps to enable the pastor to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another field of labor.
 - d. In the case of alleged local difficulties which imperil the effective functioning of the congregation, all concerned persons shall be heard, after which the bishop of the synod with the committee described in (b) above shall decide on the course of action to be recommended to the pastor and the congregation. If they agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action shall be taken by the synod. If either party fails to assent, the congregation may dismiss the pastor by a two-thirds majority vote of the voting members present at a regularly called meeting after consultation with the bishop.
 - e. The foregoing procedure shall never be invoked when questions of doctrine, morality, or continued neglect of duty are involved, for all such cases are to be treated as disciplinary matters.
 - f. If in the course of the proceedings, it should become apparent that the pastoral office cannot be conducted effectively in the congregation being served by the ordained minister due to local conditions, the bishop of the synod may temporarily suspend the pastor from service in the congregation without prejudice and with pay provided through a joint churchwide/synod fund and with housing provided by the congregation.

At a time of pastoral vacancy, an interim pastor may be appointed by the bishop of the synod with the consent of the congregation or through its designated board or committee.

During the period of service, an interim pastor shall have the rights and duties 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 Bethel or its designated board or committee. The interim pastor and any ordained pastor providing assistance shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a pastor.

The 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 the congregation.

When a pastor is called to serve in company with another pastor or pastors, the privileges and responsibilities of each pastor, together with their titles, shall be specified in documents to accompany the call and to be drafted in consultation involving the pastors, the designated board or committee, and the bishop of the synod. As occasion requires, the documents may be revised through a similar consultation.

In consultation with the bishop of the synod the congregation may, in accord with (a.1) above call a pastor for a specific term of years. 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 the congregation for a review of the call. Such call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of (a) above.

The pastor shall ensure the keeping of accurate parochial records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from the congregation, and shall submit a summary of such statistics annually to the synod.

The congregation shall, through a special review committee appointed by the Congregation Council, make quarterly reviews of the pastor(s) work and needs. This same board or committee shall, in consultation with the pastor(s), evaluate the congregation's performance of its commitment to the work of the Lord. Reports, at intervals and in a manner determined by the Executive Board, shall be made to the congregation. The pastor(s) shall submit a report of ministry in their congregation to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly. (See By-Laws, Section III, Paragraph C).

Professional staff positions, other than those of pastor or parochial school teacher (commonly referred to as special ministries) may be filled either by call or by contract at any regular or properly convened special Congregation Meeting, provided that the names of the candidates, their biographical summary and the position for which they are being considered shall have been published in at least two Sunday bulletins and mailed to all members of the congregation prior to the meeting at which the matter is to be considered and acted upon.

E - NOMINATIONS

The President shall annually appoint a standing Nominating Committee consisting of five voting members of the congregation. This committee shall nominate one candidate for each corporate office to be filled during that fiscal year. Additional candidates for all positions may be nominated from the floor. The procedures set forth above shall be followed for regular elections and for filling vacancies in any of the positions named above.

For nominations for the chairs of the various boards see Section III, Paragraph B.

F – ELECTION PROCEDURES

1. The list of candidates for the corporate offices prepared by the Nominating Committee shall be communicated to all Bethel Voting members in a timely fashion. At the meeting where the voting will take place, this list, together with all nominations made from the floor, shall become the official list of candidates. After all nominations have been received and recorded, the election shall proceed by written ballot, provided, however, that if there is only one candidate for any corporate office the election may be formalized by show of hands or voice vote.
2. The list of candidates for the chairs of the various boards shall be communicated to all Bethel voting members in a timely fashion. At the meeting where the voting will take place, the election procedures shall be the same as those set forth in the preceding paragraph.
3. The election of the corporate officers shall be held at the regular meeting in the second quarter and the election of the board chairs shall also be held at the second quarter meeting.
4. All newly elected corporate officers, and board chairs shall take office immediately prior to the close of the second quarter meeting. Their public installation shall take place as soon as practical.

G – TERMS OF OFFICE

1. The corporate officers (President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer) shall each be elected for a period of two years, the President and the Secretary to be elected in the odd-numbered years and the Vice President and the Treasurer in the even-numbered years. No corporate officer shall hold the same office for more than two consecutive two-year terms, except that a corporate officer who is elected to fill a vacancy shall be eligible to serve two full two-year terms in addition to the unexpired term.
2. The chairs of the various boards shall be elected for a period of two years. A Board chair may serve as chair for no more than four consecutive two-year terms.

SECTION II – DUTIES OF CORPORATE OFFICERS

The President shall serve as Chair of all regular and special meetings of the Board of Trustees and the Executive Board and shall serve as Chair of the Congregation Council and at the annual congregational meeting. The president is also an ex officio non-voting member of all other Boards and Standing Committees. The president shall represent the congregation in all business and legal matters and together with the chairperson of the board from which the document originates shall sign all contracts and legal documents of the congregation in its name.

The Vice President shall preside at all regular and special meetings of the Congregation Meeting and shall assist the President and, in the event of the President's absence or disability, assume and discharge the duties of the President's office. In the Vice President's absence, the President shall appoint a member of the Assembly to preside at the Congregation Meeting.

The Secretary shall keep minutes of all meetings of the Congregation Meeting, Congregation Council and Executive Board, and a roll of the Congregation Meeting. The Secretary shall be the custodian of the corporate seal and affix it to such documents only as are approved by the Executive Board. The Secretary shall be responsible for the safe-keeping of the original Articles of Incorporation, the State Charter, titles to all real estate owned by the congregation and such other documents as are entrusted to the Secretary's care by the Executive Board. In the event of the Secretary's resignation or retirement from office, the Secretary shall deliver to the President all papers, documents, record books and all other property in the Secretary's possession belonging to the congregation.

The Treasurer shall

1. supervise or perform day to day bookkeeping and accounting functions. Should these duties require additional effort, a business manager, or assistant treasurer position may be filled by resolution of the Congregation Meeting upon recommendation of the Executive Board.
2. prepare an annual budget for the General Fund after consulting with each board chair. A summary of the annual budget shall be included in two consecutive Sunday Bulletins prior to the spring Voters meeting. The annual budget shall be mailed to the voting members of the congregation prior to the spring Congregation Meeting for approval at the second quarter meeting.
3. Prepare a three-year projection of income and expenses for the General Fund, the Capital Improvement Fund and Bethel School building.

Checks less than \$2500 can be signed by one corporate officer or business manager. All checks of \$2,500 or more, except for payroll disbursements authorized in the congregational budget, shall be signed by two corporate officers.

Expenditures of \$7,500 or more shall require a majority vote at a regular or special meeting of the Voters.

The Treasurer shall present financial statements to the Congregation Meeting at each regular meeting.

In case a vacancy occurs in the corporate office of Treasurer or the position of Business Manager, the chair of the Board of Finance shall act as Treasurer and/or Business Manager in the interim.

SECTION III – DUTIES OF BOARDS

A – GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. The Chair of each Board shall advise the Congregation Council of the names of communicant members of the congregation serving as Board members.
2. Each Board, except the Executive Board and the Congregation Council, shall meet on the first Monday of each month (unless it decides on another regular meeting date), except during July and August, and at such other times as may be necessary to perform the duties to carry on the work of the Board, such additional meetings to be at the call of the Chair of the Board.
3. The first meeting of each Board shall be held on the first Monday of the month following its appointment. At this meeting the Board shall elect a Secretary who shall keep accurate minutes of each meeting.
4. Each Board shall prepare annually an itemized budget, including provisions for staff, for transmittal to the Treasurer not later than March 1.
5. Each Board shall have the authority to spend the funds allocated to it in its budget, subject to the limits set therein for each category. Requests for additional expenditures over and above the budget or authority to transfer funds to other categories must be submitted to the Congregation Council for recommendation before submission to the Congregation Meeting for approval.
6. Each Board shall report regularly to the Congregation Meeting.
7. Communications and literature from organizations and institutions outside of the congregation shall be referred to the appropriate Board.

B – THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

The Executive Board shall consist of the corporate officers of the congregation: President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. The Secretary of the congregation shall also serve as Secretary of the Executive Board.

The Executive Board shall:

1. serve as the Trustees of the congregation and perform the duties assigned to them in Article XIV of the constitution;
2. present a slate of nominees to the Congregation Meeting for the position of chair of each board, one candidate for each such position;
3. Act in the name and on behalf of the congregation between meetings of the Congregation Meeting on matters not assigned to other boards or officers;
4. annually review insurance policies and fidelity bonds necessary and advisable to protect the congregation and its agents against major financial loss or legal liability;
5. make the necessary appointments to fill vacancies in the membership of the Congregation Council;
6. initiate the appointment, as the situation of the congregation requires, of special ad hoc or continuing committees to deal with special tasks.

C – PASTORAL CARE COMMITTEE

The Pastoral Care Committee shall consist of the President and Vice President of the congregation and the immediate past President plus two members at large appointed by the Congregation Council. A list of at least five names drawn up by the Pastor and the committee members shall be submitted to the Congregation Council for their review and appointment. These appointments shall be staggered terms of two years. In case the past President cannot serve, another member shall be appointed by the Congregation Council.

The Pastoral Care Committee shall:

1. arrange for the work and vacation schedules of the Pastors;
2. make arrangements for the services of a vacancy pastorate should this become necessary;
3. ensure that the needs of the Pastors and their assistants are provided for;
4. show Christian love and concern for the Pastors and their assistants, and the professional staff in general and minister to them in all areas of pastoral need;

5. assist the special review committee with the review of the pastor(s)' work and needs. (See By-laws, Section I, Paragraph D)

D – THE CONGREGATION COUNCIL

The Congregation Council shall consist of the Executive Board of the congregation and the Chairs of the duly authorized Boards (By-Laws, Paragraphs E to O). The President shall serve as Chair of the Congregation Council.

The Congregation Council shall:

1. meet on the second Monday of the months in which there is no Congregation Meeting' Meeting. Special meetings may be called by the Chair or by two or more Board Chairs;
2. approve the number of members to serve on each regular Board and appoint the persons to fill those positions;
3. consider all requests for funds that exceed budget appropriations or which have not been budgeted and refer such requests to the Congregation Meeting with recommendation;
4. appoint the two at large members of the Pastoral Care Committee as those vacancies occur;
5. act as Planning Committee and survey, review and coordinate the work, activities and finances of the various Boards for the overall welfare of the congregation and consider any matter which, in the opinion of the Board, would be to the benefit of Bethel and the church at large. After proper deliberation, the Board shall refer such items for consideration and study to the specific Board into whose area of service the particular matter properly belongs;
6. make recommendations to the Congregation Meeting about any matters that should be considered and acted on by that assembly; and
7. not divulge matters which should be kept confidential.

The Congregation Council was known before May 2015 as the Board of Deacons. Any reference to “Board of Deacons” in the Articles of Incorporation, Constitution, By-Laws, any resolution, motion, or other document of Bethel is to be construed as referring to the Congregation Council.

E – THE BOARD OF PARISH EDUCATION

Bethel Congregation encourages Christian elementary education in order to assist children to grow as the people of God in the gifts of the Holy Spirit to include love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. (Galatians 5:22)

The Board of Parish Education shall:

1. provide Christian education opportunities for children from birth through confirmation;
2. appoint a Sunday School Superintendent who provides for the training of the Sunday School staff. The Board approves the appointments to the Sunday School staff as recommended by the Sunday School Superintendent;
3. in conjunction with the Pastor, provide for appropriate instruction for confirmation;
4. be responsible for the pre-school program and other Christian education programs conducted by the congregation; provide direction and accept oversight responsibility for the operation of such programs;
5. co-ordinate with other education programs endorsed by the congregation.

F – THE BOARD OF DOCTRINE AND WORSHIP

The Board of Doctrine and Worship shall assist the pastor in matters concerning the spiritual welfare of the congregation, its families and its individual members, give counsel to the congregation in all matters of doctrine, and plan, supervise and evaluate Bethel's worship services.

In consultation with the pastor, the board shall:

1. make recommendations to the Congregation Meeting regarding the order of regular services; the frequency, nature and order of special services; the times and procedures for the administration of the holy communion, and all other related matters requiring the approval of the Assembly;
2. assist the pastor in developing the pulpit program, giving special attention to the doctrinal and practical emphasis to be made in the worship services and in the congregation's educational and other Christian service programs;
3. make recommendations to the Assembly regarding the employment of an organist and choir director when necessary, and provide substitutes or temporary replacements as needed;
4. serve as advisory committee to the organist and choir director and do everything reasonable and possible to achieve a high level of excellence in the musical portions of all worship services;
5. assist in the recruitment of choir members and set standards of dress and decorum for all groups and individuals participating in the musical portions of the worship services;
6. appoint a head usher who shall be responsible for recruiting and training a staff of ushers

7. appoint a volunteer to recruit, train and schedule acolytes for all worship services as needed;
8. appoint a volunteer to recruit and schedule greeters for all Sunday morning worship services;
9. appoint a volunteer to recruit and schedule lectors for all Sunday morning services;
10. appoint a volunteer to recruit, train and schedule assisting ministers for all Sunday morning services;
11. appoint a chairman to recruit, train and schedule an Altar Guild;
12. make recommendations to the Board of Property and Maintenance regarding the care and maintenance of the sanctuary and any changes that may be desirable or necessary;
13. be responsible for the purchase, use and care of vestments, paraments and sacred vessels; provide the elements for the administration of the sacraments; provide candles for use in the services; arrange for appropriate decorations for special occasions; provide hymnals and keep them in good repair; provide order of worship programs as needed; and
14. select timely topics dealing with Christian doctrine and practice and encourage their discussion in organizations and groups within the congregation.

G – THE BOARD OF STEWARDSHIP

Time, talent, and treasure belong to the Lord of the Church. Christians are but managers of what God, the Owner of everything, entrusts to them. Since God works through all that is entrusted to the people of Bethel, this board shall:

Encourage involvement of every member of Bethel in the life of the congregation;

1. Educate the congregation in Christian stewardship;
2. Conduct a regular financial giving program;
3. Establish intentional programs for visitors and new members.

H – THE BOARD OF YOUTH MINISTRY

The Board of Youth Ministry shall have as its principal function the development, implementation and promotion of a Christian life program for the young people of the congregation and the community who have completed the eighth grade. To accomplish its purpose, this board's duties may include but are not limited to:

1. prepare and maintain an up-to-date list of all active and prospective participants in this group with such information about each person as the board may require to do its work properly and effectively;
2. send information to all persons on this list from time to time regarding Bethel's youth program and activities and invite their participation and support;
3. follow up those who do not respond or participate regularly, with the intent of being available as lay ministers on an individual basis to serve the needs of those for whom a group situation is uncomfortable;
4. organize and conduct Bible classes, discussion groups, and social and recreational activities under the direction of competent and qualified leaders;
5. alert the young people to opportunities for service in the congregation, the community and in the Christian church in general, and encourage them to use their talents in such service, either on a volunteer part-time basis or as a life career;
6. inform the Pastor regarding any person in this group who may be in need of personal help and counselling and do whatever else is necessary to make sure that the matter is given proper attention; and
7. put forth every effort to encourage the young people to be interested, active members of the church and help them make their Christian faith an integral and vital force in their daily lives.

I – THE BOARD OF ADULT EDUCATION

The Board of Adult Education shall:

1. encourage programs of study that will meet the needs of various groups in the congregation. Such programs will feature specific biblical content, exploration of the varied heritage of the Christian Church, or discussion of contemporary issues;
2. assist the Pastor in developing education classes for new members of the congregation; and
3. supervise and maintain the activities of the Media Center including:
 - a. literature and children's curriculum,
 - b. periodical purchases,
 - c. church archives,
 - d. audio-video equipment.

J – THE BOARD OF FINANCE AND CHURCH ADMINISTRATION

The Board of Finance and Church Administration shall:

1. provide the supply of contribution envelopes. A quarterly statement indicating current and year-to-date contribution amounts shall be made available to each member;
2. arrange for pickup and safekeeping of all collections in the church vault between the various church services, realizing that the church vault is intended only to serve as a temporary place for storage;
3. appoint and supervise sufficient qualified adult members of the congregation to act as tellers, whose duties are counting the collections, preparing a preprinted tally sheet, and depositing promptly all collections preferably the same day. Any delays should be called to the immediate attention of the Board of Finance;
4. forward to the Treasurer the completed tally sheets, a copy of the bank deposit slip and the collection envelopes; and
5. co-ordinate activities of Church Administration and office procedures including computer and copy machine related items.

K – THE BOARD OF PROPERTY AND MAINTENANCE

The function of this board shall be to maintain and, where possible, improve the congregation's physical properties and possessions, so that they will be a witness to the glory of God and a source of pride and joy for the congregation and the community.

The board shall:

1. make regular inspections of all property belonging to the congregation, including the building structures, their interiors and exteriors, the furnishings, equipment and grounds;
2. set standards of cleanliness, maintenance and operations; engage a competent custodian or custodial service and instruct regarding duties and supervise work; provide all necessary equipment and supplies for custodial use;
3. make sure that all electrical, electronic and mechanical equipment is properly maintained;
4. arrange for the proper care and safe-keeping of all furnishings and equipment belonging to the congregation and provide and assign adequate storage space as needed; this includes the audio visual hardware;
5. do everything possible to see that the premises are free of safety hazards;

6. arrange for regular and continuing utility services; plan and promote procedures for the conservation of fuel and energy;
7. employ qualified firms or individuals, as far as budget allocations will permit, to do jobs that cannot be done by the custodian or by volunteer help, making sure that the work to be done, the financial commitments and all legal obligations are clearly spelled out in the contracts for such work;
8. recruit volunteers from the membership from time to time to assist the board in specific projects, set standards of performance, provide necessary materials and equipment and supervise the work of the volunteers;
9. keep a perpetual inventory of all the congregation's significant physical properties and possessions, including the cost or value of each item or group of items and make sure that new acquisitions are added to and discarded items removed from the list;
10. consult the Executive Board at least once in each fiscal year to make sure that the congregation has adequate insurance coverage against all potential losses, damages and legal liabilities; and
11. see to it that claims are filed promptly with the insurance company in case of loss, damage or legal exposure and, if necessary, also report the matter to the local police.

L – THE BOARD OF MISSION

The Board of Mission shall be responsible for assisting the congregation in its commitment to outreach with the Gospel in mission for the world beyond Bethel congregation.

This board shall:

1. Coordinate service opportunities outside the congregation;
2. Educate Bethel congregation in Christian mission;
3. Allocate Bethel funds for mission programs;
4. Establish a presence in the community.

M – FINANCIAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

1. At least biannually, the Executive Board shall appoint three voting members of the congregation to perform a financial review of the prior fiscal year(s). The Financial Review Committee shall prepare a written report to be presented to the Congregation Meeting at the regular fourth quarter meeting.

2. It shall be the duty of this committee to examine the financial and business records of the congregation, and any other organizations affiliated with and receiving funds from Bethel such as the Bethel Foundation. This examination shall include, but shall not be limited to accounts payable and receivable, bank accounts, receipts, disbursements, deeds, certificates of title, mortgages, loans, insurance policies, stocks, bonds, trust funds and all other records, documents and evidences of transactions relating to the business and financial operations and interests of the congregation.
3. All officers, board and committee members and employees of the congregation, Bethel Foundation, and any other organizations affiliated with and receiving funds from Bethel congregation shall cooperate fully with this committee and shall supply the information and materials requested by the committee in the course of the performance of its duties. If at any time there is a question as to the propriety of a request made by the committee, the matter shall be resolved by the Executive Board.
4. The Financial Review Committee may, with the prior approval of the Executive Board or the Congregation Meeting, employ qualified professional assistance, should that become necessary or desirable. All costs in connection with the employment of such professional assistance shall be borne by the congregation.

N – THE BOARD OF FELLOWSHIP

Bethel congregation believes Jesus' promise that, wherever two or three are gathered together in His name, there He will be among them. In this spirit, Bethel seeks to support and encourage fellowship among members. To that end, this Board shall:

1. Facilitate the formation of fellowship groups patterned after the common interests and needs of groups of members;
2. Coordinate opportunities within the congregation for fellowship and communication.

O – THE BOARD OF COMMUNICATIONS

The Board of Communications shall:

1. Advance the mission of the Congregation by managing the Congregation's use of all available media;
2. Oversee, facilitate, and advise the other Congregational Boards and members regarding the content of Congregational communications;
3. Ensure that the Congregation's communications programs are implemented and maintained.