
CONSTITUTION, BYLAWS, AND CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

Gloria Dei Lutheran Church

For Ratification FEBRUARY 2014

GLORIA DEI LUTHERAN CHURCH
CONSTITUTION, BYLAWS, AND CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS (for ratification FEB 2014)
8427 Jewel Lake Road, Anchorage, AK 99502

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INTRODUCTION

The primary documents that govern the congregation of Gloria Dei Lutheran Church include the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions, which have been consolidated into this single document for ease of use, revision, and dissemination. This document is designed to be the governing policy and guidance for this congregation to ensure accurate adherence to God's mission through the policies and procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, the Alaska Synod, and the Gloria Dei Lutheran Church.

This document is divided into chapters. The chapters contain the constitutional provisions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions and are numbered as follows:

Constitutional provisions are codified by two sets of numbers: a chapter number followed by a consecutive, two-digit provision number. Thus, the second constitutional provision related to "Chapter 8. Membership" is codified **C8.02**.

Bylaws are codified by three sets of numbers (printed in blue and underlined): the chapter number, the related constitutional provision number, and a consecutive, two-digit identifying number. Thus, the first bylaw related to "Membership" is codified [C8.02.01](#).

Continuing Resolutions are similarly codified by three sets of numbers (printed in green and italicized); however, the third number is preceded by a capital letter. Thus, a continuing resolution numbered ***C14.02.A11*** would designate the fourteenth chapter, second subject within that chapter, and the first continuing resolution regarding that subject (indicated by the letter "A") adopted in the year 2011.

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PREAMBLE

We, the baptized members of the Church of Christ, responding 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 Gloria Dei Lutheran Church.
- C1.02.** For the purpose of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws and continuing resolutions, the Gloria Dei Lutheran Church congregation is hereinafter designated as "this congregation."
- C1.03.** This congregation shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of Alaska.

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 the centering in all its fullness in the person and work of Jesus.
 - 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.

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- 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 Scriptures and confessed in the ecumenical creeds and Lutheran confessional writings, as the power of God to create and sustain the Church for God's mission in the world.

Chapter 3.

NATURE OF THE CHURCH

- 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.** The Church exists both as an inclusive fellowship and as local congregations gathered for worship and Christian services. 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 (ELCA), 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.

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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 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 and justice for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, and standing with the poor and powerless 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 the congregation.
 - d. Teach the Word of God.

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- e. Witness to the reconciling Word of God in Christ, reaching out to all people.
 - f. Respond to human need; work for justice and peace; care for the sick and the suffering; and participate responsibly in society.
 - g. Motivate its members to provide financial support for the congregation's ministry and the ministry of other parts of the 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 groups and shall review their actions.
- C4.05.** This congregation shall, from time to time, adopt a mission statement which will provide specific direction for its programs.

Chapter 5.

POWERS OF THE CONGREGATION

- 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 the congregation. The congregation is authorized to:
- a. Call a pastor as provided in Chapter 9.
 - b. Terminate the call of a pastor as provided in Chapter 9.
 - c. Appoint or terminate the appointment of associates in ministry in conformity with the applicable policy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - d. Approve the annual budget.

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- e. Acquire real and personal property by gift, devise, purchase, or other lawful means.
- f. Hold title to and use its property for any and all activities consistent with its purpose.
- g. Sell, mortgage, lease, transfer, or otherwise dispose of its property by any lawful means.
- h. Enter into contract.
- i. Sue and be sued.
- j. Elect its congregation officers and council and require them to carry out their duties in accordance with the constitution and bylaws.
- k. Terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as provided in Chapter 6.

C5.03.01. While the buildings of this congregation shall be open to all people to share in its worship, instruction, pastoral care, and fellowship, this congregation rejects all fellowship with organizations—secret or open—which are avowedly religious or practice forms of religion without confessing faith in the Triune God and in Jesus Christ as the eternal Son of God incarnate to be our only Savior from sin, or which teach salvation by works.

C5.03.02. Ceremonies of such organizations as defined above shall not be permitted in the buildings or premises of this congregation, nor shall its pastor(s) take part in any such ceremonies wherever they are conducted.

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 Alaska 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:

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- 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 clergy roster 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.
 - d. This congregation agrees to consider associates in ministry for appointment to other staff positions in the 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 may be 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.
 - d. This congregation follows 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 desire of this congregation to terminate its relationship must be adopted at a legally called and conducted special meeting of this congregation by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present.
 - b. The secretary of this congregation shall submit a copy of the resolution to the synodical bishop and shall mail a copy of the resolution to voting members of this congregation. This notice shall be submitted within 10 days after this resolution has been adopted.
 - c. The bishop of the synod shall consult with this congregation during a period of at least 90 days.

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- d. If this congregation, 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 this congregation and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be terminated.
 - f. Notice of termination shall be forwarded by the synodical bishop to the secretary of this congregation and published in the periodical of this congregation.
- C6.06.** If this congregation is considering relocation, it shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located before any steps are taken leading to such action. The approval of the Synod Council shall be received before any such action is effected.

Chapter 7.

PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

- C7.01.** If this congregation ceases to exist, title to undisposed property shall pass to the Alaska 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, title to property shall continue to reside in this congregation.
- C7.03.** If a two-thirds majority of the voting members of this congregation, present at a regularly called and conducted special meeting of this congregation, vote to transfer to another Lutheran church body, title to property shall continue to reside in this congregation. Before this congregation takes action to transfer to another Lutheran church body, it shall consult with representatives of the Alaska Synod.
- C7.04.** If a two-thirds majority of the voting members of this congregation, present at a regularly called and conducted special meeting of this congregation, vote to become independent or relate to a non-Lutheran church body, title to property of this congregation shall continue to reside in this congregation only with the consent of the Synod Council. The Synod Council, after consultation with this congregation by the established synodical process, may give approval to the request to become

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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.

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 shall have communed and made a contribution of record during the current or preceding year.
- d. **Associate** members are persons holding membership in other Lutheran congregations who wish to retain such membership but desire to participate in the life and mission of this congregation. They have all the privileges and duties of membership except voting rights and eligibility for elected offices or membership on the congregation council of this congregation.

C8.02.01. Admission to baptized membership shall be governed as follows:

- a. Children, one or both of whose parents or guardians are members of this congregation, shall, upon receiving Christian baptism, be thereby received as baptized members of this congregation.

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- b. Children, neither of whose parents or guardians are members of this congregation, shall, upon Christian baptism duly recorded as a ministerial act performed under the auspices of this congregation, thereby be received as baptized members of this congregation unless there is understanding that, for good reason, they will be enrolled as baptized members of another congregation, in which case notice of the baptism shall be given to the congregation in which the child is to be enrolled as a baptized member.
- c. Children baptized in other congregations (and baptized adults mentally incompetent for confirmation) shall be received as baptized members of this congregation upon admission of one or both parents or guardians to membership, by consent of one or both parents or guardians, or by action of the congregation council.
- d. Unbaptized adults who have received instruction and given evidence of having an adequate understanding and acceptance of the teachings of the Word of God as confessed by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall thereby, upon confession of faith and Christian baptism duly recorded as a ministerial act performed under the auspices of this congregation, be received as baptized members of this congregation.

C8.02.02. Admission to confirmed membership shall be governed as follows:

- a. Baptized adults, not previously members of this congregation, who have received instruction and given evidence of having adequate understanding and acceptance of the teachings of the Word of God as confessed by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be admitted to confirmed membership through affirmation of baptism (confirmation).
- b. However, adults received as baptized members according to the provisions of **C8.02.01** (part d) of these bylaws shall be recognized as confirmed members, whether or not, at the discretion of the pastor, they participate in affirmation of baptism.
- c. Children who are baptized members of the congregation shall be admitted to confirmed membership through preparation for and participation in affirmation of baptism.
- d. Applicants for membership, presenting letters of transfer showing them to be confirmed members in good standing in other Lutheran churches, shall be admitted to confirmed membership upon acceptance of their letters of transfer

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by the pastor and/or congregation council and the report of their names to the congregation.

- e. Applicants for membership who present evidence of confirmation in a Lutheran church but who do not have letters of transfer shall be admitted to confirmed membership when the pastor and/or the congregation council has determined that they meet the standards of Christian faith and life indicated in the constitution and these bylaws when they have reaffirmed their faith before the congregation.

C8.03. 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.
- 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.

C8.03.01. Participation in Holy Communion shall be open to members of this congregation who have been confirmed or who have received pastoral instruction in Holy Communion and to others who desire to commune and who accept teachings in regard to Holy Communion as set forth as follows in **C8.03.02.**

C8.03.02. Participation by a communicant indicates sincere repentance, faith in Jesus Christ as Savior, and an earnest desire to amend ones sinful life, together with an acceptance of the Scriptural teaching regarding the Real Presence of Christ with His Body and Blood in the Sacrament. Such registration forms or oral announcements shall be used that will make prospective participants aware of these requirements.

C8.03.03. Communion participation shall be entered into the records of the congregation; notice regarding members of other congregations shall be sent to the respective congregations of which they are members.

C8.04. Membership in this congregation shall be terminated by any of the following:

- a. Death.
- b. Resignation.
- c. Transfer or release.

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- d. Disciplinary action by the congregation council.
- e. Removal from the roll due to inactivity as defined in the bylaws.

C8.04.01. Discontinuance of membership shall be governed as follows:

- a. Members who move from the community served by this congregation shall be encouraged to transfer their membership. Any confirmed member in good standing, desiring to change his/her membership to another church, shall, upon request, be entitled to a letter of transfer. Should the member fail to request a transfer, a Lutheran congregation in the community of his/her residence shall be notified.
- b. Any confirmed member who, in the judgment of the congregation council, appears to show no interest in attending worship services, taking part in the mission of the church, or contributing to the financial support of the congregation, and who fails to partake of Holy Communion according to the congregation's records for a period of one year shall be visited by the pastor and/or representatives of the congregation and encouraged by them to active membership. If, during the second year, the confirmed member does not actively participate, his/her name shall be removed at the end of that year from the active membership roster of the congregation; the right to vote shall be lost, and he/she shall no longer be counted in the membership statistics of the congregation. The person's name shall, however, be retained on a responsibility list as one who is in special need of the congregation's prayers and concern.
- c. A child, neither of whose parents or guardians is a member of this congregation, may be removed from the roster of baptized members if he/she fails to participate in the life and worship of the congregation. The child's name shall, however, be retained on a responsibility list as one who is in special need of the congregation's prayers and concern.
- d. Members who have transferred to other Lutheran congregations, who are definitely known to have become members of other congregations without transfer, who have resigned, or who have been dismissed shall thereby lose membership in this congregation and all rights pertaining thereto.

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Chapter 9.

PASTOR

- C9.01.** Authority to call a pastor shall be in this congregation by at least a two-thirds majority ballot vote of members present and voting at a meeting regularly 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.
- C9.01.01.** The congregation, after it has voted to call a pastor by at least a two-thirds majority vote, shall issue a letter of call in a form approved by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to the pastor-elect, which shall bear the signatures of the chairperson and secretary of the call meeting and shall be certified by the synod bishop.
- C9.01.02.** The call shall be for an indefinite time, except that calls for a limited time may be issued to pastors who are qualified for emeritus status and are otherwise eligible for call.
- C9.01.03.** Since the pastor ministers to the congregation primarily in the public preaching of the Word and in the administration of the sacraments, and since both pastor and congregation are parties to the call, no pastor shall announce his/her decision on any subsequent call without first having consulted with the congregation or at least with the congregation council. Should the pastor thereupon resign to accept another call, his/her resignation shall be presented to the congregation, and mutually satisfactory arrangement shall be sought for terminating his/her services, normally within 30 days.
- C9.01.04.** A desire for a change in pastorate, either by congregation or pastor, shall be brought to the attention of the synod bishop, who shall advise in the matter according to the constitution of this congregation (Chapter 9) and the established procedure of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- C9.02.** Only a member of the clergy roster of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or who has been recommended for it by the synodical bishop may be called as pastor of this congregation.

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- C9.03.** a. Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the ordained minister(s) shall
1. preach the Word;
 2. administer the sacraments;
 3. conduct public worship;
 4. provide pastoral care; and
 5. speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world.
- b. Each ordained minister with a congregational call shall, within the congregation,
1. offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead;
 2. supervise all schools and organizations of this congregation;
 3. install regularly elected members of the council;
 4. with the council, administer discipline; and
 5. with the council, supervise salaried staff.
- c. Every pastor shall
1. seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel and strive to extend the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation, and abroad;
 2. impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through distribution of its periodicals and other publications; and
 3. endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and of the Alaska Synod of the ELCA.
- C9.03.01.** Every pastor serving this congregation shall have an undivided loyalty to the faith and purpose of the Church according to Chapters 2 and 4 of this constitution. Any question concerning such loyalty shall be adjudicated according to the recommended procedure of the Church.
- C9.03.02.** Clergy qualified according to Chapter 9 of this constitution may occasionally perform pastoral functions in this congregation with the approval of the

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congregation and its pastor or, in the case of a vacancy in the pastorate, with the approval of the congregation and the synod bishop.

- 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.** 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;
 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 moral and spiritual character of the pastor;
 4. 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. dissolution of the congregation.
- b. In the case of alleged physical or mental incapacity of the pastor or ineffective conduct 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 the congregation council, 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 one layperson.
- c. In the 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.

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- 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 together with the committee described in C9.05.b. shall decide on the course of action to be recommended to the pastor and the congregation. If they agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action shall be taken by the 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, all such cases being 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.
- C9.06.** At a time of pastoral vacancy, an interim pastor may be called by the congregation in consultation with the bishop of the synod.
- C9.07.** During the period of service, an interim pastor shall have the rights and duties in the congregation of a regularly called pastor and may delegate the same in part to a supply pastor with the consent of the bishop of the synod and this congregation or congregation council. The interim pastor and any ordained pastor providing assistance shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a pastor.
- 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.
- 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.
- C9.10.** With the approval of the bishop of the synod, the congregation may depart from C9.05.a. and call a pastor for a specific term of years. Details of such calls shall be in

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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 C9.05.a.

- C9.11.** The pastor shall be a member of the congregation that has extended the letter of call. In a parish of multiple congregations, the pastor shall hold membership in one of the congregations.
- C9.12.** The pastor shall keep 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.
- C9.13.** The pastor shall submit a report of his or her ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.

Chapter 10.

CONGREGATION MEETING

- C.10.01.** The annual meeting of this congregation shall be held at a time specified in the bylaws.
- C.10.01.01.** The annual meeting of the congregation shall be held in the month of February, the date and time to be selected by the congregation council. A second special meeting may take place in the fourth quarter to elect members of the congregation council and officers of the congregation/council.
- C10.01.02.** Announcement of the time and place of the annual meeting of the congregation shall be made at two public services immediately preceding the meeting, said services to be at least one week apart, and in such publications as the congregation or the pastor may periodically issue or by special written notice to the voting members, mailed at least ten days in advance.
- C10.02.** A special congregation meeting may be called by the pastor, the congregation council, or the president of this congregation, or shall be called at the written request of 10 percent of the voting members. The call for each special meeting shall specify the purpose for which it is to be held, and no other business shall be transacted.
- C.10.03.** Notice of all meetings of this congregation shall be given at two public services immediately preceding the meeting, said services to be at least one week apart, and in

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such publications as the congregation or the pastor may periodically issue or by special written notice to the voting members mailed at least ten days in advance of the meeting.

C.10.04. Ten percent of the voting members shall constitute a quorum except as follows: for purposes concerning property ownership and church affiliation (as outlined in Chapters 6 and 7), 40 percent of the voting members shall constitute a quorum.

C10.04.01. The current roster of voting, confirmed, and baptized members shall be determined prior to each annual meeting.

C.10.05. Voting by proxy or by absentee ballot shall not be permitted.

C.10.06. All actions by the congregation shall be by majority vote except as otherwise provided in this constitution.

C10.06.01. Except as otherwise provided in the constitution and bylaws, all matters shall be decided by majority vote of those present and voting.

C.10.06.02. No one shall be declared elected unless he or she has received a majority of the votes cast.

C.10.06.03. In the following cases, voting shall be by written ballot:

- a. To elect the officers of the congregation.
- b. To elect the congregation council.
- c. To adopt or amend the Articles of Incorporation, Constitution, or Bylaws.
- d. To excommunicate a member or to remove a member from office.
- e. To sever membership in the ELCA.
- f. To dispose of, encumber, or purchase real property.
- g. When requested by ten or more voting members present.

C.10.07. Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of all meetings of this congregation.

C10.07.01. The order of business at the annual meeting shall be the following:

- a. Opening devotions.
- b. Approval of the minutes of the last annual meeting.
- c. Reports of the pastor, congregation council, treasurer, committees, and others.

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- d. Election of members to the congregational council and officers (including treasurer).
- e. Unfinished business.
- f. Election of officers.
- g. New business.
- h. Approval of the budget.
- i. Closing prayer.

Chapter 11.

OFFICERS

C11.01. The officers of this congregation and the congregation council shall be a president, president-elect, secretary, and treasurer.

- a. Duties of the officers shall be specified in the bylaws.
- b. The officers shall be voting members of this congregation.

C11.02. The congregation shall elect its officers, except the treasurer, from among the congregation council first elected at the annual meeting. The officers shall serve for one year; their terms shall begin at the close of the annual meeting at which they are elected.

C11.03. No individual shall hold more than one office at a time and no officer shall be eligible to serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office, except the treasurer.

C11.04. Election procedures are specified in the bylaws.

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Chapter 12.

CONGREGATION COUNCIL

C12.01. The voting membership of the congregation council shall consist of the officers and not more than twelve other elected members serving as liaison to the standing committees. The pastor(s) shall serve as ex-officio member(s) of the congregation council. Any voting member of the 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 three regular meetings of the congregation council without cause. Any member having two unexcused absences from regular meetings shall be notified thereof by the secretary.

C12.01.01. The congregation council shall consist of not more than sixteen members, each elected for a term of two years, but elected in such a manner that after the first election, one-half are elected each year. The above applies to vacancies at the time of election.

The officers of the congregation/congregation council, except the treasurer, shall be elected by the congregation from the council membership following its election, with terms provided in the constitution. An employee of this congregation may not serve as an officer of the congregation council.

A separate election will be held for the treasurer. Candidates/nominees for this position may come from the elected council or from the congregation at large.

C12.01.02. The congregation council may appoint two youth members (grades nine through twelve) as council members to serve one-year terms (September through August).

C12.02. The members of the congregation council, except the pastor(s), shall be elected by written ballot to serve for two years 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. Newly elected congregation council members shall be installed at worship the Sunday following the date they assume office.

C12.02.01. In addition to the requirements of congregational membership stated in Chapter 8 of this constitution, qualifications for membership on the congregation council shall include such practical ability as is needful in promoting the various interests of the congregation and the committees they represent, as outlined in the duties of the various committees of the council.

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- C12.02.02.** A member of the congregation council, with the exception of the treasurer, may succeed himself/herself in office for one term only. The filling of an unexpired term of less than one year shall not be deemed to be a term of office.
- C12.02.03.** In the event that a member of the congregation council is absent from three regular meetings of the council without excuse acceptable to the council, that council member shall forfeit membership on the congregation council. Any member having two unexcused absences from regular meetings shall be notified thereof by the secretary.
- C12.03.** Should the office of the president be vacated, the president-elect shall assume the duties of the president. Should the office of president-elect or secretary be vacated, the congregation council shall elect, by majority vote, a successor from among those council members elected by the congregation. Should a member vacate his or her place on the congregation council, the congregation council shall elect, by majority vote, a successor from a slate of nominees presented by the Nominating Committee to fill the unexpired term of the vacated position. Should the office of the treasurer be vacated, a slate of nominees from the congregation council or from the congregation at large shall be presented by the Nominating Committee from which the congregation council shall elect, by majority vote, a successor to fill the unexpired term of the vacated position.
- 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 practices 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 pastor(s) and staff and help them annually to evaluate the fulfillment of their calling, appointment, or employment.
 - e. To be examples, individually and corporately, of the style of life and ministry expected of all baptized persons.

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- f. To promote a congregational climate of peace and goodwill and, as differences and conflicts arise, to endeavor to foster mutual understanding leading to an amicable resolution.
- g. To arrange for pastoral service during the sickness or absence of the pastor.
- h. To emphasize partnership with the synod and churchwide units 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.

C12.04.01. Each member of the congregation council, with the exception of the officers, shall be elected with the understanding that they will be liaison to one of the following committees:

- a. Building and Grounds
- b. Finance
- c. Parish Education
- d. Parish Life/Fellowship
- e. Personnel
- f. Social Ministry
- g. Spiritual Life
- h. Worship
- i. Youth Ministry

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 management of its business and fiscal affairs. It shall have the powers and be subject to the obligations that pertain to such boards under the laws of the State of Alaska, except as otherwise provided herein.

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- 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 the congregation.
 - c. The congregation council may enter into contracts or other expenditures of up to three percent of the current annual budget for items not included in the budget.
 - d. The congregation council shall prepare an annual budget for adoption by this congregation and shall supervise the expenditure of funds in accordance therewith following its adoption. The budget shall include this congregation's full indicated share in support of the wider ministry being carried on in partnership 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 benevolence moneys to the synodical treasurer.
 - f. The congregation council shall be responsible for this congregation's investments and its total insurance program.
- C12.06.** The congregation council shall see that the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws are carried out.
- C12.07.** The congregation council shall provide for an annual review of the membership roster.
- C12.08.** The congregation council shall be responsible for approving the appointment of the salaried lay workers of this congregation.
- C12.09.** The congregation council shall submit a comprehensive report to this congregation at the annual meeting.
- C12.10.** The congregation council shall normally meet once a month. Special meetings may be called by the pastor or the president or at the request of at least one-half of its members. Notice of each special meeting shall be given at a public service or by written notice mailed three days in advance to all who are entitled to be present.
- C12.10.01.** Meetings of the congregation council shall normally be held once a month with a minimum of ten meetings a year.
- C.12.11.** A quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of a majority of the members of the congregation council, including the pastor or interim pastor, except when such person requests or consents to be absent and has given prior approval to an agenda of routine matters which shall be the only business of the meeting.

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C12.11.01. No congregation council business shall be transacted unless a majority of the members is present.

Chapter 13.

CONGREGATION COMMITTEES

C13.01 The Executive Committee of this congregation shall be composed of the officers and the pastor(s); authority and duties are specified in the bylaws.

C13.01.01. The Executive Committee shall execute only that authority delegated or assigned to it by the congregation or council. Generally, the Executive Committee need only act when it is impossible or impractical for decisions to await council deliberations. All actions of the Executive Committee will be reported to the next regular or special meeting of the council.

C13.01.02. The president shall preside over meetings of the congregation council and of the congregation. The president shall also oversee the workings of the committees of the congregation.

C13.01.03. The president-elect shall preside in the absence of the president. The president-elect shall assist the president in overseeing the workings of the committees of the congregation. The president-elect shall chair the Personnel Committee.

C13.01.04. The secretary shall be responsible for the minutes of the council and of the congregation and shall preserve its archives.

C13.01.05. The treasurer shall be bonded and shall be custodian of all funds of the congregation and shall disburse all such funds in accordance with the decisions of the congregation or the congregation council. The treasurer shall ensure that an accurate record of receipts is kept and statements of contribution are provided to each contributor on a regular basis. The treasurer shall present a duly audited report to the annual meeting and shall create financial management policies with the Finance Committee, provide general fiscal oversight, and present reports of income and expenditures each month to the congregation council.

C13.02. A Nominating Committee of four voting members of this congregation—no more than 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 reelection.

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- C13.02.01.** The Nominating Committee shall secure candidates for each office and congregation council position to be filled and shall secure the consent and commitment of each candidate. The list of nominees shall be announced to the congregation in conjunction with the announcement of the meeting of the congregation at which the elections are to take place. In addition to the candidates submitted by the nominating committee, additional nominations for congregation council members or officers may be made from the floor with that person's personal or written consent.
- C13.03.** An Audit Committee of three voting members shall be appointed by the congregation president. Audit Committee members shall not be members of the congregation council. Term of office will be three years, with one member appointed each year. Members shall be eligible for reappointment.
- C13.03.01.** The Audit Committee shall audit the fiscal records of the congregation and report its findings in writing to the February congregation meeting. The records shall also be audited anytime a new treasurer assumes office.
- C13.04.** A Staff Support Committee (in the absence of a staff support committee, duties shall be fulfilled by the executive committee) of four voting members of the congregation shall be appointed jointly by the congregation president and the pastor. Vacancies shall be filled by joint appointment of the president and the pastor.
- C13.04.01.** The Staff Support Committee shall be responsible for providing support for and feedback to the pastor(s) and other support staff.
- C13.05.** When a pastoral vacancy occurs, a Call Committee of nine voting members, at least one of whom shall be of high-school age, shall be elected by this congregation. Term of office will terminate at installation of the newly called pastor.
- C13.06.** Duties of standing congregation committees shall be specified in the Committee Guidelines.
- C13.07.** Other congregation committees may be formed, as the need arises, by decision of the congregation council. The council shall elect, by majority vote, a person to fill the newly created council position from a slate of nominees presented by the Nominating Committee.
- C13.07.01.** The congregation committees shall consist of Building and Grounds, Finance, Parish Education, Parish Life/Fellowship, Personnel, Social Ministry, Spiritual Life, Worship, and Youth Ministry. The congregation council shall have authority to

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appoint or disband such committees as may from time-to-time be necessary or advisable.

C13.07.02. The standing committees shall have the authority to appoint or elect as members of their committees additional congregational members after bringing their recommendations before the congregation council. Members of the committees shall serve two-year terms.

C13.07.03. The congregation council shall, at least once a year, invite the full membership of the regular committees together with representatives chosen by the organizations of the congregation to review the entire program of the congregation.

C13.07.04. In the event that a member of the committee is absent from four regular meetings of the committee without excuse acceptable to the committee, that person shall forfeit membership on the committee. Any member having three unexcused absences from regular meetings shall be notified thereof by the secretary of the committee.

C13.07.05. The Committee on Building and Grounds shall be responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of all buildings, structures, and grounds. They shall be maintained in such a manner as to protect the investment of the congregation and to ensure the safety of all occupants. The committee shall ensure that any contracted repairs or maintenance is satisfactorily executed in a professional manner. The committee shall further ensure that all periodic inspections of equipment are carried out in compliance with manufacturers' recommendations or accepted standards.

C13.07.06. The Committee on Parish Life/Fellowship shall promote an active bond of Christian fellowship for all ages and shall strive to develop closer ties and a deepening commitment toward others within the Gloria Dei community by organizing and implementing social activities throughout the year for all age groups. The committee shall further assist other organizations of the congregation in a mutual ministry to its members.

C13.07.07. The Committee on Parish Education shall provide a meaningful Christian education for all members of Gloria Dei and to those unchurched just discovering their faith. Effective Christian education programs have a strong tie to a person's growth in faith and loyalty to one's congregation. Faith is one of God's precious gifts to us all, and the committee shall be devoted to the strengthening of our faith.

C13.07.08. The Committee on Social Ministry shall promote service to humanity through acts of love and justice. The committee shall maintain an active awareness of and

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extend Christian compassion and helpfulness to persons in need, especially to the disadvantaged and those suffering from social injustices. It shall be the responsibility of this committee to study social conditions in order to increase in the community of Gloria Dei a greater awareness of the spiritual and physical needs of society. The committee shall strive to enlist the efforts of as many individuals and organizations within the congregation as possible through projects directed toward alleviating these societal needs.

- C13.07.09.** The Committee on Spiritual Life shall work with the congregation to promote the Christian faith in daily living. The committee shall conduct an annual stewardship education and response program to inspire the Christian use of time, talent, and moneys and shall endeavor to motivate the congregation to become more effective witnesses for Jesus Christ. This witness includes “reaching out” to the community to incorporate them into the Body of Christ and “reaching in” to our own membership to promote a deeper commitment to our Lord.
- C13.07.10.** The Committee on Worship shall be concerned primarily with seeing that the services of God’s house are conducted regularly and in accordance with the Lutheran confessions. The committee shall cooperate with the pastor in planning effective means of deepening the faith of worshipers at our church through the use of the full range of liturgical and musical arts and skills available. The committee shall strive to increase lay-member involvement in worship activities.
- C13.07.11.** The Committee on Youth Ministry shall provide and promote a youth ministry to all of Gloria Dei’s youth, encouraging their participation in spiritual development and social fellowship. The committee shall recruit the young people of the congregation for service in the church and encourage them in bringing other youth to faith in Christ.
- C13.07.12.** The Finance Committee shall review/create the internal fiscal policies and procedures of this congregation. In addition, they shall draft the annual budget for presentation to the congregation council and the congregation for approval. They shall also review investment policies and line-of-credit policies and procedures.
- C.13.07.13.** The Personnel Committee shall review and create appropriate job descriptions for all staff positions. They shall review and develop personnel policies and procedures and identify staffing needs necessary to support the mission of this congregation. The Personnel Committee may make annual recommendations to the congregation council regarding compensation. The executive committee and

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pastor(s) shall be responsible for annual performance evaluations of appropriate administrative staff.

C13.07.14. In addition to the duties and responsibilities provided in the constitution and bylaws, the standing committees of this congregation shall:

- a. Use as their working guide the Committee Guidelines, which is to be filed with this constitution and bylaws in the official records of the congregation. The Committee Guidelines shall receive periodic review from the congregation council and changes made shall be duly recorded.
- b. Conduct regular meetings at such time and place as the committee may determine.
- c. Elect from its membership a chairperson and a secretary who will keep the minutes of all meetings of the committee. The chairperson will serve a two-year term and may serve one consecutive term.
- d. Prepare a budget, where applicable, for review by the congregation council, which shall make a recommendation for submission to the annual meeting of the congregation.

Chapter 14.

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

C14.02. Special interest groups, other than those of the official organizations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, may be organized only after authorization has been given by the congregation council.

Chapter 15.

DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS

- C15.01.** Denial of the Christian faith as described in this constitution, conduct grossly unbecoming a member of the Church of Christ, or persistent troublemaking in this congregation is sufficient cause for discipline of a member. Prior to disciplinary action, reconciliation will be attempted following Matthew 18:15-17, proceeding through these successive steps: (a) private admonition by the pastor, (b) admonition by the pastor in the presence of two or three witnesses, and (c) citation to appear before the congregation council.
- C15.02.** A member charged with the offense shall appear before the congregation council, having received a written notice specifying the exact charges that have been made against the member at least 10 days prior to the meeting.
- C15.03.** Should the allegations be sustained by a two-thirds majority vote of the members of the congregation council and renewed admonition prove ineffectual, the council shall impose one of the following disciplinary actions (disciplinary actions b and c shall be delivered to the member in writing):
- a. Censure before the council or congregation.
 - b. Suspension from membership for a definite period of time.
 - c. Exclusion from membership in this congregation.
- C15.04.** The member against whom disciplinary action has been taken by the congregation council shall have the right to appeal the decision to the Synod Council. Such right may not be abridged, and the decision of the Synod Council shall be final.
- C15.05.** Disciplinary actions may be reconsidered and revoked by the congregation council upon receipt of (a) evidence that injustice has been done or (b) evidence of repentance and amendment.

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Chapter 16.

BYLAWS

- C16.01.** This congregation may adopt bylaws. No bylaw may conflict with this constitution.
- C16.02.** Bylaws may be adopted or amended at any legally called meeting of this congregation with a quorum present by a majority vote of those voting members present and voting.
- C16.03.** Changes to the bylaws may be proposed by any voting member provided, however, that such additions or amendments be submitted in writing to the congregation council at least 60 days before a regular or special congregation meeting called for that purpose and that the congregation council notify the members of the proposal with its recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the congregation meeting.
- C16.04.** Approved changes to the bylaws shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod.

Chapter 17.

AMENDMENTS

- C17.01.** Amendments to this constitution may be proposed by at least 5 percent of the 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 its regular or special meeting called for that purpose. The congregation council shall notify the members of the proposal with their recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the meeting.
- C17.02.** A proposed amendment to this constitution shall:
- a. Be approved at a properly called meeting according to this constitution by a majority vote of those present and voting.
 - b. Be ratified without change at the next annual meeting by a two-thirds majority vote of those present and voting.
 - c. Have the effective date included in the resolution and noted in the constitution.
- C17.03.** Any amendments to this constitution shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod. The amendment shall become effective within 120 days from the date of the receipt of the notice by the synod unless the synod informs this

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congregation that the amendment is in conflict with the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or the constitution of the Alaska Synod.

Chapter 18.

CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

- C18.01.** The congregation council may enact continuing resolutions which describe the function of the various committees or organizations of this congregation.
- C18.02** Continuing resolutions shall be enacted or amended by a two-thirds vote of all voting members of the congregation council.