

**Abiding Savior Evangelical Lutheran Church of Maricopa County**  
**d/b/a Abiding Savior Community Church**  
**Constitution & Bylaws**

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**PREAMBLE**

*We, as baptized members of the church of Christ, having committed our lives to the love of God, and therefore our neighbor, respond in faith to the call of the Holy Spirit through the Gospel. In this, we desire to preach the Word, administer the Sacraments, and reach out in His service to the world. To this end, we 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.*

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**CHAPTER 1. NAME AND INCORPORATION**

- C1.01.** The legal name of this congregation is Abiding Savior Evangelical Lutheran Church of Maricopa County, doing business as Abiding Savior Community Church.
- C1.02.** For the purpose of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws, the Abiding Savior Evangelical Lutheran Church of Maricopa County congregation is hereinafter designated as “this congregation.”
- C1.03.** This congregation is incorporated under the laws of the State of Arizona.

**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 Word of God for the salvation of all who believe.
- 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 sole norm of its proclamation, faith, and life.
- C2.04.** This congregation accepts the Apostles’, Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds as true declarations of our faith.
- C2.05.** This congregation accepts the unaltered Augsburg Confession and the writings in the Book of Concord, namely, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles, the Treatise, the Small Catechism, the Large Catechism, and the Formula of Concord, as valid interpretations of the faith of the Church.

**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 service. In length, it acknowledges itself to be in the historic continuity of the communion of saints; in breadth, it includes the fellowship of believers and congregations in our day.

**C3.03.** The Church is composed of a priesthood of all believers. Every Christian has gifts for ministry. Every Christian shares responsibility for interpreting the Word of God and assisting one another in interpreting the Word of God.

#### **CHAPTER 4. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

**C4.01.** The Church is a people created by God in Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, called and sent to bear witness to God's creative, redeeming, and sanctifying activity in the world.

**C4.02.** To participate in God's mission, this congregation as a part of the Church shall:

- a. Worship God in proclamation of the Word and administration of the sacraments and through lives of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, witness, and service;
- b. Proclaim God's saving Gospel of justification by grace for Christ's sake through faith alone, according to the apostolic witness in the Holy Scripture, preserving and transmitting the Gospel faithfully to future generations;
- c. Carry out Christ's Great Commission by reaching out to all people to bring them to faith in Christ;
- d. Serve in response to God's love by meeting our neighbors' needs:
  1. caring for the sick and the aged
  2. advocating dignity and justice for all people
  3. working for peace and reconciliation among the nations by 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, 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; and
- f. Manifest the unity given by the Spirit to the people of God by living together in the love of Christ and by joining with other Christians in prayer and action..

**C4.03.** To fulfill these purposes, this congregation shall:

- a. Provide services of worship at which the Word of God is preached and the sacraments are administered;
- b. Provide pastoral care and assist all members to participate in this ministry;
- c. Challenge, equip, and support all members in carrying out their calling in their daily lives and in their congregation;
- d. Teach the Word of God;
- e. Help each child through its pastoral and educational ministry to identify more deeply with the Christian community and participate more fully in its mission;
- f. Witness to the reconciling Word of God in Christ, reaching out to all people;
- g. Respond to human need, work for justice and peace, care for the sick and the suffering, and participate responsibly in society;
- h. Motivate its members to provide financial support for the congregation's ministry and the ministry of the one Christian Church; and

- i. Foster and participate in interdependent relationships with other congregations of the one Christian Church.

**C4.04.** This congregation shall develop an organizational structure to be described in the bylaws and continuing resolutions. The Congregational Council shall prepare descriptions of the responsibilities of each ministry team, task force, or other organizational groups and shall review their actions. Such description shall be contained in continuing resolutions of the Congregational Council.

**C4.05.** Our mission is: *This congregation exists to reflect Christ's love through encouragement and service to all.*

## **CHAPTER 5. POWERS OF THE CONGREGATION**

**C5.01.** The powers of this congregation are vested in the Congregational Meeting called and conducted as provided in this constitution and bylaws.

**C5.02.** Only such authority as is delegated to the Congregational 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 lay program staff members;
- d. Approve the annual budget;
- 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. Elect its Congregational Council and any other committees requiring election, and require those elected to carry out their duties in accordance with the constitution and bylaws; and
- i. Determine church affiliation(s) consistent with its statement of faith (see Chapters 2 & 3) and helpful in carrying out its purpose (see Chapter 4).

## **CHAPTER 6. CHURCH AFFILIATION**

**C6.01.** This congregation recognizes that the local congregation (believers gathered around Word and Sacrament) is the primary form of the church and reserves the right to practice all congregational autonomy which does not conflict with the Word of God. This congregation also recognizes that local congregations are individual members of the larger body, the one Holy Christian and Apostolic Church, and therefore has responsibility in working with other congregations as partners in the Gospel.

**C6.02.** This congregation has the authority to enter into full partnership and membership in ministries, denominations, and associations of congregations that are consistent with its statement of faith (see Chapters 2 & 3) and helpful in carrying out its purpose (see Chapter 4). All such affiliations are voluntary, and this congregation reserves the right to dissolve such affiliations. Entrance into, as well as dissolution of, any such affiliations shall require a two-thirds majority vote of all voting members present and voting at a legal meeting of this congregation called for this purpose.

**C6.03.** This congregation is a member of Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ (LCMC), an association of Lutheran congregations who are free in Christ, accountable to one another, and rooted in the Scriptures, working together to fulfill Christ's Great Commission to go and make disciples of all nations; and hereafter shall be referenced as one of this congregation's "current association(s)".

## **CHAPTER 7. PROPERTY OWNERSHIP**

**C7.01.** Title to property shall continue to reside in this congregation regardless of church affiliation.

**C7.02.** If this congregation, at a duly called special meeting, votes to go out of business, then the disposition of the church assets will be as follows:

- a. The congregation will predetermine how any money made from the sale of property will be divided;
- b. The recipient(s) of these proceeds must be another Christian and faith-based non-profit agency, but not necessarily another church; and
- c. The property and its buildings can only be sold to another Christian organization.

**C7.03.** Should this congregation, by legal majority vote, choose to become an organization which is not Christian in nature or join an organization which requires the congregation to abandon its evangelical faith as described in Chapters 2 & 3 of this constitution, then title to all land and other assets, both real and personal, shall automatically remain with the largest minority faction wishing to remain a Christian organization.

## **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.

**C8.02.** Members shall be included under one of the following:

- 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 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 congregations, or baptized adults received by affirmation of faith.
- c. Voting members are active confirmed members, 18 and older.
- d. Associate members are persons holding membership in other Christian 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 eligibility on the Congregational Council of this congregation.

**C8.03.** All those desiring membership at this congregation shall be presented to the Congregational Council.

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

- a. Live a Christian life in accordance with the Word of God and the teachings of the Lutheran church, as noted in C2.04-05;
- b. Participate fully in worship and discipleship opportunities;
- c. Discover and utilize gifts in ministry;
- d. Support the work of this congregation, and the entire Christian Church through contributions of their time, abilities, and financial support as biblical stewards.
- e. Share often in the celebration of Holy Communion. This congregation shall practice "open communion"; and therefore welcome visitors to participate in the sacrament.

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

- a. Death;
- b. Resignation;
- c. Transfer or release; or
- d. Removal from the roll due to inactivity.

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

**C8.05.01** Bylaw The Abiding Savior congregation has an expectation and desire to encourage our active members to worship, commune and attend regularly, and to participate in group activities and ministry as fits the individual's time and talents. We believe financial support should be given as guided by scripture.

**C8.05.02** Bylaw In support of our members' full participation, we will provide a voluntary self-assessment form to assist our members in evaluating their participation in the available ministries. We suggest this be done semi-annually.

## **CHAPTER 9. THE PASTOR(S)**

**C9.01.** Authority to call a pastor shall reside in this congregation and be exercised 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 association(s) to which it belongs.

**C9.02.** Every pastor shall:

- a. Preach the Word, distinguishing between law and gospel;
- b. Administer the sacraments;
- c. Conduct public worship;
- d. Provide pastoral care;
- e. Preside at confirmations, marriages, and funeral services;
- f. Oversee all schools and organizations of this congregation;
- g. Install regularly elected members of the Congregational Council;
- h. Administer discipline together with the Congregational Council;
- i. Seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for ministry of the Gospel;
- j. Strive to extend the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation, and abroad;
- k. Endeavor to increase this congregation's sense of partnership in the broader work of the Kingdom of God; and
- l. Equip the saints for ministry, helping each to identify gifts for ministry both within and beyond this congregation, and facilitate training of every member in their ministries.

- C9.03.** 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. Said Letter of Call shall be signed by the president and the secretary of this congregation.
- C9.04.** **The call of this congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall normally constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment which, except in the case of death of the pastor, shall be terminated only following consultation with the association(s) to which it belongs, for the following reasons:**
- a. Mutual agreement to terminate the call or the completion of a call for a specific term;
  - b. Resignation of the pastor;
  - c. Inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in this congregation in view of local conditions, without reflection on the competence or the moral and spiritual character of the pastor;
  - d. The physical or mental incapacity, or incompetence of the pastor;
  - e. Disqualification of the pastor through discipline on grounds of doctrine, morality, or continued neglect of duty; or
  - f. The dissolution of this congregation.

All licensed or ordained staff in full pastoral ministry shall have the right to have up to a total of three advocates drawn from local pastoral colleagues. No final decision to terminate shall be made sooner than 90 days from the inception of the dismissal process as recorded in the Congregational Council minutes unless agreed upon by all parties. A two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at a meeting called for that purpose shall be required to terminate the call of a pastor.

Following acceptance of a Letter of Call to another ministry, resignation, or termination, the pastor's ministry in this congregation shall terminate within 45 days.

- C9.05.** ***At a time of pastoral vacancy, an interim pastor shall be sought by the Congregational Council.***
- C9.06.** During the period of service, an interim pastor shall have the rights and duties in this congregation of a regularly called pastor. The interim pastor and any pastor providing assistance shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a pastor unless by prior mutual agreement between the interim pastor and this congregation.
- C9.07.** This congregation shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to a former pastor before calling a successor. A pastor shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to this congregation.
- C9.08.** When a pastor is called to serve in company with another pastor or pastors, the privileges and responsibilities of each pastor shall be specified in documents to accompany the call and to be drafted in consultation involving the pastor and the Congregational Council. As occasion requires, the documents may be revised through a similar consultation. This congregation shall give final approval to the Letter of Call.
- C9.09.** The pastor(s) shall keep accurate parochial records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, members received, members transferred or dismissed from this congregation, and First Communion, and shall submit a summary of such statistics annually to this congregation and this congregation's association(s), as requested.
- C9.10.** The Pastor shall oversee and have input into the hiring and supervision of the salaried lay workers of this congregation and the pastor will report directly to the Congregational

Council.

**C9.11.** The pastor(s) shall be a member of this congregation while under call.

**C9.12.** *The records of this congregation shall be the property of this congregation and shall not be removed or used for commercial purposes. The records are:*

- a. The roster of baptized, confirmed, associate, and voting members;
- b. The ministerial acts performed by the pastor;
- c. The minutes of the meetings of this congregation and the Congregational Council; and,
- d. The financial records of this congregation; all official and legal documents including, without limitation, this constitution and bylaws, deeds, mortgages, contracts, etc.
- e. In the event of dissolution or cessation of ministry, the official records of this congregation shall be deposited in the archives of the association(s) to which this congregation belongs.

#### CHAPTER 10. CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

**C10.01.** The annual meeting of this congregation shall be held at a time specified in the bylaws.

**C 10.01.01** Bylaw        A meeting to approve the budget, receive the annual report of activities and action of the congregation and to elect members of the congregation council shall be held in October the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of each year. The new council members will be seated at the first council meeting in January of the following year.

**C 10.01.02** Bylaw        The fiscal year of the congregation for all business activities will be from January 1 of each year until December 31 of the same year.

**C10.02.** A special Congregational Meeting may be called by the pastor, the Congregational Council, or the president of this congregation, and shall be called by the president of this congregation upon the written request of twenty-five percent (25%) 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.

**C10.03.** Notice of all meetings of this congregation shall be given at the worship services on the immediately preceding two consecutive Sundays and by email or telephone to all voting members at least ten (10) calendar days in advance of the date of the meeting.

**C10.04.** Fifteen percent (15%) of voting members of this congregation shall constitute a quorum.

**C10.05.** Voting by proxy or by absentee ballot shall not be permitted.

**C10.06.** All actions by this congregation shall be by majority vote except as otherwise provided in this constitution.

**C10.07.** Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of all meetings of this congregation.

#### CHAPTER 11. OFFICERS

**C11.01.** The president, treasurer, and secretary, shall also be the officers of this Congregation.

- a. The Congregational Council shall elect its officers. The president and secretary shall be selected from the elected membership of the Congregational Council for a one-year term, maximum of two consecutive terms. The treasurer need not be an

elected member of the Congregational Council. If not elected, the treasurer has voice without vote.

b. Duties of the officers shall be specified in the bylaws.

**C 11.01.01** Bylaw The President shall preside at all regular and special meetings of the congregation and of the Congregation Council and shall be responsible for maintaining Parliamentary Procedure according to Robert's Rules of Order (latest edition).

**C 11.01.02** Bylaw As the responsible party for the legal structure of the Corporation, the President; along with the Recording Secretary, shall execute necessary legal documents in the name of the Congregation upon proper authorization of the congregation and/or the Congregation Council.

**C 11.01.03** Bylaw The Recording Secretary shall maintain permanent and accurate records of all proceedings of Congregation and Congregation Council meetings. The Recording Secretary shall, with the input and agreement from other Executive Board members, prepare the agenda for all meetings of these bodies.

The duties of the Recording Secretary shall also include the following:

1. Maintain records and attendance at all Congregational Council meetings and any congregational meeting when a vote is taken;
2. Record all business deferred and carried over from previous meetings, and a report of the same will be prepared for subsequent meetings;
3. Maintain records of all Council appointed committees and staff reports; and
4. Manage the safekeeping of all official Congregation documents (mortgage, deeds, Articles of Incorporation) in a safe deposit box at the financial institution of the Congregation.

**C 11.01.04** Bylaw The Treasurer shall oversee the maintenance of complete and adequate records as to the source and intent of all monies for this congregation, boards, committees or organizations operating under its corporate charter; maintain all designated funds and shall pay all obligations of the congregation as approved by the congregation and/or the Congregation Council, and to the extent of funds available. In addition, the duties of the Treasurer shall include the following:

1. Maintain a file of all paid bills (expenses);
2. Pay obligations of departments, organizations, and societies of the congregation, for which the Treasurer has custody and certification, but only to the extent those departments, organizations, and societies have funds to their credit;
3. Prepare or oversee the preparation of: monthly and annual financial statements to the Congregation Council; an annual financial statement to the congregation; and any individual member who make a request for either a monthly or annual financial statement;
4. All checks over one thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00) shall require two signatures. For lesser amounts a single signature shall be sufficient. Signors shall include the pastor, president, treasurer and others as designated by the Congregational Council;
5. Shall be placed under surety bond, the expense of which shall be the responsibility of the Congregation;
6. Shall act in an advisory capacity with all committees dealing with congregation finance or budgeting;
7. Any funds for which the Treasurer is accountable from any source should not be retained by any individual for more than seven (7) days;

8. The Treasurer or Office Secretary shall maintain a complete and detailed record of all types of contributions identifiable as to individual source and intent, and prepare individual records in accordance with appropriate IRS guidelines and instructions of the Congregation Council.

**C11.02.** No officer shall hold more than one office at a time. Paid staff members and immediate family members of ASCC may not be candidates to serve on the Congregation Council.

**C11.03.** The officers of this congregation shall recruit and recommend an auditor to the Congregational Council. Upon approval by the Congregational Council, the auditor shall perform the audit and report back to the Congregational Council by way of its officers.

**C11.03.01** Bylaw      The appointment of the Auditor shall be completed by March 31 of each year, Report to be presented to the council at August meeting.

## **CHAPTER 12. CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL**

**C12.01.** The voting membership of the Congregational Council shall consist of the pastor(s), the officers of this congregation, and a minimum of three members of this congregation. 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 Congregational Council shall be declared vacant if the member:

- a. Ceases to be a voting member of this congregation;
- b. Is absent from two consecutive regular meetings of the Congregational Council without cause; and/or
- c. Is removed as a member of the Congregational Council for other circumstances.

**C12.02.** The Nominating Committee shall provide nominations to the Congregational Council. Members may also make nominations to the Congregational Council or the Nominating Committee, providing the nominee is willing to serve and the Nominating Committee has been advised within the requirements as established in the bylaws.

**C12.03.** The members of the Congregational Council, except the pastor(s), shall be elected by the Congregation at the annual congregational meeting. Voting shall be by written ballot, to serve, unless otherwise stipulated, a term for three years (not to exceed two consecutive terms) or, until their successors are elected. Their terms shall begin at the January Congregational Council Retreat following the election. Existing Congregational Council members shall retain their positions until said January retreat.

**C12.04.** The members of the Congregation Council shall establish who shall provide leadership in the areas of deacons, elders, and trustees at the January Congregation Council Retreat. Their leadership positions are recognized for a term of one (1) year.

**C12.04.01** Bylaw      Deacons have a leadership role of providing the church with the evangelism and discipleship programs through various outreach ministries to bring Christ into the lives of the community; and as a result, into the active life of the church. They have the leadership role in:

1. Promoting the Lord's church and informing the congregation of their responsibility of supporting the needs of the church through evangelization and stewardship; and
2. Seeking the financial support for missions ministry.

- C12.04.02** Bylaw Elders have a leadership role in creating a structure for worship, education and youth activity whereby spiritual growth can happen through the education of all adult, youth, and children of the congregation. The Elders shall:
1. Provide the appropriate volunteers, materials, space and instruction for bringing God's Word to all through Sunday School and Vacation Bible School;
  2. Have a leadership role in providing general worship support, choir, and special music for the sanctuary worship service. Leadership selection is to be provided in the form of a music/choir director. Worship support associated with the music ministry, including equipment purchase and repair, are also to be provided; and
  3. If at all possible, should provide a youth minister, who can provide the leadership to bring the Lord into the lives of our congregation's youth through spiritual guidance, growth and community service.

- C12.04.03** Bylaw Trustees have a leadership role in creating a structure for church administration which includes conventions and retreats, insurance, kitchen and office supplies, kitchen and office equipment, payroll and postage. The Trustees shall:
1. Have a leadership role for the church facilities, their condition and use;
  2. Have budgetary oversight responsibilities including personnel salaries, expenses and benefits; and
  3. Designate a bank or other financial institution for the deposit of church funds.

**C12.05.** Should a member's place on the Congregational Council be declared vacant, the Congregational Council shall elect, by majority vote, a successor until the next annual meeting. Individuals who have served less than one-half of a regular term shall be eligible for nomination and possible election to a full term.

- C 12.05.01** Bylaw Installation of such Congregational Council members shall be held at the next regular worship meeting of the congregation following appointment.

**C12.06.** In support of this congregation and its ministry, the Congregational Council shall provide church leadership that seeks the joy and responsibility of celebrating a personal relationship with our risen Lord, Jesus Christ. The guide to this leadership shall be the Word of God and the faith and practice of the Christian Church. The duties of the Congregational Council shall include the following:

- a. To lead this congregation in stating its mission, to do short-term and long-range planning, to set goals and priorities, and to evaluate its ministries in light of its mission and goals;
- b. To oversee and provide for the administration ministry of this congregation to enable it to fulfill its functions and perform its Christian responsibilities;
- c. To actively seek to involve all members of this congregation in the Christian life of worship, learning, witness, service, and support;
- d. To develop congregational awareness of global mission opportunities for support: prayer, financial and direct involvement;
- e. To maintain supportive relationships with the pastor(s) and staff and help them to annually evaluate the fulfillment of their calling or employment;
- f. To encourage a congregational climate of Christ's peace and goodwill, and, as differences and conflicts arise, endeavor to use His precepts and concepts to foster mutual understanding;
- g. To arrange for pastoral service during the sickness or absence of the pastor;

- h. To emphasize and highlight partnering with other Christian leaders and churches; and
- i. To seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel.

**C12.07.** The Congregational Council shall be responsible for the financial and property matters of this congregation. In this capacity, the Congregational Council:

- a. Shall be the board of directors of this congregation, and as such shall be responsible for maintaining and protecting its property and the management of its business and fiscal affairs. It shall have the powers and be subject to the obligations that pertain to such boards under the laws of the State of Arizona, except as otherwise provided herein;

**C12.07.01**Bylaw The Congregation Council shall designate a bank or other financial institution for the deposit of church funds.

- b. Shall not have the authority to buy, sell, or encumber real property unless specifically authorized to do so by a vote of the congregation;
- c. May enter into non-personnel contracts of up to \$2000 for items not included in the budget. An exception is allowed for major equipment failure, i.e. an air conditioning unit; a contract may be entered into to restore the unit to full service
- d. Shall prepare an annual budget for adoption by this congregation, shall supervise the expenditure of funds in accordance therewith following its adoption, and may incur obligations of more than fifteen percent (15%) in excess of the anticipated receipts only after approval by a Congregation Meeting. The budget shall include this congregation's full indicated share in support of ongoing, committed off-site ministries;
- e. Shall ascertain that the financial affairs of this congregation are being conducted efficiently, giving particular attention to the prompt payment of all obligations; and
- f. Shall be responsible for this congregation's investments and its total insurance program.

**C12.08.** The Congregational Council shall see that the provisions of this constitution, its bylaws, and the continuing resolutions are carried out.

**C12.09.** The Congregational Council shall provide for an annual review of the membership roster.

**C12.10.** The Congregational Council shall submit a comprehensive report to this congregation at its annual meeting.

**C12.11.** The Congregational Council shall normally meet once a month. Special meetings may be called by the pastor or the president of the Congregational Council, and shall be called by the president of the Congregational Council at the request of at least five (5) members of the congregation.

**C12.12.** A quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of a majority of the members of the Congregational Council. This majority shall include the pastor or interim pastor, except when the pastor or interim pastor requests or consents to be absent and has given prior approval to the agenda for a particular regular or special meeting, which shall be the only business considered at that meeting.

### CHAPTER 13. CONGREGATION COMMITTEES

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

**C13.01.01** Bylaw The duties and responsibilities of the Executive Committee shall include:

1. Preparation of the agenda for all regular annual and special congregation meetings as well as the agenda for the Congregation Council Meetings;
2. Providing aid to the pastor in the administration of the Personnel and Policy Manual of the congregation. e.g., lend Council support in administrating personnel decisions; and,
3. With the pastor(s) and staff, interpretation and reporting the work of the congregation to the community and its leaders; listening to and reporting community needs for Christian service to the congregation.

**C13.02.** The Congregational Council shall, by the September meeting, appoint a Nominating Committee. This committee shall have three members whose terms shall be for one year. One of these, if possible, shall be an outgoing member of the Congregational Council.

**C 13.02.01** Bylaw Members of the Nominating Committee shall be announced during the annual meeting.

**C 13.02.02** Bylaw The Committee shall follow the procedures as outlined in the four Nominating Committee template documents:

1. C13.02.02 - 1 NC Member Cover Letter
2. C13.02.02 - 2 Contact Sheet
3. C13.02.02 - 3 FAQs
4. C13.02.02 - 4 Potential Council Candidates List

**C 13.02.03** Bylaw All potential candidates shall be evaluated by the senior pastor prior to being contacted by the committee.

**C 13.02.04** Bylaw Nominees for the positions on the Congregation Council shall be presented to the Congregation by publishing in the Sunday bulletin and announced at all regular public worship services for one month prior to the annual meeting.

**C13.03.** When a pastoral vacancy occurs, a Call Committee of six voting members shall be elected by the Congregation. Term of office will terminate upon installation of the newly called pastor.

**C13.03.01** Bylaw The Call Committee shall:

1. Request from our current association(s) any available guidance and resources to aid in the call process;
2. Study the congregation's mission and pastoral needs as reflected through our current association(s) resources;
3. Gather descriptive information about the congregation, e.g. history, pictures, directories, maps, congregation reports and long range plans, for forwarding to prospective candidates;
4. Obtain potential candidates through the available current association(s) list and/or active individuals within the congregation;
5. Evaluate pastoral candidates by interview or other means;  
and
6. Recommend one candidate to the congregation at a special meeting called for that purpose.

**C13.04.** Other committees of this congregation may be formed, as the need arises, by decision of the Congregational Council.

**C13.04.01** Bylaw The council shall set forth, in writing, the duties, functions, and length of existence by continuing resolution for all committees so appointed.

**C13.05.** Duties of committees of this congregation shall be specified by the Congregational Council.

#### **CHAPTER 14. ORGANIZATIONS WITHIN THE CONGREGATION**

**C14.01.** All organizations within this congregation shall exist to aid it in ministering to the members of this congregation and to all persons who can be reached with the Gospel of Christ. As outgrowths and expressions of this congregation's life, the organizations are subject to its oversight and direction. Day to day planning and operation of the organization shall fall under the auspices of the Congregational Council and its committees. Regular reports concerning their membership, work, and finances shall be submitted to the Congregational Council.

**C14.02.** Special interest groups, other than those of the official organizations of this congregation's current association(s), may be organized only after authorization has been given by the Congregational Council and appropriate communication made to this congregation.

#### **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, 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(s);
- b. Admonition by the pastor(s) in the presence of two or three witnesses'; and
- c. Citation to appear before the Congregational Council. Any meeting and discussion shall be preceded by seeking the heart of God.

**C15.02.** A member charged with an offense shall appear before the Congregational Council. The charged member must receive a written notice, specifying the exact charges that have been made against the member, at least 10 days prior to the meeting. Should the member disregard the notice and make no effort to comply, the Congregational Council shall proceed with the hearing and reach its conclusion in the absence of the member.

**C15.03.** Should the allegations be sustained by a two-thirds majority vote of the members of the Congregational Council, and renewed admonitions prove ineffectual, the Congregational Council shall impose one of the following disciplinary actions:

- a. Censure before the council or congregation;
- b. Suspension from membership for an indefinite period of time; or
- c. Exclusion from membership in this congregation.

Notice of disciplinary actions b. and c. shall be delivered to the member in writing.

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

**C15.05.** Disciplinary actions may be reconsidered and revoked by the Congregational Council upon receipt of:

- a. Evidence that injustice has been done; or
- b. Evidence of repentance and amendment.

## 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 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 Congregational Council at least 90 calendar days before a regular or special Congregational Meeting called for that purpose and that the Congregational Council notify the congregation members of the proposal with its recommendations at least 30 calendar days in advance of the Congregational Meeting.

## CHAPTER 17. AMENDMENTS

**C17.01.** Amendments to this constitution may be proposed by the Congregational Council or by at least five voting members of the congregation. Proposals must be filed in writing and submitted to the Congregational Council 120 calendar days before formal consideration by this congregation at a regular or special meeting called for that purpose. The Congregational Council shall notify the members of the proposal with their recommendation at least 30 calendar 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 two-thirds majority vote of the members present and voting at such meeting;
- b. Be ratified without change at the next annual meeting by a two-thirds majority vote of the members present and voting at such meeting; and
- c. Have the effective date included in the resolution and noted in this constitution.

## CHAPTER 18. CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

**C18.01.** The Congregational Council may enact continuing resolutions. Such continuing resolutions may not conflict with the constitution or bylaws of this congregation.

**C18.02.** Continuing resolutions shall be enacted or amended by a two-thirds vote of all voting members of the Congregational Council.

## CHAPTER 19. INDEMNIFICATION

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