

**THE
CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS
OF
1C, A MISSION CHURCH OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH-MISSOURI SYNOD**

Columbus, Nebraska

**CONSTITUTION
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This congregation shall hold membership in The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, so long as it adheres to the confession of Faith in Article III.

Purposes and Theological Commitment:

Whereas the Word of God tells us that in every Christian congregation all things are to be done decently and in order, therefore, we, the undersigned, evangelicals of the Augsburg Confession, have accepted the following Constitution and Bylaws, by which we, a religious body, wish to abide.

**ARTICLE I
Name**

The name of this congregation shall be 1C, a Mission Church of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod

**ARTICLE II
Purpose**

The purpose of this congregation shall be to see the honor and glory of God, to carry out His will, to manifest the unity of our faith in Jesus Christ as God and Savior, to spread the Kingdom of God, to foster Christian fellowship and love, to extend a helping hand to human need, to preach and teach the Word of God, and to administer the Sacraments according to the confessional standards of the Evangelical Lutheran Church.

**ARTICLE III
Confession of Faith**

We confess that all Canonical books of the Old and New Testament are the pure Word of God, inspired by the Holy Spirit. We accept the Word of God as the foundation of faith, the source of doctrine, and the rule of life.

We accept the Symbolical books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, as contained in the Book of Concord of the year 1580 to be a correct interpretation of Scripture and the unadulterated rendering of divine truth, and we abide by this norm in matter of faith, doctrine, and practice. These principles shall decide all matters of doctrine and practice. These Confessional, or Symbolical books are:

The Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, the Athanasian Creed, the Augsburg Confession, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles, the Small and Large Catechisms of Luther, the Formula of Concord.

ARTICLE IV

Church Body

The body of this congregation includes the following: Baptized Members, Communicant Members and Voting Members.

A. DEFINITIONS:

A1. Baptized Members:

Baptized members are all members who have been baptized in the name of the Triune God and who are under the spiritual care of the pastor of this congregation.

A2. Communicant Members:

Communicant members are those baptized members who have been confirmed in the Lutheran Faith, accept the doctrinal standards of Article III of this constitution, and are familiar at least with the contents of Luther's Small Catechism, and who are not members of organizations whose principles and conduct conflict with the Word of God.

A3. Voting Members:

Voting members are communicants who have reached the age of 18, request voting membership by attending a congregational meeting and sign the 1C Constitution and Bylaws.

B. RECEPTION:

B1. Baptized Members:

Baptized members are received through the Sacrament of Holy Baptism, through transfer, or with consent of one or both parents or guardians in the case of children who have been baptized in another Christian congregation.

B2. Communicant Members:

Communicant members are received through the rite of confirmation and Sacrament of Holy Baptism as appropriate, through transfer from a sister congregation, or through profession of faith, or by reaffirmation of faith.

B3. Voting Members:

Eligible communicant members may be received as voting members by attending a congregational meeting, signing the 1C Constitution and Bylaws and approval by the voting membership.

C. EXPECTATIONS:

C1. Baptized Members:

- A.) Faithful and regular attendance at worship services.
- B.) Willingness in due time, to be instructed in the Christian faith in preparation for communicant membership in this congregation.
- C.) Living a Christian life. (Galatians 5:19-26)
- D.) Contribution of time, talents, and treasure out of love, willingly and regularly toward the maintenance of the congregation and extension of the church at large as God has blessed. (2 Corinthians 9:7 and 1 Corinthians 12)
- E.) To consider the pastor as their spiritual shepherd and to honor, esteem and love him.
- F.) To guard against all secret antagonism aimed at either a member, the pastor, or the church and by the power of the Holy Spirit conduct oneself according to Matthew 18:15-17.

C2. Communicant Members:

In addition to the Expectations of Baptized Members; Expectations of Communicant members include:

- A.) Acceptance of the Confession of Faith described in Constitution Article III.
- B.) Faithfully receiving the Lord's Supper regularly.
- C.) Faithful in the study of God's Word.
- D.) Parents train their children in the Christian faith by making use of educational opportunities in the congregation to enable parents to be spiritual teachers of their children and to nurture their faith.
- E.) To actively engage in the mission and ministry of 1C by faithfully using the gifts and abilities you have received from God.

C3. Voting Members:

In addition to the Expectations of Baptized and Communicant Members; Expectations of Voting Members include:

- A.) Attend congregational meetings.
- B.) Actively participate in the work of the congregation.
- C.) Willingly accept responsibility to serve in various capacities according to God-given ability.

D. Termination:

Membership in this congregation shall be terminated as follows:

A.) Membership shall be terminated by transfer to a sister congregation, by joining a congregation outside the fellowship of this congregation, by excommunication or self-exclusion*, or by death. (* A member who is not responsive to the witness and ministry of the church shall be considered self-excluded. See 1C Church policies for self-exclusion timeline.)

B.) Communicant members who conduct themselves in an un-Christian manner shall be admonished according to Matthew 18:15-20, its purpose to renew the member's relationship with the Lord and church.

The pastor of our congregation along with the Board of Elders will examine each and every consideration of termination. After all avenues, spiritual and personal have been exhausted and the member remains impenitent after proper admonition, their case shall be moved forward for excommunication. Termination will be reviewed by the Congregational Leadership Team with a majority vote required to move forward the case to the voting membership. The member in question may be removed from membership by a majority ballot vote in a duly called meeting of the congregation.

If such member deliberately absents themselves from the meeting at which their case is to be discussed, or in some other manner makes it impossible to deal with them, they thereby excommunicate themselves.

ARTICLE V
Called Church Workers

The pastoral office shall be conferred only upon ordained ministers who are members of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, candidates for the pastoral ministry who have satisfied the qualifications and requirements for assignment of first calls by Synod, or ordained ministers who are members in good standing of church bodies that have been formally recognized to be in altar and pulpit fellowship with the Synod when agreements for such calls are in place.

Only those commissioned ministers shall receive a call who adhere to the confessional standard set forth in this constitution, who are qualified for the work of the ministry to which they are called, and who have been endorsed by and are members of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, who are candidates of LCMS colleges and universities who have satisfied the qualifications and requirements for assignment of first calls, and who are commissioned ministers in good standing from church bodies that are in altar and pulpit fellowship with The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

The duties of the pastor are as follows:

- A) To preach and teach the Word of God purely.
- B) To administer the Sacraments faithfully as instituted by Christ and according to our confession.
- C) To care for his people individually and as a congregation. He will train and equip his people for mission and ministry, preparing God's people for works of service and building up the body of believers. He will train and equip his people to reach out to the un-churched and de-churched to connect them to God and the church. He shall baptize, give catechetical instruction, confirm, marry, and bury the dead in accordance with the ordinances of the church.
- D) The pastor as spiritual leader of the congregation, shall be an ex-officio member of the Congregational Leadership Team and all other boards and organizations of the congregation. He shall not have the right to vote in these meetings and shall in his life be an example to the congregation.

ARTICLE VI

Authority of the Congregation

- A) General: The Congregational Leadership Team shall be the governing body of this congregation and shall be empowered to administer and manage all its affairs, except as otherwise provided in this Article. The establishment and conduct of all organizations and societies within the congregation shall be subject to the approval and supervision of the Congregational Leadership Team with the power to delegate this authority.
- B) Right Of Calling: The right of calling pastors or teachers shall be vested in the congregation and its call committee and shall never be delegated to a smaller group or to an individual.
- C) Decisions: All matters of doctrine and of conscience shall be decided only by the Word of God. All other matters shall be decided by a majority vote of congregational meeting unless otherwise specified by this Constitution or Bylaws.
- D) Removal From Office: Any called, ordained minister, commissioned minister, teacher, officer or Congregational Leadership Team member may be removed from office in Christian and lawful order for one of the following reasons: Persistent adherence to false doctrine, scandalous life, willful neglect of duties, prolonged incapacity, or domineering in office. The Congregational Leadership team will first consider the matter and may advance it to a congregational meeting by a two-thirds majority vote. A two-thirds majority ballot vote is required in a congregational meeting to remove the person from office.

ARTICLE VII

Officers, Board Members, Committee Members

The officers of this congregation shall be such officers, boards, or committees as the Bylaws of this Constitution may prescribe. Congregational officers or committees, whether elected or appointed, shall have no authority beyond that which has been conferred upon them, and whatever authority may have been delegated to them may at any time be altered or revoked.

ARTICLE VIII
Division

If at any time a division should take place on account of doctrine, the property of the congregation and all benefits connected therewith shall remain with those communicant members who continue to adhere in confession and practice to Article III of this Constitution. If division takes place for any other reason, the property shall remain with the majority of the communicant members. In the event the congregation should totally disband, all property shall be disposed of by the final congregational meeting for the payment of debts and all just claims against the congregation, and any excess property and all rights connected therewith shall be transferred to the Synod of which the congregation is a member at the time of disbanding.

ARTICLE IX
Amendments

This Constitution may be amended in a properly convened congregational meeting in the following manner:

- A.) Ordinarily, amendments to the provisions of this constitution (not identified in the following paragraph) shall be submitted in writing for public posting and given to members 15 days prior to the congregational meeting at which the proposed amendments will be discussed. A two-thirds affirmative vote of the voters present shall be required to continue the amendment process.
- B.) Amendments to Articles I and III shall not alter their essential meaning. Notice of discussion of these amendments along with proposed changes shall be posted and given to all members 15 days prior to the two congregational meetings when the proposed action will be discussed. A two-thirds affirmative vote of the voters present at both meetings shall be required to continue the amendment process.
- C.) All revisions shall be submitted to the president of the district for review by the district's constitution committee and favorable action by the district's board of directors prior to final adoption by the congregation by a two-thirds affirmative vote.

ALL GLORY BE TO GOD

Bylaws
1C, a Mission Church of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod
Columbus, Nebraska

ARTICLE I
Procedures for Calling Ordained and Commissioned Ministers

- A. When an ordained or commissioned minister is to be called, every voting member shall have the privilege of making one or more nominations. The congregation shall also ask the President of the Synodical District for recommendations.
- B. Members of the congregation and the Congregational Leadership Team can serve as the call committee in this process. The President selects members for the call committee with final approval by the Congregational Leadership Team. This call committee cannot contain more than 40% Congregational Leadership Team members. This board will seek guidance and information from the district president, and, when calling an associate or assistant pastor or commissioned minister of religion will also seek the guidance and information provided by the pastor.
- C. In the call process, the call committee shall submit all names to the respective district president for information and evaluation. After receiving information and recommendations from the district president and the pastor, the call committee shall present their candidate and their biographical sketch to the congregation by means of a public announcement.
- D. At the congregational meeting organized for the purpose of calling an ordained or commissioned minister, the voting may proceed by secret ballot. A two-thirds majority ballot vote is required to issue a call. When a two-thirds affirmative vote is reached and announced, a public unanimous vote is recommended.

ARTICLE II
Removal of a Called Worker, Lay Minister, or Elected Position

- A. The pattern outlined by Matthew 18:15-20 should be used as a guide.
- B. Any pastor or other called worker may be removed from office in Christian and lawful order by a two-thirds majority ballot vote of those present at a congregational meeting, for reasons outlined in the Constitution. (Constitution – Article VI Section D) The Congregational Leadership Team shall carefully investigate charges prior to public discussion. If such charges are substantiated by clear evidence, and after consultation with the district president or his designated representative, then the Congregational Leadership Team may notify the Communicant Members and submit the matter for action at a special congregational meeting. All Communicant Members shall be given notice of such a meeting at least 15 days in advance.

- C. Any person holding an elected position of the congregation who neglects the duties of such office or fails to conduct himself or herself in a proper Christian manner as outlined in the Constitution (Constitution – Article VI, Section D) may be removed from office by a two-thirds majority vote.

The Congregational Leadership Team shall carefully investigate charges prior to public discussion, with said member being investigated abstaining from the investigation. If such charges are substantiated by clear evidence and after consultation with the pastor, the Congregational Leadership Team shall notify the Communicant Members and submit the matter for action at a meeting of that body.

ARTICLE III

Nominations, Elections and Appointments – Congregational Leadership Team and Elders

A. Structure and Composition:

1.) Congregational Leadership Team:

The Congregational Leadership Team shall consist of four officers being President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer, the longest-serving elder from the Board of Elders and include a minimum of four at-large positions with total Congregational Leadership Team members always being an odd number. The Congregational Leadership Team shall have the authority to adjust (increase/decrease) the number of at-large members as needed without congregational approval. These members would be added during the annual election process and voting may be in person or via concurrent telecommunications. *

2.) Board of Elders:

The Board of Elders shall consist of at least three male communicant members who are 30 years of age or older. The Board of Elders shall have the authority to adjust (increase/decrease) the number of members as needed without congregational approval. These members would be added during the annual election process and voting may be in person or via concurrent telecommunications. * (* two-way live audio and visual)

B. Nomination Procedure:

The Congregational Leadership Team along with Pastoral counsel shall present a slate of at least one candidate for each open position. Candidates must be communicant members of 1C Church. Nominations may be submitted to the President of the Congregational Leadership Team from 1C members no later than ten days prior to the voting date. Nominations will not be accepted from the floor. No person shall be nominated without his or her consent. The Congregational Leadership Team shall present this slate with their recommendation to the Voting Members.

C. Election and Terms of Office:

The members of the Congregational Leadership Team and Board of Elders shall be elected by the Voting Members. Nominees who receive a majority of the votes cast by the Voting Members present at the meeting shall be declared elected. Each Congregational Leadership Team member and elder shall serve a three-year term and no more than two consecutive terms. If any Congregational Leadership Team member or elder resigns before their term has expired, the Congregational Leadership Team or

the Board of Elders can name an individual to serve the balance of the vacated term with pastoral counsel to their own board. Service of more than one-half term shall constitute a full term. Terms begin June 1 with newly elected Congregational Leadership Team members and elder(s) attending the May meeting for the beginning of official transition.

ARTICLE IV **Official Duties**

The duties of the Congregational Leadership Team shall be:

- A. To promote a spirit of peace and goodwill within the congregation, and if differences arise, to endeavor to restore harmony and mutual understanding.
- B. To assist the pastor in general oversight of the life and activities of the congregation. In particular, pertaining to its public worship, to assure that everything is done in accordance with the Word of God and with the practice of the Lutheran Church.
- C. To care for people individually and as a congregation.
- D. To assist the pastor in training and equipping people for mission and ministry.
- E. To prepare God's people for works of service and build up the body of believers.
- F. To train and equip people to reach the un-churched and de-churched and connect them to God, the church, and the community.
- G. To meet monthly to consider and discuss all matters pertaining to the general welfare of the congregation as presented by the pastor or various boards and committees, to review all reports, and to present their recommendations to the Congregational meeting as needed.
- H. To appoint special committees for the study of programs and activities for the church.
- I. To administer the budget as approved at the congregational meetings.
- J. To review and/or have internal or external audit of the treasurer's book annually.
- K. In the case of an emergency, to act on behalf of the congregation between congregational meetings.
- L. To retain the minutes and records of the secretary as property of the congregation.
- M. To keep and make known all intellectual property. For example, but not limited to domain names, mailing lists, logos, marketing data or info, multimedia info, emails and shall become property by default of 1C, A MISSION CHURCH OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH MISSOURI SYNOD.
- N. Quorum of the Congregational Leadership Team shall be two-thirds of its total members.

The duties of the Board of Elders shall be:

- A. To pray for and look after the spiritual and physical needs of the pastor(s) and his (their) family (families).
- B. To assist the Pastor(s) in nurturing and encouraging spiritual growth of the 1C members.

The duties of the Congregational Officers shall be:

- A. The duties of the President shall include presiding at all meetings of the congregation and the Congregational Leadership Team, appointing committees according to the instructions of the Bylaws or the resolutions of the congregational meeting, and seeing that the resolutions of the congregational meetings are carried out. Other job duties as assigned.
- B. The Vice President's duties will be determined by the President or Congregational Leadership Team and in the absence of the President will fulfill their duties.
- C. The Secretary shall record the proceedings of the congregational meeting and Congregational Leadership Team, register all members attending the meetings, and submit the minutes for adoption at the following regular meeting. The Secretary shall be the custodian of all church records pertaining to this office and at the expiration of their term of office shall deliver them to their successor. The Secretary shall, in general, serve as clerk and correspondent to the congregation.
- D. The Treasurer shall disburse the funds of the congregation in accordance with the resolutions of the congregational meeting and under the direction of the congregation and the Congregational Leadership Team. The Treasurer shall also disburse funds for items in the budget adopted by the congregational meeting. The Treasurer shall prepare and submit for all Congregational Leadership Team and congregation meetings a statement of all receipts and a budget report. The Treasurer shall be bonded in such amounts as the Congregational Leadership Team may determine, the cost of such bonds to be borne by the congregation.

ARTICLE V

Meetings

Congregational meetings will be held at least semi-annually, budget (Fall) and elections (Spring). The time and day of the meeting will be set by the Congregational Leadership Team and announced to the congregation at least 15 days and no more than 60 days prior to the scheduled meeting date. The President of the congregation or a designated representative will preside. Agenda items, at a minimum, must include President's report, Elder's report, Treasurer's report, and Secretary's minutes from previous meeting.

All congregational matters decided by the Voting Members shall be decided by a simple majority of the Voting Members, except as otherwise provided in the Constitution and Bylaws.

Quorum shall be the greater of 20% of the Voting Members or 30 Voting Members.

ARTICLE VI
Amendments

These Bylaws may be amended in a properly convened congregational meeting in the following manner:

- A.) Amendments to the provisions of this constitution shall be submitted in writing for public posting and given to members 15 days prior to the meetings at which the proposed amendments will be discussed. A two-thirds affirmative vote of the voters present shall be required to continue the amendment process.

- B.) All revisions shall be submitted to the president of the district for review by the district's constitution committee and favorable action by the district's board of directors prior to final adoption by the congregation by a two-thirds affirmative vote.

We, the undersigned, Members of 1C have accepted the Constitution and Bylaws of the Congregation, which have been approved by The Nebraska District of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.