

**CONSTITUTION  
OF THE  
LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THE ATONEMENT  
FLORISSANT, MISSOURI**

03/16/2016

## PREAMBLE

The Word of God requires that a Christian shall conform to this divine Word in doctrine and in practice, (Psalm 119:105; Matthew 28:18-20; Galatians 1:6-8; 2 Timothy 4:1-5) and that all things be done decently and in order (1 Corinthians 14:40). Therefore, we the members of the Lutheran Church of the Atonement, Florissant, Missouri, responding in faith to the call of the Holy Spirit through the Gospel, desiring to unite together to preach the Word, administer the sacraments, and carry out God's mission, do hereby adopt this constitution and solemnly pledge ourselves to be governed by its provisions. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

### Chapter 1. NAME AND INCORPORATION

- C1.01.** The name of this congregation shall be **The Lutheran Church of the Atonement.**
- C1.02.** For the purpose of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws, the congregation of **The Lutheran Church of the Atonement, Florissant, Missouri,** is hereinafter designated as "this congregation."
- C1.03.** This congregation shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of **Missouri.**

### Chapter 2. CONFESSION OF FAITH

- C2.01.** This congregation confesses the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- C2.02.** This congregation confesses Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and the Gospel as the power of God for the salvation of all who believe.
  - a.** Jesus Christ is the Word of God incarnate, through whom everything was made and through whose life, death, and resurrection God fashions a new creation
  - b.** The proclamation of God's message to us as both Law and Gospel is the Word of God, revealing judgment and mercy through word and deed, beginning with the Word in creation, continuing in the history of Israel, and centering in all its fullness in the person and work of Jesus Christ.
  - c.** The canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the written Word of God. Inspired by God's Spirit speaking through their authors, they record and announce God's revelation centering in Jesus Christ, Through them God's Spirit speaks to us to create and sustain Christian faith and fellowship for service in the world.
- C2.03.** This congregation acknowledges and accepts all the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments as the revealed Word of God, verbally inspired, and acknowledges and accepts all the canonical writings of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, contained in the book of Concord of the year 1580, to be the true and genuine exposition of the doctrines of the Bible. These canonical writings are the Ecumenical Creeds, (Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian), the Unaltered Augsburg

Confession, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles, Luther's Large and Small Catechisms, and the Formula of Concord.

- C2.04.** 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.
- C2.05.** The Pastoral Office of this congregation, as well as that of called or appointed teachers in the parochial school, shall be conferred only upon such ministers, teachers, and candidates who profess and adhere to the confessional standards set forth in C2.03 of this constitution and are properly qualified for their office. Pastors and teachers shall, in the call extended to them and accepted by them, be pledged to this confessional standard.
- C2.06.** Only such hymns, prayers and liturgies shall be used in the public services of this congregation and in all ministerial acts, as conform to the confessional standard of C2.03. Likewise, in all classes for instruction in Christian doctrine, only such books and other materials shall be used as conform to this standard.

### **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. 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.
- C3.03** The name Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA or "this church") as used herein refers in general references to this whole church, including its three expressions: congregations, synods, and the church wide organization. The name Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is also the name of the corporation of the church wide organization to which specific references may be made herein.

### **Chapter 4. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

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

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

- a. Worship God in proclamation of the Word and administration of the sacraments and through lives of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, witness and service.
- b. Proclaim God's saving gospel of justification by grace for Christ's sake through faith alone, according to the apostolic witness in the Holy Scripture, preserving and transmitting the Gospel faithfully to future generations.
- c. Carry out Christ's Great Commission by reaching out to all people to bring them to faith in Christ and by doing all ministry with a global awareness consistent with the understanding of God as Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier of all.
- d. Serve in response to God's love to meet human needs, caring for the sick and the aged, advocating dignity 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 member to participate in this ministry.
- c. Challenge, equip, and support all members in carrying out their calling in their daily lives and in their congregation.
- d. Teach the Word of God.
- e. Witness to the reconciling Word of God in Christ, reaching out to all people.
- f. Respond to human need, work for justice and peace, care for the sick and the suffering, and participate responsibly in society
- g. Motivate its members to provide financial support for the congregation's ministry and the ministry of other parts of the ELCA.
- h. Foster and participate in interdependent relationships with other congregations, the synod, and the church wide organization of the ELCA

- i. Foster and participate in ecumenical relationships consistent with church wide 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. (Such descriptions shall be contained in continuing resolutions in the section on the Congregation Council.)
- C4.05** This congregation shall, from time to time, adopt a mission statement which will provide specific direction for its programs.
- C4.06.** References herein to the nature of the relationship between the three expressions of this church—congregations, synods, and the church wide organization—as being interdependent or as being in a partnership relationship describe the mutual responsibility of these expressions in God’s mission and the fulfillment of the purposes of this church as described in this chapter, and do not imply or describe the creation of partnerships, co-ventures, agencies, or other legal relationships recognized in civil law.

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

- C5.01.** The powers of this congregation are those necessary to fulfill its purpose.
- C5.02.** The powers of this congregation are vested in the Congregation Meeting called and conducted as provided in this constitution and bylaws; decisions shall be reached by a majority vote unless otherwise specified by this constitution, its bylaws, or its continuing resolutions.
- 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. call or terminate the call of associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers in conformity with the applicable policy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;
  - 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 officers, Congregation Council, boards, and committees and require them to carry out their duties in accordance with the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions; and
- i. terminate its relationship with the ELCA as provided in Chapter 6.

**C5.04.** This congregation shall choose from among its Voting members laypersons to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly as well as persons to represent it at meetings of any conference, cluster, coalition, or other area subdivision of which it is a member. The number of persons to be elected by the congregation and other qualifications shall be as prescribed in guidelines established by The Central States Synod of the ELCA.

**C5.05.** This congregation shall have a mission endowment fund that will operate as specified in this congregation's bylaws. The purpose of the mission endowment fund is to provide for mission work beyond the operational budget of this congregation.

## **Chapter 6. CHURCH AFFILIATION**

**C6.01.** This congregation shall be an interdependent part of the ELCA or its successor, and of the Central States Synod of the ELCA. This congregation is subject to the discipline of the ELCA.

**C6.02.** This congregation accepts the Confession of Faith and agrees to the Purposes of the ELCA and shall act in accordance with them.

**C6.03.** This congregation acknowledges its relationship with the ELCA in which:

- a. This congregation agrees to be responsible for its life as a Christian community.
- b. This congregation pledges its financial support and participation in the life and mission of the ELCA.
- c. This congregation agrees to call pastoral leadership from the clergy roster of the ELCA 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, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers for call to other staff positions in the congregation according to the procedures of the ELCA.
- 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 ELCA and with the constitution of the synod.

**C6.04.** Affiliation with the ELCA 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 ELCA according to the procedures for discipline of the ELCA.
- d. This congregation follows the procedures outlined in C6.05.

**C6.05.** This congregation may terminate its relationship with the ELCA 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 the resolution has been adopted.
- c. The bishop of the synod shall consult with this congregation during a period of at least 90 days.
- 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 ELCA shall be terminated.
- f. Notice of termination shall be forwarded by the synodical bishop to the secretary of this church and published in the periodical of this church.

**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 affected.

**C6.07.** If this congregation considers developing an additional site to be used regularly for worship, it shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located

and the appropriate unit of the church wide organization before any steps are taken leading to such action.

## **Chapter 7. PROPERTY OWNERSHIP**

- C7.01.** If this congregation ceases to exist, title to un-disposed property shall pass to the Central States Synod of the ELCA.
- C7.02.** If this congregation is removed from membership in the ELCA 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, or to become an independent Lutheran congregation, 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 Central States 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 the 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 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 ELCA.

## **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 who have been baptized into the holy catholic church in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
  - b. **Communicant members** are baptized members who have been admitted to the Lord's Supper after proper preparation.
  - c. **Confirmed members** are baptized members who have been instructed within the Lutheran tradition.

- d. **Communing members** are communicant members who have been communing during the preceding twelve months.
- e. **Associate members** are communicant members of another Lutheran congregation who wish to maintain a formal, supportive relationship with this congregation.
- f. **Affiliate members** are communicant members who wish to maintain a formal relationship with the congregation but are currently not part of the worshipping community.
- g. **Voting members** are confirmed members. Such confirmed members, during the current or preceding calendar year, shall have communed in this congregation and shall have made a contribution of record to this congregation. Members of this congregation who have satisfied these basic standards shall have the privilege of voice and vote at every regular and special meeting of the congregation.

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

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

- a. make regular use of the means of grace, both Word and sacraments;
- b. live a Christian life in accordance with the Word of God and the teachings of the Lutheran church; and
- c. support the work of this congregation, the synod, and the church wide organization of the ELCA through contributions of their time, abilities, and financial support as biblical stewards.

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

- a. death;
- b. resignation;
- c. transfer or release;
- d. disciplinary action by the Congregation Council; or
- e. removal from the roll due to inactivity as defined in the bylaws.

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

**C8.06.** Members shall be provided with opportunities to worship, to receive absolution and the Sacraments, to engage in service, witness, and growth, and to receive Christian care, as needed.

## **Chapter 9. THE PASTOR**

- C9.01.** Authority to call a pastor shall be in this congregation by at least a two-thirds majority ballot vote of voting members present and voting at a meeting regularly called for that purpose. Before a call is issued, a committee elected by this congregation to recommend the call, shall seek the advice and help of the bishop of the synod.
- C9.02.** Only a member of the clergy roster of the ELCA or a candidate for the roster of ordained ministers who has been recommended for the congregation by the synodical bishop may be called as a pastor of this congregation
- C9.03.** Consistent with the faith and practice of the ELCA,
- a) Every ordained minister 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 Congregation Council; and
    - 4) with the council, administer discipline.
  - c) Every pastor shall:
    - 1) strive to extend the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation, and abroad;
    - 2) seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel;
    - 3) impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through distribution of its periodicals and other publications; and
    - 4) endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the church wide organization of the ELCA and of the Central States Synod of the ELCA.
- 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, which shall become effective, unless otherwise agreed, 30 days after date on which it was submitted;
  - 3) inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in the congregation in view of local conditions, without reflection on the competence or the moral and spiritual character of the pastor;
  - 4) the physical or mental incapacity of the pastor;
  - 5) disqualification of the pastor through discipline on grounds of doctrine, morality, or continued neglect of duty;
  - 6) the dissolution of the congregation; or
  - 7) suspension of the congregation as a result of discipline proceedings.
- b) When allegations of physical or mental incapacity of the pastor or ineffective conduct of the pastoral office have come to the attention of the bishop of the synod, the bishop in his or her sole discretion may, or when such allegations have been brought to the synod's attention by an official recital of allegations by the Congregation Council or by a petition signed by at least one-third of the Voting members of the congregation, the bishop shall, investigate such conditions personally in company with a committee of two ordained ministers and one layperson.
- c) In case of alleged physical or mental incapacity, competent medical testimony shall be obtained. When such disability is evident, the bishop of the synod with the advice of the committee shall declare the pastorate vacant. Upon the restoration of a disabled pastor to health, the bishop of the synod shall take steps to enable the pastor to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another field of labor.
- d) In the case of alleged local difficulties that 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) If, in the course of proceedings described in C9.05.d., the committee concludes that there may be grounds for disciplinary action, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action to the synodical bishop who may bring charges, in accordance with the provisions of the constitution and bylaws of the ELCA and the constitution of this synod.
- f) If, following the appointment of the committee described in C9.05.b. or d., it should become apparent that the pastoral office cannot be conducted

effectively in the congregations(s) 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(s) without prejudice and with pay provided through a joint synodical and church wide fund and with housing provided by the congregation(s).

- C9.06.** As a time of pastor vacancy, an interim pastor shall be appointed by the bishop of the synod with the consent of this congregation or the Congregation Council.
- C9.07.** During the period of service, an interim pastor shall have the rights and duties in 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. Details of such calls shall be in writing setting forth the purpose and conditions involved. Prior to the completion of a term, the bishop or a designated representative of the bishop shall meet with the pastor and representatives of the congregation for a review of the call. Such a call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of C9.05.a.
- C9.11.** 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. 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(s) 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.
- C9.13.** The parochial records of this congregation shall be maintained by the pastor and shall remain the property of the congregation. The secretary of this congregation shall attest in writing to the bishop of this synod that such records have been placed in his or her hands in good order by a departing pastor before the installation of that pastor in another field of labor or the granting by the synod of retired status to the pastor.

## **Chapter 10. CONGREGATION MEETING**

- C10.01.** The meetings of this congregation shall be held at times specified in the bylaws.
- C10.02.** A special Congregation Meeting may be called by the pastor, the Congregation Council, or the president of this congregation, and shall be called by the president of the congregation upon the written request of 25 Voting members. The president of the Congregation Council shall call a special meeting upon request of the synodical bishop. The call for each special meeting shall specify the purpose for which it is to be held and no other business shall be transacted.
- C10.03.** Notice of all meetings of this congregation shall be given at the services of worship on the preceding two consecutive Sundays and by mail to all Voting members at least 10 days in advance of the date of the meeting. The posting of such notice in the regular mail, with the regular postage affixed or paid, sent to the last known address of such members shall be sufficient.
- C10.04.** The number of voting members that shall constitute a quorum shall be defined in the Bylaws.
- C10.05.** Voting by proxy or by absentee ballot shall not be permitted.
- C10.06.** All actions by the congregation shall be by majority vote except as otherwise provided in this constitution or by state law.
- C10.07.** Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of all meetings of this congregation.

## **Chapter 11. OFFICERS**

- C11.01.** The officers of this congregation shall be a president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer.
- a. Duties of the officers shall be specified in the bylaws.
  - b. The officers shall be Voting members of the congregation.
  - c. The president, vice president, secretary and treasurer shall serve similar offices on the Congregation council and shall be voting members of the Congregation Council.
- C11.02.** The congregation shall elect its officers and they shall be the officers of the congregation. The officers shall be elected by written ballot and shall serve terms specified in the bylaws.
- C11.03.** No officer shall hold more than one office at a time. No elected officer shall be eligible to serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office.

## **Chapter 12. CONGREGATION COUNCIL**

- C12.01.** The voting membership of the Congregation Council shall consist of the Senior Pastor, Principal of the Day School, President, Vice-President, Secretary,

Treasurer and other elected members or called staff as specified in the Bylaws. All members of the Congregation Council shall be members of this congregation.

**C12.02.** The Congregation Council shall have general oversight of the life and activities of this congregation, and in particular its worship life, to the end that everything be done in accordance with the Word of God and the faith and practice of the ELCA. 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 or employment.
- e. To be examples individually and corporately of the style of life and ministry expected of all baptized persons.
- f. To promote a congregational climate of peace and good will, and, as differences and conflicts arise, to endeavor to foster mutual understanding.
- g. To arrange for pastoral service during the sickness or absence of the pastor.
- h. To emphasize partnership with the synod and church wide units of the ELCA as well as cooperation with other congregations, both Lutheran and non-Lutheran, subject to established policies of the synod and the ELCA.
- i. To recommend and encourage the use of program resources produced or approved by the ELCA.
- j. To seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel.

**C12.03.** 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 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 Missouri, except as otherwise provided herein.

- b. The Congregation Council shall not have the authority to buy, sell or encumber real property unless specifically authorized to do so by a meeting of the congregation.
- c. The Congregation Council may enter into contracts of up to \$5,000 for items not included in the budget.
- d. The Congregation Council shall prepare an annual budget for adoption by this congregation, shall supervise the expenditure of funds in accordance therewith following its adoption, and may incur obligations of more than \$5,000.00 in excess of the anticipated receipts only after approval by a Congregation Meeting. The budget shall include this congregation's full indicated share in support of the wider ministry being carried on in partnership with the synod and church wide 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 obligations to the synodical treasurer, and to the treasurers of other agencies in which the congregation holds membership.
- f. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for this congregation's investments and its total insurance program.

- C12.04.** The Congregation Council shall see that the provisions of this constitution, its bylaws, and the continuing resolutions are carried out
- C12.05.** The Congregation Council shall provide for an annual review of the membership rosters.
- C12.06.** The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the employment and supervision of the salaried lay workers of this congregation.
- C12.07.** The Congregation Council shall submit a comprehensive report to this congregation annually.
- C12.08.** The Congregation Council shall provide for a financial review by a Certified Public Accountant on a periodic basis.
- C12.09.** The Congregation Council shall normally meet once a month. Special meetings may be called by the pastor or the president, and shall be called by the president at the request of at least one-half of its members. Notice of each special meeting shall be given to all who are entitled to be present.
- C12.10.** 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 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. Chronic or repeated absence of the pastor or interim pastor who has refused approval of the agenda of a subsequent

regular or special meeting shall not preclude action by the Congregation Council, following consultation with the synodical bishop.

### **Chapter 13. CONGREGATION COMMITTEES**

- C13.01.** When a pastor vacancy occurs, a Call Committee of six Voting members shall be elected by this congregation. Term of office will terminate upon installation of the newly called pastor.
- C13.02.** Other committees of this congregation may be formed, as the need arises, by decision of the Congregation Council.
- C13.03.** Duties of committees of this congregation shall be specified in the bylaws or continuing resolutions.

### **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.
- C14.02.** Special interest groups, other than those of the official organizations of the ELCA, may be organized only after authorization has been given by the Congregation Council and specified in a continuing resolution.

### **Chapter 15. DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS AND ADJUDICATION**

- C15.01.** Discipline of members shall follow a prescribed course.
  - a. Denial of the Christian faith as described in this constitution, conduct grossly unbecoming a member of the Church of Christ, or persistent trouble-making in this congregation are 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 1) private admonition by the pastor, 2) admonition by the pastor in the presence of two or three witnesses, and 3) citation to appear before the Congregation Council.
  - b. The process for discipline of a member of the congregation shall be governed as prescribed by the chapter on discipline in the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA. A member charged with the offense shall appear before the Congregation Council after having received a written notice, specifying the exact charges that have been made against the member, at least 10 days prior to the meeting.
  - c. Members of the Congregation Council who participate in the preparation of the written charges or who present evidence or testimony in the hearing before the Congregation Council are disqualified from voting upon the question of the guilt of the accused member. Should the allegations be sustained by a two-thirds majority vote of the members of the Congregation

Council, who are not disqualified but who are present and voting, and renewed admonition prove ineffectual, the council shall impose one of the following disciplinary actions:

- 1) censure before the council or congregation;
- 2) suspension from membership for a definite period of time; or
- 3) exclusion from membership in this congregation.

Disciplinary actions 2) and 3) shall be delivered to the member in writing.

d. 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.

e. Disciplinary actions may be reconsidered and revoked by the Congregation Council upon receipt of:

- 1) evidence that injustice has been done or
- 2) evidence of repentance and amendment

**C15.02.** Adjudication: When there is disagreement among factions within this congregation on a substantive issue that cannot be resolved by the parties, members of this congregation shall access to the synodical bishop for consultation after informing the chair of the Congregation Council of their intent. If the consultation fails to resolve the issues(s), the Consultation Committee of the synod shall consider the matter. If the Consultation Committee of the synod shall fail to resolve the issue(s), the matter shall be referred to the Synod Council, whose decision shall be final.

## **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 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. Notification may take place by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law.

**C16.04.** Approved changes to the bylaws shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the Synod.

## **Chapter 17. AMENDMENTS**

**C17.01.** The following sections of Chapter 2 of this Constitution shall be unalterable and irrevocable: C2.03, C2.05, and C2.06. This section shall be irrevocable.

**C17.02.** Amendments to this constitution may be proposed by at least ten Voting members or by the Congregation Council. Proposals must be filed in writing with the Congregation Council 60 days before formal consideration by the congregation at its regular or special meeting called for that purpose. The Congregation Council shall notify the member of the proposal with the council's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the meeting.

**C17.03.** A proposed amendment to this constitution shall:

- a. not conflict with the provisions laid down in Chapter 2 or with any section of any other chapter that pertains to scriptural doctrine and practice.
- b. Be approved at a properly called meeting according to this constitution by a majority vote of those voting members present and voting;
- c. Be ratified without change at the next regular meeting by a two-thirds majority vote of those voting members present and voting; and
- d. Have the effective date included in the resolution and noted in the constitution.

**C17.04.** Any amendments to the 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 congregation that the amendment is in conflict with the constitution and bylaws of the ELCA or the constitution of the Central States Synod of the ELCA.

**C17.05.** Whenever the Model Constitution for Congregations is amended by the Churchwide Assembly, this constitution may be amended to reflect any such amendment by a simple majority vote at any subsequent meeting of the congregation without presentation at a prior meeting of the congregation, provided that the Congregation Council has submitted by mail notice to the congregation of such an amendment or amendments at least 30 days prior to the meeting. Following the adoption of an amendment, the secretary of the congregation shall submit a copy thereof to the synod, consistent with C17.03.

## **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.

**BYLAWS OF THE CONSTITUTION  
OF THE  
LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THE ATONEMENT**

**I. MEMBERSHIP**

**A. Admission into membership**

1. 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.
2. Communicant Members are admitted by:
  - a. Special preparation as recommended by the Pastor(s)
  - b. or Confirmation if not a Communicant Member under 2a
  - c. or Transfer: In all cases where the applicant has been a communicant member of a sister congregation, the same shall present a letter of transfer from such congregation and shall be admitted into membership by the Pastor(s)
  - d. or Profession of Faith: Other persons shall submit their applications to the Pastor, and having given satisfactory evidence to him/her of qualifications for communicant membership, shall be received as communicant members. All new members are to be notified of their reception.
3. Confirmed Members shall be those baptized members who have, as adolescents, completed the Confirmation curriculum to the satisfaction of the pastor(s) or, as adults, have completed the adult instruction program as prescribed by the Pastor(s).
4. Communing Members are those communicant members who have received the Lord's Supper during the prior twelve (12) months in this congregation, or, having communed in another congregation, notify this congregation in writing of their having so communed.
5. Associate Members are those baptized persons who wish or need to maintain membership in another Lutheran congregation but who wish to be in formal, mutually supportive relationship with this congregation. Such persons shall be admitted into associate membership upon recommendation of the Pastor(s) by the Congregation Council. Upon such admission, the congregation where the Associate Member holds membership shall be notified of this action. Associate members may not serve on the Congregation Council, but may serve in other capacities.

6. Affiliate Members are those who have been Communing Members of the congregation and who desire to retain a formal relationship to the congregation. Members who have not communed with the prior twelve months shall be contacted by a pastor or a member designated by the pastor to determine their current situation. Such members may be placed on the Affiliate Membership roster, upon recommendation of the Pastor(s) and approval by the Congregation Council.

Affiliate members shall not be eligible to serve on the Congregation Council, but may serve in other capacities. Affiliate membership shall not constitute "active" membership, for purposes of synodical apportionment or educational standing.

7. With the exception of those in special circumstances (military, college, shut-ins, etc.), no person shall be considered for membership in any category except baptized who has not worshipped in this congregation at least three times or who indicated that he/she cannot support Chapter 2 (Confession of Faith) or Chapter 4 (Statement of Purpose) of this constitution.
8. Voting Members are confirmed members. Such confirmed members, during the current or preceding calendar year, shall have communed in this congregation and shall have made a contribution of record to this congregation. Members of this congregation who have satisfied these basic standards shall have the privilege of voice and vote at every regular and special meeting of the congregation.

#### **B. Termination of membership**

1. Transfer to other congregations – members desiring to join another congregation in church fellowship shall present their request for transfer to the Pastor(s), to whom authorization is granted to issue such transfers. Such transfer of membership shall be subject to ratification by the Congregation Council.
2. Joining other churches – in cases where members have joined another congregation outside our fellowship, they shall, upon the recommendation of the Pastor(s) be considered as having terminated their membership in this congregation, and their names shall be removed from the membership list by ratification of the Congregation Council.
3. Whereabouts unknown – the names of members whose whereabouts are unknown and cannot be established after diligent search, shall, upon the recommendation of the Pastor(s) be removed from the membership list by a resolution of the Congregation Meeting.
4. Ex-communication and self exclusion – any member who conducts himself/herself in an un-Christian manner shall be admonished, according to Matthew 18:15-30. If he/she refuses to amend his/her sinful life after proper admonition, he/she shall be ex-communicated. If the member refuses to attend the Congregation Council Meeting or the Congregation Meeting to discuss his/her case, he/she has thereby excluded himself/herself. A unanimous vote shall be required for every resolution of the Congregation Meeting for ex-communication or self-exclusion. Ex-communication or self-exclusion terminates membership. Evidence of true

repentance shall lead to reinstatement into membership. All resolutions for ex-communication, self-exclusion and reinstatement into membership shall be presented to the Congregation Meeting by the Congregation Council.

5. Status – a person whose membership has been terminated has forfeited all rights of a member of this congregation and all claims upon the property of this congregation so long as he/she is not reinstated into membership.
6. This congregation shall accept pastoral responsibility for children baptized in the congregation whose parents do not become members. At such time as the Pastor(s) deem that providing pastoral care and Christian nurture to these children is no longer possible, other means (such as referral to another congregation) shall be explored. If these efforts prove fruitless, such persons may be removed from membership by action of the Congregation Council.

## **II. CONGREGATION MEETINGS**

- A. Regular Congregation Meetings shall be held in November and May. The annual budget shall be presented for adoption at the November meeting. The November meeting shall include the election of members to the Nominating Committee. The May meeting shall include the election of officers, at-large council members and school board members.
- B. Special Congregation Meetings may be called in accordance with C10.02 and C10.03 of this constitution.
- C. Quorum shall be seventy-five (75) Voting members at a Congregation Meeting. In the case of the following actions, a two-thirds majority of those present shall be required for passage:
  1. the election or termination of a pastor
  2. the purchase, sale or mortgaging of real estate
  3. the construction or demolition of buildings.

**III. CALL OF PASTORS** – The office of Pastor in this congregation shall be conferred only upon those person(s) who have met the criteria for public ministry in this congregation. Procedures for calling a pastor shall be consistent with Chapter C9.01 and C9.02 of the congregation constitution.

- A. When a Pastor is to be called, the Congregation Council shall recommend to a Congregation Meeting a Call Committee. The Call Committee nominees shall be the three at-large members of the Congregation Council, three Voting members not holding elective office in this congregation, the President of this congregation, and, in the case of calling an assistant or associate pastor, the senior pastor of this congregation. If the office of Pastor becomes vacant, the interim pastor shall be a member of this committee in an advisory capacity.

- B.** The Call Committee is to consult with and to receive names of candidates from members of this congregation and from appropriate synodical officials. After carefully considering the qualifications of all eligible names submitted and, with the approval of the Bishop or his/her designee, the Call Committee is to choose a maximum of three and present these as nominee(s) to this congregation. (Should the Call Committee resolve to submit only one name for consideration, it shall request a meeting with the Congregation Council. These groups together shall discuss all the available information concerning the candidate. A vote of two-thirds majority of those voting members present is necessary to submit one to the Congregation Meeting.) Announcement of the names(s) of the nominee(s) and of the date, time, and location of the Congregation Meeting at which the election is to take place shall be as follows: by mail to Voting members at least one week prior to the date of the meeting and at the Saturday/Sunday service preceding it. Notification by mail may be made through the congregation newsletter, if appropriate. Notification via e-mail instead of regular mail may be used for Voting members who have requested electronic correspondence. The Congregation Meeting may, at its discretion, reject one or all of the nominees.
- C.** After the name(s) of the nominee(s) has/have been presented and a slate of nominees has been accepted by majority vote, the Call Committee may then present a recommendation for the guidance of the Congregation Meeting.
- D.** Thereafter, the Voting members present and voting shall by written ballot elect a nominee. The nominee receiving two-thirds or more of the votes cast shall be declared the Pastor-elect, and a call shall be extended by the officers of this congregation in accordance with congregation and synodical procedures. Should the name of only one nominee be presented, that nominee must receive a two thirds affirmative vote to be named the Pastor-elect. If, after the first ballot, no nominee has received the necessary majority, the name of the nominee receiving the fewest votes shall be deleted from the ballot, and the Congregation Meeting shall proceed to ballot on the remaining nominee(s). If only one nominee remains and does not receive the necessary two-thirds majority, the Congregation Meeting may, at its discretion, continue balloting until one nominee receives the necessary two-thirds majority, may return to the to the original slate of nominees for further balloting, or may request a new slate of nominees.
- E.** For various reasons (e.g. a limited need, an anticipated shortage of funds, the need for an evaluation period, etc.) the Congregation Council, with the approval of the Bishop, may recommend to the Congregation Meeting that a nominee be called for a specific term (term called). If such be the case, the Congregation Council must announce this in advance to the congregation and, through the Call Committee, to the nominee(s). The Pastor called on such a basis is to be reviewed annually in accordance with the Personnel Handbook. If the circumstances which created the need to place a called person in a term called situation have changed, the Congregation Council may recommend to the Congregation Meeting the removal of the term called status. This action by the Congregation Meeting will require a two-thirds vote and the approval of the Bishop.
- F.** Anyone not meeting the call criteria may be engaged only on a contract basis.

G. Ballots by proxy or by mail shall not be recognized by this congregation in the calling of a Pastor, in accordance with Chapter C10.05 of the constitution.

**IV. CALLING OF TEACHERS** - The office of called Teacher in this congregation shall be conferred only upon those person(s) who have met the criteria for public ministry in this congregation. All nominees for a called position as a teacher shall be on (or eligible for) the appropriate roster of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

A. When a Teacher is to be called, the Congregation Council shall recommend a Call Committee to the Board of Atonement Lutheran School. The Call Committee nominees shall be two members of the Congregation Council, two members of the Board of Atonement Lutheran School, and two Voting members not holding elective office in this congregation, the principal of the school, the president of this congregation, and, (at his/her discretion) the senior pastor of this congregation (or his/her designee). If the office of Principal becomes vacant, the acting principal shall be a member of this committee in an advisory capacity, unless he/she wishes to be a candidate for Principal.

B. The Call Committee is to consult with and receive names of candidates from members of this congregation and from appropriate synodical officials. After carefully considering the qualifications of all eligible names submitted and, with the approval of the Bishop and his/her designee, the Call Committee is to choose a maximum of three nominees and present these to the Congregation Council and the Board of Atonement Lutheran School at a joint meeting as requested by the Call Committee. These groups together shall discuss all the available information concerning the nominee(s). A vote of two-thirds majority of those present is necessary to submit the name to the Congregation Meeting for ratification. Announcement of the name of the nominee and of the date, time, and location of the Congregation Meeting at which the election is to take place shall be as follows: by mail to Voting members through the congregation newsletter and at the Saturday/Sunday services preceding meeting. The Congregation Meeting may, at its discretion, reject the nominee. A two-thirds affirmative vote by written ballot is required to issue a call to the nominee.

C. A nominee receiving two-thirds affirmative votes shall be declared "Teacher-elect" and a call shall be extended by the officers of this congregation in accordance with congregation and synodical procedures.

D. For various reasons (e.g. a limited need, an anticipated shortage of funds, the need for an evaluation period, etc.) the Congregation Council, with the approval of the Bishop, may recommend to the Congregation Meeting that a nominee be called for a specified term. If such be the case, the Congregation Council must announce this in advance to the congregation and, through the Call Committee, to the nominee(s). The Teacher called on such a basis is to be reviewed annually in accordance with the Personnel Handbook. If the circumstances which created the need to place a called person in a term call situation have changed, the Congregation Council may recommend to the Congregation Meeting the removal of the term call status. This action by the Congregation Meeting will require a two-thirds vote and the approval of the Bishop.

E. Anyone not meeting the call criteria may be engaged only on a contract basis.

- F. A nominee not receiving a two-thirds vote may be engaged by the Congregation Council and Board of Atonement Lutheran School on a contract basis.
- G. Ballots by proxy or by mail shall not be recognized by this congregation in the calling of a Teacher, in accordance with Chapter C10.05 of the Constitution.

## **V. ELECTIONS**

- A. A Nominating Committee, consisting of five members, shall be elected to two year terms at the regular November Congregation Meeting. The elections will be such that two members shall be elected in odd numbered years and three members shall be elected in even numbered years. The existing Nominating Committee shall prepare a slate of nominees, which may consist of more persons than the number to be elected.
- B. The Nominating Committee shall prepare a slate of nominees for the annual election of officers, at-large Congregation Council members and board members.
- C. There shall be an annual election of officers, at-large Congregation Council members and board members at the May meeting. The President and Secretary shall be elected in the odd numbered years; the Vice- President and Treasurer shall be elected in the even numbered years. One at-large Congregation Council member shall be elected each year. (Initially one person shall be elected for three years, one for two years, and one for one year. This provision expires in 2015.) Nominees for officers, at-large Congregation Council members and board members are to be listed on the ballot.
- D. To be eligible for election as an officer of this congregation, or as an at-large Congregation Council member a nominee must be a Voting member in good standing for at least two (2) years; be a minimum of twenty-one years old; have attended at least 30 weekend services in the past twelve (12) months; and commit to meaningful financial support of the congregation. To be eligible for all other elected positions, unless otherwise specified in these bylaws, a nominee must be a Voting member in good standing or an Associate Member in good standing, and be a minimum of 18 years of age.
- E. If, in the course of the year, a vacancy occurs, except in the office of President (See Article VI of these bylaws), or an additional office is created, an election to fill the vacancy may be held at any regular or special meeting of the Congregation Council. The Congregation Council shall establish its own election procedure depending on the circumstances of the vacancy. The existing Nominating Committee shall prepare a slate of nominees for the pending position, which may consist of more persons than the number to be elected.
- F. All nominees shall have been contacted and have indicated their willingness to serve. The slate of nominees for all elections shall be published in the church bulletin at least one week prior to the election. Additional nominations may be made from the floor provided the nominee has indicated a willingness to serve.
- G. All elections must be by ballot. No proxy or mail vote shall be permitted.

- H. A majority is required for election of officers, at-large Congregation Council members and members of boards.
- I. The terms of all officers and board members shall be two years. The terms of at-large Council members shall be three years. Officers, at-large Congregation Council members and board members may not hold the same elective office for more than two consecutive terms. If the Vice President accedes to the presidency he / she can serve two (2) full terms as President. Nominating Committee members may not hold consecutive terms in that position. For the purpose of this article, "term" is defined as a full two or three year period.
- J. Except for membership on the Nominating Committee, no person may hold more than one elected office at the same time.
- K. All persons elected at the May meeting shall take office on the final Sunday in June. Nominating Committee members shall take office immediately upon election.
- L. Board(s) shall meet at least four times per year and as often as necessary.
- M. The Senior Pastor shall be an ex-officio voting member of the Congregation Council. The Pastor(s) shall be (an) ex-officio voting member(s) of all boards and committees.

## **VI. DUTIES OF OFFICERS**

- A. The President shall preside at all Congregation Meetings and at all meetings of the Congregation Council, and shall sign all documents on behalf of this congregation, subject to the direction and control of the Congregation Council and the Congregation Meeting, and shall make all necessary appointments, to be approved by the Congregation Council. The President shall be an ex-officio member of all boards and committees.
- B. The Vice-President shall perform all duties of the President in his/her absence, and in the case of death, disability, resignation or removal of the President, shall succeed him/her as President for the remainder of that term of office. The Vice- President is also to act as Chairperson of the Personnel Committee.
- C. The Secretary shall keep a record of the minutes of all Congregation Meetings and Congregation Council meetings, and shall perform such other duties as the Congregation Council may require.
- D. The Treasurer shall be responsible for all monies of the congregation, shall supervise the investments of the congregation, shall assure that all obligations of the congregation are satisfied in a timely fashion, shall provide an accurate monthly report of the congregation's balances and financial activity, and shall prepare an annual budget in consultation with the Finance Committee. Other than routine transfers between existing accounts, the Congregation Council shall approve investments made by the Treasurer in excess of \$20,000.

## **VII. CONGREGATION COUNCIL**

- A.** The Congregation Council shall consist of the Senior Pastor, Principal of the Day School, President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and three at-large members.
- B.** An elected member of the School Board or of any other board may not be a member of the Congregation Council.

## **VIII. BOARD OF ATONEMENT LUTHERAN SCHOOL**

This board shall consist of eight members elected by the Congregation Meeting for terms of two years, arranged so that the terms of one-half of the board members shall expire each year. The board shall organize annually and elect a chairperson and a secretary. The Principal of Atonement Lutheran School shall be an advisory member of this board and a voting member of the Congregation Council.

The Board of Atonement Lutheran School shall:

- A.** Study and discuss the needs, problems and opportunities related to Atonement Lutheran School; co-operatively evaluate, plan, develop and promote education in the area of Atonement Lutheran School programs; and implement these programs through the school administration
- B.** Establish ad-hoc committees to address matters of interest to the school and appoint members to those committees
- C.** At its discretion, elect up to two additional members from other Lutheran churches to serve on this board as advisory or voting members for one or two year terms
- D.** Set the annual budget for Atonement Lutheran School, requesting from the Finance Committee and Congregation Council a determination of the congregation's annual mission contribution (subsidy) for the school, and establishing tuition and fee rates
- E.** Develop, promote and monitor school funding sources in addition to tuition, fees, and the annual Atonement Congregation school subsidy.

## **IX. COMMITTEES**

- A.** The Standing Committees are Finance Committee, Properties Committee, Personnel Committee, and Endowment Committee. These committees are perpetual and report to the Congregation Council. Members of the standing committees who are not elected officers shall be appointed by the President with approval by a majority vote of the Congregation Council. A nominee for a committee must give prior consent to being named as a nominee. Members of these committees serve without term limits. Members may be removed by a majority vote of the Congregation Council or may submit a written resignation.
- B.** The Congregation Council may create ad-hoc committees as needed to address matters of the congregation that are not otherwise specified in the bylaws. The

Congregation Council shall determine the responsibilities, the number of members, the requirements for committee membership, and the life of the committee. Members of ad-hoc committees shall be appointed by the President with approval by a majority vote of the Congregation Council.

#### **X. FINANCE COMMITTEE**

This committee shall consist of five members: the Treasurer, and four members appointed by the Congregation Council. The committee shall organize annually and elect a chairperson and a secretary.

This committee shall meet and shall:

- A.** Supervise the financial systems of this congregation
- B.** Assist the Treasurer in the preparation of an annual budget to submit to the Congregation Council as directed by the Congregation Meeting
- C.** Recommend to the Congregation Council a Certified Public Accountant to provide a financial review as deemed appropriate by the Congregation Council or the Congregation Meeting
- D.** Provide guidance to the Treasurer, regarding the investment of congregation monies
- E.** Assist the Treasurer in providing reports of financial condition of this congregation at all regular meetings of the Congregation Council and Congregation Meetings.

#### **Xi. PROPERTIES COMMITTEE**

This committee shall consist of seven members. The committee shall annually elect a chairperson and a secretary.

This committee shall meet and shall:

- A.** Work with the parish administrator in maintaining the buildings and grounds of this congregation in good repair
- B.** Work with the parish administrator to oversee the purchase of material and equipment required for the use and maintenance of the congregation's facilities
- C.** Receive reports from the parish administrator on the work of the custodial service/custodians in cleaning and maintaining the premises
- D.** Take steps to assure that the use of buildings and equipment by individuals, groups, or organizations, either within, or outside this congregation, is in accordance with policies which have been, or which may at any time be established
- E.** Submit to the Finance committee, prior to the preparation of the annual budget, its recommendations for allocation of funds for repairs, maintenance, and improvement of the congregation property.

## **XII. ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE**

This committee shall promote and manage the Atonement Endowment Fund as defined in the Atonement Endowment Fund Charter approved by the Congregation Meeting on January 27, 2013, and as may be amended in subsequent Congregation Meetings.

## **XIII. PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

This committee shall consist of the Vice-President of the congregation, who shall act as chairperson, one member of the Finance Committee, one member of the Board of Atonement Lutheran School, and two members appointed by the President and approved by the Congregation Council.

This committee shall meet and shall:

- A.** Conduct an annual review of personnel salary, benefit, and leave policies and practices with consideration of applicable state and Federal laws, practices recommended by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and changing conditions at the Lutheran Church of the Atonement
- B.** Write and keep up to date a manual for all phases of personnel relations, including salary ranges, allowances, sick leave, hospitalization and all benefit programs as they may apply
- C.** As needed, select options for medical and pension benefits in consultation with affected staff members
- D.** Submit recommendations for changes in salaries and/or allowances to the Finance Committee.

## **XIV. CHANGES IN REGULATIONS**

The Congregation Meeting or Congregation Council may, from time to time, adopt, alter or amend rules and regulations or directives for the guidance of officers, boards, and committees in their work.

## **XV. ORDER OF BUSINESS**

To facilitate the transaction of business which will come before the Congregation Meeting, the following order of business is suggested:

- A.** Opening devotion
- B.** Presentation of Minutes
- C.** Congregation Council report
- D.** Communications
- E.** Election of officers, at-large Congregation Council members, and board members

**F.** Reports of standing and special committees

**G.** Unfinished business

**H.** New business

**I.** Adjournment and closing prayer

As much as practicable, minutes and reports should be prepared in advance and presented in writing. Congregation Meetings will be conducted according to the most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order, except where this constitution or these bylaws may specify otherwise.

