

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS
Pleasant View Evangelical Lutheran Church
Staunton, Virginia

PREAMBLE

We, baptized members of the Church of Christ, 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

- C1.01. The name of the congregation shall be Pleasant View Evangelical Lutheran Church
- C1.02. For the purpose of this constitution and accompanying bylaws, the Pleasant View Evangelical Lutheran Church congregation is hereinafter designated as "this congregation."

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 Gospel as the power of God for 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 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 accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life.

- C2.04. This congregation accepts the Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds as true declarations of faith of this congregation.
- C2.05. This congregation accepts the Unaltered Augsburg Confession as a true witness to the Gospel, acknowledging as one with it in faith and doctrine all churches that likewise accept the teachings of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession.
- C2.06. This congregation accepts the other confessional writings in the Book of Concord, namely the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the SmalCald Articles and the Treatise, the Small Catechism, and the Formula of Concord, as further valid interpretations of the faith of the Church.
- C2.07. This congregation confesses the Gospel, recorded in the Holy Scriptures and confessed in the ecumenical creeds and Lutheran confessional writings, as the power of God to create and sustain the Church for God's mission in the world.

Chapter 3. NATURE OF THE CHURCH

- C3.01. All power in the Church belongs to our Lord Jesus Christ, it's 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. This church, therefore, derives its character and powers both from the sanction and representation of its congregation 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.

Chapter 4. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

- C4.01. The Church is a people created by God in Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, called and sent to bear witness to God's creative, redeeming, and sanctifying activity in the world.
- C4.02. To participate in God's mission, this congregation as part of the Church shall:
 - a. Worship God in proclamation of the Word and administration of the sacraments and through lives of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, witness, and service.
 - b. Proclaim God 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 nations, and standing with the poor and powerless, and committing itself to their needs.
- e. Nurture its members in the Word of God so as to grow in faith and hope and love, to see daily life as the primary setting for the exercise of their Christian calling, and to use the gifts of the Spirit for their life together and for their calling in the world.
- f. Manifest the unity given to the people of God by living together in the love of Christ and by joining with other Christians in prayer and action to express and preserve the unity which the Spirit gives.

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

- a. Provide services of worship at which the Word of God is preached and the sacraments are administered.
- b. Provide pastoral care and assist all members to participate in this ministry.
- c. Challenge, equip, and support all members in carrying out their calling in their daily lives and in 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 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- h. Foster and participate in interdependent relationships with other congregations, the synod, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- i. Foster and participate in ecumenical relationships consistent with churchwide policy.

C4.04. This congregation shall develop an organizational structure to be described in the bylaws. The Congregation Council shall prepare descriptions of the responsibilities of each committee, task force, or other organizational groups and shall review their actions. (Such Description shall be contained in continuing resolutions of the Congregation Council.)

C4.05. This congregation shall, from time to time, adopt a mission statement which will provide specific direction for its programs.

Chapter 5. POWERS OF THE CONGREGATION

C5.01. The powers of the congregation are those necessary to fulfill its purpose.

C5.02. The powers of this congregation are vested in the Congregation Meeting called and conducted as provided in this constitution and bylaws.

C5.03. Only such authority as is delegated to the Congregation Council or their organizational units in the 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 conform 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. authorize, by congregational meeting, trustees to sell, mortgage, lease transfer or otherwise dispose of its property by any lawful means;
- i. elect its Congregational Council, boards, and committees, and require them to carry out their duties in accordance with the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions; and
- j. terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America 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 Virginia Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Chapter 6. CHURCH AFFILIATION

C6.01. This congregation shall be an interdependent part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or its successor, and of the Virginia Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. This congregation is subject to the discipline of

the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

- C6.02. This congregation accepts the Confession of Faith and agrees to the Purposes of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and shall act in accordance with them.
- C6.03. This congregation acknowledges its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in which:
- a. This congregation agrees to be responsible for its life as a Christian community.
 - b. This congregation pledges its financial support and participation in the life and mission of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - c. This congregation agrees to call pastoral leadership from the clergy roster of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in accordance with its call procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - d. This congregation agrees to consider associates in ministry, deaconess, and diaconal ministers for call to other staff positions in the congregation according to the procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - e. This congregation agrees to file this constitution and any subsequent changes to this constitution with the synod for review to ascertain that all of its provisions are in agreement with the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or with the constitution and bylaws of the synod.
- C6.04. Affiliation with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may be terminated as follows:
- a. This congregation takes action to dissolve.
 - b. This congregation cease to exist.
 - c. This congregation is removed from membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America according to the procedures to discipline of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - d. This congregation follows the procedures outlined in C6.05.
- C6.05. This congregation may terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America by the following procedure:
- a. A resolution indicating the desire of this congregation to terminate its relationship must be adopted at a legally called and conducted special meeting of this congregation by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present.
 - b. The secretary of the congregation shall submit a copy of the resolution to

the synodical bishop shall mail a copy of the resolution to voting members of the congregation. This notice shall be submitted within 10 days after the resolution has been adopted.

- c. The bishop of the synod shall consult with 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 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 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.
- g. Since this congregation was a member of the Lutheran Church of America it shall be required, in addition to the provision in C6.05, to receive synodical approval before terminating its membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

*C6.06. If this congregation considers relocation, it shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located before any steps are taken leading to such action. The approval of the Synod Council shall be received before any such action is effected.

Chapter 7. PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

- C7.01. If this congregation ceases to exist, title to undisposed shall pass to the Virginia Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- C7.02. If this congregation is removed from membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America according to its procedure for discipline, title to property shall continue to reside in this congregation.
- C7.03. If two-thirds of the voting members of this congregation present at a legally called and conducted special meeting of this congregation vote to transfer to another Lutheran church body, title to property shall continue to reside in this congregation. Before this congregation takes action to transfer to another Lutheran church body, it shall consult with representatives of the Virginia Synod.
- C7.04. If two-thirds majority of the voting members of this congregation present at a legally called and conducted special meeting of this congregation vote to

become independent or relate to a non-Lutheran church body, title 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 the 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 the congregation. If the Synod Council fails to give such approval, title shall remain with those members who desire to continue as a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Chapter 8. MEMBERSHIP

C8.01. Members of this congregation shall be those baptized persons on the roll of the congregation at the time that this constitution is adopted and those who are admitted thereafter and who have declared and maintain their membership in accordance with the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.

*C8.02. Members shall be classified as follows:

- a. Baptized members are those persons who have been received by the Sacrament of Holy Baptism in this congregation, or, having been previously baptized in the name of the Triune God, have been received by certificate of transfer from other Lutheran congregations or by affirmation of faith.
- b. Confirmed members are baptized persons who have been confirmed in this congregation, those who have been confirmed in this congregation, those who have been received by adult baptism or by transfer as confirmed members from other Lutheran congregations, or baptized persons received by affirmation of faith.
- c. Voting members are confirmed members. Such confirmed members, during the current or preceding calendar year, shall have communed in this congregation and shall have made a contribution of record to this congregation.
- d. Associate Members are persons holding membership in other Christian congregations who wish to retain such membership, but desire to participate in the life and mission of this while being members of other congregations. They have all the privileges and duties of membership except voting rights and eligibility for elected offices or membership on the Congregation Council of this congregation.

C8.03. 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 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 teaching of the Lutheran church; and
- c. support of the work of this congregation and of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America through contributions of their time, abilities, and financial support as biblical stewards.

C8.05. Membership in this congregation shall be removed 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.

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 members present and voting at a meeting legally called for that purpose. Before a call is issued, the officers, or a committee elected by this congregation to recommend the call, shall seek the advice and help of the bishop of the synod.

*C9.02. Only a member of the clergy roster of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America 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 for this congregation.

C9.03. Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,

- a. Every ordained minister
 - 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. 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 Gospel;
- 3) impart knowledge of this church and its wide ministry through distribution of its periodicals and other publications; and
- 4) endeavor to increase the support given by congregation to work of the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and of the Virginia 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.

*C9.05. The call of a congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment which.

- a. except in the case of death of a pastor, shall be terminated only following consultation with the synodical bishop and for the following reasons:
 - 1) mutual agreement to terminate the call or completion of a call for a specific term of years;
 - 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 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) dissolution of the congregation; or
 - 7) suspension of the congregation as a result of discipline proceedings.
- b. When allegation 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 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 decided on 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 at a legally called meeting after consultation with the bishop, either (a) by two-thirds majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee did not recommend termination of the call, or (b) by simple majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and committee recommended termination of the call.
- 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 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the constitution of this synod.
- f. If, following the appointment of the committee described in C9.05b. or d. it should become apparent that the pastoral office cannot be conducted effectively in the congregation(s) being served by 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 churchwide/synod fund with housing provided by the congregation(s) for not more than 90 days.

C9.06. At the time of pastoral vacancy, an interim pastor may 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 of a regularly called 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 financial obligations to this congregation.

C9.09. When a pastor is called to serve in company with another pastor or pastors, the privileges and responsibility 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 similar consultation.

- C9.10. With approval of the bishop of the synod the congregation may depart from C9.05.a., and call a pastor for a specific term of years. Details of such calls shall be in writing setting forth the purpose and conditions involved. Prior to completion of a term, the bishop or designated representative of the bishop, shall meet with the pastor and representatives of the congregation for a review of the call. Such call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of C9.05.a.
- C9.11. The pastor shall keep accurate parochial records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from the congregation, and shall submit a summary of such statistics annually to the synod.
- C9.12. 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.

Chapter 10. CONGREGATION MEETING

- C10.01. The congregation shall meet twice annually: once during the month of February, and once during the month of November.
- 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 at the written request of one tenth of the voting members. The call for each special meeting shall specify the purpose for which it is to hold 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 last known address of such members shall be sufficient.
- C10.04. 25% of the voting members shall constitute a quorum.
- C10.05. Voting by proxy or 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.
- 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. Officers of this congregation shall serve similar offices of the Congregation Council and shall be voting members of the Congregation Council, except the office of treasurer.
- d. If the Congregational Council elects its officers, the president, vice-president, and secretary shall be selected from the elected membership of the Congregation Council.

C11.02. The officers shall be elected by the Congregation Council by written ballot and shall serve for one year. The term shall begin on January 1st and end on December 31st.

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

Chapter 12. CONGREGATION AND TRUSTEES

*C12.01. The voting membership of the Congregation Council shall consist of the pastor(s), the officers of the congregation, and not more than 12 members nor few than 9 members of the congregation. Any voting members of the congregation may be elected, subject only to the limitation on the length of continuous service permitted in that office. A member's place on the Congregation Council shall be declared vacant if the member (a) ceases to be a voting member of the congregation or (b) is absent from four successive regular meetings of the Congregation without cause.

C12.02. The members of the Congregation Council (except the pastor(s) shall be elected at a properly called meeting of the congregation during the month of November. Their term of office shall be 2(two) years with the term of office beginning on January 1st and ending on December 31st. The number of terms to which a council member may be elected will be limited to 2(two) consecutive, three-year terms. Newly elected Congregation Council members shall be installed at worship on a Sunday prior to the date they assume office.

*C12.03. Should a member's place on the Congregation Council be declared vacant, the Congregation Council be declared vacant, the Congregation Council shall elect, by majority vote a successor until the next annual meeting. Individuals who have served less than one-half of a regular term shall be eligible for nomination and possible election to a full term.

C12.04. The Congregation Council shall have general oversight of the life and activities

of this congregation, and in particular its worship life, to the end that everything be done in accordance with the Word of God and the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The duties of the Congregation Council shall include the following:

- a. To lead this congregation in stating its mission, to do long-range planning, to set goals and priorities, and to evaluate its activities in light of its mission and goals.
- b. To seek to involve all members of this congregation in worship, learning, witness, service, and support.
- c. To oversee and provide for the administration of this congregation to enable it to fulfill its functions and perform its mission.
- d. To maintain supportive relationships with the pastor(s) and staff and help them annually to evaluate the fulfillment of their calling, appointment, or employment.
- e. To be examples individually and corporately of the style of life and ministry expected of all baptized persons.
- f. To promote a congregational climate of peace and goodwill 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 churchwide units of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as well as cooperation with other “Lutheran” congregations, subject to established policies of the synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- i. To recommend and encourage the use of program resources produced or approved by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- j. To seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel.

C12.05. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the financial and property matters of this congregation.

- a. The Congregation Council shall be the administrative board of this congregation, and as such shall be responsible for maintaining and protecting its property and the management of its business and fiscal affairs.
- b. The Congregation Council shall not have the authority to authorize the trustees 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% of the budget for items not included in the budget.

- d. The Congregation Council shall prepare an annual budget for the adoption by this congregation, shall supervise the expenditure of funds in accordance therewith following its adoption, and may incur obligations more than 5% of the budget in excess of the anticipated receipts only after approval by Congregational 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 churchwide organization.
 - e. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for this congregation's investments and its total insurance program.
- C12.06. The Congregation Council shall see that the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws and the continuing resolutions are carried out.
- C12.07. The Congregation Council shall provide for an annual review of the membership roster.
- C12.08. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the appointment and supervision of the salaried lay workers of this congregation.
- C12.09. The Congregation Council shall submit a comprehensive report to this congregation at the annual meeting.
- C12.10. The Congregation Council shall normally meet once a month. Special meetings may be called by the pastor or the president, and shall be called 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.
- C12.11. A quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of a majority of the members of the Congregation Council, including the pastor or interim pastor, except when such person requests or consents to be absent and has given prior approval to an agenda of routine matters which shall be the only business of the meeting.
- C12.12. The property of the congregation shall be held in trust by three trustees elected by the congregation and appointed by the court according to the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia.
- C12.13. Trustees shall serve for a term of five years, without limit as to the number of terms. However, the office shall be declared vacant upon the death, resignation, or failure to continue as a voting member on the part of the person serving as trustee. A trustee shall act in accordance with the direction of the congregation and, if the trustee does not do so, the position shall be declared vacant.
- C12.14. When there is a vacancy in the office of trustee, the congregation, the congregation shall elect a person who is a voting member and who is of legal age and the officers shall recommend to the court that the person so elected be appointed trustee.

Chapter 13. CONGREGATIONAL COMMITTEES

- C13.01. The officers of the congregation and the pastor shall constitute the Executive Committee.
- C13.02. A Nominating Committee of six voting members of this congregation, two of whom shall be outgoing members of the Congregation Council, shall be elected at the annual meeting for a term of one year. Members of the Nominating Committee are not eligible for consecutive reelection.
- C13.03. An Audit Committee of three voting members shall be elected by the Congregation Council — Audit Committee members shall not be members of the Congregation Council. Term of office will be three years, with one member elected each year. Members shall be eligible for reelection.
- C13.04. A Staff Support Committee (in absence of a staff support committee, their duties shall be fulfilled by the executive committee) shall be appointed jointly by the president and the pastor. Term of office shall be two years, three members to be appointed each successive year. Committee members will hold no other office in the congregation during their term.
- C13.05. When a pastoral vacancy occurs, a Call Committee of six voting members shall be appointed by this congregation. Term of office will terminate upon the installation of the newly-called pastor.
- C13.06. Other congregational committees may be formed as the need arises, by decision of the Congregation Council.
- C13.07. Duties of congregational committees shall be specified in the 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. This congregation at its meeting shall determine their policies, guide their activities, and receive reports concerning their membership, work, and finances.
- C14.02. Special interest groups, other than those of the official organizations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, may be organized only after authorization has been given by the Congregation Council and specified in a continuing resolution.

Chapter 15. DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS AND ADJUDICATION

- C15.01. 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: (a) private admonition by the pastor, (b) admonition by the pastor in the presence of two or three witnesses, and (c) citation to appear before the Congregation Council.
- C15.02. 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 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. A member charged with the offense shall appear before the Congregation Council having received a written notice, specifying the exact charges that have been made against the member. If the member is charged with the offense fails to appear at the scheduled hearing, the Congregation Council may proceed with the hearing and may pass judgement in the member's absence.
- C15.03. Should the allegations be sustained by two-thirds majority vote of the Congregation Council, the council shall impose one of the following disciplinary actions:
- a. censure before the council or congregation .
 - b. Suspension from membership for a definite period of time or
 - c. exclusion from membership in this congregation. Disciplinary actions and shall be delivered to the member in writing.
- C15.04. The member against whom disciplinary action has been taken by the Congregation Council shall have the right to appeal the decision to the Synod Council. Such right may not be abridged and the decision of the Synod Council shall be final.
- C15.05. Disciplinary actions may be reconsidered and revoked by the Congregation Council upon receipt of (a) evidence that injustice has been done, or (b) evidence of repentance and amendment.
- *C15.06. For disciplinary actions in this congregation, "due process" shall be observed as specified in 20.41.03 in the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- *C15.0. No member of a congregation shall be subject to discipline for offenses that the Congregation Council has previously heard and decided, unless so ordered by the Synod Council after an appeal.
- *C15.10. Adjudication

- C15.11. When there is a disagreement among factions within this congregation on a substantive issue that cannot be resolved by the parties, members of this congregation shall have access to the synodical bishop for consultation after informing the chair of the Congregation Council of the intent. If the consultation fails to resolve the issue(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 those voting members present and voting.
- C16.03. Changes to the bylaws may be proposed by any voting member provided, however, that such additions or amendments be submitted in writing to the Congregation Council at least 60 days before a regular or special Congregation Meeting called for that purpose and that the Congregation Council notify the members of the proposal with its recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the Congregation Meeting.
- C16.04. Approved changes to the bylaws shall be sent to the synod.

Chapter 17 AMENDMENTS

- C17.01. Amendments to this constitution may be proposed by at least 5 voting members of by the Congregation Council. Proposals must be filed in writing with the Congregation Council 60 days before formal consideration by this congregation at its regular or special meeting called for that purpose. The Congregation Council shall notify the members of the proposal with their recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the meeting.
- C17.02. A proposed amendment to this constitution.
- a. be approved at a properly called meeting according to this constitution by a majority vote of those present and voting;
 - b. be ratified without change at the next annual meeting by a two-thirds majority vote of those present and voting; and
 - c. have the effective date included in the resolution and noted in the constitution.

C17.03. 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 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, or the constitution of the Virginia Synod.

C176.04. Whenever the Model Constitution for Congregations is amended by the Churchwide assembly, this constitution may be amended to reflect any such amendment by 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. Such continuing resolutions may not conflict with the constitution or bylaws of the congregation.

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

Chapter 19 INDEMNIFICATION

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

BYLAWS

Section 1: At a meeting after the election, the newly composed Congregation Council for the following year shall appoint the standing committees as set forth in this section and such other committees as the local and broader concerns of the congregation shall require.

a. Each such committee shall be composed of one or more members of the

Council and, in addition, other confirmed members of the congregation. Although appointed to be responsible to the Council, these committees shall be recognized as performing essential services for the congregation as a whole. The Pastor shall have voice and vote in all committees.

- b. Except as stipulated in the following paragraphs, the duties of all such committees shall be assigned by the Council, along with such instructions as in its judgement are in the best interests of the congregation. All actions of the committees shall be subject to review by the Council.
- c. The standing committees shall consist of the following:
 1. Worship
 2. Education
 3. Evangelism
 4. Stewardship/Finance
 5. Social Ministry
 6. Property
 7. Fellowship/Hospitality
 8. Recreation
 9. Youth
- d. The responsibility of each standing committee are contained in the continuing resolutions of the Congregation Council.

Section 2: The duties of the officers of this congregation shall be as follows:

- a. The President shall be responsible for (1) all congregational program, (2) upholding the Constitution and Bylaws, (3) presiding at meetings of the congregation and the Congregation Council, and (4) coordinating the functions, plans and activities of the congregation in all its parts for the total furtherance of the work of Christ's Kingdom in our midst.
- b. The Vice-President shall act for and in the stead of the President in the event of his or her absence or disability with all the rights and privileges of the office.
- c. The Secretary shall keep accurate minutes of all meetings of the Congregation and of the Congregation Council.
- d. The Financial Secretary, shall receive and keep record of all income from contributing members and other sources.
- e. The Treasurer shall keep the books of account of the congregation and shall receive from the financial secretary all funds and disburse them on proper orders, making monthly remittance of benevolence receipts to the treasurer of the synod.

1. The Treasurer shall make written report of all financial transactions to the Council monthly and to the congregation at its annual meeting.
2. A satisfactory audit of books of account shall be performed annually.

Section 3: A person may be removed from the active roll due to inactivity if they have neither communed nor made a contribution of record for a period of two (2) consecutive years.

CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

1. Mission Statement for Pleasant View Evangelical Lutheran Church: Pleasant View Evangelical Lutheran Church, inspired by the Holy Spirit and celebrating the joy of the Gospel, intends to become a more loving and caring congregation to all by:
 1. Proclaiming the Gospel through word and example;
 2. Dedicating ourselves to more meaningful worship in our lives;
 3. Strengthening our faith through a strong commitment to the educational ministry of this congregation; and
 4. Seeking the unity proclaimed by Christ for all Christians within and outside of our fellowship.

* **This congregation shall have the following standing committees:**

- a. **EDUCATION** — This committee shall provide for the nurture of congregational members in the Word of God so that they may grow in faith, hope and love toward clear recognition of daily life as the primary exercise of their Christian calling. This committee is responsible for planning, staffing, and directing programs of religious education to meet the needs of children and adults — both within the Congregation and the community we serve.

Specifically this committee shall:

- Conduct and promote the Sunday and Vacation Church School.
- Provide for Catechetical instruction in close coordination with the pastor(s).
- Offer and support any special Christian educational opportunities for the congregation.
 - Recruit and train competent teachers of the faith.
- Promote the use of educational materials published and authorized by the ELCA.
- Introduce ELCA periodicals and devotional publications into the homes of the congregation.
- Procure and distribute the educational materials.

- Encourage qualified persons to consider the call to ordained or to other full time church vocations.
- b. **EVANGELISM** — Ass Christians we are called to serve our Lord and witness to his Gospel by living our lives so as to reflect His teachings to the best of our abilities. The Evangelism Committee is responsible for guiding our members in proclaiming the Gospel and ministering to those who need to see and hear the good news of God’s love lived out in a Christian community. Duties and responsibilities of this committee include:
- Preparing “Welcome Bags” for new members
 - Distributing printed sermons and/or worship tapes to shut ins.
 - Planning and directing publicity to the community we serve.
 - Encouraging congregational involvement in the wider Christian community.
 - Recruit, train, equip, and support congregational representatives in their efforts to restore those who have lapsed from active membership in the congregation.
 - Invite new members into the fellowship of the Church.
 - Seek the support and cooperation of other committees in structuring programs which assist in individual members in sharing their faith and witnessing to others.
- c. **FELLOWSHIP/HOSPITALITY**
- Provide fellowship in terms of receptions for congregational meetings, reception of new members, celebration of special events and other events as established by the Congregation Council.
 - Periodically inventory equipment, utensils, and furnishings of the kitchen and fellowship hall to insure adequacy to support fellowship events. Active liaison should be maintained with the property committee to provide timely repair and replacement of such things.
- d. **STEWARDSHIP/FINANCE** — This combined committee shall advise the Congregation Council regarding the financial affairs of the congregation so that they may be conducted efficiently. Particular attention shall be given to the prompt payment of all obligations and to the regular forwarding of benevolence monies to the synodical treasurer. The treasurer and financial secretary shall be members ex-officio of this committee.

This committee shall strive to lead each member of the congregation into clear recognition that all we have — ourselves, our time and our possessions - are blessings from God and should be dedicated to His service. How best to do this is an individual decision made after thoughtful and prayerful consideration. Programs to assist the membership in meeting this challenge will be prepared and carried forth on a continuous basis throughout the year.

The stewardship component of this committee will:

- Provide guidance on how Christians, as stewards of God's creation, might better manage their means, talents and time.
- Promote members' monetary support of the ministries of this congregation, the Synod, and the ELCA.
- Promote and encourage the participation of all members in ministries of the congregation through their gifts of time and talent.
- Encourage tithing.
- Plan and conduct an annual campaign for members commitment of time, talent, and resources to the ministry of the congregation.
- Prepare and distribute packets of offering envelopes to the members prior to the beginning of a new year.
- Regularly inform members of the use and results of their giving.

The financial component of this committee shall:

- Prepare a draft budget for the succeeding year based upon detailed information submitted by committee chairpersons and others.
- Submit the draft budget to Council prior to the regular October meeting.
- Monitor expenditure of funds in accordance with the adopted budget and the receipt of funds in comparison to planned projections.
- Make monthly reports to Council which include the comparison of expenditures versus revenue and highlights any cause for concern such as potential revenue shortfalls.
- Review insurance coverage of all assets and exposures for the congregation, recommending changes as required.
- Review all investments of the congregation and recommending changes.
- Develop plans to finance major capital programs such as additions or modifications to church buildings.
- Provide for the count and deposit of the offering after worship service.
- Serving as nominating committee to provide candidates for appointment by Council to the Audit Committee.
- All the Congregation's financial matters are subject to review and oversight of this committee.

- e. **PROPERTY** — This committee shall arrange for protection of all congregational property. It should coordinate with finance committee to insure that adequate insurance coverage is in effect to protect property and the congregation against liability for personal injury that may befall persons using its property. Special duties include:

- Hiring and supervising the building custodian
 - Repairing or replacing broken or worn out equipment.
 - Servicing equipment.
 - Maintaining all church buildings.
 - Maintaining the church grounds including arranging for snow removal, grass cutting and landscaping as required.
 - Maintaining an adequate inventory of cleaning materials and bathroom supplies.
- f. SOCIAL MINISTRY** — This committee shall plan and promote outreach programs which minister to human needs within our congregation, our immediate community and the world at large. The committee should:
- Study social conditions, particularly but not exclusively those in the local community.
 - Make recommendations as to how the congregation might most effectively minister to those in need.
 - Enlist the efforts of congregational members in support of the social ministry programs of the congregation.
 - Maintain contacts with appropriate community social service organizations.
 - Periodically reporting to the congregation on the volunteer needs of the community.
 - Offer opportunities for thoughtful Christian discussion of important social issues.
- g. RECREATION** — This committee is responsible for planning and conducting activities and social events which offer wholesome opportunities for members of the congregation and our guest to gather so as to grow in knowledge, friendship, understanding and support of one another. Goals of these events should be to:
- Foster the inclusion of all congregational members, prospective members, and guests
 - Consider and make arrangements for special needs of the young, infirm, or aged in recreational activities.
 - Strengthen the ties that bind us both as church community and as individuals.
 - Insure that frequency and timing of recreational events provide ample opportunity for everyone to participate in several events over the course of a year.
- h. WORSHIP AND MUSIC** — this committee ministers to congregation by assisting in the planning and preparation for all worship services and the smooth functioning of the music program. It works in close coordination with the Pastor. The committee shall:

- Assign duties, supervise, and support the Music Director, Organist and Bell Choir Director in the performance of their assigned tasks.
 - Assign and supervise the coordinators for lectors, ushers, communion assistants, acolytes and crucifers, altar flowers, and altar guild.
 - Provide for broad and inclusive participation by congregational members in worship.
 - Arrange for the care of congregation's books of worship, altar and worship furnishings, sacred vessels, paraments, vestments, and musical instruments.
 - Plan and prepare for special worship events such as: Advent, Christmas, Lent, Palm Sunday, Easter, Church Anniversary, All Saint's Sunday, Thanksgiving, and any other special event for them is recognized.
 - Supervise and support the choirs of the congregation in conjunction with the organist and choir directors.
 - Authorize all liturgies and orders of worship to be used by the congregation and support the normal use of those worship orders and materials approved by the ELCA.
 - Furnish appropriate music and supplies to the organist and choir directors.
- i. **YOUTH** — The function of this committee is to provide guidance and direction to youth of junior and high school age as they strive to learn and grow from first hand experience in planning, organizing, and managing events designed to meet their religious and social needs. These events should include special programs of worship, fellowship, service to church and community, leadership, and religious instruction. This committee should assist youth in obtaining materials from the Synod and ELCA, providing transportation and financial support, and offering constructive suggestions while encouraging the youth to be innovative and creative. The youth group shall be under the oversight of this committee. The youth group shall be designed so as to provide our young people opportunities to learn and grow spiritually by planning and conducting their own activities.

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