

MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH OF DELHI TOWNSHIP

Holt, Michigan

THE BYLAWS

ARTICLE I - CONFIRMED MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Application for Membership Procedure

Applicants for confirmed membership in this congregation shall consult the Pastor who shall determine whether such applicants are eligible for membership in accordance with Article IV of the constitution. Applicants not familiar with the doctrines and Confessions of the Lutheran Church shall be required to attend a course of instruction, and make profession of their faith either before the congregation or, at the Pastor's discretion, before witnesses who are members of the Board of Elders before being received as members.

Applicants from other Evangelical Lutheran Churches shall submit a letter of transfer or release from their former congregation to establish their eligibility for membership. In the case of applicants whose previous membership in a Lutheran congregation has lapsed, the Pastor may, with the consent of the Board of Elders; arrange for a period of re-instruction prior to reaffirmation of faith of such applicants.

After applicants have given satisfactory evidence of their eligibility in accordance with the two (2) preceding paragraphs, their admission as confirmed members shall be recommended by the Pastor to the Board of Elders, which shall have the authority to act on such applications in behalf of the voting membership. The roster of new members shall be publicized in the various news media of the congregation (The Messiah Messenger, the weekly bulletin, etc.).

Section 2. Privileges and Duties of Confirmed Members

It shall be the responsibility of each member to endeavor to "grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (II Peter 3:18) and to become a "man of God thoroughly furnished to good works" (II Timothy 3:17). To this end it shall be the responsibility of each member to:

- A. Grow in the Christian faith and life through faithful use of the means of grace, searching the scriptures at home and in fellowship with other members of the congregation and its agencies, and partaking of the Lord's Supper frequently (Ephesians 4:11-16, Hebrews 10:24-25, I Corinthians 11:24-29);

- B. Live a morally decent life before God and men, abstaining from the open works of the flesh (Galatians 5:18-24) and so conducting themselves at all times as to bring credit rather than blame upon the Church of Jesus Christ;
- C. Provide for the proper Christian training of their children by instruction at home and through the agencies of the Church (II Peter 3:18, Ephesians 4:11-14);
- D. Contribute toward the maintenance of the congregation and the extension of the Kingdom of God at home and abroad to the limits of their financial ability (II Corinthians 8-9);
- E. Place their God-given talents and abilities at the disposal of the Pastor, the officers, and other agencies of the congregation as set forth in its Constitution and Bylaws, so that the purposes and functions of the congregation may be effectively implemented (I Corinthians 12-14);
- F. Allow themselves to be admonished in a brotherly way, and be corrected when they have erred (John 20:21-23, Matthew 18: 15-20).

ARTICLE II - VOTING MEMBERS

Section 1. Eligibility

- A. All confirmed members of this congregation, Messiah Lutheran Church of Delhi Township, who are 18 years of age or older shall be eligible to apply for voting membership. Such application shall be at a regular or special voters' meeting of the congregation. The applicant shall be required to sign the official copy of the constitution and bylaws of the congregation at the time of acceptance into the voting membership.
- B. Upon signing, the applicant shall become a voting member at the same meeting.
- C. All confirmed members of Messiah Lutheran Church of Delhi Township, who are 18 years of age or older, shall be eligible to fully discuss, vote and otherwise participate in the selection of any pastor or church worker being called and/or secured pursuant to Article V, Section 1 of these bylaws. Notwithstanding the provisions of Article IV, Section 4 of these bylaws, a Voters' Assembly, which has been called for the purpose of securing a pastor, shall be a legal and valid meeting with a quorum consisting of the members present at that meeting. However, a confirmed member shall not be allowed to vote on congregational business not directly related to the securing of a pastor or called church worker unless he or she holds regular voting membership.
- D. There shall be no voting by proxy.

Section 2. Privileges and Duties of Voting Members

It shall be the privilege and duty of a voting member of this congregation to:

- A. Conscientiously and prayerfully exercise his right of suffrage in all measure that will advance the work of Christ's Kingdom both locally and in the church-at-large;
- B. Willingly serve in any office or capacity for which his talents and abilities equip him;
- C. Faithfully attend all Voters' Assembly meetings;
- D. Assist with whole-hearted diligence in administering the temporal and spiritual affairs of the congregation;
- E. Encourage by personal example, friendly interest, and judicial counsel, such eligible confirmed who are not yet voting members to consider seriously accepting the responsibilities and privileges of voting membership.

Section 3. Voting Members-- Resignation

Nothing contained herein shall prevent a voting member from resigning from voting membership by requesting the secretary of the congregation, in writing, to remove his or her name from the voting roster.

ARTICLE III - DISCIPLINE IN THE CONGREGATION

All discipline in this congregation shall be administered in accordance with the order of discipline laid down in Matthew 18:15-20, I Corinthians 5:1-5, and other related New Testament passages. The following procedure shall be followed under the direction of the Pastor and the Board of Elders.

Section 1. Confirmed Membership - Termination

- A. Transfers. A member desiring to transfer to another Lutheran congregation shall apply to the Pastor. Upon the approval by the Pastor and the Board of Elders, a letter of transfer shall be issued by the Pastor. The Board of Elders shall report all transfers to the congregation via church publications and to the Voters' Assembly at the next regular meeting of that body.
- B. Joining Other Churches. In cases where confirmed members of this congregation have joined a non-Lutheran congregation, they shall, upon

the decision of the Pastor and the Board of Elders, be released from their membership in this congregation, forfeiting all rights and privileges of this congregation.

- C. Whereabouts Unknown. The names of members whose whereabouts are unknown and cannot be established within a period of six (6) months shall be removed from the membership list of the congregation and placed in a file designated "Whereabouts Unknown." Such membership is terminated and shall be reported as such to the next regular meeting of the Voters' Assembly.
- D. Self-Exclusion. When a member of Messiah Lutheran Church of Delhi Township, has not communed for a three (3) month period, with no valid excuse for the absence, his/her elder, will contact him with the intent of finding any problems said member may be experiencing, and to encourage this member to return to God's House where problems and disagreements stand a far better chance of being resolved. If this member does not return to regular attendance at worship and the Lord's Table during the next three (3) months, he/she shall be notified that he/she has self-excluded his/herself from membership in the Messiah Lutheran Congregation.

Such self-exclusion releases the individual from all responsibilities to this Christian congregation, but it also excludes the member from the privileges of church membership, such as Holy Communion, transfer to a sister congregation, and any claim against the properties of this congregation.

- E. Excommunication is to be applied to any member who conducts himself in an unchristian manner, i.e. to one who openly declares and adheres to false doctrine, who gives evidence of an immoral act and offensive life, or willfully despises the preaching of the Gospel and the Lord's Supper.

The Board of Elders is responsible for carrying out the steps mentioned above, but the congregation in meeting assembled must decide the course of action when all the steps have been exhausted. The vote to excommunicate must be unanimous by all those voters attending a Voters' Assembly convened for that purpose. However, the person who is to be excommunicated shall not be allowed to vote but may speak on his own behalf.

- F. Restoration. A member who has been removed from membership for whatever reason shall be restored with all rights and privileges when he/she repents and asks forgiveness, as promised in the scriptures. Acts of discipline and restoration shall be made known to the confirmed members by whatever method the Pastor and the Board of Elders deem suitable.

Section 3. Provisions Pertaining to Church Officers and Chairman

Any officer or chairman of the congregation who willfully neglects the duties of his office may be deposed by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the voting members present in a regular meeting of the Voters' Assembly. The Board of Elders shall initiate such disciplinary action. When an office is made vacant by deposition, resignation, death, or excommunication of the incumbent, a successor to such officer or chairman shall be elected by the voting membership at the next meeting.

Section 4. Provisions Pertaining to Pastors and Teachers

Sufficient grounds for deposing a pastor or duly called or contracted teacher shall be persistent adherence to false doctrine, scandalous life, or willful neglect of official duties or evident and protracted incapacity to perform the function of the sacred office. Charges on any of these counts shall be carefully investigated by the Board of Elders. In the case of a teacher, these counts shall be carefully investigated by both the Board of Elders and the Board of Christian Education. Should such charges be substantiated by clear evidence, the individual involved shall be given an opportunity to resign his position in the congregation. Such opportunity having been given and declined, the above-mentioned board or boards shall, after consultation with the appropriate officers of the Michigan District, notify the voting membership of the situation and shall submit the matter for action at a special meeting of that body. A two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the voting members present shall be required to depose a pastor or teacher.

Should the occasion to depose a pastor, called church worker, or teacher ever arise, the chairman of the Board of Elders shall announce intended disposition at regular divine services on the two (2) Sundays preceding a special meeting of the voting members called for that purpose. All voting members shall be notified by mail at least two (2) weeks in advance.

ARTICLE IV - MEETINGS OF THE CONGREGATION

Section 1. Regular Meetings

Regular meetings of the Voters' Assembly shall be held two (2) times during each calendar year in spring and November. The Parish Planning Council shall set the dates and times of all voters' meetings. The November meeting of the Voters' Assembly shall include the consideration and acceptance of the budget for the following year.

All confirmed members of the congregation may attend the meetings of the Voters' Assembly and may, with the consent of the voting membership, submit recommendations or participate in a discussion of any given item of business before the voting membership.

Every meeting of the voting membership shall be announced at the worship services on two (2) consecutive Sundays preceding the date of the meeting.

Section 2. Special Meetings

Special meetings of the Voters' Assembly may be called by the chairman or the Pastor, or at the request of any one of the administrative boards, or at the request of ten (10) voting members of the congregation. Notice of the date and time of such meeting, and of the nature and agenda of the business to be transacted, shall be given at the Sunday worship services immediately preceding the time of the meeting.

Section 3. Order of Business at Regular Meetings

Regular meetings of the voting membership shall proceed as follows:

- A. Scripture reading and/or prayers
- B. Reception of new voting members
- C. Roll call of voting members
- D. Minutes of previous meetings, including special meetings
- E. Unfinished business
- F. Treasurer's Report
- G. State of Parish report by Pastor
- H. Reports from committees of the voting membership
- I. Reports of administrative boards
- J. New Business
- K. Adjournment

The chairman may, with the consent of the voting membership, vary the above order in the interest of efficiency.

In general, for the purpose of order (I Corinthians 14:40), Robert's Rules of Order shall prevail.

Section 4. Restrictions Pertaining to Voters' Assembly Meetings

- A. A Voters' Assembly meeting shall be a legal and valid meeting providing

30 qualified voting members are present. This shall constitute a quorum, except as otherwise provided in this constitution and bylaws for dealing with certain specific situations herein defined. When the number of qualified voters is not present to constitute a quorum at any voters' meeting, the required number for the quorum may be lowered by five (5) for the next regular or special voters' meeting only. At the following special or regular voters meeting the number of qualified voters required for a quorum will return to 30.

- B. No issue may be voted on at a Regular Voters' Assembly Meeting unless the issue to be voted on has been published or announced at the worship services on two (2) consecutive Sundays preceding the date of the meeting. No issue may be voted on at a Special Voters' Assembly Meeting unless the issue to be voted on has been announced at the worship services immediately preceding the time of the meeting.
- C. All issues shall be decided by a simple majority vote except as otherwise provided in this constitution or bylaws.
- D. In the event of a tie vote, the chairman shall cast the deciding ballot.

ARTICLE V - CALLED STAFF

Section 1. Procedure for Securing a Pastor

After consultation by the Board of Elders with the President of the Michigan District, or his representative, an open solicitation will be made to all members. Any confirmed member who is at least 18 year of age may offer a pastoral candidate name for consideration. A candidate list will be developed, and this list of names will then be submitted to the District President for comments and any additional candidates. Presentation of the resultant candidate list, with or without recommendations of a "Call Committee" will be made at a regularly scheduled or special meeting of the congregation. Those present who are at least 18 years of age shall elect one of the proposed candidates by ballot and simple majority of those present. It shall be the duty of the chairman to see that notice of his election is delivered promptly to the candidate in whatever manner the membership shall deem advisable.

Section 2. The Pastoral Office

The pastoral office is the authority conferred upon pastors by God, through a call of the congregation (the holder of the priesthood and all congregation authority) to exercise in public office the common rights of spiritual priesthood in behalf of all. The pastoral office is the primary office in the congregation from which all other offices of the congregation issue. However, the congregation may establish as many auxiliary offices as its needs require and determines what work is to be assigned to such offices.

Upon being installed, the Pastor is authorized and obligated to proclaim to the congregation, jointly and severally; the Word of God in its full truth and purity as contained in the canonical writings of the Old and New Testaments and professed in the Book of Concord of the year 1580. He is further:

- A. To administer the Sacraments in accordance with their divine institution;
- B. To discharge toward all members of the congregation the function of a minister and curate of their souls in an evangelical manner, in particular to visit the sick and the dying and admonish indifferent and erring members;
- C. To spiritually guard the welfare of the younger members of the congregation and adults during their preparation for reception of Holy Communion;
- D. To guide the congregation in applying the divinely ordained discipline of the church;
- E. To provide spiritual leadership and oversight in the educational agencies and various adult and youth organizations within the congregation;
- F. To serve as an example by Christian conduct and to do all that is possible for the upbuilding of the congregation and for the advancement of the Kingdom of Christ. By reason of his position, the Pastor is not only a servant and steward of God, but also of the congregation. The Pastor shall have the authority and responsibility for supervision of the musical portion of all worship services in conjunction with the Board of Elders so that at all times it is in harmony with the doctrine and practice of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod. Members of the congregation are obligated to accord the Pastor honor, love, and obedience in his ministry of God's Word, and to support his ministrations with diligence and faithful prayers, to help him in the discharge of his duties by cordial one-mindedness, and to provide for his maintenance according to the ability of the congregation.
- G. To serve as an *ex officio* member of all boards, committees, councils and organizations.

In calling a pastor to preach the Word of God and to administer the Sacraments on their behalf, the members of the congregation exercise their royal priesthood and by no means relinquish it. This is the privilege and responsibility of all members of the church.

Section 3. Procedure for Securing Director of Christian Education (DCE)

A Call Committee consisting of one (1) member of the Board of Elders and the Board of Christian Education, also the Pastor and three (3) voting members of the congregation, shall be established by the congregation. After consultation with the

President of the Michigan District, or his representative, a list of candidates shall be obtained from said office for consideration.

Section 4. Ministry Description for the Director of Christian Education

As a called minister in this congregation the Director of Christian Education (DCE) is to be a person dedicated to the overall ministry of the community of believers in this place. Through the Holy Spirit's guidance, it is his desire to see that his ministry glorifies the name of Jesus Christ through word and action. As a member of the full-time leadership team of this congregation he or she is to seek to use his or her gifts as a means of equipping others so that all believers might better be involved in doing the work of ministry as described in Ephesians 4.

Section 4a. Statement of Qualifications

The DCE is to be synodically trained and certified, and a spiritually mature person, dedicated to serving Christ and His Church through a ministry of Christian nurture and training. Qualities and skills necessary for the successful fulfillment of responsibilities include:

1. Being personable and able to communicate well with others;
2. Being able to determine and prioritize ministry needs, organizing, implementing and seeing to completion a plan for meeting those needs, and doing so with minimal need for supervision on a day-to-day basis;
3. Being committed to the concept of team ministry, with a gift for inspiring volunteers to use their God-given abilities for the growth of the church;
4. Having a sound doctrinal and theological base in accordance with the LCMS, so as to be an effective teacher of God's Word;
5. One who demonstrates a heart given to service in the church and community, so as to lead others into service;
6. Living a moral life befitting the position of a leader in God's Church.

Section 4b. Statement of Relationships

The Director of Christian Education and the Pastor are called to work together as "Partners of the Gospel," so that the total ministry of Messiah Lutheran congregation might be accomplished. Each is a called minister of Christ's Church, and as such, stands before God and His Church as a valued member of a team.

In an effort to accomplish the ministry of Messiah Lutheran Church most effectively and harmoniously, the following principles guide the parish staff:

1. As “Partners of the Gospel,” the members of the staff faithfully carry out their congregational-assigned ministry functions and work together in a spirit of warmth, patience, loyalty, mutual encouragement, and upholding of the interests of others (Philippians 2);
2. The Director of Christian Education is responsible for carrying out the policies and programs that have been approved by the congregation, the various boards, and/or the Pastor of Messiah Lutheran Church;
3. On a day-to-day basis, the DCE is responsible to the Pastor of Messiah Lutheran Church.
4. The DCE is to serve as an *ex officio* member of all boards, committees, councils and organizations.

Section 4c. Statement of Congregational Expectations

The DCE is to have major responsibilities in five areas: outreach, Christian education, early childhood education, family ministry, and assistance with pastoral ministry. Given the size of the parish and the many challenges connected to each area of responsibility, the DCE is to focus on growth in these areas:

1. Outreach – Train, equip and motivate lay members by building and organizing an Outreach Committee to:

- Follow up with visitors
- Train and motivate congregation for outreach
- Be aware of and integrate outreach into all other areas and programs of the Church’s life.
- Other tasks, as necessary, to grow this area of the congregation

2. Christian Education – In coordination with Board of Christian Education, recruit, train, equip and motivate lay members, to do the following:

- Oversee VBS, Sunday School, Junior/Senior Youth ministries and small group Bible Studies.
- Build programs for post High School youth.
- Be familiar with and utilize congregational resources from Michigan District and the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod (LCMS).
- Assist Pastor and lay leaders with Pre-Confirmation/Confirmation programs, as needed.
- Other tasks DCE sees necessary to grow this area of the congregation.

3. Early Childhood Education – Liaison between Early Childhood Ministry (ECM) Committee and Board of Christian Education regarding curriculum.

- Develop and maintain rapport with Daycare staff, children and parents.
- Research and utilize resources from Michigan District and LCMS.

4. Family Ministry - In coordination with Board of Christian Education, research and utilize resources from Michigan District and LCMS, to recruit, train, equip and motivate lay members, to do the following:

- Assist in the development of future needs programs, i.e., parenting and child development classes, marriage retreats, etc.
- Stephen Ministry to individuals and groups.

5. Assistance with Pastoral Ministry – In coordination with the Board of Elders, assist in the following areas:

- Lead worship services in Pastor's absence, including sermon delivery (male only).
- Assist Pastor/Elders with funeral visitations, home visits, hospital calls as needed.
- Assist with ushering duties and distribution of the Elements of Holy Communion as needed.
- Present a children's message each week or as requested.

Section 4d. Statement of Specific Duties

The DCE's ministry should be flexible enough to allow for creativity, change, and variation as programs are developed and needs are identified. The DCE shall report in June of each year to the Pastor and the Parish Planning Council or its designated representatives on the above areas of responsibility.

Included in this report shall be evaluation of how well short-term goals have been met, identification of new and ongoing needs, specific goals for the upcoming year (September through August) and recommendations for meeting those goals, identification of ways the congregation members, boards, Parish Planning Council, and staff could better assist the DCE in meeting his or her personal and job-related responsibilities.

ARTICLE VI - ELECTIONS

Section 1. Nominating Procedure

In the November newsletter in a non-election year, the Parish Planning Council shall announce its selection of six (6) qualified voting members who together with the Pastor, shall serve as the Nominating Committee. The voters may submit to the committee the names of possible candidates for office prior to February 1 of an election year.

The Nominating Committee shall prepare a list of candidates drawn from among the confirmed membership of the congregation. This list shall then be made available to the confirmed membership of the congregation at least four (4) weeks prior to the spring meeting. Only male candidates shall be eligible for chairman and vice-chairman and membership on the Board of Elders,

Following the publication of the Nominating Committee's list, any confirmed member of the congregation may submit to the committee additional names for inclusion on the list and such names shall be placed in nomination by the committee along with the candidates already chosen. Nothing contained herein shall preclude nominations for office being made from the floor on the day of the election. All officers and board chairs shall be voting members.

The Nominating Committee, at least one (1) week before the date of the spring meeting, shall post conspicuously on the church bulletin board the list of candidates for the following offices:

Section 2. Election Procedure

From the list of candidates of each elected office, the voting membership shall at the spring meeting elect by simple majority, the following officers in the order herein indicated.

- A. Chairman
- B. Vice-Chairman
- C. Treasurer
- D. Secretary
- E. Financial Secretary
- F. Board members, to the number required to complete the membership of each of the administrative boards:
 - 1. Elders
 - 2. Fellowship
 - 3. Christian Education
 - 4. Stewardship
 - 5. Trustees
 - 6. Early Childhood Ministry
 - 7. Outreach

Section 3. Installation of Officers - Term of Office

The newly elected officers and board members of the congregation shall be installed on the first Sunday in June, and shall assume their duties of office as of June 1. The term of office for chairman, vice-chairman, and all board chairpersons shall be limited to two (2) years, and they may succeed themselves only one (1) term. Terms end May 31 of the second year of their term.

ARTICLE VII - CHURCH OFFICERS AND FINANCIAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

Section 1. Chairman of the Congregation

The chairman shall be elected biennially for a term of two (2) years. He shall preside at all regular and special meetings of the congregation, as well as the Parish Planning Council. He shall be an *ex-officio* member of all boards and committees and shall have such other powers and duties as may be assigned to him by the bylaws or the voting membership. He shall, to the best of his ability, enforce the constitution and bylaws of this congregation and carry out the expressed will of the congregation as embodied in the resolutions of the voting membership. He shall endeavor to coordinate the functions, plans, and activities of the congregation in all parts for the total furtherance of the work of Christ's Kingdom in our midst.

Section 2. Vice-Chairman

The vice-chairman shall be elected biennially for a term of two (2) years. He shall perform all the duties of the chairman of the congregation in the absence or disability of said chairman, and he shall also have such powers and duties as may from time to time be assigned to him by the constitution, these bylaws, or by resolution of the voting membership. The vice-chairman will also be responsible for overseeing any financial review. See Article VII, Section 6.

Section 3. Secretary of the Congregation

The secretary of the congregation shall be elected biennially for the term of two (2) years. He or she shall be responsible for keeping the records of the congregation. He or she shall accurately record and preserve the proceedings of all voters' meetings and Parish Planning Council meetings; keep an accurate list of voting members; oversee the correspondence of the congregation; and prepare and file all reports required by law. The secretary shall, in addition, have such powers and duties as may from time to time be assigned to him or her by the constitution, these bylaws, or the voting membership.

Section 4. Treasurer

The Treasurer shall be elected biennially for a term of two (2) years. The Treasurer will have input through the Board of Stewardship for the hiring of a Bookkeeper. The Treasurer shall have the following duties:

- A. Shall present a written, duplicated financial report at voters' meetings and preliminary reports at the Parish Planning Council meetings;
- B. Shall submit permanent financial records for audit as may from time to time be direct by the Voters' Assembly;
- C. Shall coordinate the flow of monies from the treasury to the various boards in such a way that an adequate balance is retained for the payment of salaries and other regular recurring expenses;
- D. Shall, except as otherwise provided herein, sign all checks for payment of bills, salaries, or other financial commitments of the congregation of any sort. The Treasurer, at his/her discretion and with the approval of the Board of Stewardship, will designate another person (other than the Bookkeeper, Financial Secretary or member of the counting team who in the absence of the Treasurer, or as otherwise directed by the Treasurer, will be assigned the duties of the payment of the regular congregational bills, payroll and signing of checks;
- E. Shall supervise the Bookkeeper and report job performance and personnel issues related to the Bookkeeper to the Board of Stewardship for its action;
- F. Shall reconcile bank and credit card statements and verify that all checks are accounted for on a monthly basis;
- G. Shall have such other powers and duties, regarding the church finances, as may from time to time be assigned to him or her by the constitution, these bylaws, or the voting membership.

Section 5. Financial Secretary

The financial secretary shall be elected biennially for a term of two (2) years. The financial secretary shall appoint a finance committee of not less than two (2) members which shall be responsible for insuring that an accurate account is maintained of all offerings. He/she shall provide each congregational member with an annual statement of that member's contribution. Quarterly statements will be provided on request. The financial secretary shall be a member of the Board of Stewardship and have such other

powers and duties as may from time to time be assigned to him/her by the constitution, these bylaws, or the voting membership.

Section 6. Financial review committee

The vice-chairman of the congregation shall oversee a financial review biannually, upon election of treasurer or financial secretary or at the request of the parish planning council. The vice-chairman shall appoint two (2) members who are not involved in the financial record keeping of the congregation. A financial review shall be conducted on all accounts in accordance with chapter 19 of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod Congregational Treasurer's Manual.

ARTICLE VIII - THE PARISH PLANNING COUNCIL

The Parish Planning Council shall consist of the chairman, vice-chairman, secretary of the congregation, the treasurer, chairpersons of the administrative boards (or their delegated representatives), all of who shall hold membership on the Parish Planning Council until their term of office expires. It shall be the specific function of the Parish Planning Council to:

- A. Serve as the point of liaison between the Pastor, the officers of the congregation, and the various boards in planning the total work of the congregation;
- B. Settle jurisdictional disputes between the several administrative boards;
- C. Prepare an agenda for the two (2) meetings of the Voters' Assembly;
- D. Set the dates and times for the Voters' Assembly meetings;
- E. Appoint the Nominating Committee pursuant to the bylaws of this congregation;
- F. Fill unexpired terms or shortages of personnel by appointment;
- G. Prepare and submit the recommended budget to the Voters' Assembly at the November meeting;
- H. Appoint an ad hoc salary/benefits committee at its June meeting to review salaries, benefits, and recommendations for the congregation's paid staff. This ad hoc committee will report at the October planning council meeting and make recommendations for inclusion in the budget presented to the Voters' Assembly. This ad hoc committee will consist of a representative from the Board of Elders, Board of Christian Education, Board of Early Childhood Ministry, Board of Trustees, Board of Stewardship and the congregational treasurer;

- I. Shall serve as liaison between all board chairpersons, with regards to the appropriation of funds to pay past due bills. It shall be the sole responsibility of the Parish Planning Council to determine the priority of payment of all past due bills incurred by Messiah Lutheran Church, as needed.
- J. Establish and maintain policy for hiring and supervision of non-called staff.

The Parish Planning Council shall determine the date and time of their meetings. Additional meetings may be called by the chairman of the congregation and/or the Pastor as required. Members of the Planning Council shall be notified of the date, location, time, and agenda of any additional or special meeting at least twenty-four (24) hours in advance of said meeting.

The Parish Planning Council is not primarily a decision-making body, but serves as a forum where the activities of the administrative boards may be discussed, evaluated, and coordinated, and where all such activities may be integrated into an overall congregational program. The Parish Planning Council shall be available at all times, however, for any additional functions which the voting membership may wish to confer upon it.

A quorum at any meeting of the Parish Planning Council shall consist of at least five (5) members. Each member may cast one (1) vote on any proposal, motion, or resolution. A simple majority shall be a deciding vote. In cases of a tie vote, that proposal, motion, or resolution shall be tabled until the following meeting.

The Parish Planning Council shall keep a permanent set of minutes for each meeting, and such minutes shall be the property of the congregation.

ARTICLE IX - THE ADMINISTRATIVE BOARDS

Section 1. General Duties and Powers of Administrative Boards

Each administrative board shall submit a report of its activities at each regular meeting of the voting membership, and on such other occasions as the voting membership shall require. Such reports shall include specific recommendation (if any) for congregational action and/or approval. If the chairman of any board is unable to attend the regularly scheduled meetings, a written report must be submitted to the congregational chairman prior to the meeting.

Each administrative board shall initiate and carry out such activities and programs within the congregation as will enable it to effectively perform the functions and duties assigned to it by the constitution and bylaws, or by specific resolution of the voting

membership. All chairpersons, or a designated representative from that board, are required to attend voters' meetings.

Each administrative board shall be empowered to administer all funds set aside for its work by budget appropriation or by special resolution of the Voters' Assembly, provided that the voting membership may, at its direction, restrict such expenditures to conform to the actual financial condition of the congregation at any given time. Each administrative board shall be jointly and severally liable for all expenditures not authorized either by the budget or by special resolution of the congregation.

Each administrative board shall keep a permanent set of minutes for each meeting, and such minutes shall be the property of the congregation.

Each administrative board shall be responsible for annually preparing a budget for itself and submitting it to the Parish Planning Council for review and approval. Nothing contained herein shall preclude such administrative board from submitting its original budget to the Voters' Assembly for approval regardless of the recommendations of the Parish Planning Council.

Each administrative board will prepare a yearly plan of activity for the board as a tool to assist them in effectively performing the functions and duties assigned to them by the constitution and bylaws and to focus on longer-range plans for the development and expansion of Christ's work in our midst.

Confirmed youth may serve on the boards of Education, Fellowship, Stewardship, Trustees, Early Childhood Ministry and Outreach as non-voting members.

Section 2. Organization and Meetings of Administrative Boards

Each administrative board shall be under the direct control and supervision of the chairman of that board. Following the election of the chairman of each board and the number of board members required, the chairman of the respective board shall designate and appoint from among the board members at his own discretion those individuals who are to be responsible for various phases of the work of that boards. Such appointments are to be made within two (2) weeks of the date of their election, and notification of such appointments is to be given to the chairman of the congregation for publication to the members in the manner he deems most advisable.

The time and frequency of the board meetings shall be at the discretion of the chairman of the board and the board members, except that for good and sufficient reason either the chairman of the congregation or the Pastor may call a meeting of that board at anytime. Meetings called by the Pastor or chairman of the congregation shall be classified as special meetings, and each person involved shall be notified in writing or orally of the date, time, location, and agenda of such a meeting at least twenty-four (24) hours in advance of the meeting.

Section 3. The Board of Elders

The Board of Elders shall consist of three (3) or more male voting members of the congregation, including the elected chairman of the Board of Elders. The nature and duties of the Board of Elders make it essential that men of extensive Christian knowledge, zeal, integrity, love and experience be elected to the Board of Elders. All members of the Board of Elders may succeed themselves, by the approval of the Voters' Assembly.

The Board of Elders shall constitute the spiritual board of the congregation, and its duties shall include, but are not limited to, the following:

- A. Maintain and preserve the purity of doctrine as expressed in scripture and the Book of Concord;
- B. Provide for the proper order and decorum of the church and all worship services;
- C. Preside over the proper preparation and administration of the Sacraments;
- D. Administer to the sick and needy of the congregation;
- E. Instruct the ushers relative to their duties and procedures;
- F. Oversee the proper transfer of members and admission of new members into the church;
- G. Oversee the spiritual welfare of the church membership;
- H. Be responsible for hiring and supervising church secretary (ies) and music director for the congregation;
- I. Be responsible for an annual review of all called staff, church secretary(ies) and music director(s) and make recommendations to the salary committee;
- J. Such other duties as may be assigned by the constitution, these bylaws, or by resolution of the voting membership.

At the first regular meeting following the election of the Board of Elders, the board shall elect a chairperson and establish rules for conducting its meetings. The aforementioned rules of procedure shall be subject to the review and approval of the voting membership.

At the first regular meeting following the election of the Board of Elders, the chairman of the Board of Elders shall appoint a permanent recording secretary who shall accurately record and preserve the proceedings of all regular and executive sessions of

the Board of Elders. The minutes of all regular sessions of the Board of Elders shall be available, upon request, to any member of the congregation. However, minutes of executive sessions of the Board of Elders remain confidential and not disclosed under any circumstances.

In those cases where the discipline of an individual is being discussed, or any other discussion of an individual member, the substance of which is of such a personal nature that privacy is required; the Board of Elders shall adjourn to an executive session. The chairman of the Board of Elders shall take the appropriate action to insure the privacy of the executive session minutes.

Section 4. The Board of Fellowship

The Board of Fellowship shall consist of at least five (5) or more voting members who are 18 years old or older, including the elected chairman of the Board of Fellowship. It is recommended but not required that one (1) member of the board be a Stephen Leader or Stephen Minister. All members of the Board of Fellowship may succeed themselves, by the approval of the Voters' Assembly.

The function and duties of the Board of Fellowship shall include, but are not, limited the following.

- A. Promote the mission of Messiah Lutheran Church to SEEK THE LOST; GROW THE FOUND;
- B. Enlist all of God's people in the work of spreading the Gospel, both within the family of Christ at Messiah and to those in the area yet to hear the Gospel;
- C. Assist in the deepening of the faith and activity of the members of this congregation;
- D. To promote, support and encourage other programs of a formal or informal nature, which are designed to provide Christian care to the membership of Messiah Lutheran Church and the surrounding community, including but not limited to Meal on Wheels, Care Commission, Food Banks, Red Cross, Soup Kitchens, etc., as needs and opportunities arise;
- E. The presentation of a Christian image to the public reflecting the work of Christ and of this congregation as His instrument;
- F. Publicize the work of the congregation through various media;
- G. Implement and manage programs and events to welcome, receive, and incorporate individuals and families into the community of believers at Messiah Lutheran Church;

- H To promote, support and encourage Stephen Ministries at Messiah Lutheran Church;
- I. Implement and manage programs and events designed to assist individuals and families to continue to worship and participate in the spiritual and fellowship activities of the congregation.

Such other duties as may be assigned by the constitution, these bylaws, or by resolution of the voting membership.

At the first regular meeting following the election of the Board of Fellowship, the board shall elect a chairperson and establish rules for conducting its meetings. The aforementioned rules of procedure shall be subject to the review of the voting membership.

Section 5. The Board of Stewardship

The Board of Stewardship shall consist of at least three (3) or more voting members who are 18 years old or older, including the elected chairman of the Board of Stewardship and the elected congregational financial secretary. All members of the Board of Stewardship may succeed themselves, by the approval of the Voters' Assembly.

The duties of the Board of Stewardship shall include, but are not limited to the following:

- A. To initiate programs for the development of good stewardship attitudes in the members of the congregation in regard to time, talents, and treasures;
- B. To provide for the training and utilization of members of the congregation for the work of Christ's Kingdom;
- C. To ensure the financial stability of the congregation and its work through a developed program of dedicated, proportionate, first-fruits giving;
- D. Determine anticipated revenues and submit report to the Parish Planning Council;
- E. Overseeing the implementation of the approved budget;
- F. Be responsible for hiring and supervising the Bookkeeper for the congregation. This will include an annual review and recommendations to the salary committee in conjunction with the Board of Early Childhood Ministry;
- G. Such other duties as may be assigned by the constitution, these bylaws, or

by resolution of the voting membership.

At the first regular meeting following the election of the Board of Stewardship, the board shall elect a chairperson and establish rules for conducting its meetings. The aforementioned rules of procedure shall be subject to the review and approval of the voting membership

Section 6. The Board of Christian Education

The Board of Christian Education shall consist of at least five (5) or more voting members who are 18 years old or older, including the elected chairman of the Board of Christian Education. All members of the Board of Christian Education may succeed themselves, by the approval of the Voters' Assembly.

The function and duties of the Board of Christian Education shall include, but are not limited to, the following:

- A. General supervision of all education activities of the confirmed and unconfirmed members of the congregation, both religious and secular;
- B. Stimulate and maintain the proper interest in the Christian training of the confirmed and unconfirmed members of the congregation;
- C. Select Sunday School Superintendent and Sunday School teachers and submit the names of said selections to the Voters' Assembly for approval at a regular meeting;
- D. Promote genuine Christian fellowship for the confirmed and unconfirmed members of the congregation;
- E. Be responsible for the control, maintenance, supervision, and promotion of the following programs:
 - 1. Sunday School
 - 2. Vacation Bible School
 - 3. Weekday Classes
 - 4. Christian Day School
 - 5. Adult Bible Classes
 - 6. Youth groups for pre- and post-confirmation aged young people
 - 7. Bible Breakfasts

8. Seminars, retreats, special-interest classes that meet educational/spiritual needs of the members of the congregation
9. Other programs, classes, special events, etc., which are designed to minister to the needs of Messiah's members

At the first regular meeting following the election of the Board of Christian Education, the board shall elect a chairperson and establish rules for conducting its meetings. The aforementioned rules of procedure shall be subject to the review and approval of the voting membership.

Section 7. The Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees shall consist of at least four (4) or more voting members who are 18 years old or older, including the elected chairman of the Board of Trustees. All members of the Board of Trustees may succeed themselves, by the approval of the Voters' Assembly.

The Board of Trustees shall constitute the management body of all secular affairs of the congregation, and its duties shall include, but are not limited to, the following:

- A. Sign all legal documents on behalf of the congregation and as directed by the congregation;
- B. Oversee the repair and maintenance of the church building and grounds;
- C. Represent the congregation in all other temporal matters;
- D. Be responsible for hiring and supervising maintenance and custodial staff for the congregation. This will include an annual review and recommendations to the salary committee in conjunction with the Board of Early Childhood Ministry;
- E. Perform such other duties as may be assigned by the constitution, these bylaws, or by the resolution of the voting membership.

At the first regular meeting following the election of the Board of Trustees, the board shall elect a chairperson and establish rules for conducting its meetings. The aforementioned rules and procedure shall be subject to the review and approval of the voting membership.

Section 8. The Board of Early Childhood Ministry

The Board of Early Childhood Ministry (ECM) shall consist of at least five (5) or more voting members who are 18 years old or older, including the elected chairperson of

the Board of Early Childhood Ministry. All members of the Board of Early Childhood Ministry may succeed themselves by the approval of the voters' assembly.

The function and duties of the Board of Early Childhood Ministry shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- A. Developing policies to guide the director in daily operations of our Christ-centered ECM;
- B. Prepare and present to the congregation long- and short-term goals for the ECM;
- C. Call or hire director, teachers, and staff to ensure quality Christian ministry;
- D. Assist director and staff in providing programming that meets or exceeds state requirements and fulfills ECM purpose and goals;
- E. Prepare and annually review job descriptions for all Messiah Child Development Center (MCDC) staff and make compensation recommendations to the salary committee;
- F. Conduct annual evaluations of the director, bookkeeper (in conjunction with the Board of Stewardship) and maintenance and upkeep staff (in conjunction with the Board of Trustees) and submit recommendations to the salary committee;
- G. Be responsible for funding, financial management, and submitting an annual budget for the ECM;
- H. Provide publicity for the ECM;
- I. Keep ECM's focus on the congregation's mission statement and the ECM's purpose and philosophy statement;
- J. Develop a subcommittee to research and write grants and seek other means of funding;

At the first regular meeting following the election of the Board of Early Childhood Ministry, the board shall elect a chairperson and establish rules for conducting its meetings. The aforementioned rules of procedure shall be subject to the review and approval of the voting membership.

Section 9. The Board of Outreach

The Board of Outreach shall consist of at least five (5) or more voting members who are 18 years old or older, including the elected chairman of the Board of Outreach it is recommended but not required that one (1) member of the Board be a Stephen Leader or Stephen Minister. All members of the Board of Outreach may succeed themselves, by the approval of the Voters' Assembly.

The function and duties of the Board of Outreach shall include, but are not, limited to the following:

- A. Promoting the mission of Messiah Lutheran Church to SEEK THE LOST; GROW THE FOUND;
- B. Enlisting all of God's people in the work of spreading the Gospel, both within the family of Christ at Messiah and to those in the area yet to hear the Gospel;
- C. Being responsible for maximum use of the communication media to bring the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the community;
- D. Maintaining, in conjunction with the Board of Elders and the Pastor, a well-ordered and current file of prospective members as well as current information packets to be distributed;
- E. Assisting the Board of Elders and the Pastor in the reception, orientation and integration of new members;
- F. Organizing, in coordination with the Pastor, periodic adult instruction classes;
- G. Being responsible for enlisting and training lay volunteers to make follow-up visits to prospective members or as needed;
- H. Such other duties as may be assigned by the constitution, these bylaws, or by resolution of the voting membership.

At the first regular meeting following the election of the Board of Outreach the board shall elect a chairperson and establish rules for conducting its meetings. The aforementioned rules of procedure shall be subject to the review of the voting membership.

ARTICLE X - GENDER

Except when referring to the Pastor, elders, chairman of the congregation, or vice-chairman of the congregation, whenever in these Bylaws any particular gender is used, it shall include the other gender, whenever the meaning, context and circumstances so require.

ARTICLE XI – INDEMNIFICATION

Professional members of the church staff, employees of the congregation, and officers and servants of the congregation shall be indemnified as of right to the fullest extent now or hereafter permitted by law in connection with any actual or threatened action, suit or proceeding, civil, criminal, administrative, investigative, or other arising out of their service to the congregation or because of their positions within the congregation.

The congregation shall purchase and maintain insurance to protect itself and any such staff person or volunteer against any liability, costs, or expenses assessed against or incurred by him/her in respect of such services, whether or not the congregation would have the power to indemnify him/her against such liability by law or under the provisions of this article.

ARTICLE XII - AMENDMENTS

These bylaws may be amended at any meeting of the voting membership by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of those members present at the meeting, provided that the entire voting membership has been provided, at least fourteen (14) days in advance of when the vote is to be taken, with a copy of the proposed amendment or amendments to be acted upon.

All amendments to the Bylaws or to the Constitution shall be recorded in the official copy of the constitution and bylaws in the possession of the current secretary of the congregation.

(As amended by Messiah Voters' Assembly: December 3, 1995, April 20, 1997, November 23, 1997, November 22, 1998, April 18, 1999, November 21, 1999, November 20, 2000, November 18, 2001, October 17, 2002, April 27, 2003, April 17, 2005 and April 22, 2007)