

**CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS OF  
SHALOM COMMUNITY LUTHERAN CHURCH**

**PREAMBLE**

Responding to the grace of God, known through Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit, we unite together for the purpose of the mission of God, to make disciples, baptize, and teach the Word of God and administer the Sacraments ordained through His divine will, revealed through the Holy Scriptures. We confess that all power and authority residing in God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ is revealed through the power of the Holy Spirit, one God now and forever.

**Chapter 1. NAME AND INCORPORATION**

C1.01. The name of this congregation shall be Shalom Community Lutheran Church.

C1.02. For the purpose of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws, Shalom Community Lutheran Church congregation is hereinafter designated as “this congregation.” This congregation shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of Minnesota as a non-profit corporation.

**Chapter 2. STATEMENT OF FAITH**

C2.01. We believe, teach, and confess the Triune God; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

C2.02. We believe, teach, and confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and the gospel as the power of God for the salvation of all who believe in Him, through whom everything was made, and through whose life, death, and resurrection God fashions a new creation.

a. The proclamation of God's message to us as both law and gospel is the Word of God, revealing judgment and mercy in the person and work of Jesus Christ through whom God was pleased to reconcile all things to Himself.

- b. We believe, teach, and accept the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm for what we teach, what we believe and how we live. 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, and to direct the priesthood of all believers for God's mission in the world.
  - c. We reject the notion that science, personal experience, tradition, or other human endeavors have equal footing with the Bible.
  - d. We affirm that God created us male and female, and that it is God's will and intention that human sexual expression and fulfillment take place only within the boundaries of marriage between one man and one woman (**Genesis 2:24-25**; **Matthew 19:4-6**; and **Mark 10:2-9**). We also confess that as individuals and as a congregation we have not fulfilled God's will in our decisions, modeling, and teaching." (amended 9/13/15)
- C2.03. We accept the Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds, and the Lutheran confessional writings in the Book of Concord as true declarations of the scriptural faith we believe.
- a. We believe, teach, and accept the Unaltered Augsburg Confession and the Small Catechism as true witnesses to the Word of God.

### **Chapter 3. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE OF THIS CONGREGATION**

- C3.01. This 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. To this end this congregation will:
- a. Worship God in proclamation of the Word, administration of the Sacraments, and through lives of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, witness, and service.
  - b. Provide pastoral care and assist all members to participate in this ministry.
  - c. Teach biblical principles of stewardship including use of time, talent and treasures.

d. Foster and participate in relationships with other organizations and ministries to further the mission of Jesus Christ.

C3.02. This congregation is grounded in the Word of God. We will continually read, study and apply the Word of God in our personal lives and in our congregation.

C3.03. This congregation is a praying church. All meetings of the congregation, the Deacons or committees begin with prayer to seek God's guidance and blessing. (Philippians 4:6-7)

a. We encourage our members to pray for our ministry, each other and for the world.

C3.04. This congregation is a missional church. A minimum of 10% of all donations to this congregation will be used to advance the Kingdom of God or address human need outside our congregation. These funds are to be administered by a mission development team. (see Section 9 in the bylaws) In addition we love, care and will provide for each other in our congregation in times of need.

#### **Chapter 4. POWERS OF THE CONGREGATION**

C4.01. The powers of this congregation are vested in the congregation and the Board of Deacons (hereafter called "the Deacons") as provided in this constitution and bylaws.

C4.02. Only such authority as is delegated to the Deacons or other organizational units in this congregation's governing documents, is recognized. All remaining authority, including the following, is retained by the congregation:

a. Call a pastor as provided in Section 4.02 of the bylaws.

b. Terminate the call of a Pastor as provided in Section 4.04 of the bylaws.

- c. Acquire real property by purchase, or other lawful means; hold title to and use its property for any and all activities consistent with its purpose. (amended 9/13/15)
  - 1. Gifts of personal or real property shall be considered by the Deacons.
  - 2. Decisions to sell, mortgage, lease, transfer or otherwise dispose of its property by any lawful means shall be at the discretion of the Deacons.
- d. Elect the Deacons and any other teams requiring election, and require them to carry out their in accordance with the constitution, bylaws and congregational handbook.

## **Chapter 5. CHURCH AFFILIATION**

- C5.01. This congregation may choose to affiliate with other organizations to promote the Gospel of Jesus Christ, in accordance with the confessions of this congregation. Any such official affiliations will be entered into and codified by procedures indicated in the bylaws. This action requires a two-thirds majority of voting members present.
- C5.02. If this congregation desires to terminate its affiliation with other organizations, such action may be taken at a legally called and conducted special meeting as provided for in the bylaws. This action requires a two-thirds majority of voting members present.

## **Chapter 6. AMENDMENTS**

- C6.01. Amendments to this constitution may be proposed by at least five voting members, or by the Deacons. Proposals must be filed in writing with the Deacons sixty days before formal consideration by this congregation at its regular or special meeting called for that purpose. The Deacons shall notify the members of the proposal, with their recommendation, at least 30 days in advance of the meeting.
- C6.02. A proposed amendment to this constitution shall:
  - a. Be approved at a properly called meeting according to this constitution, by a two-thirds 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.
- c. Have the effective date included in the resolution and noted in the constitution.

## **Chapter 7. BYLAWS**

- C7.01. The congregation may adopt bylaws, however no bylaw may conflict with this constitution. The bylaws set forth hereafter are adopted with this constitution.
- C7.02. Amendments to the bylaws, including the adoption of new bylaws or the repeal of existing bylaws (collectively amendments), may be proposed by the Deacons, or not less than five voting members. If proposed by the voting members, the proposed amendment shall be filed with the Deacons and said proposal must contain the specific provisions proposed for adoption, amendment or repeal. The Deacons shall call a meeting of the congregation to be held within 60 days of the filing of such proposal, such meeting to be a regularly scheduled meeting or special meeting called for such purpose. Notice of such meeting shall be provided by the Deacons to the members at least 30 days in advance of the meeting and shall contain the specifics of the proposed Amendment and the recommendation of the Deacons.
- C7.03. Amendments to the bylaws must be approved by two-thirds majority vote of those voting members present and voting.

## **BYLAWS OF SHALOM COMMUNITY LUTHERAN CHURCH**

### **Section 1. MEMBERSHIP**

- B1.01. Everyone who accepts Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and accepts this congregation's Statement of Faith is eligible for membership.
- B1.02. 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 congregations, or by affirmation of faith.
- b. Individuals who wish to be members of this congregation indicate their intent by signing a membership roster.
- c. Confirmed members are baptized persons who have been confirmed in this congregation, those who have been received by adult baptism, or by transfer as confirmed members from other congregations, or baptized adults received by affirmation of faith.
- d. Confirmed members are the voting members of this congregation.
- e. Individuals who are active in this faith community through regular worship attendance, service and financial support may ask to be designated as voting members; this request will be acted upon by the Board of Deacons.  
(amended 9/13/15)

B1.03. Members of this congregation shall be those baptized or confirmed persons on the roll of this congregation at the time that this constitution is adopted, and those who are admitted thereafter who have declared and maintain their membership in accordance with the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.

- a. Members shall participate in corporate worship and discipleship opportunities, make regular use of the means of grace, both Word and Sacraments, and support the work of this congregation through contributions of their time, talents and treasure. (1 Cor. 12)

B1.04. Membership in this congregation shall be terminated by death, resignation, transfer, disciplinary action by the Deacons, or removal from the roll. Members who do not participate in the life of the congregation, as exemplified by their absence from participation in the worship life of this congregation and their fiscal support of the ministry of this congregation for a period of one year, shall be understood to have resigned from membership. Such individuals shall remain people for whom the church has a continuing pastoral concern. (amended 9/13/15)

- a. We welcome individuals who have resigned from membership by the above process to recommit to active membership and participation in the life of the congregation. (added 9/13/15)

B1.05. It is recognized that errant behavior that is not acceptable to our Confessional Christian values may be demonstrated by individuals from time to time. Such behavior shall be dealt with according to the words of our Lord as written in the Gospel of Matthew 18:15-17.

- a. The disciplinary actions of this congregation shall be for the purpose of correction and the return to faithfulness in the Christian life of the individual(s), that they may enjoy the surety of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.

## **Section 2. CONGREGATIONAL MEETING**

B2.01. The annual meeting of this congregation shall be held on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of January. When extenuating circumstances (such as weather) require the meeting to be rescheduled, it shall be held on the next possible Sunday.  
(amended 9/13/15)

B2.02. A special congregation meeting may be called by the Pastor, the Deacons, or at the written request of 25% of the voting members. The call for each special meeting shall specify the purpose for which it is to be held, and no other business shall be transacted.

B2.03 Except for notices of meetings to consider proposed amendments to the bylaws as provided in Chapter 7 of the foregoing constitution, notice of each special meeting of this congregation shall be given at the services of worship on the preceding two consecutive Sundays, and by mail or email, to all voting members at least 10 days in advance of the date of the meeting at their last known address.

- a. A minimum of 25% voting members in attendance shall constitute a quorum.
- b. Voting by proxy or by absentee ballot shall not be permitted.

- c. All actions by the congregation shall be by majority vote of members present and voting, except as otherwise provided in these bylaws.
- d. If procedural difficulties arise during meetings discussion shall be suspended for a time of prayer to seek God's wisdom. (James 1:5-8)

### **Section 3. CONGREGATIONAL RECORDS**

B3.01. The records of the congregation shall be the property of the congregation, and shall not be removed, or used for commercial purposes. The records are:

- a. The roster of baptized, confirmed, and voting members. (amended 9/13/15)
- b. The records of the ministerial acts performed by the pastor.
- c. The minutes of the meetings of the congregation and the Deacons.
- d. The financial records of the congregation.
- e. All official and legal documents including this constitution and bylaws, deeds, mortgages, contracts, etc.

B3.02. In the event of dissolution or cessation of ministry, the official records of the congregation shall be deposited in the archives of association(s) to which the congregation belongs.

### **Section 4. THE PASTOR**

B4.01. A Pastor called by this congregation shall be the shepherd of the congregation and adhere to the confessions of faith defined and accepted by this congregation, and therefore shall:

- a. Preach and teach the Word of God as revealed in the Old and New Testaments.
- b. Lead, inspire, and equip the saints for the work of service to the building up of the body of Christ (Eph. 4:12).

- c. Perform such duties as stated in the letter of call and agreed upon with the Deacons.
- d. Serve as a voting member of the Deacons and an ex-officio member of all standing teams.
- e. Be a member of this congregation.

B4.02. Authority to call a Pastor shall reside in this congregation.

- a. When a pastoral vacancy occurs, a Call Team of four voting members and one Deacon shall be selected by the Deacons.
- b. This team shall inquire into, interview potential candidates, and otherwise acquaint itself with the qualifications of candidates for the office.
- c. The team shall recommend its choice for Pastor to the Deacons. Upon approval by the Deacons, the Call Team shall present its recommendation to the congregation at a duly called special meeting.
- d. An affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of the voting members present at that meeting shall be necessary to call a Pastor.
- e. Voting shall be by ballot.
- f. This team will terminate upon installation of the newly called Pastor.

B4.03. The letter of call shall be signed by the President and the Secretary of this congregation. 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.

B4.04. The call of a congregation, when accepted by a Pastor, shall normally constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment which, except in the case of the death of the Pastor, shall be terminated only following consultation with the associations to which it belongs, for the following reasons:

- a. Mutual agreement to terminate the call, or the completion of a call, for a specific term.
- b. Resignation of the Pastor.
- c. Inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in the congregation in view of local conditions, without reflection on the competence or the moral and spiritual character of the Pastor, the physical or mental incapacity, or incompetence of the Pastor. This action requires a two-thirds majority vote of a legally called special congregational meeting.
- d. The dissolution of the congregation.

B4.05. The congregation may depart from B4.04 and call a Pastor for a specific term. Details of such calls shall be in writing setting forth the purpose and conditions involved. Prior to the completion of a term, the congregation shall review the call. Such call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of B4.04 a through d.

## **Section 5. BOARD OF DEACONS**

- B5.01. The Deacons are the coordinating and administrative body of Shalom Community Lutheran Church. The early church, in Acts 6:3, chose people of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, to serve as Deacons. Following that model, the Board of Deacons will consist of the Pastor and six members of the congregation. Any voting member of the congregation can be elected to the Deacons.
- B5.02. The members of the Deacons, except the Pastor(s), shall be elected by the congregation, by written ballot or oral vote, by majority vote to serve for three years (i.e. one term), or until their successors are elected. Their terms shall begin at the close of the annual meeting at which they are elected. Members will be limited to two consecutive terms on the Deacons.
- B5.03. A member's place on the Board of Deacons shall be declared vacated if the member:
- a. Ceases to be a voting member of this congregation.

- b. Is absent without cause from two consecutive regular meetings of the Deacons.
- B5.04. Should a member's place on the Board of Deacons be declared vacant, the Deacons shall elect, by majority vote, a successor until the next annual meeting. This deacon shall be installed on the Sunday following their election. (amended 9/13/15)
- B5.05. The Deacons shall have general oversight of the life and activities of this congregation, and shall
- a. Encourage the spiritual growth and maturity of members through worship, education, service and fellowship opportunities.
  - b. Promote cooperation and partnership with other congregations according to established policies of our congregation.
  - c. Oversee the financial and property matters of this congregation. (amended 9/13/15)
  - d. Insure that the provisions of this constitution, the bylaws, and the congregational handbook are carried out.
  - e. Meet once a month. Special meetings may be called by the Pastor or the President.
  - f. Appoint one of its members to serve on each team of the congregation.
  - g. Ensure that one or more individuals assist the Financial Secretary with counting the offering after each service. (amended 9/13/15)
  - h. Arrange for an annual external audit of the financial records of the congregation.
- B5.06. A quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of five members of the Board of Deacons.
- B5.07. Any actions by the Deacons must be approved by at least five members of the Board.

## **Section 6. CONGREGATION OFFICERS**

- B6.01. The officers of this congregation shall be a President, Vice President, and Secretary.
- a. The Board of Deacons shall elect its officers, the President, Vice President, and Secretary, from the membership of the Deacons for a one-year term. These officers shall hold the same offices for the congregation.

## **Section 7. CHURCH BOARD OF DEACONS OFFICER'S DUTIES**

- B7.01. The President: The President shall act as the chair of the congregation, and exercise general administrative responsibility for the congregation. The President shall:
- a. Facilitate all meetings of the congregation and the Deacons.
  - b. Meet periodically with the Pastor and the Vice President to review current ministries and plan future efforts and priorities of the congregation.
  - c. Represent the congregation in matters of business and sign or countersign all legal documents.
  - d. Report significant actions of the Deacons to the congregation.
- B7.02. The Vice President: The Vice President shall facilitate meetings in the event of the President's absence. The Vice President shall:
- a. Meet periodically with the Pastor and the President to review current ministries and plan future efforts and priorities that are needed of the congregation.
  - b. Insure that employee job descriptions and personnel records are reviewed and updated annually.

B7.03. The Secretary: The Secretary shall record and make available accurate minutes of all meetings of the congregation and the Deacons. The Secretary shall:

- a. Keep a permanent record of all minutes of the Deacon meetings. These minutes shall be preserved for seven years.
- b. Be responsible for notifying voting members of the time and place of regular and special meetings of the voters' assembly.

## **Section 8. THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY**

B8.01. The Financial Secretary shall be a member of the congregation who is called and gifted by God to handle the finances of the congregation. This person shall be appointed by the Deacons and will report to them and the Pastor. The Financial Secretary may or may not be a member of the Board of Deacons but shall attend monthly Deacon meetings. The Financial Secretary shall perform duties as described in the Financial Secretary Position Description approved annually by the Deacons and on file in the church handbook. (amended 9/13/15)

## **Section 9. Mission Development Team**

- B9.01. The Mission Development Team (MDT) allocates the mission tithe of the congregation to ministry opportunities locally and globally. (amended 9/13/15)
- a. Participation on this team is open to any active member of this congregation.
  - b. There shall be a minimum of five participants on this team. Meetings of the MDT shall be announced so all interested persons can participate.
  - c. Mission commitments shall be reported to the congregation at least annually.

## **Section 10. LIABILITY OF BOARD OF DEACONS AND OFFICERS**

B10.01. No Deacon or officer shall be liable to the congregation for any loss or damage suffered by it on account of any action of commission or omission by a Board Member or officer of the congregation if such Board member or officer:

- a. Exercised and used the same degree of care and skill as a reasonably prudent person would have exercised or used under the circumstances in the conduct of his or her own affairs.
- b. Took or omitted to take such action in reliance upon advice of counsel for the congregation or upon statements made or information furnished by officers or employees of the congregation which he or she had reasonable grounds to believe to be true. The foregoing shall not be exclusive of other rights and defenses to which he or she may be entitled as a matter of law.

## **Section 11. THE CALLING OR HIRING OF OTHER ORDAINED OR NONORDAINED STAFF**

B11.01. For the mission and ministry of this congregation other ordained or non-ordained staff may be employed.

B11.02. All paid positions will have a written job description.

B11.03. The creation and funding of a new position will be proposed by the Board of Deacons and presented to the congregation for approval.

B11.04. All staff positions will report to the Pastor. Regular reports of staff activities shall be presented to the Deacons.

## **Section 12. AFFILIATIONS**

B12.01. This congregation is affiliated with Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ (LCMC) and has subscribed to the Statement of Faith in the LCMC constitution.

### **Section 13. MINISTRY TEAMS**

B13.01. All members of this congregation are encouraged to participate in ministry teams.

B13.02. A member of the Board of Deacons will relate to each ministry team for spiritual support, guidance and communication.

B13.03. Ministry teams are encouraged to appoint a coordinator.

### **Section 14 CONGREGATION START-UP**

B14.01. The Pastor of this congregation upon adoption of this Constitution will be Rebecca Worner.

B14.02. The initial Board of Deacons will be elected with two one year terms, two two year terms and two three year terms.