

OUR PHILOSOPHY OF MINISTRY

We, the members of **ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH**, are a privileged community of people who, by the grace of God in Jesus Christ, have heard Christ's command to **"...love the Lord your God with all of your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength...and you shall love your neighbor as yourself."** (Mark 12:29-31)

Because of this, we recognize that we are called to **heal the broken hearted, to encourage those with weakened spirits, and to enrich the minds of all who pass this way, through the power of God who strengthens us.**

We, the members of **ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH**, are a responsible people. We acknowledge that we are all called to fulfill the above vision and mission. Though we employ certain persons to serve in a full-time capacity within the organized congregation, they are placed over and among us by God to equip us for our own full-time ministries.

However, we, the members of **ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH**, are also a realistic people. We know that though the final victory was declared at the Empty Tomb, there is no neutral ground in this world. Every part of creation, and every minute of time, is claimed by God and counterclaimed by the power of Darkness. Hence, we pledge ourselves, as those redeemed by the blood of Christ, to walk in the way of our high calling in Jesus Christ, seeking to bring God's light and truth into a confused, darkened world. We seek to do this in:

(1) Worship and Spirituality

Praising our God through a diversity of worship and spiritual growth; praying that we might honor him at all times and in all ways, and serve as instruments of his Glory in all we do.

(2) Congregational Life

Bringing together the congregation in fellowship through various events and functions; promoting the development of edifying relationships through small groups, including a means to support one another in times of crisis and need (Christ-Care groups), and special interest groups such as youth, young adults, marriage and family, those living alone, and those in transition because of death, divorce, loss, or abuse.

(3) Education

Providing opportunities for people of all ages to grow in the knowledge of the Scriptures and the Christian life; especially we seek to assist families in their responsibility to teach the Christian faith to their children, helping them to enrich their own Christian faith as informed, committed disciples of Christ.

(4) Outreach and Mission

Proclaiming the message of the Kingdom of God to the world through outreach ministry and by inviting people into that Kingdom through personal contact, and assimilating and nurturing those whom the Holy Spirit gathers into His and our Church family at home and abroad.

(5) Administration

Providing for responsible management of the ministry through adequate staffing and diligent overseeing of congregational property and assets; and managing the material resources that God has entrusted to us as "stewards" of his creation.

"A Changed People Called to Encourage a Changing World"

CONSTITUTION

PREAMBLE

We, baptized members of the Church of Christ, responding in faith to the call of their Holy Spirit through the Gospel, desiring to unite together to preach the Word, administer the sacraments, and carry out God's mission, do hereby adopt this constitution and solemnly pledge ourselves to be governed by its provisions. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Chapter 1. NAME AND INCORPORATION

- C1.01. The name of this congregation shall be ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH of Austin, Texas.
- C1.02. For the purpose of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws and continuing resolutions, the ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH of Austin, Texas congregation is hereinafter designated as "this congregation."
- C1.11. This congregation shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of Texas.

Chapter 2. CONFESSION OF FAITH

- C2.01. This congregation confesses the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- C2.02. This congregation confesses Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and the Gospel as the power of God for the salvation of all who believe.
 - a. Jesus Christ is the Word of God incarnate, through whom everything was made and through whose life, death, and resurrection God fashions a new creation.
 - b. The proclamation of God's message to us as both Law and Gospel is the Word of God, revealing judgment and mercy through word and deed, beginning with the Word in creation, continuing in the history of Israel, and centering in all its fullness in the person and work of Jesus Christ.
 - c. The canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the written Word of God. Inspired by God's Spirit speaking through their authors, they record and announce God's revelation centering in Jesus Christ. Through them God's Spirit speaks to us to create and sustain Christian faith and fellowship for service in the world.
- C2.03. This congregation 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 the 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, the Large 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, its head. All actions of this congregation are to be carried out under his rule and authority.
- C3.02. The Church exists both as an inclusive fellowship and as local congregations gathered for worship and Christian service. Congregations find their fulfillment in the universal community of the Church, and the universal Church exists in and through congregations. This church, therefore, derives its character and powers both from the sanction and representation of its congregations and from its inherent nature as an expression of the broader fellowship of the faithful. In length, it acknowledges itself to be in the historic continuity of the communion of saints; in breadth, it expresses the fellowship of believers and congregations in our day.

Chapter 4. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

- C4.01. The Church is a people created by God in Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, called and sent to bear witness to God's creative, redeeming, and sanctifying activity in the world.
- C4.02. To participate in God's mission, this congregation as a part of the Church shall:
- a. Worship God in proclamation of the Word and administration of the sacraments and through lives of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, witness, and service.
 - b. Proclaim God's savings Gospel of justification by grace for Christ's sake through faith alone, according to the apostolic witness in the Holy Scripture, preserving and transmitting the Gospel faithfully to future generations.
 - c. Carry out Christ's Great Commission by reaching out to all people to bring them to faith in Christ and by doing all ministry with a global awareness consistent with the understanding of God as Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier of all.
 - d. Serve in response to God's love to meet human needs, caring for the sick and the aged, advocating dignity and justice for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, and standing with the poor and powerless, and committing itself to their needs.
 - e. Nurture its members in the Word of God so as to grow in faith and hope and love, to see daily life as the primary setting for the exercise of their Christian calling, and to use the gifts of the Spirit for their life together and for their calling in the world.
 - f. Manifest the unity given to the people of God by living together in the love of Christ and by joining with other Christians in prayer and action to express and preserve the unity which the spirit gives.
- C4.03. To fulfill these purposes, this congregation shall:
- a. Provide services of worship at which the Word of God is preached and the sacraments are administered.
 - b. Provide pastoral care and assist all 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 other 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;
- b. terminate the call of a pastor;
- c. appoint or terminate the appointment of associates in ministry in conformity with the applicable policy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;
- d. approve the annual budget;
- e. acquire real and personal property by gift, devise, purchase, or other lawful means;
- f. hold title to and use its property for any and all activities consistent with its purpose;
- g. sell, mortgage, lease, transfer, or otherwise dispose of its property by any lawful means;
- h. elect its (officers), Congregation Council, boards, and committees, and require them to carry out their duties in accordance with the constitution (and) bylaws, (and continuing resolutions); and
- i. terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as provided in Chapter 6.

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 Southwestern Texas Synod of the Evangelical 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 except in special circumstances and with the approval of the bishop of the synod.
 - d. This congregation agrees to consider associates in ministry for appointment 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 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 ceases to exist.
 - c. This congregation is removed from membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America according to the procedures for 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 this congregation shall submit a copy of the resolution to the synodical bishop and shall mail a copy of the resolution to voting members of 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 a two-thirds majority of the voting members present, at which meeting the bishop of the synod or an authorized

representative shall be present. Notice of the meeting shall be mailed to all voting members at least 10 days in advance of the meeting.

- e. A certified copy of the resolution to terminate its relationship shall be sent to the synodical bishop, at which time the relationship between this congregation and 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. If this congregation was a member of the Lutheran Church in 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 is considering relocation, it shall confer with the bishop of the synod 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 property shall pass to the Southwestern Texas 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 a two-thirds majority of the voting members of this congregation present at a regularly called and conducted special meeting of this congregation vote to transfer to another Lutheran church body, 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 Southwestern Texas Synod.

C7.04. If a two-thirds majority of the voting members of this congregation present at a regularly called and conducted special meeting of this congregation vote to become independent or relate to a non-Lutheran church body, title to 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 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 defined in Bylaw 6.
- b. Associate members are persons holding membership in other Lutheran (Christian) congregations who wish to retain such membership but desire to participate in the life and mission of this congregation. 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 teachings of the Lutheran church; and
- c. support 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 terminated by any of the following:

- a. death;
- b. resignation;
- c. transfer or release;
- b. disciplinary action by the Congregation Council; or
- c. * 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 regularly 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 who has been recommended for it by the synodical bishop may be called as a pastor of this congregation.

- C9.03. Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, every ordained minister shall preach the Word, administer the sacraments, conduct public worship, provide pastoral care, and shall speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world. Each ordained minister with a congregational call shall, within the congregation, offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead; supervise all schools and organizations of the congregation; shall install regularly elected members of the Congregation Council, and with the council administer discipline. Every pastor shall seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel and strive to extend the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation, and abroad; shall impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through distribution of its periodicals and other publications; and shall endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and of the 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. a. The call of a congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment which, except in the case of the death of the pastor, shall be terminated only following consultation with the synodical bishop and for the following reasons:
- 1) mutual agreement to terminate the call or the completion of a call for a specific term of years;
 - 2) resignation of the pastor;
 - 3) inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in the congregation in view of local conditions, without reflection on the competence or the moral and spiritual character of the pastor;
 - 4) the physical or mental incapacity of the pastor;
 - 5) disqualification of the pastor through discipline on grounds of doctrine, morality, or continued neglect of duty; or
 - 6) dissolution of the congregation.
- b. In the case of alleged physical or mental incapacity of the pastor or ineffective conduct of the pastoral office, it shall be the responsibility of the bishop of the synod, when such difficulties are personally known or have been brought to the synod's attention by an official recital of allegations by the Congregation Council, or by a petition signed by at least one-third of the voting members of the congregation, to 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 which imperil the effective functioning of the congregation, all concerned persons shall be heard, after which the bishop of the synod together with the committee described in C9.05.b. shall decide on the course of action to be recommended to the pastor and the congregation. If they agree to carry out such

recommendations, no further action shall be taken by the synod. If either party fails to assent, the congregation may dismiss the pastor by a two-thirds majority vote of the voting members present at a regularly called meeting after consultation with the bishop.

- e. The foregoing procedure shall never be invoked when questions of doctrine, morality, or continued neglect of duty are involved, all such cases being treated as disciplinary matters.
- f. If in the course of the proceedings, it should become apparent that the pastoral office cannot be conducted effectively in the congregation being served by the ordained minister due to local conditions, the bishop of the synod may temporarily suspend the pastor from service in the congregation without prejudice and with pay provided through a joint churchwide/synod fund and with housing provided by the congregation.

- C9.06. At a 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 and may delegate the same in part to a supply pastor with the consent of the bishop of the synod and this congregation or Congregation Council. The interim pastor and any ordained pastor providing assistance shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a pastor.
- C9.08. This congregation shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to a former pastor before calling a successor. A pastor shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to this congregation.
- C9.09. When a pastor is called to serve in company with another pastor or pastors, the privileges and responsibilities of each pastor shall be specified in documents to accompany the call and to be drafted in consultation involving the pastors, the congregation council, and the bishop of the synod. As occasion requires, the documents may be revised through a similar consultation.
- C9.11. With the approval of the bishop of the synod the congregation may depart from C9.05.a. and call a pastor for a specific term of years. Details of such calls shall be in writing setting forth the purpose and conditions involved. Prior to the completion of a term, the bishop or a designated representative of the bishop, shall meet with the pastor and representatives of the congregation for a review of the call. Such call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of C9.05.a.
- C9.12. 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.
- C9.13. 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 semi-annual meeting of this congregation shall be held at a time specified in the bylaws.
- C10.02. A special Congregation Meeting may be called by the pastor; the Congregation Council; or the president of this congregation; and shall be called at the written request of ten percent (10%) of the voting members. The call for each special meeting shall specify the purpose for which it is to held and be held and no other business shall be transacted.

- C10.03. Notice of all meetings of this congregation shall be given at the services of worship on the preceding two consecutive Sundays and by mail to all (voting) members at least 10 days in advance of the date of the meeting. The posting of such notice in the regular mail, with the regular postage affixed or paid, sent to the last known address of such members shall be sufficient.
- C10.04. Ten percent (10%) of the voting members shall constitute a quorum.
- C10.05. Voting by proxy or by absentee ballot shall not be permitted.
- C10.06. All actions by the congregation shall be by majority vote except as otherwise provided in this constitution.
- 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 DIRECTOR OF FINANCE.
- *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.
- C11.02. The officers shall be elected by the CONGREGATION COUNCIL by written ballot and shall serve for one year. The term shall begin at the end of the CONGREGATION COUNCIL meeting at which they are elected.
- C11.03. No officer shall hold more than one office at a time. No elected officer shall be eligible to serve more than TWO CONSECUTIVE TERMS in the same office.

Chapter 12. CONGREGATION COUNCIL

- C12.01. The voting membership of the CONGREGATION COUNCIL shall consist of the pastor(s) and TWELVE (12) elected 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 this congregation or b) is absent from four successive regular meetings of the Congregation Council without cause.
- C12.02. The members of the CONGREGATION COUNCIL (except the pastor(s)) shall be elected at a legally called meeting of the congregation during the month of MAY. Their term of office shall be for TWO years with the term of office beginning on AUGUST 1ST and ending on JULY 31ST. Their tenure shall be arranged so that ONE-HALF (1/2) of the terms expire annually. Newly elected Congregation Council members shall be installed at worship on the SECOND (2ND) Sunday in SEPTEMBER.
- C12.03. Should a member's place on the CONGREGATION COUNCIL be declared vacant, the Congregation Council shall elect, by majority vote, a successor until the next Congregation Council election.

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 and churchwide units of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as well as cooperation with other congregations, both Lutheran and non-Lutheran, 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.

C12.05. THE CONGREGATION COUNCIL shall be responsible for the financial and property matters of this congregation.

- a. THE CONGREGATION COUNCIL shall be the board of directors of this congregation, and as such shall be responsible for maintaining and protecting its property and the management of its business and fiscal affairs. It shall have the powers and be subject to the obligations that pertain to such boards under the laws of the State of Texas, except as otherwise provided herein.
- b. THE CONGREGATION COUNCIL shall not have the authority to buy, sell, or encumber real property unless specifically authorized to do so by a meeting of the congregation.
- c. THE CONGREGATION COUNCIL shall prepare an annual budget for adoption by this congregation, shall supervise the expenditure of funds in accordance therewith following its adoption, and may incur obligations in excess of budgeted expenses in accordance with the bylaws. 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.
- d. THE CONGREGATION COUNCIL shall ascertain that the financial affairs of this congregation are being conducted efficiently, giving particular attention to the prompt payment of all obligations and to the regular forwarding of benevolence monies to the synodical treasurer.
- 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, 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.
- C12.11. 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.
- C12.12. 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.

Chapter 13. CONGREGATIONAL COMMITTEES

- C13.01. The officers of the congregation and the pastor shall constitute the Executive Committee.
- C13.02. A NOMINATING COMMITTEE for members of the Congregation Council shall consist of the chairpersons of the standing committees. The president of the Congregation Council will chair this committee.
- C13.03. An AUDIT COMMITTEE of three voting members shall be elected by the Congregation Council. The treasurer and financial secretary shall not be eligible for membership in the audit committee.
- C13.04. A STAFF SUPPORT COMMITTEE (in the 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 the Congregation Council. Term of office will terminate at 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

- 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. 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, at least 10 days prior to the meeting.
- C15.03. Should the allegations be sustained by a 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 b. and c. 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.

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 ___X___ voting members or 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 shall:

- 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 this 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 Southwestern Texas Synod.

Chapter 18. CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

C18.01. The Congregation Council may enact continuing resolutions which describe the function of the various committees or organizations of this congregation.

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

BYLAWS

PREAMBLE

The bylaws of this congregation are intended to formally define the organizational structure, duties, and responsibilities of those officers, committees and organizations empowered by the congregation; to specify the precise time and place of the congregational meetings; and to describe the procedures by which the affairs of this congregation and its organizations are conducted. Bylaws are to be adopted in accordance with Chapter 16 of this constitution. No bylaw may conflict with this constitution.

Bylaw 1: CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

The congregation shall hold three regularly scheduled meetings. A meeting will be held on an appropriate day in JANUARY for the purpose of receiving and accepting annual reports and the consideration of other business of the congregation. The second meeting will be held on an appropriate day in MAY for the purpose of electing new members of the Congregation Council, and for the consideration of other business of the congregation. A third meeting will be held on an appropriate day in NOVEMBER for the purpose of adopting the budget for the year, and for the consideration of other business of the congregation. The Congregation Council will determine the precise time and date of these meetings. The Congregation Council may hold these meetings outside of the months of January, May and November under extenuating circumstances.

Bylaw 2: ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The Congregation Council shall elect its officers during its regularly scheduled AUGUST meeting. This meeting will normally be a RETREAT at which time the new Council "members will be briefed of their duties and job descriptions. This retreat will also review the congregation's "Mission Statement" and short and long-range goals. Nominations for each office in the Congregation Council will be taken by the chairperson. Following discussion of all nominees for each office, a simple majority of voting council members present will determine the selection. Officers will begin their term at the end of the Congregational Council meeting at which they are elected.

Bylaw 3: DUTIES OF OFFICERS OF THE CONGREGATION AND CONGREGATION COUNCIL

B3.01. The PRESIDENT will be elected from the Congregation Council and shall be a lay person. The president shall preside at all council and congregational meetings, and will serve as chairperson of the Nominating Committee. The president may choose to cast or not cast a tie-breaking vote at any of these meetings. If the vote then remains a tie, the motion is defeated. For the purpose of elections, the president may pass the tie-breaker vote to the vote counters to be opened only if the election is a tie. The president shall council with all staff clergy and present an agenda for each council meeting. The president shall be available for all committees as a lay resource. The president shall be available for emergency decisions in the absence of clergy staff.

GOALS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Set time and dates of Congregation Council meetings in counsel with the other members of the Congregation Council.
2. Inform council members of up-coming meetings one week prior, to insure their attendance.
3. In conjunction with the Pastor, prepare an agenda for each parish council meeting.
4. Contact council members who are not present at the meeting and inform them of the business discussed and transacted.
5. In APRIL of each year, meet with the chairpersons of the standing committees to form a NOMINATING COMMITTEE to nominate members to fill the expiring terms of office.
6. In JANUARY of each year, appoint a 3 member auditing committee. (The treasurer and financial secretary are not eligible.)
7. In cooperation with the Pastor, appoint a STAFF SUPPORT COMMITTEE -- not currently officers of the congregation.

B3.02. The VICE PRESIDENT shall be elected from the Congregation Council and shall be a lay person. The vice president shall serve as the chief liaison between the Congregation Council and the committees of the congregation as described in the continuing resolutions. In the absence of the president, the vice president shall perform all duties of the president. In the event the president is no longer able to serve, such as resignation, death, or incapacity, the vice president becomes president for the duration of the unexpired term.

GOALS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. The VICE PRESIDENT shall oversee the "CHRIST-CARE" ministry of the congregation by providing for the spiritual care of the Congregation Council.
2. The VICE PRESIDENT shall oversee the "CHRIST-CARE" ministry of the congregation. The congregation is divided up into six (6) groups which are lead by two Congregational Council members each. Each "CHRIST-CARE" group shall meet at least four times a year in the home of a Congregation Council member or at an agreed upon location. A shared meal is suggested. The purpose for these groups is to provide a means for closer contact among congregational members and a means of communication when special needs arise. Each "CHRIST-CARE" group will be asked to provide special support during times of loss or crisis, including supplying the food needed for funeral dinners. (See FELLOWSHIP). New members will be added to groups as they join the congregation. This will be done in consultation with the VISITATION/EVANGELISM chair and the pastor. At each meeting of the full Council, the Christ-care" leaders will be asked to report to the Council.
3. When a "Christ-care" leader is no longer on the board, the groups shall be reorganized where needed by the VICE PRESIDENT in consultation with the pastor.

B3.03. The SECRETARY shall be elected from the Congregation Council and shall be a lay person. The secretary is also an officer of the congregation. The secretary shall hold the power to attest to legal and official signatures of the congregation. The secretary shall be responsible for the safety and proper filing of all legal documents and Congregational and Congregation Council meeting minutes. The secretary may appoint other persons to take minutes at all council and congregational meetings. Copies of the previous meeting minutes shall be made available by the secretary at each Congregation and Congregation Council meeting.

OTHER DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Assist the Vice-President in keeping track of meeting attendance and making contact with those who are not in attendance.
2. Prepare notices to be sent by mail or telephone council members to remind them of the Council meetings.
3. Get copies of the minutes to the Parish secretary one week prior to the next Council or Congregational meeting to be run off for presentation. (typed, or neatly written).

B3.04. The DIRECTOR OF FINANCE shall be elected from the Congregation Council, and shall be a layperson. The Director of Finance is also an officer of the congregation. The Director of Finance shall be responsible for managing the congregational funds in accordance with policies established by the Finance Committee. The Director of Finance shall make authorized disbursements and transfers of funds between accounts and maintain complete documentation of all transactions.

GOALS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. The DIRECTOR OF FINANCE shall be sure an accurate report is prepared each month by the TREASURER of all income and disbursements. This report should be in the Church office one week prior to the Congregation Council meeting.
2. The DIRECTOR OF FINANCE shall present a funds reconciliation report at each Congregational Council meeting, including:
 - Childcare account
 - Seminary-In-Residence account
 - Building Fund account
 - And any additional auxiliary accounts that may exist
3. The DIRECTOR OF FINANCE shall serve as chairman of the FINANCE COMMITTEE.
4. The DIRECTOR OF FINANCE shall maintain current "signature" cards with the appropriate signatures for each account.
5. The DIRECTOR OF FINANCE shall be regularly available to the TREASURER to authorize fund transfers and to determine payment strategies of budgetary commitments as needed.

B3.05. The TREASURER shall be elected by the Congregation Council, and may or may not be a member of said council. The treasurer shall be a lay person. The treasurer shall be responsible for reporting the financial position of the congregation. The treasurer shall keep or oversee the keeping of the books of account of the congregation and make monthly written reports to the Congregation Council and congregation. The Treasurer shall consult the Director of Finance when drawing from any congregation account or investment.

OTHER DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Prepare and present the written report of all financial disbursements and income to the Parish Secretary one week prior to the Congregation Council meetings for duplication.
2. The TREASURER shall be available upon request of the Council to answer questions concerning the financial report.
3. The term of office of the TREASURER shall be reviewed annually by the Congregational Council and the TREASURER.

B3.06. The FINANCIAL SECRETARY shall be elected by the Congregation Council, and may or may not be a member of said council. The financial secretary shall be a lay person. The financial secretary shall supervise the preparation of the deposit by the tellers each week. The financial secretary shall be responsible for the prompt recording of contributions of members and visitors, and the preparation of the quarterly contribution statements of the individual members.

GOALS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. The FINANCIAL SECRETARY shall see to it that the offering is removed from the sanctuary at each worship service and counted and prepared for deposit by the tellers.
2. The FINANCIAL SECRETARY shall see to the safe keeping and deposit of the funds in the Church's accounts.
3. The FINANCIAL SECRETARY shall oversee the preparation of accurate "Teller sheets" to be given to the TREASURER for correct accounting of special and regular funds.
4. The FINANCIAL SECRETARY shall oversee the prompt recording of contributions of members in the office computer and maintain these records for a period of three years.

Bylaw 4: ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP

It is the goal of this congregation to have every member active in the worship, life and ministry of the congregation. To this end, efforts shall be made to encourage and stimulate active membership. When a member has not communed or made a contribution of record for a SIX-MONTH period (barring extenuating circumstances), the evangelism committee and pastoral staff shall make every effort to contact that member. If the member has not received Holy Communion or made a contribution of record for a period of TWO CONSECUTIVE years, the Congregation Council may respond to the member's choice in inactivity by removing his/her name from the roll of active membership. The Congregation Council may take this action only:

- (1) when there is a pastor under call to serve the congregation; and
- (2) after every effort has been made to contact the member, including the issuance of written notification to the member, of this pending action.

Bylaw 5: EXCESS DISBURSEMENTS

The Congregation Council may incur obligations in excess of the budgeted disbursements as follows:

- (1) The Congregation Council may approve funds for emergency repairs or replacements necessary for the protection of the congregational property. The Congregation Council shall discuss possible options in order to act in the best interests of the congregation.
- (2) Individual unbudgeted disbursements may be approved by the Congregation Council in the amounts not to exceed 2% of the total general fund disbursement budget for the year. The total amount of unbudgeted disbursements shall not exceed 6% of the total general fund disbursement budget for the year.

Bylaw 6: VOTING MEMBERS

Voting members are confirmed members. Such confirmed members shall have communed and made a contribution of record during the current or preceding year.

Resolution 1: STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE CONGREGATION

The Congregation Council shall appoint as many standing committees as the local and wider concerns of the congregation shall require. The term of appointment shall be for one (1) year but members of these standing committees may be reappointed upon their willingness to serve in that area. The term of appointment shall begin at installation, usually on the 2ND SUNDAY in SEPTEMBER. Each standing committee shall be composed of one or more council members, and other persons on the current list of VOTING and ASSOCIATE members. Council members shall normally serve on only one standing committee.

R1.01. WORSHIP AND MUSIC (Worship and Spirituality)

There shall be a Committee on Worship and music. It shall assist the Congregation Council in seeing that the services of God's House are conducted regularly and in accordance with the practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. To this end it will oversee the recruiting and training of ushers, lay readers, lay assistants, acolytes, and the altar guild. This committee shall supervise and strive to advance the welfare of the congregation's organists, choirs and choir directors. It shall arrange for nursery care for parents with children as needed. This committee shall oversee the worship life of the congregation in conjunction with the Pastor(s) and music staff, and provide for pulpit and organ supply as needed.

GOALS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Recruit willing members (3 or more), who understand the significance and purpose of our worship and music to serve on the WORSHIP AND MUSIC COMMITTEE
2. The congregation's organist(s) and choir director(s) are on-going members of the WORSHIP AND MUSIC COMMITTEE.
3. Oversee and appoint an "Altar Guild" chairperson who will also serve as a member of this committee.
4. Oversee the following responsibilities:
 - Enlisting, training and scheduling ACOLYTES
(Acolytes begin in the 6th grade-the 8th grade)
 - Enlisting, training and scheduling USHERS
(Ushers may begin at 9th grade-Adult)
 - Enlisting, training and scheduling LAY READERS
(Lay readers may begin at 9th grade-Adult)
 - Enlisting, training and scheduling LAY ASSISTANTS
(Lay ASSISTANTS may begin at 9th grade-Adult)
 - Enlisting, training and scheduling GREETERS
5. Appoint a HEAD USHER who will be in charge of training and overseeing usher teams.
6. Oversee and review ORGANIST AND MUSIC DIRECTOR contracts annually.
7. Provide for "Supply Pastor" during Pastor's absence or vacancy. Be sure adequate compensation is arranged.
8. Review worship schedule and recommend any changes to the Congregation Council.
9. Review and recommend new forms of worship, liturgies, hymns, as determined useful for the Congregation's worship life.
10. In conjunction with the ALTAR GUILD see that the items needed for worship are supplied.
11. Plan and publicize and special services during the year.
12. Check mail box WEEKLY and authorize appropriate expenditures and place in the TREASURER'S box.
13. Submit an annual budget request in the form and at the time requested by the FINANCE COMMITTEE.

R1.02. HOSPITALITY (Congregational Life)

There shall be a Committee for Hospitality. This committee shall plan and organize gatherings, fellowships, and events to support congregational life and enrichment. It shall also oversee the extending of Christian compassion to the ill, the aged, the orphaned, the underprivileged and the imprisoned and, in general, to all ages in need of aid to body and soul.

GOALS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Plan, supervise and implement larger gatherings of the congregation, these include:
 - Easter Breakfast:
 - Confirmation reception: (Spring)
 - New Member receptions: (As needed)
 - The Congregational Picnic (Fall)
 - The Christmas Progressive Dinner
 - Other special events recommended by the Congregational Council.
2. Organize "funeral dinners" upon request, for member families at the death of an immediate member of their family. Coordinate this with the appropriate CHRIST CARE GROUP leaders.
3. Oversee the kitchen and "kitchen" supplies, including utensils, dish towels and coffee supplies.
4. Submit an annual budget request in the form and at the time requested by the FINANCE committee.
5. Check mail box WEEKLY and make authorization of expenditures and place in the TREASURER'S box.

R1.03. SMALL GROUPS (Congregational Life)

There shall be a committee for Small Groups. The purpose of this committee is to coordinate and oversee the organization of the small group ministry of the congregation. This shall include any youth groups, women's groups, men's groups, couples groups, singles groups or any other small group formed to enhance the ministry of this congregation.

GOALS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Survey the congregation (normally in September) and assess the desires and interests of the congregation.
2. Together with the pastor, determine the types of special groups that need to be formed from the survey.
3. Recruit leaders for the groups that will be formed.
4. Provide training in small group and home group ministry for all new leaders.
5. Oversee the youth ministry of the congregation in conjunction with the pastor.
6. Recruit youth leaders as needed for various age groups.
7. Working together with the EDUCATION committee, help in the planning of retreats and renewal weekends.
8. CHECK MAIL BOX weekly and authorize expenditures for the TREASURER.
9. Prepare and submit an annual budget request in the form and time requested by the FINANCE committee.

R1.04. CHRISTIAN EDUCATION (Education)

There shall be a Committee on Christian Education. This committee, in association with the pastor, shall oversee the conduct and promotion of the Sunday School and the activities of all organizations pertaining to Christian Education within the congregation. It shall encourage the use of teaching and worship materials published or approved by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and seek to introduce the church's periodicals and books of family devotion into the homes of the congregation.

GOALS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Recruit a SUNDAY SCHOOL COORDINATOR whose charge will be as follows:
 - a) To maintain a Sunday School roster of all children between the ages of 3yrs and 12th grade and reporting any updates or changes to the parish office.
 - b) Recruit the number of Sunday School teachers needed as determined by the Coordinator together with the Committee on Christian Education.
 - c) Determine appropriate curriculum in consultation with the Committee and oversee the budget, purchasing and distribution of this material.
 - d) Together with the teachers, determine where classes will meet, secure needed supplies and prepare classrooms for the children.
 - e) Coordinate any "Rally Day" or similar inspirational events, and oversee any Sunday School openings if desired.
 - f) Encourage Christian growth by remembering birthdays and Baptism dates of those in Sunday School, and by encouraging regular attendance.
 - g) Purchase and distribute personalized Bibles to all 1st graders (September).
 - h) Order children's devotionals ("MY DEVOTIONS") for all 4th graders (September).
 - i) The SUNDAY SCHOOL COORDINATOR shall be appointed annually with the option to continue serving as long as both the individual and the Committee on Christian Education agree.
 - j) The SUNDAY SCHOOL COORDINATOR shall be a member of the Committee on Christian Education and report to its chairperson.
2. Recruit a SUMMER EDUCATION COORDINATOR whose duties shall be as follows:
 - a) Plan for and carry out a Vacation Bible School program including planning the curriculum in consultation with the Committee on Christian Education; recruiting teachers and helpers; and purchasing the appropriate materials.
 - b) Plan for and coordinate Summer Sunday School as determined in consultation with the Committee on Christian Education.
3. Recruit a SPECIAL PROGRAM COORDINATOR whose duties shall be as follows:
 - a) Plan for and coordinate an annual Children's Christmas Program including choosing the appropriate program in consultation with the Committee on Christian Education; recruiting helpers; and planning dates and rehearsals.
 - b) Plan for and coordinate an annual Children's Spring Musical including finding a director; choosing the appropriate program in consultation with the Committee; and planning dates and rehearsals.
4. Recruit an ADULT EDUCATION COORDINATOR whose duties shall be as follows:
 - a) Plan and coordinate adult education classes in consultation with the pastor. These shall include adult Sunday School, Confirmation (Affirmation of Baptism), mid-week Bible Studies, and any special classes desired or needed for the spiritual well-being of the congregation and of those with whom we associate.
 - b) Assess the congregation's needs and desires for continuing education opportunities annually (September) and plan strategies to meet these needs in conjunction with the Pastor.
5. Prepare and submit an annual budget request in the form and time requested by the FINANCE committee.
6. Check BOX weekly and authorize any appropriate expenditures and place in the TREASURER'S box.

R1.05. COMMUNITY MINISTRY (Outreach and Mission)

There shall be a Community Ministry committee. The purpose for this committee shall be to oversee the congregation's efforts to reach out to its surrounding community.

GOALS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Oversee the MEDICAL LENDING PROGRAM by securing a director and working with him or her to maintain the equipment and to help in the picking up of new equipment.
2. Review and oversee lending policy as needed and assist the director in retrieving equipment that has not been returned.
3. Oversee the work of the "InterAct" (Inter faith AIDS Care Teams) ministry of this congregation and assist the coordinator as needed.
4. In conjunction with the pastor, review any needs or requests that may come from the community that may require a benevolent or political response from the congregation.
5. Oversee the congregation's SEMINARIAN-IN-RESIDENCE ministry.
 - a. Select a five (5) member committee which will interview and secure the proper Lutheran Seminary student(s)
 - b. With the committee and pastor, review the Seminarian-in-"Residence objectives annually and determine any changes.
 - c. Oversee the expenditures and income of the S.I.R. fund and provide a monthly report to the Congregational Council.
6. CHECK MAIL BOX weekly and authorize expenditures for the TREASURER.
7. Prepare and submit an annual budget request in the form and time requested by the FINANCE committee.

R1.06. CHILDCARE/PRESCHOOL/NURSERY (Outreach and Mission)

There shall be a Committee on Childcare/Preschool/Nursery. This committee shall oversee the functions of our Childcare/Preschool/Nursery. Its duties will be to work directly with the director and staff of our Childcare/Preschool ministry, to see to it that we maintain the best possible Christian care. This committee shall be responsible for the hiring or firing of the Childcare/Preschool director and shall determine salaries and benefits for both the director and staff. This committee shall oversee the financial accounting and payroll of the Childcare/Preschool, and it shall provide a monthly financial report to the Congregation Council. The childcare committee shall work in conjunction with the Director and the PROPERTY committee to be sure the facilities safe and appealing for children.

This committee shall also oversee our Congregation's Nursery care, including its facilities and personal for the congregational events including worship, and programs where child care may be needed.

GOALS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Recruit committee members (3 or more) who show an interest and have an understanding of the congregation's purpose for having a CHILDCARE MINISTRY.
2. Provide for the keeping of the financial books and the overseeing of the income and expenses of the CHILDCARE ministry, including the preparation of payroll in a timely and efficient manner.
3. Prepare an annual budget to be submitted at the NOVEMBER Congregational meeting for review.
4. Consult with the Childcare director concerning maintenance needs of the playground and facilities once a month.
5. Review and establish with the Childcare director, the goals and objectives of this congregation's childcare ministry.
6. Provide for and encourage the continuing education and training of the director and staff, so far as the budget will allow.
7. Make periodic contacts with the parents of the children, seeking their input in the program and inviting them to participate in the Christian education and worship of the congregation.
8. Oversee the Nursery facility in the Parish Life center and see to it that it is supplied with the proper equipment and staff.
9. Submit an annual line item request in the form and at the time requested by the Finance committee.
10. Check mail box WEEKLY and authorize expenditures for the TREASURER.

R1.07. VISITATION/EVANGELISM (Outreach and Mission) There shall be a Committee on Visitation/Evangelism. This committee shall lead all members of the congregation in continuous and, from time to time, concerted endeavors to reawaken the spiritually indifferent and to reach others with the message of the Gospel as it calls us to Christ's Church. It shall oversee the calling upon newcomers to our worship and to our area that become known to us. To this end, the committee shall devote itself to deepening spiritual life and shall periodically study the congregation in the context of its surrounding community.

GOALS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. WEEKLY go through the worship attendance cards and guest book in the Narthex to determine visitors.
2. Recruit members willing to make calls on new visitors
3. BE SURE EACH NEW VISITOR RECEIVES A PERSONAL CONTACT WITHIN TWO DAYS OF THEIR VISIT.
4. When personal contact is not possible, send a post card acknowledging their visit.
5. Report names and addresses of visitors which should be placed on the church mailing list, and report them to the office secretary.
6. Once a quarter review "visitor" list and determine, through consultation with the pastor, who should be retained and who should be dropped.
7. Inform Pastor of any repeat visits so that he/she may call on them.
8. Make sure new visitors are met at the end of the service each Sunday and invited to sign the guest book.
9. In conjunction with the CONGREGATIONAL LIFE committee and the Pastor, plan "new-member" orientations and receptions.
10. In conjunction with the Pastor and other committees, oversee the integration of new families or individuals into the life of the congregation.
11. Make visits on new families in the area that come to our attention or show a special need.
12. Provide updated materials and training for volunteer visitors from the congregation to aid them in making new visits.
13. Oversee the congregation's advertising budget including "Yellow Pages", newspaper, and other media.
14. Prepare and submit an annual budget request in the form and time requested by the FINANCE committee.
15. Once a year review membership list in conjunction with the Pastor, and carry out the procedures in BYLAW #4 (MEMBERSHIP).

R1.08. FINANCE/STEWARDSHIP (Administration)

There shall be a Finance/Stewardship committee, of which the church Treasurer, Financial Secretary and the Directory of Finance shall be members. It shall receive budget requests from the standing committees and prepare a draft budget for the succeeding year, including this congregation's percentage* share in support of the wider ministry carried on it's behalf by others, including the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Southwestern Texas Synod, and shall submit such a draft budget to the Congregation Council for its action and presentation to a congregation meeting. The committee shall exercise oversight of all the financial affairs of the congregation to make sure that they are being conducted efficiently, giving particular attention to the prompt payment of all obligations and to the regular forwarding of benevolence monies. It shall, subject to the annual approval of the Congregation Council, be responsible for the congregation's investments. It shall, in conjunction with the Property Committee, be responsible for the congregation's insurance program.

(*See STEWARDSHIP budget)

GOALS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Provide for an auditing of all the congregation's books, including "Child Care" and "S.I.R." by FEBRUARY of each year. (The Treasurer and Financial Secretary shall NOT serve on the audit committee.)
2. Review the congregation's insurance policies annually in conjunction with the PROPERTY COMMITTEE.
3. Collect Committee budgets from chairpersons and have Annual budget ready for presentation at the NOVEMBER Congregational Council meeting.
4. Review yearly the salary and compensation of the Pastor and Office staff and make appropriate recommendation to the CONGREGATION COUNCIL.
5. Oversee the hiring and replacement of Office staff in cooperation with the Pastor.
6. Provide a detailed "job description" for all Office staff positions.
7. Oversee all special appeals that come to the congregation from individuals, local organizations, or the Synod and Church-wide offices. In consultation with the pastor, make recommendations for appropriate action.
8. Evaluate the offerings of the congregation regularly and present any concerns to the Congregational Council.
9. Determine the Congregation's BENEVOLENCE program including the proportionate percentage to be set aside for each area of concern. Present the designated areas and percentage amount to the NOVEMBER council meeting for approval and include them in the annual budget proposal to the congregation.

R1.09. PROPERTY (Administration)

There shall be a Committee on Church Property. This committee shall see to the proper maintenance, construction, and protection of all property of the congregation and shall take care that the same is kept in good repair.

GOALS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Make an annual inspection of church properties and equipment and recommend to the Congregation Council needed repairs, improvements or replacements.
2. Recruit members for the Property Board, who will be responsible for the following areas:
 - Electrical repairs
 - Plumbing repairs
 - Yard/Building maintenance
 - Carpentry repairs
 - Air Cond/Heating repairs
 - Office equipment
3. Oversee the hiring and contracting of maintenance staff and custodial needs.
4. Carry out all resolutions of the congregation on purchases, repairs, replacements in conjunction with the DIRECTOR OF FINANCE.
5. Determine and establish, with the approval of the Council, regulations regarding the use of Church property and equipment.
6. Set up AC/Heating maintenance schedules and oversee repairs.
7. Semi-annually, organize a property "work-day" for general clean-up and repair.
8. Negotiate service contracts for musical instruments, office machines and other equipment requiring periodic servicing.
9. Obtain at least 2 bids on major purchases and construction and repair work.
10. Keep kitchen and restrooms supplied with paper products.
11. Submit an annual budget request to the FINANCE COMMITTEE in the form and at the time requested by the committee.
12. Check BOX weekly and authorize any appropriate expenditures and place in the TREASURER'S box.