

The Constitution of

Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church of Middle Lake, Sk.

2018 ver.1

Whereas God's Word requires that a Christian congregation be guided by God's Word in doctrine and practice (PS. 119:105; Gal 1:6-8; Tim 4:1-5), and all things being done decently and in order (1Cor.14:40), therefore we, the members of Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church, accept and subscribe to the following Constitution and Bylaws, in accordance with which all spiritual and material affairs of our congregation shall be governed.

Article I: Name

The name of this congregation shall be; Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church of Middle Lake, Sk.

Article II: Purpose and Mission

- A. The purpose of this congregation shall be to give honor and glory to God, to carry out His will, and to assist in preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all the world.
- B. The mission of this congregation shall be to manifest the unity of our faith in Jesus Christ as God and Savior, to foster Christian fellowship and love, to extend a helping hand in human need.
- C. We shall achieve our objectives by the preaching of the Word of God, by the administration of the sacraments, and by the religious instruction of all its members according to the confessional standard of the Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Article III Confessions

This congregation acknowledges and accepts all the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments as the revealed Word of God, verbally inspired, and acknowledges and accepts all the Confessional writings of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, contained in the Book of Concord of the year 1580, to be the true and genuine exposition of the doctrines of the Bible.

These Confessional writings are:

- a) The three Ecumenical Creeds (Apostles, Nicene, and Athanasian),
- b) The Unaltered Augsburg Confession,
- c) The Apology of the Augsburg Confession,
- d) The Smalcald Articles,
- e) Luther's Large and Small Catechisms, and
- f) The Formula of Concord.

Article IV: Membership

A. Membership in this congregation shall include:

1) Baptised Members

- all who have been baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and who are under the spiritual care of this congregation but who have not yet been confirmed.
- those having received Christian Baptism in another church, are received by transfer

2) Communicant Members

- are those baptised members who complete a course of Instruction and are confirmed in the Lutheran Faith
- when they transfer from a sister congregation
- when they are received through profession of faith or re-affirmation of faith
- and accept the confessional standard of Article 3 of this constitution
- and are familiar at least with the contents of Luther's Small Catechism

Membership shall be terminated when a member:

- dies
- transfers to a sister congregation
- joins a church outside the fellowship of this Congregation
- is a member of organizations whose principles and conduct conflict with the Word of God
- continually engages in an un-Christian lifestyle
- is absent from Church Services and activities for a prolonged period of time

Communicant members who conduct themselves in an un-Christian manner shall be admonished according to Matthew 18:15-20;

Each case shall be thoroughly considered by the Board of Elders in consultation with the Pastor, and presented to the Congregation for a decision. Anyone who remains impenitent after proper admonition shall be excommunicated.

If such members deliberately absent themselves from the meeting(s) at which their case is to be discussed, they shall be regarded as having excluded themselves from the membership of the congregation.

Article V: The Office of the Pastor

- A) This congregation shall establish the pastoral office, which shall be bestowed only on such a pastor or candidate who professes and adheres to the confessional standard set forth in Article 3 of this constitution, who is qualified for his work, who has been endorsed by the Synod, and who is a member of the Synod.
- B) Any pastor may be removed from office by the Congregation with a 2/3 majority ballot vote, in Christian and lawful order, for one of the following reasons: persistent adherence to false doctrine, scandalous life, willful neglect, or inability to perform the duties of the office.
- C) The congregation may request the resignation of the pastor from his position in the congregation in the case of prolonged incapacity or general incompetence.

Article VI: Authority of the Congregation

- a) The Church Council shall be the governing body of this congregation and shall be empowered to administer and manage all its affairs. The establishment and conduct of all organizations and societies within the congregation or related directly to it shall be subject to the approval and supervision of the Church Council.
- b) All matters shall be decided by a majority vote of the Church Council unless otherwise specified by this constitution or bylaws. Matters of doctrine and conscience shall be decided only on the basis of the Word of God.
- c) The right of calling pastors or teachers shall be vested in the Congregation and shall not be delegated otherwise.

Article VII: Officers

The Officers of this congregation shall be such officers elected to Church Council as the Bylaws of this congregation prescribe.

Article VIII: Property Rights

- A) If at any time a division should take place on account of doctrine, the property of the congregation and all benefits connected therewith shall remain with those communicant members who continue to adhere in confession and practice to Article 3 of this constitution, as determined by the adjudication procedures of the Synod.
- B) If division takes place for any other reason, the property shall remain with the majority of the communicant members who continue to adhere in confession and practice to Article 3 of this constitution, as determined by the adjudication procedures of the Synod.
- C) In the event the congregation shall dissolve, the property and all rights connected therewith shall be transferred to Lutheran Church Canada.

Article IX: Doctrinal Literature

Only such hymns, prayers, and liturgies shall be used in the public services of the congregation and all classes for instruction and ministerial acts as conform to the confessional standard of Article 3.

Article X: Synodical Membership

This congregation shall hold membership in Lutheran Church Canada. It shall abide with Synodical procedures and send its pastor and lay delegate to Conventions to help Synod continue God's Work. It shall be the duty of the congregation and its individual members to support the work of the Synod, since they thereby support their own Christ appointed work.

Article XI: Bylaws

This congregation may adopt such bylaws as may be required for the accomplishment of its purpose and mission.

Article XII: Changing the Constitution

- A) Except as herein otherwise provided, amendments to this constitution, other than Articles 3, 5, 9 & 12, may be adopted at a Congregational meeting.
 - 1) The proposed amendment must be submitted in writing at a previous Congregational meeting and published by posting in a conspicuous place in the church or by mail prior to the meeting at which the proposed amendment will be acted upon;
 - 2) An affirmative vote of a 2/3 majority of the Communicant Members present is required.
- B) In addition to the above requirements, the proposals to amend article 3, 5, 9, and 12 shall require that a previous notice of such amendment and discussion of the same shall be presented at 2 Congregational meetings before the meeting at which the proposed amendment is to receive action. In this way due notice of the fact that a vote will be taken shall be given to all members of the congregation. Any changes in these Articles shall not destroy the essential meaning of the same. Whether or not this has occurred shall be decided, if challenged, by a decision of Lutheran Church Canada in which the congregation holds its Synodical membership.

Bylaws

Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church of Middle Lake, Sk.

Article I: The Congregation

Members of the Congregation share in the Priesthood of all believers, and are obligated to honor their chosen Pastor as the Servant of Christ and are to support his ministry in the Congregation with faithful prayer, cordial love and one-mindedness, and willing obedience; The Congregation is pledged to provide for the maintenance of the Pastor and his family in accord with the policies of Lutheran Church Canada and the ability of the Congregation.

Baptised and Communicant members of this congregation shall strive to conform their entire lives to the rule of God's Word, and to that end shall:

- live in such a way that their lives bring glory to the Name of Jesus,
- use every opportunity to share the good news of the Gospel of Christ,
- exercise faithful stewardship of God's many gifts and talents,
- make diligent use of the means of Grace, Word and Sacrament, in the public and also in private

The Communicant Members of the Congregation shall elect a Church Council to handle the affairs of the church. They shall also vote on calling a Pastor, approving a budget annually, changing the constitution and all other matters brought to a Congregational meeting.

Members of the Congregation should pray for and support their Church council, to the best of their ability, by volunteering their God given talents and time.

- A) Congregational Meetings shall be held Semi-annually. A meeting in March/April for the previous year financial statement and internal audit report. The second meeting shall be called in December for the purpose of electing officers and setting a budget.
- B) Special Meetings – Special meetings of the Congregation may be called by the President. A reason for the meeting shall be given together with the notice of meeting. Notice for every Congregational meeting shall be announced at a Sunday worship service prior to the meeting. An effort to inform the congregation in electronic form should be made. (text, email, social media)

When it has been properly announced, 10 Communicant members shall constitute a Quorum for enacting the business of the Congregation.

When 10 members are not present for a properly called meeting, those present shall set a time and date – at least one week later – for such a meeting. Proper notice shall be given; those members present at this later meeting shall constitute a quorum.

The following shall be the normal Order of Business for the meetings of the Congregation (Agenda):

- 1) Devotion
- 2) Roll Call
- 3) Reading and acceptance of the minutes of the previous Congregational Meeting and summary of the minutes of any Church Council Meetings.
- 4) Unfinished Business
- 5) Treasurers Report
- 6) Reports of Pastor, Officers, and Boards
- 7) New Business
- 8) Adjournment
- 9) Closing Prayer and Benediction

Article II: Offices and Boards

A) The Executive Officers of this congregation shall be:

- 1) President (1 Position)
- 2) Secretary (1 Position)
- 3) Treasurer (1 Position)

B) The Congregation shall also elect the following Boards:

- 1) Board of Elders (1,2,3,1b,2b,3b Positions)
- 2) Board of Christian Stewardship (1,2,3,1b,2b,3b Positions)

Term of Office

- 1) The executive Officers shall be elected for a term of three years, with one of the executive positions being elected each year.
1. The members of the Boards are elected for a term of three years, with one of the positions of a board elected each year. After election of each Board, they shall select a chair and secretary at the election meeting. The Elders Chair shall act on behalf of the President when he is absent, incapacitated, or at his invitation. The Stewardship Chair shall act on behalf of the Treasurer if such circumstances arise that it is necessary. As such these Chairman shall also have signing authority and access to the Church Bank accounts and investments.
- 2) After 2 consecutive full terms on one position, the nominating committee should make an effort to find a different member to serve.

C) The Church Council:

The Executive Officers elected, together with the Pastor, and the members of each of the Boards constitute the Church Council. It shall have the following duties:

- 1) The Church Council shall act in matters committed to it and on behalf of the congregation between meetings.
- 2) The Council shall plan and make any necessary recommendations to the congregation.

The President shall call Church Council meetings as necessary. As long as each member of Council is contacted about the meeting (phone, text, email, etc.) and one member from each board joins the Executive Officers that shall constitute Quorum.

Article III: Election of Officers

- A) Nominating committee – These Communicant members shall meet at the call of the president and shall strive to prepare a slate of nominees for each vacant position, securing the consent of the nominee beforehand. The committee shall present the slate to the elections meeting. Additional nominations may be made from the floor, provided that the consent of the nominee has been secured first.
- B) Elections
 - 1) Annual elections shall take place in the December meeting.
 - 2) Elections shall be by majority ballot.
 - 3) The installation of Officers shall take place in a Sunday worship service in early January.
- C) Vacancy - In the event of a vacancy in any of the offices, the church council may appoint a member to fill the balance of the unexpired term.
- D) Eligibility for Office – Any Communicant member shall be eligible for any of the Offices of the congregation, except for the following: the President, and members of the board of Elders. Whereas the Lutheran Church Canada does not believe that women are to be ordained to the Pastoral ministry; and in as much as the Offices of President, and the Board of Elders are directly related to the office of Pastoral ministry, these offices shall be filled by male members of the congregation.

Article IV Executive Officers

A) The President

- 1. The President shall preside at all meetings of the congregation, and ensure that the business of the congregation is carried out in harmony with the provisions of this constitution.
- 2. He shall give leadership to the church council and shall, like the pastor, be considered an ex-officio member of all boards and committees and may attend any of their meetings at his discretion.
- 3. He shall present the congregation in an official capacity, and have signing authority on behalf of the congregation for official documents. He shall also have signing authority and access to the Church Bank accounts and investments.
- 4. The Chairman of the Elders shall act on behalf of the President when he is absent, incapacitated, or at his invitation.

B) The Secretary

- 1. Shall keep accurate minutes of the meetings of the Voters assembly and Church Council in an official Secretary's book, and shall be responsible for its safe keeping.
- 2. May find an alternate if unable to attend the meeting
- 3. Shall have signing authority on behalf of the congregation where required for official documents.
- 4. Post a list of elected Officers and Board members as well as those volunteers on committees.

C) The Treasurer

2. Shall have the overall responsibility for the finances of the Congregation and also have signing authority and access to the Church Bank accounts and investments
3. Be responsible for remitting offerings for missions and church agencies and for the payment of Salaries and bills authorized by the congregation or its boards within their budgets.
4. Keep accurate records of the receipts and disbursements, budgeted and actual expenditures of the congregation, in a manner approved by the congregation, either manual or electronic.
5. Be responsible for the safe keeping and investing and accounting of bequests and trust funds.
6. Present printed financial reports to Congregational meetings and to the Church Council as requested.
7. Submit the books and records annually to the auditing committee.
8. File necessary documents with Government agencies to maintain non-profit and charity status

The Executive Officers are also responsible for all administration and should enlist volunteers to help with:

- The Church building and Parsonage maintenance (trustees committee)
- safe keeping of all official and important documents (cemetery maps volunteers)
- keep up to date inventory and maintenance of furniture, furnishings and equipment

Article V: The Boards

The Board of Elders - shall consist of the President and 3 mandatory positions. There are also 3 supplementary positions if able to be filled. The Elders shall be communicant members who are committed to Christ and the mission of His church, and recognized for their Christian Knowledge, zeal and experience in the work of the church.

The Board Elders shall concern itself with the spiritual life, health and leadership of the Pastor, and to that end:

- Pray for the Pastor and his family
- Uphold and encourage the Pastor in his shepherding work
- Exercise leadership when the Congregation is calling a Pastor
- Annually review the Pastors compensation and make recommendations to the congregation regarding the salary, housing, free time, vacation, work load, etc.

The Board of Elders shall concern itself with the spiritual life and health, not only of the congregation, but also of the members of the Board itself, and to that end:

- diligently seek to grow spiritually as individuals and as a board, through personal devotion and prayer, through public worship and example.
- organize itself in such a way that board members are responsible for all the members of the congregation.
- ensure that the congregation functions in accord with article 3 of the constitution in both doctrine and practice.
- encourage all members to grow in Christ through public and personal worship, bible study and prayer

- arrange for the proper instruction of all those who want to become communicant members of the church, both youth and adults
- arrange for and accept the transfers of those from sister congregations (and report to the congregation)
- assist in making new members feel welcome and integrate them into the life and work of the congregation
- review the status of all the members, their communion attendance, and worship involvement, with a view to encouraging delinquent members to become active.
- maintain discipline within the congregation according to the scriptures, the Lutheran Confessions and the Constitution of the congregation, and exercise discipline when required
- maintain contact with those members who move away from Middle Lake, with a view to helping them establish membership in a new church home.
- arrange for the transfer of those members to a new Lutheran Congregation in their community
- investigate special needs within the congregation and the community, and determine where and how the church can help in the Name of Christ.

The Board of Elders shall concern itself with the public worship of the congregation so that Christ may be uplifted as we Worship the Father inspired by the Spirit and to that end it shall be responsible for:

- The use of proper worship materials, in keeping with Article 3 of this Constitution.
- The physical setting for the worship services: care of the sanctuary; altar paraments and communion ware and supplies; communion registration cards; sound system; Music; attendance records.(Pianists, sound system volunteer)
- Hospitality and comfort of the worshipers: welcoming worshipers, especially visitors; heat & ventilation; distribution of bulletins, devotional materials, the member mail boxes; ushering; (greeters, office secretary, ushers)
- Assisting the Pastor with the Sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion.
- Scheduling guest speakers, substitutes, assistants.

The Board of Elders is responsible for all Evangelism and Education and should enlist volunteers to help with:

- Visitations
- Praying for a mission spirit among members and outreach of the Gospel
(Missions and Evangelism Committee)
- provide learning opportunities for children youth and adults
- enlist and appoint leaders and teachers for the various agencies and provide training
- review the enrolment in the various classes and record member participation
i.e. Sunday School, VBS, Bible Study, Youth Group
(Education Committee)

Board of Christian Stewardship shall consist of the Treasurer and 3 mandatory positions. There are also 3 supplementary positions if able to be filled. Stewardship members shall be communicant members who are known for their commitment to Christ and their positive attitude toward the gifts of time, talent, and treasure.

The Board of Stewardship:

-shall study the scriptural principles of stewardship

- Set an example for the Congregation in the Grace of proportionate giving.
- Design ways and means of educating members in the principles of Christian Stewardship.
- Sponsor Stewardship education programs
- shall assist the members of the congregation in making a personal commitment to Christ; and lead the Congregation in corporate commitments
- Advise the Congregation on a goal for Mission giving.
- Keep informed of the mission needs and goal of Lutheran Church Canada
- Shall be aware of the needs of our Seminaries
- Keep members informed about our progress toward our mission and congregational goals.
- Screen and make recommendations about all outside appeals for funds that are directed at the congregation or its members.
- Prepare the annual congregational budget after consulting with the Church Council.
- appoint financial secretaries or carry out these duties (under the authority of and working closely with the treasurer, the Financial Secretaries are responsible for receiving, counting and recording the offerings of the members of the Congregation, and for depositing them promptly. They shall also prepare receipts of giving's at year end)
- shall annually appoint an internal auditing committee, or carry out these duties, and shall report to the Congregation

Article VI: Calling of Pastors

- A) Nominations - The Church Council, after consulting with the Regional Pastor, shall present a list of Candidates for the Office of Pastor. Additional names may be added from the floor on a motion by any Communicant member.
- B) Election – The election of a pastor shall be by majority ballot. The election shall then be made unanimous before sending the Call to the Pastor elect. He may be informed by phone prior to sending the official documents.
- C) The Pastoral Office – The Pastoral Office is the authority bestowed upon the Pastor by God, through a call of the congregation to exercise in public office, and on behalf of all members, the priesthood of all believers. The Pastoral Office is the primary office, from which are derived all other offices, boards, agencies, and committees in the congregation.

The Pastor is further to:

- Serve as an example of Christian life and conduct remembering that he is both a steward of God, and servant of Christ, as well as servant of the local Congregation and the Church at large;
- Administer the Sacraments in accordance with their Divine institution;
- Faithfully care for the Spiritual needs of all members of the Congregation, ministering to them in an evangelical manner, in particular to visit the sick and the dying, and to admonish the indifferent and erring members;
- Train and lead those who are enquiring into the Christian faith, especially the youth and adults who enroll in confirmation classes during their preparation for acceptance as Communicant members;
- Give leadership to the Congregation as it reaches out to the unchurched with the Gospel of Christ
- Give depth to the meaning of the Christian faith, and to lead the members into a deeper commitment to Christ;
- Provide spiritual leadership and oversight in the educational agencies and the various adult and youth organizations within the Congregation;
- Guide the congregation in applying the divinely ordained discipline of the church;
- Conduct the worship services of the Congregation and together with the Board Elders, supervise the music used in the services so that it is in harmony with the provisions of Article III of this Constitution;
- Do all that is possible for the upbuilding of the congregation and for the advancement of the Kingdom of Christ among us.