

CONSTITUTION

CONCORDIA LUTHERAN CHURCH

1127 East Broadway

Louisville, Kentucky 40204

PREAMBLE

WHEREAS Christ our Lord has commissioned His Church to preach the Gospel to all the world (Matt. 28:20); and

WHEREAS Christians should practice fellowship with those who profess the true faith (Acts 2:42; Hebrews 10:24-25); and

WHEREAS they should endeavor to keep the unity of faith (Ephesians 4:3, 6; 1 Corinthians 1:10); and

WHEREAS they should administer the office of the keys (John 20:21-23; Matthew 18:17, 20); and

WHEREAS in a Christian congregation all things should be done decently and in order (1 Corinthians 14:40);

THEREFORE we, the undersigned, herewith adopt the following constitution and its By-laws according to which all affairs of this congregation, both spiritual and material, shall be conducted.

ARTICLE I

NAME

The name of this congregation shall be CONCORDIA LUTHERAN CHURCH, INC. - of Louisville, Kentucky.

ARTICLE II

DOCTRINAL STANDARD

- A. This congregation acknowledges and accepts all the canonical books of the Old Testament and the New Testament as the revealed and inerrant Word of God, verbally inspired, and submits to them as the only infallible authority in all matters of faith and life.
- B. This congregation acknowledges and accepts all the confessional writings of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, contained in the Book of Concord of the year 1580, as true and genuine expositions of the doctrines of the Bible. These confessional writings are the three Ecumenical Creeds (Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian), the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, the apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles, Luther's Large and Small Catechisms, and the Formula of Concord.

ARTICLE III

MEMBERSHIP

The membership of this congregation includes the following:

A. BAPTIZED MEMBERS

1. Definition. Baptized members are all members who have been baptized in the name of the Triune God and who are under the spiritual care of the pastor of this congregation, including children who have not yet confirmed their baptismal vows.
2. Reception. Baptized members are received through the sacrament of holy baptism, through transfer, or with the consent of one or both parents or guardians in the case of children who have been baptized in another Christian congregation.
3. Duties. Baptized members shall conform their lives to their baptismal vow.
4. Termination. Baptized members who have not been received as communicant members shall have their membership terminated for the same reasons that communicant membership is terminated insofar as these reasons are applicable.

B. COMMUNICANT MEMBERS

1. Definition. Communicant members are those baptized members who have been confirmed in the Lutheran faith, accept the doctrinal standards of Article II of this constitution, are familiar at least with the contents of Luther's Small Catechism, and who are not members of lodges* or other organizations whose principles and conduct conflict with the Word of God. 2 Corinthians 6:14-18; John 5:23. *By "lodge" we mean secret societies having unchristian religious principles, documents or rites.
2. Reception. Communicant members are received through the rite of confirmation, by transfer from a sister congregation, upon profession of faith, or by reaffirmation of faith, provided they conform to the requirements for membership in this congregation. Their reception shall be reported to the Voters' Assembly.
3. Duties. Communicant members shall conform their entire lives to the rule of God's Word and to that end make diligent use of the means of grace, exercise faithful stewardship of God's gifts, and impart and accept fraternal admonition as the need for such admonition becomes apparent.
4. Termination. (a) Communicant members in good standing may be transferred by the pastor to a sister congregation immediately upon request. Such transfer shall be reported to the Voters' Assembly. Members who move out of the community and thereby become inactive shall be encouraged to transfer their membership to a sister congregation. (b) Communicant members who join congregations outside of our fellowship thereby terminate their membership. (c) Communicant members whose whereabouts are unknown and whose addresses cannot be established shall have their names removed by resolution of the Voters' Assembly. (d) Communicant members who have not taken part in the life of the church, absented themselves from the worship services, and have not received the Holy Communion for a period of over 2 years will be considered "inactive" by the Board of Elders. Names of communicant members who are "inactive" may be brought by the Board of Elders to the Voters' Assembly for removal after following appropriate "church discipline" steps. Removal may then be made only upon a resolution of the Voter's Assembly."
5. Church Discipline. (a) Communicant members who conduct themselves in an unchristian manner shall be admonished according to Matthew 18:15-20; if they remain impenitent after proper admonition, they shall be excommunicated. Each case shall be presented individually to the Voters' Assembly for action. A unanimous vote by the voters present shall be required for excommunication. If such a member deliberately absents himself from the meetings at which his case is to be discussed or in some other manner makes it impossible to deal with him, he thereby excludes himself. A person under church discipline shall not be permitted to vote on his own case. (b) Excommunicated persons who repent and ask forgiveness shall be reinstated into membership.

C. VOTING MEMBERS

1. Definition. Voting members are communicants who have reached the age of 18 years, who have been received by the Voters' Assembly, and have declared their acceptance of and have signed this constitution and by-laws in a regular meeting of the Voters' Assembly.

2. Reception. Applicants for voting membership shall be received as voting members by resolution of the Voters' Assembly provided they meet the requirements for such membership in this congregation.
3. Duties. Voting members shall attend the meetings of the Voters' Assembly regularly, participate in the work of the congregation, and willingly accept responsibility according to ability.
4. Termination. Voting membership may be terminated by resolution of the Voters' Assembly for cause. Any voting member who has not attended a Voters' Assembly meeting for two years shall be contacted personally by the president or his designee to see if they wish to remain a member of the Voters' Assembly. Termination of communicant membership automatically terminates voting membership. Termination of voting membership does not terminate the privileges of communicant membership.
5. Honorary Membership. When a member has been faithful in attendance and duties for a number of years and can no longer attend meetings regularly because of age, illness, or other good reasons, the member may be recommended by the Board of Elders for honorary membership in the Voters' Assembly and be declared to be an honorary member by voice vote of the Assembly. Honorary members are entitled to all the privileges of voting membership but are not required to attend the meetings to maintain their status.

ARTICLE IV
AUTHORITY OF THE CONGREGATION

A. GENERAL

The Voters' Assembly shall be the governing body of this congregation and shall be empowered to administer and manage all its affairs. The establishment and conduct of organizations and societies within the congregation shall be subject to the approval and supervision of the Voters' Assembly, and membership in them shall be limited to communicant members of the congregation.

B. RIGHT AND PROCEDURE OF CALLING

The right of calling pastors or other called staff shall be vested in the Voters' Assembly and shall never be delegated to a smaller group or to an individual. The calling of a Pastor shall be done in consultation with the proper Synodical officials. All candidates for the office of Pastor shall be reviewed and approved by the District President. Either the District President, Circuit Counselor, or their representatives shall be present at all meetings for calling a Pastor.

C. DECISIONS

All matters of doctrine and of conscience shall be decided only by the Word of God. All other matters shall be decided by a majority vote of those present and voting unless otherwise specified by this Constitution or By-laws.

D. REMOVAL FROM OFFICE

A pastor, teacher, or any officer may be removed from office by the Voters' Assembly by a two-thirds majority ballot vote of those present and voting in Christian and lawful order, for one of the following reasons: persistent adherence to false doctrine, scandalous life, or willful neglect of duties, or prolonged incapacity.

E. REMOVAL FROM MEMBERSHIP

The Voters' Assembly shall have authority to exclude any communicant member according to Matthew 18:15-18. The person so excluded (excommunicated) shall forfeit all rights of a member (article III C4).

ARTICLE V
OFFICERS

- A. The officers of this congregation shall be such officers, boards, or committees as the By-laws of this constitution may prescribe.
- B. Congregational officers or committees, whether elected or appointed, shall have no authority beyond that which has been conferred upon them, and whatever authority may have been delegated to them may at any time be altered or revoked.

ARTICLE VI
SYNODICAL MEMBERSHIP

This congregation shall hold membership in The Lutheran Church -- Missouri Synod as long as this Synod remains true to the Word of God and the Lutheran Confessions. It shall send its pastor, called teachers, and a lay delegate to the District conventions of the Synod.

ARTICLE VII
DIVISION

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 of Article II of this Constitution. If division takes place for any other reason, the property shall remain with the majority of the communicant members. In case of dissolution of the congregation, the assets shall be given to the District of Synod in which the congregation holds membership.

ARTICLE VIII
DOCTRINAL CONFORMITY

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

ARTICLE IX
CHANGING THE CONSTITUTION

A. UNALTERABLE ARTICLES

Articles II, IV, and VIII of this Constitution shall not be subject to change or repeal.

B. AMENDMENTS

Amendments to the Constitution may be adopted at a regular Voters' Assembly provided:

1. That they do not conflict with the provisions laid down in Article II, or with any other article that pertains to a Scriptural doctrine and practice; and
2. That the proposed amendment has been submitted in writing at a previous meeting of the Voters' Assembly and published prior to the meeting at which the proposed amendment will be acted upon.
3. That an affirmative vote of a two-thirds majority of the voters present and voting is secured.