

EMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS

Amended: 22 January 1995

Amended: 17 November 2002; ratified 2 February 2003

Corrected and Amended: 25 January 2004

***PREAMBLE**

We, baptized members of the Church of Christ, responding in faith to the call of the 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

- C1.01.** The name of this congregation shall be Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Virginia Beach, Virginia.
- C1.02.** For the purpose of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws, the congregation of Emmanuel Lutheran Church is hereinafter designated as "this congregation."
- C1.03.** The seal of this congregation presents a simple cross in the center. At the top are printed the words "Emmanuel Lutheran Church"; at the bottom of the seal the location of the church "Virginia Beach, Virginia" is printed. The date of organization "1962" is divided to appear on each side of the cross.

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. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 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 saving 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 churchwide organization of 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 descriptions shall be contained in continuing resolutions in the section on the Congregation Council.

***C4.05.**

This congregation shall, from time to time, adopt a mission statement which will provide specific direction for its programs.

C4.05.01.

Mission Statement - We, the members of Emmanuel Lutheran Church, empowered by the Holy Spirit, share the good news of God revealed in Jesus Christ in all that we say and do, both within and outside our community of faith. Through God's Word, the sacraments, and the ministry of teaching, we are stewards providing education, social ministry, fellowship, and spiritual nourishment.

C4.05.02.

Care of Members - Responsibilities of this congregation for fostering faithful membership shall include:

- a. proper instruction in the Word of God and the teaching of the Lutheran church prior to reception as confirmed members;
- b. transfer of membership to another Lutheran congregation or the issuing of a certificate of standing and/or release to another evangelical congregation at the request of the confirmed member. Such transfer of membership or issuing of a certificate of standing and/or release should be granted to baptized but unconfirmed children at the request of their parents.
- c. encouraging members who move from the community which this congregation serves to transfer to a Lutheran congregation which can serve them effectively and in which they can participate regularly. A Lutheran congregation in the new community in which such members live shall be notified of their move.
- d. continuing concern and conscientious pastoral care for members, in an effort to encourage fulfillment of their duties and responsibilities, when they do not partake of Holy Communion, support the church with their offerings, or appear to desire to participate in the life and worship of this congregation. When such members have failed to receive Holy Communion and to make a contribution of record for a period of two consecutive calendar years, they may be removed from the roll of members by the congregation council. This procedure will take place only when there is a pastor under call to serve this congregation or with the approval of the bishop of the synod and after such members have been counseled about the matter, if possible.
- e. a high commitment to youth ministry in this congregation. The aim of this ministry is to nurture and encourage youth who are exploring their growing faiths. Usually, youth ministry will include a regularly-meeting youth group which is a recognized organization of this congregation. The group's purpose shall be to enhance spiritual and interpersonal development through activities, retreats and by encouraging youth to be involved in all phases of this congregation's life.

Chapter 5.

POWERS OF THE CONGREGATION

- *C5.01. The powers of this 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 this congregation's governing documents is recognized. All remaining authority is retained by the congregation. The congregation is authorized to:
 - a. call a pastor as provided in Chapter 9;

- b. terminate the call of a pastor as provided in Chapter 9;
- c. call or terminate the call of associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers in conformity with the applicable policy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;
- d. adopt amendments to the constitution, as provided in Chapter 17, and amendments to the bylaws, as specified in Chapter 16;
- e. approve the annual budget;
- f. acquire real and personal property by gift, devise, purchase, or other lawful means;
- g. authorize the trustees to hold title to the property;
- h. use its property for any and all activities consistent with its purpose;
- i. authorize, by congregational meeting, the trustees to sell, mortgage, lease, transfer, or otherwise dispose of its property by any lawful means;
- j. elect its Congregation Council, boards, and committees, and require them to carry out their duties in accordance with the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions; and
- k. terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as provided in Chapter 6.

***C5.04.** This congregation annually shall choose from among its voting member's laypersons to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly as well as persons to represent it at meetings of any conference, cluster, coalition, or other area subdivision of which it is a member. The number of persons to be elected by the congregation and other qualifications shall be as prescribed in guidelines established by the Virginia Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

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 Virginia Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran 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, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers for call 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 and 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 this 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 the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America 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. Since this congregation was a member of the Lutheran Church in America, it shall be required, in addition to the foregoing provisions in *C6.05., to receive synodical approval before terminating its membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

- *C6.06.** If this congregation considers relocation, it shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located 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 Virginia 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 legally 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 Virginia Synod.
- *C7.04.** If a two-thirds majority of the voting members of this congregation present at a legally 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 this 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 this 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 this 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 confirmed members. Such confirmed members, during the current or preceding calendar year, shall have communed in this

congregation and shall have made a contribution of record to this congregation.

d. Associate members are persons holding membership in other Christian congregations who wish to retain such membership but desire to participate in the life and mission of this congregation or persons who wish to retain a relationship with this congregation while being members of other congregations. 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, the synod, and the churchwide organization 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;
- d. disciplinary action by the Congregation Council; or
- e. 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 legally 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 a candidate for the roster of ordained ministers who has been recommended for the congregation 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,

- a. Every ordained minister shall:
 - 1) preach the Word;
 - 2) administer the sacraments;
 - 3) conduct public worship;

- 4) provide pastoral care; and
 - 5) speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world.
- b. Each ordained minister with a congregational call shall, within the congregation:
- 1) offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead;
 - 2) supervise all school and organizations of this congregation;
 - 3) install regularly elected members of the Congregation Council; and
 - 4) with the council, administer discipline.
- c. Every pastor shall:
- 1) strive to extend the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation, and abroad;
 - 2) seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel;
 - 3) impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through distribution of its periodicals and other publications; and
 - 4) endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and of the Virginia 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, which shall be attested by the bishop of the synod.

- *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;
 - 2) resignation of the pastor, which shall become effective, unless otherwise agreed, 30 days after the date on which it was submitted;
 - 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;
 - 6) the dissolution of the congregation; or
 - 7) suspension of the congregation as a result of discipline proceedings.
- b. When allegations of physical or mental incapacity of the pastor or ineffective conduct of the pastoral office have come to the attention of the bishop of the synod, the bishop in his or her sole discretion may, or when such allegations 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, the bishop shall, 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 that 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 at a legally called meeting after consultation with the bishop, either (a) by a two-thirds majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee did not recommend termination of the call, or (b) by a simple majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee recommended termination of the call.
- e. If, in the course of proceedings described in *C9.05.d., the committee concludes that there may be grounds for disciplinary action, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action to the synodical bishop who may bring charges, in accordance with the provisions of the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the constitution of this synod.
- f. If, following the appointment of the committee described in *C9.05.b. or d., it should become apparent that the pastoral office cannot be conducted effectively in the congregation(s) 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(s) without prejudice and with pay provided through a joint synodical and churchwide fund and with housing provided by the congregation(s).

***C9.06.** At a time of pastoral vacancy, an interim pastor shall 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 in the congregation 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 before beginning

service in a call to another congregation or employment in another ministry setting related to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

- *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. 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 a call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of *C9.05.a.
- *C9.12.** The pastor of this congregation:
- a. shall keep accurate parochial records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from the congregation;
 - b. shall submit a summary of such statistics annually to the synod; and
 - c. shall become a member of this congregation upon receipt and acceptance of the letter of call. In a parish of multiple congregations, the pastor shall hold membership in one of the congregations.
- *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.
- C9.20. Ecumenical pastoral ministry**
- C9.21.** Under special circumstances, subject to the approval of the synodical bishop and the concurrence of this congregation, an ordained minister of a church body with which the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America officially has established a relationship of full communion may serve temporarily as pastor of this congregation under a contract between the congregation and the ordained minister in a form proposed by the synodical bishop and approved by the congregation.

Chapter 10.

CONGREGATION MEETING

- C10.01.** Semi-annual meetings of this congregation shall be held at a time specified in the bylaws.
- C10.01.01.** A semiannual congregation meeting shall be convened in November or December at a time fixed by the congregation council for the purpose of election of council members and approval of the budget for the forthcoming year. A semiannual congregational meeting shall be convened in January or February at a time fixed by the congregation council for the purpose of receiving annual reports for the preceding year. At each of these sessions, other business of this congregation may be transacted.
- C10.01.02.** At congregation meetings when matters concerning selling, purchasing or encumbering real estate, or extensive repairs to, or construction of, church-owned

buildings are considered, only voting members, eighteen years or older, shall be permitted to vote.

- 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 by the president of the congregation upon the written request of twenty percent of the voting members. The call for each special meeting shall specify the purpose for which it is to be held and no other business shall be transacted.
- 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.** Fifteen percent 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 approved by the congregation shall be by majority vote of those voting members present and voting, except as otherwise provided in this constitution or by state law.
- 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, financial secretary and treasurer.
- 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.
 - d. If the Congregation Council elects its officers, the president, vice president, and secretary shall be selected from the elected membership of the Congregation Council.
- C11.01.01.** The president shall preside at meetings of this congregation and the congregation council. In the event of the president's inability to serve, the vice-president shall preside.
- C11.01.02.** The secretary shall keep accurate minutes of all meetings of this congregation and of the council in a volume provided by this congregation, which shall be preserved permanently in its archives.
- C11.01.03.** The financial secretary shall receive and keep record of all income from contributing members and other sources.
- C11.01.04.** The treasurer shall keep the books of account of this congregation and shall receive from the financial secretary a record of all funds deposited to the church account and disburse monies on proper order, making monthly remittance of benevolence to the treasurer of the synod.
- C11.01.05.** The treasurer and the financial secretary shall provide written financial reports of income and expense, and a balance sheet to the Congregation Council monthly

and a comprehensive detailed report to the congregation at its semi-annual meeting in January or February. The annual reports should be developed with the understanding that these reports are the official recorded history of the congregation. The treasurer's report shall be a complete listing of all budget line items with budgeted amount and actual expenditures compared. These reports should be submitted via the congregation council.

C11.02. The Congregation Council shall elect its officers and they shall be the officers of the congregation. The officers shall be elected by written ballot and shall serve for one year or until their successors are elected. Their terms shall begin at the close of the annual meeting at which they are elected.

C11.03. No officer shall hold more than one office at a time. The president and vice-president shall be eligible to serve no more than two consecutive terms in the same office. The treasurer shall be eligible to serve no more than four 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 not more than thirteen members. Any voting member of the congregation may be elected, subject only to the limitation on the length of continuous service permitted in that office. One member shall be a youth member who is a voting member of this congregation but who has not yet reached his/her nineteenth birthday. 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 two 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 during the month of November or December. Their term of office shall be for three years except for the youth member who shall have a term of one year. Terms of office shall begin on January 1 and end on December 31. Such members shall be eligible to serve no more than two full terms consecutively. A youth term shall be for one year, and an individual is eligible for no more than two consecutive terms. Newly elected Congregation Council members shall be installed at worship the Sunday prior to the date they assume office.

C12.02.01. All elections of lay members to the council at the annual congregation meeting shall be by written ballot.

C12.02.02. At the annual congregation meeting, nominations for council membership shall be made by the council. Two nominees shall be presented for each vacancy to be filled. Additional nominations may be made from the floor. A majority of the votes cast shall be necessary for election. In the balloting for council membership after the second ballot, the names of persons receiving the highest number of votes, but not elected on the preceding ballot, shall be entered on the next ballot to the number of two per each vacancy unfilled. If any vacancy(ies) on the council to be filled is (are) an unexpired term(s), the vacancy shall be filled by the elected member(s) receiving the least number of votes on the final ballot.

- C12.02.03.** The council will normally meet on the second Wednesday of each month at a time determined at its first meeting.
- C12.02.04.** The council which will serve for the ensuing year shall hold a special meeting in December for the purpose of election of officers, approval of Directors of the standing committees and chairpersons of special committees, and other appropriate administrative matters which shall become effective on January 1 following.
- C12.02.05.** The following may constitute the Order of Business at regular council meetings:
- a. Devotions
 - b. A period for study of the life and work of the church
 - c. Roll call and action on excuses for absence
 - d. Reading of minutes
 - e. Reception of petitions and communications
 - f. Report of the pastor
 - g. Statistical report
 - h. Report of the financial secretary
 - i. Report of the Treasurer
 - j. Reports of standing committees
 - k. Reports of special committees
 - l. Other reports
 - m. Unfinished business
 - n. New business
 - o. Adjournment
- 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 annual meeting. Individuals who have served less than one-half of a regular term shall be eligible for nomination and possible election to a full term.
- 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 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 organization 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.
- j. To seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel.

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 Commonwealth of Virginia, except as otherwise provided herein.
- b. The Congregation Council shall not have the authority to authorize the trustees to buy, sell, or encumber real property unless specifically authorized to do so by a meeting of the congregation.
- c. The Congregation Council may enter into contracts of up to \$4,000 for items not included in the budget. Any single obligation of more than \$1,000 must first be approved at a legally called meeting of the congregation.
- d. 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 of more than ten percent in excess of each budget item in a given year only after approval by a Congregation Meeting. 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.
- e. 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.
- f. 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, and 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 employment of the salaried lay workers of this congregation. The Pastor(s) shall be responsible for the day to day supervision of the salaried lay workers, Deacons, and Associates In Ministry of this congregation.

- C12.09.** The Congregation Council shall submit a comprehensive report to this congregation at the annual meeting.
- C12.09.01.** The retention of church records in a form that is visible, available and retrievable for the use of the congregation is the responsibility of the Congregation Council. These records include but are not limited to:
 Current copy of the constitution of the congregation
 Congregational meeting minutes
 Congregation Council meeting minutes
 Significant correspondence related to church business,
 Building information and synod policy
 Annual Report of the Congregation (submitted to the synod)
 Inventory of contents of safety deposit box
 Church register
 Roster of member
 Historical files
- 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 by the president 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 the pastor or interim pastor requests or consents to be absent and has given prior approval to the agenda for a particular regular or special meeting, which shall be the only business considered at that meeting. Chronic or repeated absence of the pastor or interim pastor who has refused approval of the agenda of a subsequent regular or special meeting shall not preclude action by the Congregation Council, following consultation with the synodical bishop.
- C12.13.** The property of the congregation shall be held in trust by three trustees elected by the congregation and appointed by the court according to the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia.
- C12.14.** Trustees shall serve for a term of five years, without limit as to number of terms. However, the office shall be declared vacant upon the death, resignation, or failure to continue as a voting member on the part of the person serving as trustee. The trustees shall abide by the decisions of the congregation.
- C12.15.** When there is a vacancy in the office of trustee, the congregation shall elect a person who is a voting member and who is of legal age and the officers shall recommend to the court that the person so elected be appointed trustee.

Chapter 13.

CONGREGATION COMMITTEES

- C13.01.** The officers of this congregation and the pastor shall constitute the **Executive Committee.**
- C13.02.** A **Nominating Committee** of six voting members of this congregation, two of whom, if possible, shall be outgoing members of the Congregation Council, shall be elected for a term of one year by the Congregation Council at its October

meeting. Members of the Nominating Committee are not eligible for consecutive reelection.

- C13.03.** An **Audit Committee** of three voting members shall be elected by the Congregation Council. Audit Committee members shall not be members of the Congregation Council. Term of office shall be three years, with one member elected each year. Members shall be eligible for reelection. The Audit Committee shall audit the financial records of this church and of all organizational entities associated with the congregation. In addition, the Audit Committee shall review the church records specified in Section 5 Item 6 of the Bylaws to ensure:
- a. the documents are available and in good order
 - b. appropriate documents and reports have been completed and are on file.
- The Audit Committee shall make a report of its findings in writing to the Congregation Council.
- C13.04.** A Mutual Ministry Committee (in the absence of a Mutual Ministry 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 with one-third of the 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 and two alternates shall be appointed by the Congregation Council and approved by the congregation at a legally called congregational meeting or at a special congregational meeting called for that purpose. The size of the committee shall be maintained at eight persons throughout the call process. Term of office will terminate upon at installation of the newly called pastor. The president shall be an ex-officio member of the Call Committee with voice but no vote.
- C13.06.** Other committees of this congregation may be formed, as the need arises, by decision of the Congregation Council.
- C13.07.** Duties of committees of this congregation shall be specified in the bylaws and/or continuing resolutions.
- C13.07.01.** The following committees are designated standing committees: Christian Education; Church Property; Evangelism; Finance; Social Ministry; Stewardship; and Worship and Music. All other committees, which the congregation council may establish to achieve a stated objective, are designated special committees.
- C13.07.02.** Except as stipulated in the following paragraphs, the duties of all committees shall
- be assigned by the congregation council, along with such instructions as in its judgment are in the best interests of this congregation. All actions of committees shall be subject to review by the council.
- C13.07.03.** Each committee shall be composed of three or more voting members of this congregation. Although appointed by and responsible to the congregation council, the committees shall be recognized as representatives of the interest of, and performing essential services for, this congregation as a whole. The Pastor shall have voice and vote in all committees.
- C13.07.04.** The standing committees normally shall hold regular meetings at the church building, at 7:30 p.m., on the first Wednesday of each month. Chairpersons may

conduct regular meetings at a different time or place when special circumstances require and should so advise the president at the earliest opportunity. Exceptions should be kept to a minimum so that the committee is available to other committees, officers, and congregational members for discussion of matters of mutual interest. Special committees shall meet in accordance with council direction. Special meetings of any committee may be called by the chairperson whenever the need arises.

- C13.07.05.** Each committee shall submit monthly to the council a written report of committee meetings. Each standing committee shall submit a comprehensive annual written report for presentation to the congregation in January. Committee chairpersons should prepare these reports to be historical records and instructional to future committees. As a minimum the reports should include the names of members that served on the committee, a description of accomplishments and any recommendations to the congregation. Special committees shall submit annual reports if directed by the council.
- C13.07.06.** All standing committees and those special committees which have been authorized by council to spend congregational monies shall submit proposed annual budgets and spending plans when specified by council. Throughout the year committees shall diligently manage expenditures within their respective line-items. If a committee recognizes the need for programs that were not anticipated when its budget was submitted and therefore not approved by council, it shall bring such programs to the attention of council with a recommended course of action. Should circumstances arise during the year, which indicate that the approved budget will prove inadequate to support committee programs, the committee shall promptly notify council of the situation along with current status of programs and budget requirements together with feasible options and recommendations.
- C13.07.07.** The congregation council shall assign a minimum of one council member to each standing and special committee. The member(s) so assigned normally shall not serve as chairpersons. The main purpose of the assignment is to assist in the information flow between the committee and council.
- C13.07.08.** The committees, standing and special, are formed to ensure the fulfillment of all congregational functions described in Chapter IV. They constitute the main thrust of congregational action in their respective areas of responsibility. In accomplishing their tasks, committees are enjoined to coordinate their actions with other committees as may be appropriate, in order that the intended outcomes may be enhanced and conflicts avoided. Dialogue with counterparts in other Lutheran churches is encouraged.
- C13.07.09.** Christian Education Committee. This committee shall develop and implement an educational ministry program. To this purpose, with assistance and guidance of the Pastor, it shall oversee the conduct and promotion of the schools and other educational programs within this congregation. It shall obtain and train teachers, shall ensure that teaching and worship materials are current, using primarily those materials published or approved by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and shall seek to introduce the church's periodicals and book of family devotion into the homes of the congregation. The learning environment including

classroom arrangement, lighting, class size, and training aids shall be reviewed frequently to enhance achievement of instruction goals. The committee shall bring the call to the ministry of the Gospel and other full-time vocations to the attention of the youth and other congregation members. Committee membership shall include the superintendents of the church schools.

- C13.07.10.** Church Property Committee. This committee shall provide for the cleanliness, maintenance, repair and preservation of all church property, cognizance of which is not otherwise assigned to another committee, organization or individual. This committee shall monitor safety requirements, physical security, fire protection and fire prevention measures related to the church buildings, their contents and grounds. It shall maintain the inventory record of all property and coordinate the annual inventory of church property. It shall recommend the disposition of church property that is of no further use to this congregation. It shall prescribe the tasks, supervise the work, and evaluate the performance of the sexton.
- C13.07.11.** Evangelism Committee. This committee shall provide for this congregation's witness ministry. To this end it shall: provide motivation to the members to witness to their faith in their daily lives; by means of a visitation program, attempt to restore members who have lapsed from active membership and bring new members into the fellowship of the church; periodically study this congregation in the context of its surrounding community; and conduct follow-up communications with visitors to our worship services. Annually it shall review the church roll in order that it accurately reflects the active membership.
- C13.07.12.** Finance Committee. This committee shall oversee the financial affairs of this congregation, including the overall insurance and investment programs. It shall ensure procedures are followed which provide safeguards for the counting and depositing of offerings. It shall preparing a draft budget for the succeeding year and, following council action, present the recommended budget to this congregation for approval at the annual congregation meeting. Throughout the year, it shall monitor income, spending plans and expenditures, giving particular attention to the prompt payment of all obligations. It shall provide for the annual audits of the accounts and records of the financial secretary, the treasurer, and the organizations of this congregation. The financial secretary and the treasurer shall be ex officio members of this committee.
- C13.07.13.** Social Ministry Committee. This committee shall provide for the outreach of service to the needs of society on the local level, and in cooperation with the synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, on the national and world-wide levels. To this end it shall: lead this congregation in its outreach by providing information of society's needs; promote the social appeals of the synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; coordinate congregational action in providing for human needs; and provide a communication channel with local religious and governmental agencies.
- C13.07.14.** Stewardship Committee. This committee shall provide leadership in accomplishing the congregational function of support. To this end it shall: annually plan and execute the Every Member Response Program; provide on a continuing basis, education of this congregation as to the need for and its

responsibility towards support to Emmanuel Lutheran's ministries with time, talent and treasure; conduct a visitation program for new members to explain this congregation's programs and to obtain their pledges of support; and regularly inform this congregation of the ministries being accomplished. The financial secretary shall be an ex officio member of this committee.

C13.07.15. Worship and Music Committee. This committee shall assist the Pastor in leading this congregation in accomplishing its worship function. To this end it shall: ensure that worship services are conducted regularly and in accordance with the liturgy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; procure and care for the musical instruments, supplies and hymnals; and recruit and train members for participation in the worship services as lay assistants, acolytes, choir members, and ushers. The committee provides for element presenters and nursery facilities at both services. The Director of Music and all choir directors shall be ex officio members of this committee.

C13.07.16. Altar Guild. There shall be an Altar Guild which meets regularly, working closely with the Pastor and the Director of Music. The Altar Guild shall be responsible for preparing the narthex, nave and chancel for worship, and for the care and storage of all items used for worship. The Altar Guild shall review questions of aesthetics in the narthex, nave and chancel, including changes in furnishings, and bring recommendations for significant changes to the congregation council. The Altar Guild shall oversee the memorial program by maintaining the Memorial Book and making specific recommendations to the congregation council for expending Memorial Fund gifts.

C13.07.17. Fellowship Committee. The purpose of the Fellowship Committee is to provide a ministry to the congregation of Emmanuel Lutheran Church by encouraging social interaction and providing a mutual support system. Fellowship Committee furnishes the opportunity to create a more relaxed environment beyond the worship service.

C13.07.18. School Committee. This committee shall assist the Pastor and Director of the parochial school at Emmanuel Lutheran Church. To this end it shall: help yearly in the certification process, meet regularly to address policy issues and other business, set salaries, write contracts, interpret this ministry of the church to this congregation, serve as the Board of Directors of the parochial school, and help in other ways deemed appropriate. It shall see that the philosophy of Emmanuel School and Emmanuel Lutheran Church are carried out to the fullest. In accord with section C9.03 item b,2, the Pastor of this congregation shall supervise the parochial school.

C13.07.19. Congregational Life Committee. It shall be the responsibility of this committee to provide care of and ministry to members.

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.
- C14.02.01.** All organizations or groups that are not part of this congregation and who desire to use either the church building or the church grounds must first obtain approval of the congregation council.
- C14.02.02.** Specific rules for the use of the building or grounds shall be established by the Property Committee and provided to each user group or organization.
- C14.02.03.** The loan of church owned materials or equipment may be approved by the Pastor or the president. Council shall be informed at its next meeting.

Chapter 15.

DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS AND ADJUDICATION

- *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. If for any reason, the pastor is unable to administer the admonitions required by a. and b. hereof, the president (if not the pastor) or vice president shall administer the admonitions.
- *C15.02.** The process for discipline of a member of the congregation shall be governed as prescribed by the chapter on discipline in the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. If discipline against a member proceeds beyond counseling and admonition by the pastor, charges against the accused member(s) that are specific and in writing shall be prepared by member(s) of the congregation who shall sign the charges as the accuser(s). The written charges shall be filed with the pastor, who shall advise the Congregation Council of the need to issue a written citation to the accused and the accusers that specifies the time and place of the hearing before the Congregation Council. The written charges shall accompany the written citation to the accused. A member charged with the offense shall appear before the Congregation council after having received a written citation, at least ten days prior to the meeting. If the member charged with the offense fails to appear at the scheduled hearing, the Congregation Council may proceed with the hearing and may pass judgment in the member's absence.
- *C15.03.** Members of the Congregation Council who participate in the preparation of the written charges or who present evidence or testimony in the hearing before the Congregation Council are disqualified from voting upon the question of the guilt of the accused member. Should the allegations be sustained by a two-thirds

majority vote of the members of the Congregation Council, who are not disqualified but who are present and voting, and renewed admonition prove ineffectual, 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.
- *C15.06. For disciplinary actions in this congregation, “due process” shall be observed as specified in 20.41.04. in the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- *C15.07. No member of a congregation shall be subject to discipline for offenses that the Congregation Council has previously heard and decided, unless so ordered by the Synod Council after an appeal.
- *C15.10. Adjudication
- *C15.11. When there is disagreement among factions within this congregation on a substantive issue that cannot be resolved by the parties, members of this congregation shall have access to the synodical bishop for consultation after informing the chair of the Congregation Council of their intent. If the consultation fails to resolve the issue(s), the Consultation Committee of the synod shall consider the matter. If the Consultation Committee of the synod shall fail to resolve the issue(s), the matter shall be referred to the Synod Council, whose decision shall be final.

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 by the secretary of this congregation to the synod.

Chapter 17.
AMENDMENTS

- *C17.01.** Those sections of this constitution that are not required, in accord with the *Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, may be amended in the following manner. Amendments may be proposed by at least five 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 a regular or special Congregation Meeting called for that purpose. The Congregation Council shall notify the congregation's members by mail of the proposal together with the council's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the meeting.
- *C17.02.** An amendment to this constitution, proposed under *C17.01., shall:
- a. be approved at a legally called Congregation 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 that result from the processes provided in *C17.01. and *C17.02. 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 Virginia Synod of the ELCA.
- *C17.04.** Whenever the *Model Constitution for Congregations* is amended by the Churchwide Assembly, this constitution may be amended to incorporate any such amendment by a simple majority vote of those voting members present and voting at any subsequent meeting of the congregation without presentation at a prior meeting of the congregation, provided that the Congregation Council has submitted by mail notice to the congregation of such an amendment or amendments, together with the council's recommendations, at least 30 days prior to the meeting. Following the adoption of an amendment, the secretary of the congregation shall submit a copy thereof to the synod. Such provision shall become effective immediately following a vote of approval.

Chapter 18.
CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

- *C18.01.** The Congregation Council may enact continuing resolutions. Such continuing resolutions may not conflict with the constitutions or bylaws 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.

Chapter 19.
INDEMNIFICATION

***C19.01.** Consistent with the provisions of the laws under which this congregation is incorporated, this congregation may adopt provisions providing indemnification for each person, who, by reason of the fact that such person is or was a Congregation Council member, officer, employee, agent, or other member of any committee of this congregation, was or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending, or completed civil, criminal, administrative, arbitration, or investigative proceeding.