

**Constitution and Bylaws
Hope Lutheran Church
Farmington Hills, MI 48331**

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.

C1 NAME AND INCORPORATION

- C1.01 The name of this congregation shall be Hope Lutheran Church of Farmington Hills, Michigan.
- C1.02 For the purpose of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws, the congregation of Hope Lutheran Church of Farmington Hills, Michigan is hereinafter designated as this "Congregation."
- C1.03 This Congregation shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of Michigan.

C2 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 Scripture 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.

C3 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 the saints; in breadth, it expresses the fellowship of believers and congregations in our day.

C4 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 standing committee and task force, and shall review their actions.

C4.05 This Congregation shall from time to time adopt a mission statement which will provide specific direction for its programs.

C5 CHURCH AFFILIATION

- C5.01 This Congregation shall be an interdependent part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or its successor, and of the Southeast Michigan Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. This Congregation is subject to the discipline of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- C5.02 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.
- C5.03 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 according to the procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- C5.04 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 C5.05.
- C5.05 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 with the

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 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 with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America 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.

C5.06 If this Congregation considers relocation, it shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located and the appropriate program unit of the churchwide organization before any steps are taken leading to such action.

C5.07 If this Congregation considers developing an additional site to be used regularly for worship, it shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located and the appropriate program unit of the churchwide organization before any steps are taken leading to such action.

C6 MEMBERSHIP

C6.01 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.

C6.02 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. Members of this Congregation who have satisfied these basic standards shall have the privilege of voice and vote at every regular and special meeting of 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.

C6.03 All applications for confirmed membership shall be submitted to and shall require the approval of the Congregation Council.

C6.04 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.

C6.05 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.

C7 CONGREGATION MEETING

C7.01 The semi-annual meetings of this Congregation shall be held at a time specified by the bylaws.

C8 POWERS OF THE CONGREGATION

C8.01 The powers of this Congregation are those necessary to fulfill its purpose.

C8.02 The powers of this Congregation are vested in the Congregation Meeting called and conducted as provided in this constitution and bylaws.

C8.03 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 12;
 - b. terminate the call of a pastor as provided in Chapter 12;
 - 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. hold title to and use its property for any and all activities consistent with its purpose;
 - h. sell, mortgage, lease, transfer, or otherwise dispose of its property by any lawful means;
 - i. elect its Congregation Council and require the members of the Congregation Council to carry out their duties in accordance with the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions; and
 - j. terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as provided in Chapter 6.
- C8.04 This Congregation Council shall choose from among its voting members 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 and other qualifications shall be as prescribed in guidelines established by the Southeast Michigan Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

C9 CONGREGATION COUNCIL

- C9.01 The voting membership of the Congregation Council, shall consist of the Senior Pastor, the President, and six (6) directors (three of whom are Officers). Any active Voting Member of this Congregation may be elected, subject only to the limitation on the length of continuous service in that position and to the following age restrictions:
- a. one (1) of the three (3) non-officer directors may be sixteen (16) or seventeen (17) years of age.
 - b. all officers and all other directors must be at least eighteen (18) years of age.
- C9.02 All members on the Congregation Council may be removed from office for reasonable cause.
- C9.03 The affairs of this Congregation shall be directed and managed by the Congregation Council, which has been duly placed in office, in accordance with the constitution and bylaws, by this Congregation. The Congregation Council shall govern, regulate and direct the affairs and business of this Congregation, carrying out the policies and directives of this Congregation for the mission and ministries of this Congregation. It shall gather and assimilate the needs and concerns of this Congregation and present them as appropriate for formal action at the Congregation Meeting.
- C9.04 All written policies established by the Congregation Council are subject to revision by the Congregation Council.

- C9.05 Non-budgeted cumulative recurring expenditures of up to 3.5% of the annual expense budget and cumulative non-recurring expenditures of up to 5% of the annual expense budget shall be disbursed by the authority of the Congregation Council.
- C9.06 The Congregation Council shall normally meet once a month. Special meetings of the Congregation Council may be called by the Senior Pastor or the President and shall be called by the President at the request of at least half of the Voting Members of the Congregation Council. Written notice of each special meeting of the Congregation Council shall be given at least one week prior to the meeting to all members of the Congregation Council.
- C9.07 Five (5) voting members of the Congregation Council present at a business meeting shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. The vote of a majority of the voting members of the Congregation Council present and voting at any meeting at which a quorum is present shall constitute the act of the Congregation Council, unless the vote of a larger number is specifically required by law.
- C9.08 All Members and Staff personnel of this Congregation are welcome to attend Congregation Council meetings and may address Congregation Council members when acknowledged by the chairperson.

C10 PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

- C10.01 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 end this Congregation's ministry, such that this Congregation will cease to exist, title to undisposed property shall pass to the Southeast Michigan Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or to another church body recognized as a Religious 501(c)(3) organization deemed appropriate by a two-thirds majority of the voting members of this Congregation present at a legally called and conducted special meeting of this Congregation. If the two-thirds majority is not reached, the title to the undisposed property shall pass to the Southeast Michigan Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- C10.02 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.
- C10.03 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 church body recognized as a Religious 501(c)(3) organization, or become an independent church body recognized as a Religious 501(c)(3) organization, title to property shall continue to reside in this Congregation. Before this Congregation takes action to transfer to another church body or become independent, it shall consult with representatives of the Southeast Michigan Synod.

C11 OFFICERS

C11.01 The Officers of this Congregation shall be the President, the Vice President (also known in this Congregation as the Director of Leadership), the Treasurer (also known in this Congregation as the Director of Finance), and the Secretary (also known in this Congregation as Director of Facilities).

- a. Duties of the Officers shall be specified in the bylaws.
- b. The Officers shall be Voting Members of this Congregation at least 18 years of age.
- c. The Officers shall serve as Voting Members of the Congregation Council.
- d. The Officers of this Congregation are authorized to execute legal documents.

C11.02 No Officer shall hold more than one office at a time.

C11.03 All Officers of this Congregation may be removed from office for reasonable cause by this Congregation.

C12 THE PASTOR

C12.01 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 the Congregation Council to recommend the call, shall seek the advice and help of the bishop of the synod.

C12.02 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.

C12.03 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 schools and organizations of this Congregation;
 - 3) install regularly elected members of the Congregation Council; and
 - 4) with the Congregation 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 Southeast Michigan Synod of the ELCA.

C12.04 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.

C12.05 PASTORAL CALL

- 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 the termination of a parish arrangement; 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 C12.05b. 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 C12.05d., 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 C12.05b. or d., it should become apparent that the pastoral office cannot be conducted effectively in the congregation being served by the ordained minister due to local conditions, the bishop of the synod may temporarily suspend the pastor from service in the congregation without prejudice and with pay provided through a joint synodical and churchwide fund and with housing provided by the congregation.

C12.06 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.

C12.07 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.

C12.08 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.

C12.09 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.

C12.10 With the approval of the bishop of the synod, the congregation may depart from C12.05a. 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 C12.05a.

C12.11 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.

C12.12 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.

C12.13 The parochial records of this Congregation shall be maintained by the pastor and shall remain the property of the congregation. The Secretary of this Congregation shall attest in writing to the bishop of this synod that such records have been placed in his or her hands in good order by a departing pastor before the installation of that pastor in another field of labor or the granting by the synod of retired status to the pastor.

C12.14 [Reserved]

C12.15 [Reserved]

C12.16 [Reserved]

C12.17 [Reserved]

C12.18 [Reserved]

C12.19 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.

C13 CONGREGATION COMMITTEES

C13.01 The Congregation Council may establish advisory or special committees from time to time as it shall deem appropriate to conduct the activities of the congregation and shall define the powers and responsibilities of such committees. The members and all chairpersons of the committees shall be

appointed by the President on the recommendation of the Congregation Council. The Congregation Council shall establish the purpose, composition, terms and other operating matters relative to each such committee.

C13.02 The composition and operation of each standing committee shall be described in the bylaws.

C14 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. The Congregation Council shall have the discretion to review each organization's policies, and request reports concerning their membership, work and finances. In the event the Congregation Council deems that an organization does not support the mission of this Congregation, the Congregation Council shall have the authority to dissolve the organization.

C15 DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS AND ADJUDICATION

C15.01 Denial of the Christian faith as described in this constitution or conduct grossly unbecoming a Member of the Church 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.
- d) If, for any reason, the pastor is unable to administer the admonitions required by a. and b. hereof, the President or Vice President shall administer such admonitions.

C15.02 The process for discipline of a Member of the congregation shall be governed and prescribed by the chapter on discipline in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. If the 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 Congregation Council shall impose one of the following disciplinary actions:

- a. censure before the Congregation 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 Southeast Michigan Synod Council. Such right may not be abridged and the decision of the Southeast Michigan 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 [Reserved]

C15.08 [Reserved]

C15.09 Adjudication

When there is a 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 President of the Congregation Council of their intent. If the consultation fails to resolve the issue(s), the Consultation Committee of the Southeast Michigan Synod shall consider the matter. If the Consultation Committee of the Southeast Michigan Synod shall fail to resolve the issue(s), the matter shall be referred to the Southeast Michigan Synod Council, whose decision shall be final.

C16 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 Congregation Meeting 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 congregation's Members of the proposal with the Congregation Council's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the Congregation Meeting.

C17 AMENDMENTS

- C17.01 Amendments to this Constitution may be proposed by at least 25 Voting Members or by the Congregation Council. Proposals must be filed in writing with the Congregation Council 60 days before formal consideration by the congregation at a regular or special Congregation Meeting called for that purpose. The Congregation Council shall notify this Congregation's Members of the proposal together with the Congregation Council's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the meeting.
- C17.02 An amendment to this constitution shall:
- a. be approved at a legally called Congregation Meeting according to this constitution by a majority vote of those Voting Members present and voting;
 - b. be ratified without change at the next regularly scheduled Congregation Meeting by a two-thirds majority vote of those Voting Members present and voting; and
 - c. have the effective date included in the resolution and noted in the constitution.

C18 CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

- C18.01 This Congregation in a legally called Congregation Meeting or the Congregation Council may enact continuing resolutions. Such continuing resolutions may not conflict with the constitution or bylaws of this Congregation.
- C18.02 Continuing resolutions shall be enacted or amended by a majority vote of a meeting of this Congregation or a two-thirds vote of all voting members of the Congregation Council.

C19 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 an Officer, employee, agent, Congregation Council member, 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.

Bylaws of Hope Lutheran Church

C1 NAME AND INCORPORATION

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C2 CONFESSION OF FAITH

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C3 NATURE OF THE CHURCH

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C4 STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

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- C4.04 This section left intentionally blank
- C4.04.01 The Congregation Council is also known throughout these bylaws as the Strategic Planning Council (SPC).

C5 CHURCH AFFILIATION

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C6 MEMBERSHIP

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- C6.05 Inactivity shall be measured against the most recently completed full calendar year membership. Inactivity shall be defined as failure both to attend at least one worship service at this Congregation and to make at least one financial contribution to this Congregation during that calendar year.

C7 CONGREGATION MEETING

- C7.01 A meeting shall be held in the spring for the purpose of congregational elections and conducting other necessary business.
- The Personnel Committee shall serve as tellers and as such, shall be responsible for counting the votes.
- C7.02 A meeting shall be held in the fall for the purpose of congregational action on the budget and conducting other necessary business. The financial budget of this Congregation shall be on a calendar year basis and shall be presented for approval by this Congregation at the fall Congregation Meeting.
- C7.03 Notice of all regular meetings of this Congregation shall be given at all worship services in the preceding two (2) weeks and shall be included in congregational communications in the preceding two (2) weeks.
- C7.04 A special Congregation Meeting may be called by the Senior Pastor, the SPC, or the President of this Congregation, and shall be called by the President of this Congregation upon the written request of a minimum of ten (10) voting members of this Congregation. The call for each special meeting shall specify the purpose for which it is to be held, and no other business shall be transacted.
- C7.05 Notice of special meetings shall be given at all worship services on the last Sunday that is at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting and shall be included in congregational communications at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting.
- C7.06 Twenty-five (25) Voting Members shall constitute a quorum for the semi-annual meetings. Fifty (50) Voting Members shall constitute a quorum for a special meeting.
- C7.07 For approval of the slate of SPC members, calling of a pastor, constitution or bylaw changes, the annual budget, non-budgeted cumulative recurring expenditures over 3.5% of the annual expense budget, and cumulative non-recurring expenditures over 5% of the annual expense budget, voting shall be by written ballot. Voting by proxy or by absentee ballot shall not be permitted.

- C7.01.08 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.
- C7.01.09 *Robert's Rules of Order*, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of all meetings of this Congregation.
- C7.01.10 Non-budgeted cumulative recurring expenditures over 3.5% of the annual expense budget, and cumulative non-recurring expenditures over 5% of the annual expense budget shall be disbursed by authority of the Congregation Meeting.

C8 POWERS OF THE CONGREGATION

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C9 STRATEGIC PLANNING COUNCIL (SPC)

- C9.01.01 The elected members of the SPC shall be elected by written ballot at the regular spring Congregation Meeting. The Personnel Committee (as defined in Chapter 13) shall make recommendations for all elected SPC positions for ratification by this Congregation. Voting members may make nominations from the floor. The terms for all elected members of the SPC shall be for two (2) years beginning on July 1 and ending on June 30 unless one (1) of the three (3) non-officer directors is sixteen (16) or seventeen (17) years of age at the beginning of their term. If one (1) of the non-officer directors is sixteen (16) or seventeen (17) years of age, their term will be one (1) year.
- C9.01.02 After one (1) term, a director may be elected to a different position and serve one (1) term.
- C9.01.03 No director may be elected to serve more than two (2) full consecutive terms or, if selected initially to fill a vacancy, serve more than five (5) consecutive years in one position.
- C9.01.04 After serving the maximum time allowed in C9.01.03 in the same or different positions, a director must wait one (1) year to serve again on the SPC unless elected Director of Leadership.
- C9.01.05 Should SPC vacancies occur during a term, they shall be filled for the remainder of the term by this Congregation at its next regular Congregation Meeting. Should the SPC judge that the vacancy needs to be filled earlier, it may fill the vacancy by appointing an interim director until a vote at the next Congregation Meeting.

C9.01.06 All members of the SPC, other than the Senior Pastor, shall be volunteers.

C9.01.07 The composition of the SPC shall be as follows:

Member	Officer	Term	Elected/Appointed	Voting Status
President	President	2 years	Elected	Yes
Director of Leadership	Vice President	2 years	Elected	Yes
Director of Finance	Secretary	2 years	Elected	Yes
Director of Facilities		2 years	Elected	Yes
Director at Large	-	2 years	Elected	Yes
Director at Large	-	2 years	Elected	Yes
Director at Large	-	2 years	Elected	Yes
Senior Pastor	-	Ongoing	Called	Yes
Recording Secretary	-	Ongoing	Appointed	No

C9.01.08 The Recording Secretary shall keep an exact record of all transactions and resolutions of the Congregation Meeting and the SPC in regular and special meetings of each; shall enter such minutes into a record that shall remain the property of this Congregation; and shall submit the report for approval at the next regular meeting, as applicable. The Recording Secretary shall work with designated Church staff to oversee the publication and archiving of Church policies and procedures, as well as Hope's Constitution, Mission, and Vision Statements. The Recording Secretary is appointed by, and serves at the pleasure of the President and is a non-voting member of the SPC.

- C9.01.09 The SPC shall appoint four (4) at-large members of the Call Committee.
- C9.01.10 The Directors at Large shall be voting members of the SPC who shall assume such additional duties as agreed upon and defined from time to time by the SPC.
- C9.02.10 The Senior Pastor shall be the Chief of Staff, the spiritual leader of the SPC, and the liaison between the staff and SPC; shall report on membership information; and shall be an ex officio member of all committees (with voting privileges unless otherwise specified elsewhere in these bylaws), except the Personnel and Call Committees when leaving this Congregation.
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- C9.12 This section left intentionally blank
- C9.13 This section left intentionally blank
- C10 PROPERTY OWNERSHIP**
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- C11 OFFICERS**
- C11.01.01 The President shall preside at the meetings of this Congregation and of the SPC and see that they are conducted in an orderly and Christian manner. The President shall encourage all SPC members to carry out their duties and responsibilities. Upon completion of his term, the President shall serve for one (1) two- (2)-year term on the Personnel Committee. The President shall be a member of the Call Committee and an ex officio member of all boards and committees.
The President shall appoint the Recording Secretary of the SPC.
- C11.01.02 The Director of Leadership shall oversee the identification, development, and support of current and potential congregational leaders. The Director of Leadership shall assist the President in assigned, selected duties and shall, in the absence of the President, preside at any meeting. The Director of Leadership shall serve as a voting member of the Personnel and Call Committees and a non-voting member of all other committees. The Director of Leadership shall, in consultation with the President, appoint the Personnel Committee chairperson. The office of Director of Leadership may, but need not, be filled by an SPC member who has completed up to two (2) consecutive elected terms in other SPC positions.
- C11.01.03 The Director of Finance shall oversee financial operations of the congregation, including overall financial planning, capital campaigns, and budgeting, and help in providing adequate financial resources for this Congregation's ministries. The

Director of Finance shall oversee this Congregation's investments. The Director of Finance shall see that a bi-annual review of this Congregation's financial records is conducted and the results reported to the SPC and at the next Congregation Meeting. The Director of Finance shall serve as chairperson of the Finance Committee. From the Committee Members appointed by the SPC, the Director of Finance shall appoint a Vice Chairperson of Finance, a Financial Trustee of Income, and a Financial Trustee of Expense.

- C11.01.04 The Director of Facilities shall provide oversight and direction to the SPC with regard to the church facility, grounds, and property. The Director of Facilities shall oversee the Property Team, which shall assist the Director of Facilities in carrying out these duties. The Director of Facilities shall be responsible, in conjunction with the Director of Operations, for approval of any facilities-related purchases in excess of \$1,000 and shall report those purchases to the SPC. The Director of Facilities shall act as an advisory resource to the Director of Operations and the Property Team Coordinator regarding repairs to the church facility, grounds, and property and shall assist in the coordination of contracts. The Director of Facilities shall also meet regularly with the Director of Operations and Property Team Coordinator in an effort to understand current matters and assess future needs of the church facility, grounds, and property.
- C11.01.05 The President shall be limited to serve one (1) term of two (2) years after serving one (1) term of two (2) years as the Director of Leadership. If the President cannot complete the full two- (2)-year term, the Director of Leadership shall assume the position of President for the remainder of the term and shall be eligible to serve, in addition, a two- (2)-year term as President, subject to election by this Congregation. If the Director of Leadership steps down with less than one (1) year of the term remaining and is replaced by a vote of this Congregation or by an appointment made by the SPC, the President is eligible to serve a second two- (2)-year term. If the President chooses not to serve a second term, this Congregation shall elect a new President.
- C11.01.06 The Director of Leadership shall be limited to serve one (1) term of two (2) years. After completion of this term, subject to election by this Congregation, the Director of Leadership shall assume the position of President.
- C11.01.07 The Director of Finance may serve up to two (2) consecutive terms. If the Director of Finance steps down before the end of his term, the Vice Chairperson of Finance shall be appointed by the President to complete the term as Director of Finance. If the Vice Chairperson of Finance is appointed to the position of Director of Finance, he, in consultation with the President, shall appoint a new Vice Chairperson of Finance. After the existing Director of Finance completes his term(s) of service, the Vice

Chairperson of Finance shall assume the role of Director of Finance, subject to election by this Congregation.

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C12 THE PASTOR

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C13 CONGREGATION COMMITTEES

C13.01.01 The committees shall establish rules and regulations for meetings and shall meet at such times as are necessary, provided that a reasonable notice of all meetings shall be given to committee members. No act of a committee shall be valid unless approved by vote or written consent of the majority of its members.

C13.01.02 The standing committees of the congregation include Finance and Personnel. Each standing committee must include at least one SPC member. Except as otherwise provided elsewhere in these bylaws, members of the standing committees shall be appointed for two (2) years by the SPC, beginning service July 1 and ending June 30. The President shall make an appointment to fill any vacancy that occurs on the committee, and the appointee shall serve through the following June 30.

C13.01.03 Each standing committee shall keep minutes of meetings in some manner reasonably

intended to record the business that occurred at the meeting and shall make the minutes available to the SPC.

C13.01.04 In the event of a pastoral vacancy, the SPC shall appoint a Call Committee. The Call Committee shall consist of the President, Director of Leadership, Personnel Committee Chairperson, and four (4) Members of the Congregation appointed by the SPC. The Committee shall be chaired by the Personnel Committee Chairperson.

C13.02.01 The Finance Committee shall be a standing committee comprised of the following members:

- a. Director of Finance — Chairperson of the Finance Committee (voting member)
- b. Vice Chairperson of Finance (voting member)
- c. Financial Trustee of Income (voting member)
- d. Financial Trustee of Expense (voting member)
- e. Finance Committee Member (voting member)
- f. Finance Committee Member (voting member)
- g. Senior Pastor (ex officio voting member)
- h. Director of Operations (non-voting member)

The Vice Chairperson of Finance shall assist the Director of Finance with all responsibilities of the position and shall be the successor to the Director of Finance, subject to election by this Congregation. The Vice Chairperson of Finance shall be a voting member of the Finance Committee.

The appointed Financial Trustee of Income shall report to the Director of Finance. The Financial Trustee of Income shall review the income of this Congregation with the Director of Operations and shall provide the Director of Finance with regular reports and analyses on the financial stewardship of the membership. The Financial Trustee of Income shall be responsible for overseeing receipt and deposit of all funds of this Congregation. The Financial Trustee of Income shall be a voting member of the Finance Committee. To the extent possible, appointments to this position shall be made in alternating years with appointments to the position of Financial Trustee of Expense.

The appointed Financial Trustee of Expense shall report to the Director of Finance and shall be responsible for all funds after deposit in a bank designated by the SPC. All other disbursements shall be made on order of this Congregation or the SPC as specified in the constitution. The Financial Trustee of Expense shall serve as a voting member of the Finance Committee. To the extent possible, appointments to this position shall be made in alternating years with appointments to the position of Financial Trustee of Income.

The positions of Finance Committee Members and Trustees are limited to two (2) terms of two (2) years each. To the extent possible, appointments to each of these positions shall be made in alternating years.

The Voting Members of the Finance Committee, except the Senior Pastor, shall be bonded and authorized to sign checks.

- C13.02.02 The Finance Committee shall confer as often as required, but at least quarterly, to:
- a. Review the propriety of the disposition of all monies and report findings to the SPC quarterly and to the congregation semi-annually;
 - b. Recommend, in accordance with these bylaws, any non-budgetary expenditure as may be required or deemed advisable;
 - c. In August of each year, request from the SPC and staff members an itemized list of budget requirements for the coming year; and
 - d. Present to the SPC by October of each year a proposed annual budget for the ensuing year for subsequent congregational action in the fall meeting.
- C13.02.03 The Personnel Committee shall be comprised of five (5) members as follows:
- a. Past President
 - b. Director of Leadership
 - c. Three (3) Voting Members of this Congregation.
- C13.02.04 The Director of Leadership shall appoint three (3) voting members of the Congregation to the Personnel Committee and shall appoint one of the three (3) voting members as Personnel Committee chairperson. The three voting members shall serve a two (2) year term with the option of two (2) reappointments by the Director of Leadership. The Personnel Committee chairperson shall be the chairperson of the Call Committee. The Senior Pastor of this Congregation shall participate as an ex-officio member, acting in an advisory capacity without voting privileges.
- C13.02.05 The Personnel Committee shall confer as often as required but at least quarterly. This committee is responsible for all personnel matters including, but not limited to, the following:
- a. Determine annual salary adjustment recommendations for the staff and provide recommendations to the SPC;
 - b. Conduct annual review and evaluation of the Senior Pastor;
 - c. Provide support and guidance to the Senior Pastor in the annual review and evaluation of staff members reporting to the Senior Pastor;
 - d. Serve as the nominating committee for leadership positions in this Congregation;
 - e. Review existing abuse/harassment prevention policies and develop new policies as necessary to present to the SPC and this Congregation for approval;

- f. Develop training materials and procedures to implement the training requirements as specified in the abuse/harassment prevention policies of this Congregation;
- g. Ensure with outside counsel that this Congregation has insurance coverage concerning abuse and harassment issues and make recommendations to the SPC;
- h. Together with the Senior Pastor, the SPC President, and/or outside counsel, investigate abuse/harassment complaints involving staff, volunteers, or others and determine appropriate action as defined by the abuse/harassment policy.

C14 ORGANIZATIONS WITHIN THE CONGREGATION

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C15 DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS AND ADJUDICATION

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C16 BYLAWS

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C17 AMENDMENTS

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 C17.02

C18 CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

C18.01
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C19 INDEMNIFICATION

C19.01