



CONSTITUTION
of
ST. PAUL LUTHERANCHURCH
Of New Braunfels

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NEW BRAUNFELS, TEXAS

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CONSTITUTION OF ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF NEW BRAUNFELS, TEXAS

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 AND INCORPORATION

- C1.01. The name of this Congregation shall be St. Paul Lutheran Church of New Braunfels, Texas.
- C1.02. For the purpose of this Constitution and the accompanying Bylaws, the St. Paul Lutheran Church of New Braunfels, Texas, is hereinafter designated as "this Congregation."
- C1.03. This Congregation shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of Texas.

Chapter 2. CONFESSION OF FAITH

- C2.01. This Congregation confesses the Triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- C2.02. This Congregation confesses Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and the Gospel as the power of God for the salvation of all who believe.
- a. Jesus Christ is the Word of God incarnate, through whom everything was made and through whose life, death, and resurrection God fashions a new creation.
 - b. The proclamation of God's message to us as both Law and Gospel is the Word of God, revealing judgment and mercy through word and deed, beginning with the Word in creation, continuing in the history of Israel, and centering in all its fullness in the person and work of Jesus Christ.
 - c. The canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the written Word of God. Inspired by God's Spirit speaking through their authors, they record and announce God's revelation centering in Jesus Christ. Through them God's Spirit speaks to us to create and sustain Christian faith and fellowship for service in the world.

- C2.03. This Congregation accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life.
- C2.04. This Congregation accepts the Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds as true declarations of the faith of this Congregation.
- C2.05. This Congregation accepts the Unaltered Augsburg Confession as a true witness to the Gospel, acknowledging as one with it in faith and doctrine all churches that likewise accept the teachings of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession.
- C2.06. This Congregation accepts the other confessional writings in the Book of Concord, namely, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles and the Treatise, the Small Catechism, the Large Catechism, and the Formula of Concord as further valid interpretations of the faith of the Church.
- C2.07. This Congregation confesses the Gospel, recorded in the Holy Scriptures and confessed in the ecumenical creeds and Lutheran confessional writings, as the power of God to create and sustain the Church for God's mission in the world.
- C.2.08. This Congregation accepts the will of God regarding sexuality and marriage as revealed In the Holy Bible. In particular,
- a. God ordains that marriage is between one man and one woman;
 - b. Sex outside of marriage is a violation of God's law.
 - c. A child in the womb is a creation of God whose life is protected by the Fifth Commandment.
 - d. Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image in which God created that person.
- C.2.8.01. All members and all persons employed by St. Paul Lutheran Church in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, must abide by our Statement on Marriage and Sexuality. (This is posted at our congregational website.)

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 is the gathering of all believers among whom the Gospel is preached in its purity and the sacraments are administered in accordance with the Gospel (*Augsburg Confession, Article 7*).

Chapter 4. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

C4.01. The Church is a people created by God in Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, and called and sent to make disciples of Jesus Christ.

C4.02. To carry out God's mission, this Congregation as a part of the Church shall:

- a. carry out Christ's Great Commission by reaching out to all people, near and far, to make disciples in Christ;
- b. provide services of worship at which the Word of God is preached and the sacraments are administered;
- c. provide pastoral care and assist all members to participate in this ministry;
- d. challenge, equip, and support all members in carrying out their calling in their daily lives and in their Congregation;
- e. teach the Word of God;
- f. serve in response to God's love to meet human needs, whether charitable or spiritual;
- g. teach Biblical stewardship; and
- h. foster and participate in relationships with other congregations.

Chapter 5. POWERS OF THE CONGREGATION

C5.01. The powers of this Congregation are those necessary to fulfill its purpose. Among them, 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 of the Congregation Council

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. adopt amendments to the Constitution, as provided in Chapter 17, and amendments to the Bylaws, as specified in Chapter 16;
- d. approve the annual budget;
- e. acquire real and personal property by gift, devise, purchase, or other lawful

means;

- f. hold title to and use its property for any and all activities consistent with its purpose;
- g. sell, mortgage, lease, transfer, or otherwise dispose of its property by any lawful means;
- h. elect its officers and Congregation Council, and require them to carry out their duties in accordance with the Constitution, Bylaws, and continuing resolutions; and
- i. Affiliate or terminate its affiliation as provided in Chapter 6.

C5.04. This Congregation shall choose from among its voting members individuals to serve as delegates to represent it at meetings of any conference, district, coalition, or other area subdivision or organization of which it is a member.

Chapter 6. CHURCH AFFILIATION

C6.01. This Congregation may affiliate with other church bodies with which it can accept a common confession of faith.

C6.02. This Congregation may affiliate with other Christian church bodies as decided by a two-thirds majority of the voting members of the Congregation then present and voting at a specially called meeting of the Congregation.

C6.03. This Congregation may terminate its affiliation as follows:

- a. This Congregation takes action to dissolve.
- b. This Congregation ceases to exist.
- c. This Congregation is removed from membership by its affiliated organization.
- d. This Congregation may terminate its affiliation with other Christian church bodies as decided by two-thirds majority of the voting members of the Congregation then present and voting at a specially called meeting of the Congregation.

Chapter 7. PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

C7.01. If this Congregation ceases to exist, title to undisposed property shall be disbursed to non-profit entities and/or organizations as determined by a majority of the remaining voting members of the Congregation at a specially called meeting of the Congregation.

C7.02. If this Congregation is removed from membership in an affiliated organization according to its procedure for discipline, title to property shall remain with this Congregation.

C7.03. Regardless of affiliation, title to any real property and assets of the Congregation shall remain with the Congregation.

Chapter 8. MEMBERSHIP

C8.01. Membership in this Congregation is a call to discipleship under Jesus Christ. Therefore, 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 who have worshipped and communed in this Congregation an average of once every two months during the previous twelve months (or from the date of acceptance as a member), and have made a personal contribution of record to this Congregation at least once in the previous twelve months. 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 the 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. Contingent upon completion of orientation, new members will be presented to the Congregation Council for approval.

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 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.

Chapter 9. THE PASTOR

- C9.01. To assist this Congregation in fulfilling its mission, this Congregation may call or contract with pastors. Authority to call a pastor shall be in this Congregation by at least a two-thirds majority ballot vote of voting members present and voting at a meeting legally called for that purpose. Contract calls shall be issued by the Congregation Council by at least a two-thirds majority ballot vote of Council members present and voting, and ratified by the Congregation at the next regularly scheduled Congregation meeting by at least a two-thirds majority ballot vote of voting members present and voting.
- C9.02. Only a pastor credentialed or certified by this Congregation's then-affiliated Lutheran association(s) may be a called pastor of this Congregation. A contract pastor need not be credentialed or certified by this Congregation's then-affiliated Lutheran association(s).
- C9.03. Any called or contract pastor of this Congregation shall subscribe to this Congregation's Confession of Faith (see Chapter 2 of this Constitution). To help this Congregation fulfill its mission, the pastor(s) shall:
- a. preach the Word;
 - b. administer the sacraments;
 - c. conduct public worship;
 - d. provide pastoral care; and
 - e. proclaim God's love for the world.
- C9.04 Ordained pastors with a Congregational call shall, within the Congregation:
- a. offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead;
 - b. provide spiritual guidance to all schools and organizations of this Congregation;
 - c. install regularly elected members of the Congregation Council;
 - d. seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel; and
 - e. with the Council, administer discipline.
- C9.05. The specific duties of the pastor, compensation, and other matters pertaining to the service of the pastor shall be included in a letter of call.
- C9.06. The call of this Congregation:
- a. When accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment which, except in the case of the death of the pastor, may be terminated 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, 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) commission of a felony or a crime of moral turpitude; or
- 7) the dissolution of the Congregation.

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 Congregation Council, the Congregation President and the Director of the Personnel Board shall investigate such conditions personally and make recommendation to Congregation Council.

c In the case of alleged difficulties which imperil the effective functioning of the Congregation, all concerned persons shall be heard, after which the Congregation Council shall decide on the course of action to be recommended to the pastor. If the pastor agrees to carry out such recommendations, no further action shall be taken by the Congregation Council. If the pastor fails to agree, the Congregation may dismiss the pastor by a two-thirds majority vote of the voting members present and voting at a legally called Congregation meeting.

C9.07. An interim pastor, during the period of his/her service, shall have the rights, duties, and obligations in the Congregation of a regularly called pastor and may delegate the same in part to a contract pastor with the consent of the Congregation Council.

C9.08. 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 and the Congregation Council. As occasion requires, the call documents may be revised through a similar consultation.

C9.09. The pastor of this Congregation shall:

- a. see that accurate parochial records are kept of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from the Congregation. All such records shall remain the property of the Congregation;
- b. see that a summary of such statistics is submitted annually to the Congregation and Congregation Council as part of the Pastor's annual report; and
- c. become a voting member of this Congregation upon receipt and acceptance of the letter of call.

Chapter 10. CONGREGATION MEETING

- C10.01. The semi-annual meetings of this Congregation shall be held in June and November of each year.
- C10.02. A special Congregation Meeting shall be called by the President of the Congregation upon written request of 50 voting members. A special Congregation Meeting may also be called by the Congregation Council or the President of this Congregation. The call for each special meeting shall specify the purpose(s) for which it is to be held and no other business shall be transacted at that meeting.
- 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 or by other transmission as specified in the Bylaws or continuing resolution to all voting members at least 10 days in advance of the date of the meeting.
- C10.04. Attending voting members of a properly called meeting 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.
- C10.08. In the event there are more than two candidates for an elected office of the Congregation or a Council board representative and no candidate received more than 50% of the vote on the first ballot, a runoff election will be held for the two candidates receiving the most votes on the first ballot. The person receiving a majority in the subsequent ballot will be the newly elected officer or representative. Election for other church representatives shall be in accordance with the Bylaws or continuing resolutions.

Chapter 11. OFFICERS

- C11.01. The officers of this Congregation shall be Congregation President, Congregation Vice President, and Congregation Treasurer. The Congregation President shall appoint a secretary who is a voting member of the Congregation. The secretary shall not be an officer of the Congregation Council or a voting member of the Congregation Council.
- a. The duties of the officers shall be specified in the Bylaws.
 - b. The officers shall be voting members of the Congregation.
 - c. The officers of the Congregation shall serve similar offices on the Congregation Council and shall be voting members of the Congregation Council.

C11.02. The Congregation shall elect its Congregation President and Congregation Vice President at the June semi-annual meeting in the odd-numbered years, and they shall elect its Congregation Treasurer at the June semi-annual meeting in the even-numbered years. The officers shall be elected by written majority ballot and shall serve for two years or until their successors are elected. Their terms shall begin at the close of the meeting at which they are elected.

C11.03. No officer shall hold more than one office at a time.

Chapter 12. CONGREGATION COUNCIL

C12.01. The voting membership of the Congregation Council shall consist of the officers of the Congregation and Council representatives as defined by the Bylaws. The called pastor(s) and the Church Administrator may have a voice but no vote at meetings of the Congregation Council.

C12.02. Paid staff members, including called pastors, shall not be elected to any Congregation Council position or serve as a voting member on any administrative board or committee, except the Executive Committee.

C12.03. The members of the Congregation Council shall be elected to serve for two years or until their successors are elected. Such members shall be eligible to serve no more than four consecutive full terms and no more than two consecutive full terms elected to the same position. Half of the representatives shall be elected at the June semi-annual meeting in the even-numbered years and half the representatives shall be elected in the odd-numbered years. The dates and terms of office and the duties of the officers of the Congregation and Council representatives shall be specified in the Bylaws. No member of the Congregation Council shall be eligible to serve by election after serving continuously eight years on the Congregation Council until a one-year period of separation from service to the Congregation Council has occurred. No person shall be considered for election to any Congregational position if fulfilling the term of their election would violate the eight year term limits in this section.

C12.04. Should a member's place on the Congregation Council be declared vacant, the Congregation Council shall elect, by majority vote, a successor. The successor shall fulfill the vacant term. If an individual is elected by Council to fulfill a partial term, he or she shall still be eligible to be elected to two additional full terms in the same position. The successor shall be ratified by the Congregation at its next meeting.

C12.05. The Congregation Council shall have general oversight of the life and activities of this Congregation, and in particular its spiritual life, to the end that everything be done in accordance with the Word of God and the Congregation's Confession of Faith. The duties of the Congregation Council shall include the following:

- a. lead this Congregation in stating its mission, vision, and priorities, initiate long-range planning, and evaluate its activities in light of its mission, vision, and priorities;

- b. seek to involve all participants of this Congregation in worship, learning, witness, service, and support;
- c. oversee and provide for the administration of this Congregation to enable it to fulfill its functions and perform its mission;
- d. maintain supportive relationships with the pastor(s) and staff and help them annually to evaluate the fulfillment of their calling or employment;
- e. be examples individually and corporately of the style of life and ministry expected of all baptized persons;
- f. promote a congregational climate of peace and goodwill, and, as differences and conflicts arise, to endeavor to foster mutual understandings;
- g. arrange for pastoral service during the sickness or absence of the pastor;
- h. explore and implement cooperation with other Lutheran bodies and with other denominations; and
- i. seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel.

C12.06. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the financial and property matters of this Congregation.

- a. The Congregation Council shall be the board of directors of this Congregation, and as such shall be responsible for maintaining and protecting its property and the management of its business and fiscal affairs. It shall have the powers and be subject to the obligations that pertain to such boards under the laws of the State of Texas, except as otherwise provided herein.
- b. The Congregation Council shall not have the authority to buy, sell, or encumber real property unless specifically authorized to do so by a meeting of the Congregation except as specified in the Bylaws or continuing resolution.
- c. The Congregation Council shall prepare an annual budget for the adoption by this Congregation, shall supervise the expenditure of funds in accordance therewith following its adoption, and may incur obligations in excess of the anticipated receipts only after approval by a Congregation Meeting.
- d. The Congregation Council shall ascertain that the financial affairs of this Congregation are being conducted efficiently according to generally accepted accounting principles.
- e. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for this Congregation's investments and its total insurance program.

- C12.07. The Congregation Council shall see that the provisions for this Constitution, its Bylaws, and the continuing resolutions are enforced.
- C12.08. The Congregation Council shall provide for an annual review of the membership roster.
- C12.09. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the implementation of policies and procedures for all employees of this Congregation.
- C12.10. Each Congregation Council member shall submit a comprehensive written report to this Congregation at the June semi-annual meeting.
- C12.11. The Congregation Council shall normally meet once a month. Special Council meetings may be called by the Congregation President, and shall be called by the Congregation 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.

Chapter 13. CONGREGATION COMMITTEES

- C13.01. The *Executive Committee* shall consist of the officers of this Congregation, the Pastor (or Senior Pastor, if there are multiple pastors), and the Church Administrator. The Executive Committee shall have such powers and limitations on those powers as are specified by the laws of the State of Texas, this Constitution, and its Bylaws, and shall have such authority to implement such actions and duties as are specifically authorized by the Congregation Council or by the Congregation by continuing resolution. The Executive Committee shall have no authority to expend funds, to authorize the purchase of property and services, or to conduct any business on behalf of this Congregation except as is specifically authorized by the Bylaws or by resolution of the Congregation Council or the Congregation.
- C13.02. A *Nominating Committee* shall be formed in accordance with the Bylaws.
- C13.03. An *Audit Committee* shall be formed in accordance with the Bylaws.
- C13.04. A *Call Committee* shall be formed in accordance with the Bylaws whenever a pastoral call vacancy occurs that the Congregation intends to fill.
- C13.05. A *Mutual Ministry Team* shall be formed in accordance with the Bylaws.
- C13.06. A Committee for the Preservation and Operation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of St. Martin and Hortontown Cemetery (referred to as the "*St. Martin Committee*") shall be formed in accordance with the Bylaws.
- C13.07. A *Memorial Committee* shall be formed in accordance with the Bylaws.
- C13.08. A *Finance Committee* shall be formed in accordance with the Bylaws.

- C13.09. A *Ministry Review Committee* shall be formed in accordance with the Bylaws.
- C13.10. Other Congregation committees may be formed as the need arises by decision of the Congregation Council.
- C13.11. Duties of Congregation committees shall be as specified in the Bylaws and/or continuing resolutions.
- C13.12. The Pastor (or Senior Pastor, if there are multiple pastors) of this Congregation shall be a member with voice but no vote of all committees and boards of the Congregation. The Senior Pastor may designate another called pastor to serve in this capacity for any committee or board, except the Executive Committee. The pastor (or Senior Pastor, if there are multiple pastors) shall have both voice and vote on the Executive Committee. No pastor shall be a member of the Audit Committee.
- C13.13. The Congregation President shall be a non-voting member of all committees and boards of the Congregation, except the Executive Committee, where the Congregation President shall have both voice and vote. Additionally, the Congregation President may not be a member of the Nominating Committee or the Audit Committee.

Chapter 14. ORGANIZATIONS WITHIN THE CONGREGATION

- C14.01. All organizations within this Congregation shall exist to support this Congregation in fulfilling its mission. As outgrowths and expressions of this Congregation's life, the organizations are subject to its oversight and direction.
- C14.02. Special interest groups other than those of the official organizations of this Congregation may be organized only after authorization has been given by the Congregation or the Congregation Council as specified in a continuing resolution.

Chapter 15. DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS

- C15.01. Denial of the Christian faith as described in this Constitution, conduct grossly unbecoming a member of the Church of Christ, or persistent trouble-making in this Congregation are sufficient cause for discipline of a member. Prior to disciplinary action, reconciliation will be attempted following Matthew 18:15-17, proceeding through these successive steps: a) private admonition by the pastor (or Senior Pastor, if there are multiple pastors), b) admonition by said pastor in the presence of at least two witnesses, and c) notice to appear before the Congregation Council. If, for any reason, said pastor is unable to administer the admonitions required by a) and b) hereof, the Congregation President or Congregation Vice President shall administer such admonitions.
- C15.02. If discipline against a member proceeds beyond counseling and admonition by the pastor (or Senior Pastor, if there are multiple pastors), 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 said pastor, who shall advise the Congregation Council of the need to issue a written notice 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 notice to the accused. A member charged with the offense shall appear before the Congregation Council after having received a written notice 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 To assure due process and due protection for the accused, 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. In addition, due process requires the following:

- a. The right to be given a specific written statement of the charges;
- b. The right to a hearing by the Congregation Council;
- c. The right of the accused to testify in person or remain silent;
- d. The right to call witnesses;
- e. The right to introduce documentary evidence;
- f. The right to confront and cross-examine witnesses;
- g. The right to a hearing closed to the public unless both the accuser(s) and the accused agree to a public hearing;
- h. The right to a written decision;
- i. The right to be treated with fundamental procedural fairness, which means:
 - 1) Avoidance by Council members of written communications to or from either accused or accuser(s) without copy to the other;
 - 2) Avoidance by Council members of other communications with either the accused or the accuser(s) outside of the presence of the other;
 - 3) Maintaining proper decorum during the hearing;
 - 4) Allowing both the accuser(s) and the accused to present their cases without unnecessary interruptions;
 - 5) Keeping a verbatim record of the hearing, made either by audio or video recording; and
 - 6) Allowing both the accuser(s) and the accused to be accompanied at the hearing by a representative (who may, but need not, be an attorney) who may also participate in the proceedings.

C15.04. Should the allegations be sustained by a two-thirds majority vote of the members of the Congregation Council who are not disqualified but are present and voting, and renewed admonition proves 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.

- C15.05. The member against whom disciplinary action has been taken by the Congregation Council shall have the right to appeal the decision to the Congregation. Notice of a decision to make such appeal shall be made in writing to the Congregation President within fifteen (15) days of Congregation Council's disciplinary decision. Upon receipt of such notice, the Congregation President shall call a special meeting of the Congregation to hear such appeal, to be held no later than sixty (60) days following the date of such notice. Such right may not be abridged and the decision of the Congregation shall be final.
- C15.06. 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.
- C15.07. No member of this Congregation shall be subject to discipline for offenses that the Congregation Council has previously heard and decided, unless so ordered by the Congregation after an appeal. Said appeal shall be conducted in accordance with the provisions of Section C15.05 of the Constitution.
- C15.08. 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 Congregation Council for consultation after informing the President of the Congregation Council of their intent. If the consultation fails to resolve the issue(s), the matter shall be referred to the Congregation whose decision shall be final.

Chapter 16. BYLAWS

- C16.01. This Congregation may adopt bylaws. In the event of a conflict between the Bylaws and this Constitution, this Constitution controls.
- C16.02. Bylaws may be adopted or amended at any properly called meeting of this Congregation with a quorum present (see Section C10.04 of the Constitution) by a two-thirds majority vote of those voting members present and voting.
- C16.03. Changes to the Bylaws may be proposed by the Congregation Council or by written petition signed by at least 50 voting members provided that such additions or amendments be submitted 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 in writing of the proposal with its recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the Congregation Meeting.

Chapter 17. AMENDMENTS

C17.01. Amendments to this Constitution may be proposed by the Congregation Council or by written petition signed by at least 50 voting members. Proposals must be filed in writing with the Congregation Council 60 days before formal consideration by this Congregation at its regular or special meeting called for that purpose. The Congregation Council shall notify the Congregation's members in writing of the proposal with the Council's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the Congregation Meeting.

C17.02. A proposed amendment to this Constitution, proposed under C17.01., shall

- a. be approved at a properly called meeting according to this Constitution by a two-thirds majority vote of those present and voting; and
- b. have the effective date included in the resolution and noted in the Constitution.

Chapter 18. CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

C18.01. The Congregation in a properly called 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 two-thirds majority vote of a meeting of the Congregation or a two-thirds majority vote of voting members of the Congregation Council present and voting at a regular or special called meeting.

C18.03. Continuing resolutions enacted as a result of a Congregation vote may only be amended or rescinded by a two-thirds majority vote of a meeting of the Congregation.

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.

The effective date of the revisions of this amended Constitution shall be December 1, 2018.