

Member(s) of Immanuel,

Council is requesting your presence at a Congregational Meeting on Sunday October 22<sup>nd</sup> to review draft updates to Immanuel's Constitution including significant changes to the bylaws and continuing resolutions. These updates include two separate sections: the mandatory, newly adopted ELCA Model Constitution sent out by Bishop Hazelwood last October, and the Bylaws and Resolutions specific to our own church.

Bishop Hazelwood explains "*The ELCA recently approved changes to the Model Constitution of Congregations at its Churchwide Assembly. If you have not updated your congregation's constitution since 2013, I strongly suggest that you do so. I have had numerous conversations with congregations facing conflict, and they often ask what are their options in dealing with extremely recalcitrant personalities. This leads us to looking at their constitutions, and we often find inadequate provisions due to non-existent or outdated methods, and further disruption.*"

It's very important that all members take the opportunity to review the attached draft updates of Immanuel's Constitution. Our constitution is a vital document that "*reflects the theology and polity of this church as it organizes itself to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, share the sacraments, reach out to the neighbor with good news and share the love of God in the world.*" It dictates how the church is run, how it spends money, creates committees, and manages our pastor, staff, and membership. The constitution guides every major decision made about our church.

A community effort is needed to make this document truly reflect who we are and how Immanuel lives its mission. Please take some time to read the information and thoughtfully participate in this process. Copies of the model constitution and bylaws are available to all members. They are found on our website, [www.immanuellt.org](http://www.immanuellt.org), posted via links in the regular eNews, and available as paper copies on the table at the back of the church. If you are unable to access the documents in one of these ways, but would like a copy, please call the church office and request that a packet be mailed to you (508) 222-2898. Below is a general timeline for how this process will take place. We look forward to your comments, feedback, and participation.

**September 21, 2017 FIRST DRAFT Version of Updated Constitution**  
**Disseminated to members for review**

**October 22, 2017** Congregational Meeting to explain and review proposed changes to Constitution and ByLaws - input and conversation from members welcome.

**October 23, 2017 thru November 30, 2017** additional time period for congregational review and feedback. At some point, Synod representative Pastor Tim Oslovitch also reviews the draft for accuracy and consistency with New England Synod mandatory proposed changes.

**December 2017** Council creates FINAL DRAFT (based on members' feedback) of Constitution and disseminates it to members for final review

**January 2018** Congregation Votes on Updated Constitution at regular Annual Meeting.

Immanuel Approved Constitution gets submitted to ELCA for approval.

*Immanuel's 2017 Congregational Council*  
*Cheryl Graham, Jill Richards, Larre Nelson, Allison Thayer, Jeannie Smith,*  
*Donna Bellerose, Frank Canino, Marlene Sparks, John Pietrella, Lisa*  
*Gerlach, Mark Shelton and Rachel Stuen*