

**THE BYLAWS OF THE CONSTITUTION OF  
PRINCE OF PEACE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH  
SPRINGFIELD, VIRGINIA**

*(Effective January 1, 1998, as amended on March 1, 1998, and February 12, 2007~~[[;]]~~, and  
[date of amendment])*

**ARTICLE I  
MEMBERSHIP**

**Section 1. Duties and Responsibilities**

- A. It shall be the duty of all Confirmed Members of Prince of Peace Evangelical Lutheran Church to:
  - 1. Acknowledge Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord~~[[;]]~~.
  - 2. Participate in worship services regularly~~[[;]]~~.
  - 3. Participate in the Lord's Supper frequently~~[[;]]~~.
  - 4. Participate in small groups, Bible studies, ~~and/or~~ and Christian fellowship~~[[;]]~~.
  - 5. Develop and use spiritual gifts to live and share the Gospel of Jesus Christ~~[[;]]~~.
  - 6. Contribute regularly and faithfully, as God has prospered them, toward the building of Christ's Kingdom in the Congregation and throughout the world~~[[;]]~~.
  - 7. Provide a setting for sharing Christian values from generation to generation~~[[;]]~~.
  - 8. Support the Pastors and staff through prayer, honor, and respect for their ministry.
- B. It shall be the duty of all Voting Members to:
  - 1. Conscientiously and prayerfully exercise the right to vote in all matters placed before them.
  - 2. Encourage others to be active in accepting the responsibilities and privileges of voting membership.
  - 3. Willingly serve in any office or capacity for which their spiritual gifts equip them.

**Section 2. Termination of Membership**

Members shall be removed from Prince of Peace's membership rolls for one of the following reasons only:

- A. Death.
- B. Request of the member for transfer of membership to another Lutheran church with whom we are in confessional agreement.

- C. Request of the member for release from membership.
- D. “Whereabouts Unknown” for a period of one year or longer.
- F. Excommunication, but only in accordance with the Word of God as recorded in Matthew 18:15-18.

## ARTICLE II VOTING RIGHTS OF MEMBERSHIP

### **Section 1. Voting Rights**

Voting Members shall have the right to vote on the following matters:

- A. The official call or removal of Called Workers.
- B. The adoption of the annual church budget.
- C. The acquisition or disposal of real property (i.e., land, fixed improvements and construction of fixed properties), except undesignated bequests and estates.
- D. The amending of the Constitution or its Bylaws.
- E. The merger or dissolution of the church.
- F. The Vision of the Congregation.
- G. Other matters determined by the Board of Servant Leaders or by the Voting Members of the Congregation.

### **Section 2. Voting**

- A. The forum for voting shall be determined by the Board of Servant Leaders. This may include voting by written ballot at worship services, through the mail, ballot box in the ~~Church~~ church, Congregational meeting of the Voting Members, or other manner as designated by the Board of Servant Leaders. However, a Congregational meeting shall be held upon petition of 25 Voting Members of the Congregation. If a Congregational meeting is held, an in-person Congregational meeting is encouraged, but a Congregational meeting may be held by electronic means with reasonable measures to:
  - 1. provide, at a minimum, conditions for simultaneous aural communication among those present.
  - 2. verify that each person voting remotely is a Voting Member.
- B. No issue will be submitted to the Voting Members for a vote unless notice of the issue has been published at worship services at least two consecutive weeks prior to the vote ~~or by mail at least three days prior to the vote~~ and by electronic means at least twice prior to the vote. The text of any proposed amendment to the Constitution or its Bylaws shall be

~~provided contemporaneously with each notification of the issue. Town meetings are encouraged as a means to discuss issues with the Congregation before significant issues are voted upon.~~

- C. Issues may be brought before the Voting Members by the Board of Servant Leaders, or by petition of 25 Voting Members of the Congregation.
- D. All decisions shall be by simple majority vote of the Voting Members voting, except the following, which shall require two-thirds majority vote of the Voting Members voting:
  - 1. Amending the Constitution or its Bylaws.
  - 2. The call or the removal of Called Workers.
  - 3. The merger or dissolution of the church.

E. Town meetings are encouraged as a means to discuss issues with the Congregation before significant issues are voted upon.

*[Notes: We understand Virginia Law to allow for electronic meetings, but we propose including such provisions including applicable requirements under Virginia, explicitly in the Bylaws.*

*We also propose including electronic notice as another requirement for notification. We also propose eliminating the mail notification option for an urgent meeting, as the BoSL has sufficient authorization to take mitigating action for urgent issues until a voters meeting can be called.*

*With the additions discussed above, we propose retaining the encouragement to use Town meetings before votes as a separate item so that it is emphasized apart from the other provisions.]*

## ARTICLE III CHURCH OFFICERS

### Section 1. ~~Elected Officers~~ Board of Servant Leaders

- A. The Board of Servant Leaders (the “Board”) represents the members of the Congregation in congregational affairs.
  - 1. The Board will ensure that the Mission and Vision of Prince of Peace is the focus of all activities and related ministries.
  - 2. The Board will approve governance policies for Church activities. These approved governance policies ~~and operational policies approved by the Senior Pastor~~ will be maintained in a Policy Manual available to all Church members.

*[Notes: This section governs the BoSL and thus operational policies should be addressed elsewhere and maintained by the Senior Pastor separately from the Policy Manual.]*

- 3. The Board will present a proposed budget for each fiscal year (1 July to 30 June) to the Congregation for approval before the beginning of that fiscal year.

4. The Board will ensure that the policy and financial decisions of the Board and the Congregation are executed in accordance with the Constitution, its Bylaws, and approved policies.
  5. The Board shall appoint trustees in accordance with Article IX of the Constitution.
  6. ~~The~~ Notwithstanding any other provision herein, the Board, in consultation with the Senior Pastor, has the authority to remove appointed officials in accordance with the Constitution.
  7. The Board will proactively seek the views and ideas of the members of the Congregation to ensure that the Congregation is properly represented in Board actions.
  8. The Board will bring to a vote of the Voting Members of the Congregation any matter which the Board is unable to approve or reject by a majority vote.
  9. The Board may contract for or hire additional Pastors or other individuals as needed to provide spiritual leadership and support to the ~~Core and Support Ministries~~ ministries of the Congregation.
- B. The Voting Members of the Congregation shall elect members of the Board of Servant Leaders.
1. The Board ~~of Servant Leaders~~ shall be composed of (6) six members elected by the Congregation.
  2. The normal term of office as a member of the Board ~~of Servant Leaders~~ shall be three years. Members of the Board ~~of Servant Leaders~~ may not serve more than two consecutive elected terms. If appointed to fill a vacancy, a member may not stand for reelection if another term would extend service on the Board ~~of Servant Leaders~~ to more than seven consecutive years.
  - ~~3. To facilitate an orderly transition from two year terms to three year terms, the Congregation shall elect:~~
    - ~~a. Two members for three year terms and one member for a one year term in June 2007, and~~
    - ~~b. One member for a three year term and two members for one year terms in June, 2008.~~
  - 4.3. The Board ~~of Servant Leaders~~ will appoint a member to complete the term of any Board member who resigns or is removed from office.

*[Notes: Because the orderly transition provisions are no longer applicable, we propose removing them at this time.]*

## **Section 2. Appointed Officers**

- ~~A. The Congregation may call individuals to serve as Ministry Administrators, Core Ministry Leaders, and Support Ministry Leaders. The Senior Pastor shall appoint individuals to these positions when the positions are not filled by workers called by the Congregation.~~

~~B. The Senior Pastor and each appointed officer may appoint other officers as needed to perform the functions of his or her office. —~~

*[Notes:*

- If the Congregation, or other applicable law, determines that additional Officers of the Congregation are needed, we propose that such Officer be added by amending the Constitution instead of allowing the BoSL to identify such officers.*
- These specific terms for Ministry Administrators, Core Ministry Leaders, and Support Ministry Leaders are not currently in use by the Congregation. The proposed addition of Section 3 of Article IV covers other called workers. Additionally, such positions are not necessarily “Officers” of the Congregation. Accordingly, we propose adding a new section in the Bylaws to cover ministry staff.]*

### **Section 3. Election Procedures**

~~A. C.~~ The Board ~~of Servant Leaders~~ shall appoint a nominating committee to nominate candidates for the members of the Board ~~of Servant Leaders~~.

1. The Senior Pastor will serve as an ex-officio member of the nominating committee.
2. Any member of the Congregation may propose a candidate for membership on the Board ~~of Servant Leaders~~ to the nominating committee in accordance with procedures established by the Board ~~of Servant Leaders~~.
3. The names of the nominees shall be published at services at least twice before elections, which shall be held in June of each year.
4. The Congregational ~~Assembly may~~ shall elect only voting members of the Congregation who have been nominated in accordance with the Constitution and these Bylaws.

~~B. D.~~ The Board ~~of Servant Leaders~~ shall select a Chair, a Vice Chair, and a Secretary from the elected members of the Board ~~of Servant Leaders~~. The Board will submit their selection to the Congregation for affirmation by a majority vote of the Voting Members voting.

## **ARTICLE IV PASTORS AND OTHER CALLED WORKERS**

### **Section 1. The Office of the Public Ministry**

The Pastoral Office is the authority conferred upon pastors by God, through a call of the Congregation, to exercise in public office the common rights of spiritual priesthood in behalf of all. The Congregation, however, may establish as many auxiliary offices as its needs require, and determine what work is to be assigned to such offices.

## **Section 1.2, Senior Pastor**

The Senior Pastor shall carry out the functions of the Pastoral Office in accordance with the call of this Congregation. The Senior Pastor may be assisted in carrying out the functions of the Pastoral Office as provided by the Constitution and its Bylaws. The Senior Pastor's duties and responsibilities include the following.

- ~~A. The Senior Pastor shall be called by a two-thirds majority vote of the Voting Members voting.~~
- A. The Senior Pastor's primary responsibilities are proclaiming the Word and administering the Sacraments.
- B. The Senior Pastor shall provide spiritual and programmatic leadership to the Congregation.
- C. The Senior Pastor shall be the senior leader of all called and appointed ministry staff, leading and directing the ministry according to the guidelines established in accordance with the Constitution and its Bylaws.
- D. The Senior Pastor shall oversee the operations of the Congregation within the guidelines established in accordance with the Constitution and its Bylaws, such as governance policies approved by the Board of Servant Leaders, including developing and maintaining the operational policies of the Congregation and overseeing the financial affairs of the Congregation.
- ~~B. E.~~ The Senior Pastor shall serve as an ex-officio member of the Board of Servant Leaders.
- ~~C. F.~~ The Senior Pastor ~~will be~~ is accountable to the Congregation and to the Board of Servant Leaders.

## **Section 2.3, Associate Other Pastors and Other Called Workers**

Associate Pastors may be called as needed to assist the Senior Pastor in carrying out the functions of the Pastoral Office to include proclaiming the Word, administering the Sacraments, and providing spiritual and programmatic leadership to the Congregation. Other Called Workers may be called as needed to assist the Senior Pastor in providing spiritual leadership to the Congregation.

- ~~A. Associate Pastors shall be called by a two-thirds majority vote of the members voting.~~
- ~~B. Associate Pastors will be are accountable to the Senior Pastor~~

## **Section 3, Other Pastors**

Other pastors may be called, or contracted by the Senior Pastor or by the Board of Servant Leaders, as needed to assist the Senior Pastor. Called Associate Pastors, other Called Workers, and Contract Pastors are accountable to the Senior Pastor.

*[Notes: The Bylaws outline the structure of the Congregation and thus we propose retaining the section on Pastors. Much of the previous content, however, is already covered in the Constitution,*

*and we thus propose revising this section to focus on the roles and structure of the Office of Public Ministry.]*

## **ARTICLE V** **MINISTRY STAFF**

The Senior Pastor may, within budgeted guidelines, establish ministry staff positions as he may deem necessary or appropriate from time to time to manage, oversee, and implement the ministries, the business, and the administration of the Congregation. Individuals appointed to these positions are appointed officials, unless called by the Congregation.

Appointment and removal of persons to serve in ministry staff positions will be the responsibility of the Senior Pastor, but he may delegate such appointment to another ministry staff member. An individual called by the Congregation may be appointed by the Senior Pastor to serve in specific positions.

*[Notes: We propose adding this section to identify and clarify positions within the church and provide flexibility to the Senior Pastor consistent with our form of governance. This section is intended to clarify how such individuals are appointed and who constitutes an “appointed official” that can be removed by the Board of Servant Leaders.]*

## **ARTICLE VI** **AMENDMENTS**

The Bylaws may be changed or amended by two-thirds majority vote of the Voting Members voting in the manner prescribed above.

*[Note: Typically, Bylaws explicitly provide for the method of their amendment. This is the more common in the sample constitutions referenced during the review process. We propose adding it here.*

*As a condition to retain membership in the Synod, the District will review any changes to the Constitution and its Bylaws. It is envisioned that all changes, including those presented to the district and any subsequent changes at the recommendation of district, would be agreed upon by the Congregation as an amendment, and thus the conditions of Synod Membership are not explicitly referenced here.]*