

# ST. MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

## of Cedar Rapids, Iowa

### CONGREGATION CONSTITUTION

~~Adopted at Annual Congregation Meeting on 1/27/13~~  
Proposed Amendments

#### Introduction

On November 8, 1885, sixteen Swedish immigrants chartered the Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Saron Congregation of Cedar Rapids. In 1945 the name of the church was changed to St. Mark Evangelical Lutheran Church and in recent years to its current name. During its more than 125-year history, this congregation has been served by church buildings at three different locations. On May 2, 1999, St. Mark's dedicated the current church building called the St. Mark's Center for Faith and Life at 8300 C Avenue NE. This Constitution was created in 2013 to guide the congregation in fulfilling its mission and purpose.

#### Preamble

We, baptized ~~members~~partners 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 incorporated name of this congregation is St. Mark's Lutheran Church of Cedar Rapids, Iowa. This congregation is known today as St. Mark's Lutheran Church and is herein referred to as "this/the congregation".
- C1.02. This congregation is incorporated under the laws of the State of Iowa.

#### Chapter 2. CONFESION 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 its faith.

C2.05. This congregation accepts the Unaltered Augsburg Confession as a true witness to the Gospel and the faith that sustains it.

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.

### Chapter 3. STATEMENT OF MISSION AND PURPOSE

- C3.01. The Church, the worldwide body of Christ, is created by God in Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, and called to bear witness to God's activity in the world as memberspartners live their lives.
- C3.02. The purpose of this Constitution and Bylaws is to guide this congregation in its mission to be a welcoming church to those seeking to know Christ. The Mission Statement of the congregation shall be defined in the Bylaws.
- C3.03. To fulfill the Church's mission and purpose this congregation shall:
  - a. Worship God through the proclamation of the Word and the administration of the sacraments and other activities of Christian daily living.
  - b. Proclaim God's saving Gospel of justification by grace through Christ in faith, according to the apostolic witness provided by the Holy Scripture.
  - c. Carry out Christ's Great Commission by reaching out to all people to help them know and serve God through the teachings of Christ.
  - d. Serve in response to God's love to meet human needs and care for sick memberspartners of the congregation, our community, and the world.
  - e. Nurture its memberspartners using the Word of God to grow through Christian living.
- C3.04. This congregation, through the Church Council, shall annually review and verify its mission statement as stated in the Bylaws to provide direction for all its programs.

### Chapter 4. POWERS OF THE CONGREGATION

C4.01. The powers of this congregation are those stated and implied in this Constitution which are necessary to fulfill its Mission and Purpose.

C4.02. The powers of this congregation are vested in the congregation and exercised in a regularly called Congregational Meeting as provided in this Constitution and the Bylaws.

C4.03. Only such authority as is delegated to the Church Council and its organizational units in this document or the Bylaws is recognized. All remaining authority is retained by the congregation. This congregation is authorized to:

- a. Call a pastor as stipulated in this document.
- b. Terminate the Call of a pastor or other staff when it is necessary to do so.
- c. Adopt amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws as stipulated in this document.
- d. Formulate and approve an 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 Church Council and require the members of the Council to carry out their duties in accordance with this Constitution and the Bylaws.

## Chapter 5. CHURCH AFFILIATIONS

C5.01. This congregation's denominational affiliation must be Lutheran based. As of the date of adoption of this Constitution, this congregation is affiliated with Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ. The congregation at a legally called meeting can vote on a proposal from the Church Council to establish or terminate its church affiliations. Changes in denominational affiliation must be approved by a two-thirds vote of all voting memberspartners in attendance at that meeting.

## Chapter 6. PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

C6.01. All the property will be owned by the congregation and governed by the Church Council and will require a two-thirds vote of approval of the voting congregation memberspartners attending a legally called meeting and acting according to the laws of the State of Iowa to sell, mortgage, lease, transfer or otherwise dispose of its property by any lawful means.

C6.02. The Church Council is empowered to secure whatever aid and assistance is needed to handle all property transactions.

## Chapter 7. MEMBERSPARTNERSHIP

C7.01. MembersPartners 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 by declaring and maintaining their memberspartnership in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution and its Bylaws.

C7.02. MembersPartners shall be classified as follows:

- a. Baptized memberspartners are those persons who have been received by the Sacrament of Holy Baptism into this congregation, or, having been previously baptized in the name of the Triune God, have been received by certificate of transfer from another congregation or by affirmation of faith.

- b. Confirmed ~~memberspartners~~ are baptized persons who have been confirmed in this congregation, those who have been received by adult baptism or by transfer as confirmed ~~memberspartners~~ from other congregations, or baptized persons received by an affirmation of their faith.
- c. Voting ~~memberspartners~~ must be confirmed ~~memberspartners~~ as stipulated in C7.02b. To be eligible to vote, such confirmed ~~memberspartners~~, during the current or preceding calendar year, shall have ~~communed-worshipped~~ in this congregation, as defined in the Bylaws, and shall have made a contribution of record to this congregation. Confirmed ~~memberspartners~~ of this congregation who have satisfied the basic standards stated in this paragraph shall have the privilege of voice and vote at every regular and special meeting of this congregation.

C7.03. It shall be the privilege and duty of ~~memberspartners~~ of this congregation to:

- a. Make regular use of the means of grace both in word and in the sacraments.
- b. Live a Christian life in accordance with the Word of God and the teachings of the Lutheran church and support the work of this congregation with demonstrated stewardship.
- c. Support the work of this congregation through contributions of their time, abilities, and financial support as biblical stewards.

C7.04. ~~MembersPartnership~~ in this congregation shall be terminated for any of the following:

- a. Death.
- b. Resignation.
- c. Transfer or release.
- d. Disciplinary action by the Church Council per Chapter 14 herein.
- e. Inactivity as defined in the Bylaws.

Such persons who have been removed from the roll of ~~memberspartners~~ shall remain persons for whom the Church has a continuing pastoral concern.

## Chapter 8. THE PASTOR(S)

C8.01. The Senior Pastor shall be the Chief Executive of the Church.

C8.02. A pastor must be called to this congregation by at least a two-thirds majority ballot vote of voting ~~memberspartners~~ present at a congregational meeting legally called for that purpose.

C8.03. Before a Call is issued, the officers or a Call Committee will recommend a Lutheran Pastor to the Church Council for verification. A called pastor must be an ordained and rostered Lutheran pastor.

C8.04. Pastoral Expectations - Every ordained pastor shall:

- a. Preach the Word;
- b. Administer the sacraments;
- c. Conduct public worship;
- d. Provide pastoral care;
- e. Live an exemplary sound, moral, law-abiding, and spiritual life.

C8.05. Pastoral Duties - Each ordained minister with a Congregational Call shall, within this congregation:

- a. Offer instruction, baptize, confirm, marry, visit congregational ~~members~~partners in need, and bury the dead.
- b. Supervise all schools and organizations of this congregation.
- c. Perform all necessary administrative duties.
- d. Administer discipline when necessary.

C8.06. Pastoral Responsibilities - Each pastor shall:

- a. Strive to extend the Kingdom of God through Christ to those seeking this knowledge.
- b. Seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry.
- c. Impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through a connection to and support of Lutheran and other Christian missions and information about church initiatives.

C8.07. Pastoral Contract - The specific duties of each pastor, compensation, and other matters pertaining to service as a pastor and termination provisions shall be included in a letter of Call that shall be signed by the Council President, the Council Secretary, and the called pastor and shall exist as a legal contract of employment.

C8.08. Pastoral Continuity - The Call of this 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 by a 2/3 majority vote of the Church Council for the following reasons.

- a. Mutual agreement to terminate the nature of the Call.
- b. Resignation of the pastor, which shall become effective, unless otherwise agreed, 30 days after the date on which it was submitted.
- c. Inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in this congregation in view of local conditions, without reflection on the competence or the moral and spiritual character of the pastor.
- d. The physical or mental incapacity of the pastor based on a professional diagnosis by a qualified medical professional.
- e. Disqualification of the pastor through discipline on grounds of doctrine, incidents of moral turpitude, or continued neglect of duty.
- f. The dissolution or financial insolvency of this congregation.

C8.09. Pastoral Rights - Before any action to terminate the call of a pastor can be finalized by the Church Council, a pastor can request a mutually agreed upon facilitator to conduct a hearing between the Church Council and the pastor. After the requested facilitation hearing, the Church Council can vote to terminate or reinstate the pastor.

- a. If no solution occurs through facilitation, the pastor or the Church Council can request outside mediation by a mediator with pastoral mediation experience.
- b. Names of three mediators will be obtained from our Lutheran affiliation or other sources. The pastor and the Church Council will each be allowed to strike one name to determine the person who will become the mediator.
- c. The mediator will conduct an investigation, confer with the parties, and offer a recommended solution to the Church Council within 30 days of the start of the mediation process.
- d. A pastor can request a review of any action causing removal by asking for a congregational meeting for review and a vote of confidence by this congregation.

- e. At that meeting a two-thirds majority vote in favor of termination by this congregation will be necessary to dismiss the pastor.

C8.10. Pastoral Vacancy:

At a time of pastoral vacancy, an interim pastor can be appointed by the Church Council to serve as the official Senior Pastor or as an associate pastor of the church. During the period of service, an interim pastor shall have the rights and duties in this congregation of a regularly called pastor and may delegate the same in part to other pastors with the consent of the Church Council.

C8.11. Interim Pastoral Restrictions:

Any ordained pastor providing interim assistance, or any existing staff members, shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a new Senior Pastor.

C8.12. Pastoral Compensation:

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.

C8.13. Associate Pastors:

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 with job descriptions to be drafted to accompany the Call in consultation with the Church Council. The terms, conditions, and compensation of employment will be specifically identified in these documents.

C8.14. Pastoral Administrative Responsibilities:

- a. The Senior Pastor of this congregation will oversee the maintenance of accurate parochial records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, ~~members~~partners received, ~~members~~partners dismissed, and ~~members~~partners leaving this congregation.
- b. All pastors will submit a summary of church statistics and program summaries annually at the Annual Congregational Meeting.
- c. All pastors will become a member of this congregation upon receipt and acceptance of the letter of Call.
- d. All pastors will diligently participate in maintaining and securing all of the church parochial records of this congregation. All records of the church will remain the property of this congregation.
- e. Before final compensation is paid to the pastor leaving a Call, the Church Council will verify that all church records are in good order. If they are not, final compensation will be withheld.

## Chapter 9. CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS:

C9.01. Congregational Meetings:

- a. The Annual Meeting of this congregation shall be held at a time specified in the Bylaws.

- b. A special Congregational Meeting may be called by the pastor, the Church Council, or the Council President, who shall conduct the meeting.

C9.02 Congregational Meetings Called by Petition:

~~MembersPartners~~ of this congregation can petition for a meeting by submitting a written request of 10% of verified congregational voting ~~memberspartners~~. The call for each special meeting shall specify the purpose for which it is to be held, the time and place, and the item on the agenda. No other business shall be transacted.

C9.03. Congregation Meeting Notification Process:

Notice of all meetings of this congregation shall be given at the services of worship on the preceding two consecutive Sundays and by appropriate notice to all voting ~~memberspartners~~ at least 10 days in advance of the date of the meeting. The posting of such notice by regular mail, with the regular postage affixed or paid and sent to the last known postal address of such ~~memberspartners~~, shall be sufficient as will notice communicated by electronic means and sent to the last known electronic mail address of such ~~memberspartners~~.

C9.04. Quorum:

~~At every congregational meeting Voting partners (as defined in the Bylaws) equal to the lesser of 10% of the previous calendar year's average Sunday weekly attendance -one or one~~ hundred (100) voting members shall constitute a quorum. Voting by proxy or by absentee ballot shall not be permitted.

C9.05. Majority Vote:

All actions approved by this congregation shall be by a majority vote of those voting ~~memberspartners~~ present and voting, except as otherwise provided in this Constitution or by state law.

C9.06. Procedures:

Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of all meetings of this congregation. A parliamentarian will be appointed to serve at each congregational meeting. That person's ruling will be final in any disputed action.

## Chapter 10. OFFICERS

C10.01. The officers of this congregation shall be a President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer.

- a. Duties of the officers shall be specified in the Bylaws.
- b. The officers shall be voting ~~memberspartners~~ of the congregation.

C10.02. The Church Council shall elect its officers as specified in the Bylaws and they shall be the officers of this congregation.

## Chapter 11. CHURCH COUNCIL

C11.01. Council Membership:

- a. Members of the Church Council shall be elected by the Congregation at an Annual Meeting of the congregation
- b. The Church Council shall consist of not more than twelve nor fewer than seven elected ~~members-partners~~ of the congregation.

- c. Any voting ~~member-partner~~ of the congregation may be elected, subject only to the limitation on the length of continuous service permitted in that office.
- d. A member's place on the Church Council shall be declared vacant if the member a) ceases to be a voting ~~member-partner~~ of this congregation or b) is absent from four successive regular meetings of the Church Council without cause.
- e. Consistent with the laws of the state in which this congregation is incorporated, the congregation may adopt procedures for the removal of a member of the Church Council in other circumstances.

C11.02. Terms of Office:

- a. The members of the Church Council shall be elected by ballot to serve a three year term.
- b. Such members shall be eligible to serve no more than two full elected terms consecutively. Their terms shall begin at the close of the annual meeting at which they are elected.

C11.03. Council Vacancies:

Should a member's place on the Church Council be declared vacant, the Church Council shall elect, by majority vote, a successor until the next Annual Meeting. An appointed Council member's time served to fill a Council vacancy until the next Annual Meeting is not included in the term limit defined in Section C11.02 b above.

C11.04. Council Responsibilities:

The Church Council shall have general oversight of the life, ~~and activities, and operations~~ of this congregation, ~~and, including its worship life.~~ The duties of the Church Council shall include the following ~~and be exercised through Ends, Chief Executive Limitations, and Council policies.~~

- a. To represent and lead this congregation in stating its mission, to do long-range planning, to set goals and priorities, and to evaluate its activities in light of its mission and goals.
- b. To seek to involve all ~~memberspartners~~ of this congregation in worship, learning, witness, service, support and personal stewardship.
- c. To oversee and provide for the administration of this congregation to enable it to fulfill its functions and perform its mission.
- d. To maintain supportive relationships with the pastor(s) and staff and to annually evaluate in writing the fulfillment of ~~the senior pastor's their~~ calling ~~or employment~~.
- e. To be examples individually and corporately of the style of life and ministry expected of all baptized persons.
- f. To promote a congregational climate of peace and goodwill, and, as differences and conflicts arise, to endeavor to foster mutual understanding.
- g. To arrange for pastoral service or employee assistance that covers any special needs of the pastors or lay staff.

C11.05. Financial Management:

The Church Council shall be responsible for the financial and property matters of this congregation.

- a. The Church 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 Iowa, except as otherwise provided herein.

- b. The Church Council shall not have the authority to buy, sell, or encumber or lease real property unless specifically authorized to do so by a meeting of this congregation.
- c. The Church Council shall ~~prepare~~ present an annual budget for adoption by this congregation and shall supervise the expenditure of funds in accordance therewith following its adoption. It may incur obligations in excess of the anticipated receipts only as provided by the provisions in the Bylaws.
- d. The Church Council shall ascertain that the financial affairs of this congregation are being conducted efficiently, giving particular attention to the prompt payment of all obligations and preventing any possibility of the embezzlement of church funds.
- e. The Church Council shall be responsible for and evaluate annually this congregation's investments and its total insurance program.

C11.06. The Church Council shall see that the provisions of this Constitution and its Bylaws are carried out.

C11.07. The Church Council shall provide for an annual review of the ~~members~~partnership roster.

C11.08. The Church Council shall ~~hold the Senior Pastor be~~ responsible for ~~the supervision of the staff called by the congregation and~~ the employment and supervision of the salaried lay workers of this congregation.

C11.09. The Church Council shall submit a comprehensive report to this congregation at the Annual Meeting.

C11.10. The Church Council shall normally meet once a month. Special meetings may be called by the Senior Pastor or the President and shall be called by the President at the request of at least one-half of its members. Notice of each special meeting shall be given to all who are entitled to be present.

C11.11. A quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of a simple majority of the number of members on the Church Council. Absence of the Senior Pastor shall not preclude action by the Church Council.

C11.12. The Church Council as the duly elected representative body of the congregation has the right and responsibility to do what is necessary and proper to meet the needs of the congregation. If the Church Council takes an action that is not specifically addressed by other provisions of this constitution, then any action by the council under this section will be brought to the attention of the congregation and at the next congregational meeting will require a majority vote of the congregation to sustain it.

## Chapter 12. CONGREGATION COMMITTEES

C12.01. The Church Council can authorize the committees needed to effectively meet the goals and objectives of this Constitution.

C12.02. A *Nominating Committee* shall be elected at the Annual Meeting as specified in the Bylaws.

C12.03. An *Audit Committee* shall be elected by the Church Council as specified in the Bylaws.

~~C12.04. A *Personnel Committee* will be created by the Council to provide assistance to the staff in matters relating to staff employment, evaluation, and continuance.~~

C12.0504. When a pastoral vacancy occurs, a *Call Committee* of at least six voting ~~memberspartners~~ shall be elected by the Church Council. The committee will be dissolved upon the election of the new pastor by the congregation.

C12.056. Other committees of this congregation may be formed, as the need arises, by decision of the Church Council.

C12.076. Duties of committees of this congregation shall be specified in the continuing resolutions of the Church Council. *The pastors will monitor all committees established by the Church Council.*

C12.078. The Senior Pastor of this congregation shall be an ex officio member of all committees and boards of the congregation with the exception of the Audit Committee. The President of this congregation shall be an ex officio member of all committees and boards of the congregation.

## Chapter 13. ORGANIZATIONS WITHIN THE CONGREGATION

C13.01. All organizations within this congregation shall exist to aid it in ministering to the ~~memberspartners~~ 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 Church Council oversight and direction. This congregation at its Annual Meeting shall determine their policies, guide their activities, and receive reports concerning their ~~memberspartners~~hip, work, and finances.

C13.02. Special Interest Groups:  
These groups may be organized only after authorization has been given by the Church Council and specifications given as to their function, purpose, and duration in a continuing resolution.

## Chapter 14. DISCIPLINE OF ~~MEMBERSPARTNERS~~ AND ADJUDICATION

Any church ~~memberpartner~~, staff member, or pastor may be subject to disciplinary action following the due process herein explained.

C14.01. Disciplinary Infractions:

- Denial of the Christian faith as described in this Constitution.
- Conduct grossly unbecoming a member of the Church of Christ.
- Persistent trouble-making in this congregation.

C14.02. Reconciliation Actions based on Matthew 18:15-22:

- Private admonition by a called pastor of St. Mark's
- Admonition by a pastor in the presence of two or three Council witnesses.
- Summons to appear before the Church Council.
- If, for any reason, a pastor is unable to administer the admonitions, the President or Vice President shall administer such admonitions.

C14.03. Disciplinary Process - The process for discipline of a ~~member partner~~ of this congregation shall be governed by these provisions:

- If discipline against a ~~member partner~~ proceeds beyond counseling and admonition by a pastor, charges against the accused ~~memberpartner~~(s) that are specific and in writing shall be prepared by ~~memberpartner~~(s) of the congregation who shall sign the charges

as the accuser(s). The written charges shall be filed with a pastor, who shall advise the Church Council of the need to issue a written summons to the accused and the accusers that specifies the time and place of the hearing before the Church Council.

- b. The written charges shall accompany the written summons to the accused.
- c. A ~~member~~partner charged with an offense shall appear before the Church Council after having received a written summons, at least ten days prior to the meeting. If the ~~member~~partner charged with the offense fails to appear at the scheduled hearing, the Church Council may proceed with the hearing and may pass judgment in the ~~member~~partners's absence.

C14.04. Restrictions:

Members of the Church Council who participate in the preparation of the written charges or who present evidence or testimony in the hearing before the Church Council are disqualified from voting upon the question of the guilt of the accused ~~member~~partner.

C14.05 Actions:

Should the allegations be sustained by a two-thirds majority vote of the Council members, the Church Council shall impose one of the following disciplinary actions:

- a. Censure before the Council or congregation;
- b. Suspension from ~~members~~partnership for a definite period of time; or
- c. Exclusion from ~~members~~partnership in this congregation (termination).

Disciplinary actions b and c above shall be delivered to the member in writing.

C14.06. Modifications:

Disciplinary actions may be reconsidered and revoked by the Church Council upon receipt of evidence that injustice has been done or evidence of repentance and amendment.

C14.07. Mediation:

- a. When there is disagreement with an individual or group within this congregation on a substantive issue that cannot be resolved by the parties, ~~members~~partners of this congregation shall request a mediator for consultation after informing the president of the Church Council of their intent.
- b. A mediator shall have previous experience and training in conflict resolution. Three names can be proposed by the Church Council, with each side having the option of removing one name. The mediator will conduct investigations and hearings as needed and submit within 30 days a recommended solution to the Council.

C14.08. Reconciliation:

Regardless of the outcome of the proceedings, all parties involved are encouraged to seek reconciliation in the spirit of Jesus' teaching in Matthew 18:21-22.

## Chapter 15. BYLAWS

C15.01. No Bylaw may conflict with any provision of this Constitution.

C15.02. The congregation may at any legally called congregation meeting adopt, amend or rescind Bylaws by a majority vote.

C15.03. The Church Council may adopt, amend and rescind Bylaws by a two-thirds majority vote of all voting members of the Church Council at two successive Council meetings as provided in the Bylaws.

## Chapter 16. CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

Sections of this Constitution may be added, deleted, or amended in the following manner:

### C16.01. Amendment Origination:

- a. Amendments may be proposed by a petition of one hundred (100) voting congregational ~~members~~partners that is submitted to the Church Council.
- b. Amendments may be originated by the Church Council.
- c. Amendments must be filed in writing with the Church Council 60 days before formal consideration by this congregation at a regular or special Congregational Meeting called for that purpose.
- d. The Church Council shall notify this congregation's ~~members~~partners by postal mail or electronic mail of the proposal, along with the Council's recommendation. This must be communicated to this congregation at least 30 days in advance of the first meeting.
- e. The amendment must pass by a majority vote at two congregational meetings. Thirty days must pass after the first such meeting before the second such congregational meeting can be held. The amendment will become effective immediately upon approval.

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## Chapter 17. CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

C17.01. The congregation in a legally called meeting may enact, amend or rescind continuing resolutions by a majority vote. Such continuing resolutions may not conflict with the Constitution or Bylaws of this congregation.

C17.02. The Church Council may enact, amend or rescind continuing resolutions by a two-thirds majority vote of all voting members of the Church Council.

C17.03. All continuing resolutions will be attached to the official copy of the Constitution and Bylaws maintained in the church office.

## Chapter 18. INDEMNIFICATION

C18.01. Consistent with the provisions of the laws under which this congregation is incorporated, this congregation, acting through the Church Council, may adopt provisions providing indemnification for each person for a Church Council member, officer, employee, agent, or other member of any committee of this congregation, who was or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending, or completed civil, criminal, administrative, arbitration, or investigative proceeding.