

**CONSTITUTION**  
**of the**  
**Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, Inc.**  
**Atlanta, Georgia**

Amended by Redeemer on March 17, 2024.  
Approved by the Southeastern Synod Council on May 30, 2024.

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## Redeemer Constitution Document History

This page lists amendments to the constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Redeemer and the date when each amendment became effective, in accordance with the process described in Chapter 16. Changes to continuing resolutions are listed at the beginning of the Continuing Resolutions section.

Change #	Description of Change	Effective Date
1	Constitution brought into conformance with the ELCA <i>Model Constitution for Congregations</i> ; also, changes to chapters 10-14.	June 3, 2010
2	Constitution brought into conformance with changes to the ELCA <i>Model Constitution for Congregations</i> in 2009, 2011, and 2013; also, amendments to chapters 11 and 13 to separate the offices of vice president and secretary.	Adopted March 23, 2014; approved by synod 09/24/2014
3	Changes to section C12.02.c.2 reducing the required number of Council election nominees and the number of nominees automatically included in the slate.	Adopted March 15, 2015; approved by synod 04/15/2015
4	Constitution brought into conformance with changes to the ELCA <i>Model Constitution for Congregations</i> in 2016. Also, removal of previous amendments not conforming to the model constitution. Ratified congregational amendments added.	Adopted October 22, 2017.
5	Amendments to chapter 11 to define ecclesiastical ballots and to chapter 13 to establish a Mutual Ministry Committee; to chapters 12, 13, and 14 to correct wording and to identify ministry teams; and to chapters 16, 17, and 20 to bring the numbering into conformance with the ELCA <i>Model Constitution for Congregations</i> .	Adopted March 11, 2018; approved by synod 6/8/2018.
6	Constitution brought into conformance with the ELCA <i>Model Constitution for Congregations</i> from 2019.	Adopted October 11, 2020
7	Amendments to Chapter 13 to create the Legacy Giving Board and to clarify pastoral membership on the Executive Committee.	Adopted October 11, 2020 and December 6, 2020; approved by synod 1/9/2021.
8	Amendments to Chapters 11 and 12 to change the voting membership of the Congregation Council.	Adopted April 18, 2021; approved by synod 6/4/2021.
9	Constitution brought into conformance with the ELCA <i>Model Constitution for Congregations</i> from 2022. Provision C5.05 removed (included by scrivener's error in 2022 draft).	Approved December 10, 2023.
10	Amendment to C12.05.C specifying that the annual budget will include all expected expenditures and their funding sources.	Adopted March 17, 2024; approved by synod 5/30/2024.
11	<a href="#"><u>Constitution brought into conformance with the ELCA <i>Model Constitution for Congregations</i> from 2025.</u></a>	
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**CONSTITUTION**  
**of the**  
**Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, Inc.**  
**Atlanta, Georgia**

Approved Version as of 05/30/2024

*Sections marked with an asterisk (\*) are required by the ELCA Model Constitution for Congregations.*

**\*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 Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, Inc., Atlanta, Georgia.
- C1.02.** For the purpose of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws<sup>1</sup> [and continuing resolutions](#), the congregation of Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, Inc., Atlanta, Georgia, is hereinafter designated as "this congregation."
- C1.03.** For the purpose of this constitution, "Church" references the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church.
- C1.04.** For the purpose of this constitution, "church" and "this church" reference the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- C1.05.** This congregation shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of Georgia.

**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.

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<sup>1</sup> *Lutheran Church of the Redeemer does not use bylaws. Topics assigned to bylaws in the required text will be found in continuing resolutions for the related provision.*

- \*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.**  
**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. This church confesses the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church and is resolved to serve Christian Unity throughout the world.
- \*C3.03. 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 saints; in breadth, it expresses the fellowship of believers and congregations in our day.
- \*C3.04. This church, inspired and led by the Holy Spirit, participates in The Lutheran World Federation as a global communion of churches, engaging in faithful witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ and in service for the sake of God's mission in the world.
- \*C3.05. The name Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA or "this church") as used herein refers in general references to this whole church, including its three expressions—congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization. The name Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is also the name of the corporation of the churchwide organization to which specific references may be made herein.

**Chapter 4.**  
**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, justice, and equity for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations, and standing in solidarity with the poor and oppressed 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 this congregation's ministry and the ministry of the other expressions 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.<sup>2</sup> 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 in the section on the Congregation Committees.
- \*C4.05. This congregation shall adopt and periodically review a mission statement which will provide specific direction for its programs.
- \*C4.06. References herein to the nature of the relationship between the three expressions of this church—congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization—as being interdependent or as being in a partnership relationship describe the mutual responsibility of these expressions in God’s mission and the fulfillment of the purposes of this church as described in this chapter, and do not imply or describe the creation of partnerships, co-ventures, agencies, or other legal relationships recognized in civil law.

**Chapter 5.**  
**POWERS OF THE CONGREGATION**

- \*C5.01. The powers of this congregation are those necessary to fulfill its purpose.
- \*C5.02. The powers of this congregation are vested in Congregation Meetings duly called and conducted as provided in this constitution.
- \*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 this congregation. This 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. call a minister of Word and Service;
  - d. terminate the call of a minister of Word and Service in conformity with the constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;
  - e. adopt amendments to the constitution, as provided in Chapter 16, amendments to the bylaws, as specified in Chapter 17, and continuing resolutions, as provided in Chapter 18;
  - f. approve the annual budget;
  - g. acquire real and personal property by gift, devise, purchase, or other lawful means;
  - h. hold title to and use its property, real and personal, for any and all activities consistent with its purpose;
  - i. sell, mortgage, lease, transfer, or otherwise dispose of its property, real and personal, by any lawful means;
  - j. elect its Congregation Council and require them to carry out their duties in accordance with the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions; and
  - k. terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as provided in Chapter 6.
- \*C5.04. This congregation or the Congregation Council shall elect from among ~~the~~ voting members of the congregation 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 to be elected ~~by this congregation~~ and other qualifications shall be as prescribed in guidelines established by the Southeastern Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

<sup>2</sup> *Lutheran Church of the Redeemer does not use bylaws. Topics assigned to bylaws in the required text will be found in continuing resolutions for the related provision.*

**Chapter 6.**  
**CHURCH AFFILIATION**

- \*C6.01. This congregation shall be an interdependent part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or its successor, and of the Southeastern Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. This congregation is subject to the discipline of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- \*C6.02. 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.
- \*C6.03. 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 roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament 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. These special circumstances are limited either to calling a candidate approved for the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or to contracting for pastoral services with a Minister of Word and Sacrament of a church body with which the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America officially has established a relationship of full communion.
  - d. This congregation agrees to consider ministers of Word and Service for call to other staff positions in this congregation according to the procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
  - e. This congregation agrees to file this constitution and any subsequent changes to this constitution with the synod for review to ascertain that all of its provisions are in agreement with the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and with the constitution of the synod.
- \*C6.04. Affiliation with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is 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 or in accordance with provision 9.23 of the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
  - d. The Southeastern Synod takes charge and control of the property of this congregation to hold, manage, and convey the same on behalf of the synod pursuant to †S13.24 of the synod constitution. This congregation shall have the right to appeal the decision to the next Synod Assembly.
  - e. This congregation follows the procedures outlined in \*C6.05.
- \*C6.05. This congregation may terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America by the following procedures:
  - a. A resolution indicating the intent to terminate its relationship must be adopted at two legally called and conducted special meetings of this congregation by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present at each meeting. The first such meeting may be held no sooner than 30 days after written notice of the meeting is received by the bishop of the synod, during which time this congregation shall consult with the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any. The times and manner of the consultation shall be determined by the bishop in consultation with the Congregation Council. Unless the bishop and/or the bishop's designees are voting members of this congregation, the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any, shall have voice but not vote at the first meeting.
  - b. Within 10 days after the resolution has been voted upon at the first meeting the secretary of this congregation shall submit a copy of the resolution to the bishop, attesting that the special meeting was legally called and conducted and certifying the outcome of the vote, and shall send copies of the resolution and certification to voting members of this congregation.
  - c. If the resolution was adopted by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present at the first meeting, the bishop of the synod and this congregation shall continue in consultation, as specified in paragraph a. above, during a period of at least 90 days after receipt by the bishop of the attestation and certification as specified in paragraph b. above.
  - d. If this congregation, after such consultation, is still considering termination of its relationship with this church, such action may be taken at a legally called and conducted special meeting by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present. Notice of the second meeting shall be sent to all voting members and to the bishop at least 10 days in advance of the meeting. Unless the bishop and/or the bishop's designees are voting members of this congregation, the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any, shall have voice but not vote at the second meeting.

- e. Within 10 days after the resolution has been voted upon, the secretary of this congregation shall submit a copy of the resolution to the bishop, attesting that the second special meeting was legally called and conducted and certifying the outcome of the vote, and shall send copies of the resolution and certification to the voting members of the congregation. If the resolution was adopted by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present at the second meeting, the relationship between the congregation and this church shall be terminated subject to Synod Council approval as required by paragraphs f. and g. below.
- f. Unless this notification to the bishop also certifies that this congregation has voted to affiliate with another Lutheran denomination, this congregation shall be deemed an independent or non-Lutheran church, in which case \*C7.04. shall apply.
- g. This congregation shall abide by these covenants by and among the three expressions of this church:
  - 1) Congregations seeking to terminate their relationship with this church which fail or refuse to comply with each of the foregoing provisions in \*C6.05., shall be required to receive Synod Council approval before terminating their membership in this church.
  - 2) Congregations which had been members of the Lutheran Church in America shall be required, in addition to complying with the foregoing provisions in \*C6.05., to receive synod approval before terminating their membership in this church.
  - 3) Congregations established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be required, in addition to complying with the foregoing provisions in \*C6.05, to satisfy all financial obligations to this church and receive Synod Council approval before terminating their membership in this church.
- h. If this congregation fails to achieve the required two-thirds vote of voting members present at this congregation's first meeting as specified in paragraph a. above or fails to achieve the required two-thirds vote of voting members present at this congregation's second meeting as specified in paragraph d. above, another attempt to consider termination of relationship with this church must follow all requirements of \*C6.05. and may begin no sooner than six months after the meeting at which the two-thirds vote was not achieved.

**\*C6.06.** If this congregation considers relocation, it shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located and the appropriate unit of the churchwide organization before any steps are taken leading to such action. The approval of the Synod Council shall be received before any such action is taken.

**\*C6.07.** 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 unit of the churchwide organization before any steps are taken leading to such action.

## Chapter 7.

### PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

**\*C7.01.** If this congregation ceases to exist, title to undisposed property shall pass to the Southeastern Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

**\*C7.02.** If this congregation is removed from membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America according to its procedure for discipline or pursuant to 9.23. of the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, title to property shall continue to reside in this congregation.

**\*C7.03.** If the voting members of this congregation present at a legally called and conducted special meeting of this congregation vote to ~~relate~~transfer to another Lutheran church body, title to property shall continue to reside in this congregation, provided the process for termination of relationship in \*C6.05. has been followed. Before this congregation takes action to ~~relate~~transfer to another Lutheran church body, it shall consult with representatives of the Southeastern Synod.

**\*C7.04.** If the voting members of this congregation present at a legally called and conducted special meeting of this congregation vote to become independent or relate to a non-Lutheran church body and have followed the process for termination of relationship in \*C6.05, title to property of this congregation shall continue to reside in this congregation only with the consent of the Synod Council. The Synod Council, after consultation with this congregation by the process established by the synod, may give approval to the request to become independent or to relate to a non-Lutheran church body, in which case title shall remain with the majority of this congregation. If the Synod Council fails to give such approval, title shall remain with those members who desire to continue as a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. In neither case does title to this congregation's property transfer to the synod.

**\*C7.05.** Notwithstanding the provisions of \*C7.02. and \*C7.03. above, where this congregation has received property from the synod pursuant to a deed or other instrument containing restrictions under provision 9.71.a. of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, this

congregation accepts such restrictions and:

- a. Shall not transfer, encumber, mortgage, or in any way burden or impair any right, title, or interest in the property without prior approval of the Synod Council.
- b. Shall—upon written demand by the Synod Council, pursuant to †S13.23. of the constitution of the Southeastern Synod—reconvey and transfer all right, title, and interest in the property to the synod.

## Chapter 8. MEMBERSHIP

- \*C8.01.** 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.<sup>3</sup>
- \*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. 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 as well as the other rights and privileges ascribed to voting members by the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws. They shall not have voted as a seasonal member of another congregation of this church in the previous two calendar months.
  - 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. These individuals have all the privileges and duties of membership except voting rights or other rights and privileges ascribed to voting members by the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.
  - e. **Seasonal** members are voting members of other congregations of this church who wish to retain such membership but desire to participate in the life and mission of this congregation, including exercising limited voting rights in this congregation. The Congregation Council may grant seasonal membership to such persons provided that this congregation is a member of a synod where the Synod Council has approved seasonal member voting on its territory. Such seasonal members shall have all the privileges and duties of voting members except that:
    - 1) they shall not be eligible for elected office in, or for membership on the Congregation Council or on a call committee of, this congregation;
    - 2) they shall not have the right to vote on any matter concerning or affecting the call or termination of call of any minister of this congregation;
    - 3) they shall not have the right to vote on any matter concerning or affecting the affiliation of this congregation with this church;
    - 4) they shall not be eligible to serve as voting members from this congregation of the Synod Assembly or the Churchwide Assembly;
    - 5) they shall not, even if otherwise permitted by this congregation, vote by proxy or by absentee ballot; and
    - 6) they shall not, within any two calendar month period, exercise voting rights in this congregation and in the congregation where they remain voting members.
- \*C8.03.** All applications for confirmed membership shall be submitted to and shall require the approval of the Congregation Council.
- \*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

<sup>3</sup> *Lutheran Church of the Redeemer does not use bylaws. Topics assigned to bylaws in the required text will be found in continuing resolutions for the related provision.*

- 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.

- \*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 in accordance with Chapter 20 of the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; or
  - e. removal from the roll due to inactivity in accordance with the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.<sup>4</sup> Such persons who have been removed from the roll of members shall remain persons for whom the Church has a continuing pastoral concern.

**Chapter 9.**  
**THE ROSTERED MINISTER**

- \*C9.01. Authority to call a pastor shall be in this congregation by at least a two-thirds vote of voting 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.
- \*C9.02. ~~Only This congregation may call as a pastor only:~~
  - a. a member of the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; ~~or~~
  - a.b. a candidate for the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament who has been recommended for this congregation by the synod bishop, ~~may be called as a pastor of this congregation.~~
- \*C9.03. Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,
  - a. Every minister of Word and Sacrament shall:
    - 1) preach the Word;
    - 2) administer the sacraments;
    - 3) conduct public worship;
    - 4) provide pastoral care;
    - 5) seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel;
    - 6) impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through available channels of effective communication;
    - 7) witness to the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation, and abroad; and
    - 8) speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, proclaiming God's love for the world, advocating dignity, justice, and equity for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, and embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations.
  - b. Each pastor with a congregational call shall, within the congregation:
    - 1) offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead;
    - 2) relate to all schools and organizations of this congregation;
    - 3) install regularly elected members of the Congregation Council;
    - 4) with the Council, administer discipline;
    - 5) endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the churchwide organization and of the Southeastern Synod; and
    - 6) encourage adherence to covenantal relationship with this church as expressed in the Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- \*C9.04. 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.
- \*C9.05. The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between a minister of Word and Sacrament and this congregation shall be as follows:

<sup>4</sup> *Lutheran Church of the Redeemer does not use bylaws. Topics assigned to bylaws in the required text will be found in continuing resolutions for the related provision*

- a. The call of this congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment which shall be terminated only by the pastor's death or, following consultation with the synod bishop, for any of 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, no later than 30 days after the date on which it was submitted;
  - 3) 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;
  - 4) inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in view of disability or incapacity of the pastor;
  - 5) suspension of the pastor through discipline for more than three months on grounds of doctrine, morality, or continued neglect of duty;
  - 6) resignation or removal of the pastor from the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament of this church;
  - 7) termination of the relationship between this church and this congregation;
  - 8) dissolution of this congregation or the termination of a parish arrangement; or
  - 9) suspension of this congregation through discipline for more than six months.
- b. When allegations of disability or incapacity of the pastor under paragraph a.4) above or ineffective conduct of the pastoral office under paragraph a.3) above have come to the attention of the bishop of this synod,
  - 1) the bishop, who has sole discretion, may investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson, or
  - 2) 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 this congregation, the bishop personally shall investigate such conditions together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson.
- c. In case of alleged disability or incapacity under paragraph a.4) above, the bishop's committee shall obtain and document competent medical opinion concerning the pastor's condition. When a disability or incapacity is evident to the committee, the bishop of the synod may declare the pastorate vacant. When the pastorate is declared vacant, the Synod Council shall list the pastor on the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament with disability status. Upon resumption of the ability to conduct the office effectively, the bishop shall take steps to enable the pastor to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another appropriate call.
- d. In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of this congregation under paragraph a.3) above, the bishop's committee shall endeavor to hear from all concerned persons, after which the bishop together with the committee shall present their recommendations first to the pastor and then to this congregation. The recommendations of the bishop's committee must address whether the pastor's call should come to an end and, if so, may suggest appropriate severance arrangements. The committee may also propose other actions that should be undertaken by this congregation and by the pastor, if appropriate. If the pastor and congregation agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action need be taken by the synod.
- e. If either party fails to assent to the recommendations of the bishop's committee concerning the pastor's call, this congregation may dismiss the pastor only at a legally called meeting after consultation with the bishop, either (a) by a two-thirds 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 majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee recommended termination of the call.
- f. If, in the course of proceedings described in paragraph c. or paragraph d. above, the bishop's committee concludes that there may be grounds for discipline, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action, in accordance with the provisions of this church's constitution and continuing resolutions.

**\*C9.06.** At a time of pastoral vacancy, an interim pastor may shall be appointed by the bishop of the synod with the consent of this congregation or the Congregation Council.

**\*C9.07.** 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 a supply pastor with the consent of the bishop of the synod and this congregation or Congregation Council. The interim pastor and any rostered minister providing assistance shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a pastor. Unless previously agreed upon by the Synod Council, an interim pastor is not available for a regular call to the congregation served.

**\*C9.08.** 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.

- \*C9.09.** 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.
- C9.10.** When a new senior pastor is installed, each called associate pastor shall submit a letter of resignation to the senior pastor, who may accept it within one year of the tender.
- \*C9.11.** With the approval of the bishop of the synod, this congregation may depart from \*C9.05.a. 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 this congregation for a review of the call. Such call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of \*C9.05.a.
- \*C9.12.** The pastor of this congregation:
- shall keep accurate records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from this congregation;
  - shall submit a summary of such statistics annually to the synod; and
  - shall be a member of the 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.
- \*C9.13.** The pastor(s) shall submit a report of ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.
- \*C9.14.** The records of this congregation shall be maintained by the pastor and shall remain the property of this congregation. The secretary of this congregation shall attest in writing to the bishop of this synod that such records have been placed in the secretary's hands in good order by a departing pastor before the installation of that pastor in another call or approval of a request for change in roster status.
- \*C9.15.** Under special circumstances, subject to the approval of the synod bishop and the concurrence of this congregation, a minister of Word and Sacrament 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 this congregation and the pastor in a form proposed by the synod bishop and approved by this congregation.
- \*C9.21.** Authority to call a deacon shall be in this congregation by at least a two-thirds vote of voting 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.
- \*C9.22.** ~~Only This congregation may call as a deacon only:~~
- a member of the roster of Ministers of Word and Service of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; or
  - a candidate for the roster of Ministers of Word and Service who has been recommended for this congregation by the synod bishop, ~~may be called as a deacon of this congregation.~~
- \*C9.23.** Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, every minister of Word and Service shall:
- Be rooted in the Word of God, for proclamation and service;
  - Advocate a prophetic diakonia that commits itself to risk-taking and innovative service on the frontiers of the Church's outreach, giving particular attention to the suffering places in God's world;
  - Speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, proclaiming God's love for the world, advocating dignity, justice, and equity for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, and embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations;
  - Equip the baptized for ministry in God's world that affirms the gifts of all people;
  - Encourage mutual relationships that invite participation and accompaniment of others in God's mission;
  - Practice stewardship that respects God's gift of time, talents, and resources;
  - Be grounded in a gathered community for ongoing diaconal formation;
  - Share knowledge of this church and its wider ministry of the gospel and advocate for the work of all expressions of this church; and
  - Identify and encourage qualified persons to prepare for ministry of the gospel.
- \*C9.24.** The specific duties of the deacon, compensation, and other matters pertaining to the service of the deacon shall be included in a letter of call, which shall be attested by the bishop of the synod.
- \*C9.25.** The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between a minister of Word and Service and a congregation shall be as follows:
- The call of a congregation, when accepted by a deacon, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment, which shall be terminated only by the deacon's death or, following consultation with the synod bishop, for any of the following reasons:

- 1) mutual agreement to terminate the call or the completion of a call for a specific term;
  - 2) resignation of the deacon, which shall become effective, unless otherwise agreed, no later than 30 days after the date on which it was submitted;
  - 3) inability to conduct the ministry of Word and Service effectively in this congregation in view of local conditions;
  - 4) inability to conduct the office effectively in view of disability or incapacity of the deacon;
  - 5) suspension of the deacon through discipline for more than three months;
  - 6) resignation or removal of the deacon from the roster of Ministers of Word and Service of this church;
  - 7) termination of the relationship between this church and this congregation;
  - 8) dissolution of this congregation or the termination of a parish arrangement; or
  - 9) suspension of this congregation through discipline for more than six months.
- b. When allegations of disability or incapacity of the deacon under paragraph a.4) above, or ineffective conduct of the office of minister of Word and Service under paragraph a.3) above, have come to the attention of the bishop of this synod,
- 1) the bishop, who has sole discretion, may investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson, or
  - 2) 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 this congregation, the bishop personally shall investigate such conditions together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson.
- c. In case of alleged disability or incapacity under paragraph a.4) above, the bishop's committee shall obtain and document competent medical opinion concerning the deacon's condition. When a disability or incapacity is evident to the committee, the bishop of this synod may declare the position vacant. When the position is declared vacant, the Synod Council shall list the deacon on the roster of Ministers of Word and Service with disability status. Upon resumption of the ability to conduct the office effectively, the bishop shall take steps to enable the deacon to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another appropriate call.
- d. In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of this congregation under paragraph a.3) above, the bishop's committee shall endeavor to hear from all concerned persons, after which the bishop together with the committee shall present their recommendations first to the deacon and then to this congregation. The recommendations of the bishop's committee must address whether the deacon's call should come to an end and, if so, may suggest appropriate severance arrangements. The committee may also propose other actions that should be undertaken by this congregation and by the deacon, if appropriate. If the deacon and congregation agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action need be taken by the synod.
- e. If either party fails to assent to the recommendations of the bishop's committee concerning the deacon's call, this congregation may dismiss the deacon only at a legally called meeting after consultation with the bishop, either (a) by a two-thirds 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 majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee recommended termination of the call.
- f. If, in the course of proceedings described in paragraph c. or paragraph d. above, the bishop's committee concludes that there may be grounds for discipline, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action in accordance with the provisions of this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions.
- \*C9.26** This congregation shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to a former deacon before calling a successor. A deacon 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.
- \*C9.27.** When a deacon is called to serve in company with another rostered minister or other rostered ministers, the privileges and responsibilities of each rostered minister shall be specified in documents to accompany the call and to be drafted in consultation involving the rostered ministers, the Congregation Council, and the bishop of the synod. As occasion requires, the documents may be revised through a similar consultation.
- \*C9.28.** With the approval of the bishop of the synod, this congregation may depart from \*C9.25.a. and call a deacon 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 deacon and representatives of this congregation for a review of the call. Such a call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of \*C9.25.a.
- \*C9.29.** The deacon shall become a member of this congregation upon receipt and acceptance of the letter of call. In a parish of multiple congregations, the deacon shall hold membership in one of the congregations.

- \*C9.31. The deacon(s) shall submit a report of ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.

## **Chapter 10.**

### **CONGREGATION MEETING**

- C10.01.** This congregation shall have at least one regular meeting per year. The regular meeting(s) of the congregation shall be held at the time(s) specified by the Congregation Council. Consistent with the laws of the State of Georgia, the bylaws<sup>5</sup> shall designate one regular meeting per year as the annual meeting of this congregation. A member of the congregation may present a resolution to the congregation at the annual meeting. If the resolution is approved by a majority of the voting members at the session in which it is presented, the Chair of the meeting shall refer the resolution to the Congregation Council, who shall call a special Congregation Meeting within sixty days to present the resolution to the entire congregation for consideration.
- C10.02.** A special Congregation Meeting may be called by the senior pastor, the Congregation Council, or the president of this congregation, and shall be called by the president of this congregation upon the written request of ten percent of the voting members. The president of the Congregation Council shall call a special meeting upon request of the synod bishop. The call for each special meeting shall specify the purpose for which it is to be held, and no other business shall be transacted.
- C10.03.** Notice of all meetings of this congregation shall be given at the services of worship on the preceding two consecutive weekends and either by mail or by alternative means when requested by the member to all voting members at least 10 days in advance of the date of the meeting. The posting of such notice in the regular mail, with the regular postage affixed or paid, sent to the last known address of such members or by alternative means when requested by the member shall be sufficient.
- C10.04.** Any meeting of the congregation, whether an annual meeting or a special meeting, may be held in more than one session over not more than seven days. Any resolution to be considered by the congregation, whether at an annual meeting or special meeting, shall be provided to the congregation with the notice required for that meeting and may not be amended during the course of the meeting. A voting member may cast only one vote on a resolution.
- C10.05.** Any number of present and voting members shall constitute a quorum.
- C10.06.** Voting by proxy or by absentee ballot shall not be permitted, except as provided for by the Congregation Council election process in C12.02 and the continuing resolutions.
- C10.07.** All actions by this congregation shall be by majority vote except as otherwise provided in this constitution.
- C10.08.** This congregation may hold meetings by remote communication, including electronically and by telephone conference, as long as there is an opportunity for simultaneous aural communication or its equivalent. To the extent permitted by state law, notice of all meetings may be provided electronically.
- C10.09.** Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of all meetings of this congregation.

## **Chapter 11.**

### **OFFICERS**

- C11.01.** The officers of this congregation shall be a president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and financial secretary.
- The officers shall be voting members of the congregation.
  - Only laypersons shall be officers of this congregation. For purposes of this section, "layperson" shall mean all persons, whether or not ordained ministers, other than the pastors or the staff of this congregation. Spouses or partners of the pastors or the staff of this congregation are also excluded from serving as officers.
  - Officers of this congregation shall serve similar offices of the Congregation Council and shall be voting members of the Congregation Council only if they are elected members of the Council.
  - If any of the officers ceases to be a voting member of the congregation, that office shall at once be declared vacant by the Congregation Council, which shall fill the vacancy for the unexpired term.
  - The president shall preside at meetings of the congregation and of the Congregation Council.
  - The vice-president shall preside at meetings of the congregation and the Congregation Council in the event of the absence of the president. The vice-president shall provide administrative support and assistance to the president as appropriate when requested by the president.

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<sup>5</sup> *Lutheran Church of the Redeemer does not use bylaws. Topics assigned to bylaws in the required text will be found in continuing resolutions for the related provision.*

- g. The secretary shall attend and shall keep accurate minutes of all meetings of the congregation and of the Congregation Council in a volume which shall be provided by the congregation and preserved permanently in its archives.
  - h. The financial secretary shall receive and keep record of all income from contributing members and other sources.
  - i. The treasurer shall keep the books of account of the congregation and shall receive all funds and disburse them on proper orders, making monthly remittance of synod benevolence receipts to the treasurer of the synod.
  - j. The Congregation Council shall select a memorial fund treasurer to manage the memorial funds and other designated funds, pursuant to the continuing resolutions. The memorial fund treasurer shall make an annual report to the congregation.
  - k. The treasurer and the financial secretary shall make written reports of all financial transactions to the Congregation Council monthly and shall make an annual report to the congregation. All financial officers shall give corporate surety, in amounts determined by the Congregation Council, for which the premium shall be paid by the congregation. Fidelity coverage provided by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be deemed a fulfillment of this requirement.
- C11.02.** The Congregation Council shall elect the president, vice-president, and secretary at its first meeting during the calendar year.
- a. The president shall be elected by ecclesiastical ballot, in which each voting member of Council submits the nomination of another Council member on a written ballot. A majority of votes cast shall be necessary for election. If no one is elected on the first ballot, the three persons who receive the most votes shall be on the second ballot. If no one is elected on the second ballot, the two persons receiving the most votes shall be on a third ballot. The person receiving a majority of votes shall be elected president.
  - b. Nominations from the floor shall be made for the vice-president and the secretary. Election shall be by written ballot for each position. A majority of votes cast is necessary for election. If no one is elected on the first ballot, the three persons receiving the most votes shall be on a second ballot. If no one is elected on the second ballot, the two persons receiving the most votes shall be on a third ballot. The person receiving a majority of votes on the third ballot shall be elected.
  - c. These officers shall serve for one year or until their successors are elected. Their terms shall begin at the close of the election.
- C11.03.** The senior pastor, president, vice-president, and secretary, with the approval of the majority of the Congregation Council, shall appoint the treasurer and the financial secretary, who shall serve for one year or until their successors are approved. The treasurer and the financial secretary may not serve for more than three consecutive years.
- C11.04.** No officer shall hold more than one office at a time. No elected officer, with the exception of the treasurer and the financial secretary, shall be eligible to serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office.

**Chapter 12.**  
**CONGREGATION COUNCIL**

- C12.01.** The membership of the Congregation Council shall be the 15 members who are elected as provided in C12.02, the financial secretary, the treasurer, and the senior pastor. The voting members of the Council are the elected members and the senior pastor. The financial secretary and the treasurer are voting members only if they are elected Council members.
- C12.02.** Any voting member of this congregation, other than employees of the congregation and their spouses or partners, may be elected to the Congregation Council, subject only to the limitation on the length of continuous service permitted in that office.
- a. One-third of the members of the Congregation Council shall be elected by the congregation each calendar year for three-year terms to replace members of the Congregation Council whose terms have expired. The term of office shall commence on January 1 after the election.
  - b. Except as provided in C12.03, no person, other than the senior pastor, the financial secretary, and the treasurer, may serve consecutive terms on the Congregation Council. An outgoing Council member shall not be eligible to serve on the Council for the next three years after the conclusion of that member's term.
  - c. The Nominating Committee, as provided for in C13.02, shall solicit nominations and conduct the elections for the Congregation Council each year as follows:
    - 1) Nominations for the Congregation Council shall be made only by voting members on the forms provided by the Nominating Committee. Each voting member may make up to five nominations for the

- Congregation Council and shall sign the form.
- 2) The Nominating Committee shall prepare a slate of ten nominees. The six persons receiving the most nominations shall be on the slate. The Nominating Committee shall complete the slate so that it is generally representative of the congregation in the areas of age, gender, family composition, areas of involvement or interest in church activities, and any special skills that may be needed on the Congregation Council.
  - 3) The election of Congregation Council members shall be at a convenient time during one week during the month of October or November, as determined by the Congregation Council. Election procedure, including absentee voting, is provided for in the continuing resolutions.
  - 4) To be elected to the Congregation Council, a candidate must be among the number of candidates receiving the highest number of votes cast, that number of candidates being equal to the number of vacancies on the Congregation Council.
  - 5) Should a runoff be necessary, procedures will be the same as for the election, as provided for in the continuing resolutions.
  - 6) All ballots shall be retained by the Congregation Council for at least one year following the election.
- C12.03.** A member's place on the Congregation Council shall be declared vacant if the member a) ceases to be a voting member of this congregation, b) is absent from three successive regular meetings of the Congregation Council without excuse or notice, or c) resigns.
- a. The Congregation Council shall fill the vacancy with the nominee for Congregation Council, who remains a voting member, having the next largest number of votes on the last ballot after the members elected at the most recent election. Such member shall serve the remainder of the term of the member being replaced.
  - b. If a vacancy on the Congregation Council is filled and less than one-half of the regular term remains, the member completing the term shall be eligible, at the end of that term, for nomination and election to a new three-year term.
- C12.04.** The Congregation Council shall have general oversight of the life and activities of this congregation, and in particular its worship life, to the end that everything be done in accordance with the Word of God and the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The duties of the Congregation Council shall include the following:
- a. To 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 members of this congregation in worship, learning, witness, service, and support.
  - 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 rostered ministers and staff and help them annually to evaluate the fulfillment of their calling, appointment, 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, compromise, and mediation, leading to reconciliation.
  - g. To arrange for pastoral service during the sickness or absence of the pastor.
  - h. To emphasize support of the synod and churchwide units of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as well as cooperation with other congregations, both Lutheran and non-Lutheran, subject to established policies of the synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
  - i. To recommend and encourage the use of program resources produced or approved by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
  - j. To seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel.
- C12.05.** 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 Georgia, 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 this congregation.
  - c. The Congregation Council shall propose an annual budget for adoption by this congregation at a Congregation Meeting. The annual budget shall be a comprehensive budget, inclusive of all intended spending and intended fiscal sources for the spending. The budget shall include this congregation's full indicated share in support of the wider ministry being carried on in collaboration with the synod and churchwide organization. The fiscal year of this congregation shall be the calendar year.

- d. The Congregation Council shall supervise the expenditure of funds in accordance with the budget, following its adoption, and may incur obligations of no more than five percent in excess of the budget unless such expenditure is approved at a Congregation Meeting.
  - e. The Congregation 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 to the regular forwarding of mission support monies to the synod.
  - f. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for this congregation's investments and its total insurance program. All funds, except memorial and designated funds, shall be invested in fully insured accounts.
  - g. The Congregation Council, from time to time, shall establish an official publication of the congregation.
- C12.06.** The Congregation Council shall see that the provisions of this constitution and the continuing resolutions are carried out.
- C12.07.** The Congregation Council shall be responsible for ensuring that the membership roll is current by providing for an annual review and updating of the roll, so that an accurate number and list of voting members, as defined in C8.02c., is available prior to the time of the Congregation Council election each year.
- C12.08.** The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the appointment and supervision of the compensated lay staff of this congregation, as provided for in the continuing resolutions.
- C12.09.** The Congregation Council shall submit a comprehensive report to this congregation at the annual meeting, as specified in the continuing resolutions. A report of all assets, debts, liabilities, and material obligations shall be included.
- C12.10.** The Congregation Council shall normally meet once a month. Special meetings may be called by the senior pastor or the president, and shall be called 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.
- C12.11.** A quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of a majority of the voting members of the Congregation Council, as specified in C12.01. Members may participate in a meeting by means of a conference telephone or similar communications equipment that enables all persons participating to hear each other at the same time, or its equivalent. Participation by such means shall constitute presence at the meeting and shall permit the member to vote. Proxy voting at a Council meeting is not permitted.
- C12.12.** When the senior pastor requests or consents to be absent from a Council meeting and has given prior approval to an agenda of routine matters, they shall be the only business of the meeting. Chronic or repeated absence of the senior pastor who has refused approval of the agenda of a subsequent regular or special meeting shall not preclude action by the Congregation Council, following consultation with the synod bishop.

### **Chapter 13.**

#### **CONGREGATION COMMITTEES AND BOARDS**

- C13.01.** The Executive Committee shall consist of the president of the Council, the vice president, the secretary, the treasurer, the financial secretary, and two Council members, who are elected at large by written ballot at the first meeting of the Congregation Council each year. Each at-large member shall be individually elected and must receive a majority of the votes cast. The senior pastor also serves as a member of the Executive Committee. The duties and powers of the Executive Committee are specified in the continuing resolutions.
- C13.02.** A Nominating Committee consisting of the outgoing members of the Congregation Council who are not eligible for reelection, and up to two additional members chosen by the Congregation Council from those previous Council members not eligible for re-election in the upcoming term, shall solicit nominations and conduct the election for the Congregation Council, as provided for in C12.02c. and the continuing resolutions.
- C13.03.** An Audit Committee shall consist of at least three voting members of the congregation elected by the Congregation Council. Audit Committee members shall not be members of the Congregation Council. The term of office of each member shall be three years, with one member elected each year. Members shall be eligible for reelection. Duties of the committee are specified in the continuing resolutions.
- C13.04.** The Mutual Ministry Committee supports and nurtures a healthy relationship between the rostered staff and the congregation, pursuant to C12.04.d. Members are appointed jointly by the president and the rostered ministers for three-year terms.
- C13.05.** When a vacancy occurs in a position for which this congregation calls a rostered minister, a *Call Committee* of six voting members shall be elected by the Congregation Council. The term of office of each member shall terminate at the installation of the newly called rostered minister.
- C13.06.** The Congregation Council may establish ministry teams, committees, and other organizations to plan and implement the ministries of this congregation.
- C.13.07** This Congregation shall have a Legacy Giving Board that will operate as specified in this Congregation's

Continuing Resolutions. The purpose of the Legacy Giving Board is 1) To encourage, educate, and equip the Congregation for making long-term planned gifts to support the mission of the Church as a part of a donor's overall financial and estate planning; and 2) To honor and advocate for the donor's intent and wishes.

- C13.08.** The ministries of the congregation, the ministry teams, and other organizations that carry out the ministries, and their duties may be specified in the continuing resolutions.

#### **Chapter 14.**

#### **ORGANIZATIONS WITHIN THIS CONGREGATION**

- C14.01.** All ministry teams, committees, and other 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, these organizations are subject to the oversight and direction of the Congregation Council. To facilitate oversight, all organizations shall be affiliated with a ministry team, a committee, or a staff person.
- C14.02.** The Congregation Council may appoint task forces or other ad hoc committees for short-term periods to carry out specific purposes.

#### **Chapter 15.**

#### **DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS AND ADJUDICATION**

- \*C15.01.** Persistent and public denial of the Christian faith, willful or criminal conduct grossly unbecoming a member of the Church of Christ, continual and intentional interference with the ministry of this congregation, or willful and repeated harassment or defamation of member(s) of this congregation is sufficient cause for discipline of a member. Prior to disciplinary action, reconciliation and repentance will be attempted following Matthew 18:15-17, proceeding through these successive steps, as necessary:
- a) private counsel and admonition by the pastor,
  - b) censure and admonition by the pastor in the presence of two or three witnesses,
  - c) written referral of the matter by the Congregation Council to the vice president of the synod, who will refer it to a consultation panel drawn from the Consultation Committee of the synod, and
  - d) written referral of the matter by the consultation panel to the Committee on Discipline of the synod.
- If, for any reason, the pastor is unable to administer the admonitions required by ~~paragraphs~~ a. and b. hereof, those steps may be performed by another pastor chosen by the Executive Committee of the Congregation Council.
- \*C15.02.** The process for discipline of a member of this congregation shall be governed as prescribed by the chapter on discipline in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. If the counseling, censure, and admonitions pursuant to C15.01 do not result in repentance and amendment of life, charges against the accused member(s) that are specific and in writing may be prepared by the Congregation Council, signed, and submitted to the vice president of the synod. The vice president shall select from the synod's Consultation Committee a panel of five members (three lay persons and two rostered ministers). A copy of the written charges shall be provided to the consultation panel and the accused member(s). The consultation panel, after requesting a written reply to the charges from the accused member(s), shall consider the matter and seek a resolution by means of investigation, consultation, mediation, or whatever other means may seem appropriate. The panel's efforts to reach a mutually agreeable resolution shall continue for no more than 45 days after the matter is submitted to it.
- \*C15.03.** If the consultation panel fails to resolve the matter, that panel shall refer the case in writing, including the written charges and the accused member's reply, to the Committee on Discipline of the synod for a hearing. A copy of the panel's written referral shall be delivered to the vice president of the synod, the Congregation Council, and the accused member(s) at the same time it is sent to the Committee on Discipline of the synod. The Executive Committee of the Synod Council shall then select six members from the Committee on Discipline to decide the case, and shall appoint a member of the Synod Council to preside as nonvoting chair. Those six members plus the nonvoting chair comprise the discipline hearing panel for deciding the case. The Congregation Council and the accused member(s) are the parties to the case.
- \*C15.04.** The discipline hearing panel shall commence and conduct the disciplinary hearing in accordance with the provisions governing discipline of congregation members prescribed in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.
- \*C15.05.** By the vote of at least two-thirds of the members of the discipline hearing panel who are present and voting, one of the following disciplinary sanctions can be imposed:

- a. suspension from the privileges of congregation membership for a designated period of time;
  - b. suspension from the privileges of congregation membership until the pastor and Congregation Council receive evidence, satisfactory to them, of repentance and amendment of life;
  - c. termination of membership in this congregation; or
  - d. termination of membership in this congregation and exclusion from the church property and from all congregation activities.
- \*C15.06. The written decision of the discipline hearing panel shall be sent to the vice president of the synod, the accused member(s), and the Congregation Council as required by the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. The decision of the discipline hearing panel shall be implemented by the Congregation Council and recorded in the minutes of the next council meeting.
- \*C15.07. No member of this congregation shall be subject to discipline a second time for offenses that a discipline hearing panel has heard previously and decided pursuant to this chapter.
- \*C15.10. **Adjudication**
- \*C15.11. When there is disagreement between or among factions within this congregation on a substantive issue which cannot be resolved by the parties, members of this congregation may petition the synod bishop for consultation after informing the president of this congregation of their intent to do so. The synod bishop shall seek a timely resolution of the dispute. If the issue relates directly to the pastor, the bishop may begin the process in ~~§14.18~~\*C9.05.d. In all other matters, if the bishop's consultation fails to resolve the issue, the bishop shall refer the matter to the Consultation Committee of the synod, which shall undertake efforts to find an appropriate solution. If the Consultation Committee's efforts fail to resolve the dispute, the entire matter shall be referred to the Synod Council for adjudication by whatever process the Council deems necessary. The Synod Council's decision shall be final.

## Chapter 16.

### AMENDMENTS

- \*C16.01. Unless provision \*C16.04. is applicable, those sections of this constitution that are not required, in accord with the *Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, may be amended in the following manner. Amendments may be proposed by at least 10 percent of the voting members or by the Congregation Council. Proposals must be filed in writing with the Congregation Council 60 days before formal consideration by this 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 council's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the meeting. Notification may take place by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law.
- \*C16.02. An amendment to this constitution, proposed under \*C16.01., shall:
- a. be approved at any legally called meeting of this congregation by a majority vote of those voting members present and voting; and
  - b. be ratified ~~without change~~unchanged at the next regular meeting of this congregation by a two-thirds vote of those voting members present and voting.
- \*C16.03. Any amendments to this constitution that result from the processes provided in \*C16.01. and \*C16.02. shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod. The synod shall notify this congregation of its decision to approve or disapprove the proposed changes; the changes shall go into effect upon notification that the synod has approved them.
- \*C16.04. This constitution may be amended to bring any section into conformity with a section or sections, either required or not required, of the *Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* as most recently amended by the Churchwide Assembly. Such amendments may be approved by a majority vote of those voting members present and voting at any legally called meeting of this congregation without presentation at a prior meeting of this congregation, provided that the Congregation Council has submitted by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law, notice to this congregation of such an amendment or amendments, together with the council's recommendations, at least 30 days prior to the meeting. Upon the request of at least two (2) voting members of this congregation, the Congregation Council shall submit such notice. Following the adoption of an amendment, the secretary of this congregation shall submit a copy thereof to the synod. Such provisions shall become effective immediately following the congregation's vote of approval.

**Chapter 17.  
BYLAWS**

- \*C17.01. This congregation may adopt bylaws.<sup>6</sup> No bylaw may conflict with this constitution.
- \*C17.02. Bylaws may be adopted or amended at any legally called meeting of this congregation with a quorum present by a two-thirds vote of those voting members present and voting.
- \*C17.03. Changes to the bylaws may be proposed by any voting member, provided 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. The Congregation Council shall notify this congregation's members of the proposal with the council's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the Congregation Meeting. Notification may take place by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law.
- \*C17.04. Adopted or amended bylaws shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod.

**Chapter 18.  
CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS**

- \*C18.01. This congregation in a legally called meeting or the Congregation Council may enact continuing resolutions. Such continuing resolutions may not conflict with the constitution 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.
- \*C18.03. Adopted or amended continuing resolutions shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod.

**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.
- C19.02. Pursuant to the laws of the State of Georgia, including the Georgia Nonprofit Corporation Code, this congregation shall indemnify any person who is or was a member of the Congregation Council, officer, employee, agent, or other member of any committee of this congregation, or is or was serving at the request of this congregation as a director, officer, employee, or agent of another association, corporation, partnership, trust, or other enterprise, if that person becomes a party in a civil, criminal, or administrative action, provided that such person acted in good faith and in a manner he or she reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of this congregation, and with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, had no reasonable cause to believe his or her conduct was unlawful.
- C19.03. Such indemnification shall only be made in accordance with O.C.G.A. Sections 14-3-850 through 14-3-856, inclusive as they exist on the date of adoption of this amended Constitution, and as they may be henceforth amended or renumbered. For such indemnification to apply, the Congregation Council shall be notified immediately of such action, suit, or proceeding, and the congregation shall be permitted to participate in the defense of any such action or proceeding through legal counsel designated by the Congregation Council.
- C19.04. This congregation shall have power to purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of any person who is or was a Congregation Council member, officer, employee, agent, or other member of any committee of this congregation, or is or was serving at the request of this congregation as a director, officer, employee or agent of another association, corporation, trust, or other enterprise against any liability asserted against such person and incurred by him or her in any such capacity, or arising out of his or her status as such, whether or not this corporation would have the power to indemnify such person against such liability under the provision of this chapter.

<sup>6</sup> *Lutheran Church of the Redeemer does not use bylaws. Topics assigned to bylaws in the required text will be found in continuing resolutions for the related provision.*

**Chapter 20.**

**HONORARY LIFE MEMBERS OF THE CONGREGATION COUNCIL**

- C20.01.** Members of the congregation who have served two full terms (six years) on the Congregation Council and who have attained the age of sixty-five shall be eligible for election by the congregation to the position of honorary life membership on the Congregation Council.
- C20.02.** The Congregation Council shall annually nominate from those eligible a candidate or candidates for election to the position of honorary life member of the Congregation Council. The congregation at a Congregation Meeting shall elect honorary life members from among the candidate or candidates so nominated. Any number of honorary life members may be elected in any year.