

SHEPHERD OF THE SIERRA LUTHERAN CHURCH BYLAWS

ARTICLE I MEMBERSHIP

A. BAPTIZED MEMBERS

A person becomes a BAPTIZED MEMBER of this congregation through the rite of Holy Baptism. Individuals who have been baptized in another Christian congregation become baptized members by their own request or, in the case of children, by the request of their parents.

B. COMMUNICANT MEMBERS

A person becomes a COMMUNICANT MEMBER of this congregation in one of the following ways:

1. By the rite of confirmation, providing that such person has been properly baptized and received instruction in the doctrinal confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church.
2. By presentation of a letter of transfer or release from a Lutheran congregation with whom we are in fellowship.
3. By profession of faith, having demonstrated to the congregation as represented by the Pastor and the Board of Elders, full agreement with the confessional standard.

Each admission of a new member must be announced in the voters' assembly following such admission and be recorded in the minutes of that body.

New members must be accepted by the Board of Elders upon recommendation of the Pastor.

C. CHRISTIAN PRIVILEGES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERSHIP

- Share the peace and love of Jesus Christ with those in need;
- Attend the services of the congregation regularly;
- Partake of Holy Communion frequently;
- Bring children to holy baptism at an early age;
- Assist with spiritual, material, and physical needs of the other members of the congregation;
- Promote the work of the church at large;
- Contribute according to their ability toward the maintenance of the congregation and the work of the church;

- Assist in the general programs of the congregation according to one's ability; and,
- Submit to the regulations made by this congregation, providing they do not conflict with the word of God.

D. VOTING MEMBERSHIP

1. A person who is a communicant member and has attained the age of 18 years is eligible to become a voting member of the congregation.
2. It shall be the Christian privilege and duty of every voting member to attend meetings of the voters' assembly, taking an active part within their abilities in the administration and welfare of the congregation's affairs.

E. TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

1. Transfer: Communicant members in good standing who desire to join another LCMS Lutheran congregation shall, upon request, receive a letter of transfer from the Pastor with the consent of the board of elders. Copies of the letter shall be issued both to the member and to the receiving congregation
2. Release: Communicant members desiring to become members of a church which is not in fellowship with this congregation shall be peacefully released upon their written request and a letter of release issued upon the recommendation of the Board of Elders.
3. Church Discipline: Just as members of the congregation have responsibilities to the church, likewise the church has responsibilities to its members. Among these is the exercising of church discipline. When someone ceases to fulfill their duties and responsibilities as a member of this congregation, it shall be the duty of fellow members, the board of elders, and the Pastor to seek in a loving way to restore them. If a member persists in sin, refusing to repent, and refusing admonition of fellow members, then it shall be the duty of the congregation to exercise church discipline, according to the guidelines set forth by our Lord in Matthew 18:15-18. If every effort to restore such individual is rejected, then the matter should be brought before the voters' assembly by the Board of Elders. If there is still no repentance on the part of this individual, they shall be excommunicated and removed from membership. Should anyone present any biblical reason why this should not be done, the matter shall be referred back to the Board of Elders and Pastor. Anyone excommunicated shall be notified by the Board of Elders.
4. Self-Exclusion: Communicant members who have moved away or are no longer an active part of this congregation, or who do not request a release or transfer to another congregation, should be approached using

church discipline. If efforts to restore them to fellowship are denied or impossible, they shall be removed from membership and notified of this fact if possible.

5. Right of Appeal: Anyone involved in church discipline such as excommunication or self-exclusion shall have the right to appeal their case directly to any properly convened meeting of the voter's assembly and, if necessary, to the Board of Elders.

ARTICLE II ADMINISTRATION

A. THE VOTERS' ASSEMBLY

There shall be two regular meetings of the voters' assembly each year, held bi-annually. The meeting dates shall be set by the church council. Special meetings of the voters' assembly may be called by the president on an as-needed basis. Special meetings may also be called by any three (3) members of the church council, presented in writing to the president, or by petition signed by ten percent (10%) of the voting membership and submitted to the president or the Executive Committee, which is comprised of the church's corporate officers—president, vice president, secretary and treasurer of the congregation. The business to be conducted at such special meetings is limited to that included in the call for that meeting. Robert's Rules of Order Revised shall be observed in all meetings and always conducted in the spirit of Christian love and understanding.

1. Notification of Meetings: The dates and times of regular meetings of the voters' assembly are to be published no less than two weeks prior to the meeting, and may be given by mail, telephone or church bulletin.
2. Quorum: A quorum for a properly convened voters assembly meeting—regular or special—shall be one-fourth (1/4) of the voting members. When the calling or removal of a Pastor or other worker, or the purchase of real estate or major real estate improvement is on the agenda, one-half (1/2) of the voting members must be present to constitute a quorum for a decision on these matters. In all meetings of the voters' assembly, the simple majority of the votes cast shall decide all matters unless otherwise stipulated in the bylaws or constitution.
3. Agenda: The agenda for the voters' assembly meeting shall be prepared by the church council. Additional subjects may be added by *any* voting member, but normally the president of the voters' assembly will request that subjects brought up requiring a decision first be submitted to the appropriate board or committee for study.

A suggested order of business for regular meetings is as follows:

- Opening devotions;
- Approval of meeting agenda;
- Roll call;
- Announcements and reception of new members and signing of the constitution;
- Reading of minutes of previous meeting or meetings;
- Pastor's report;
- Treasurer's report;
- Financial Secretary's report;
- Board of Elders report;
- Board of Trustees;
- Board of Stewardship;
- Fellowship Board;
- Board of Evangelism and Missions report;
- Board of Christian Education report;
- Circuit Forum representative report;
- Report of committees;
- Old business;
- New business; and,
- Adjournment with prayer.

B. CHURCH COUNCIL

The church council shall meet a minimum of eight (8) times a year at a time and place designated by the President. The president shall call additional meetings if required. The council shall adopt a uniform agenda consistent with Article II, Section A of the by-laws and the constitution. Council meetings shall be in conformance with Robert's Rules of Order Revised and in Christian Love and understanding.

C. DUTIES OF OFFICERS

1. President: The president shall be the executive officer of the congregation. He/She shall preside at all meetings of the voters' assembly and the church council, and shall enforce this congregation's constitution and bylaws. He/She shall lend guidance and assistance to all boards and committees.
2. Vice-President: The vice president, in the absence of the president or in his/her inability to function, shall act for, and in the stead of, the president. The vice-president shall supervise those boards, committees and organizations as requested by the president. The vice-president shall determine whether the necessary quorum for voting is present, certify the results of congregational elections, and discharge all other duties pertaining to the office or delegated to him/her. He/She shall maintain an accurate

record of members of the voters' assembly, to be kept current by the church secretary.

3. Secretary: The secretary shall keep and sign the minutes of all meetings of the voters' assembly and the church council. The secretary shall conduct all authorized correspondence and shall have custody of the books and other documents of the congregation.
4. Treasurer: The treasurer shall be accountable for all monies of the congregation. The treasurer shall keep a true account of all transactions, have custody of all funds, and pay all bills of the congregation, when such payments are properly authorized. The treasurer will render reports to the voters' assembly and the church council and will submit to the congregation a detailed annual report. The treasurer will serve as chairman of the budget committee.
5. Financial Secretary: It is the duty of the financial secretary to receive all monies of the congregation, establish a committee to count the receipts, and deposit promptly all monies received. The financial secretary shall prepare an itemized account of each member's offerings and distribute to each member an itemized annual account of his/her contributions.
 - Counting Committee:
 1. All counting sessions must be conducted by two or more approved counters. If two counters are not available at the designated day and time, it is the responsibility of the financial secretary to contact others for assistance. The financial secretary is approved to act as a counter.
 2. Counting and deposit of all collections will be conducted on a set day and time, preferably on the Monday following the Sunday collection. Collections are to be kept in a controlled environment (locked safe) until such time as counting and deposit occurs.
 3. Counting members shall not discuss donations with anyone outside the committee or with each other outside the counting sessions. Any questions or clarifications should be directed to the financial secretary for resolution.

D. LEGAL AUTHORIZATION

The president and council secretary are authorized to sign all legal documents approved by the congregation. In the absence of either president or secretary, the remaining corporate officers as defined in Article VI Section VII of the Constitution of Shepherd of the Sierra Lutheran Church may substitute for signatories.

E. DUTIES OF ALL BOARDS

All boards shall meet monthly as directed by the church council, and shall consist of sufficient members to responsibly fulfill the board's obligations. A representative of each board is to be present at all council meetings.

1. Board of Elders: This board shall meet a minimum eight (8) times a year. Chairperson shall call additional meeting(s) as needed. Special meetings of the board may be called by the Pastor, the president, or any two elders. Major activities to be addressed by the Board of Elders shall include all matters pertaining to:

- The selection of a chairman to serve each year;
- The congregation's worship;
- Doctrine and practice;
- Disciplinary action involving members of the congregation, Pastor; or other called workers;
- The material welfare of the Pastor;
- The spiritual care and growth of the congregation;
- The Bible classes for adults;
- Youth Confirmation;
- Soul-accounting procedures and records;
- Acceptance and assimilation of new members;
- Ushers, organists, choirs, and acolytes; and,
- Other assignments by the voters' assembly or church council.

2. Board of Evangelism and Missions: This board shall meet a minimum eight (8) times a year. Chairperson shall call additional meeting(s) as needed. Special meetings of the board may be called by the Pastor, the president, or any two members of the board. The board, in cooperation with the Pastor and other church boards, shall:

- Strengthen and encourage congregational mission interest in our own congregation, district and Synod;
- Invite and visit prospective members of the congregation;
- Promote means and programs to bring new members into the congregation;
- Establish publicity in the community to promote our congregation;
- Promote the welfare of the individual members of the congregation as well as non-members;
- Provide for other matters assigned to it by the voters' assembly or church council; and,
- Work jointly with LWML in missions and evangelism.

3. Board of Christian Education: This board shall meet a minimum eight (8) times a year. Chairperson shall call additional meeting(s) as needed.

Special meetings may be called by the Pastor, the president, or any two members of the board. Major activities to be addressed by the board shall include:

- Sunday school and Bible classes for youth;
- Vacation Bible School;
- Special educational programs;
- Youth program;
- Congregational library; and.
- All other matters assigned to it by the voters' assembly or church council.

4. Board of Trustees: This board shall meet a minimum six (6) times a year. Chairperson shall call additional meeting(s) as needed. Special meetings can be set by the board itself, the Pastor, or the president. The board shall have responsibility for the following programs and activities:

- The maintenance and cleaning of the congregation's building and Properties;
- The planning and supervising of special volunteer work parties and cleaning;
- The provision of adequate insurance for the congregation's property and liability in conjunction with the church council;
- The provision for adequate health and safety aspects for the congregational property;
- The supervision and authority over the custodian when and if the congregation hires one or more; and,
- All other matters assigned to it by the voters assembly or the church council.

5. Stewardship Board: This board shall meet a minimum eight (8) times a year. Chairperson shall call additional meeting(s) as needed. It will be comprised of four members, one of whom will be chosen by the members as the chairman. The board will be accountable for the following items:

- Chairing and implementing the annual stewardship emphasis;
- Reviewing the talents of the congregation and recruiting of members for various tasks; and,
- Working to assist members to use time for the Lord and His church.

6. Fellowship Board: This board is elected by the voters' assembly and shall meet with the church council and the Pastor to discuss upcoming known events. The board shall meet on an as-needed basis with the various boards to assist and plan for upcoming congregational events. Some of the activities to be addressed by this board include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Weekly snacks;
- Funerals;
- Graduations;
- Confirmation;
- New Member receptions;
- Seder Meal; and,
- Other events as may arise.

F. DUTIES OF ALL COMMITTEES

1. Budget Committee: The chairman of the budget committee shall be the treasurer. Two or more members shall be appointed by the president. The budget committee shall prepare and present a recommended budget for the following year at the church council meeting before the fourth quarter voters' assembly meeting.
2. Nominating Committee: The chairman of the nominating committee shall be the vice-president, and the president shall appoint two or more members. The nominating committee shall seek nominations for offices from the membership of the congregation. Nominations must have the consent of the nominee. The nominating committee shall prepare a slate of at least one candidate for each office or position to be filled by election in the second quarter voters' assembly meeting. This slate is to be presented through the church newsletter, or by One Call, or at least two of the church's Sunday bulletins prior to the meeting in which the elections are to be held. Nominations may be made by any congregational member, with the consent of the nominee, at the meeting in which elections are to be held.
3. Additional Committees: The church council or voters' assembly may appoint special temporary or permanent committees for specific activities or functions as is deemed necessary.

G. AUXILIARY ORGANIZATIONS

All auxiliary organizations within the congregation shall exist only by the consent of the voters' assembly and shall have the right of existence only as long as their general activities conform to the purpose and the best interests of the congregation and the church at large. All committees or auxiliary organizations authorized to execute savings or cash accounts on behalf of the congregation will present monthly statements to the church council.

ARTICLE III TENURES OF CONGREGATIONAL OFFICES

A. TENURES OF ALL OFFICERS

The president and vice-president shall be elected to one-year terms and may succeed themselves twice in their present office (for a total of three consecutive years). The treasurer, financial secretary and secretary shall be elected to two-year terms and may succeed themselves twice in their present office (for a total of six consecutive years). In the event that the term of an individual Council Officer shall have expired, the Church Council shall have the authority to retain this individual, with their consent, on the Council in their position until such a time as another individual holds said office. Elders shall be elected for a two-year term and may succeed themselves three times in their present offices (for a total of eight consecutive years). Elected members of other boards shall be elected to two-year terms and may succeed themselves twice in their present offices (for a total of six consecutive years).

B. ELECTION PROCEDURES

The nominating committee shall present its slate of nominations through the appropriate church newsletter prior to the second quarter meeting of each year.

1. The election shall be conducted for each office separately in this order: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Financial Secretary, Board of Elders, Board of Evangelism and Missions, Board of Christian Education, Board of Trustees, Stewardship Board, and Fellowship Board. The circuit forum delegate and lay delegate for each district convention will be appointed by the president from among the members of the church council. The nominating committee shall present its slate of nominations through the appropriate church newsletter, or by One Call, or at least two of the church's Sunday bulletins prior to the second quarter meeting of each year.
2. Vacancies: In the event of vacancies in unexpired terms, elections may be held at any regular or special voters' assembly to fill that office for the remainder of the term. Nominees for District President and Circuit Counselor shall be elected by the church council.
3. The nominations of a Pastor: The church council shall, in the event of a pastoral vacancy, notify the District President requesting a list of candidates. The council shall also notify the Circuit Counselor, requesting his assistance in filling the vacancy and in the procedure of electing and calling a candidate for the vacant office. At a special meeting called for the purpose of electing and calling a candidate, the list of candidates from

the District President, together with any other candidates selected by the church council, shall be submitted to the voters' assembly. Any voting member shall be entitled to make additional nominations from the floor. If any names have been added which were not included on the District President's list, they shall be submitted to him for his comment and recommendation. The list of nominations of eligible candidates shall be submitted to the voting members no less than two weeks before the election.

4. The election of a Pastor: The election of a Pastor from the list of nominees shall be by secret ballot. The candidate receiving the three-quarters (3/4) majority of the present quorum shall be elected. Notification shall be sent immediately to the called Pastor-elect.

ARTICLE IV THE RIGHT OF ACCESS

Every member of the congregation shall have the right of access of any assembly, council, board, committee, or organization of the congregation. Such access, which may include a criticism, a recommendation, a request, or a redress, must be made either in writing in the form of a signed letter, or by personal appearance before the proper group. Hearsay and secondhand information shall be considered invalid and shall be disallowed in the meeting of such groups.

Right of access shall not include meetings or portions of meetings where discussions of specific personnel problems are scheduled, including employees or members.

ARTICLE V AMENDMENTS TO THESE BYLAWS

Proposals to change these bylaws may be offered by any voting member at any regular voters' assembly meeting, or in writing to the church council for special study and for drafting of suitable resolutions concerning the proposals. The resolution shall be distributed through the church's newsletter, or by One Call, or by three consecutive church bulletins prior to the regular meeting of the voters assembly in which the resolution is to be acted upon. To be adopted, resolutions must be approved by a three-quarters (3/4) majority of the voters in attendance in two consecutive, properly called and convened voters assembly meetings.