

SHEPHERD OF THE VALLEY LUTHERAN CHURCH CONSTITUTION: BYLAWS

Chapter 1 NAME AND INCORPORATION

C1.11.01. The fiscal year of this congregation shall be the calendar year.

Chapter 8 MEMBERSHIP

C8.02.c.01. With regard to contributions of record, a contribution from any family member shall be deemed a contribution of record for the household and all dependents.

C8.05.e.01. An inactive member is a member who, during the current and preceding calendar year, has not communed in this congregation and has not made a contribution of record to this congregation.

C8.05.e.02. Prior to being considered for removal from membership, an inactive member will be offered the opportunity to respond to the following:

- a. A visit from the pastor, and
- b. A letter or visit from a lay member of the Congregation Council.

C8.05.e.03. Once a member of this congregation has met the criteria of C8.05.e.01 and C8.05.e.02, he or she may be removed from membership in the congregation by a majority vote of the Congregation Council at a regularly scheduled meeting.

Chapter 10 CONGREGATION MEETING

C10.01.01. The annual meeting of this Congregation shall consist of two sessions. The first session shall be for the purpose of adopting a budget for the forthcoming fiscal year, and shall be held as close to the beginning of the fiscal year as possible. The second session shall be for the purpose of electing Officers and other Congregation Council members as specified in the bylaws.

Chapter 11 OFFICERS

C11.01.01 In addition to the duties specified herein, each officer may be given responsibility for additional duties as specified by the Congregation Council.

- a. The **Congregation Chair** shall preside at Congregation Meetings, Congregation Council meetings and Executive Committee meetings, and shall prepare the agenda for the Executive Committee. In the event of a pastoral vacancy, the Congregation Chair shall oversee all communications with the synod in regard to an interim spiritual leader. If, for any reason, the pastor is unavailable, the Congregation Chair shall receive requests for emergency pastoral care and take appropriate action in a timely manner.
- b. The **Vice Chair** shall assume the responsibilities of the Congregation Chair if, for any reason, the Congregation Chair shall cease or be unable to serve. The Vice Chair shall be responsible for the administrative affairs of the congregation, including maintaining the membership rolls, and shall oversee all lay staff.
- c. The **Secretary** shall maintain the minutes of the Congregation, Congregation Council and Executive Committee meetings, shall receive ministry reports, and shall be responsible for all Congregation Council–directed correspondence of the congregation.
- d. The **Treasurer** shall be responsible for recording, reporting and implementing the financial affairs of the congregation. These responsibilities include maintaining a record of bank-recorded income and disbursements; providing to the Congregation Council a monthly report of expenditures and bank recorded income; maintaining the payroll and related matters for all salaried staff; paying bills in a timely manner; maintaining a file of payment request forms to substantiate expenditures; receiving from the Financial Secretary weekly reports of monetary gifts collected at services; and working with the Audit committee to ensure success of the annual audit.

Chapter 12

CONGREGATION COUNCIL

C12.01.01 In addition to the pastor(s) and the officers of the congregation, the voting membership of the Congregation Council shall include five Commission representatives and two at-large members.

Each Commission representative shall serve as liaison between the Congregation Council and the individuals who carry out the Commission’s ministries. Commission representatives shall be responsible for bringing resource requests and reporting events and goals of the Commissions to the Congregation Council. The Commissions of Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church shall include the following:

- a. The **Spiritual Commission** includes ministries directed toward sustaining and developing the spiritual life of the congregation.
- b. The **Faith in Action Commission** includes ministries directed toward serving individuals in need.
- c. The **Education Commission** includes ministries directed toward educating people of all ages in the Christian faith.
- d. The **Outreach Commission** includes ministries directed toward bringing the Good News to all people through invitation to worship, through fellowship and through faith sharing.
- e. The **Resource Commission** includes ministries directed toward sustaining and developing the physical, financial and human resources of the congregation.

The at-large members shall be voting members of the congregation who do not represent a particular commission.

C12.04.a.01. The Congregation Council shall meet in retreat annually to build effective working relationships with one another and to set goals.

C12.04.a.02. The Congregation Council shall annually evaluate the goals of the congregation in response to the Mission Statement and shall present the results of the evaluation to the congregation at a Congregation Meeting.

C12.04.b.01 The Congregation Council shall ensure that the annual stewardship campaign includes an invitation to congregation members to participate in the ministries of the church in a manner commensurate with their interests, gifts and callings.

C12.04.b.02 The Congregation Council shall assist and support all ministries by supplying encouragement and resources to ministry leaders, and by promoting faithful and thoughtful pursuit of congregation and ministry goals.

C12.04.b.03 The Congregation Council shall receive reports of the activities of ministries and committees; offer assistance in resolving questions about or problems arising during the pursuit of ministry or committee goals; and designate an appropriate amount of time for reflection, prayer and planning.

C12.05.a.01. The Congregation Council shall ensure that the congregation is protected from legal liability by:

- a. Maintaining incorporation with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts;
- b. Maintaining adequate and appropriate insurance policies;
- c. Obtaining criminal background checks on all individuals working with vulnerable populations, as stipulated by applicable local, state, or federal law(s).

C12.05.c.01. The Congregation Council shall not incur financial obligations in a given fiscal year totaling greater than 8 percent in excess of the anticipated receipts for that year without congregational approval.

C12.05.d.01. The Congregation Council shall authorize no expenditure of funds in excess of \$5,000 for any item not included in the budget without congregational approval.

C12.07.01. During its annual review of the membership roster, the Congregation Council shall endeavor to ensure that all members are assigned to the correct membership classification(s) as defined in C8.02 of the constitution. The classifications are not mutually exclusive.

C12.07.02. Once a member has met the criteria for *baptized member*, he or she shall remain a baptized member for as long as he or she holds membership in the congregation.

C12.07.03. Once a member has met the criteria for *confirmed member*, he or she shall remain a confirmed member for as long as he or she holds membership in the congregation.

C12.07.04. Once a member has met the criteria for *voting member*, he or she shall remain a voting member for as long as he or she continues to meet the stated requirements. If any voting members no longer meet the voting member criteria stated in the constitution they will be notified in writing of the intention to remove them from the voting member roster and shall be given a minimum of one month to meet the criteria. If the criteria are not met, the council shall vote, at a regularly scheduled meeting, to remove them from the voting roster.

C12.07.05. If a member who has been removed from the voting roster wishes to be reinstated, he or she must first comply with the voting member criteria and then request reinstatement. The council will vote on reinstatement at the next regularly scheduled meeting following the receipt of the request, such approval not to be unreasonably withheld.

C12.07.06. Any person declared an *associate member* shall remain an associate member until one of the following occurs:

- a. The person is accepted into full membership at Shepherd of the Valley.
- b. The person declares that he or she no longer wishes to be an associate member.
- c. The person is removed from the associate member roll because of inactivity as defined in C8.05.e of the bylaws.

Chapter 13

CONGREGATION COMMITTEES

C13.03.01. The current Financial Secretary shall not be a member of the Audit Committee. Additionally, the former Treasurer and Financial Secretary shall not audit financial records corresponding to their term in that position.