

The Constitution

and

Bylaws

Light of Christ Lutheran Church

Adopted March 12, 1987

Revised August 15, 1996

Revised June 20, 1999

Revised March 21, 2004

Revised May 21, 2006

The Preamble

The Biblical purpose for Light of Christ Lutheran Church is to reach out with God's grace to help people know, trust and share God's purpose for their life.

Therefore we, the members of Light of Christ Lutheran Church, located at 2400 SW 344th Street, Federal Way, located in King County, state of Washington, accept and subscribe to the following Constitution and Bylaws, in accordance with which all spiritual and material affairs of our congregation shall be governed, adopted on March 12, 1987; revised on August 15, 1996; revised on June 20, 1999; revised March 21, 2004; revised May 21, 2006.

The Constitution

Article I – Name

The name of this congregation shall be Light of Christ Lutheran Church, located in the City of Federal Way, King County in the State of Washington.

Article II – Purpose

The purpose of this congregation shall be to give honor and glory to our God, to proclaim Him Lord of our life, to carry out His will, to manifest the unity of our faith in Jesus Christ as God and Savior, to spread the kingdom of God to all, to nurture our members in living out their Christian life by caring for and serving others, and to foster Christian fellowship and love, by the proclaiming of the Word of God, by the administration of the Sacraments, and by the religious instruction standard of the evangelical Lutheran Church (Article III).

Article III – Doctrinal Standard

This congregation accepts without reservation:

- A. All Scripture, as given to us in the 66 canonical books of the Old and the New Testaments, is the written, inspired, and inerrant Word of God and is the only rule and norm of faith and practice (II Timothy 3:16-17, II Peter 1:20-21, John 17:17).
- B. All the confessional writings of the evangelical Lutheran Church, contained in the Book of Concord in the year 1580, as a true and genuine exposition of the Word of God. These confessional writings are the three Ecumenical Creeds (Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian), the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles, the Large Catechism of Luther, the Small Catechism of Luther, and the Formula of Concord.

Article IV – Membership

- A. The membership of this congregation includes the following:
- A.1 **Baptized Members** are all who have been baptized in the name of the Triune God and who are under the spiritual care of the Pastor of this congregation, including the children who have not yet been confirmed.
 - A.2 **Communicant Members** are those baptized members who have been in the Lutheran faith, accept the confessional standard of Article III of this constitution, are familiar with the contents of Luther's Small Catechism and are not members of organizations whose principles and conduct conflict with the Word of God.
 - A.3 **Voting Members** are communicant members, in good standing, who have reached legal age, have been received by the Voter's Assembly, and have read and signed the constitution of the congregation.
- B. **Reception** Baptized and communicant members are received through the Sacrament of Holy Baptism, through the consent of one or both parents in the case of children who have been baptized in another Christian congregation, through the rite of confirmation, through transfer from a sister congregation, or through profession of faith or reaffirmation of faith. The reception shall be approved by the Voter's Assembly. Eligible communicant members may be received as voting members upon application for such privilege, upon approval by the Voter's Assembly, and upon reading and signing the constitution.
- C. **Duties** Members of the congregation shall conform their entire lives to the rule of God's Word and to that end make diligent use of the means of grace, exercise faithful stewardship of God's many gifts and talents, impart and accept fraternal admonition as the need of such admonition becomes apparent, and be readily available for service in the kingdom of Christ within and beyond the congregation.
- D. **Termination**
- D.1 Membership shall be terminated by transfer to a sister congregation, by death, by joining a congregation outside the fellowship of this congregation, by excommunication, or by self-exclusion, and each case shall be presented to the Voter's Assembly for a decision.
 - D.2 Communicant members who conduct themselves in an un-Christian manner shall be admonished according to Matthew 18:15-20. If they remain impenitent after proper admonition, they shall be excommunicated. In all disciplinary cases, the congregation will follow its stated and adopted guidelines.

Article V –The Offices of Pastor and Other Called Workers

The pastoral office of this congregation, and any other position for called workers, shall be conferred only on such pastors, called workers, and candidates who profess and adhere to the confessional standard set forth in Article III of this Constitution and who are qualified for their work, who have been endorsed by the Synod and be a member of the Synod. Pastors, and other called workers shall be pledged to this confessional standard. Pastors of this congregation shall be

men. Lay Ministers performing pastoral functions within the congregation shall be men. Female Lay Ministers may have responsibilities outside the realm of pastoral functions.

Note: for removal or dismissal from office, see Article VI.D.

Article VI – Authority of the Congregation

- A. **General** The Voter's Assembly is the ultimate authority of this congregation and is empowered to administer and manage all its affairs through a properly elected Governing Board as described in Article VIII. The establishment and conduct of all organizations within the congregation is subject to the approval and supervision of the Governing Board, except the Board of Elders
- B. **Right of Calling** The right of calling pastors and other called workers, shall be vested in the Voters Assembly and shall never be delegated to a smaller group or to an individual. The process of calling Pastors or other called workers will be coordinated and led by the Board of Elders.
- C. **Decisions** All matters of doctrine and of conscience shall be decided by the Word of God. When there is no clear consensus, such matters are to be decided by majority vote of the Voter's Assembly, unless otherwise specified by this Constitution or Bylaws. All other matters are to be decided by a majority vote of the Voter's Assembly unless otherwise specified by this Constitution or Bylaws.
- D. **Removal From Office** Any ordained or commissioned minister or other called church worker may be removed from office by an affirmative vote by ballot of three-fourths of the voters at a Voter's Assembly, in Christian and lawful order, for one of the following reasons: persistent adherence to false doctrine, scandalous life, willful neglect, or inability to perform the duties of the office.
- E. **Vacancy** In case of a vacancy in the office of an ordained or commissioned minister, the congregation shall notify the President of the District so that he may assist in temporarily filling the vacancy and also give assistance in regard to the calling of a new Pastor or other called worker.

Article VII –Officers

- A. This congregation shall have the following officers in addition to any which the Voter's Assembly may authorize from time to time:
 - A.1. A Chairman, who shall conduct the meetings of the Voter's Assembly and the Governing Board.
 - A.2. A Vice-Chairman, who is to fill the Chairman's role in the Chairman's absence or inability to act or at the Chairman's request.
 - A.3. A Secretary, who shall keep the minutes of the Voter's Assembly and the Governing Board.
 - A.4. A Treasurer, who shall be responsible for the financial records of the congregation.

The above officers shall be the legal officers of the congregation.

- A.5. A Financial Secretary, who shall oversee the receipt of all monies and deposit the same in an account established in the name of the congregation.
- A.6. The Office of Elder The elders of this congregation shall be men.
- A7. Women who have reached legal age may serve as officers and as members of boards and committees as long as these positions are not directly involved in the specific functions of the Pastoral Office (preaching, the public administration of the Sacraments, Church Discipline).

Article VIII – Governing

- A. **Membership** – The Governing Board shall consist of three (3) voting members, elected at large by the Voter’s Assembly plus the congregation officers listed in Article VIIA.1 through A.6 and the Elder’s Chairman. Members of the Governing Board may not receive compensation from the congregation. Ex Officio members of the Governing Board include the Pastor(s), staff, Lay Minister, and called workers.
- B. **Nomination and Election** – The nomination and election shall take place as described in the Bylaws.
- C. **Term of Office** – The term of office shall be two years, with four members of the Governing Board elected in even years and five members elected in odd years. Those elected in even years will include the Chairman, Secretary, Financial Secretary, one (1) voting member at large, and two (2) or more Elders. Those elected in odd years will include the Vice-Chairman, Treasurer, two (2) voting members at large and two (2) or more Elders.
- D. **Vacancies** – In the event of a vacancy the Chairman shall create a list of candidates from which the Governing Board will elect an individual to serve until the next election for that particular position. This includes authorization to elect a person to fill an un-expired term of an officer.
- E. **Meetings** – The Governing Board shall meet at least quarterly and may be called more frequently at the request of the Chairman or any three (3) Governing Board members. The meeting shall be posted at least one (1) week prior to being held and a majority of all Governing Board members present shall constitute a quorum. The minutes shall fully disclose all actions taken and shall be signed by the Chairman and the Secretary. Minutes of meetings shall be made available to members of the Voter’s Assembly upon request.
- F. **Removal from Office** – Any Governing Board member who is unable to serve or is willfully neglectful in the performance of his official duties, may be removed from office by a properly called meeting of the Voter’s Assembly. Such action shall be initiated by the Governing Board

Article IX – Powers of the Governing Board

The Governing Board shall have the power to develop policies as required to execute the goals approved by the Voter's Assembly. Written policies shall be available upon request. The Group shall have no authority beyond that which has been conferred upon them by the Constitution, the Bylaws, or by the Voter's Assembly.

Article X - Duties of the Governing Board

- A. The Governing Board, as the chief governing council of the congregation, shall act in all matters pertaining to the legal and general welfare of the congregation, except those reserved for the Voter's Assembly in Article VI B, C, & D of the Constitution.
- B. The Governing Board shall see to it that all activities of the church reflect the purpose and faith of the congregation.
- C. It shall concern itself with establishing all policies governing the activities of the congregation and with the implementation of the mission, vision, budget, and plans adopted by the Voter's Assembly.
- D. The Governing Board may appoint any organizational group needed. It shall oversee and have authority over all boards, committees, task forces, ministries or other organizational groups of the congregation, except the Board of Elders.
- E. The Governing Board is responsible to hire staff or appoint all individuals into defined roles for the purpose of executing Church business and/or congregational goals, except for the office of Pastor or other called workers.
- F. The Governing Board is responsible to perform or oversee the performance of the paid staff performance evaluations which should occur at minimum annually.
- G. The Governing Board has the authority to reprimand or terminate paid staff for failure to perform their job responsibilities.
- H. The Governing Board has the authority to determine paid staffing levels and adjust staffing levels according to the needs and the financial situation of the congregation.

Article XI – Synodical Membership

This congregation shall be a member of The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod as long as the Synod conforms to the congregation's confessional standards set forth in Article III of this Constitution as determined by a majority vote of the congregation at a meeting called for that purpose.

Article XII – Division

If at any time a division should take place on account of doctrine, the property of the congregation and all benefits connected therewith shall remain with those communicant members who continue

to adhere in confession and practice to Article III of this Constitution. If division takes place for other than doctrinal reasons, the property shall remain with the majority of the communicant members. In the event the congregation should totally disband, the property and all rights connected therewith shall be transferred to the Northwest District of The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod.

Article XIII – Doctrinal Consistency

- A. **Worship and Related Activities** Only such hymns, prayers, and liturgies shall be used in the public services of the congregation and in all ministerial acts and educational activities as conform to the confessional standard of Article III.

Article XIV – Meetings

The annual meeting of the Voters' Assembly shall be held as determined in the Bylaws. Announcement of the meeting shall be made in the services of the two previous Sundays. Special meetings require announcement in services of two previous Sundays or notification by mail and announcement in services of one previous Sunday. Such special meetings may be called at the request of the Pastor, Chairman, Governing Board, or ten (10) percent of the voting members.

Article XV – Quorum

All members present at a properly called meeting shall constitute a quorum, except for those stipulations stated in the Bylaws.

Article XVI – Bylaws

This Voters' Assembly may adopt bylaws as may be required for the accomplishment of the congregation's purpose.

Article XVII – Changing the Constitution

- A. **Unalterable Parts** Those parts of this Constitution and Bylaws that pertain to the confessional standard of Article III may not be altered. Specifically stated as unalterable are Articles III, V, VIB, VIIA.6, XIII, and XVIA.
- B. **Amendments** Amendments to provisions of this constitution may be adopted at the annual meeting of the Voter's Assembly or during a special meeting, as hereafter provided:
- B.1. That the proposed amendment has been submitted in writing at a previous Voters' or Special meeting and published by posting in a conspicuous place in the church or by mail to all communicant members of the congregation prior to the meeting at which the proposed amendment will be acted upon.
- B.2. That an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the voters present is secured.
- B.3. In addition to the above requirements, proposals to amend Articles II and XI shall require that previous notice of such amendment and discussion of the same shall be

presented at two regular meetings of the Voters' Assembly before the meeting at which the proposed amendment is to receive action. Due notice of the fact that a vote will be taken shall be given to all members of the congregation. Any changes in these articles shall not destroy the essential meaning of the same. Whether or not this has occurred shall be decided, if challenged, by a decision by the dispute resolution process described in the Bylaws of the Synod.

B.4. The date of adoption shall be included in the amendment.

B.5. The amendment shall not be implemented until approved by the Board of Directors of the Northwest District of The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod

The Bylaws

Bylaw 1 – VOTERS' ASSEMBLY

A. Meetings

- 1. An annual meeting of the Voter's Assembly shall be held for the express purpose of approving the budget for the following year, electing the members of the Governing Board and Elders and for conducting any other business deemed necessary. Annual meetings shall include an opening devotion, approval of the minutes from the previous meeting, roll call or registration, ratification of the reception of new members, reports of officers, Pastors, Ministry Leaders, Boards, and Task Forces, unfinished business, recommendations of the Governing Board, the last order of business being the reception of new voting members and adjournment with a devotional close. In questions of parliamentary not covered by the Constitution and Bylaws, Roberts Rules of Order shall prevail.**
- 2. Special meetings of the Voter's Assembly may be called by the Governing Board or at the request of ten (10) percent of the voting members by publicly announcing the date, time, place, and specific purpose of such meeting at the worship services for two consecutive Sundays immediately preceding the meeting date. Special meetings shall include an opening devotion and closing devotion and shall take up only those items of business for which the special meeting was called. In questions of parliamentary not covered by the Constitution and Bylaws, Roberts Rules of Order shall prevail.**

B. Quorum

- 1. Ordinarily the voters present at a properly called Voter's Assembly meeting shall constitute a quorum to do business. However, for amending the Constitution, for the purchase or disposal of real property, or for the removal from office of a called Pastor or other called worker, a majority of all voting members shall be required for a quorum. In the absence of a majority, those present may fix a date for an adjourned meeting for which at least five (5) days written notice shall be given. The members attending the resumed meeting shall constitute a quorum.**
- 2. There shall be no voting by proxy.**

Governing Board

Bylaw 2 – PROCEDURE FOR THE CALLING OF ORDAINED AND COMMISSIONED MINISTERS

- A. **Nominations** – When a Pastor, Worker, or Lay Minister is to be called, every member of the congregation shall have the privilege of making one or more nominations. The congregation shall also ask the President of the Northwest District of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod for recommendations. At any properly called meeting of the Voter’s Assembly, eligible and qualified candidates for the office of Pastor, called Worker or Lay Minister shall be submitted by the nominating committee after receiving information and recommendations from the District President. The Elders shall serve as the nominating committee for the office of Pastor, Worker, or Lay Minister. The Board of Education shall serve as the nominating committee for the office of The Director of Christian Education. The Pastor, Worker, or Lay Minister shall then be chosen by a secret ballot vote under the majority rule.

Bylaw 3 – Officers

The officers of the congregation shall consist of those described in Article VII of the Constitution.

Bylaw 4 – Governing Board

- A. **Membership** – The Governing Board shall consist of those members described in Article VIII of the Constitution. The Chairman of the congregation shall chair the Governing Board. In the absence of the Chairman the Vice-Chairman or another officer may chair the meeting.
- B. **Powers and Duties** – The powers of the Governing Board are described in Article IX of the Constitution and the duties are spelled out in Article X of the Constitution. Additional powers and duties may be conferred on the Governing Board by the Voter’s Assembly at a properly called meeting.
- C. **Meetings** – The Governing Board shall meet at least quarterly at a time and place determined by the Chairman. The Pastor, Chairman, or any three (3) members of the Governing Board may call special meetings of the Group by informing all members of the Group of the time and place of such meetings at least twenty-four (24) hours in advance.
- D. **Quorum and Decisions** – A majority of Governing Board members present shall constitute a quorum. Decisions of the Group will be made by a simple majority of those members voting. The presiding chairman shall not vote except in case of ties.
- E. **Boards, Committees, Ministries, Task Forces** – The Chairman, in consultation with the Pastor, has the responsibility of recommending the establishment or dissolution of Church organizational groups. They also have the responsibility for recommending the Chairperson and other members of such organizational groups. Their recommendations shall be referred to the Governing Board for decision. The Governing Board Chairman shall furnish to each organizational group Chairperson a job description for their respective organizational group.

Bylaw 5 – NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS AND MEMBERS
AT LARGE OF THE GOVERNING BOARD

- A. Nominations - A nominating committee, appointed by the Chairman of the congregation in accordance with Bylaw 7 of these Bylaws, shall present a slate of SLG and Elder candidates at the annual meeting of the Voter's Assembly. Additional nominations may be made from the floor. No person may be nominated without his or her consent. All positions shall be elected by a majority ballot vote. They shall be installed into office in a public worship service of the congregation.
- B. Term of Office – The Governing Board members, except for the Chairman of the Elders, shall be elected for a term of two years as prescribed in Article VIIC of the Constitution. A minimum of four (4) Elders, serving as a Spiritual Leadership Team, shall be elected for a two-year term, two or more Elders each year. A member of the Governing Board, who has served two (2) terms, shall not succeed himself or herself, with the exception of the Elders.

Bylaw 6 – DUTIES OF OFFICERS

- A. Chairman – The Chairman shall preside at all meetings of the Voter's Assembly and the Governing Board and shall be responsible for seeing that all resolutions of the Voter's Assembly and the Governing Board are carried out as instructed.
- B. Vice-Chairman – The Vice-Chairman shall perform the duties of the Chairman in the Chairman's absence or disability, or at the Chairman's request.
- C. Secretary – The Secretary shall record the proceedings of the Voter's Assembly and the Governing Board. The secretary shall register all members in attendance at the meetings and submit the minutes of the meeting for adoption at the following regular respective meeting. In addition, the Secretary shall maintain a current record of all active members and advise the Chairman of the names of those who have been unexcused for two consecutive meetings. As custodian of all church records pertaining to the office of Secretary, the Secretary is responsible for delivering these records to the successor at the end of the Secretary's term.
- D. Treasurer – The Treasurer shall disburse the funds of the congregation in accordance with its resolutions and under the direction of the Governing Board and shall prepare a written statement of all receipts and disbursements to be presented at the quarterly meetings of the Governing Board and a written statement of all receipts and disbursements to be presented at the annual Voter's Assembly meeting.
- E. Financial Secretary – The Financial Secretary shall be responsible for the accurate counting, recording, and depositing of all receipts for the congregation in a designated financial institution(s) and shall be responsible for annual issuance of statements to members showing their yearly offerings for IRS purposes. In addition, the Financial Secretary shall furnish the Treasurer with a duplicate deposit slip and present a written report at the quarterly meetings of the Governing Board and present a written report at the annual meeting of the Voter's Assembly.

Elders –The Elders, in association with the Pastor, shall concern itself with the spiritual care and leadership of the congregation, and in cooperation with the Pastor shall be charged with the supervision of public worship and church discipline and to that end shall admonish members who are neglecting the means of grace and who fail to share in the support of congregational endeavors; direct and supervise the visitation of newly received members; review materials for Sunday School and Bible studies; review all music materials; appoint Deacons and Deaconesses to serve in a variety of capacities described in their job descriptions; and adjudicate all matters of disagreement within the congregation. The Elders shall annually elect a Chairman to represent them on the Governing Board

Bylaw 7 – Committees

The committees of the congregation shall include:

- A. Auditing Committee – An auditing committee, consisting of three (3) members, none of whom shall be a financial officer or a church employee, shall be appointed annually by the Chairman. It shall make an audit of the books and records of the Treasurer and Financial Secretary, and of such other financial records the Voter’s Assembly may assign to it. It shall make its report to the Governing Board at the first quarterly meeting following the close of the budget year. The report shall be made available to any voting member at their request.**
- B. Nominating Committee – A nominating committee, consisting of five members, shall be appointed by the Chairman at least two months prior to the annual meeting of the Voter’s Assembly. The Pastor shall be an ex officio member of the committee.**

Bylaw 8 – Amendments

Amendments may be made to these Bylaws at any regular meeting of the Voter’s Assembly or at a special meeting expressly called for that purpose, provided that notice has been given as provided in Section IA2 of these Bylaws. The date of adoption shall be included in each amendment and the amendment shall not be implemented until approved by the Board of Directors of the Northwest District of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod.