

St. Timothy Lutheran Church

The Constitution

PREAMBLE

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen!

For as much as the Lord commanded his children to gather regularly for public worship, the proclamation of the Word and the administration of the Sacraments by the establishing of the Church and the office of the Holy Ministry, this constitution presents the visible format under which these present day disciples would accomplish these purposes and provide for Christian growth in the Body of Christ in our midst.

ARTICLE I NAME

The name of this congregation shall be Saint Timothy Lutheran Church of Edmonds, Snohomish County, Washington, a religious corporation chartered by the state of Washington.

ARTICLE II MISSION

The purpose of this congregation shall be to give honor and glory to the Triune God, to carry out his will, to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all the world, to manifest the unity of our faith in Jesus Christ as God and Savior, to foster Christian fellowship and love, to extend a helping hand in human need, and to achieve our objectives by the preaching of the Word of God, by the administration of the sacraments, and by the religious instruction of all its members according to the confessional standard of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as explained in Article III.

ARTICLE III CONFESSIONAL STANDARD

This congregation accepts without reservation:

- A.1. The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the written Word of God and the only rule and norm of faith and of practice;
- A.2. All the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as a true and unadulterated statement and exposition of the Word of God, to wit: the three Ecumenical Creeds (the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, the Athanasian Creed), 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.1. Membership

The membership of this congregation includes the following:

A.1.1 *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.1.2 *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.1.3 *Voting* members are communicant members who have reached legal age who have signed the constitution of the congregation.

A.2 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 Board of Elders.

A.3 Duties

Members of the congregation shall conform their 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 needed, and be readily available for service in the kingdom of Christ within and beyond the congregation.

A.4 Termination

A.4.1 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. Each case shall be decided by the voters assembly.

A.4.2 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 CALLED CHURCH WORKERS

A.1 This congregation has the exclusive right to call ordained and commissioned ministers. The pastoral office shall be conferred only on such a pastor or candidate who professes and adheres to the confessional standard set forth in this constitution, who is qualified for his work, who has been endorsed by The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod, and who is a member of Synod. The same shall apply to all commissioned ministers.

A.2 Any ordained or commissioned minister may be removed from office by the voters assembly by a two-thirds majority ballot vote, 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.

A.3 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 commissioned minister.

ARTICLE VI AUTHORITY OF THE CONGREGATION

A.1 The voters assembly shall be the governing body of this congregation and shall be empowered to administer and manage all its affairs. The establishment and conduct of all organizations and societies within the congregation or related directly to it shall be subject to the approval and supervision of the voters assembly.

A.2 All matters shall be decided by majority vote of the voters assembly unless otherwise specified by this constitution or bylaws; matters of doctrine and conscience shall be decided only on the basis of the Word of God.

A.3 The right of calling ordained or commissioned ministers shall be vested in the voters assembly and shall not be delegated otherwise.

ARTICLE VII OFFICERS AND BOARDS

This congregation may have the following officers and boards in addition to any which the congregation shall authorize from time to time:

A.1 Officers

A.1.1 A president, who shall conduct the meetings of the church council and voters assembly, and shall be authorized to sign all legal documents.

A.1.2 A vice-president, who is to fill the role in the president's absence or inability to act, and is authorized to sign all legal documents.

A.1.3 A secretary, who shall keep the minutes of the church council and voters meetings and is authorized to sign all legal documents.

A.1.4 A treasurer, who shall be responsible for the financial records of the congregation, and is authorized to sign all legal documents.

A.1.5 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.1.6 The president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer shall serve as the legal officers of the congregation.

A.1.7 Lay ministers performing unique pastoral functions as defined by The LC-MS within the congregation shall be male.

A.2 Boards

A.2.1 A board of elders, which shall assist the pastor in the spiritual life of the congregation.

A.2.2 A board of trustees, which shall be responsible for the physical properties of the congregation. The chairperson shall be authorized to sign all legal documents.

A.2.3 A board for Christian Education, which shall be responsible for the nurture and Christian growth of the members of the congregation.

A.2.4 A board for Preschool, which shall be responsible for the Preschool.

A.2.5 A board for evangelism, which shall lead the members of the congregation in outreach to others in the community and around the world.

A.2.6 A board for youth, which shall be responsible for ministry to and with youth.

A.2.7 A board for stewardship, which shall encourage the members in proper stewardship of time, talents and treasures.

A.2.8 A board for fellowship, which shall seek to nurture relationships in the congregation.

A.2.9 A board for finance, which shall oversee the finances of the congregation.

A.2.10 A board for social ministry, which shall encourage members to care for physical the needs of others.

A.3 Removal from Office

A.3.1 Any officer or board member may be removed from office by the voters assembly by a two-thirds majority ballot vote, 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.

ARTICLE VIII 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 this constitution as determined by a majority vote of the congregation at a meeting called for that purpose.

ARTICLE IX DIVISION

A.1 If at any time a division should take place for any reason, 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 the confessional standards set forth in this constitution, as determined by the dispute resolution process described in the Bylaws of the Synod.

A.2 In the event the congregation should dissolve, the property and all rights connected therewith must be transferred to a not-for-profit entity. In light of our “walking together” the property will be transferred to the Northwest District of The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod.

ARTICLE X MEETINGS

Regular meetings of the voters assembly shall be held as determined in the Bylaws. Announcement of the meetings shall be made in the worship services of the two previous

Sundays. Special meetings require announcement in the worship services and publication in the worship bulletins of the two previous Sundays or notification by mail and announcement in the worship service and publication in the worship bulletin on the previous Sunday. Such special meetings may be called at the request of the pastor, the president, the church council, or ten (10) voting members.

ARTICLE XI QUORUM

All members present at a properly called meeting (in accordance with Article X) shall constitute a quorum.

ARTICLE XII LIMITATIONS ON HOLDING OFFICE

The Scriptures clearly teach that God has given the pastoral office and the exercise of pastoral authority to men and not to women. Scripture does not prohibit women who possess the requisite gifts from holding humanly-established offices, assuming that the occupants of these offices do not perform those functions that are distinctive to the public exercise of the ministry of Word and sacraments, or carry out official functions that would involve public accountability for the function of the pastoral office.

ARTICLE XIII AMENDMENTS

A.1 Amendments to provisions of this constitution, except Articles II, III, V, VIII and XIII, may be adopted at a regular voters meeting, except as hereinafter provided:

A.1.1 That the proposed amendment has been submitted in writing at a previous meeting of the voters assemble 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;

A.1.2 That an affirmative vote of a two-thirds majority of the voters present is secured.

B.1 In addition to the above requirements, proposals to amend Articles II, III, V, VIII, and XIII shall require that previous notification 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 voting 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 Synod.

B.1.1 The date of adoption shall be included in the amendment.

B.1.2 The amendment shall not be implemented until approved by the Board of Directors of the Northwest District of The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod.