

**Constitution, Bylaws, and
Continuing Resolutions**

of

**Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church
of Vacaville, California**

Approved September 25, 2011

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Arrangement of Congregation's Governing Documents

1. The provisions of the Constitution, the Bylaws, and the Continuing Resolutions of a congregation pertain to the same matter should be placed together for clarity in use.
2. All provisions in the Model Constitution for Congregations are prefaced with “C” to distinguish these provisions from comparable ones in the synodical and church wide constitutions. An asterisk [*] preceding the “C” indicates that the provision is a required one.
3. A numerical codification indicates (a) general subject, (b) constitutional provisions, (c) bylaws, and (d) continuing resolutions.
 - a. Major sections are designated as **chapters**. The chapter designation becomes the first number in the codification sequence and is followed by a period. Thus, provisions in “Chapter 8. Membership” are preceded by “8”
 - b. **Constitutional provisions** are codified with two sets of numbers: the chapter number and a two-digit number preceding the second period in the codification. Thus, one constitutional provision related to the “Membership” is codified “*C8.02”
 - i. When many related provisions are parts of a unit that are considered inseparable, they are normally lettered “a,” “b,” “c,” etc.
 - ii. When related provisions are part of a unit but considered separable, such as a list of duties, they are normally numbered in sequence.
 - iii. If the related provisions cannot be clearly judged to be separable or inseparable, preference may be given to a numbered sequence.
 - c. **Bylaws** are codified with three sets of number: the chapter number, the related constitutional provision number, and a two-digit number. Thus, one bylaw related to “Membership” would be codified *C08.02.01
 - d. **Continuing Resolutions** are also codified with three sets of numbers except that the third set is preceded by a capital letter. Thus, a continuing resolution might be numbered:
C13 (to designate the chapter),
C13.01 (to designated the matter within the chapter),
C13.01.A01 (to indicate that it was the first continuing resolution regarding the subject and that it was adopted in 2001).

The Congregation Steering Team may enact continuing resolutions which describe the function of the various committees or organizations of this congregation.

Constitution of Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church

***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 Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church of Vacaville.
- C1.02.** For the purpose of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws, the congregation of Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church is hereinafter designated as "this congregation."
- C1.11.** This congregation shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of California.

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.

- *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 Scriptures 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. 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.

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 and justice for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, and standing with the poor and powerless, 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 the congregation's ministry and the ministry of other parts 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. The Congregation Steering Team shall prepare descriptions of the responsibilities of each committee, task force, or other organizational group and shall review their actions. Such descriptions shall be contained in continuing resolutions in the section on the Congregation Steering Team and Congregation Ministry Teams.

***C4.05.** This congregation shall, from time to time, adopt a mission statement which will provide specific direction for its programs.

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 the Congregation Meeting called and conducted as provided in this constitution and bylaws.

***C5.03.** Only such authority as is delegated to the Congregation Steering Team or other organizational units in this congregation's governing documents is recognized. All remaining authority is retained by the congregation. The 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 or terminate the call of associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers in conformity with the applicable policy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;
- d. adopt amendments to the constitution, as provided in Chapter 17, and amendments to the bylaws, as specified in Chapter 16;
- e. approve the annual budget;

- f. acquire real and personal property by gift, devise, purchase, or other lawful means;
- g. hold title to and use its property for any and all activities consistent with its purpose;
- h. sell, mortgage, lease, transfer, or otherwise dispose of its property by any lawful means;
- i. elect its officers and Congregation Steering Team, and require to carry out their duties in accordance with the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions; and
- j. terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as provided in Chapter 6.

***C5.04.** This congregation shall choose from among its voting members 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 the congregation and other qualifications shall be as prescribed in guidelines established by the Sierra Pacific Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

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 Sierra Pacific 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 clergy roster 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.
- d. This congregation agrees to consider associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers for call to other staff positions in the 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 may be 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.
- d. 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 procedure:
- a. A resolution indicating the desire of this congregation to terminate its relationship must be adopted at a legally called and conducted special meeting of this congregation by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present.
 - b. The Secretary of this congregation shall submit a copy of the resolution to the synodical bishop and shall mail a copy of the resolution to voting members of this congregation. This notice shall be submitted within 10 days after the resolution has been adopted.
 - c. The bishop of the synod shall consult with this congregation during a period of at least 90 days.
 - d. If this congregation, after consultation, still desires to terminate its relationship, such action may be taken at a legally called and conducted special meeting by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present, at which meeting the bishop of the synod or an authorized representative shall be present. Notice of the meeting shall be mailed to all voting members at least 10 days in advance of the meeting.
 - e. A certified copy of the resolution to terminate its relationship shall be sent to the synodical bishop, at which time the relationship between this congregation and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be terminated.
 - f. Notice of termination shall be forwarded by the synodical bishop to the Secretary of this church and published in the periodical of this church.

- *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 program 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 effected.

- *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 program 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 Sierra Pacific 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, title to property shall continue to reside in this congregation.

- *C7.03.** If a two-thirds majority of the voting members of this congregation present at a

legally called and conducted special meeting of this congregation vote to transfer to another Lutheran church body, title to property shall continue to reside in this congregation. Before this congregation takes action to transfer to another Lutheran church body, it shall consult with representatives of the Sierra Pacific Synod.

- *C7.04.** If a two-thirds majority of 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, 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 established synodical process, 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.

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.

C8.01.01 A copy of the current constitution will be made available to all members.

- *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 shall have communed and made a contribution of record during the current or preceding calendar year.
- d. **Associate** members are persons holding membership in other Lutheran or Christian congregations who wish to retain such membership but desire to participate in the life and mission of this congregation, or persons who wish to retain a relationship with this congregation while being members of other congregations. They have all the privileges and duties of membership except voting rights and eligibility for elected offices or membership on the Congregation Steering Team of this congregation.

C8.02.A01 Admission to Baptized membership

- a. a child, one or both of whose parents or guardians are members of the congregation shall, upon receiving Baptism, become baptized members.
- b. a child, neither of whose parents or guardians is a member of this congregation, shall upon receiving Baptism, become a baptized member of the congregation,

unless for good reason, the child is to be a baptized member of another congregation, in which case membership shall be transferred to that congregation.

- c. a child baptized in another congregation shall be received as a baptized member of the congregation, when a transfer has been received.
- d. an unbaptized child who has received instruction and given evidence of an adequate understanding and acceptance of the teachings of the Word of God as confessed by the Lutheran Church, shall, upon confession of faith and Baptism become a baptized member of the congregation.
- e. when one or both parents of baptized children are received into the membership of the congregation, such children should be received as baptized members with the consent of the member parent or parents.
- f. when a baptized child is an orphan or a ward of someone who moved into the area served by this congregation, the child may be received as a baptized member when it is commended to the care of this congregation by the congregation which baptized the child.
- g. when the parents of a baptized child are not themselves, members of the Lutheran church by moves into an area served by this congregation and desire to have their child put within the pastoral care of this congregation, the child may be received as a baptized member.

C8.02.B01 Admission to Confirmed membership

- a. baptized adults, not previously members of the congregation, who have received instruction and have given evidence of having adequate understanding and acceptance of the teachings of the Word of God as confessed by the Lutheran Church, shall be admitted to confirmed membership through the rite of confirmation.
- b. children who are baptized members of the congregation shall be admitted to confirmed membership through participation in the rite of confirmation.
- c. applicants for membership presenting Letters of Transfer showing them to be confirmed members in good standing in other Lutheran congregations shall be admitted to confirmed membership upon acceptance of their Letters of Transfer by the Congregational Steering Team, the report of their names to the congregation.
- d. applicants for membership who present evidence of confirmation in a Lutheran congregation but do not have Letters of Transfer shall be admitted to confirmed membership when the Congregational Steering Team has determined that they meet the standards of Christian faith and life indicated in the constitution and bylaws and when they have reaffirmed their faith before the congregation. Exceptions to an appearance may be made by the Congregational Steering Team.

C8.02.C01 Admission to voting membership

The Congregational Steering Team shall be responsible for determining the voting membership in accordance with the qualifications specified in the constitution and bylaws.

- *C8.03.** All applications for confirmed membership shall be submitted to and shall require

the approval of the Congregation Steering Team.

- *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
 - 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 by the Congregation Steering Team; or
 - e. removal from the roll due to inactivity as defined in the bylaws.

Such persons who have been removed from the roll of members shall remain persons for whom the Church has a continuing pastoral concern.

- C8.05.01** A confirmed member who does not, for a period of one year, partake in Holy Communion, support the church with their offerings, and does not appear to desire to participate in the life and worship of the congregation shall be visited by the pastor and/or representatives from the congregation who will encourage them to be active members. If during the second year, the confirmed member does not participate actively, that member's name shall be removed from the membership roster of the congregation but retained on a responsibility list as one who is in special need of the congregation's prayer and concern.

- C8.05.02** A child, neither of whose parents nor guardians is a member of the congregation, may be removed from the roster of baptized members if the child fails to participate in the life and worship of the congregation.

Chapter 9. THE PASTOR

- *C9.01.** Authority to call a pastor shall be in this congregation by at least a two-thirds majority ballot vote of members present and voting at a meeting legally called for that purpose. Before a call is issued, the officers, or a committee elected by this congregation to recommend the call, shall seek the advice and help of the bishop of the synod.

- *C9.02.** Only a member of the clergy roster of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or a candidate for the roster of ordained ministers who has been recommended for the congregation by the synodical 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 ordained minister shall:
 1. preach the Word;
 2. administer the sacraments;
 3. conduct public worship;
 4. provide pastoral care; and

5. speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world.
- b. Each ordained minister with a congregational call shall, within the congregation:
 1. offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead;
 2. supervise all schools and organizations of this congregation;
 3. install regularly elected members of the Congregation Steering Team; and
 4. with the Congregation Steering Team, administer discipline.
- c. Every pastor shall:
 1. strive to extend the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation, and abroad;
 2. seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel;
 3. impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through distribution of its periodicals and other publications; and
 4. endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and of the Sierra Pacific Synod of the ELCA.

***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.**
- a. The call of a congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment, which, except in the case of the death of the pastor, shall be terminated only following consultation with the synodical bishop and for 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, 30 days after the date on which it was submitted;
 3. inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in the congregation in view of local conditions, without reflection on the competence or the moral and spiritual character of the pastor;
 4. the physical or mental incapacity of the pastor;
 5. disqualification of the pastor through discipline on grounds of doctrine, morality, or continued neglect of duty;
 6. the dissolution of the congregation or the termination of a parish arrangement; or
 7. suspension of the congregation as a result of discipline proceedings
 - b. When allegations of physical or mental incapacity of the pastor or ineffective conduct of the pastoral office have come to the attention of the bishop of the synod, the bishop in his or her sole discretion may, or when such allegations have been brought to the synod's attention by an official recital of allegations by the Congregation Steering Team or by a petition signed by at least one-third of the voting members of the congregation, the bishop shall, investigate such conditions

personally in company with a committee of two ordained ministers and one layperson.

- c. In case of alleged physical or mental incapacity, competent medical testimony shall be obtained. When such disability is evident, the bishop of the synod with the advice of the committee shall declare the pastorate vacant. Upon the restoration of a disabled pastor to health, the bishop of the synod shall take steps to enable the pastor to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another field of labor.
- d. In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of the congregation, all concerned persons shall be heard, after which the bishop of the synod together with the committee described in *C9.05.b. shall decide on the course of action to be recommended to the pastor and the congregation. If they agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action shall be taken by the synod. If either party fails to assent, the congregation may dismiss the pastor at a legally called meeting after consultation with the bishop, either (a) by a two-thirds majority 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 simple majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee recommended termination of the call.
- e. If, in the course of proceedings described in *C9.05.d., the committee concludes that there may be grounds for disciplinary action, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action to the synodical bishop who may bring charges, in accordance with the provisions of the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the constitution of this synod.
- f. If, following the appointment of the committee described in *C9.05.b. or d., it should become apparent that the pastoral office cannot be conducted effectively in the congregation(s) being served by the ordained minister due to local conditions, the bishop of the synod may temporarily suspend the pastor from service in the congregation(s) without prejudice and with pay provided through a joint synodical and churchwide fund and with housing provided by the congregation(s).

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

***C9.07.** During the period of service, an interim pastor shall have the rights and duties in the 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 Steering Team. The interim pastor and any ordained pastor providing assistance shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a pastor.

***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 related to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

***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 Steering Team, and the bishop of the synod. As occasion requires, the documents may be revised through a similar consultation.

- *C9.11.** With the approval of the bishop of the synod, the 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 the congregation for a review of the call. Such a call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of *C9.05.a.
- *C9.12.** The pastor of this congregation:

 - a. shall keep accurate parochial records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from the congregation;
 - b. shall submit a summary of such statistics annually to the synod; and
 - c. shall become a member of this 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.
- C9.12.01.** The records of the congregation shall be and remain the property of the Congregation. The pastor shall be responsible for the maintenance of the records except as otherwise provided herein. Upon termination of a Pastor's service to the congregation, the records shall have been brought up to date prior to departure. The records shall consist of:

 - a. the roster of baptized, confirmed and voting members;
 - b. the ministerial acts performed by the pastor;
 - c. the minutes and reports of the Synod and Handbook of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;
 - d. the minutes of the meeting of the congregation and the Congregation Steering Team, for which the Secretary shall be responsible;
 - e. the financial records of the congregation, for which the Treasurer of the congregation shall be responsible.
- C9.12.02.** The pastor shall be responsible for providing a copy of all changes in the above records in the previous year for inclusion in the congregational report at the semi annual meeting in May.
- *C9.13.** The pastor(s) shall submit a report of his or her ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.
- *C9.14.** The parochial records of this congregation shall be maintained by the pastor and shall remain the property of the congregation. The secretary of this congregation shall attest in writing to the bishop of this synod that such records have been placed in his or her hands in good order by a departing pastor before the installation of that pastor in another field of labor or the granting by the synod of retired status to the pastor.
- C9.21.** Under special circumstances, subject to the approval of the synodical bishop and the concurrence of this congregation, an ordained minister 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 the congregation and the ordained minister in a form proposed by the synodical bishop and approved by the congregation.

Chapter 10. CONGREGATION MEETING

C10.01. The semi-annual meeting of this congregation shall be held at a time specified in the bylaws.

C10.01.01. A semiannual meeting shall be held in the month of May and a semiannual meeting shall be held in the month of September each year. Notice of time and place of convening shall be announced as specified in the constitution and bylaws. The current roster of voting, confirmed, and baptized members shall be determined prior to each meeting.

C10.01.A01. The agenda for the semiannual meeting in May shall include (but is not limited to):

- a. Opening devotion.
- b. Establish a quorum.
- c. Reading and approval of the minutes of the previous meeting.
- d. Approval of the budget.
- e. Election of Officers and Congregational Steering Team.
- f. Closing prayer.

C10.01.B01. The agenda for the semiannual meeting in September shall include (but is not limited to):

- a. Opening devotion.
- b. Establish a quorum.
- c. Reading and approval of the minutes of the previous meeting.
- d. Reports of the Pastor, Congregational Steering Team, Synod Delegates, and others as necessary.
- e. Elect a Nominating Ministry Team.
- f. Elect voting members for the Synod Assembly (C5.04).
- g. Review the current year's budget.
- h. Closing prayer.

C10.02. A special Congregation Meeting may be called by the pastor, the Congregation Steering Team, or the President of this congregation, and shall be called by the President of the congregation upon the written request of 30% of the voting members. 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 Sundays and by mail to all 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 shall be sufficient.

C10.04. Ten percent (10%) voting members shall constitute a quorum.

C10.05. Voting by proxy or by absentee ballot shall not be permitted.

C10.06. All actions approved by the congregation shall be by majority vote of those members present and voting, except as otherwise provided in this constitution or

by state law.

C10.06.01 The current roster of voting members shall be made available at each meeting of the congregation.

C10.06.02 In the following cases voting shall be by written ballot:

- a. To adopt or amend the articles of incorporation, constitution, or bylaws of the congregation.
- b. To call a pastor.
- c. To request a pastor's resignation.
- d. To remove a member from office in the congregation.
- e. To sever membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- f. To dispose of, encumber, or purchase real property.
- g. When requested by ten or more voting members.

C10.07. 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, Secretary, and Treasurer.

- a. Duties of the officers shall be specified in the continuing resolutions.
- b. The officers shall be voting members of the congregation.
- c. Officers of this congregation shall serve similar offices of the Congregation Steering Team and shall be voting members of the Congregation Steering Team.
- d. A pastor may not serve as an officer of the congregation.

C11.01.A01. The duties of the President shall include but not be limited to:

- a. Preside at the Congregational Steering Team meetings and congregational meetings;
- b. Act as a member of the Executive Team;
- c. Establish the agenda for the Congregation Steering Team meetings and congregational meetings, in consultation with the pastor(s) and the Executive Team;
- d. Along with the pastor(s) and the Executive Team, plan any Congregation Steering Team leadership retreat;
- e. Write a summary of Congregation Steering Team business for publications in the newsletter;
- f. Maintain and amend as needed the Executive Team's Policies and Operations Guide.

C11.01.B01. The duties of the Secretary shall include but not be limited to:

- a. Chair Congregation Steering Team meetings and congregation meetings in the absence of the President;
- b. Act as a member of the Executive Team;
- c. Along with the pastor(s) and the Executive Team, plan any Congregation Steering Team leadership retreat;
- d. Annually review the membership roster;
- e. Serve as the Mutual Ministry Team leader.
- f. Forward and receive all pertinent correspondence regarding this congregation's

constitution, bylaws, and amendments.

g. Responsible for signing State required documents.

C11.01.C01. The duties of the Treasurer shall include by not be limited to:

a. Be custodian of all funds of the congregation;

b. Act as a member of the Executive Team;

c. Disburse such funds in accordance with the decisions of the congregation or the Congregation Steering Team;

d. Present a report to the semi-annual congregational meeting and such other reports to the Congregation Steering Team as may be required;

e. Provide assistance to the treasurers of the various organizations within the church;

f. Oversee the filing of tax reports and remittances;

g. Oversee financial staff

C11.02. The congregation shall elect its officers by written ballot and shall serve for one year, with the exception of the Treasurer who will serve for three years. Their terms shall begin on July 1.

C11.03. No officer shall hold more than one office at a time. No elected officer shall be eligible to serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office.

C11.03.A01. The Treasurer shall not be eligible to serve for consecutive terms in the same office.

Chapter 12. Congregation Steering Team

C12.01. The voting membership of the Congregation Steering Team shall consist of the pastor(s), the officers of the congregation, and not more than 13 nor fewer than 7 members of the congregation. Any voting member of the congregation may be elected, subject only to the limitation on the length of continuous service permitted in that office. A member's place on the Congregation Steering Team shall be declared vacant if the member a) ceases to be a voting member of this congregation or b) is absent from four successive regular meetings of the Congregation Steering Team without cause. Consistent with the laws of the state in which this congregation is incorporated, the congregation may adopt procedures for the removal of a member of the Congregation Steering Team in other circumstances.

C12.01.01. The Core Ministry Team Leaders (Outreach, Congregational Life, Mission, Education, Operations, Youth, and Stewardship) shall comprise seven of the 13 congregation members of the voting membership of the Congregation Steering Team.

C12.02. The members of the Congregation Steering Team except the Executive Team shall be elected at a legally called meeting of the congregation. Their term of office shall be for two years, with the term of office beginning on July 1 and ending on June 30. Such members shall be eligible to serve no more than two full terms consecutively. Newly elected Congregation Steering Team members shall be installed at worship a Sunday prior to the date they assume office.

C12.03. Should a member's place on the Congregation Steering Team be declared vacant, the Congregation Steering Team shall elect, by majority vote, a successor until the

next semiannual meeting *in May*.

- C12.04.** The Congregation Steering Team 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 Steering Team 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 pastor(s) and staff and help them annually to evaluate the fulfillment of their calling 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.
 - g. To arrange for pastoral service during the sickness or absence of the pastor.
 - h. To emphasize partnership with the synod and churchwide organization 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 Steering Team shall be responsible for the financial and property matters of this congregation.
- a. The Congregation Steering Team shall be the board of trustees 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 California, except as otherwise provided herein.
 - b. The Congregation Steering Team shall not have the authority to buy, sell, or encumber real property unless specifically authorized to do so by a meeting of the congregation.
 - c. The Congregation Steering Team may enter into contracts of up to \$5,000 for items not included in the budget.
 - d. The Congregation Steering Team shall prepare an annual budget for adoption by this congregation, shall supervise the expenditure of funds in accordance therewith following its adoption, and may incur obligations of more than 5% in excess of the anticipated receipts only after approval by a Congregation Meeting. The budget shall include this congregation's full indicated share in

support of the wider ministry being carried on in partnership with the synod and churchwide organization.

- e. The Congregation Steering Team 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 benevolence monies to the synodical treasurer.
- f. The Congregation Steering Team shall be responsible for this congregation's investments and its total insurance program.

C12.05.01 All undesignated bequests received by Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church shall be divided with one-half of the amount to be used for the Lord's work beyond the congregation and one-half to be used for non-budgeted work within the congregation. In the case of an undesignated bequest of \$30,000 or under, the Congregation Steering Team shall assume responsibility for distribution. In the case of an undesignated bequest of more than \$30,000, a task force shall be formed to study and make a recommendation concerning the use of the money. The size and composition of the task force shall be determined by the Congregation Steering Team. The recommendation will go first to the Congregation Steering Team and then to the congregation for a vote.

C12.06. The Congregation Steering Team shall see that the provisions of this constitution, its bylaws, and the continuing resolutions are carried out.

C12.06.01 The Congregation Steering Team will exercise discipline in accordance with the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.

C12.07. The Congregation Steering Team shall provide for an annual review of the membership roster.

C12.08. The Congregation Steering Team shall be responsible for the employment and supervision of the salaried lay workers of this congregation.

C12.08.A01 The pastor(s) and all salaried employees will be reviewed annually by the Mutual Ministry Team (C13.04). The Team's written evaluations as well as recommendations for compensation, benefits, and promotions will be forwarded to the Executive Team for review and action.

C12.09. The Congregation Steering Team shall submit a comprehensive annual report to this congregation at the semiannual meeting in September.

C12.11. The Congregation Steering Team shall normally meet once a month. Special meetings may be called by the pastor or the President, and shall be called by the President 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.

C12.11.01 Meetings of the Congregation Steering Team shall be open to all members of the congregation.

C12.11.02 The Congregation Steering Team may call for an executive session in matters pertaining to:

- a. Personnel matters;
- b. Litigation; or
- c. Salaries.

C12.12. A quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of a majority of the members of the Congregation Steering Team, including the pastor or interim

pastor, except when the pastor or interim pastor requests or consents to be absent and has given prior approval to the agenda for a particular regular or special meeting, which shall be the only business considered at that meeting. Chronic or repeated absence of the pastor or interim pastor who has refused approval of the agenda of a subsequent regular or special meeting shall not preclude action by the Congregation Steering Team, following consultation with the synodical bishop.

Chapter 13. CONGREGATION MINISTRY TEAMS

C13.01. The officers of this congregation and the pastor shall constitute the **Executive Team**.

C13.01.A01. The Executive Team shall:

- a. Propose agenda for Congregation Steering Team and congregation meetings;
- b. Plan any retreat for the Congregation Steering Team;
- c. Submit to the Congregation Steering Team a list of candidates for the Mutual Ministry and Personnel (*Team*);
- d. Screen and review all outside appeals for funds and make recommendations for action to the Congregation Steering Team. Review all offers of non-solicited gifts to the congregation and disperse them according to this organizations governing documents (C12.05.01); and
- e. Be authorized to make time sensitive decisions that will have a direct impact on the life of the congregation. Any actions will be communicated to the Congregation Steering Team at their next meeting.

C13.02. A **Nominating Team** of six voting members of this congregation, two of whom, if possible, shall be outgoing members of the Congregation Steering Team, shall be elected at the semiannual meeting in September for a term of one year. Members of the Nominating Team are not eligible for consecutive reelection.

C13.03.A01 A professional audit will be performed every third year coinciding with the conclusion of the term of office of the Congregation Steering Team Treasurer.

C13.04 The **Mutual Ministry Team (MMT)** shall act to affirm, review, and strengthen the approved mission, aims, and goals of the congregation and how the ministry staff is attaining these goals and provide recommendations to the Congregation Steering Team. The team shall be led by the Congregation Secretary; additional members shall be the pastor in ex officio and 6 members from the congregation approved by the CST.

C13.04.A11 The Mutual Ministry's Teams areas shall include (but are not limited to):

- a. Mutual Ministry -- Monitor congregation's ministry and alignment with church's purpose, mission, vision and core values.
- b. Documents
 1. Review and revise the job descriptions of staff members
 2. Review and revise Employee Handbook as necessary
 3. Review and revise the Constitution of the congregation, following the Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- c. Personnel

1. In a confidential manner, the team will conduct an annual performance review of the pastor(s). The MMT reviews the pastor's yearly goals and consults with the pastor regarding continuing education.
 2. The pastor will annually provide confidential performance evaluations for each staff member to the MMT for the purpose of compensation recommendations to the Executive Team.
 3. Serve as Personnel Committee when the need arises to resolve conflicts within the staff.
- C13.06.B11.** The Mutual Ministry Team Leader shall maintain and amend as needed, the MMT Continuity Binder. The team leader will encourage the ministry leaders to develop a Continuity Binder for their areas.
- C13.05.** When a pastoral vacancy occurs, a **Call Ministry Team** of six voting members shall be elected by this congregation. Term of office will terminate upon installation of the newly called pastor.
- C13.06.** The Congregation Steering Team recognizes the following Ministry Teams. Other ministry teams of this congregation may be formed, as the need arises, by decision of the Congregation Steering Team.
- C13.06.01.** The **Operations Team (OT)** shall act to manage and oversee the physical assets of this congregation. The Operations Team will have a team leader who will be elected by the congregation at the semiannual meeting in May and will serve for two years. The Team Leader's primary responsibility is to oversee the team's ministry areas, serve as a point of contact for and attend all meetings of the Congregational Steering Team, and insure effective communication and coordination with the Operations Team.
- C13.06.A01.** The Operations Team's ministry areas shall include (but are not limited to):
- a. Buildings and Maintenance: the buildings and maintenance ministry shall form a team of volunteers to carry out the following ministry responsibilities:
 1. Be responsible for the buildings and premises of the congregation so that their use is normally limited to the functions of the congregation. Should groups or individuals not associated with the congregation desire to use such property, application shall be made through the church office for approval;
 2. Supervise the maintenance of the properties of the congregation; and
 3. Supervise any additional building projects as mandated by the congregation.
- C13.06.B01.** The Operations Team Leader shall maintain and amend as needed, the OT Continuity Binder. The team leader will encourage the ministry leaders to develop a Continuity Binder for their areas.
- C13.06.02.** The **Outreach Team (OUT)** shall act to reach out to all people, extend them an opportunity to discover their spiritual gifts and help them to grow in their Christian lives. The focus is to inspire people to live Christian lifestyles through evangelical activities, and publicity efforts. The Outreach Team will have a team leader who will be elected by the congregation at the semiannual meeting in May and serve for two years. The team leader's primary responsibility is to oversee the team's ministry areas, serve as a point of contact for and attend all meetings of the Congregation Steering Team, and insure effective communication and coordination with the Outreach Team.

- C13.06.C11.** The Outreach Team’s ministry areas shall include (but are not limited to):
- a. Evangelism:
 1. Provide spiritual outreach.
 2. Develop a program of evangelism.
 3. Develop a program of visitation for visitors.
 - b. Community Bridge Events: plan and coordinate special events that help connect Shepherd of the Hills with the surrounding community.
 - c. Publicity: develop and manage a publicity plan that effectively communicates Shepherd of the Hills’ purpose and mission. Such publicity includes (but is not limited to): newspaper, telephone directory, informational brochures, member directories, world wide web (www) internet sites, etc.
 - d. Inactive Family Ministry in conjunction with the Pastor.
- C13.06.B01.** The Outreach Team Leader shall maintain and amend as needed, the OUT Continuity Binder. The team leader will encourage the ministry leaders to develop a Continuity Binder for their areas.
- C13.06.03.** The **Congregational Life Team** (CLT) shall act to help people develop and mature their Christian lives. The focus is to encourage Christian lifestyles through fellowship, and member nourishment. The Congregational Life Team will have a team leader who will be elected by the congregation at the semiannual meeting in May and serve for two years. The team leader’s primary responsibility is to oversee the team’s ministry areas, serve as a point of contact for and attend all meetings of the Congregational Steering Team and insure effective communication and coordination within the Congregational Life Team.
- C13.06.C01.** The Congregational Life Team’s ministry areas shall include (but are not limited to):
- a. Church Fellowship/Special Activities: This ministry shall:
 1. Publicize church events in the congregation and in the local media.
 2. Coordinate congregational events that promote church fellowship.
 3. Oversee a church historian program.
 - b. Member Nourishment.
 1. Worship and Music: The worship and music team shall:
 - a. Develop an effective worship program providing for ushers, acolytes, and variations in the worship service. It shall provide for an organist, choir, and music director. The music director shall be responsible for selecting choir music. The team shall counsel the organist and music director for special music events.
 - b. Plan all special worship services.
 - c. Arrange for supply pastors.
 - d. Coordinate for worship services.
 2. Caring Ministry Oversight, this shall include (but not limited to):
 - a. Women’s Ministry
 - b. Men’s Ministry
 - c. Stephen’s Ministry
 - d. Meals Ministry
 - e. Funeral Ministry

f. Young Adult

- C13.06.D01.** The Congregational Life Team Leader shall maintain and amend as needed, the CLT Continuity Binder. The team leader will encourage the ministry leaders to develop a Continuity Binder for their areas.
- C13.06.04.** The **Mission Team** (MIT) shall act to encourage and enable mature Christians to continue the discipleship process by going back into the community to start new ministries. The focus is to send people out to help others discover Christ. The Mission Team will have a team leader who will be elected by the congregation at the semiannual meeting in May and serve for two years. The team leader's primary responsibility is to oversee the team's ministry areas, serve as a point of contact for and attend all meetings of the Congregational Steering Team and insure effective communication and coordination within the Mission Team.
- C13.06.E01.** The Mission Team's ministry areas shall include (but are not limited to):
- a. ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America), Sierra Pacific Synod, Vineyard Conference, and Community Involvement: they will work to initiate and manage ministry opportunities that are related to these organizations and groups.
 - b. Leadership Development:
 - c. Spiritual Gift Development/Implementation:
- C13.06.D11.** The Mission Team Leader shall maintain and amend as needed, the MIT Continuity Binder. The team leader will encourage the ministry leaders to develop a Continuity Binder for their areas.
- C13.06.05.** The **Christian Education Team** (CET) shall provide opportunities for and encourage persons of all ages to mature in the Christian faith. It shall provide leadership and supervision of all aspects of the educational program of the congregation. The Christian Education Team will have a team leader who will be elected by the congregation at the semiannual meeting in May and serve for two years. The team leader's primary responsibility is to oversee the team's ministry areas, serve as a point of contact for and attend all meetings of the Congregational Steering Team and insure effective communication and coordination within the Christian Education Team.
- C13.06.E11.** The Christian Education Team's ministry areas shall include (but are not limited to):
- a. Provide leadership and supervision of all aspects of the educational program of the congregation.
 - b. Oversee the operation of the congregation's Sunday Morning & Wednesday's Evening Children's Ministry, Vacation Bible School, Confirmation Program, and Communion Instruction Program.
 - c. Recruit leaders for the various Christian Education programs.
 - d. Develop effective teaching ministries which include the training of teachers and leaders, and provide opportunity for study by every member of the congregation through its teaching agencies.
 - e. Liaison with Shepherd of the Hills Preschool Board.
 - f. Oversee various adult education programs, such as: Bible study classes, inquiry classes, and other adult study programs of interest to the Christian

community.

- g. Oversee the ordering of all curriculum materials, equipment, and supplies that will be needed in the Christian Education programs and provide for their care and upkeep.

C13.06.B05. The Christian Education Team Leader shall maintain and amend as needed, the CET Continuity Binder. The team leader will encourage the ministry leaders to develop a Continuity Binder for their areas.

C13.06.06. The **Youth Ministry Team** (YMT) shall provide leadership and supervision of all aspects of the youth ministry of the congregation. The Youth Ministry Team will have a team leader who will be elected by the congregation at the semiannual meeting in May and serve for two years. The team leader's primary responsibility is to oversee the team's ministry areas, serve as a point of contact for and attend all meetings of the Congregational Steering Team and insure effective communication and coordination within the Youth Ministry Team.

C13.06.A08. The Youth Ministry Team's ministry areas shall include (but are not limited to):

- a. Provide an effective youth program in the parish and select the advisors for such programs.
- b. Provide opportunities for youth to grow in faith and in social relationships through Bible Camps, conferences, and inter-faith organizations.
- c. Encourage young people to consider Christian vocations and church related colleges.

C13.06.A08. The Youth Ministry Leader shall maintain and amend as needed, the YMT Continuity Binder. The team leader will encourage the ministry leaders to develop a Continuity Binder for their areas.

C13.06.07. The **Stewardship Team** (ST) shall provide opportunities for and encourage all people to grow in their personal stewardship of time, talents, and treasures. The Stewardship Team will have a team leader who will be elected by the congregation at the semiannual meeting in May and serve for two years. The team leader's primary responsibility is to oversee the team's ministry areas, serve as a point of contact for and attend all meetings of the Congregational Steering Team and insure effective communication and coordination within the Stewardship Team.

C13.06.F11. The Stewardship Team's ministry areas shall include (but are not limited to):

- a. Develop the program for stewardship education and provide for receiving the pledges.
- b. Contact and encourage new members to serve to the church and maintain a time and talents file.
- c. Foster support for missions and charities through an ongoing benevolence program.

C13.06.G11. The Stewardship Leader shall maintain and amend as needed, the ST Continuity Binder. The team leader will encourage the ministry leaders to develop a Continuity Binder for their areas.

Chapter 14. ORGANIZATIONS WITHIN THE CONGREGATION

C14.01. All 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, the organizations are subject to its oversight and direction. This congregation at its meeting shall determine their policies, guide their activities, and receive reports concerning their membership, work, and finances.

C14.02. Special interest groups, other than those of the official organizations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, may be organized only after authorization has been given by the Congregation Steering Team and specified in a continuing resolution.

Chapter 15. DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS AND ADJUDICATION

***C15.01.** Denial of the Christian faith as described in this constitution, conduct grossly unbecoming a member of the Church of Christ, or persistent trouble-making in this congregation are sufficient cause for discipline of a member. Prior to disciplinary action, reconciliation will be attempted following Matthew 18:15-17, proceeding through these successive steps: a) private admonition by the pastor, b) admonition by the pastor in the presence of two or three witnesses, and c) citation to appear before the Congregation Steering Team. If for any reason, the pastor is unable to administer the admonitions required by a. and b. hereof, the President (if not the Pastor) or Secretary shall administer such admonitions.

***C15.02.** The process for discipline of a member of the 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 discipline against a member proceeds beyond counseling and admonition by the pastor, charges against the accused member(s) that are specific and in writing shall be prepared by member(s) of the congregation who shall sign the charges as the accuser(s). The written charges shall be filed with the pastor, who shall advise the Congregation Steering Team of the need to issue a written citation to the accused and the accusers that specifies the time and place of the hearing before the Congregation Steering Team. The written charges shall accompany the written citation to the accused. The written citation that specifies the time and place of the hearing before the Congregation Steering Team and requests the presence of a member charged with the offense shall be sent at least ten days prior to the meeting. If the member charged with the offense fails to appear at the scheduled hearing, the Congregation Steering Team may proceed with the hearing and may pass judgment in the member's absence.

***C15.03.** Members of the Congregation Steering Team who participate in the preparation of the written charges or who present evidence or testimony in the hearing before the Congregation Steering Team are disqualified from voting upon the question of the guilt of the accused member. Should the allegations be sustained by a two-thirds majority vote of the members of the Congregation Steering Team who are not disqualified but who are present and voting, and renewed admonition prove ineffectual, the council shall impose one of the following disciplinary actions:

- a. censure before the council or congregation;
- b. suspension from membership for a definite period of time; or

c. exclusion from membership in this congregation.

Disciplinary actions b. and c. shall be delivered to the member in writing.

- *C15.04. The member against whom disciplinary action has been taken by the Congregation Steering Team shall have the right to appeal the decision to the Synod Council. Such right may not be abridged and the decision of the Synod Council shall be final.
- *C15.05. Disciplinary actions may be reconsidered and revoked by the Congregation Steering Team upon receipt of a) evidence that injustice has been done or b) evidence of repentance and amendment.
- *C15.06. For disciplinary actions in this congregation, "due process" shall be observed as specified in 20.41.04. in the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- *C15.07. No member of a congregation shall be subject to discipline for offenses that the Congregation Steering Team has previously heard and decided, unless so ordered by the Synod Council after an appeal.
- *C15.10. **Adjudication**
- *C15.11. When there is disagreement among factions within this congregation on a substantive issue that cannot be resolved by the parties, members of this congregation shall have access to the synodical bishop for consultation after informing the chair of the Congregation Steering Team of their intent. If the consultation fails to resolve the issue(s), the Consultation Committee of the synod shall consider the matter. If the Consultation Committee of the synod shall fail to resolve the issue(s), the matter shall be referred to the Synod Council, whose decision shall be final.

Chapter 16. BYLAWS

- *C16.01. This congregation may adopt bylaws. No bylaw may conflict with this constitution.
- *C16.02. Bylaws may be adopted or amended at any legally called meeting of this congregation with a quorum present by a majority vote of those voting members present and voting.
- *C16.03. Changes to the bylaws may be proposed by any voting member provided, however, that such additions or amendments be submitted in writing to the Congregation Steering Team at least 60 days before a regular or special Congregation Meeting called for that purpose and that the Congregation Steering Team notify the congregation's members by mail of the proposal with the Steering Team's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the Congregation Meeting.
- *C16.04. Approved changes to the bylaws shall be sent by the Secretary of this congregation to the synod.

Chapter 17. AMENDMENTS

- *C17.01. 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 to this constitution may

be proposed by at least 5% voting members or by the Congregation Steering Team. Proposals must be filed in writing with the Congregation Steering Team 60 days before formal consideration by this congregation at its regular or special meeting called for that purpose. The Congregation Steering Team shall notify the congregation's members by mail of the proposal together with the Congregation Steering Team's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the meeting.

- *C17.02.** An amendment to this constitution, proposed under *C17.01., shall:
- a. be approved at a legally called Congregation Meeting according to this constitution by a majority vote of those present and voting;
 - b. be ratified without change at the next semiannual meeting by a two-thirds majority vote of those present and voting; and
 - c. have the effective date included in the resolution and noted in the constitution.
- *C17.03.** Any amendments to this constitution that result from the processes provided in *C17.01. and *C17.02. shall be sent by the Secretary of this congregation to the synod. The amendment shall become effective within 120 days from the date of the receipt of the notice by the synod unless the synod informs this congregation that the amendment is in conflict with the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or the constitution of the Sierra Pacific Synod of the ELCA.
- *C17.04.** Whenever the *Model Constitution for Congregations* is amended by the Churchwide Assembly, this constitution may be amended to incorporate any such amendment by a simple majority vote of those voting members present and voting at any subsequent meeting of the congregation without presentation at a prior meeting of the congregation, provided that the Congregation Steering Team has submitted by mail notice to the congregation of such an amendment or amendments, together with the Congregation Steering Team's recommendations, at least 30 days prior to the meeting. Following the adoption of an amendment, the Secretary of the congregation shall submit a copy thereof to the synod. Such provisions shall become effective immediately following a vote of approval.

Chapter 18. CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

- *C18.01.** The Congregation Steering Team may enact continuing resolutions which describe the function of the various ministry teams or organizations of this congregation.
- *C18.02.** Continuing resolutions shall be enacted or amended by a two-thirds vote of all voting members of the Congregation Steering Team.
- C18.02.01.** Approved continuing resolutions shall be made public through church publications and made a part of any constitution copy being handed out to members or otherwise circulated.

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 Steering Team 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.

Chapter 20. PARISH AUTHORIZATION

[Required provisions when congregation is part of a parish]*

- *C20.01.** This congregation may unite in partnership with one or more other congregations recognized by the synod named in *C6.01. to form a parish. Except as provided in *C20.02. and *C20.03., a written agreement, developed in consultation with the synod and approved by the voting members of each congregation participating in the parish, shall specify the powers and responsibilities that have been delegated to a Parish Council.
- *C20.02.** Whenever a letter of call is being recommended for extension to an ordained minister of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or a candidate for the roster of ordained ministers who has been recommended to the congregation by the synodical bishop to serve the congregations of a parish, such letter of call shall be first approved by a two-thirds vote at congregational meetings of each of the congregations forming the parish. If any congregation of the parish should fail to approve extending this call, the other congregation(s) in the same parish shall have the right to terminate the parish arrangement.
- *C20.03.** Any one of the congregations of a parish may terminate the call of a pastor as provided in †S14.13.d. of the synodical constitution of the synod named in *C6.01. In such case, the other congregation(s) in the same parish shall have the right to terminate the parish arrangement.
- *C20.04.** Whenever a parish arrangement is terminated, the call of any rostered person serving that parish is terminated. Should any congregation that formerly was part of the parish arrangement desire to issue a new call to that rostered person, it may do so in accordance with the call process of this church.