

# **Our Saviour's Lutheran Church Constitution & Bylaws**

**Our Saviour's Lutheran Church  
326 Leroy Street, Audubon, IA 50025**

**CONSTITUTION**

**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 Our Saviour's Lutheran Church.
- C1.01. For the purpose of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws, the said congregation is hereinafter designated as "this congregation."
- C1.11. This congregation shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of Iowa.

**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. We acknowledge as one with us 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 of Christ.
- 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. This church, 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 it 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 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 in this 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 others in the Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ.
  - h. Foster and participate in interdependent relationships with other congregations and the Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ.
  - i. Foster and participate in ecumenical relationships consistent with church-wide policy.
- C4.04 This congregation shall develop an organizational structure to be described in the bylaws. The Congregation Council shall prepare descriptions of the responsibilities of each committee, task force, or other organizational groups and shall review their actions.
- C4.05 This congregation shall, from time to time, adopt a statement of its mission 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 Council or other organizational units in the 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. Appoint or terminate the appointment of associates in ministry;
  - d. Approve the annual budget;
  - e. Acquire real and personal property by gift, devise, purchase, or other lawful means;
  - f. Hold title to and use its property for any and all activities consistent with its purpose;

- g. Sell, mortgage, lease, transfer, or otherwise dispose of its property by any lawful means;
- h. Elect its officers, Congregation Council, boards and committees, and require them to carry out their duties in accordance with the constitution and bylaws, and continuing resolutions; and
- i. Terminate its relationship with the Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ as provided in Chapter 6.

## **Chapter 6**

### **Church Affiliation**

- C6.01. This congregation shall be an interdependent part of the Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ.
- C6.02. This congregation accepts the Confession of Faith and agrees and shall act in accordance with them.
- C6.03. This congregation acknowledges its relationship with the Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ 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 Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ.
  - c. This congregation agrees to call pastoral leadership from the Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ in accordance with its call procedures except in special circumstances.
  - d. This congregation agrees to consider associates in ministry for appointment to other staff positions in the congregation.
- C6.04. Affiliation with the Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ may be terminated as follows:
- a. This congregation takes action to dissolve.
  - b. This congregation ceases to exist.
  - c. This congregation follows the procedures outlined in C6.05.
- C6.05. This congregation may terminate its relationship with the Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ 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 office of the Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ and shall mail a copy of the resolution to voting members of the congregation. This notice shall be submitted within 10 days after the resolution has been adopted.

## Chapter 7

### Property Ownership

- C7.01. If this congregation ceases to exist, title to undisposed property shall pass to the Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ.
- C7.02. If this congregation is removed from membership of the Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ for any reason, title to property continue to reside in this congregation.
- C7.03. If a two-thirds majority of the voting members of this congregation present at a regularly called and conducted special meeting of this congregation vote to transfer to another Lutheran church body, to a non-Lutheran church body, or to become an independent church, title to property shall continue to reside in this congregation.

## Chapter 8

### Membership

- C8.01. Members of this congregation shall be those baptized persons on the roll of the 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.
- C8.02. 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 member from other Lutheran congregations, or baptized persons received by affirmation of faith.
  - c. Voting members are confirmed members, as further defined in the bylaws. Such confirmed members shall have communed and made a contribution of record during the current or preceding year.
  - d. Associate members are persons holding membership in other Christian congregations who wish to retain such membership but desire to participate in the life and mission of this congregation. They have all the privileges and duties of membership except voting rights and eligibility for elected offices or membership of the Congregation Council of this congregation.
- C8.03. All applications for confirmed membership shall be submitted to and shall require the approval of the Congregation Council.
- 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 and of the Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ 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 Council; 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.

## 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 regularly called for that purpose.
- C9.02. A call from the congregation may be either a certified or contract call as defined in the Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ call procedures.
- C9.03. Consistent with the faith, every called pastor shall preach the Word, administer the sacraments, conduct public worship, provide pastoral care, and shall speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world. Each called pastor shall, within the congregation, offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit with the sick and distressed, and bury the dead; supervise all schools and organizations of the congregation; shall install regularly elected members of the Congregation Council, and with the council administer discipline. Every pastor shall seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel and strive to extend the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation, and abroad; shall impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through distribution of its periodicals and other publications; and shall endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ.
- 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.
- 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 for the following reasons:
- 1) Mutual agreement to terminate the call or the completion of a call for a specific term of years;
  - 2) Resignation of the pastor;
  - 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; or

- 6) The dissolution of the congregation.
  - b. In the case of alleged local difficulties which imperil the effective functioning of the congregation, all concerned persons shall be heard. The congregation may dismiss the pastor by a two-thirds majority vote of the voting members present at a regularly called meeting.
  - c. The foregoing procedure shall never be invoked when questions of doctrine, morality, or continued neglect of duty are involved, all such cases being treated as disciplinary matters.
- C9.06. At a time of pastoral vacancy, an interim pastor may be appointed by the Congregation Council.
- C9.07. During the period of service, an interim pastor shall have the rights and duties of a regularly called pastor and may delegate the same in part to a supply pastor with the consent of the Congregation Council. 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.
- 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 and the Congregation Council. As occasion requires, the documents may be revised through a similar consultation.
- C9.10. The congregation may depart from C9.05.a. and call a pastor for a specific term of years. Details of such calls shall be in writing setting forth the purpose and conditions involved. Such call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of C9.05.a.
- C9.11. The pastor(s) shall keep accurate parochial records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from the congregation, and shall submit a summary of such statistics annually to the congregation. All permanent parochial records shall remain the property of the congregation. Upon leaving the congregation the pastor(s) shall complete all parochial records of ministry to the time of departure.

## **Chapter 10**

### **Congregational Meeting**

- C10.01. The regular meetings of this congregation shall be held at times specified in the bylaws.
- C10.02. A special Congregational Meeting may be called by the pastor, the Congregation Council, or the president of this congregation, and shall be called at the written request of 5% 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 at least ten days in advance of the date of the meeting by methods provided in the bylaws.
- C10.04. The number of voting members that shall constitute a quorum will be provided in the bylaws.
- C10.05. Voting by proxy or by absentee ballot shall not be permitted.

- C10.06. All actions by the congregation shall be by majority vote except as otherwise provided in this constitution.
- 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, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer.
- a. Duties of the officers shall be specified in the bylaws.
  - b. The officers shall be voting members of the congregation.
  - c. Officers of this congregation shall serve similar offices of the Congregation Council and shall be voting members of the Congregation Council.
- C11.02. The congregation shall elect its officers and they shall be the officers of the congregation. The officers shall be elected by written ballot and shall serve for one year or until their successors are elected. Their terms shall begin on the date specified in the bylaws.
- C11.03. No officer shall hold more than one office at a time. No elected officer shall be eligible to serve more than three consecutive terms in the same office.

## Chapter 12

### Congregational Council

- C12.01. The voting membership of the Congregation Council shall consist of the pastor(s) and at least five members of the congregation and the officers 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 Council 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 Council without reasonable cause, reasonable cause to be determined by the executive committee
- C12.02. The members of the Congregation Council, except the pastor(s), shall be elected by written ballot to serve for two years or until their successors are elected. Such members shall be eligible to serve no more than two full terms consecutively.
- C12.03. Should a member's place on the Congregation Council be declared vacant, the Congregation Council shall elect, by majority vote, a successor until the next annual meeting.
- C12.04. The Congregation Council 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 Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ. The duties of the Congregation Council 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 a supportive relationship with the pastor(s) and staff and help them annually to evaluate the fulfillment of their calling, appointment, 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, if differences and conflicts arise, to endeavor to foster mutual understanding.
  - g. To arrange for pastoral service during the sickness or absence of the pastor
- C12.05. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the financial and property matters of this congregation.
- a. The Congregation Council 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 Iowa, except as otherwise provided herein.
  - b. The Congregation Council 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 Council may enter into contracts of up to 10% of the budget for items not included in the budget.
  - d. The Congregation Council 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 no obligations in excess of the budget without 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 Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ.
  - e. The Congregation Council shall ascertain that the financial affairs of this congregation are being conducted efficiently, giving particular attention to the prompt payment of all obligations.
  - f. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for this congregation's investments and its total insurance program.
- C12.06. The Congregation Council shall see that the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws and the continuing resolutions are carried out.
- C12.07. The Congregation Council shall provide for an annual review of the membership roster.
- C12.08. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the appointment and supervision of the salaried lay workers of this congregation.
- C12.09. The Congregation Council shall submit a comprehensive report to this congregation at the annual meeting.
- C12.10. The Congregation Council shall normally meet once a month. Special meetings may be called by the pastor or the president, and shall be called 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. A quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of a majority of the members of the Congregation Council, including the pastor(s) or interim pastor, except when such pastor(s) requests or consents to be absent and have given prior approval to an agenda of routine matters which shall be the only business of the meeting.

## **Chapter 13**

### **Congregational Committees**

- C13.01. The officers of this congregation and the pastor(s) shall constitute the Executive Committee.
- C13.02. A Nominating Committee of six voting members of this congregation, two of whom shall be outgoing members of the Congregation Council, shall be elected at the annual meeting for a term of one year. Members of the Nominating Committee are not eligible for consecutive reelection. An alternate member shall be elected to serve in case of vacancy. The pastor(s) shall serve as conveners and as advisory member(s). The candidates of the nominating committee shall be made known to the congregation in conjunction with the announcement of the special or annual meeting at which the election is to take place
- C13.03. An Audit Committee of two voting members shall be elected by the Congregational Council. Audit Committee members shall not be members of the Congregation Council. Term of office will be two years, with one member elected each year. Members shall be eligible for reelection. The Audit Committee shall audit all financial records of the congregation proper and shall present its report to the annual meeting in writing. The Audit Committee shall carefully examine all insurance policies to determine insurance in force and include this information in its report.
- C13.04. A Mutual Ministry Committee shall be appointed jointly by the council and the pastor(s). The committee shall consist of five people. The term of office shall be two years, with three members appointed one year then two members appointed the next year. Committee members will hold no other office in the congregation during their term. Members shall be eligible for reappointment. The function of the Mutual Ministry Committee will seek to promote harmonious and supportive relationships between the pastor(s), staff and members of the congregation. It will provide personal support to the pastor(s) and their families, improve internal communications and develop team ministry. The committee will also review staff performance on an annual basis. This is not to be an administrative or business or personnel committee, though it may at various times be concerned with administrative, business, financial or personnel matters. The committee exists to listen, support and affirm each other, the congregation and the pastor(s) and their families.
- C13.05. When a pastoral vacancy occurs, a Call Committee of seven voting members shall be appointed by the Congregation Council. Term of office will terminate at installation of the newly-called pastor.
- C13.06. Other congregational committees may be formed as the need arises, by decision, of the Congregation Council.
- C13.07. Duties of congregational committees shall be specified in the bylaws or in continuing resolutions.

## **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. All committees and organizations handling funds within the congregation shall submit accounts to the treasurer or the church office at least 21 days prior to the annual meeting and the treasurer shall include such accounts in a report to the annual meeting.

- C14.02. Special interest groups may be organized only after authorization has been given by the Congregation Council and specified in a continuing resolution.

## Chapter 15

### Discipline of Members

- 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 Council.
- C15.02. A member charged with the offense shall have the right to appear before the Congregation Council, after having received a written notice, specifying the exact charges that have been made against the member, at least 10 days prior to the meeting at which the charges are to be considered.
- C15.03. Should the allegations be sustained by a two-thirds majority of the Congregation Council, 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. Disciplinary actions may be reconsidered and revoked by the Congregation Council upon receipt of:
- a) evidence that injustice has been done, or;
  - b) evidence of repentance and amendment.

## 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 Council at least 60 days before a regular or special Congregation Meeting called for that purpose and that the Congregation Council notify the members of the proposal with its recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the Congregation Meeting.

## Chapter 17

### Amendments

C17.01. Amendments to this constitution may be proposed by at least 5% voting members or by the Congregation Council. Proposals must be filed in writing with the Congregation Council 60 days before formal consideration by this congregation at its regular or special meeting called for that purpose. The Congregation Council shall notify the members of the proposal with their recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the meeting.

C17.02. A proposed amendment to this constitution shall:

- a. Be approved at a properly called meeting according to this constitution by a majority vote of those present and voting;
- b. Be ratified without change at the next annual 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.

## Chapter 18

### Continuing Resolutions

C18.01. The Congregation Council may enact continuing resolutions which describe the function of the various committees 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 Council.

C18.03. Continuing resolution adopted in any given years shall be reported at the annual meeting and will be appended to the bylaws.

**Our Saviour's Lutheran Church  
326 Leroy Street, Audubon, IA 50025**

**BYLAWS**

**Part I**

**Communion Participation**

- A. Participation in Holy Communion shall be available to baptized members of this congregation after pastoral preparation and shall be available to visitors. Worthy participation requires that one believe these words "for you and for the forgiveness of sins." (Luther's Small Catechism)
- B. Registration forms shall be available, and record of participation in Holy Communion shall be entered upon the books of the congregation. If a member of another congregation communes, notice shall be sent to the member's pastor.

**Part II**

**Conflicting Loyalties**

- A. This congregation rejects all fellowship with organizations, secret or open, which are avowedly religious or which practice forms of religion without confessing faith in the Triune God and in Jesus Christ as the eternal Son of God incarnate to be our only Savior from sin, and thus teach salvation by works.
- B. Ceremonies of such organizations shall not be permitted in the church or on the church premises of this congregation.
- C. The pastor(s) of this congregation shall take no part in any such ceremonies even if they are conducted outside the church premises.

**Part III**

**Membership**

- A. Admission to baptized membership
  - 1. If both or either parent(s) of a child baptized is a member of this congregation, the child is then received as a member of the congregation.
  - 2. If the parents or guardians are members of another Christian church, the child's membership should ordinarily be immediately transferred to the parents' congregation. If parents or guardians have no church membership, pastoral efforts shall be made to bring about the connection of the family with a Christian congregation.

- B. Admission to voting membership

The Congregation Council shall be responsible for determining the voting membership in accordance with the qualifications specified in the constitution and bylaws. Any doubtful cases shall be decided by the congregation. In addition to the qualification of C8.02 of the constitution, a voting member shall be any confirmed member.

- C. Discontinuance of membership, inactive membership

1. Members who move away shall be encouraged to transfer their membership. A confirmed member in good standing desiring the change of membership to another Christian congregation shall, upon request, receive a Letter of Transfer.
2. A confirmed member who in the judgment of the Congregation Council shows no interest in attending church services and does not partake of Holy Communion, and who does not contribute to the congregation treasury according to the congregation's records for a period of two years, shall be presumed to no longer desire membership, shall lose the right to vote, and shall not be counted in the membership statistics of the congregation. However, before such action is taken officially, reasonable effort shall be made to share with him or her concerns of the congregation and to give every encouragement to participate in the life and mission of the congregation. Encouragement may be given to transfer elsewhere if that would more readily facilitate participation. Such members' names shall be kept on an inactive membership list.
3. Children, neither of whose parents or guardians are active members of the congregation, shall be transferred to an inactive membership roll if they fail to participate in the Christian education program of the congregation.
4. The congregation shall maintain a list of inactive members and shall continue to assume responsibility for them, giving visitation, encouragement and pastoral care for a period of five years. If one resumes activity within that period, he or she shall again be included on the active membership list. If not, the person shall be dismissed from the congregation's inactive rolls. In all instances the person shall be notified of these actions.
5. Members who have been dismissed or who have resigned, and members who have transferred to other Lutheran congregations, or who are definitely known to have become members of other congregations without transfer, have thereby terminated their membership in the congregation and have surrendered all membership rights.

## **Part IV**

### **The Pastoral Call**

- A. When the congregation has voted to call a pastor, co-pastor, associate pastor, or assistant pastor, it shall issue a Letter of Call to the pastor-elect. It shall be signed by the chairperson and the secretary of the meeting at which the call was voted. Calls to additional clergy shall be issued in consultation with the existing pastor(s) and in accordance with the provisions of this paragraph.
- B. The call shall normally be for an indefinite time.
- C. If a pastor received a call to another congregation which the pastor is inclined to accept, the pastor is encouraged to consult with the Congregation Council before coming to a decision. The pastor should attempt to reach a decision as quickly as possible, normally within three weeks. The pastor shall thereupon notify the present congregation. When the call has been accepted, the pastor shall terminate the ministry and transfer to the new field of service as quickly as feasible, normally within one month.

## **Part V**

### **The Congregational Meeting**

The church year shall be from January 1st to December 31st. The annual meeting of the congregation shall be held on the first Wednesday after the second Monday in January, unless the Congregation Council deems it advisable to set the meeting at an alternate date in January. A quorum for the conduct of business at any congregational meeting shall consist of five (5) percent of voting members.

## Part VI

### The Congregational Council

#### A. Membership

1. The voting membership of the Congregation Council shall consist of the pastor(s) and at least five members of the congregation and the officers of the congregation
2. The Congregation Council and officers shall be elected at the annual meeting and their terms shall begin immediately upon election.
3. Three members of the Congregation Council shall be elected for a term of one year, and three members shall be elected for a term of two years, at the adoption of this constitution; and thereafter three members shall be elected each year for two year terms. Council members shall be elected from those submitted by nominating committees and from those additional nominations that may be made from the floor.

#### B. Boards of the Congregation Council.

1. The elected Congregation Council members shall each serve on a Board of the congregation, those being: 1) Social Ministry & Evangelism; 2) Worship; 3) Stewardship; 4) Education; and 5) Property and Management.
2. The Congregation Council shall at least once a year invite the full membership of its regular boards together with representatives chosen by the organizations of the congregation to review the entire program of the congregation and engage in future program planning.

#### C. Duties of Officers and Boards of the Congregation Council.

1. The president shall preside over meetings of the Congregation Council and of the congregation unless the meeting decides otherwise.
2. The vice president shall preside in the absence of the president, unless the meeting decides otherwise.
3. The secretary shall keep the minutes of the Council and of the congregation and shall add them to the permanent record.
4. The treasurer shall be custodian of all funds of the congregation; and shall disburse all such funds in accordance with the decisions of the congregation or the Congregational Council. The treasurer shall present an audited report to the annual congregational meeting and such other reports to the Congregation Council as may be required.
5. The Board on worship shall have special responsibility under the supervision of the pastor(s) for matters pertaining to the congregation's worship, and for the general spiritual care of the congregation, and shall make recommendations thereon to the Congregation Council.
6. The Board on evangelism shall have special responsibility under the supervision of the pastor(s) for reaching out to members and non-members with the good news of God in Christ and shall make recommendations thereon to the Congregation Council.
7. The Board on stewardship shall have responsibility under the supervision of the pastor(s) for the congregation's development in accordance with scriptural principles of stewardship. It shall encourage members in the use of their time and talents and see that the financial needs of the congregation are met and shall make recommendations thereon to the Congregation Council.

8. The Board on parish education shall have special responsibility under the supervision of the pastor(s) to offer guidance and educational leadership and provide adequate material for the Christian education of all members of the congregation, and shall make recommendations thereon to the Congregation Council.
9. The Board on property shall have special responsibility under the supervision of the pastor(s) for the use and care of the church building and property, including an annual review of insurance thereon, and shall make recommendations accordingly to the Congregation Council.

Use of property:

- (a) The property of the congregation shall be for the use of the congregation in its normal function as a Lutheran Church and shall not be used in any way not in harmony with the purpose of the congregation.
  - (b) Buildings which are the property of the congregation shall not be lent or rented to any group or individual not affiliated with the congregation unless application for such use has been approved by the Congregation Council.
10. The Board on social ministry shall have special responsibility under the supervision of the pastor(s) to demonstrate that compassion, justice and love are essential to the Gospel and to inform and motivate the congregation regarding social concerns, and shall make recommendations thereon to the Congregation Council.

D. Other responsibilities of the Congregation Council.

1. The Congregation Council shall be empowered to secure such persons as is needed to carry on the work of the congregation and shall fix their salaries.
2. Adjustments in the salary of the pastor(s) shall be considered annually and shall be the responsibility of the Congregation Council, subject to the congregation's approval.
3. The stewardship committee, together with the officers of the Congregation Council and pastor(s), shall initiate the formation of an annual proposed budget and shall seek suggestions from other boards concerning the budget.

## Part VII

The Congregation Council shall not borrow funds to meet operating expenses in an amount to exceed \$25,000.00. If the Congregation Council votes to borrow funds to meet operating expenses within any borrowing limits set forth in these by-laws, such borrowing may be from sources outside the assets held by the congregation.