

ARTICLE III

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVE

Section 1.

The continuing purpose of this congregation, as a gathering of Christians, is to serve all people in God's world with the gospel of Jesus Christ on the basis of Holy Scriptures (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15).

Section 2.

The primary objective of this congregation shall be to proclaim the law and the gospel in our congregation, community and the world (2 Timothy 4:2), so that through the means of grace the Holy Spirit might:

- A. lead sinners to repentance and faith in Jesus Christ for life and salvation (Luke 24:46-48).
- B. strengthen believers in faith and sanctification (Romans 10:17).
- C. equip believers as disciples, stewards, witnesses and servants to share the gospel and live their faith (Ephesians 4:11,12; Matthew 5:16).

ARTICLE IV

CHURCH AFFILIATION

This congregation shall affiliate itself only with a church body that holds to all the truths of God's Word in doctrine and practice and is bound to the confessions of faith as set forth in Article II, if, and as long as, such a church body exists.

ARTICLE V

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Classification

Baptized members of the congregation are those who have been baptized into the Christian faith in the name of the Triune God (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:16).

Communicant members are those baptized souls who have stated their adherence to all the canonical books of the Old and New Testament, without qualification, as the only rule and norm of faith and life, and have declared their agreement with the chief parts of Christian doctrine as written in Dr. Martin Luther's Small Catechism.

Voting members are those male communicant members (1 Corinthians 11:3; 1 Corinthians 14:34; 1 Timothy 2:12) who have declared their agreement with this Constitution by their signatures and who have been received by the voters' assembly of the congregation.

Section 2. Privileges and Responsibilities

"God is love" (1 John 4:8), and his love ever moves him to bless the members of his church with physical and spiritual gifts (1 John 3:1; James 1:17). In return for all of these undeserved blessings, we love him (1 John 4:19) and show that love with the works that we do. The exercise of such love we acknowledge as both a privilege and a responsibility. Some of the privileges and responsibilities to be noted are the following:

- A. Our God has given us his Word, the one thing needful (Luke 10:42), which alone can save us and tell us how to live a God-pleasing life (2 Timothy 3:15-17). Consequently, members of his church will consider it a distinct privilege and a responsibility to
 - 1) hear and receive the Word of God diligently (Luke 11:28);
 - 2) provide and promote opportunities for Christian education (2 Peter 3:18);
 - 3) bring up their children in the training and instruction of the Lord (Ephesians 6:4);
 - 4) share the gospel with all people (Acts 1:8).
- B. Our God has given us two sacraments; Holy Baptism and Holy Communion, which are means that our Lord uses to bring his grace to us. Consequently, members of his church will
 - 1) Have their children baptized early in life, for "baptism now save you also" (1 Peter 3:21).

2) Frequently partake of Holy Communion (1 Corinthians 11:23-26), if they are recognized as such who can properly examine themselves (1 Corinthians 11:28). Only those in our confessional following of faith are permitted to commune at our altar. (Closed Communion - 1 Corinthians 1:10; 2 Corinthians 6:14; Romans 16:17).

C. Our God has given us the privilege and responsibility of being managers over a certain portion of his estate and assures us he will graciously bless our faithful management (2 Corinthians 9:6). Therefore members of his church will under grace

- 1) Continually remember that all their possessions, time and abilities are really a trust from God.
- 2) Cheerfully decide in their hearts (2 Corinthians 9:7) the portion of their possessions and time and abilities which they will regularly devote to the Lord for use in carrying out that which the congregation has made its concern, not omitting the work of the church-at-large (Matthew 28:19; 1 Corinthians 9:14; 16:2; 2 Corinthians 9:6-11; 1 Peter 4:10).
- 3) If eligible, become voting members and regularly attend the voters' meetings and lend the congregation their counsel and aid.

D. Our God has implanted within us Christians the new man, who desires to live righteously (2 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 4:24). Consequently, members of his church will

- 1) Not live in obvious acts of the sinful nature (Galatians 5:19-21), but lead a Christian life (Galatians 5:22-25).
- 2) When they have erred, permit themselves to be admonished and corrected by their fellow Christians in the spirit of Matthew 18:15-18.
- 3) Refuse to hold membership in any organization whose teachings and practices conflict with the Word of God (e.g. lodges) (John 5:23; 8:31,32; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18).

Section 3. Church Discipline and Excommunication

Christian discipline shall be exercised in this congregation according to Matthew 18:15-18 toward those who err from the faith or who in other ways have given offense. Those members who become evident as impenitent sinners must be excommunicated. At all times this shall be done in the spirit of the gospel, namely, to regain the erring. In order that the congregation may be "perfectly united in mind as they ought" (1 Corinthians 1:10), a unanimous vote of the voters' assembly is necessary for excommunication.

Section 4. Termination of Fellowship

Members who persist in an error that in itself does not make the presence of saving faith impossible and who otherwise are not under church discipline (cf. Article V, Section 2, D, and Section 3) may be excluded from the fellowship of this congregation after they have been evangelically admonished by their fellow Christians in the spirit of Matthew 18:15-16; and when their adherence to error becomes public and a matter of divisiveness (Titus 3:10) and thus an offense and obstacle to the truth of God's Word (Romans 16:17).

This action shall not be used as a substitute for the loving act of excommunication when impenitence is clearly evident.

Section 5. Loss of Rights and Privileges

Those who have been excommunicated or excluded from the fellowship of this congregation lose all rights and privileges in the congregation and its property.

Section 6. Reinstatement

When, by the grace of God, a person who has been excommunicated or whose fellowship has been terminated repents of his sin, he is to be reinstated with all former rights and privileges of this congregation (2 Corinthians 2:6-8).

on two Sundays immediately preceding a regular business meeting of the voters' assembly and posted in the church during that period.

Section 3.

Such a proposal shall be discussed in the meeting in which it is presented and voted on in the next regular meeting of the voters' assembly.

Section 4.

A two-thirds vote of the voting members present shall be required to alter or repeal any alterable or repealable article of this Constitution or to add an article hereto.

Section 5.

Any and all Bylaws may be repealed or amended by a majority vote of the voting members present at any regular meeting, provided that public notice of this proposed action shall have been given the congregation on at least two Sundays prior to the time of the meeting, and provided that the proposed amendment has been submitted in writing to the church council for its study and recommendation.

Good Shepherd Evangelical Lutheran Church of Novi, Michigan, **Bylaws**

Article I - Meetings of the Congregation

Section 1.

1.1 The voting members of this congregation shall hold three (3) regular meetings each calendar year. The meetings shall be held in the months of February, June, and November.

1.2 The congregation may hold an open forum on the Sunday preceding a regular voters meeting. Any confirmed member may attend and may offer opinions on the agenda items for the upcoming regular voters meeting.

Section 2.

The meetings shall be held on the third Sunday of each respective month, with the exact date, time and place of the meetings announced by the church council, unless otherwise specified by the congregation. Announcements of the meetings shall be given in print and/or orally on at least two different Sundays prior to the time of the meeting.

Section 3.

Special meetings of the congregation may be called by the church council, or the pastor, or upon written request of three voting members. Announcement of the meetings shall be sent by mail to all families, at least one week prior to the meeting, and shall also be given on two Sundays, with the purpose(s) clearly stated. The church mailboxes may be used for the mail notification, as long as those announcements which are not picked up are sent through regular mail at least one week prior to the meeting.

Section 4.

The February meeting shall be designated as the annual meeting. The November meeting shall include the election of church council members and adoption of the Budget for the following calendar year.

Section 5

The order of business for the regular meetings may be as follows:

- A. Opening with a devotion.
- B. Reading and approval of minutes of the previous regular and any intervening special meetings.
- C. Reception of new members; transfer, release or removal from membership.
- D. Ministry reports (including included but not limited to Pastor's report, President's report, Treasurer's report, Financial Secretary's report and Committee Chairman reports).
- E. Unfinished business.
- F. Recommendations of the church council and new business.
- G. Elections.
- H. Adjournment with prayer.

Section 6.

The meetings shall be conducted according to good, Christian order. Robert's Rules of Order may be followed for parliamentary procedure.

Section 7.

No one shall bring to any meeting a charge or complaint against any member or against a pastor, a teacher, or a staff minister unless he has first admonished him in a Christian manner in the spirit of Matthew 18:15-20.

Section 8.

Only voting members present at the meeting shall have the right to vote.

Section 9.

Voting membership shall be restricted to male communicant members who have reached the age of 18.

Section 10.

Voting members shall sign, thereby indicating their acceptance, the official copy of the Constitution and Bylaws at the meeting of the congregation in which they were received or as soon thereafter as possible.

Article II - Quorum

The voting members present at a properly announced meeting of the congregation shall constitute a quorum.

Article III - The Church Council and Boards

Section 1. Officers of the Congregation

1.1 The voter's assembly shall elect by ballot at its annual election meeting, specified in the Bylaws, Article I, a church council composed of voting members to hold the following offices:

- President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Financial Secretary
- Chairman of the Board of Elders
- Chairman of the Board of Education
- Chairman of Evangelism Committee
- Chairman of Stewardship Committee
- Chairman of Properties Committee

1.2 At its annual election meeting the voters' assembly shall also elect by ballot voting members to compose the following boards:

- Board of Education (three total members, Chairman plus two additional)
- Board of Elders (three total members, Chairman plus two additional)

1.3 At the first meeting of the newly elected church council meeting the following January, a list of committee members will be determined. Any confirmed member 18 years of age or more shall be eligible to be a committee member. Each committee chairman will then be responsible to recruit committee members by using this list as one primary resource. Each committee shall consist of at least three members, including its chairman.

Section 2. Term of Office

2.1 The term of office for each elected officer shall be two years. No officer shall serve more than three consecutive full terms. He shall again be eligible for election one year after the expiration of his third full term of office.

2.2 The term of one half of the church officers, if possible, shall expire each year, such expired terms to be filled by election at the annual election meeting of the voters' assembly. Each officer shall serve until this successor is installed.

Section 3. Relationships

The church council shall be responsible and accountable to the voters' assembly, and the boards shall be responsible and accountable to the church council.

Section 4. Installation

On the first Sunday in January or as soon thereafter as possible, the newly elected officers shall be installed into office at a regular service and shall thus be presented to the congregation.

Section 5. Responsibilities

5.1 The church officers shall adorn their high office with an honest way of life and be good examples to the congregation (1 Timothy 3:8-12). They shall be responsible for the spiritual and material affairs of the congregation under the guidance of the pastor. They shall be accountable for good order in the services. They shall particularly care in love for their fellow members who have special needs (Galatians 6:9-10).

5.2 Members of the church council shall consult together concerning the total spiritual and physical well being of the congregation, giving due attention also to the work of the Lord in the church-at-large. They shall implement resolutions of the voters' assembly and carry out such assignments as are directed to them by the voters' assembly. They shall recommend to the voters' assembly the annual budget of the congregation. They shall control the corporate property of the congregation according to the direction given by the voters' assembly. The church council is hereby empowered to borrow money, pledge the assets of the congregation, sell, lease or otherwise dispose of the real and personal property of the congregation all at the direction of the voters' assembly. It shall also have the right to acquire property by any legal means as directed by the voters' assembly. The president and the secretary (or the treasurer, in the secretary's absence) are hereby designated as the persons who shall sign all documents of the congregations.

Section 6. Meetings

The church council shall meet regularly, normally once each month. Special meetings may be called by the pastor or the president. The church council shall never convene to transact business without the knowledge of the pastor. The members of the council present shall constitute a quorum.

Section 7. Vacancies

In the event of a vacancy on the church council or any of the boards, the vacancy shall be filled at the next meeting of the voters' assembly by ballot from a list of candidates proposed by the nominating committee. Such newly elected officers shall normally be installed the Sunday following their election.

Article IV - Duties of Officers, Boards, and Committees

Section 1. President

The president, who also serves as director, shall preside as chairman of all business sessions of the congregation and church council and shall perform such other duties as may be assigned to him. He shall have general supervision of the affairs of the congregation and conduct all its business affairs according to established good order. He shall sign all deeds, mortgages, notes, leases, and all other legal documents directed to be executed by the congregation. He shall assure that the congregation's financial records are audited annually and that a report of the audit is presented to the voters at the meeting following the close of the fiscal year. In the absence of the president, the council shall appoint a temporary chairman.

Section 2. Secretary

The secretary, who also serves as director, shall record accurately the proceedings of all meetings of the congregation and the church council. He shall be responsible for the legal records of the congregation. He shall have the authority to countersign all deeds, mortgages, notes, leases, and all other legal documents executed by the congregation and assist in the

orderly conduct of its business affairs according to established good order. He shall also perform such other duties as may be assigned to him by the congregation.

Section 3. Treasurer

The treasurer, who also serves as director, shall receive from the financial secretary a monthly report of all monies received and credit the same to the proper accounts. He shall make disbursements according to the instructions from the church council as directed by the congregation. He shall make a monthly report to the church council, financial reports to each voters' assembly, and special reports whenever the council shall so request. He shall submit his records annually for audit or at any time the voters' assembly so desires. In the absence of the secretary, he shall have the authority to countersign legal documents on behalf of the congregation. In the event the treasurer is unable to carry out his duties, the president or secretary are authorized to do so.

Section 4. Financial Secretary

The financial secretary, who also serves as director, shall receive and deposit all contributions from the congregation, shall keep an accurate account of the same and deliver a report of them to the treasurer, indicating the proper accounts to be credited. He shall make a report for the regular meetings of the congregation and submit his books for audit annually or at any time the voters' assembly so desires. He shall submit to the members a quarterly report of their offerings.

Section 5. The Board of Elders

The Board of Elders shall, in general, be responsible for the spiritual well being of the congregation. It shall insure that doctrine and practice in the church conform to the Word of God and the provisions of the constitution, that regular worship services are conducted in good order, and that assistance is given the pastor in administering the spiritual affairs of the congregation. The Board of Elders shall make a monthly report to the church council and special reports whenever the council shall so request.

Section 6. The Board of Education

The Board of Education shall oversee and promote all educational agencies of the congregation. It shall formulate all policies to be followed in the education phases of the congregation's work, and shall recommend them by way of the church council to the voter's assembly for ratification. It shall prepare annual budget recommendations for those items of the congregation's business for which it is responsible.

Section 7. Evangelism Committee

The Chairman of Evangelism shall establish and maintain an active program for the congregation to reach out to the neighborhood and the community with the gospel. The Evangelism committee shall support the Chairman in these matters, as well as by promoting the work that the congregation does together with its fellow congregations as a synod. They shall prepare annual budget recommendations for those items of the congregation's business for which it is responsible.

Section 8. Stewardship Committee

The Chairman of Stewardship shall formulate policies for sound Christian stewardship (stewardship of time, talents, and treasures) and implement them at the congregational and family levels. The Stewardship committee shall support the Chairman by gathering information on the interests and abilities of each member, seeking to integrate them into the proper area of the congregational ministry. They shall assist the chairman in conducting special programs to encourage Christian giving.

Section 9. Properties Committee

The Chairman of Properties shall be responsible for all buildings and properties belonging to the congregation. The Properties committee shall support the Chairman by regularly inspecting these buildings and properties, exerting every effort to keep them in good order and physical repair. The committee shall also review insurance coverage and make recommendations to the Chairman who shall subsequently formulate usage policies.

Section 10. Other Committees

The president with the concurrence of the church council, shall appoint other committees as needed (e.g., Budget Committee, Nominating Committee, etc.)

Section 11. Ex Officio Membership

The pastor and president by virtue of their offices are members of the boards and committees and are to be informed of all meetings of all committees so that they may attend if they desire to do so.

Article V - Election of Church Officers

Section 1.

The church council shall appoint a nominating committee consisting of three voting members. The pastor is an ex officio member of this committee.

Section 2.

After receiving from the secretary a list of expired terms of office, the nominating committee shall select from the voting membership a slate of candidates for the vacancies in keeping with the scriptural requirements stated in Article VIII, Section I of the constitution. Each candidate shall be informed of the responsibilities of the office to which he is nominated. Consent of each nominee is necessary for candidacy.

Section 3.

The nominating committee shall present for approval the slate of candidates to the October meeting of the church council for the November election meeting. The candidates' names shall be published and also posted (with the nominating committee members' names) three Sundays before the election. Any confirmed member may recommend additional nominees in writing to the nominating committee. The committee shall consider such written recommendations and take appropriate action [cf. Section 2) posting any revisions.

Section 4.

At the November meeting, the voters' assembly shall hear the recommendations of the nominating committee and proceed to elect by ballot. Nominations shall not be open to the floor at the election meeting. A majority of votes cast shall be necessary for election.

Article VI - Reception into Membership

Section 1.

Persons who wish to be received into membership in this congregation (other than through the sacrament of holy baptism or rite of confirmation) shall bring their request to the attention of the pastor or the church council. The council shall honor the request when accompanied by a letter of transfer, a recommendation from a sister congregation, or a profession of faith, provided that qualifications for membership, as specified in Article V of this Constitution, have been met. Such action of the council shall be ratified at the next regular or special meeting of the voters' assembly. Notice of such receptions shall be reported to the entire congregation.

Section 2.

Since reception into membership signifies acceptance of and submission to this Constitution and Bylaws, each individual or family shall be given a copy of the same prior to their reception so that they may become familiar with its provisions.

Article VII - Transfer, Release or Removal from Membership

Section 1.

Those desiring a transfer or release from membership shall bring their request to the attention of the pastor or the church council for action to be presented for ratification at the next meeting of the voters' assembly.

Section 2.

Transfer of membership shall apply only to those who desire membership in a congregation which is in agreement with this congregation in doctrine and practice. Release from membership shall apply when affiliation is sought with those denominations not in agreement with this congregation in doctrine and practice.

Section 3.

Members with whom the congregation has been unable to communicate, despite diligent efforts to do so, may be removed from the membership list.

Section 4.

Members released, transferred, or removed have no further rights in this congregation and its property.

Article VIII - Repeals and Amendments of the Bylaws

Any and all Bylaws may be repealed or amended by a majority vote of the voting members present at any regular meeting, provided that public notice of this proposed action shall have been given the congregation on at least two Sundays prior to the time of the meeting, and provided that the proposed amendment has been submitted in writing to the church council for its study and recommendation.