CONSTITUTION

of

Christ Lutheran Church

Whitefish, MT

PREAMBLE

We, the baptized and believing members of Christ's Body, the Church, responding in faith to the call of the Holy Spirit through the Gospel, desire to unite together, to preach the Word, to administer the Sacraments, and to carry out God's mission. We therefore adopt and pledge to be governed by this Constitution in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

MISSION STATEMENT

Christ Lutheran Church maintains a current Mission Statement which helps to define its purpose, core values, and vision. It is based on Scripture and our Confession of Faith, as defined in 2.5 below, and is approved by this congregation and Church Council as reflected in the official Council records.

Chapter 1 NAME AND INCORPORATION

1.1 The name of this congregation shall be Christ Lutheran Church, located in Whitefish, MT.

1.2 For the purpose of this Constitution and the accompanying Bylaws, Christ Lutheran Church is hereinafter designated as "this Congregation."

1.3 For the purpose of this Constitution and the accompanying Bylaws, the Christ Lutheran Church Congregational Council is hereinafter designated as the "Council."

1.4 This Congregation shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of Montana.

Chapter 2 CONFESSION OF FAITH

2.1 This Congregation confesses God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, the only One Triune God.

Matthew 28:19 "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,"

John 14:16-20 "And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever— the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. On that day, you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you."

2.2 This Congregation confesses Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and the Gospel as the power of God for the salvation of all who believe.

John 3:16-17 "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him."

2 Peter 3:18 "But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen."

Ephesians 2:8-10 "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."

2.3 This Congregation confesses that Jesus Christ is the Word of God incarnate, through whom everything was made and is held together, and through whose life, death, and resurrection God fashions his new creation.

John 1:1-3 "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made."

Philippians 3:10-11 "I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead."

Colossians 1:16-17 "For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together."

2.4 This Congregation proclaims God's message to us, His Word, as both Law and Gospel, 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.

2 Corinthians 7:10 "Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.'

Lutheran Book of Concord (p. 560). Formula of Concord, Solid Declaration V,12. He states: "Everything that preaches about our sin and the wrath of God, no matter how or when it happens, is the proclamation of the law. On the other hand, the Gospel is a proclamation that shows and gives nothing but grace and forgiveness in Christ. At the same time it is true and right that the apostles and the preachers of the Gospel,

just as Christ himself did, confirm the proclamation of the law and begin with the law in the case of those who as yet neither know their sins nor are terrified by the wrath of God, as he says in John 16:8, 'The Holy Spirit will convince the world of sin because they do not believe in me.'…….14 In the same vein, the Smalcald Articles state: "The New Testament retains and performs the office of the law, which reveals sin and God's wrath, but to this office it immediately adds the promise of God's grace through the Gospel."

2.5 This Congregation believes, teaches, and accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired, revealed, and inerrant Word of God, and the sole authoritative source and norm of our proclamation, faith, and life.

Matthew 5:17-18 "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished."

2 Timothy 3:16-17 "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."

2.6 This Congregation believes that the canonical Scriptures reveal God's revelation centered in Jesus Christ, and the grace of God that creates and sustains the Christian faith and establishes fellowship for the ministry of the Gospel.

John 14:6 "Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

Isaiah 40:8 "The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God stands forever."

2.7 This Congregation believes that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary sexes together reflect the image and nature of God (Gen. 1:26-27). Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person.

We affirm that God created each person as male at birth or female at birth. We believe and confess the Biblical teaching that the marriage of male and female is an institution created and blessed by God. From marriage, God forms families to serve as the building blocks of all human civilization and community. We teach and practice that sexual activity belongs exclusively within the Biblical boundaries of a faithful marriage between one man and one woman.

Genesis 1:27 "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them."

Genesis 2:24 "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh."

Matthew 19:4-6 "Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,' and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'? So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore, what God has joined together, let man not separate."

2.8 This Congregation accepts the Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds as true declarations of the faith of this Congregation.

2.9 This Congregation accepts the unaltered Augsburg Confession and the 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 valid interpretations of the faith of the Church.

2.10 This Congregation believes that all human life is sacred and created by God in His image. Human life is of inestimable worth in all its dimensions, including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition from conception through natural death. We are therefore called to defend, protect, and value all human life (Psalm 139).

STATEMENT OF FINAL AUTHORITY: The Holy Scriptures are the final authority for this Congregation's faith, doctrine, morals, practice, discipline, and governance. The Council, in consultation with the Senior Pastor, shall have final ecclesiastical authority to interpret and apply this Constitution, the Bylaws, continuing resolutions, policies, and all statements of faith, doctrine, morals, practice, discipline, and governance, except for matters expressly reserved to the voting members of the Congregation under this Constitution or applicable law.

Chapter 3 NATURE OF THE CHURCH

3.1 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.

3.2 The Church exists both as an inclusive fellowship and as local congregations gathered for worship and Christian service. In length, it acknowledges itself to be in the historic continuity of the communion of saints, and in breadth, it expresses the fellowship of believers and congregations in our day.

3.3 The Church is defined as the priesthood of all believers. Every Christian has gifts for ministry and is encouraged to serve one another. Every Christian shares responsibility for studying the Word of God and assisting one another in applying the Word of God.

Chapter 4 STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

4.1 The Church is the assembly of saints in which the Gospel is taught purely, and the sacraments are administered rightly. (*Augsburg Confession Article 7.1 states, "It is also taught among us that one holy Christian church will be and remain forever. This is the assembly of all believers among whom the Gospel is preached in its purity, and the holy sacraments are administered according to the Gospel.)"*

4.2 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. (Eph. 1:22-23; Apology of the Augsburg Confession Article 7-8.28, "In accordance with the Scriptures, therefore, we maintain that the church in the proper sense is the assembly of saints who truly believe the Gospel of Christ and who have the Holy Spirit.)"

4.3 To participate in God's mission, this Congregation, as a part of the Church, shall:

a. Provide services of worship at which this congregation worships God in proclamation of the Word and administration of the sacraments and through lives of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, witness, and service. (Rev. 4:8b)
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. (Mark 1:14-15)
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. (Matt. 28:18-20)
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 by standing with the poor and powerless, and committing itself to their needs. (James 5:13-16)
e. Nurture its members in the Word of God 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. (Matt. 28:18-20)
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. (1 Cor. 12:12-13)
g. Help people of all ages through pastoral and educational ministry to identify more deeply with the Christian Community and participate more fully in its mission. (1 Cor. 12:27)
h. Motivate members to provide financial support for this Congregation's mission and ministry. (2 Cor. 9:6-7)

Foster and participate in relationships with other congregations and organizations consistent with the policies and beliefs of this Congregation. (Rom. 15:5-6)

4.4 This Congregation shall operate within an organizational structure to be described in the Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions. The Council shall review the descriptions and responsibilities of each ministry team, task force, or other organizational group and shall review their actions.

Chapter 5 POWERS OF THIS CONGREGATION

5.1 All power in this Congregation has its source in the Word of God, which is the basis for its faith and life. All individuals and groups within this Congregation shall submit to the authority of the Word, consistent with our Confession of Faith, and the life and activity of this Congregation and its organizations shall conform to it. Congregational authority is subject to the interpretation and authority based on our Statement of Final Authority as stated in Chapter 2.

5.2 The powers of this Congregation are those necessary to fulfill its purpose.

5.3 The powers of this Congregation are vested in the Congregational Meeting called and conducted as provided in this Constitution and Bylaws.

5.4 The Council, other organizational units, and individuals acting in the name of this Congregation shall have the authority delegated to them by this Constitution and by any other Bylaws that this Congregation creates under the authority of this Constitution. This Congregation is authorized to:

a. Call a pastor or terminate the call of a pastor.
b. Approve the annual budget.
c. Acquire real and personal property by gift, devise, purchase, or other lawful means.
d. Hold title to and use its property for any and all activities consistent with its purpose.
e. Sell, mortgage, lease, transfer, or otherwise dispose of its property by any lawful means.
f. Elect its Council and require them to carry out their duties in accordance with the Constitution, Bylaws, and continuing Resolutions.
g. Determine denominational affiliation consistent with its Confession of Faith and purpose.

Chapter 6 CHURCH AFFILIATION

6.1 This Congregation shall be an independent, voluntary member of the Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ (LCMC).

6.2 This Congregation accepts the Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ (LCMC) Statement of Faith and agrees to act in accordance with it.

6.3 This congregation acknowledges its relationship with the Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ (LCMC) 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 (LCMC).
c. This congregation agrees to call pastoral leadership who are eligible to be included in the clergy roster of the Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ (LCMC) in accordance with its call procedures and ministry standards.

6.4 This Congregation may choose to associate or affiliate with other organizations to promote the Gospel of Jesus Christ in accordance with the confessions and policies of this Congregation.

6.5 The procedure for associating or terminating a relationship or membership with a Lutheran denomination or association shall be by a special Congregational meeting called and conducted according to this Constitution to vote on the Resolution. The Resolution shall require a two-thirds majority vote of all ballots cast at the meeting. Notice of the meeting shall be communicated to all voting members at least two weeks in advance of the meeting.

Chapter 7 PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

7.1 Title to this Congregation's property shall continue to reside in this Congregation regardless of church denominational affiliation, provided this Congregation continues to adhere to its Confession of Faith.

7.2 Should this Congregation, by a two-thirds majority vote, choose to become an organization that is not specifically and exclusively Lutheran, or join an organization that requires this Congregation to abandon its evangelical faith as described in Chapters 2 and 3, title to all assets—both real and personal—shall remain with the largest minority faction that intends to remain an explicitly Lutheran church consistent with its Confession of Faith. If this minority faction fails to establish itself as a legal entity under Montana law within one year of the vote, the property shall be disposed of according to the provisions of Paragraph 7.3.

7.3 If this Congregation ceases to exist, property shall be disposed of as determined at a final Congregational Meeting. If such a meeting is not possible and the property must be disposed of by a third party (such as the State of Montana) or by operation of law, it is the will of this Congregation that the property be transferred to one or more organizations of like faith and practice. Such organizations should continue to fulfil as closely as possible the purpose of this Constitution as defined in Chapter 4.

Chapter 8 MEMBERSHIP

Church membership is a biblical principle. 1 Cor. 12:27 says, "Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it." In Rom. 12:4-5, Paul says, "For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another." Also, Heb. 10: 24-25 exhorts: "And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near." Acts 2:41-47 also describes a process where believers were "added" to the church, indicating a record of members.
Based on these and other biblical principles, Christ Lutheran Church defines the process, rights, and responsibilities of membership as follows:

8.1 Members of this Congregation shall be those baptized members 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 maintained their membership in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution and its Bylaws.

8.2 Becoming a member of this Congregation shall involve, in addition to affirming the Confession of Faith outlined in Chapter 2 herein, the completion of a confirmation or new member class, or a personal interview conducted by the pastoral staff of this Congregation, and shall be approved by the Council.

8.3 Members shall be classified as follows:

a. BAPTIZED members are those who have been received by the Sacrament of Holy Baptism in this Congregation or have affirmed previous baptism in the Name of the Triune God. Baptized members are non-voting members.
b. CONFIRMED members are baptized people who have affirmed their faith and commitment in this Congregation by completing a confirmation class, a new member class, or a personal interview conducted by the pastoral staff.
c. VOTING members are confirmed members who have remained ACTIVE by receiving Holy Communion and participating in the life and mission of this Congregation within the past year.
d. Steps to Voting Membership**:**
   A person becomes a voting member of this Congregation by:
   (1) being baptized in the name of the Triune God, or affirming a prior Christian baptism;

(2) affirming the Confession of Faith stated in this Constitution;
(3) completing a confirmation class, new member class, or personal interview conducted by the pastoral staff;
(4) being approved for membership by the Council; and
(5) being received into membership at a worship service or other appropriate gathering of the Congregation.

e. Voting Membership Participation**:**
A confirmed member who is received into membership shall be a voting member upon reception, provided the member intends to participate actively in the worship, sacramental life, and mission of this Congregation. Thereafter, voting membership is maintained by receiving Holy Communion and participating in the life and mission of this Congregation within the past year, unless special consideration is granted for mental or physical incapacity.

8.4 Voting Members of this Congregation shall have the privilege and duty to

a. Participate fully in corporate worship and discipleship opportunities (Ps. 95:6).
b. Discover and utilize gifts in ministry (1 Cor. 12:12-27).
c. Live a Christian life in accordance with the Word of God and the teachings of this church (Col. 3:16, Rom. 12:1-2).
d. Support the work of this Congregation and its missions, through contributions of their time, abilities, and financial support as biblical stewards (1 Chron. 16:29, Eph. 4:28).
e. Resolve conflict with one another according to the principles espoused in Matt. 18: 15-17.

8.5 Voting Members of this Congregation shall be eligible for the following (see 1 Cor. 12:12-27):
a. Eligibility for holding an elected office
b. Eligibility to serve on constitutional committees
c. Eligibility to vote on matters presented at Congregational meetings

8.6 This Congregation will support its membership by fulfilling its purposes as directed in Scripture and stated in Chapter 4, section 4.3. (see Acts 2:42, Eph. 2:21-22, 1 Thess. 5:11, Matt. 9:37-38)

8.7 Membership in this Congregation shall be terminated by any of the following:
a. Death
b. Resignation
c. Request- any member requesting that their name be removed as a member
d. Transfer- any member requesting a transfer to another congregation shall receive a transfer.
e. Inactivity- If a member has not attended at least one church service at Christ Lutheran during the past 12 months or has not participated in the life of the

church. Subject to personal contact and/or the action of the Council, they remain a continuing pastoral concern.

f. Disciplinary action by the Council

8.8 Membership Discipline Process (See Gal.6:1, and Matt 18:15-17)

A willful and unrepentant violation of the Confession of Faith is grounds for discipline. If a member of this Congregation denies belief in the Christian faith as described in this Constitution, conducts themselves in a way that is unbecoming of a member of the church, or persistently causes trouble in worship, ministry, relationships, or otherwise, this Congregation will encourage the people involved to reconcile according to the guidance of Matthew 18:15-17. To reconcile or discipline the errant member, this Congregation will use these steps:

a. The pastor and/or another designated leader who is a member of the church shall privately admonish the errant member. If the errant member repents, then the matter is resolved, and those involved will seek to renew their relationships.

b. If the errant member does not respond with repentance, then the Pastor shall admonish the errant member in the presence of two or three other members. If the errant member then repents, the matter is resolved, and those involved will seek to renew their relationships.

c. If the errant member still does not repent or if the matter is still unresolved, the Council will summon the errant member in writing to appear before the Council. Notice of this appearance shall be at least ten days before the meeting and will specify the charges that the Council has against the errant member. At the meeting, the Council shall examine the charges together, examine all the available evidence, and listen to the arguments and concerns of the errant member and of all others involved that the Council believes may contribute to resolving the matter wisely. The Council will then attempt to resolve the matter. If the errant member then repents, the matter is resolved, and those involved will seek to renew their relationships. If the errant member disregards the notice, makes no effort to comply, or withdraws from the disciplinary process in writing, the Council may, at its discretion, proceed with the meeting on the subject and has the authority to reach a conclusion on the matter in the absence of the member.

d. If the errant member does not repent and Council sustains one or more of the allegations by a two-thirds vote of those present, then the Council shall impose one of these two disciplinary actions on the errant member in writing:

(1) Censure and suspension from membership until the Council receives evidence that the errant member has repented.

(2) Exclusion from membership, denial of the Sacraments, and denial of participation in Congregational activities.

8.9 Conflict Resolution

a. Biblical Reconciliation. Personal offenses, relational conflicts, and concerns involving conduct among members should first be addressed according to Matthew 18:15–17, Galatians 6:1, and other applicable Scripture, unless the Council determines that the matter requires immediate action to protect the Congregation, its members, or its ministries. Lawsuits between believers, or threats of lawsuits between believers, are a matter of grave concern for the church. While not a direct responsibility of the church, they are contrary to biblical and church teaching, and mediation is an effort to resolve disputes in a biblical fashion (1 Cor. 6: 1-7).

b. Civil Legal Disputes. Any civil legal dispute between a member and this Congregation, the Council, pastors, officers, staff, committees, ministries, or persons acting within the scope of their church responsibilities shall first be submitted to mediation before either party files or pursues civil litigation, unless emergency legal relief is necessary to prevent immediate and irreparable harm.

c. Mediation. Mediation will be governed by the Rules of Procedure for Christian Conciliation of the Institute for Christian Conciliation (ICC Rules) or equivalent process, unless modified as stipulated by the parties. In particular, subject to the more detailed provisions of the ICC Rules, mediator(s) will attempt to assist us in reaching a voluntary settlement of any disputes through mediation. The confidentiality of the mediation process will be protected, and these matters will not be discussed with people who do not have a necessary interest in them. If a settlement can be agreed upon, the mediators may, at their discretion, issue an advisory opinion. Neither the opinion nor any communications exchanged in the mediation process will be admissible for any purpose in any subsequent legal proceeding.

d. Effect of Mediation on Church Discipline. Participation in mediation shall not prevent the Council from exercising its ecclesiastical responsibility to address membership, discipline, safety, doctrine, or governance matters under this Constitution.

e. Safety and Legal Exceptions. Nothing in this section shall prevent the Congregation, Council, pastors, staff, members, or any other person from reporting suspected abuse, neglect, threats, criminal conduct, or other matters to civil authorities when required or permitted by law. Nothing in this section shall require mediation before seeking emergency protection, complying with mandatory reporting obligations, or taking action necessary to protect persons or property.

f. Continuing Application. This conflict-resolution requirement applies to disputes arising from a person's membership, participation, service, employment, leadership, or relationship with the Congregation, even if the person later resigns, is removed from membership, or otherwise ceases active participation.

g. Request for Reconsideration. A disciplined member may submit a written request for reconsideration to the Council, stating the basis for the request, including repentance, new information, procedural error, or evidence that

the discipline was unjust. The Council shall consider the request within a reasonable time and may affirm, modify, or revoke the disciplinary action by the vote required under this Chapter. The Council may revoke disciplinary actions by a two-thirds vote of those Council members present and must consider this if it receives evidence showing that it has acted unjustly or that the errant member has repented.

Chapter 9 PASTOR(S)

9.1 The authority to call a pastor (Senior or Associate) shall reside in this Congregation. (Eph. 4:11-12, Acts 14:23, Titus 1:5, Matt. 28:18-20)

a. The Council shall designate a Call Committee to oversee the call process and identify and recommend the best qualified candidate for the position.
b. The Council will have the opportunity to meet with the candidate and ask any questions to provide feedback to the Call Committee during the interview process.
c. If the members of the Council who are present at the official Council meeting affirm the recommended candidate by a majority ballot vote of at least two-thirds, the Council will call a special Congregational meeting to present the recommended candidate to the voting members of this congregation.
d. If the members present affirm the recommended candidate by a majority ballot vote of at least two-thirds, this congregation shall extend an official call to the candidate.

9.2 Pastors are accountable to the Word of God, the Confession of Faith, this Constitution, the Bylaws, the terms of their call, and applicable policies of this Congregation. Pastors are subject to both church discipline and pastoral standards. Allegations concerning a pastor's doctrine, conduct, fitness for office, or violation of the Confession of Faith shall be addressed by the Council in a manner consistent with this Constitution, the pastor's call documents, the LCMC Pastoral Admonition, and applicable law. Therefore, they shall: (2 Tim. 4:2, 1 Pet. 5:2-3, Eph. 4:11-12, James 5:14, John 21:15-17, Acts 20:28-30, 1 Tim. 3:1-7):

a. Preach and teach the Word of God as revealed in the Old and New Testaments.
b. Administer the Sacraments of Holy Baptism and Holy Communion.
c. Be an integral part of the public worship and praise.
d. Minister to all the members of this congregation according to their needs and visit those who are unable to attend but need pastoral care.
e. Preside at confirmations, marriages, and funeral services.
f. Oversee the spiritual direction and vision of this Congregation.
g. Lead, inspire, and equip the members in fulfilling their responsibility to witness for Christ according to the mission of this Congregation.
h. Provide pastoral leadership for the meetings and activities of this Congregation such as the Council, and any committees or groups that require pastoral leadership.

i. Install or anoint and bless those elected members of the Council, and those being sent out on mission projects.
j. Serve in harmony with the Word of God and the confessions of this Congregation. Strive in word and deed to be a faithful example in Christian living, avoiding conduct which might endanger the faith of others.
k. Provide training and encouragement for other pastoral staff members and lay leaders.
l. Participate in continuing education to provide opportunities for personal renewal, enrichment of devotional life, and development of pastoral effectiveness.
m. Administer discipline together with the Council, as outlined in this constitution, Chapter 8, and in accordance with the CLC Personnel Manual.
n. Strive to extend the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation, and abroad.

9.3 The job description and specific duties of a Pastor, compensation, and other matters pertaining to the service of a Pastor shall be included in a letter of call and signed by the President of the Council. When a pastor is called to serve in company with another pastor or pastors, the privileges and responsibilities of the pastor or pastors shall be specified in documents to accompany the call and to be drafted in consultation involving the Senior Pastor and/or the Council. As occasion requires, the documents may be revised through a similar consultation.

9.4 The call of this Congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall normally constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment. Except in the case of the death of a Pastor, recommendation of termination shall be considered in the case of the following:

a. Mutual agreement to terminate the call, or the completion of a call for a specific term.
b. Written resignation notice submitted by a pastor to the Council. Unless the pastor and Council agree otherwise in writing, the resignation shall become effective thirty days after submission.
c. Pastor is deemed unfit for office. Before recommending termination of a pastoral call for unfitness, doctrinal violation, misconduct, or other cause, the Council shall provide the pastor with written notice of the concerns and a reasonable opportunity to respond, unless immediate action is necessary to protect the Congregation, its members, or its ministries. If, after prayerful consideration, the Council determines by a two-thirds vote of the Council members present at a called meeting that termination should be recommended, the Council shall call a special Congregational Meeting for that purpose. Termination of the call shall require a two-thirds majority vote of the voting members present and voting at that meeting, unless a higher vote is required by this Constitution or applicable law
d. A willful and unrepentant violation of the Confession of Faith as outlined in 9.2.

e. The Council may place a pastor on temporary administrative leave, with or without duties as determined by the Council, while serious concerns are reviewed. Administrative leave is not itself a termination of call or a disciplinary determination.

f. Termination of a pastoral call does not automatically terminate the pastor's membership, if any, in this Congregation. Membership discipline, if applicable, shall be addressed separately under Chapter 8, unless the Council determines that the same facts and process properly support both actions.

g. When a matter concerns the Senior Pastor personally, or when consultation with the Senior Pastor would create a conflict of interest, the Council may proceed without such consultation and may seek counsel from another qualified pastor, denominational advisor, legal counsel, or other appropriate advisor.

9.5 This Congregation shall not amend Chapter 9 of this Constitution without first giving thirty (30) days' notice to all pastors that it has currently called.

9.6 At a time of pastoral vacancy, the Council shall have the responsibility to seek and hire an interim pastor.

9.7 During the period of service, an interim pastor shall act in an advisory role. Although an interim pastor may perform the ordinary pastoral duties necessary to serve this Congregation during the interim period, such rights and duties shall not include membership in this Congregation, participation in membership discipline decisions, or participation in any final-authority consultation required under this Constitution, including voting on Council, unless expressly authorized in writing by the Council. The interim pastor and any ordained pastor assisting shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a permanent pastor. It is understood that the Interim Pastor has agreed not to be a candidate for the pastoral call. In every way, the Interim Pastor will focus on preparing the way for the coming of an installed Pastor.

9.8 If a pastor on staff wishes to apply for a vacant pastoral role, the Council must approve by a three-fourths majority vote to allow them to apply to the pastoral call process.

9.9 Pastoral staff members who wish to remain on staff in their current position recognize that a new Senior Pastor will have a unique set of gifts that will help refine our impact. The interim pastor and Call Team will be called upon to facilitate a smooth transition for all. As a new Senior Pastor begins to lead the church, all staff members will be invited to join in navigating a new rhythm and vision.

Chapter 10 CHURCH STAFF

10.1 The Senior Pastor, Business Administrator, and/or Personnel Committee have the authority to hire or dismiss church staff, including employees and appointed

volunteers, subject to Council approval. Specific duties and expectations are defined in either the Bylaws or the individual's job description. All employment terms must be detailed in a letter of employment signed by the staff member upon agreement.

10.2 Staff positions and responsibilities may vary depending upon the required needs and resources available at the time.

Chapter 11 CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

11.1 Regularly scheduled semi-annual Congregational Meetings of this Congregation shall be held at a time specified in the Bylaws.

11.2 A special Congregational Meeting may be called by the Pastor(s), the Council, the President of this Congregation, or at the written request of ten percent (10%) 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.

11.3 Notice of all meetings of this Congregation shall be given at the worship services on the preceding two (2) consecutive Sundays and communicated to all voting members at least ten (10) days in advance of the date of the meeting through normal church communication tools.

11.4 A quorum shall be required to conduct official business at any Congregational Meeting. A minimum of ten percent (10%) of the voting members shall constitute a quorum. Voting by proxy or by absentee ballot shall not be permitted unless the Council deems it necessary in exceptional circumstances, approved by two-thirds of the Council.

11.5 All decisions by this Congregation shall be by at least majority vote except as otherwise designated in this Constitution or Bylaws.

11.6 Unless otherwise provided for in this document and the CLC Bylaws, Robert's Rules of Order, the latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of all meetings of this Congregation.

11.7 Attendance at Congregational Meetings. Attendance at Congregational Meetings shall be limited to voting members of this Congregation, except that the Council may allow non-voting members, staff, advisors, guests, or other persons to attend all or part of a meeting when the Council determines their presence is appropriate. Only voting members may make motions, speak to matters before the Congregation unless recognized by the chair, or vote.

Chapter 12 OFFICERS

12.1 The officers of this Congregation shall be a President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer. These individuals shall also serve as the corresponding officers of the Council and shall be selected and appointed by the Council.

12.2 Duties of the officers shall be as specified in the Bylaws.

12.3 The officers shall be voting members of this Congregation for the previous two years and shall serve a one-year term. The officers may continue to serve in their position for up to six consecutive years if so elected by the Council.

12.4 The officers shall not serve more than one position at a time.

12.5 Officers can be removed from office through the membership discipline process as outlined in Chapter 8 herein.

Chapter 13 COUNCIL

13.1 The voting membership of the Council shall consist of the Pastor(s) and 12 voting members elected from this Congregation. These members include the officers. Any voting member of this Congregation may be elected, subject only to the limitations and the length of continuous service permitted in that office, as indicated in 13.2. The Business Administrator shall be a non-voting member of the Council. The Pastor(s) shall not vote on matters of pastoral duties, compensation, discipline, or removal.

13.2 The Council will strive for unanimity in all actions. In the event of disagreement, the matter before the Council may be tabled by a simple majority vote of those present until the next meeting to devote time for prayer. If it is determined that the matter should not be tabled, the majority vote will carry. If the matter is tabled until a future meeting, should disagreement still exist, a majority vote of the Council with a quorum present will decide the matter.

13.3 Conflict of Interest. Council members, officers, pastors, employees, committee members, ministry leaders, and other persons acting on behalf of this Congregation shall act in good faith and in the best interests of this Congregation. Any such person who has an actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest involving a financial interest, family relationship, employment relationship, business relationship, or other personal interest shall promptly disclose the conflict to the Council or applicable committee. A person with a conflict shall not vote on the matter and shall not participate in deliberation unless the disinterested members of the Council or committee determine that the person may provide relevant information. Any action involving a disclosed conflict shall be approved only by disinterested decision-makers and shall be documented in the minutes or other appropriate records. When a matter involves the Senior

Pastor personally, or when consultation with the Senior Pastor would create a conflict of interest, the Council may proceed without such consultation and may seek guidance from another qualified pastor, legal counsel, or other appropriate advisor. In all such matters, the Council and other leaders shall seek to act with transparency, integrity, and faithful stewardship of the trust placed in them by this Congregation.

13.4 Indemnification. To the fullest extent permitted by applicable law, this Congregation shall indemnify, defend, and hold harmless each current and former pastor, interim pastor, officer, Council member, committee member, ministry leader, employee, volunteer, agent, representative, trustee, incorporator, member acting at the request or direction of the Congregation, and any other person authorized to act for or on behalf of this Congregation, whether formally or informally, paid or unpaid, from and against any and all claims, demands, actions, proceedings, liabilities, losses, damages, judgments, fines, penalties, settlements, costs, and expenses of every kind, including reasonable attorney fees and costs of investigation and defense, arising out of, relating to, or resulting from such person's service to or activities on behalf of this Congregation, including acts or omissions performed or alleged to have been performed in connection with worship, teaching, counseling, discipline, governance, employment, supervision, administration, finances, property, facilities, ministries, missions, communications, decisions, policies, or any other activity of this Congregation. Such indemnification shall apply whether the claim is brought by a member, former member, attendee, employee, volunteer, visitor, third party, governmental authority, or any other person or entity, and whether the matter is civil, administrative, investigative, regulatory, or other non-criminal proceeding, except to the extent indemnification is prohibited by law. Indemnification shall not apply to acts or omissions finally determined by a court or other body of competent jurisdiction to involve willful misconduct, intentional wrongdoing, fraud, criminal conduct, knowing violation of law, or improper personal benefit. The Congregation may advance defense costs and expenses before final disposition of a matter, subject to a written undertaking to repay such amounts if it is ultimately determined that the person is not entitled to indemnification. The Congregation may purchase and maintain insurance, including directors' and officers' liability, employment practices liability, general liability, pastoral counseling, volunteer, and other insurance, to support or supplement these indemnification obligations. The rights provided in this section shall be in addition to any other rights available under this Constitution, the Bylaws, contract, insurance, applicable law, or action of the Council, and shall continue after a person's service to the Congregation has ended.

13.5 The members of the Council, except the Pastor(s), shall be elected at the first semi-annual Congregational Meeting of each year for a term of office of three (3) years. Four members shall normally be elected each year. Such members shall be eligible to serve no more than two full terms consecutively.

13.6 A member's place on the Council shall be declared vacant if the member:

a. Ceases to be a voting member of this congregation,
b. Is absent from four successive regular meetings of the Council without cause, as determined by a Council majority vote,
c. Submits a letter of resignation,
d. Is removed through the membership discipline process as outlined in Chapter 8 herein.

13.7 Should a member's place on the Council be declared vacant, the Council shall elect, by majority vote, a successor to serve until the next Congregational meeting in which Council members are elected.

13.8 The Council shall have general oversight of the life and activities of this Congregation, so that everything will be done in accordance with the Word of God. The duties of the 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 provide oversight and enable the administration of this Congregation 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, appointment, or employment.
e. To confirm the appointment or termination of non-ordained staff.
f. To be examples individually and corporately of the style of life and ministry expected of all baptized and confirmed members.
g. To promote a congregational climate of peace and goodwill, and, as differences and conflicts arise, to endeavor to foster mutual understanding.
h. To arrange for pastoral service during the sickness or absence of the Pastor(s).
i. To promote cooperation and partnership with other congregations according to the established policies of this Congregation, and to seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel.

13.9 The Council shall be responsible for the following financial and property matters of this Congregation:

a. The Council shall be the board of directors of this Congregation, and as such shall be responsible for verifying the proper 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 Montana, except as otherwise provided herein, to account for ecclesiastical governance.

b. The Council shall not have the authority to buy, sell, or encumber real property unless specifically authorized to do so by a meeting of this Congregation.
c. The Council may enter into contracts or purchase of items as specified in the Bylaws.
d. The Council shall approve the annual budget for adoption by this Congregation and shall review the expenditure of funds in accordance with the approved budget.
e. The Council shall verify that the financial affairs of this Congregation are being conducted efficiently and appropriately, giving particular attention to the prompt payment of all obligations and to the regular forwarding of benevolence monies.

13.10 The Council may enact continuing Resolutions or Policies that govern specific organizations or operations of this Congregation, so long as they comply with this Constitution. The Business Administrator, with the assistance of the Secretary, shall keep a record of Resolutions and Policies for this Congregation to review and for a historical record.

13.11 The Council shall see that the provisions of this Constitution, its Bylaws, and the continuing Resolutions and Policies are carried out.

13.12 The Council shall submit an annual report to this Congregation as specified in the Bylaws.

13.13 The Council 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.

13.14 A quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of a majority of the members of the Council, including the Pastor(s) or Interim Pastor.

13.15 Only one member of a family may serve as a Council member of this Congregation at any one time. Family members include the following: spouse, mother, father, mother-in-law, father-in-law, sister, brother, sister-in-law, brother-in-law, and natural, step, and adopted children.

13.16 Unless otherwise provided for in this document and bylaws, Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, shall govern the parliamentary procedure of all meetings of this Council.

Chapter 14 CONSTITUTIONAL COMMITTEES

14.1 Constitutional committees shall be formed to provide for the ongoing mission and ministries of this Congregation. The number of members, their term of service, and their responsibilities are as specified in the Bylaws. Members of constitutional committees must be voting members of Christ Lutheran Church. The following committees shall be formed as specified in the Bylaws:

a. Executive Committee
b. Nominating Committee
c. Finance Committee
d. Personnel Committee
e. Audit Committee
f. Call Committee
g. Mission Endowment Committee
h. Missions Committee

Chapter 15 CONGREGATIONAL MINISTRIES

15.1 All organizations within this Congregation shall exist to aid 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 Council and Pastoral oversight and direction, including ministry policies, activities, and finances. A person must be a voting member in order to be the team leader of any ministry and must be approved by a pastor and/or the Council for that position of leadership

15.2 Any idea for starting a new ministry must meet the following qualifications:

a. The ministry idea must be biblically sound.
b. The ministry idea must be consistent with the mission, Confession of Faith, and goals of this congregation.
c. The ministry idea must not involve the independent raising of funds (which may compete with the church's stewardship) unless expressly approved by the Council.
d. The ministry idea must be "transferable" (in other words, it does not depend upon specific personalities).
e. The new ministry must be led by a leadership team that includes a minimum of one voting member.

15.3 All requests to start a new ministry shall be submitted to a pastoral staff member and be approved by the senior pastor and Council.

15.4 All ministries associated with this congregation that spend or receive funds must work with the bookkeeper to manage these financial exchanges. The use of the buildings and facilities of this Congregation shall be limited to this Congregation's activities and policies, and those of outside groups approved by the Business Administrator in accordance with the Facility Use Policy.

Chapter 16 BYLAWS

16.1 The purpose of the Bylaws is to provide meaningful clarity to the provisions of this Constitution by giving definition, explanation, and details for the governing of the affairs of this Congregation.

16.2 This Congregation may adopt Bylaws that do not conflict with this Constitution. It may do so by any legally called Congregational meeting with a quorum present and with the approval of a majority vote of all ballots cast at the meeting.

16.3 Any voting member may submit proposed changes to the Bylaws to the Council for consideration. If the Council approves the proposal, then the Council shall either schedule a special Congregational meeting or present the proposal at the next scheduled semi-annual Congregational meeting. The Council shall notify this Congregation of the proposal with Council recommendations at least ten (10) days prior to the Congregational meeting.

Chapter 17 AMENDMENTS

17.1 Amendments to this Constitution may be proposed by at least ten percent (10%) of the voting members, or by the Council. Proposals from members must be filed in writing to the Council within 60 days before formal consideration by this Congregation.

17.2 Any proposed amendment to this Constitution must be acted upon at the next scheduled semi-annual Congregational meeting, or at a legally called and conducted special Congregational meeting. A notice of this meeting with recommendations from the Council shall be communicated to all voting members at least 10 days prior to the meeting. Approval of the proposed amendment requires a two-thirds majority vote of all ballots cast at the meeting.

Chapter 18 CONGREGATIONAL RECORDS

18.1 The records of this Congregation shall be the property of this Congregation and shall not be removed or used for commercial purposes. The records shall be maintained by the Administrative Staff and include the following:

a. The roster of baptized voting members.
b. The ministerial acts performed by the Pastor(s).
c. The minutes and reports of this Congregation and Council.
d. The adopted Resolutions and Policies.
e. The Financial Records.
f. The legal documents, including deeds, mortgages, contracts, IRS status, Bylaws, and this Constitution.

18.2 Voting members may inspect financial and corporate records with proper purpose and written notice. Individual donor records are confidential and are accessed only by the bookkeeper and designated administrative staff.

Note: Scripture quotations are from The ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), © 2001 by Crossway.