

# BYLAWS TO THE CONSTITUTION

**Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church**  
**Winfield, Kansas**  
**A member congregation of**  
**The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod (LCMS)**

## **ARTICLE I – MEMBERSHIP**

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- A. Acceptance into membership
1. Baptized membership – persons are received into baptized membership
    - a. By the sacrament of Holy Baptism, or
    - b. By transfer from another Lutheran congregation, or
    - c. By consent of one or both parents or legal guardians in the case of children who have been baptized in the name of the Holy Trinity in another Christian congregation.
  2. Communicant membership – persons are received into communicant membership
    - a. By the rite of confirmation, or
    - b. By letter of transfer from a congregation in fellowship with The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, provided they conform to the requirements of communicant membership of this congregation (Constitution V.B.), or
    - c. By public profession of faith, submitting a request for membership to the Pastor, and giving satisfactory evidence of meeting qualifications for communicant membership as stated in Article V.B. of the Constitution.
  3. Guest membership – Lutherans who are members in good standing of another Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod congregation and are residing locally for educational, business, or other reasons. Guest members shall have such basic rights as:
    - a. Reception of the Sacraments, Pastoral care, and congregational concern,
    - b. Use of their time, talents, and treasure in the service of the Lord through our congregation, and
    - c. Attendance and participation in Voters' Assemblies but without voting privileges.
  4. Each transfer in or confession of faith request shall be approved by the Pastor and the Board of Elders and reported to the Administrative Council and the Voters' Assembly.

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- B. Voting membership – any communicant member may become a voting member. Voting members
1. Have reached their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday,
  2. Have read and signed the Constitution and Bylaws of this congregation, and are encouraged to
    - a. Attend the Voters' Assembly meetings,
    - b. Exercise the right to vote,
    - c. Be willing to accept nomination for office, committee appointments and other services necessary to the functioning of the congregation, and
    - d. Participate in the mission and business activities of the congregation.
- C. Termination of membership – persons terminate their baptismal and communicant membership in Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church by
1. Transfer to a Lutheran congregation in fellowship with The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod.

Persons desiring such a transfer shall present their request to the Pastor to whom authorization is granted to issue such transfers. The Pastor shall report each request to the Board of Elders.
  2. Release to other congregations.

Members desiring to join a congregation outside this fellowship shall request from the Pastor a release from membership. Upon recommendation of the Pastor and the Board of Elders, such release shall be granted and their names removed from Trinity's membership list. Those who join a congregation outside the fellowship of The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod and do not request a release from membership shall have their membership removed.
  3. Self exclusion.

Members who exclude themselves from active participation by absenting themselves from worship services and Holy Communion over an extended period of time, or whose whereabouts are unknown and cannot be established after exhaustive efforts to locate them, shall be reported by the elders or Pastor at a regular Voters' Assembly. Their names shall be removed from Trinity's membership list by action of the Voters' Assembly.
  4. Excommunication.

Members who conduct themselves in an unchristian manner shall be admonished according to the Word of God using Matthew 18:15-20 as a guide. They shall be encouraged to meet with the Pastor, the Administrative Council, or a congregational ad hoc committee. Refusal to amend their sinful life or stubborn resistance to all efforts of bringing them to repentance after Christian admonition shall result in their being excommunicated by a resolution adopted by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present at a regular Voters' Assembly.

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### D. Forfeiture of Rights.

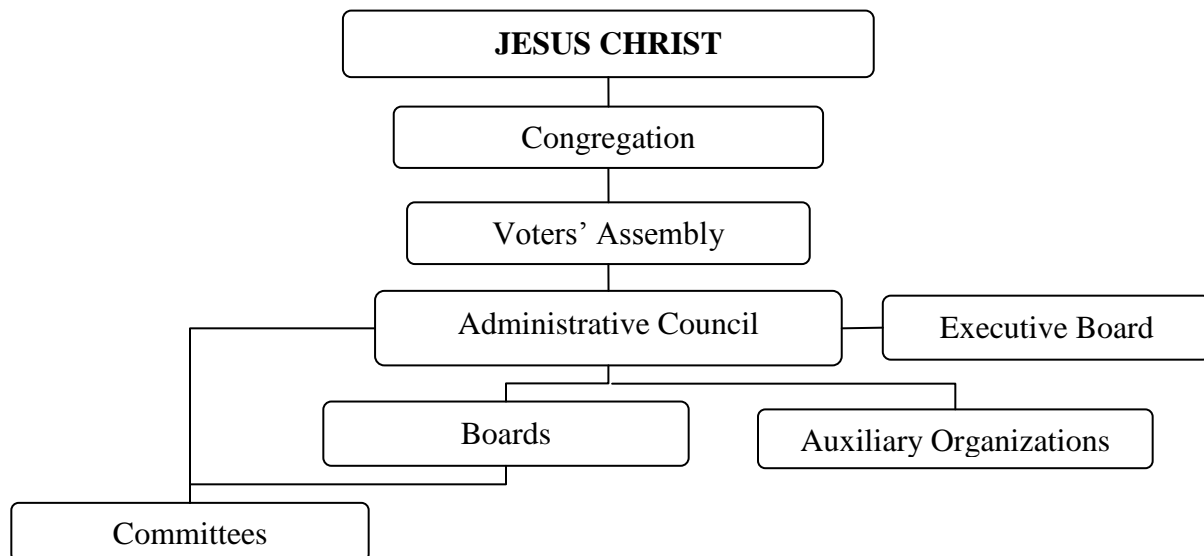
Persons whose membership has been terminated or who have severed association with Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church by release, self-exclusion, or excommunication forfeit all rights and privileges of communicant membership and all claims upon the congregation's property and services so long as they are not members. Persons whose membership has been terminated in any of the above ways can become members by following the procedure outlined in Article I.A.2. b or c of these Bylaws.

### E. Reporting of official acts

All actions by the Pastor and Board of Elders under this article shall be reported at the next regular meeting of the Administrative Council and Voters' Assembly in written form.

## ARTICLE II – ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE OF THE CONGREGATION

The following chart shows the administrative structure of the congregation as well as the line of authority:



Each body shall have the powers as outlined in the Constitution, Bylaws, and Manual of Duties, Procedures, and Policies of the congregation (Constitution VII.A.).

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### **ARTICLE III – VOTERS’ ASSEMBLY MEETINGS**

A. Regular meetings

There shall be three regular meetings each calendar year. They will be held in the months of February, June, and October. The dates shall be determined by the Administrative Council. These shall be publicized and printed in the worship folder at least twice prior to the meeting.

B. Special meetings

1. A special meeting may be called by the President, Pastor, or upon written request of any three members of the Administrative Council.
2. A special meeting may be called by publicly announcing it and its agenda during the regular Sunday morning worship services.
3. Only those items of business for which the meeting has been called and which were announced may be conducted at any special Voters’ Assembly.

C. The number of voting members present at a duly called meeting shall constitute a quorum.

### **ARTICLE IV – CONGREGATIONAL OFFICERS AND ELECTIONS**

A. The officers and the Executive Board of Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church shall consist of the President, President-elect, Secretary, Treasurer, and Financial Secretary who shall serve as legal trustees of the congregation and who shall be bonded (Manual III.A.1.b.).

B. The Administrative Council of Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church shall include the officers of the congregation and:

- Chairpersons of-
  - Board of Buildings and Grounds
  - Board of Education
  - Board of Elders
  - Board of Youth Ministry
  - Board of Parish Life
  - Safety and Security Committee (advisory only)

Members-at-large (2)

C. Nominations and Elections

1. Nominating Committee

- a. The committee shall consist of three communicant members; two to be elected by the Voters’ Assembly at the October meeting and the member-at-large with the non-expiring term.
- b. The Nominating Committee shall chose one of its members to be the chairperson at its first meeting. (The Nominating Committee shall never

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be appointed and the President-elect shall not be a part of the Nominating Committee.)

- c. Members elected shall be in good standing, be well acquainted with the membership, be informed of the duties of the offices to be filled, which offices are to be filled, understand the purpose and mission of the congregation, and be willing to plan open-mindedly for the congregation's progress by seeking the best possible nominees for each and every office. The Pastor shall be an advisory member of the committee.
  - d. Members of the congregation shall be invited and urged to share their ideas on prospective nominees with the committee by January 1. Any communicant member may suggest names to be considered by the Nominating Committee. These names are suggestions only, are confidential, and may not appear on the final ballot. The consent of the person being suggested is not needed at this time. Only male communicants shall be eligible for President, President-elect, and membership on the Board of Elders. (The request for suggested names from the congregation shall be published in the Sunday bulletin each week following the October Voters' Assembly until January 1.) No nominations are to be made from the floor at the election meeting.
  - e. Regardless of the number of suggestions received, the Nominating Committee's major responsibility is to secure the best qualified person for each office whether that person was recommended/suggested or not. No nominee shall be selected for more than one office. (See Manual for additional guidelines.)
2. Elections
- a. From the ballot, the voting membership shall, at their February Voters' Assembly, elect by simple majority the officers needed. Paper ballots shall be used when there is more than one candidate for an office.
  - b. Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church shall annually elect the following:

<b>Even numbered years:</b>	<b>Odd numbered years:</b>
President-elect	President-elect
Elders – 4	Elders – See Manual III.B.1.
Financial secretary	Secretary
	Treasurer
Board of Buildings & Grounds – 2	Board of Buildings & Grounds – 2
Board of Education – 3	Board of Education – 3
Board of Parish Life – Chairperson-elect	Board of Parish Life – Chairperson-elect
Board of Youth – 2	Board of Youth – 2
Member-at-large	Member-at-large
Church Endowment representative	School Endowment representative

- c. Each elected board of Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church shall select from their members a chairperson and a secretary at the beginning of the

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fiscal year. The chairperson shall then make themselves and all members of their board familiar with the Bylaws, Duties, Procedures, and Policies which pertain to their particular board or committee. Duties of Officers and Boards are found in the Manual of Duties, Procedures, and Policies which follow these Bylaws. These actions shall be reported at each August meeting of the Administrative Council.

### **D. Terms of Office**

1. The term of each office shall be two years, terminating on June 30<sup>th</sup> of the second year.
2. No person shall hold more than one elected office at a time.
3. The President-elect position shall be elected each year and shall serve the first year as President-elect and the second year as President.
4. The chairperson-elect position of the Board of Parish Life shall be elected each year and shall serve the first year as chairperson-elect and the second year as chairperson.

### **E. Installation of Officers**

1. The newly elected officers and board members of the congregation shall be installed during a Sunday worship service prior to July 1.
2. They shall meet and train with their respective board or committee from March until June and shall assume the duties of office July 1.

## **ARTICLE V – SYNODICAL ELECTIONS**

Names of proposed candidates or delegates for election to circuit, district, or synodical offices or other purposes may be made to the Voters' Assembly by the boards, Administrative Council, or by a voting member whenever required.

## **ARTICLE VI – DIVINE CALLS**

The Board of Elders is the Call Committee of the congregation when ordained ministers are to be called and the Board of Education is the Call Committee of the congregation when commissioned ministers are to be called. All synodically rostered church workers are to receive calls. Contracts are to be used for all other church and school workers.

1. The appropriate board
  - a. Shall encourage the congregation to be in prayer concerning the call to be made;
  - b. Shall consult with the appropriate offices of the Circuit and Kansas District;

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- c. Shall encourage the members of the congregation to submit names of possible candidates with a dated deadline for submission;
  - d. Shall send names submitted by the congregation to the District President and obtain a list of synodically certified candidates from the District President;
  - e. Shall submit the list of synodically certified candidates obtained from the District President to the Voters' Assembly and ask them to select, by ballot and two-thirds majority, one candidate from the list (the Board may suggest three candidates they would prefer);
  - f. In case no candidate receives a two-thirds majority vote, another ballot shall be cast with the name having the fewest votes deleted from the ballot. This procedure shall be repeated until one candidate receives the required two-thirds majority.
  - g. In consultation with the Circuit and District officials shall prepare terms of a call and promptly deliver it to the candidate. The candidate may be alerted to his/her call via phone or other message system prior to receiving the call documents.
  - h. If the candidate rejects the call, the Board shall request another meeting of the Voters' Assembly to select from the adopted list another candidate to whom a call will be issued.
2. It is the responsibility of the Boards to do their utmost to see that the offices of Pastor or teacher do not remain vacant.

## **ARTICLE VII – REMOVAL FROM OFFICE**

1. Any Pastor, teacher, or officer may be removed from office by the Voters' Assembly by a two-thirds vote, in Christian and lawful order, for one of the following reasons: persistent adherence to false doctrine, scandalous life, or willful neglect of duties.
2. Reasons for removal from office shall be submitted in writing at a meeting of the Voters' Assembly and announced to the congregation by public posting and/or mail to all communicant members at least one week prior to the meeting at which the removal from office will be acted upon. A two-thirds affirmative vote of the voters present shall be required for removal from office.
3. The congregation may request the resignation of any Pastor, teacher, or officer from his/her position in the congregation in the case of prolonged incapacity or general incompetence.

## **ARTICLE VIII – AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS**

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Proposed amendments to these Bylaws shall be submitted in writing to a member of the Executive Board prior to a duly called meeting of the Voters' Assembly and announced to the congregation prior to the Voters' Assembly at which the proposed amendment will be acted upon. A two-thirds affirmative vote of the voters present shall be required for adoption. The date of approval shall be referenced in any amendment adopted. (Please consult the Manual of Duties, Policies, and Procedures, IV.E, Constitution and Bylaw Committee.)

Revised and adopted 1983

Revised 2/11/86

Revised 2/15/87

Revised 9/20/87

Revised 3/14/93

Revised 2/19/95

Revised 5/19/96

Revised 11/21/99

Revised 9/29/02

Revised 10/21/07

Revised 10/12/08

Revised and adopted 2/21/10

Revised 6/12/11

Revised 2/17/13

Revised 2/15/15

Revised 6/7/15