

**CONSTITUTION OF
FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH
NORTH PALM BEACH, FLORIDA**

PREAMBLE

It is the will of our Lord Jesus Christ that His disciples should preach the Gospel to the whole world (Matthew 28:18-20). The Word of God requires that we conform to this Divine Word in Doctrine and Practice (Ps. 119:105; II Tim. 4:1-5) and that all things be done decently and in order (I Cor. 14:40). Therefore, we accept and subscribe to this constitution and bylaws to govern the spiritual and material affairs of our congregation.

THE CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I

NAME

The name of this congregation shall be Faith Lutheran Church of North Palm Beach – Missouri Synod, Inc..

ARTICLE II

MISSION AND PURPOSE

Our Mission Statement: We are Faith Lutheran Church, members of the Body of Christ. The Holy Spirit calls us today to share God's love and grace for your life through worship, study, fellowship and service.

Purpose: The purpose of this congregation is to grow and spread the kingdom of God by the preaching of the Word of God, by the administration of the Sacraments, and by the religious instruction of youth and adults, according to the confessional standard of the Lutheran Church (Article III), and to foster Christian fellowship, charity, and stewardship, both within the congregation and in the community-at-large.

ARTICLE III

CONFESSION OF FAITH

We accept without reservation all the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments as the revealed and inspired Word of God and the only rule and norm of faith and practice. We believe in the Triune God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We accept all the Confessional Writings of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, contained in the Book of Concord of the year 1580, to be the true and genuine exposition of the doctrines of the Bible. These Confessional Writings are the three Ecumenical Creeds (Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian), the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles, Luther's Large and Small Catechisms, and the Formula of Concord.

ARTICLE IV

AFFILIATION

This congregation shall be affiliated with the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod as long as the confessions and constitution of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod are in accord with the confessions and constitution of this congregation as laid down in Article III.

ARTICLE V

MEMBERSHIP

The membership of this congregation includes the Baptized Members, Confirmed Members, and Voting Members as defined in the bylaws.

ARTICLE VI

ORGANIZATION

A. Voters' Assembly

The Voters' Assembly shall consist of all voting members present at a regular or special meeting of the congregation. The congregation, through the Voters' Assembly, shall have final authority in managing its internal and external affairs.

B. Ministry Leadership Council

The Ministry Leadership Council shall be the governing body of the congregation and is responsible to administer all the congregation's affairs except the following matters for action only by the Voters' Assembly:

1. Call or remove a called worker.
2. Purchase or sell church property or buildings valued over 10% of the annual operating budget.
3. Adopt the Annual Financial Plan.

C. Officers and Boards

The officers of this congregation shall be such officers as the bylaws of this constitution prescribe. The officers and boards prescribed in the bylaws shall have no authority beyond that which has been conferred upon them in the constitution or bylaws.

ARTICLE VII

PROPERTY RIGHTS

- A. If, at any time, a separation shall take place within this congregation, the advice of the officers of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod shall be sought. If, despite all efforts to resolve differences in peace and love, a division into factions of the congregation shall occur, the property of the congregation and all benefits connected shall remain with the majority of voters.
- B. If the congregation dissolves, any assets remaining after settling all obligations will be disbursed at the discretion of the Voters' Assembly.

ARTICLE VIII

DECISIONS

All congregational matters decided by the Voters' Assembly shall be decided by a simple majority of the voting members present at a properly convened meeting of the Voters' Assembly, except as otherwise provided in this constitution and bylaws. Procedural questions will be decided by following a current *Robert's Rules of Order*.

ARTICLE IX

AMENDMENTS

This constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of those voters present and voting at a meeting of the Voters' Assembly. The wording of the amended constitution and bylaws shall be distributed to the congregation assembled for worship on two different Sundays prior to the date upon which the amendment is presented for action.

**BYLAWS OF
FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH
NORTH PALM BEACH, FLORIDA**

**Article 1
Baptized Membership**

Baptized members are all persons within the congregation who have been baptized in the name of the Triune God and come under the pastoral care of this congregation. It is expected that all baptized members will:

- A. Attend worship services faithfully and regularly.
- B. Lead a Christian life as taught in Galatians 5:19-26.
- C. Out of Christian love, submit to brotherly admonition, according to Matthew 18, when having erred or offended.
- D. Contribute, as God has blessed them, of their time, talents and treasure toward the maintenance of the congregation and the extension of the church at large.
- E. Within a reasonable time at the discretion of the Senior Pastor, take a course of instruction in preparation for confirmed membership in this congregation.

**Article 2
Confirmed Membership**

Confirmed members are all baptized persons within the congregation who have completed a course of instruction in Christian doctrine that meets with the approval of the Ministry Leadership Council.

Persons seeking to attain confirmed membership shall make that fact known to the Senior Pastor, who shall ascertain the understanding and commitment to the purpose and theological commitment contained in Article III. The pastor will determine if additional training is needed and the appropriate method for that training. The pastor is authorized to extend confirmed membership to the person and shall announce that in a public service.

In addition to the duties of baptized members, it is expected of all confirmed members that they:

- A. Accept the confessions of faith listed in Article III of the constitution.
- B. Familiarize themselves with the doctrines of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod and with the contents of the Catechism.
- C. Partake of the Lord's Supper regularly.
- D. Participate in continuing Christian education.
- E. Provide for the Christian training of their children by making use of the educational agencies of the congregation.
- F. Understand the mission and purpose of the congregation.
- G. Are not members of organizations whose principles and conduct conflict with the Word of God.

Baptized members who have been confirmed in the faith are received into communicant membership through the rite of confirmation, by transfer from a sister congregation, upon profession of faith, or by reaffirmation of faith, providing that they conform to the requirements of membership in this congregation. If by profession or reaffirmation of faith, persons shall submit their application to the Senior Pastor, and having given satisfactory evidence of qualification, shall be received into membership.

Article 3
Voting Membership

All confirmed members 18 years of age or over shall be voting members. It is expected of all voting members that they will read and accept the constitution and bylaws and serve faithfully, according to their God-given talents, in any capacity in which they may be called upon to serve.

Article 4
Change of Membership Status

- A. Transfers
A member desiring transfer to another congregation shall make that fact known to the Senior Pastor. The pastor shall cause the creating and mailing of a letter of transfer to the receiving congregation.
- B. Whereabouts Unknown or Moved
The names of people whose whereabouts are unknown or who have moved from the area and have not requested to retain membership shall be removed from membership after a period of one year.
- C. Discipline
All discipline in this congregation shall be administered in accordance with Matthew 18:15-20. The purpose of any disciplinary action is to renew a member's relationship with the Lord and with the church. A member shall be considered self-excluded when unresponsive to the witness and ministry of the church as determined by the Senior Pastor and Ministry Leadership Council.

Article 5
Voters' Assembly

- A. The Voters' Assembly shall meet at least once a year. The day and hour of the meetings shall be set by the Ministry Leadership Council and publicized a minimum of ten days prior, to include two Sundays. The notice shall contain an agenda of items to be considered as well as the slate of nominees when an election is necessary. No agenda items may be added once the agenda is distributed. The President, Vice President, or their designated Ministry Leadership Council member shall preside at all Voters' Assembly meetings.
- B. The Voters' Assembly may meet at other times of the year subject to a call by the Ministry Leadership Council or by special petition of 20 or more confirmed members of the congregation. Notice of any such meeting shall be publicized as far in advance as possible but at least two Sundays prior to the date of the meeting. The notice shall contain an agenda of items to be considered. No agenda items may be added once the agenda is distributed. The President, Vice President, or their designated Ministry Leadership Council member shall preside at all Voters' Assembly meetings.
- C. A quorum shall be 25 or more voting members present for the meeting.

Article 6
Called Workers

- A. Called Workers
 1. Calls will be issued only to such candidates who are approved by the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.
 2. After authorization is received from the Voters' Assembly, the Ministry Leadership Council shall create a Call Committee. No more than one-third of the Call Committee members may be members of the Ministry Leadership Council.
 3. The Call Committee shall consult with those in the affected ministry area(s) and with the Florida-Georgia District as part of their efforts to secure the names of candidates.
 4. The Call Committee will present a final list of candidates to the Voters' Assembly for issuance of the call.

5. The candidate receiving the simple majority of votes cast by the Voters' Assembly will be issued a call.
- B. Removal from Office of Called Workers
1. In Christian love and lawful order, any called worker may be removed from office by the Voters' Assembly for one or more of the following reasons: persistent adherence to false doctrine, scandalous life, willful neglect of duties, inability to perform the duties of the office, or other reasons stated in the appropriate personnel policy manual.
 2. The Ministry Leadership Council shall carefully investigate charges on any of these counts. Should charges be substantiated by clear evidence, and after consultation with the District President or his designated representative, the Ministry Leadership Council shall notify the voting members of the situation and submit the matter for action at a special Voters' Assembly meeting publicized as stated in Article 5.
 3. A two-thirds majority secret ballot vote of the voting members present at the special Voters' Assembly meeting shall be required to remove any divinely called servant from office.

Article 7 Officers

The officers of the congregation shall consist of a President, Vice-President, Recording Secretary and combined Treasurer/Financial Secretary.

- A. The President shall:
1. Preside at all meetings of the Voters' Assembly and the Ministry Leadership Council;
 2. Appoint any necessary boards, committees, task groups, or action teams following the approval of the Ministry Leadership Council;
 3. Ensure adherence to the constitution and bylaws; and
 4. Perform the general duties as are common for the office, including such additional duties as may be directed by the Voters' Assembly or the Ministry Leadership Council from time to time.
- B. The Vice President shall:
1. Perform all the duties of the President in the President's absence;
 2. Appoint and chair a Nominating Committee with the advice and consent of the Ministry Leadership Council; and
 3. Perform other additional duties that may be directed by the Voters' Assembly, by the Ministry Leadership Council, or by the President.
- C. The Recording Secretary shall:
1. Perform the general duties as are common for the office, especially the keeping and preserving of accurate records of all Voters' Assembly meetings, and handling such correspondence as the congregation may require; and
 2. Keep and make available the minutes of all Ministry Leadership Council meetings.
- D. The Treasurer/Financial Secretary shall:
1. Be responsible for the accurate recording of all receipts and disbursements, and submit a written report of them at all regular meetings of the Voters' Assembly and Ministry Leadership Council; and
 2. Assure accuracy and propriety of all financial transactions of the congregation.
- E. Term of Office
- Each officer shall serve for a term of three years and shall serve no more than two full successive terms in that position without a break of at least one year. The term of office commences immediately following the election.

Article 8
Ministry Leadership Council

A. Membership

The Ministry Leadership Council shall consist of the congregational officers listed in Article 7 and three members-at-large elected by the Voters' Assembly. The congregational officers and three members-at-large shall all be voting members of the Ministry Leadership Council. The Senior Pastor is a non-voting member of the Ministry Leadership Council.

B. Term of Office

The term of office shall be three year staggered terms with approximately one-third of the Ministry Leadership Council being elected each year. Council members shall serve no more than two full successive terms in that position without a break of at least one year. The term of office commences immediately following the election.

C. Meetings

The Ministry Leadership Council shall meet at least quarterly and may be called more frequently at the request of the President or any three Ministry Leadership Council members. An elected officer shall be present and preside. A total of four members of the Ministry Leadership Council, one of whom must be the President or Vice President, constitute a quorum for any meeting. Notice of each meeting shall be communicated to all Council members in a timely manner.

Article 9
Powers of the Ministry Leadership Council

The Ministry Leadership Council shall have the power to develop policies as required to execute the goals approved by the Voters' Assembly. Written policies shall be available upon request. The Council shall have no authority beyond that which has been conferred upon it by the constitution, its bylaws, or by the Voters' Assembly.

Article 10
Duties of the Ministry Leadership Council

The Ministry Leadership Council's responsibility is generally confined to establishing topmost policies. Council authority for implementation and subsidiary policy development is delegated to the staff through the Senior Pastor. The Senior Pastor is to provide regular reports to the Ministry Leadership Council on the status of operations.

- A. The Ministry Leadership Council, as the chief governing council of the congregation, shall act in all matters pertaining to the legal and general welfare of the congregation, except those reserved for the Voters' Assembly in Article VI.B. of the Constitution.
- B. The Ministry Leadership Council shall ensure that all activities of the church reflect the purpose and faith of the congregation.
- C. The Ministry Leadership Council shall concern itself with the establishment of all policies governing the activities of the congregation and with the implementation of the mission, vision, budget, and plans adopted by the Voters' Assembly.
- D. The Ministry Leadership Council shall establish and change as needed any boards, committees, action teams, or other entities to accomplish the mission of the congregation.
- E. The Ministry Leadership Council shall maintain the financial integrity of the congregation.
- F. The Ministry Leadership Council shall encourage the ministry staff in their work through prayer, word, and action.
- G. The Ministry Leadership Council shall be available for any additional functions that the Voters' Assembly may confer on it.

Article 11
Election, Removal from Office, and Vacancies

A. Nomination

The Vice President shall annually appoint a Nominating Committee whose responsibility will be to develop a slate of candidates for the officers and Ministry Leadership Council members to be elected each year. The committee shall contain a majority of members who are not on the Ministry Leadership Council and shall report their nominations to the Voters' Assembly. The Senior Pastor shall be an advisory member of the Nominating Committee.

All nominees shall be active, voting members noted for their Christian knowledge, zeal, and experience in the spiritual work of the Kingdom. Specific criteria for elected officials shall be outlined by the Nominating Committee prior to accepting any nominations. In addition to the Nominating Committee's slate of candidates, any voting member may nominate candidates. A call for nominations will be distributed to the congregation no less than one month prior to the election meeting. The list of nominations will be closed at the time that the meeting agenda and slate of candidates is distributed. Those elected by the voters may not receive any compensation for the duties of their positions and may not lead any group that reports directly to the Ministry Leadership Council, except a Call Committee or the Nomination Committee.

B. Election

Nominees will be elected using a ballot by a majority vote of those voters present at a meeting of the Voters' Assembly.

C. Removal from Office of Elected Officials

Any elected official who is unable or is willfully neglectful in the performance of his/her official duties, will be asked to resign or may be removed from office using a ballot by a two-thirds vote of those voters present and voting at a Voters' Assembly meeting. The Ministry Leadership Council shall initiate such action.

D. In the event of a vacancy, the Ministry Leadership Council shall be authorized to appoint another voting member to fill the unexpired term.

Article 12
Amendments

The bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of those voters present and voting at a meeting of the Voters' Assembly. The wording of the amended constitution and bylaws shall be distributed to the congregation assembled for worship on two different Sundays prior to the date upon which the amendment is presented for action.