

Constitution and By-Laws

**THE LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD
7701 Kenwood Road, Cincinnati, Ohio 45236**

PREAMBLE

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

We, members of the Church of Christ, desiring to be blessed together with Word and Sacrament and to unite as a congregation in the common confession, defense and propagation of our faith in Jesus Christ our Savior, do hereby adopt this constitution and solemnly pledge ourselves to be governed by its provisions.

ARTICLE ONE

Name and Incorporation

- 1.01 The name of this congregation shall be the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd.
- 1.02 This congregation shall be incorporated.

ARTICLE TWO

Confession of Faith

- 2.01 This congregation confesses Jesus Christ as Lord of the Church. The Holy Spirit creates and sustains the Church through the Gospel and thereby unites believers with their Lord and with one another in the fellowship of faith.
- 2.02 This congregation holds that the Gospel is the revelation of God's sovereign will and saving grace in Jesus Christ. In Him, the Word Incarnate, God imparts Himself to men and women.

- 2.03 This congregation acknowledges the Holy Scriptures as the norm for the faith and life of the Church. The Holy Scriptures are the divinely inspired record of God's redemptive act in Christ, for which the Old Testament prepared the way and which the New Testament proclaims. In the continuation of this proclamation in the Church, God still speaks through the Holy Scriptures and realizes His redemptive purpose generation after generation.
- 2.04 This congregation accepts the Apostles', the Nicene, and the Athanasian creeds as true declarations of the faith of the Church.
- 2.05 This congregation accepts the other symbolical books of the evangelical Lutheran church, the Augsburg Confession, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles, Luther's Large Catechism, Luther's Small Catechism, and the Formula of Concord, as further valid interpretations of the confession of the Church.
- 2.06 This congregation affirms that the Gospel transmitted by the Holy Scriptures, to which the creeds and confessions bear witness is the true treasure of the Church, the substance of its proclamation, and the basis of its unity and continuity. The Holy Spirit uses the proclamation of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments to create and sustain Christian faith and fellowship. As this occurs, the Church fulfills its divine mission and purposes.

ARTICLE THREE

Relation to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

- 3.01 This congregation is and shall remain a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or its successor, of the synod of the church within whose boundaries it is located (the Southern Ohio Synod) and of the conference to which it is assigned by the synod.
- 3.02 This congregation claims for itself all the rights and privileges and accepts all the duties and obligations, connected with such membership. In so doing, this congregation recognizes the constitution, by-laws and constitutional enactments of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and of the synod to which it belongs as having governing force in its life.
- 3.03 This congregation covenants to support faithfully with prayer, personal service and offerings the common work of the church and of the synod for the Kingdom of God.

- 3.04 This constitution, and all amendments thereof, shall be transmitted to the synod for review to ascertain that none of its provisions is in conflict with the constitution and by-laws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or with the synodical constitution. The article herein embodying the Confession of Faith and the section declaring the adherence of the congregation to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall not be altered without explicit action by the synod agreeing thereto.
- 3.05 The bishop of the synod or his/her appointed representative shall have the right to be present at, and shall receive prior notice of, all meetings of the congregation and of the church council during a vacancy of the Senior Pastor.
- 3.06 Should the congregation desire to relocate, or merge with another congregation, it shall secure the advice and approval of the synod before any commitments to that end are entered into.
- 3.07 In case of strife or division, if any part of this congregation rejects the faith set forth in Article II, or refuses to abide by its obligations as a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, that part of the congregation, whether a majority or a minority of its membership, which continue in unity with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and its faith shall be recognized as the lawful congregation and shall continue in possession of all the property of the congregation.
- 3.08 If this congregation a) disbands, b) ceases or fails to maintain religious worship or services according to the tenets and usages of the Lutheran Church, c) departs from membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America without the consent of the synod, or d) so decreases in numbers or financial strength as to render it impracticable for the congregation to fulfill the purposes for which it was organized or to protect its assets from waste and deterioration, the synod to which the congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd belongs shall have the right to take charge and control of all property of the congregation and thereafter to hold, manage and convey the same at the discretion of the synod.

ARTICLE FOUR Membership

- 4.01 This congregation shall consist of its pastor or pastors and other baptized persons within its fellowship. Child members are defined as those who have been baptized and are a part of the family of the congregation but who have not yet been confirmed. Adult or confirmed members are those who have been duly received into communicant membership of the congregation by adult Baptism, confirmation, certificate of transfer from another Lutheran congregation, or reaffirmation of faith.

- 4.02 Each applicant for adult membership shall have been properly instructed in the Word of God and the faith of the Lutheran Church prior to his or her reception.
- 4.03 The duties of the confirmed members are: to avail themselves faithfully of the Means of Grace, joining regularly in the services of worship of this congregation, hearing the Word of God preached, and partaking of the Lord's Supper; to earnestly study the Holy Scriptures and observe private and family devotions; to endeavor to promote the unity and welfare of the congregation as a family of God; and, to contribute to the financial support of the congregation and for the general work of missions, mercy and education carried on by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. As is fitting for those whom the Holy Spirit has called to faith and discipleship, the members of this congregation shall lead a Christian life in love, humility and peace, endeavoring through admonition, consolation and encouragement to edify one another.
- 4.04 Parents shall present their children for Holy Baptism and shall diligently nurture them in the Christian faith in the home and in the schools provided by the congregation.
- 4.05 Confirmed members who have received Holy Communion or made a contribution of record to the congregation within the preceding year shall be counted as on the active roll of such members for reporting to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and to the synod. Those confirmed members who no longer qualify for that roll because they have neither received Holy Communion nor made a contribution of record to the congregation within the preceding year shall be classified as inactive. As such, they shall remain within the continuing concern of the congregation and shall be given conscientious pastoral care. An inactive member shall be restored to the active roll of confirmed members when he/she receives the Lord's Supper and makes a contribution of record to the congregation.
- 4.06 At the request of a confirmed member, a certificate of standing or of transfer of membership to another Lutheran or other evangelical congregation shall be issued.

ARTICLE FIVE

Pastor(s)

- 5.01 A pastor of this congregation shall be a person whose soundness in the faith, aptness to teach, and educational qualifications have been examined and approved by the church, and who has been properly ordained; who accepts and adheres to the Confession of Faith of the Evangelical Lutheran church in America and of this congregation (ARTICLE TWO); and whose life and conduct are above reproach.

- 5.02 A pastor shall be a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, or shall promptly apply to become a member thereof upon acceptance of the call of this congregation. Should the synod refuse to receive the pastor, or should the pastor be deposed from the office of the ministry, the pastor shall automatically cease to be a pastor of this congregation.
- 5.03 In the selection of a pastor, the congregation shall seek the counsel and guidance of the bishop of the synod.
- 5.04 As soon as practical after entering upon his or her duties, a pastor of this congregation shall be duly installed in his or her office by the bishop of the synod or the bishop's appointee.
- 5.05 A pastor shall preach the Word, administer the Sacraments and conduct public worship consistent with the faith and practices of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. A pastor shall care for his or her people individually and as a congregation, give catechetical instruction, confirm, marry in accordance with the laws of God and the state, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead. A pastor shall inculcate piety in individual and family life and supervise all schools and auxiliary organizations of the congregation. A pastor, along with the church council, shall administer discipline. A pastor shall seek out and encourage qualified young persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel and strive to extend the Kingdom of God in the community, in the homeland and abroad. A pastor shall impart knowledge of the church and its wider ministry through distribution of its periodicals and other publications and shall endeavor to increase the liberality of this congregation in support of the work of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and of the synod.
- 5.06 In order that a pastor of this congregation may devote himself or herself fully to the duties of his or her office, a pastor shall receive an adequate salary, paid in semi-monthly or monthly installments. A pastor's expenses incident to attendance at conventions of the synod and attendance at meetings of the district shall be defrayed by the congregation.
- 5.07 When a pastor of this congregation desires to terminate his or her period of service, he or she shall submit resignation to the church council for report to the congregation. Unless otherwise agreed, the resignation shall normally become effective two months after the date on which it is submitted.
- 5.08 A. The regular call of this congregation when accepted by a pastor shall constitute a permanent relationship which shall be terminated only for the following causes: (1) the death of the pastor or the dissolution of the congregation; (2) the resignation of the pastor; (3) the attainment by the pastor of the age of seventy years, after which

time his or her pastoral service may be extended from year to year by a two-thirds vote at a congregational meeting; (4) disqualification of the pastor through discipline; (5) the physical or mental disability of the pastor; (6) continued neglect of duty; (7) inability to conduct the pastoral office efficiently in this congregation in view of local conditions, without reflection on the moral and spiritual character of the pastor.

B. In the last three contingencies, it shall be the duty of the bishop of the synod, when such difficulties are personally known to him or her, or have been brought to his or her attention by an official recital of allegations by the church council, or by a petition signed by at least one third of the communing members, to investigate such conditions.

C. In the case of alleged physical or mental disability, competent medical testimony shall be secured. When such disability is evident, the bishop of the synod with the advice of the committee, shall declare the pastorate vacant.

D. In case of alleged neglect of duty or of local difficulties which imperil the efficient conduct of the congregation, all those concerned shall be heard, after which the bishop of the synod together with an advisory committee, shall decide on the course of action to be recommended to the pastor and the congregation. If both agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action shall be taken by the synod. If either party fails to assent, the matter shall be reported to the subsequent meeting of the synod council of the Southern Ohio Synod and its action, based on the evidence submitted, shall be final. Such action shall not be regarded as an act of discipline, but as an act of expedience based on the principles of Christian love. This procedure shall never be invoked when questions of doctrine or morality are involved, all such cases being treated as disciplinary matters.

- 5.09 Charges against a pastor which, if sustained, would subject him or her to discipline shall be presented to the synod and adjudicated by it as set forth in the by-laws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- 5.10 This congregation shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to a former pastor before calling a successor.
- 5.11 The privileges and responsibilities of an associate or assistant pastor shall be specified in his or her call, which shall be drafted in consultation with the bishop of the synod.

ARTICLE SIX
Senior Pastor

- 6.01 The Senior Pastor shall be one (1) pastor who has been called by the congregation for the specific role of Senior Pastor.
- 6.02 The Senior Pastor shall be the leader of the Ministry of Administration and shall have those duties as defined in ARTICLE ELEVEN, Paragraph Three (11.03).
- 6.03 The Senior Pastor is directly responsible to the church council.
- 6.04 The leaders of all Areas of Ministry are directly responsible to the Senior Pastor.
- 6.05 The Senior Pastor shall keep the membership rolls of the congregation, reporting thereon periodically to the church council. The Senior Pastor shall record acts in the official parish register, which shall be and remain the property of the congregation. The Senior Pastor shall be the custodian of the seal.
- 6.06 At a time of vacancy of the Senior Pastor, a vice-pastor shall be appointed by the bishop of the synod following consultation with the church council.
- 6.07 During his or her period of service, a vice-pastor shall have the rights and duties of the regularly called Senior Pastor. He or she may delegate the same in part to an interim supply pastor with the consent of the bishop of the synod. The vice-pastor and ministers who may assist him or her shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a pastor.

ARTICLE SEVEN
Congregational Meetings

- 7.01 Congregational meetings shall be called for the purpose of calling or releasing a pastor, selling or purchasing real estate, extensive repairs or construction of church buildings, or borrowing funds in excess of ten percent (10%) of the current annual anticipated receipts. Only active members shall be permitted to vote, and twenty percent (20%) of the eligible voters shall constitute a quorum. On all matters other than the foregoing, all active members shall be permitted to vote, and ten percent (10%) of these shall constitute a quorum.
- 7.02 Congregational meetings may be called by the Senior Pastor, the church council, or at the written request of ten percent (10%) of the confirmed members in good standing. The call for each meeting shall specify the purpose for which it is to be held, and no other business shall be transacted thereat.

- 7.03 Notice of all congregational meetings shall be given at the services of worship on the preceding two consecutive Sundays or by mail to all confirmed members in good standing at least ten days in advance of the date of the meeting.
- 7.04 Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, shall be the governing parliamentary law of this congregation, except as otherwise provided in the constitution or by-laws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, in the constitution of the Southern Ohio Synod or in this constitution or its by-laws.

ARTICLE EIGHT
Election of Pastor(s)

- 8.01 Election of a pastor shall be by written ballot at a properly called congregational meeting presided over by the bishop of the synod or the bishop's appointee. Balloting shall be limited at any one meeting to a single nomination presented by the church council with at least two thirds of its members concurring. Two thirds of the votes cast shall be necessary for election. After the congregation has determined the salary and other emoluments to be offered to the pastor-elect, the church council shall execute a call accordingly and forward the same to the pastor. Unless otherwise agreed, the call shall normally become invalid unless a definite answer is received within thirty days after its receipt. If a nominee fails on election or declines the call, the church council shall make another nomination at a subsequent meeting.
- 8.02 If this congregation unites with one or more other congregations in calling a pastor, the church councils of all congregations in the parish shall meet jointly and agree on a single nomination for election, the balloting to be done separately in each congregation. Two thirds of all the votes cast, and a majority of the votes cast in each congregation, shall be required for election. The joint church council shall issue the call.

ARTICLE NINE
Church Council

- 9.01 The church council shall consist of the pastor or pastors and deacons. Deacons shall be elected annually by the congregation. Any confirmed member in good standing and meeting the criteria stated in the by-laws may be elected a deacon, subject only to the limitation on the length of continuous service permitted in that office. Should a deacon cease to be a confirmed member of this congregation in good standing, or should he or she without excuse fail to attend two successive regular meetings of the church council, his or her place shall at once be declared vacant.
- 9.02 All lay members of the church council shall be installed by the Senior Pastor according to the prescribed order of the church as soon as practical following their election.
- 9.03 The duties of the church council shall include the following:
- A. To have general oversight of the spiritual life and activities of the congregation, and in particular of its public worship, to the end that everything is done in accordance

with the Word of God and the faith and practices of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

B. To promote a spirit of peace and good will within the congregation and if differences arise, to endeavor to restore harmony and mutual understanding.

C. To assure pastoral supply during the sickness or absence of the Senior Pastor.

D. To set the policy and direction for the congregation.

E. To oversee the preparation and counting of ballots for elections to church council.

- 9.04 The church council shall be the board of trustees of the congregation, and as such shall be responsible for its property and the management of its business and fiscal affairs. It shall have the powers and be subject to the obligations that pertain to such boards under the laws of the State of Ohio. The church council shall not, however, have the authority to buy or sell real property unless specifically authorized to do so by a meeting of the congregation. It shall approve and adopt an annual budget for each operating year and shall supervise the expenditure of funds in accordance therewith.
- 9.05 The church council shall see that the provisions of this constitution and its by-laws are obeyed and that the resolutions of the congregation are carried out.
- 9.06 The church council shall elect confirmed members in good standing in the congregation as delegates in the permitted numbers to the conventions of the synod and the meetings of the district to which this congregation belongs. The expenses incurred by such delegates in connection with their attendance shall be paid by the congregation.
- 9.07 Special meetings of the church council may be called by the Senior Pastor or the president, or shall be called at the written request of at least one third of its members. Advance notice of each special meeting shall be given to all who are entitled to be present.
- 9.08 A quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of a majority of the members of the church council, (including the Senior Pastor or vice-pastor or interim supply pastor, except in cases in which he or she has given prior approval to the consideration of questions of a routine nature, in which event the business of the meeting shall be confined to such matters).

9.09 The church council shall assume the management of the congregation when it is determined by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the church council that the Senior Pastor is ineffective in his or her role as the Minister of Administration.

ARTICLE TEN

Officers

- 10.01 The church council shall elect a president, a vice-president, a secretary, a treasurer and a financial secretary, who will serve both the council and the congregation in their several capacities.
- 10.02 The president shall be chairperson of the congregation and the church council. In the event of the president's inability to perform his or her duties the vice-president shall serve in his or her stead.
- 10.03 The president, vice-president, and secretary shall be chosen from the membership of the church council.
- 10.04 All officers shall be confirmed members of the congregation in good standing. If any of them ceases to be such, his or her office shall at once be declared vacant by the council, which shall fill the vacancy for the unexpired term.
- 10.05 The secretary shall keep accurate minutes of all meetings of the congregation and of the council in a volume provided by the congregation, which shall be preserved permanently in its archives.
- 10.06 The financial secretary shall receive and keep record of all income from contributing members and other sources. If not already an elected deacon, the financial secretary shall attend any meeting of the church council at the reasonable request of the church council.
- 10.07 The treasurer shall keep the books of account of the congregation. He or she shall receive all funds and disburse them on proper orders. If not already an elected deacon, the treasurer shall attend any meeting of the church council at the reasonable request of the church council.
- 10.08 The treasurer and the financial secretary shall make written report of all their transactions to the church council monthly. They shall also report annually to the congregation, together with a satisfactory audit. All financial officers shall give corporate surety, in amounts determined by the church council, for which the premiums shall be paid by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or the congregation.

ARTICLE ELEVEN
Administrative Structure

- 11.01 The purpose of the Administrative Structure is to provide an organization built upon Lutheran beliefs that will effectively and efficiently lead the congregation into the future through serving its members and the larger community.
- 11.02 There shall be six (6) Areas of Ministry which define the work of the church and emphasize its overall purpose to make Word and Sacrament available to the greatest number of people possible. These six Areas of Ministry shall be: (1) The Ministry of Administration, (2) The Ministry of Worship and Music, (3) The Ministry of Education, (4) The Ministry to Families, (5) The Ministry of Congregational Life, and (6) The Ministry of Outreach.
- 11.03 The purpose of the Ministry of Administration is to envision and plan the future, encourage professional growth in staff members, manage the congregation's financial resources, and create an environment conducive for worship, study, and fellowship. Specific responsibilities shall include, but not be limited to, the worship life of the congregation, administration and oversight of all six areas of congregational ministry, preparation of the annual budget for approval by the church council, performance evaluation and professional development of staff members, hiring and supervision of congregational lay employees (and if necessary, their termination), and adequate maintenance of the buildings and facilities.
- 11.04 The purpose of the Ministry of Worship and Music is to meet the need for a wide variety of corporate and individual worship experiences, and provide opportunities for musical expression to all skill/age levels of the congregation. Specific responsibilities shall include, but not be limited to, assisting the pastor(s) in the conduct of worship services which are consistent with the liturgy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, overseeing all music programs of the congregation, and the proper care and maintenance of all musical instruments.
- 11.05 The purpose of the Ministry of Education is to guide in the learning, understanding, and living of our faith by providing educational opportunities for people of all ages. Specific responsibilities shall include, but not be limited to, the conduct and promotion of all educational programs.
- 11.06 The purpose of the Ministry to Families is to nurture the practice of faith for families and family members in their everyday lives. This will be met through fellowship, service, and teaching in support of families and family members of the church and community.

- 11.07 The purpose of the Ministry of Congregational Life is to involve members in the life of the congregation by providing fellowship opportunities, serving members with special needs, and encouraging the sharing of time, talents, and financial resources.
- 11.08 The purpose of the Ministry of Outreach shall be to communicate through words (spoken, printed, and multimedia) and actions (physical and financial) the good news of Jesus Christ to all people beyond the congregations' membership.
- 11.09 The Ministry of Administration shall be led by the Senior Pastor. Leadership of the other areas of ministry shall be appointed by the church council upon the recommendation of the Minister of Administration. These leaders shall normally be programmatic staff members and may be either a pastor or lay person.
- 11.10 Each Leader shall be responsible for both the leadership and management of their ministry area. Leadership includes developing, communicating, and implementing vision. Management responsibilities include managing the programs of that area of ministry including the supervision of staff members, work groups and task forces, recruiting and training volunteers, budgetary decisions and expenditures within that ministry area. Each ministry leader is responsible to report his or her goals and plans to the church council and receive approval prior to implementation. Each ministry leader shall report in writing to the congregation annually, and to the church council as frequently as it deems appropriate.

ARTICLE TWELVE
Organizations Within the Congregation

- 12.01 All organizations within the congregation shall exist to aid it in ministering to its members and to all whom it can reach with the Gospel of Christ. As outgrowths and expressions of the congregation's life, the organizations are subject to the oversight and approval of the church council.
- 12.02 Special interest groups, other than the congregation's units of the official auxiliaries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, may be organized only after authorization has been given by the church council.

ARTICLE THIRTEEN
Discipline of Members

- 13.01 The offenses for which a confirmed member of this congregation shall be subject to discipline are: denial of the Christian faith; immoral or scandalous conduct; persistent

troublemaking, especially with the congregation; and, in general, behavior that is grossly unbecoming a member of the Church of Christ.

- 13.02 Discipline shall be administered by the church council in behalf of the congregation, with the right of appeal to the synod in accordance with the provisions of the synodical constitution. The procedure which Christ instructed His disciples to follow (Matthew 18:15-17) shall be adhered to in every case, proceeding through these successive steps: 1) private admonition by the pastor, 2) admonition by the pastor in the presence of two or three witnesses, and 3) citation to appear before the church council.
- 13.03 Persons cited to appear before the church council shall be served with a written summons at least ten days before the hearing. In addition to notifying the accused of the time and place to appear, the summons shall specify the exact charges that have been made against him or her. If the accused fails to appear at the appointed hour without valid excuse, the council may proceed with the hearing and may pass judgment in his or her absence.
- 13.04 Should the accused be found guilty by a vote of at least a majority of the members of the church council and renewed admonition prove ineffectual, the council shall impose one of the following penalties: 1) censure before the council or the congregation; 2) suspension from membership until proof is given of sufficient repentance and amendment; or 3) excommunication. A resolution of the council suspending or excommunicating a member of this congregation shall be delivered to him or her in writing.
- 13.05 Acts of discipline may be reconsidered and revoked by the church council upon receipts of evidence that injustice has been done.

ARTICLE FOURTEEN By-Laws and Amendments

- 14.01 By-laws may be adopted which are not in conflict with this constitution.
- 14.02 Amendments to this constitution may be made at a congregational meeting by a two-thirds vote of the eligible members in good standing who are present and voting. The congregational meeting shall be called for the specific purpose of amending this constitution or its by-laws and the proposed changes shall be submitted by mail to all the confirmed members in good standing at least thirty days prior to the meeting. Following the adoption of an amendment, the secretary shall forward a certified copy thereof to the bishop of the synod, and it shall go into effect

only upon receipt of official notices that such amendment has either been agreed to by the synod or that it is not in conflict with the constitution and by-laws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or with the synodical constitution.

BY-LAWS

Membership

- 4.02.01 The Senior Pastor shall report the reception of new members and the departure of current members to the church council.

Congregational Year

- 7.02.01 The congregational year shall begin on September 1 and end on August 31.

Church Council

- 9.01.01 The number of deacons on the church council shall be twelve (12).
- 9.01.02 The term of office for a deacon shall be three (3) years and those terms shall be so arranged that four (4) deacons are elected annually.
- 9.01.03 A deacon may serve for no more than two (2) consecutive terms. However, if a deacon has filled an unexpired term, that deacon may stand for election for two (2) additional consecutive terms only if the unexpired term filled was less than one-half (1/2) of the full term.
- 9.01.04 All elections of lay members of the church council shall be by written ballot and the result duly recorded by the secretary.
- 9.01.05 Nominees for election to church council shall meet the following criteria:
- A. The nominee must have been a member of the congregation for at least one (1) year.
 - B. The nominee must be active in the programs of the congregation other than worship attendance.
 - C. The nominee must live a Christian lifestyle.
 - D. The nominee must communicate effectively with other members of the congregation.

9.01.06 Election of deacons shall be as follows:

A. Nominations shall be solicited from the congregation annually in May. The nominee must have agreed to serve if elected. The final day for nominations shall be the second Monday of June.

B. Including those already nominated by the congregation, the church council shall present a slate of nominees equal to at least the number of vacancies to be filled.

C. Biographical information shall be gathered from those nominated and made available to the congregation no later than the first day of balloting.

D. Numbered ballots shall be prepared and made available to all those qualified to vote. Ballots may be picked up at the church on the first three Sundays in September. When a ballot is given out, the name shall be recorded. Upon request, the church office shall mail out a ballot to any eligible voter who has not already received a ballot.

E. Balloting shall be the first three (3) Sundays in September. The ballot box shall be closed one-half hour after the final worship service on Sunday morning the third Sunday in September in order for the ballots to be counted.

F. The church council shall appoint three (3) of its members to be tellers.

G. The four (4) nominees receiving the highest number of votes shall be declared elected (plurality). In the case of a tie, a random drawing by the tellers shall determine the election.

9.01.07 A vacancy on the church council shall be filled by appointment of a deacon for the remainder of the unexpired term by the church council. There shall be no voting from the congregation to fill an unexpired term.

9.02.01 Installation of lay members of church council shall normally be at the first meeting of the church council following their election.

9.04.01 The church council may incur obligations of more than ten percent (10%) of the current anticipated annual receipts only after approval by a congregational meeting.

11.10.01 The annual report of each ministry leader shall be submitted to the congregation each September.